



**Mustard Seed Children's Summary for 6 April 2008
Released on Wednesday, April 2, 2008**

"Daniel Made a Choice" (Holding to Your Convictions)

MEMORY VERSE:

"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat..." (Daniel 1:8)

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT: Daniel 1:8-20

8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

9 Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.

11 Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12 Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

14 So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15 And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

16 Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

17 As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

18 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.

20 And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach that we must choose to trust and obey God in hard times.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. Daniel chose to trust God in hard times.
2. Daniel and his friends chose to obey God in hard times.
3. God blessed Daniel and his three friends.

PLANNING LESSON AIDS:

For Helping to Remember, you will need poster board or white paper, crayons, colored pencils and markers. Make a copy of the word search for each student.

LESSON BACKGROUND:

This week's lesson takes place during the time of the Prophet Daniel. God's people are in exile in Babylon (forced to live in a country that is not their own). For many years prior to this, God had sent warnings to His people concerning judgment and consequences for their sin. The people did not heed the warnings from the prophets of God and as a result, the Babylonians invaded Judah, conquered the country, and took the people, including Daniel, back to Babylon as captives.

From among those taken captives, King Nebuchadnezzar wanted the best (most intelligent, good looking, quick learners, etc.) to be trained to serve in the palace. These chosen, young men would be taught the Babylonian language and literature and receive three years of training and then serve the king (Daniel 1:4-5).

As part of the training, the young men would live a life of luxury – receiving an education and eating the rich food and wine supplied by the king. However, Daniel and his three friends (Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego) were conscious of the fact that this supply of food and wine would be contrary to the strict Jewish dietary laws. This week's lesson describes the choice that Daniel and his friends made – whether to obey God or man.

TEACHER'S NOTES / TELLING THE LESSON:

Consider the following as you prepare your lesson for your students:

1. Why were Daniel and his friends away from home and in Babylon?

Daniel and his friends were captives in Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians had conquered Judah and taken its citizens back to Babylon. The capture and the conquering of the country happened in stages. In the first stage, the Babylonians captured young men of royal birth to take back to Babylon to educate. Daniel and his friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, were among these first captives. They were considered to be the best that Judah had to offer – intelligent, good looking, and quick learners. They were selected to receive three years of special training in order to serve in the palace of the king.

2. How were Daniel and his friends trained for service to the king?

Daniel and his friends were among those chosen for positions in the king's administration. They were to receive three years of specialized training to learn the Babylonian language and literature and how to serve the king. For three years they would be educated to be indoctrinated into the Babylonian culture. During this time, they would live a life of luxury, including an abundant provision of food and drink or "the king's delicacies" and "the wine which he drank" (Daniel 1:5).

3. What was Daniel's special request during this training period? What was the outcome?

The food and wine supplied by the king violated the dietary laws that God had given to his people. Daniel and his friends decided that they would not disobey God by eating the king's food and drinking his wine. Daniel asked the chief officer for permission not to eat the food. When the chief officer was concerned that he would get into trouble if he granted the request, Daniel requested a ten day trial period in which he and his friends would eat only vegetables and drink water and then be compared to the others who ate the king's food.

The chief officer agreed to the trial. At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier than the captives who ate the king's food. Their request to be allowed to eat vegetables and drink water was granted.

4. What did God do for the four friends during their training period?

God blessed Daniel and his three friends. God helped them understand their studies. God gave them an unusual intelligence (God-given knowledge). God gave them an unusual ability to learn so that they were able to master the literature and science presented to them by their teachers more readily than the others. They also were given wisdom to use their intelligence and knowledge.

Daniel was also given an ability beyond that of his friends. God gave Daniel the ability to understand dreams and visions.

5. What was the result of the friends' interviews with the king?

At the end of the three years, all the young men were interviewed for positions in the kingdom. King Nebuchadnezzar conducted the interviews personally. The positions to be filled were evidently important ones since the king himself was going to make the choices and appointments.

The king found that Daniel and his three friends were superior to the other captives. He chose them to be his advisers. In every subject, Daniel and his three friends were ten times smarter than any of the king's advisers or magicians.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

Daniel could have blamed God for his troubles. An enemy had taken him captive and forced him to live far from home and family. People in the enemy's land did not worship God. Daniel, however, loved God, even when life was hard. He knew God would take care of him. He chose to obey God even when the other captives did not. Will you choose to trust and obey God in hard times?

HELPING TO REMEMBER (ACTIVITIES):

Use the following activities, or create your own, to emphasize the key points of the lesson: Provide each student with poster board or white paper. Allow each to draw pictures or a scene from the story of Daniel showing how he chose to trust and obey God. Use crayons, colored pencils or markers to decorate the pictures.

Repeat the memory verse and let each child practice saying the verse. A word search containing key words from the lesson is included at the end of this summary.

EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE:

"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat..." (Daniel 1:8)

Although far from home and faced with tough decisions, Daniel, even as a young boy (probably no more than fourteen years old), had strong convictions about obeying God. Daniel made a definite decision to follow God's laws. He decided that he would continue to follow the strict Jewish dietary laws even when presented with the luxurious food and wine of the king.

ANTICIPATING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON:

Next week's lesson is "Three Friends Took a Stand" and focuses on the truly amazing faith of Daniel's three friends. To prepare, read Daniel 3:10-13, 16-18, 21, 24.

Lesson Summarized By:

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WORD SEARCH
Daniel Made a Choice
(Daniel 1:8-20)

Find each of the following words.

VEGETABLES

FATTER

DANIEL

FAIRER

FAVOR

WINE

MEAT

WISDOM

CHOICE

KNOWLEDGE

DEFILE

LEARNING

KING

ADVISERS

WATER

COUNTENANCE

N E V U E F E T A K N O W L E D G E S I K A M U E
G C N E A C E R E F A I K R F D R F L I D E R A N
L A R V A T A R A E S R E T T A F T C I N A L F A
R I O V C L R B L E S R D M D N I N E N F E O A I
O R F I N R N W F V N N D E K G E R I I I E D L N
S I R W E L N E L G W E T O I T B C E N A V D K I
T L E A R N I N G V I M A L N K L I A R I N R F C
R D L I E C I O H C S F E R G I K D R S A D R R I
M F F I W M A E G A D N M N T I G E E T R A C A E
F I L E A A N C L N O N E N S D W R R W S F L D N
R E R N N L C F C C M C E I B C S R U T E D V R T
N T E E A G E C N A N E T N U O C M I E A N L R E
E N T B W V E G E T A B L E S K A A R R V G C A N
E S A E M B I T U E A N A N O E O A K L N E A F E
A I W W E N L V D O N N T O D R R W E W I N E A G
D R E I R A S F A W F D F E E E R O E N F R G D V

Solution to Word Search
Daniel Made a Choice
(Daniel 1:8-20)

F K N O W L E D G E
 A F L
 V R E T T A F I L
 O I F E A
 R K R I E D
 W T I E N V D
 L E A R N I N G I A N A R I
 E C I O H C S E G D S
 D M E
 O R
 R M S
 E E C N A N E T N U O C
 T V E G E T A B L E S
 A
 W W I N E

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The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary, by Nelson Books.