THE CHURCH AT BROOK HILLS

Family Worship Guide – Week 37

READ

- Daniel is set in the sixth century BC while Israel is in exile. Daniel and his friends have been taken into exile as young men who are to be educated as diplomats and scholars in the court of Babylon. Though their training immerses them in the Babylonian worldview, culture, literature, and religion, they remain faithful to God. Daniel stands as a witness to, and sometimes illustration of, God's sovereignty over even the greatest empire the world had known. People in the ancient world would have believed that Israel's defeat indicated the weakness of their God in relation to the great Babylonian Empire and its powerful gods. The purpose of the book of Daniel is to illustrate and proclaim the sovereignty of Israel's God. This is most clearly seen in Daniel 2 as God reveals His sovereignty and shows Himself superior by revealing to Daniel the content and interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream.
- Read Daniel 2:1-16
- Nebuchadnezzar ordered his advisers to tell him the content of his dream. This was the only way he could be confident in their interpretation. Needless to say they lacked the wisdom and understanding to carry out the king's instructions. In verse 10, the king's advisers asserted that the king was making an unreasonable request when they said "there is not a man on earth who can meet the king's demand, for no great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. The thing that the king asks is difficult, and no one can show it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." After the king's advisers revealed that they were unable to satisfy the king's demands, Nebuchadnezzar grew furious and ordered all the wise men in Babylon to be destroyed (including Daniel).
- Read Daniel 2:17-30
- Unlike the king's advisers and gods, Daniel's God was able to reveal the king's dream. He alone is the sovereign One who is superior to all earthly kings, men and gods. He alone is the One who has the power to explain and interpret the dreams of men. Daniel responded appropriately by offering praise to his God. He acknowledged that God is a God of wisdom, knowing the end from the beginning, and a God of power, for whatever He determines, He can do. Evidences of His power are seen in His control of events ("He changes times and seasons") and of the destiny of nations ("He removes kings and sets up kings"). Nebuchadnezzar was on the throne because God determined to use Him there to fulfill His will. Evidences of God's wisdom are seen in His "giving wisdom to the wise" and in His revealing "deep and hidden things." It was God, not Daniel's insight, which allowed Daniel to understand and interpret the king's dream.
- Read Daniel 2:46-49
- After Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the king fell upon his face and honored Daniel's God by saying, "Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery." Once again the purpose of the chapter is clear, Daniel's God reigns supreme and is sovereign over all earthly kings and kingdoms (vv. 27-28, 36-38, 44-45, 47).

  The Bottom Line: God reigns supreme over all things and all people in this world!

  Questions:
  How have you seen God's wisdom displayed in your life?
  Who does Daniel say places kings in their position of authority?
  Why is this important to remember?

PRAY

- Read *Window on the World*, pg. 138-139 *Quechua* (Peru)
- Use Prayer Card

SING

- Use lyric sheet and mp3 download of "He Reigns"
- This week, our family worship song is "He Reigns". In the book of Daniel we see that God reigns over lords, lands, and even lions. We learn through the story of Daniel and King Nebuchadnezzer that God desires to be honored and praised as the God of gods by people in every nation (Daniel 2:47). As the Church, we can rejoice in this truth and praise God for making His salvation know to us. It is by His grace that we are saved through faith in Jesus Christ and together we can declare, "Glory, glory! Hallelujah! He reigns!"

MEMORIZE

- Daniel 2:20-21 Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding…"

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SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These activities and questions can replace or serve as a supplement to the questions under the "Read" section on Page 1. Remember that these suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God's word and worship Him together.

Preschool (Birth-Kindergarten)

- Before you begin: gather several items and put them in a bag.
- Say to your preschooler: I need you to help me. I have all this stuff in my bag and I need you to hold it for me because I have something in the bottom that I need to get. (Start to take things out and put the items in your child's arms and load the child down with more than he/she can possibly hold.)
- Do you need some help with all that stuff? Do you think that maybe if we had asked (Dad or Mom or another special person) to help they could have held all this stuff? _____ is a special person to have around in our lives! But, guess what, they can't always do everything and maybe I have a little more here than they could have held, too.
- There is a special Father that all of us have. He can hold all that is in this world and more. That special Father is God. He made the world and all that is in it. God is in control of everything and He can do anything! He is sovereign which means He is the boss of all things!
- God is the more powerful and more important than anyone in all the world! He loves us so much that He has given us everything that we need every day. He is in control all the time of everything that happens.

Children (Grades 1-5)

- Help your children understand that everyone in the world reports to someone. Their teacher at school is accountable to a principle, and the principle must answer to a headmaster or superintendent. Mommies and daddies are free to make choices and run their own home, but they can't just make any decision they want. If they choose to do things that are against the laws of Alabama or the United States, they would have to answer to a police officer or even a judge. Invite your child to try and think of a man or woman who answers to no one. Then, as a family, trace the "chain of command" upward to show them that even those we may think of as important or in charge actually have authorities and powers over them.
- Explain that even though all people everywhere must report to someone, this does not apply to God. In fact, God proved this powerfully through His servant Daniel. Daniel served in the land of Babylon under a mighty and fearsome king named Nebuchadnezzar. One day, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that no wise man in all the land of Babylon could figure out. This made the king so angry that he was going to have every wise man in Babylon murdered. Nebuchadnezzar could kill dozens or even hundreds of people just because he wanted to and not even get in trouble for it! He was one of the most powerful men in the whole world. However, he didn't have the wisdom to interpret his own dream. The God of Israel revealed what the king's dream was to His servant Daniel and also showed Daniel what the dream meant. When Daniel went before the king and explained the meaning of the dream, Nebuchadnezzar could hardly believe it! He was so amazed that he fell down on his face and told Daniel, "Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery."
- For a king to get down on his face meant that he was in the presence of someone greater than himself. Nebuchadnezzar had just learned the truth that God doesn't report to anyone. He reigns over all things and all people on earth!

Students (Grades 6-12)

- Daniel's education caused him to be engulfed in a completely different belief system. Have you ever encountered beliefs in a school setting that were contrary to your beliefs as a follower of Christ? Discuss.
- What is your reaction to beliefs that are different than that of the Bible? Argumentative and defensive or passive and non-confrontational? It's important to note that Daniel's response was direct and proactive, but was full of humility and meekness.
- Read 2:17-19. What did Daniel ask his friends to seek other than answers? Where do you turn when you're faced with tough questions and are out of answers? Is the Word of God and the wisdom of God your first option or your last? Why?
- This passage reminds us that God is in control and always knows what's going on. Re-read 2:19-23. He answered Daniel's cry for answers, but also showed him additional aspects of His character. What characteristics can we learn about God in these verses?

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