

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Our emphasis this week is on "Being reliant on God to provide exactly what you need and watch Him do what only He can do."*

SHARE IT

When was a time you felt totally reliant on God to do something?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Here are a few optional questions you could ask:*

- 1) *Why are trials often times of growth?*
- 2) *Why is it hard for us to fully trust in God in "normal" times?*

LEARN FROM THE BIBLE

How would you describe the Babylonian king?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Perhaps kings have amplified "normal" flaws. King Nebuchadnezzar was selfish, demanding, self-indulgent, cruel, and confused. His repeated tendency was to think of himself as important, revered, and glorified.*

What are Daniel's responses to his situation and the people in his world?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *I love his God-honoring disposition including being thoughtful of others.*

- *His first response was to use "wisdom and tact." Both are often missing in modern life.*
- *He asked good questions*
- *He requested an audience (faith in God gives us courage)*
- *He communicated with close friends*
- *He turned to God in prayer*
- *He gave God praise BEFORE he knew the king's response*
- *He was courageous before the king*
- *He unselfishly and compassionately asked the king to NOT execute the other wise men, even though he was the one who had the answer. Remember that some of those wise men were false teachers.*
- *He gave all glory and credit to God*
- *He included his friends in the rewards*
- *What a guy! Right?*

What do we learn about God (including 20-23)? How does Daniel live out his faith?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *We see that although God allowed Israel/Judah to be conquered, in compassion and mercy, He still has a plan for them. He is sovereign over all kings and authorities and he will provide for his people. Daniel requested an audience with the king before he knew anything. He fully trusted that God would give him an answer. And, he gave God all the glory.*

How is God/Jesus the ultimate hero of this story?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Not only is God/Jesus providing for and preserving His people, Jesus is also the king of the kingdom that will never be destroyed (44). His power will one day crush every kingdom power on earth and endure forever.*

DISCUSS TOGETHER

What can we learn from Daniel's response to this situation and harsh people?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *This conversation is important. Christians have been known to react poorly in these times. Try to go beyond the big challenges to how we react everyday to people, how we could live by faith in our sovereign God to our every day worlds.*

Why are difficult situations times when we learn about God? (Daniel's and our own)

NOTES TO LEADERS: *This is a continuation of the first questions. It seems that difficult times can cause us to turn fully to God, to remember that He is all powerful and we are not, to see our own limitations and flaws and God's greatness and love.*

How does Daniel demonstrate kinship and partnership with the fellow believers in his 'small group?'
How might this apply to us today?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *We independent Americans try to do things on our own or see ourselves as self-sufficient. Daniel did three important things that I pray we will learn in our groups:*

- 1) *To make our first response to pray together*
- 2) *To trust, support, and encourage one another*
- 3) *To share all things including the good and the difficult*
- 4) *In short: To truly do life and mission together.*

What does this story encourage in your own life?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Is your group at a place where people trust each other enough to share at this level? Perhaps you, the leaders, can model this.*

APPLY IT THIS WEEK

Call another person in your group to pray together. Be sure to pray for the "harsh" people in your world.

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Please ask people to call each other this week to pray together.*

**Grace to you all,
Steve**