



## **Week One – Into Exile**

**Primary Scripture:** Daniel 1:3-17

### **Overview:**

This lesson introduces students to the world of Israel's exile and the young men who faced overwhelming challenges to keep the faith. You will explore the nature of fear and how it can be disruptive to students' lives. You will also examine fear's relationship with love, and how when students gain a deeper understanding of themselves, they can be freed from the unnoticed influences of fear.

### **Learning Goals:**

- Understand the context of Israel's exile to develop biblical literacy
- Distinguish between different kinds of fear; improving faith
- Acquire tools of self-knowledge in order to reveal personal fear

## **Week Two – The Fiery Furnace**

**Primary Scripture:** Daniel 3:8-27

### **Overview:**

In session two, you will examine the compelling story of three young believers who resisted the fear-based pressures to conform. Students will learn to appreciate the miracle of their mature faith and how that maturity can be translated to modern-day. Arrogance and foolishness are not part of the gospel to which we are called, and students will be given space to examine how full-hearted courage shapes their own walk with God.

### **Learning Goals:**

- Appreciate the biblical text of a familiar story of faith
- Develop a deeper understanding of courage and its relationship to the heart
- Consider the characteristics of robust faith to be confident, hopeful, and obedient

## **Week Three – The Writing on the Wall**

**Primary Scripture:** Daniel 5:1-6; 13-17; 25-30

### **Overview:**

This curious story has a lot to offer students struggling to find hope in long seasons of darkness. Students will continue to learn about challenges of exilic life while trying to keep the faith. We will also imagine what this looks like in our own seasons of sadness and grief, and students will be encouraged to extend hope to one another, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

### **Learning Goals:**

- Build upon the historical sequence of the exile to better understand the story
- Develop our own imaginative capacity for hope during long periods of darkness
- Realize the importance of inspiring hope in one another as we journey together in faith

## **Week Four – The Lions’ Den**

**Primary Scripture:** Daniel 6

### **Overview:**

The story of Daniel and the Lions’ Den is likely a familiar one. Still, there are hidden gems in the text that eagerly await discovery. We will continue to explore the narrative sequence of the exile and how new changes affected God’s faithful leaders. Students will realize the importance of prayer in overcoming threats to one’s faith. Finally, they will see how the illusion of control can never outweigh the courage which our loving God provides.

### **Learning Goals:**

- Highlight the shift in context for Daniel as leadership changes hands
- Discover the power of prayer in maintaining faithful courage
- Contrast our need for control over God’s call for hopeful obedience