

Waiting for God to make a move



Bible References:
Daniel 1:1-5; 6:10-23

Daniel's life changed dramatically when he was taken into exile in Babylon. Everything familiar was stripped away, and he had no idea how long he would have to wait for God to act. Yet throughout his years in exile, Daniel remained faithful, choosing to trust God and pray consistently despite the uncertainty he faced. In this session we'll explore what it means to wait for God to make a move. Daniel's story reminds us that although we may long for God to act, waiting is not wasted time. We can continue to trust God, remain faithful and bring our concerns to him in prayer, even when we can't yet see how he is at work.

You will need:

- 'Waiting on God' handout
- Coloured pens and highlighters





Beat

Leader's notes:

Discuss the names of the group members together. The following questions are closed, but encourage the group to explain their yes/no answers.

- Do you know what your name means? If so, share it with the group. If not, then do a quick search to find out.
- What do you like or dislike about your name?
- Are you named after anyone?
- Do you have the kind of name that people spell or pronounce incorrectly? How does that make you feel?
- If you could choose a different name, what would it be?

Say:

Names are an important part of our identity, and this was especially true in biblical times. As we begin this series exploring what it means to wait, we're going to meet Daniel. Before Daniel found himself waiting on God, his identity was challenged in dramatic ways. In a short space of time his life was transformed by circumstances beyond his control. Everything changed, and he spent years waiting on God to act.



Bridge

Ask:

- Are you good at waiting for things?
- What do you find most challenging about waiting?

**Say:**

We've already met Daniel, but now we're going to discover what happened to him as a teenager.

Read:

¹ In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure-house of his god.

³ Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility – ⁴ young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. ⁵ The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service.

(Daniel 1:1-5)

Ask:

Place yourself in Daniel's position. How would it feel to experience what he did?

Say:

Daniel's name meant 'God is my judge', but it was changed to 'Belteshazzar', meaning 'Bel protect my life'. Bel was one of the Babylonian gods.

Ask:

- What impact do you think this name change had on Daniel?
- Have you ever experienced a time when it felt like too many things changed all at once? If you feel comfortable, then share it with the group.

Say:

Daniel's world was turned upside down. He had no idea how long the exile would last. As time passed, the Israelites continued to wait desperately for God to make his move.

Watch:

3 Ways to Choose to Live in 'Babylon' (and Which Jesus Chose) (5:19)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=XzWpaOgcPyo&t

Ask:

- What were the two main ways the people responded to their challenging situation?
 - What third way did Jeremiah suggest?
 - How did Daniel and his friends live out Jeremiah's 'third way'?
 - How do you think Daniel felt after a dream revealed that he would have to wait a long time for the exile to end?
 - Do you agree with the clip when it says, 'We all live and work in Babylon'?
- Explain your answer.
- What version of Babylon are we living in today? What challenges come with that reality?
 - How did Jesus show us how to live lives of loyalty and subversion?
 - What modern-day parallels do you see in the Israelites' story of exile? What situations in the news come to mind?

Say:

The title of this session is 'Waiting for God to make a move'. Although we know that God is present in every situation we face, it can still be frustrating when it feels like we're waiting for him to act.

Ask:

- Describe a situation where you are waiting for God to 'make a move'.
- When we want God to 'make a move', we usually mean that we want him to resolve a situation quickly. How can we learn from the example of Daniel – and ultimately Jesus – as we wait for the resolution of a challenging situation?

Say:

Daniel couldn't control what had happened to him or how long the exile would last. He had every reason to believe that life had been put on hold. Yet rather than giving in or giving up, Daniel chose to remain faithful to God. His story reminds us that waiting doesn't mean doing nothing. God can still work in us and through us while we wait.

**Bridge****Ask:**

What is your response to the following quote?

'Waiting on God requires the willingness to bear uncertainty, to carry within oneself the unanswered question, lifting the heart to God about it whenever it intrudes upon one's thoughts.'

-Elisabeth Elliot



Sound Check

Say:

Throughout today's session we've explored what it means to wait for God to make a move. Daniel spent years in exile, but one thing never changed – his commitment to prayer. As you watch this recap of Daniel in the lions' den, notice how often prayer is mentioned. It wasn't something Daniel did only when life became difficult. Prayer had become part of his everyday life.

Watch:

Daniel in the Lions' Den – Saddleback Kids (3:49)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEM_X25DWPk

Say:

No matter the circumstances, no matter the adversity, Daniel had a clear pattern of prayer that he followed every day. We could easily look at Daniel's story and conclude that he got his answer to prayer quickly because he was saved from the lions' den. However, Daniel was still living in exile and still waiting for God to make a move.

Over the next four weeks, we're going to follow Daniel's example. Think of one situation where you're waiting for God to make a move, then choose three times each day to pause and pray about it.

Leader's notes:

Give each member of the group a 'Waiting on God' prayer handout.

Say:

You've had the opportunity to think about situations that feel unresolved. These may relate to world events or personal circumstances, but each one is an opportunity to continue trusting God while you wait.



Leader's notes:

Give the young people time to complete the first sections of the handout by:

- describing the situation they are facing
- writing three specific prayer requests
- deciding when they will pray each day over the coming four weeks.

If appropriate, invite members of the group to share one of their prayer requests and commit to praying for one another throughout the series.

Explain that each week they can use the handout to record answers to prayer, signs of progress or reminders of God's faithfulness. This activity will be revisited during the final session of the series.



Bridge

Ask:

- What might make it difficult to keep praying about the same situation over the next four weeks?
- What practical steps could help us encourage one another to pray consistently?



Selah

Ask:

What do you think Steven Furtick means when he says:

‘The only thing harder than waiting on God is wishing that you had

How can our impatience while waiting on God get us into trouble?

Say:

Whether we’re waiting for God to make a move in the world around us or in our own lives, fears and worries can easily consume our minds. As we end today’s session, let’s spend some time reminding ourselves who God is before bringing our concerns to him in prayer.

Watch:

‘Waiting Here For You’ (Live) – The Worship Initiative feat. Robbie Seay, Dinah Wright, Trenton Bell (5:47)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pj8_HsO1gA

Pray:

Heavenly Father,
Thank you for the reminder that:
You are everything you’ve promised,
Your faithfulness is true;
And we’re desperate for your presence.
All we need is you,
Waiting here for you
With our hands lifted high in praise,
And it’s you we adore,
Singing Alleluia.
Amen.





Say:

In a piece of music, the coda brings the different aspects of the melody, harmonies and bassline to a conclusion. It pulls together the different themes and often, but not always, brings resolution to a piece of music.

Ask:

- As you reflect on everything you have learned today, what is your coda?
- What is one thing you have discovered about prayer and waiting?

Leader's notes:

Give the young people a moment to think about your question and briefly share their coda with the group before the session comes to an end.



Waiting on God

'When Daniel learned that the decree had been signed and posted, he continued to pray just as he had always done. His house had windows in the upstairs and opened towards Jerusalem.

Three times a day he knelt there in prayer, thanking and praising his God.'

— DANIEL 6:10 (THE MESSAGE PARAPHRASE)

DESCRIBE THE CHALLENGING SITUATION YOU ARE FACING:

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WRITE DOWN THREE SPECIFIC PRAYER REQUESTS:

1
2
3

Bring your three prayer requests to God three times a day. At the end of each week jot down any progress that has been made and give thanks to God for his faithfulness. Use the song suggestion in each box to spend time praising God.

WEEK 1

'Endless Praise' – Planet Shakers

WEEK 2

'You have made me glad' – Charity Gayle

WEEK 3

'Hosanna' – Saddleback Worship

WEEK 4

'King of Me' – Rend Co Kids (just for fun!)

“'Waiting on God requires the willingness to bear uncertainty, to carry within oneself the unanswered question, lifting the heart to God about it whenever it intrudes upon one's thoughts.'
— ELISABETH ELLIOT