

FOLLOW YOUR HEART?



Wouldn't it be fun to know the future? You could know what you are getting for your birthday or what you will be when you grow up. Did you know there are some important things God wants you to know about the future? The Bible calls this "prophecy." (2 Peter 1:19-21.)

Together we are starting out on an amazing adventure in Bible prophecy. We will get to be like detectives exploring these prophecies, using symbols found right in the Bible itself.

- 1 Who does God say are the only people who can understand His prophecies?
Daniel 12:10 People who are _____.
- 2 What do we need to do before we study the Bible and read each Bible lesson?
James 1:5 We need to pray and ask Jesus to give us _____.

Have you ever heard someone say, "Follow your heart," or "Let your heart lead the way?"

- 3 What does it mean to follow your heart? It means to follow your **EFLESING**. (unscramble)

- 4 Is it safe to follow your heart?
Jeremiah 17:9 Yes / No
- 5 Did Jesus follow His own heart?
John 5:30 He said, "I do _____ seek My own will but the _____ of the Father who sent Me."



We use the word "prophecy" to refer to something that will happen in the future that God wants us to know about.

The reason there are sad and evil things in our world is that Satan, who used to be a beautiful angel in heaven, chose to follow his own heart.



- 6 What was Satan like at first when God made him? (Unscramble the word to find out.)
Ezekiel 28:12 He was "full of wisdom and **CRETEFP** _____ in beauty."
- 7 What happened to this once-beautiful angel?
Ezekiel 28:17 His heart was _____ because of his beauty.
- 8 How many angels joined Satan and had to leave heaven with him? (Circle the correct answer.)
Revelation 12:4 One **third / half** of all the angels (called stars).



Many times every day we have to make choices—sometimes big choices, but many times little choices.

- 9 Walking with Jesus is saying _____ to Him with all our known choices. You can't hold hands and walk with someone if you are going different ways.
Every choice we make is important because every choice brings consequences.

Have you ever had a life test?

That's a test where you have to decide whether you should follow your heart to do something wrong, or instead follow Jesus and choose to do what is right.



Daniel and his three friends had a life test. They had been stolen away from their home in Jerusalem, and were taken to the city of Babylon. In Babylon, they were slaves to King Nebuchadnezzar. (Daniel 1:1-4)

The king chose to send some of his smartest slaves to his special school so they could learn the language of Babylon and eventually become government officials. Thinking to be kind to them, he ordered that these special young men be given food from his own table. (Daniel 1:5)



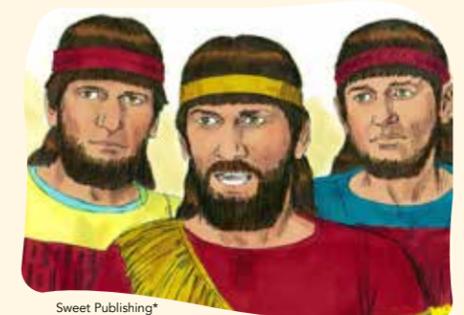
But Daniel didn't want to eat the king's food. Why not? What was wrong it?

Daniel remembered that God had given some very important health rules in the Bible. (Leviticus 11.) Apparently, most of the food that Nebuchadnezzar served was from the "unclean" list. Also, the king drank wine. But that was not wise. (Proverbs 20:1; 31:4.)

Now Daniel and his friends had a choice to make.

- 1. Disobey God, eat the king's food and drink his wine, gain favor with the king, and probably live.
 - 2. Obey God, not eat the king's food or drink his wine, lose the king's favor, and probably be killed.
- 10 What did Daniel choose?
Daniel 1:8 Daniel _____ in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's unclean meat and wine.

Three brave, young friends decided to join him in obeying God.



What did Daniel do?

- 11** What did Daniel ask the officer in charge of them to do?
Daniel 1:12, 13 He asked the steward to give them a simple diet for just _____ days. Then he could compare them to the boys who ate and drank what the king provided.

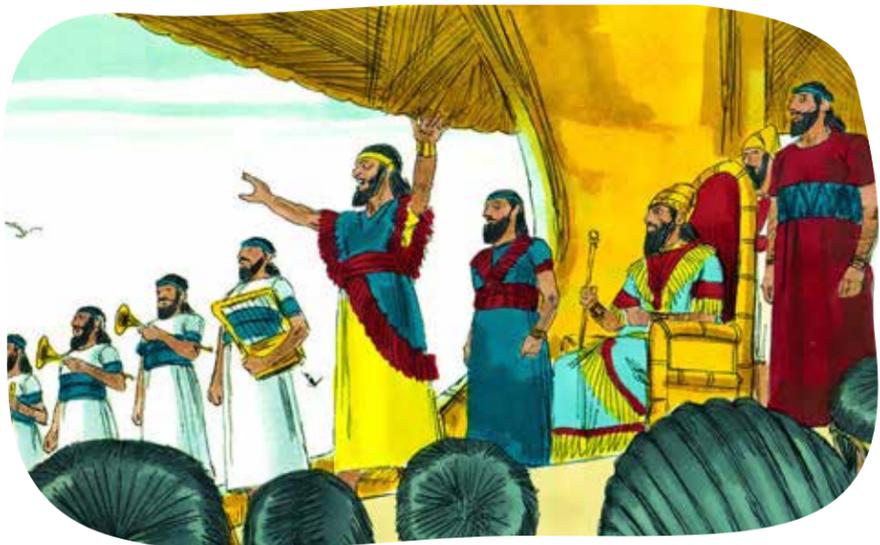
God blessed the four boys who honored Him. (Daniel 1:15.) At the end of the ten days, they looked much better than the boys who ate the king's food. So they were allowed to eat a simple diet the rest of their time in school.

At the end of their training, the king found that Daniel and his three friends were ten times wiser than all the other wise men in the whole kingdom!

- 12** What will God do for those who honor Him?
1 Samuel 2:30 "Those who _____ Me I will _____."

Nebuchadnezzar made Daniel's friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, important leaders in his kingdom. That promotion brought another life test.

King Nebuchadnezzar ordered all the leaders in his kingdom to come and worship a golden image that he had set up in the plain of Dura. Of course, Daniel's three friends had to go.



- 13** Everyone was told to bow down to the image. What would happen to anyone who did not bow down?
Daniel 3:6 They would be thrown into a fiery _____.
- 14** If you were told that you must bow down to an image or you would be thrown into a fiery furnace, what would you do? What did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego do?

- a. Knelt down and prayed to God instead.
- b. Knelt down and tied their shoelaces.
- c. Kept standing up.



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- 15** Their enemies quickly told the king. (Daniel 3:8.) When the king talked to the three men and saw that they would not change their minds, what did he say?
Daniel 3:15 "And who is the _____ who will deliver you from my hands?" (He soon found out!)

The three friends did not ask for a second chance. Fearlessly, they told the king that their God was able to deliver them; but even if He did not, they would not bow down to the golden image.

- 16** The king was FURIOUS! How hot did he command the furnace to be heated?
Daniel 3:19 _____ times hotter.

The fire was so hot, the soldiers were immediately killed when they threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego into the furnace.

- 17** When the king next looked into the furnace, what did he see? **Daniel 3:25**

- a. Three men burning up in the fire
- b. Three men walking around in the fire
- c. Four men walking around in the fire

The king was amazed and called them to come out of the furnace. Amazingly, their clothes didn't even smell like smoke! (Daniel 3:26, 27.)

Those three young men passed a real life test when they chose to obey God at the cost of their lives. This brought glory and honor to God. Now all the kingdom of Babylon learned of this amazing God. Even King Nebuchadnezzar said with confidence, "There is no other God who can deliver like this!" (Daniel 3:29).

- 18** What did Nebuchadnezzar say about the three brave men?
Daniel 3:28 They would neither " _____ nor _____ any god except their own God."

We obey God when we love and worship Him with our hearts and then serve Him with our actions. Remember, Jesus first wants our hearts; then our service will naturally follow. (Ezekiel 11:19, 20.)



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“ There is no other God who can deliver like this! ”

Sometimes we are afraid to be different.

These three young men probably didn't like to be different from everyone else, but they would rather be different than dishonor God.

Revelation 13 describes a time in the future when worship will be a very big issue. The whole world will worship and obey Satan instead of God.



- 19** What will Satan threaten to do to those who are true to God?
Revelation 13:17 They will not be able to _____ or _____.
- 20** What did Jesus tell His disciples about the cost of following Him?
John 16:33 "In the _____ you will have tribulation; but be of good _____, I have overcome the world."

 **Tribulation: Great trouble or suffering**

Life as a Christian is not always easy, just as it wasn't easy for the three young men we learned about in this story. They were put into the fire, but Jesus was with them. What special promise does Jesus give you?

- 21** Put the words from **Hebrews 13:5** in order: **forsake, I, leave, never, nor, will, you, you** _____
- 22** Do you want to be true to God like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego?

Answers

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. wise | 7. lifted up | 13. furnace | 19. buy / sell |
| 2. wisdom | 8. third | 14. c | 20. world / cheer |
| 3. feelings | 9. yes | 15. god | 21. I will never leave you. |
| 4. no | 10. purposed | 16. seven | you nor forsake you. |
| 5. not / will | 11. ten | 17. c | |
| 6. perfect | 12. honor / honor | 18. serve / worship | |

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