

=BOOKS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 27

Daniel

Objects to have:

The sign for the new book: DANIEL

He lived right

Have the following pictures: A lion or lions

A man

A king

Another man

Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

(Hold up your Bible.) The Bible is the most wonderful book in the whole world. It contains the best stories of any story book. All the stories in it are true; they really happened.

How many books are in this Book? Yes, 66. Into how many parts is the Bible divided? Yes, into two—the Old Testament and the New Testament. We have been hearing stories from the books in the Old Testament. We've not finished yet; we have more Old Testament books. And even after we have heard one story from each book of the Bible, there are hundreds more Bible stories to hear.

Let us say together the books of the Bible which we have learned so far. (Do this with the children, up through the book of Ezekiel.) The next book is named for a man, also. His name was Daniel.

Telling the story:

When Daniel was a boy, he was taken to Babylon with the other Israelites who were taken captive. Everybody liked Daniel. I'll tell you why they liked him: He studied hard in school. He worked hard; whenever Daniel was given work to do, he did a good job. Daniel was strong and looked healthy because he took care of himself; he knew that his body was given to him by God. He took care of himself by eating his vegetables and his meat; by drinking his milk, by drinking enough water. Daniel also got enough sleep at night. Daniel washed when he got dirty; he kept his body clean. He took a bath when he was supposed to. Daniel obeyed his teachers and others in authority over him. So, Daniel took care of himself, worked hard, studied hard in school, obeyed God's commandments, all because he loved God. He wanted to please the Lord in everything that he did.

One day the king of Babylon said, "I want some special boys to work for me." The king gave the men who worked for him the job of finding among the Israelites those extra-special boys who could grow up to be some more of the king's men. They found many boys; Daniel was one of them. So Daniel was taken to the king.

The king said, "I like Daniel very much. I want him to grow up in the palace." So, Daniel did. As Daniel grew older, he got wise; God gave him wisdom because Daniel wanted to live right. One day the king made Daniel to be a very important man; Daniel was made the most important man in the country—next to the king!

There were other men who worked for the king. Their jobs were not as important as Daniel's job; Daniel was the most important man in Babylon next to the king. These other men were called presidents and princes, and they did not like it that the king liked Daniel better than any of them. These other men who worked for the king were jealous of Daniel.

The presidents and the princes were talking together one day. They said to each other, "The king likes Daniel better than he likes any of us. Let's watch Daniel! Let's watch for any mistakes he makes in his work. Let's watch for any bad things that he might do or say." So the presidents and the princes started watching Daniel. They watched him as he worked. They watched him as he went places and did things. They listened as he talked. Do you know what? Daniel was so faithful to do the work that he was supposed to do that they couldn't find any fault with his work. Daniel was so careful to behave the way God wanted him to behave that they could not find any wrong in Daniel. After watching Daniel for days and days, they said to each other, "We're going to have to think of something so that the king will not like Daniel so well. What could it be?"

"I've got it!" said one of the presidents or princes. "Let's get the king to make a law that Daniel cannot keep. Daniel is different from the rest of us. He is always going to church; he prays every day; he reads the book called the Bible. No matter how tired Daniel is or how busy he is or how much he wants to play or go places, Daniel will still pray every day."

"That's it! We'll go to the king and we'll convince him that he should make a law that Daniel cannot keep. The law will be good for only 30 days, but that is long enough to catch Daniel." What kind of law could they make that Daniel could not keep? This is what they said, "We will talk the king into making a law that says that nobody in the whole country can ask for anything from anybody except from the king. Anytime anybody wants anything, he has to come to the king and ask him for it. We'll say that the law should last for 30 days. The king will like this law; it will make him even more important with the people." All the presidents and the princes agreed to this plot. They went gleefully to the king; I think they were smirking and rubbing their hands together! They knew that Daniel would break this law; he would always pray when it was time to pray.

The presidents and the princes stood before the king. They said, "O, King, we think that it would be a very good idea to make a new law. You are such a wonderful king. We want the people to know that you are a wonderful king. We want them to honor you as you ought to be honored. So, King, write a new law. Say in this new law, 'If you want anything from anybody, do not ask them. Go only to the king to ask anything that you need or want. This will be a law for 30 days.'"

The king listened to the presidents and the princes. He was feeling very important as he listened to them. Then he heard them say, "If any man breaks this law, he shall be cast into the den of lions."

The king said, "Write down the law." After the law was written down, he took the piece of paper and he signed his name to the law. Now, this would be a law for 30 days, and nobody could change the law! The presidents and the princes laughed their wicked laughs!

All the country heard about the new law. Of course, Daniel learned about the new law, too. What would Daniel do? Anybody who broke the new law would be thrown down into the den of lions, and that would mean certain death. Couldn't Daniel pray so that nobody would see him? He would not have to pray as he was in the habit of praying, some people would say. What would Daniel do?

Daniel went to his room; it was time for him to pray. There were big windows in his room, and he always liked to kneel down there by those big windows whenever he prayed by himself. Daniel went to the place where he always prayed; he knelt down right by the big windows. Oh, look out, Daniel, somebody can see you from the outside! After Daniel had prayed, he went to work.

Once again, about lunchtime, Daniel went to his room. He walked over to the windows, knelt down and prayed. The new law did not stop Daniel! He loved God and knew that he needed God to help him in everything that he did, during every minute of the day.

In the evening Daniel went to his room. For the third time that day Daniel knelt down and talked with God.

There were some men who were spying on Daniel; they saw him kneeling and praying in his room. They ran to the king and told the king that Daniel had broken the law, that Daniel was not asking just the king for the things that he needed, that he was asking God. The presidents and the princes said, "Daniel has broken the law. Throw him into the den of lions so that he might be killed." (Hold up the picture of the lions.)

The king was very, very sad. He loved Daniel and did not want Daniel to be killed. He decided to see what he could do about changing the law. He worked for many, many hours, reading books and talking with lawyers, trying to find a way to change the law, because the king loved Daniel and he did not want him to be thrown into the lions' den. Even though the king worked and worked to try to get the law changed, there was nothing that could be done; the law would have to stay a law.

The king could do nothing but command that Daniel be brought from his room. Soldiers went and brought Daniel to the king. The king and the soldiers and Daniel marched to the den of lions. The lions were hungry; they were standing, looking up with their mouths open and growling. The soldiers opened the door to the lions' den. The soldiers grabbed hold of Daniel, and they threw Daniel down; he was going to be like food to those hungry, ferocious lions! The king and the soldiers went to their homes.

Just as Daniel was being cast into the lions' den, someone else appeared there, too. (Hold up the picture of the man.) An angel was sent from God out of Heaven. Anytime that people saw angels, the angels looked like men. The king and the soldiers did not see him. The angel got very busy. He was going around to all the lions, and he was closing their mouths! There stood those hungry lions, and there stood Daniel. The lions could not hurt Daniel at all, for the angel had closed their mouths and the lions could not open them! How funny that must have been. Daniel was safe! God was watching over him and caring for him.

(Hold up the picture of the king.) All night long in the palace the king thought about Daniel in the lions' den. The king could not sleep; he did not want to eat supper; he did not want to listen to pretty music. The king just could not think about anything except poor Daniel in the lions' den.

Then came the morning. The king washed and shaved and dressed. He hurried out of the palace; he hurried to the lions' den. The king called down into the lions' den: "Daniel, are you safe? Is the living God Whom you serve continually able to deliver you from the lions?"

A voice came up from the bottom of the lions' den, "O King, live forever. My God has sent His angel and has closed the lions' mouths. The lions have not hurt me."

The king said, "Soldiers, pull Daniel up out of the lions' den." Daniel was pulled up. How nice it was to stand in the clean, clear air outside the lions' den!

The king was so happy to see that Daniel was not hurt in the least. Then the king thought of those wicked men who dreamed up that horrible law. The king commanded, "Go get those princes and presidents; throw them into the lions' den." His command was obeyed, and the wicked men who had been so jealous of Daniel were killed by the lions.

(Hold up the picture of the other man.) Children, dare to be like Daniel! Always do right.

LET'S LEARN PART OF A BIBLE VERSE: Daniel 6:10, "...Daniel...kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."