

Bible Stories for Adults

Daniel in the Lion's Den

Daniel 4 - 6

Opening

Gathering: Give examples of people who have changed from obvious enemies of God to lovers of God.

Today's Focus: While God used the Babylonians to bring His punishment upon the Jews for their unfaithfulness, He also used the Jews to reveal Himself to the Babylonians.

Key Verses: *Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything He does is right and all His ways are just. And those who walk in pride He is able to humble.* Daniel 4:37

Then King Darius wrote ... people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel for He is the living God and He endures forever. Daniel 6:25-26

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Nebuchadnezzar (*Jeremiah*)

Who was Nebuchadnezzar and what was his relationship with the Jews?

Jeremiah 39:1, 4-9

Why did he do this?

Jeremiah 25:4, 7-9

How did the Jews feel about Nebuchadnezzar?

Jeremiah 51:34-35

Did the Jews ever see the vengeance they wanted?

Jeremiah 25:11-14

Judah Exiled in Babylon (*Daniel 1*)

How did Daniel and other Judah nobility become subject to Nebuchadnezzar?

Daniel 1:1-2

Did Nebuchadnezzar have these noble people killed like other kings would?

Daniel 1:3-4

Who were some of these best?

Daniel 1:6-7, 17-20

Nebuchadnezzar Dreams (*Daniel 2*)

How did Daniel become an official in the Babylonian kingdom?

Daniel 2:26-28, 48

What was the purpose of the dream?

Daniel 2:47

How was this purpose further impacted after Nebuchadnezzar tried to execute Daniel's friends?

Daniel 3:28-29

Bible Stories for Adults

Daniel in the Lion's Den

Page 2

Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream (*Daniel 4:1-18*)

What was happening in Babylon when God gave Nebuchadnezzar a second dream?

Daniel 4:4-5

How did Daniel get involved?

Daniel 4:6-9

What was the dream?

Daniel 4:10-14

How did the dream change strangely for its finish?

Daniel 4:15-16

Was Nebuchadnezzar given any reason to think this dream had a special meaning?

Daniel 4:17 (17-18)

The Meaning of the Dream (*Daniel 4:19-26*)

Did the dream have a good or bad meaning?

Daniel 4:19

What was the tree?

Daniel 4:22 (20-22)

What other nation had its greatness compared to an expansive tree?

Hosea 14:1, 5-7

What was meant by the man with the mind of an animal?

Daniel 4:25 (23-25)

Why was the tree stump left in the ground?

Daniel 4:26

The Dream is Fulfilled (*Daniel 4:27-37*)

Was there any way Nebuchadnezzar could prevent this from happening?

Daniel 4:27

Did Nebuchadnezzar turn to God or did the curses of the dream happen?

Daniel 4:28-31, 33 (28-33)

Did Nebuchadnezzar regain his sanity after the prescribed 7 times?

Daniel 4:34a, 36 (34-36)

Did the dream & fulfillment have its desired effect of turning Nebuchadnezzar to God?

Daniel 4:37

How sincere and enthusiastic was Nebuchadnezzar's praise for God?

Daniel 4:1-3

Belshazzar's Party (*Daniel 5:1-6*)

Nebuchadnezzar was followed by three short-reigned kings until Nabonidus took over in a coup

Nabonidus retired to Arabia, left his son Belshazzar in charge

Belshazzar meant *Bel protect the king* - Bel was Babylon's chief god

Did Belshazzar continue in the newfound faithfulness of Nebuchadnezzar?

Daniel 5:1-2, 4

How was Belshazzar suddenly sobered up?

Daniel 5:5-6

Bible Stories for Adults

Daniel in the Lion's Den

Page 3

Just Ask Daniel (*Daniel 5:7-24*)

How did Daniel enter the scene?

Daniel 5:8-12 (7-12)

How did Belshazzar try to influence an interpretation and how did Daniel respond?

Daniel 5:16-17 (13-17)

How did Daniel use the story in chapter 4 to explain Belshazzar's problem?

Daniel 5:18, 20-24 (18-24)

The Meaning of the Words (*Daniel 5:25-31*)

What words were written on the wall?

Daniel 5:25

<u>Word</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Coin/Weight</u>	<u>Ruler Symbolized</u>	
<i>Mene</i>	Numbered	Mina	Nebuchadnezzar	
<i>Tekel</i>	Weighed	Shekel	Evil-Merodach	
<i>Parsin</i>	Divided	Half-Shekel	Nabonidus/Belshazzar	Persia

What judgment on Belshazzar did God pronounce with these words?

Daniel 5:26-28 (26-29)

When was this judgment fulfilled?

Daniel 5:30-31

From historical records:

Persian army conquered Babylon in 539 BC (Judah exiled in 608 BC)

Soldiers temporarily diverted the Euphrates River and crossed dry bed under city walls

Led into city by 2 traitors during annual feast of the gods

Darius means *Lord-King* - Term used like *Caesar* or *Pharaoh*

Used later for Darius Hystaspis (Ezra 4:5) & Darius Codomanus (Nehemiah 12:22)

The Decree of Darius Cyaxares II (*Daniel 6:1-9*)

How did Darius organize his Median empire?

Daniel 6:1-2

How did God bless Daniel's work and what did others think of it?

Daniel 6:3-5

What plan did Daniel's enemies conceive to be sure they could catch Daniel?

Daniel 6:7-9 (6-9)

Daniel's Response to the Decree (*Daniel 6:10-15*)

Did Daniel obey the new law or did he keep on praying?

Daniel 6:10

Was Daniel ever caught illegally praying?

Daniel 6:11-13

How did Darius respond to Daniel's blatant disregard for the law?

Daniel 6:14

Why didn't Darius just cancel the stupid decree?

Daniel 6:15

See also Esther 1:19 and 8:8

Bible Stories for Adults

Daniel in the Lion's Den

Page 4

Daniel in the Lions' Den (*Daniel 6:16-28*)

Was Darius able to find any way to save Daniel?

Daniel 6:16-17

How well did Darius sleep after putting Daniel in the lions' den?

Daniel 6:18-20

What had happened to Daniel in the lions' den?

Daniel 6:21-23

Could it have been that the lions just weren't hungry?

Daniel 6:24

How was God's name glorified through this story?

Daniel 6:25-27

The Rest of the Story

How else was Daniel's life blessed by God?

Daniel 7:1, 16-18 (1-28)

Similar to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2

Daniel 8:1 (1-27)

Daniel 9:1, 21, 25 (1-27)

Daniel 10:1 (10:1-12:13)

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When have I been content and prosperous only to have everything thrown into chaos?
Did I look to God through the situation?
(*Daniel 4; Genesis 50:15-20; Job 1-2; Luke 12:16-21; Acts 8:1-4; Romans 8:28-39*)
2. When has God been faithful to His promises in my life? How have I responded?
(*Daniel 4:33-37; 1 Kings 8:12-21; Psalm 145:13, 21; Acts 2:38-41; 2 Peter 3:8-14*)
3. When have I been caught up with the crowd and found myself easily falling into sin?
(*Daniel 5:1-4; Exodus 32; Matthew 27:1-10; Luke 22:54-62; 23:34; Acts 7:54-8:3; 26:4-5, 9-18*)
4. How do I measure up on God's scales?
(*Daniel 5:27; Isaiah 64:6; Matt. 5:43-48; Mark 6:5-6; Luke 6:37-38; James 1:2-4; Romans 3:9-24*)
5. What are some stupid things I've done or said that I have had to live with?
(*Daniel 6:12-16; Judges 11:32-39; 2 Kings 20:12-19; Matthew 5:33-37*)