

## Lesson 109

# Daniel Serves Faithfully

God speaks through Daniel to earthly kings.

# Studying God's Word

Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Before class write the following coded message on the board: @^? #( #% !^%~\*^\$ .

## Introduction

### Slide #3

Refer to Lesson 108 Theme Poster. In our last lesson, we learned how God showed his power by protecting Daniel's three friends—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. When these three men would not bow down to King Nebuchadnezzar's golden statue, they were thrown into the fiery furnace. But God protected them.

Nebuchadnezzar saw God's power when these men were saved. But he was still prideful and did not honor God the way that he should, so God sent him a scary dream.

What did Nebuchadnezzar dream about? A very tall tree that reached to the heavens and then was chopped down.

Remember that God had given Daniel the special ability to tell the meanings of dreams. So Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar what it meant: The Lord would humble Nebuchadnezzar. He would live like an animal in the fields until he understood that God is in control.

Refer to the Exodus to Malachi Timeline between #28 and #29. We've seen how Daniel served in King Nebuchadnezzar's court. Today, we are going to see how Daniel also served during the reigns of two other kings. These kings ruled while God's people were still captives in Babylon.

Have Code Chart, tape or poster putty, and pencils and paper ready. Refer to the coded message you wrote on the board. Before we begin, let's look at this strange message on the board. Can you read it? No.

### Slide #4

But if I show you the code, you can figure out what it says. Let's see who can be first to decode the message. Hand out paper and pencils. Post the Code Chart on the wall and give students a few minutes to decode it.

Answer: "God is in control." If you brought a prize, award it to the student who finishes first.

Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. What attribute of God tells us he is in control? Sovereign.

In today's lesson, we'll see how God wrote a message on a wall to show that he is sovereign. But no one could read or understand what it meant! Let's see what God's message was and who solved it.

## Daniel Solves God's Message

After Nebuchadnezzar's death, Daniel served under the rule of another king named Belshazzar.

One day, Belshazzar hosted a great feast. A thousand of his rulers were drinking wine and eating together. Then Belshazzar made a bad decision. He commanded that some special golden cups be brought in to the party. These vessels had been taken from God's temple in Jerusalem and were meant to be used only while worshipping God. But the king and his guests were drinking from these special cups while praising false gods.

Pass out the Class Notes to the students.

How do you think God felt about this? Allow answers. He was not pleased to see the holy vessels being used at a feast for false gods.

### Slide #5

Let's look at the Class Notes. We'll unscramble words to complete the sentences as we go through the lesson. Who will read #1 and give the answer? Choose a reader. Temple. Have students complete #1.

### Slide #6

### Slide #7

### Slide #8

### Slide #9

Daniel 5:5-6 & 8

As they were drinking, something very strange happened next. Open your Bibles to the book of Daniel. Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster to help students find it. Let's read Daniel 5:5. Choose a reader.

What suddenly appeared? The fingers of a human hand.

What did the hand do? Wrote on the wall of the king's palace.

How will you answer #2 on the Class Notes? Choose a reader. Hand.

Complete #2.

What would you do if you saw such a thing? Would it scare you?

Allow answers.

Let's see if this mysterious handwriting scared the king. Who will read verse 6? Choose a reader.

How does the Bible describe the king's reaction? His color changed, his thoughts alarmed him, his limbs (legs) gave way, and his knees knocked together.

Belshazzar must have been shocked. Who wants to show us how you think he looked? Allow several students to demonstrate the king's reaction.

Of course, the king wanted to know what the writing said. So, he called all his wise men to him. Let's read verse 8. Choose a reader.

Could the king's wise men interpret or read the writing on the wall? No.

None of the Babylonian wise men could tell the king what the words on the wall meant. It was kind of like looking at a coded message, like the one we solved earlier. But no one knew the code to figure it out! This terrified the king even more. But the queen knew how Daniel had told King

Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of his dreams. So, she told Belshazzar he should call for Daniel.

When Daniel came in, he agreed to read the writing and to tell the king what it meant. But first, Daniel reminded Belshazzar of how God had humbled the mighty Nebuchadnezzar because of his pride, making him eat grass like an animal until he understood that God was in control.

Slide #10

Slide #11

Slide #12

Daniel 5:22, 25–28

Let's read what else Daniel said to the king in chapter 5, verse 22. Choose a reader.

What did Daniel say Belshazzar had not done? Humbled his heart.

Even though Belshazzar knew all about Nebuchadnezzar's punishment, he still refused to humble himself. Instead, he worshipped false gods and put himself above the true God. His sin was the same as Nebuchadnezzar's—pride. And because of his sin, the mysterious hand had appeared to write a message from God.

Let's find out what was written on the wall. Follow along as I read verse 25. Read the verse.

Here are the words. Write each word on the board in a column as you repeat it. Mene, Mene, Tekel, and Parsin. But Belshazzar still didn't know what this message meant, so Daniel explained.

Listen and follow along as I read verses 26–28. After you read each verse, write the meaning next to each word and explain. Mene = numbered. God had numbered the days of Belshazzar's kingdom. It would end very soon. Tekel = weighed. God had judged Belshazzar and found him wanting or lacking. He had failed to live as he should have. Parsin/Peres = divided. Belshazzar's kingdom would be split up and taken over by the Medes and Persians.

What do you think happened right after Daniel explained God's message? Allow guesses.

The king was killed that very night, and Darius the Mede was set over the kingdom. Once again, God showed that he is sovereign (in control) over the kings of earth.

Slide #13

Slide #14

Who will read #3 on the Class Notes? Choose a reader. Message. Complete #3.

And #4? What was the message? Choose a reader. Split up. Complete #4. To answer #5, how soon did the Babylonian kingdom fall? Choose a reader. Night. Complete #5.

Who will read #6 about the king who ruled after Belshazzar? Choose a reader. Darius. Complete #6.

## God Protects Daniel

Because of Daniel's faithfulness, God allowed him to keep serving as an important official under the new king, Darius. Of all the king's officials, Daniel was his favorite.

How do you think some of the other king's men felt about this?  
Allow answers.

Some of the leaders became very jealous of Daniel, and they decided to set up a trap for him. King Darius was tricked by these jealous officials into signing a new law, which said that everyone must pray ONLY to the king. No one was allowed to pray to any other god, including Daniel's God—the only true God. Whoever broke this law would be thrown into a den of lions.

### Slide #15

Let's fill in the blank for #7. Who will read that? Choose a reader. King. Complete #7.

Daniel 6:10

### Slide #16

### Slide #17

Turn to Daniel 6:10. Who would like to read? Choose a reader.

Daniel knew about this law King Darius had signed. He knew that if he prayed to God, he would be disobeying the king's law. But what did Daniel do in the upper chamber (room) of his house? He knelt down and prayed in front of the window, just as he had always done three times a day.

How will you complete #8 in the Class Notes? Choose a reader. Three. Complete #8.

Daniel chose to be obedient to God and pray only to him. As usual, he prayed in front of the window, which made it easy for his enemies to see him. So, while Daniel was praying, officials in the king's court spied on him and told King Darius that Daniel was breaking the law. These men wanted Daniel to get in trouble.

But the king liked Daniel. When he realized that these officials had trapped Daniel, he tried to find a way to keep him from being punished. But the king's officials reminded Darius that he had signed the law and it could not be changed.

### Slide #18

Daniel 6:16–17

Let's read Daniel 6:16–17 to see what the king did. Choose readers.

What did he command? Daniel should be brought and cast into the den of lions.

Darius didn't want to punish Daniel, but it was too late. He had to follow through according to his law. So, Daniel was thrown into a den of hungry lions! A large stone was placed at the door of the den. The king sealed it with his ring to show that nothing could stop Daniel's punishment. Now Daniel was all alone in the lions' den—or was he?

Darius still had hope for Daniel's rescue. Who did he hope would save Daniel? Reread verse 16 if necessary. God. Your God, whom you serve continually.

The king had seen how Daniel had stayed faithful to God—Daniel had never stopped serving him—and Darius hoped that God would save Daniel now.

#### Slide #19

Who will read #9 in the Class Notes? Choose a reader. Lions' den. Complete #9.

Normally, the lions would eat anyone in their den, so King Darius was worried about Daniel. He didn't want him to die. Darius was so upset that he couldn't eat or sleep all night.

#### Slide #20

#### Slide #21

#### Slide #22

Daniel 6:19–23

Let's see what he did the next morning. Listen as I read Daniel 6:19–20. Read the verses.

First thing in the morning, the king got up and ran to the lions' den to check on Daniel. What did he ask Daniel? Has your God been able to deliver you from the lions?

Was Daniel alive? Do you think he answered? Allow guesses.

Who would like to read verses 21–22 to find out? Assign readers.

How did God protect Daniel? God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths.

How do you think the king felt when he heard Daniel speak? Allow answers.

Listen as I read verse 23. Read the verse. The king was very glad that Daniel was alive, and he commanded that Daniel be taken out of the lions' den.

When Daniel came out, was he hurt? No.

Why was no harm found on Daniel? Because he had trusted in God.

#### Slide #23

#### Slide #24

Let's complete the Class Notes. Who will read #10? Choose a reader. Angel. Complete #10.

Show the Lesson Theme Poster. Because Daniel trusted God, he gave Daniel the courage to face the hungry lions in their den and then protected him from all harm. When King Darius saw that Daniel had been saved, he believed that Daniel's God was the true God. He made a law that all people in his kingdom must fear the Lord.

## Application

Daniel's faithfulness is a great example for us today. First, under King Belshazzar, Daniel was not afraid to deliver a hard message of judgment to the king. He told him the meaning of the handwriting on the wall.

But how can we follow this example? Has God asked us to solve coded messages for other people? No.

Not really. But he might ask us to explain some things about God to others. Maybe you have a friend at school, a neighbor, or even a relative who doesn't understand how much God loves them or that God sent Jesus to save us from our sins. No one can understand everything about God, but you can share with others the things that you've learned about him.

We can also follow Daniel's example of obedience. Daniel chose to obey God and pray only to him even when he knew that the king's law said he would be thrown to the lions.

We have many people around us who tell us how to live and what to do—friends, teachers, neighbors, people on TV. But their ideas may not always be right. How can we make sure to obey God? Allow answers. Read and study the Bible so that we will know what God wants us to do. If we don't know what to do, ask parents, pastors, and Bible teachers. Avoid temptation to disobey.

Daniel also spent time in prayer every day—three times a day! Although God does not ask us to pray a certain number of times every day, he does want us to be faithful in our prayers. Making sure we take time with God every day gives us strength to stay obedient to him.

What can we do to be faithful in our prayers? Allow discussion. Make prayer lists, write it on the calendar, always pray at meals or at other regular times, make it a habit, pray all throughout the day, pray with others.

Let's pray together now and ask God to help us be faithful like Daniel.

## Lesson Review

We all learn best with review and repetition! We encourage you to play a lesson review game.

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