

LESSON AIM: God blessed Daniel's life because he stood for righteousness in very difficult situations. In this lesson we want to encourage our students to be like Daniel and stand for what is right.

KEY SCRIPTURES: Daniel 6

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- 1) What happened to Daniel and his 3 friends when they were young teenagers?
- 2) What were the names of his three friends?
- 3) What happened at the end of the story when they didn't bow down to the statue?
- 4) Review last week's verse; have students explain it in their own words.

INTRODUCTION:

- Remember that Daniel came to Babylon as a captive when he was young, but God gave him a place of authority in a foreign land.
- Even now as an older man, God still gives him favor, but Daniel's faith will be tested.
- God still proves that He is with Daniel and does another incredible miracle!
- **Have you ever been tempted to stop doing what is right (reading your Bible, being honest, obeying your parents) because others who are not Christians pressured you? God wants you to be faithful, that is, to do right all the time—even when doing right may get you into trouble. Daniel determined to be faithful to God, no matter what happened.**

LESSON:

Begin with a recap of last week's lesson (as there was a lot that happened!) Babylon was very different than Jerusalem where Daniel and his friends were raised. **In Babylon the people did not worship the God of Israel, they worshipped idols. They did not obey God's laws; they made up their own laws.** But God was with Daniel, even in a strange land. (*Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.* Heb.13:5) and Daniel was determined that he would not defile himself by drinking the king's wine or eating the king's delicacies. God blessed Daniel and his friends for taking a stand for what was right!

In Chapter 6 of Daniel we read about another important stand for righteousness that Daniel took when he was much older, over 80 years old. There is a new ruler who conquered Babylon whose name was King Darius. This King liked Daniel as well, and promoted him to a very important position in the kingdom. He was the chief administrator of the Persian Empire. He had been in captivity for sixty-six years. But there were certain **men who were jealous of Daniel and sought to get him into trouble, but none of them could find any fault or error in Daniel's life. So they devised a plot to trap Daniel.** Knowing that Daniel prayed three times every day, they had Darius sign a decree that no one could worship any god except Darius for thirty days. Whoever disobeyed this law would be thrown into a den of hungry lions. Just like King Nebuchadnezzar, King Darius was a bit prideful and liked the idea of people worshipping Him! He forgot that his friend Daniel worshiped the true God and signed the official decree. But this did not stop Daniel from praying to the true God. **(Now have students turn to Daniel Chapter 6 and read verses 6-28)**

Do you think Daniel was scared and maybe hid in his closet to pray instead of at his window? No way! **God enabled Daniel to be faithful. Daniel wasn't ashamed, and as usual, he prayed at his wide-open window so that people knew he prayed to the one true God. He wasn't afraid of the decree; God was first in his life!** Sure enough, he was spotted praying and he was arrested.

When the King found out that Daniel had been arrested, he was very upset at himself for being so foolish and signing that decree. He realized he had been part of a trap to get Daniel into trouble. Because it was an official decree signed by the King, it could not be changed. Darius reluctantly commanded that Daniel be thrown to the lions, encouraging Daniel to trust his God. (The King could see that Daniel's God was real, for he had seen God's power in Daniel's life. Yet, not knowing God personally, he couldn't trust Him) It seemed to be too late; Daniel was being thrown into a pit a hungry lions that hadn't been fed for days!

The King could not sleep all night, and refused to have music or food. He arose early in the morning and ran to the lion's pit that had been sealed with a stone. He called out to Daniel and had the stone moved away. **(Have the students read Daniel 6:20-23).**

God miraculously protected Daniel again from death! He had shut the lions mouth so that they didn't harm him! He might have sat with them and pet them throughout the night! However the King was furious with those that had tricked him, and he had *them* thrown into the lion's den, and by now the lions were VERY hungry.

God is still looking for 'Daniels' today; boys and girls who would not be ashamed to stand up for Him! **Daniel didn't fear his enemies, he feared God (which means he had respect and reverence for God), and because of this, God honored Daniel and delivered him. Now everybody knew that the God of Daniel was the true God because of the miracle God did!** If none of this would've happened, no one would have known about this mighty God; they would've just seen Daniel hiding in closet praying to another god like they did. God wants us to be bold so that He can do BIG things through us!

Sometimes, even if you are God's child, you may find it hard to be faithful. God will help you to be faithful to Him, no matter how others respond. As you pray at lunchtime, some may make fun of you, but others will notice and begin to think about God's goodness to them. When you share in class about what you believe in God, some may argue with you, but some may listen to what you say and change the way they think about God. As you faithfully go to church each Sunday, some of your family might think you are silly for going, but some day someone in your family might choose to go with you and begin to learn about God, too. Even if no one responds kindly toward you, God will help you to be steadfast and faithful to Him. God even promises to reward your faithfulness in heaven. (Rev 2:10) Daniel remained faithful to God even in his desperate situation.

Let's pray and ask God how we can be like Daniel; ask God to give you favor with the people of authority in your life, ask God to give you the courage to take a stand for Him!

MEMORY VERSE:

(Even year):

"...For He is the living God, and steadfast forever..." Daniel 6:26

(Odd year)

"...Lord God, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You." Jeremiah 32:17

