



CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

SEPTEMBER 05 2020

deliverance

Scripture Story: Daniel 6.

Commentary: *Prophets and Kings (or Royalty and Ruin)*, chapter 44.

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

Darius the Mede became king of Babylon sometime after the Babylonians were overthrown by the Medo-Persians. Darius immediately divided the kingdom into provinces—each governed by a prince. There were 120 princes in all, and three governors were set over them. Daniel was the first of the three governors selected. And Daniel had a more “excellent spirit” than all the others. For this reason, King Darius thought to put Daniel in charge of the whole kingdom.

We get a glimpse of Daniel’s excellent spirit in the very beginning of his exile from Jerusalem. As a very young man, Daniel showed his loyalty to God over man by choosing, along with his three companions, not to eat from King Nebuchadnezzar’s table, which was lavish with impure and unhealthful food and drink. Instead, Daniel asked for the natural food that God had intended for mankind to eat and water to drink. As a result Daniel and his friends were stronger and in better health than those who ate from the king’s table, and the Lord blessed them with “knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom.”

Daniel continued to show integrity throughout his life and remained faithful to God. Later, when he heard of the decree that no one in the kingdom was to pray to anyone except King Darius for 30 days, Daniel’s trust in God was not shaken. Even in the face of death, he continued to remain faithful in prayer to his God—the God of heaven. The Lord honored Daniel’s faithfulness, and delivered him from the hand of his enemies.

The teacher should discuss the importance of

maintaining a consistent prayer life, which includes talking to the Lord, as well as listening to His Spirit speak to the heart. It is this unceasing two-way communication with the Father that will allow us to develop an “excellent spirit”—one that is obedient to the Lord in the face of all difficulties and trying experiences.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Understand the importance of being loyal to God. (*Know*)
- Trust that the Lord will keep His promises to help us in difficult circumstances. (*Feel*)
- Choose to show their love for God by obeying His Word. (*Respond*)

III. EXPLORE

- Prayer
- Integrity
- Emotions
- Persecution

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the *What Do You Think?* section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Have the students divide into small groups of two or three. Each group will discuss the scenarios given in the *What Do You Think?* section, and write down the

group's responses. After a few minutes let each group take a turn sharing their responses with the class. If the class is not large enough to divide into groups, give class members a few minutes to reflect on the *What Do You Think?* section and write down their individual answers. Then ask two or three people to share their responses with the class.

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

The story is told of a girl who lost her library book. She searched everywhere but could not find it. "Did you pray about it?" her mother asked. "No," she replied, but thought to herself, *I don't think God cares about lost library books*. She began to clean her room, hoping the book would show up. She remembered the discussion in her Sabbath School class about the universe and how powerful God is. The teacher talked about the speed of light, and said that it would take 20 billion years for man to travel across the whole universe. Sarah thought, *Since God is in control of the universe and its laws, maybe He can help me find my book*.

Sarah searched the rest of the house but still could not find the library book. "Have you asked God to help you?" her mother asked again, with a serious look on her face. "The Lord cares, even about little things," she told Sarah. "The Bible tells us that He knows how many hairs are on our heads. He loves you 10 million billion times more than you can imagine. Ask for His help, and maybe the book will show up where you least expect it." Sarah went to her room and prayed, "Lord, if You are not too busy, please help me find my book."

Later that evening, Sarah went to her little sister's room to read her a bedtime story. After the story, Sarah tucked her sister in, and there under the covers was Sarah's library book.—Adapted from Jerry D. Thomas, "Ten Million Billion," *Great Stories for Kids*, book 4, (Pacific Press Publishing Association), p. 30

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

God does care about little things. He cares enough to help us with small problems as well as bigger problems. The Lord also cares about the choices we make. Throughout our lives we are faced with choices—

choices that shape our characters, choices that determine what our futures will be. Daniel's choices led him to a position of recognition and authority. Even more than that, Daniel's choices led him into a trusting relationship with God. Not only did Daniel trust in the Lord, but the Lord could count on Daniel. Daniel was obedient even in the face of death, and the Lord delivered him from death.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

- What was it about Daniel that impressed King Darius? Name some specific characteristics that might cause the king to trust Daniel to rule the whole kingdom?
- How do you think Daniel responded to the king's recognition?
- Even though Daniel was a Hebrew captive in a foreign land, he was given a high position in the kingdom. What does this teach us about being faithful to God?
- What was the motivation of the other princes and governors who wanted to bring an accusation against Daniel?
- Think of some life choices we must make that will determine our loyalty to God or to man. Share with the class.

Use the following as more teachable passages that relate to today's story: Joshua 24:15; Psalm 50:15; Daniel 6:16; Matthew 22:37; John 15:14.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

1. Daniel was an exile from Jerusalem. As we read the first chapter of Daniel we learn that he was one of those who had been taken captive when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, invaded Jerusalem. It was somewhere around 70 years later that he was faced with the decision to obey God or to be thrown into the den of lions. Review and discuss the history of the Babylonian captivity of the Hebrews and subsequent events in the life of Daniel that led up to the lions' den. (*Note: use the following texts to help the class understand the 70-year prophecy of Jeremiah. Around the time that Daniel was*

thrown into the lions' den, the Hebrews were at the end of the 70 years: 2 Chronicles 36:20, 21; Jeremiah 25:11, 12; 29:10; Daniel 5:30, 31; 6:1-5; 9:1, 2.)

2. Have the class compare and discuss Daniel's story with the story of Joseph. What are the similarities? (See *Genesis 37:18-20, 28; 39:1-23.*)
3. We are in spiritual bondage. Everyone in the human race is taken captive at birth. And we are faced with choices—to eat at the king's table or eat the food God has given, to worship the gods of this world or honor the God of heaven, to give in to temptation or obey the Word of God. Discuss with the class the similarities between Daniel's experience and our experience as Christians living in a sinful world that is not our home.
4. Each of the kings of Babylon had great respect for Daniel and trusted him. They knew of his loyalty to his God, and witnessed the power of God in his life. (See *Daniel 4:18; 5:11-14; 6:3.*) King Darius saw an "excellent spirit" in Daniel. Darius not only trusted Daniel, because he was upright and honest, but he admired Daniel as well. Show how loyalty to God can also gain the respect of those who do not know God. Discuss with the class.
5. Even though Daniel had done nothing wrong, the princes of the kingdom set out to find fault in him. When they could find nothing to



Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

Role-Playing

Role-playing is an effective teaching tool. Divide the class into two groups. Give each group a few minutes to discuss the story of Daniel in the lions' den. Then have each group role-play the story using their school as the setting, and using disciplinary actions for someone who may have broken an "unfair" school rule in an effort to "do the right thing."

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accuse him of, they made something up. We are sometimes faced with situations where we are treated unfairly or accused wrongly. And in many cases there is nothing we can humanly do to defend ourselves, as in the case of Daniel and Joseph and others in the Bible. What does this teach us about how unreliable it is to trust in man? How should we relate to those who treat us wrongly? Go over the *Out of the Story* section in the student's lesson with the class.

6. Daniel knew the importance of prayer. Each

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Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Key Text**

Invite the students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.

- **Flashlight**

*Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week's story found in the book *Prophets and Kings*. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from *Out of the Story*.*

- **Punch Lines**

Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week's story. Have them share the verse that speaks most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.

- **Further Insight**

Ask them how the quotes in Further Insight convey the point of the story in this lesson.

day he looked toward Jerusalem and prayed to the God of heaven (Daniel 6:10). By having a consistent prayer life, he developed a close friendship with God. He knew he could trust the Lord in every situation. First Thessalonians 5:17 tells us to “pray without ceasing” (KJV). In your own words describe what this means.

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Ask class members to stand and each person to move to another seat. Then ask two people to switch seats. Ask two different people to switch seats. Now ask everyone to stand and face the opposite direction. Next, have everyone face the front again. Ask someone in the class to describe what they did in this activity. Talk about changes. Everything in life changes, but the

Lord remains the same. His Word stands forever and His promises are sure. The Lord also wants to depend on us to remain the same, to remain loyal to Him, even when we are faced with changes or difficult circumstances.

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

The Bible says to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37, NKJV). Love is an action word. In 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 we find a list of some of the actions of love. Our love for God can be seen in what we say and do. When we love others, when we treat others with kindness, we are also showing our love for God. But the greatest test of our love for the Lord is our obedience. Remember the words of Jesus: “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15, NKJV). Determine with all your heart to show your love for the Lord by obeying God rather than man.



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty and Ruin*), chapter 44.

*A special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings* has been created by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net.