

Daniel Week 1

Point to Emphasize: We need to be diligent to learn new things while we are young.

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 1

Memory Verse: Also it is not good for a person to be without knowledge,...
(Proverbs 19:2a)

Story Sample:

God's people, the children of Israel had lived in the good land of Canaan for quite some time. They had built the temple (God's house) and they were worshipping and serving God. There was another country far away called Babylon. The king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, went to war against the Israelites. He won the battle and took some of the children of Israel as captives. He took them out of Canaan and brought them to his country. This place, Babylon, was a land full of idols. No one there worshipped the true and living God. The people in Babylon made idols from wood and stone and worshipped them instead of worshipping the true God.

Nebuchadnezzar wanted some special young men for his captives. He wanted them to learn everything about the ways and language of his country. He wanted the very best of the children of Israel, the ones who were the tops in every way. They had to be from a royal family, with no defect, and also able to learn many things.

To be royal meant that you had parents or aunts and uncles who were rulers of the people. That's like saying you had to be a prince, like in England, or the President's child in order to qualify. To have no defect meant that you were perfect in every way, even how you looked. I don't think I would have qualified at all!

And then they had to be able to learn many things. They not only had to be smart, they had to be willing to learn.

What kinds of things do we need to learn? *[Let them tell you some things and make a list or picture gram on the board]* Yes, we can learn to ride a bike, play the piano or another instrument, write our name, learn our phone number, speak another language, and jump rope. When we get older, we'll want to go to college, so there are a lot of things we need to learn for that.

How many times do you have to do something before you learn it? It takes most of us many times of practicing something before we learn it well. *[Use example of learning to ride a bike.]* It is easy to give up when you are learning something new. It is easy to give up and do something that is easier instead. So to be able to learn something you must keep doing it over and over and over again until you learn it. Sometimes when we are learning we say, "Oh, this is too hard. I just want to play a computer game. I don't want to do this math."

The Bible speaks of four young men who were just the kind of young men Nebuchadnezzar wanted. Daniel and his three companions (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah) were some of the children of Israel who had been captured and brought out of Canaan. They gave themselves to learn all kinds of things. Daniel had to learn another language, the language of the Chaldeans. And that is how we should be. It would be easy to say, "It is too hard. I just won't try." But if we practice over and over and over again you will be surprised how well you can learn something new. So to learn something new or something hard we must be diligent.

[End with the children giving examples of how they can be diligent in many ways.]

Daniel Week 2

Point to Emphasize: We should follow our parents' way, because they take God's way.

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 1

Memory Verse: Train up a child according to the way he should go; Even when he is old, he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)

Story Sample

Do you remember what we learned about last week? That's right, we learned about Daniel and his three friends. Remember how the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, went to war against the children of Israel? He won the battle, the children of Israel became his captives, and he brought them to where his palace was in Chaldea. Chaldea was a land full of idols. No one there worshipped the true and living God. The people in Chaldea made idols from wood and stone and bowed down to and thanked and praised them instead of worshipping the true God.

Now you can see that the situation did not look very good for God and for His people. The children of Israel were captive in Babylon and there was no more worship to God. But God can never be defeated. He will always have a way, and He will always have some who worship Him as the true and living God.

Remember, last week we learned that Daniel and his three companions —Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah— were young people who had been captured and brought out of Canaan. They had been brought into the king's palace because they were of royal seed, had no defect, and were very bright and able to learn many things. Growing up in the king's palace they were expected to eat food that had been offered to idols! What were they to do? They would get into trouble if they did not eat it. But how could God's people eat food that had been offered to idols? God had told His people that they should have nothing to do with idols for only He is God.

A top servant of the king also changed their names. Their Israelite names —Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah— showed that they belonged to God. The new names were Chaldean names and had nothing to do with God. What would they do?

Now, before Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were brought to the king's palace, they lived in Canaan with all God's people. As boys growing up in Canaan, did they live with a king in a palace? No, they lived with a family. These were boys growing up in Israelite families. At home in Canaan they lived with their dad, mom, brothers and sisters. Their family was a part of the children of Israel who knew that they were to worship the true and living God. These boys did exactly what their parents did. They knew about Jehovah. They saw their dad and mom worshipping Him. They simply followed what their parents did. Their parents taught them to read God's Word and to follow God. Their parents taught them that as God's people they should not have anything to do with idols. This was the way their parents lived and this was their family's

way. And as these boys were growing up they learned to go along with their parents' way. These four boys knew that they were special. They were in a family who thanked and praised the true and living God.

But now these four were not with their families. They had been taken to the king of Babylon's palace. These four were on their own. And they were surrounded with people who did not know or worship the true God. What would they do? Would they take their parents' way, which was God's way, even though their mom and dad were not around to check on them? Or would they eat the food that had been offered to idols and use the names that were connected to idols?

Well, these boys decided to take their parent's way, God's way.

Sometimes we are in the same spot as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Our dad and mom do certain things because they love God and follow Him. And in our families they tell us about God and about following Him as they do. *[Insert a personal story about choosing to follow God's way even when others are not.]*

Next week we will find out how these four boys took their parents' way, God's way.

Daniel Week 3

Point to Emphasize: We can refuse to do things we know are not right and can do it in a proper way.

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 1

Memory Verse: Only, fear Jehovah and serve Him in truth with all your heart, for consider what great things He has done for you. (1 Samuel 12:24)

Story Sample

Do you remember who we have been talking about the last few weeks? That's right. Daniel and his three companions. Can you tell me all four of their names? (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah) Last week we learned that the Bible tells us that Daniel made a big decision regarding the food that had been offered to idols. He decided in his heart to follow his parents' way and not eat this food. But how could they get out of this? What were they to do? Daniel had no way to get any other kind of food, and they would get into trouble if they did not eat it.

It was a top servant of the king who decided what food he would be given to eat. So Daniel told this top servant that he did not want to eat the food offered to the idols. The servant was afraid that if Daniel did not eat the food he would begin to look weak and sickly. Then the king would be very angry with the servant and severely punish him.

However, there was a lower servant, a steward, who came and brought the food. He was like a waiter at a restaurant, bringing the food from the kitchen to the table.

READ Dan.1:12

Then Daniel said to the steward, Please test your servants for ten days, and let vegetables be given to us to eat and water to drink.

So the steward went along with Daniel's request and for ten days Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were given only vegetables and water. After ten days the top servant looked them over. And what do you think he saw? He found that they looked healthier than all the others who had been eating the food offered to idols. So the steward agreed that from then on these four would be given vegetables and water. They would not be given any food offered to idols.

WOW! Isn't God great?!

Daniel was young yet he decided in his heart to take the way he had learned from his parents and have nothing to do with idols. Then God gave him a way to eat healthy foods and look so healthy. Now, did you notice how Daniel talked to that steward? Did he rudely say, "I want you to stop giving me food offered to idols! I only want vegetables and water". Is this the way he spoke? NO! He said "Please". Did you hear

that word when I read the verse from the Bible? Let me read it again. (*Read verse again*)

Daniel said "Please". Not only did Daniel make the best decision to take his parents' way of not having anything to do with idols, he also knew how to properly ask for something. Now if we were to listen to all the asking that has happened this morning, would we hear the word "Please"? Or would we just hear, "Can I ___," or "Can you get me the verse card?", or "I want to sit by ___". How about when you were at home this morning? Did you use the word "please" at all?

Daniel was really a fine boy. He made a big decision for God and he used the little word "please". Maybe this morning we should all practice being like Daniel and say "please".

Now who made the decision not to eat the food offered to idols? (*Daniel*) And who talked with the top steward, using the word "please"? (*Daniel*) And who ate the vegetables and water for ten days? (*Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah*). WOW! Isn't that good? Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah stuck together. They were friends who took God's way, their parents' way, together. Isn't it good that God gave Daniel such friends?

[For the younger children the storyteller could emphasize speaking in a proper way, saying "please". For the older children the storyteller could emphasize that God blessed Daniel and his companions for taking His way. Don't get caught up in vegetarianism.]

Daniel Week 4

Point to Emphasize: It is important to have the right companions, the ones that will help you follow God and follow your parents' way

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 2

Memory Verse: For I have kept the ways of Jehovah and have not acted wickedly by turning away from my God. (2 Samuel 22:22)

Story Sample

From these past weeks we can see that Daniel and his companions were very proper boys. God gave Daniel and his three companions knowledge and insight in all learning and wisdom. To Daniel especially, God gave him the understanding with all visions and dreams. Today, we will continue with the story of Daniel, and we will see how he handled a hard situation. We don't wait until we are older to know how to do things. The things you learn when you are young can guard and protect you as you get older.

Who can tell me the name of the king in Babylon? (*Nebuchadnezzar*) Well, their trouble all began when Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. He had a dream and it really troubled him. It was all he could think about! He couldn't even sleep, he thought about it so much. He wanted to know what this dream meant. So he called for the wise men and anyone that he thought may be able to interpret his dream. These were the wisest men in Babylon, or so he thought! But listen to this, He wanted them to tell him not only what the dream meant, he wanted them to tell him what it was that he dreamed! This is **IMPOSSIBLE** for man to do!

None of these men could tell him his dream. They even tried to get Nebuchadnezzar to tell them the dream so that they could make up a meaning for it, but he wouldn't tell them. What could they do if he wouldn't even tell them his dream? No one could tell him his dream. Boy, the king got angry! He was furious! He was so upset he decided to destroy all the wise men in Babylon.

Now, it isn't always good to decide something when you're angry, is it? Because when you do, a lot of times you do something foolish, something that can hurt yourself as much as it hurts the one you are mad at. Do you think it would have been smart to get rid of **ALL** the wise men? Who would Nebuchadnezzar go to in the future if he needed advice? Yes, it's really better not to do or say anything when you're angry. [*Use a personal example of a time you got angry and it caused you to do something foolish*]

And who were some of these wise men he was angry with? Yes! – Daniel and Hananiah and Mishael and Azariah were among the wise men. So now they were in real danger. They were in danger of being destroyed. Daniel was the first to hear of their trouble.) What do you think he did when he found out? Did he decide, "I'll run away right now and get to safety by myself"? No! Did he decide, "I'll go to Nebuchadnezzar right now and I'll tell him not to be so upset"? No! He went to his companions. Can you name

them? He must have known he couldn't solve this problem all by himself – he needed help! Not just from anybody, but from someone that would help him seek God and follow what he learned from his parents when he was growing up. *[Insert your own story telling about how you didn't run away from a problem, but sought help from someone you knew would help you follow God and follow your parents' way.]*

So it's good to go to those you can trust, isn't it? And that's just what Daniel did. He went to his companions and told them what was happening. And because they had been raised in families that trusted God, they knew they needed to pray. So they did! And do you know what happened after they prayed?

Well, you'll just have to come back to find out!

**Daniel
Week 5**

Review

This week is a review of the previous four weeks. Mostly, it has to do with Daniel chapter one, so stress that chapter especially. Try to have the children involved in the review as much as possible. As an idea, divide them into four teams and have each team review one week for 15-20 minutes. Then present it to the others at the end of the time.

Daniel Week 6

Point to Emphasize: We can talk to God, to tell Him our problems and to thank Him

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 2

Memory Verse: Give thanks to Jehovah, for He is good, for His lovingkindness is forever;
(1 Chronicles 16:34)

Story Sample

King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. He had a dream, and it really bothered him. It was all he could think about! He couldn't even sleep, he thought about it so much. He wanted to know what this dream meant. He called for the wise men and anyone that he thought may be able to interpret his dream. These were the wisest men in Babylon, or so he thought! But listen to this, he wanted them to tell him not only what the dream meant, but he wanted them to tell him what it was that he dreamed.

None of these men could tell him. They even tried to get him to tell them the dream so that they could make up a meaning for it, but he wouldn't tell them. What could they do if he wouldn't even tell them his dream? No one could tell him his dream. Nebuchadnezzar got angry! He was so angry, he decided to destroy **all** the wise men in Babylon.

That meant that Daniel and Hananiah and Mishael and Azariah were in danger of being killed. Daniel was the first to hear of their trouble. He went to his companions and told them what was happening. And because they had been raised in families that trusted God, they knew they needed to pray.

Daniel and his companions knew they could never find an answer to their problem by themselves. This is part of being wise – to know that you can't solve all your problems by yourself. The young men were wise enough to know that only God could help them out of this trouble! And do you know what happened? God answered their prayers! He gave Daniel the answer by showing him Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

So what do you think Daniel did first after he saw this dream? Did he go to Nebuchadnezzar and brag that he was so smart? No! He thanked God! He was so grateful to God for this answer to prayer!

Do you ever thank God? What are some of the things you thank God for? *[Make a list on the board as the children answer – food, parents, home, clothing, toys, friends, etc.]* Yes, we have a lot we can thank Him for, don't we? Sometimes we forget to thank God for all we have. It's good to have a time every day when we can thank God. It's even good to have a time with your whole family when you can thank Him together. Maybe you could do it when you say your verses each day.

Anyway, Daniel thanked God first. Then Daniel went to the king's commander, who had been appointed to destroy all the wise men. He asked him not to kill all the wise men, because he had the answer to the king's dream. He asked if he could go before the king to tell him about his dream. So next week we'll find out what happens when Daniel goes to the king.

Daniel Week 7

Point to Emphasize: We should be straightforward and exact in our speaking

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 2

Memory Verse: ...I speak the truth; I do not lie,... (I Timothy 2:7b)

Story Sample

Last week we saw that King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, and he wanted to know what this dream meant. So he called for all of his wise men to come help him. But no one could tell him. Nebuchadnezzar was so angry he decided to destroy all the wise men in Babylon.

This put Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah in real danger of being killed. These four companions decided to pray. And God answered their prayers! He gave Daniel the answer by showing him Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Do you remember what Daniel did next? He thanked God for answering his prayer!

Then Daniel went to the king's commander who had been appointed to destroy all the wise men. He asked if he could go before the king to tell him about his dream. The king asked Daniel if he could tell him the dream. Daniel answered the king in a very straightforward way. He didn't try to speak to please the king. He told him honestly that no man could have an answer for the king. Only God could reveal this dream. And because of their prayer, God had revealed the dream to Daniel.

So Daniel proceeded to tell the king about his dream. He was very exact, repeating the details of the dream exactly as God had revealed it to him. And then he told the king what it meant.

Have you ever tried to repeat a story to someone? Do you always get all the details right? It's hard, isn't it? Let's try it. I'm going to whisper to one of you what it was that the king saw in his dream, and you pass it on to the person next to you. *[Whisper to the first one in the front row, "He saw an image of gold, silver, bronze, iron, and clay." Have them pass it on all the way to the back row, then have the last one stand up and repeat it.]*

So it's hard to be exact, isn't it? Daniel was very exact, so he was just the right one to tell Nebuchadnezzar the dream. And then Daniel continued on to tell him what the dream meant. After the king heard all that Daniel had to say, he fell on his face and worshipped Daniel. Can you believe it? The king was actually worshipping one of his people. This proud man was really humbled, wasn't he? He told Daniel, "It is certain that your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a Revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery."

So King Nebuchadnezzar rewarded Daniel with gifts and made him ruler over all of Babylon and chief of all the wise men of Babylon. And Daniel's three friends became administrators of Babylon. So you see, their faithfulness to pray and live according to God's way eventually brought them blessing. They had started out in fear of being killed and ended up responsible men in Babylon. Isn't God faithful to His people?!

Daniel Week 8

Point to Emphasize: We need to apply ourselves to learn and get the best education that we can.

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 3

Memory Verse: Wise men treasure up knowledge,...(Proverbs 10:14a)

Story Sample

Now let's go back to where everything started with Daniel and his three companions. They all started in Canaan. These four boys grew up in families who knew God and knew God's ways. Then the king of Babylon came and in a war defeated the children of Israel and took some captives. He brought the best young ones back to his palace. Even as children these four were known for being willing to learn new things and for being able to learn difficult things.

Now these four did not stay young boys. Every year they were growing up. They became young men. And as young men they all had jobs. Now, what kind of job do you think they might get? Well, they got very good jobs, very important jobs. They became high officials. Why? Because they studied hard, learned different languages, did not stop with just learning the easy things, and so God blessed them.

Did you know that to speak, read, and write several languages takes a lot of years of study? I may be able to say "Hello" in English, "Hola" in Spanish and "Ne how mah" in Chinese. *[Show greetings in 3-4 languages]* That is easy. But for me to read a book in English, read a book in Spanish, or read a book in Chinese takes many years of study. *[Show a whole page in different languages.]* It is really good for us to learn other languages. Some of us speak Spanish in our home and some of us speak Chinese in our home, but are we going to learn to read it and write it, too? That takes study. I hope you would all study to learn to speak, read, and write another language.

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah became young men. And they got very important jobs from the king of Babylon. The king made Daniel the ruler over the province of Babylon, and he made him the chief over all the wise men in Babylon. Daniel remained living in the king's palace. Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were appointed to the administration of the province of Babylon.

For example, it's like at your school. At school you have kids, teachers, a principal and sometimes a vice principal. Now, who runs the school? Do kids? No! Do teachers? No! The principal and the vice principal run the school. They are the administrators. So, in the same way Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah ran the province of Babylon. And Daniel was the ruler over them. Those were very important jobs. What kind of education does a principal who runs a school need? *[List this on the board: First they go to elementary school, then jr. high, high school, and then 4 years of college. After 4 years of college they still need a few more years of college before they can be a principal.]* You have to

know a lot to be a principal. Well, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah did not just run a school. They ran the whole province of Babylon. They had to know a lot about many things. They needed many years in school. They needed a very good education. We need one, too. We all need to do our best in school, study hard, and go on to college. We should be learners our whole lives. Our usefulness to the Lord depends upon how willing we are to learn.

Even though Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah all had important jobs, they were still under King Nebuchadnezzar. He was the ruler over all of Babylon and what he said was the law. Everyone did what the king said. He was the ruler over the whole country. He had the top authority over everyone.

Daniel Week 9

Point to Emphasize: We should not be proud and make a show of ourselves to others.

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 3

Memory Verse: When pride comes, then comes dishonor; but wisdom is with the humble. (Proverbs 11:2)

Story Sample

Let's go back to where everything started with Daniel and his three companions. They all started in Canaan. Then the king of Babylon came and in a war defeated the children of Israel and took some captives. He brought the best young ones back to his palace.

As these four grew up in the palace, they were excellent young people. Eventually the king gave them very important jobs. They became high officials. Why? Because they studied hard, learned different languages, and did not stop with just learning the easy things. And God blessed them.

Now King Nebuchadnezzar was a very proud man. He wanted to show off his wealth and his high position. He wanted everyone to know how important he was. What a difference there was between King Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah! The king was surely smart, had an important job and should be respected by others (*make a list of his virtues and accomplishments i.e. smart, worked hard, studied hard, had important job*). Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were like the king in these ways. But then the king was very proud. He wanted to make sure that everyone knew how smart and how important he was. He wanted to make a big show for himself. He wanted to brag about all his accomplishments, his wealth and his high position. He wanted to make sure that everyone thought he was the best. He lifted himself up above all others. He did not acknowledge that God had made him king. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah did not make a show. They were not so proud. They were smart and had very important jobs, but they knew that this was from God. So they did not make a show to others. They were happy to do the best they could.

Now, when you do your best and get 100% on a spelling or math test that is really good. I'm always happy to see someone's test when there is 100% on it. Your mom and dad are happy to see that, too. And you feel good inside that you studied and did your best and made a good grade. That is excellent! But what if someone gets 100% and then sees that someone else missed a lot of spelling words? What if the one with 100% says, "Ha,ha,ha. I did better than you did. I am smarter than you are." This is to make a kind of show and to put others down. This is being too proud.

King Nebuchadnezzar wanted everyone to know how great he was. So he made a huge image of gold. This image was a huge statue with a head, body, arms and legs. It was as high as a nine-story building (90 feet) and was 9 feet across. (*show picture of a 9 story building*) It could not fit in a room so the king had it placed on a large piece of

ground. It is like setting up a huge statue in a park. He set up this image in the plain of Dura. You could see this huge image for miles. Now this image was made of gold. Anything made of gold was very expensive. People made things that were valuable out of gold. So the king spent a lot of riches to make this image, and he thought it was so important. He expected everyone to come to the plain of Dura and fall down to worship that image. If everyone did that it would make the king seem very important!

The king planned a big celebration. He was going to have all of the top officials and the most important people come to a dedication of this image. And everyone would fall down and worship the image that he had made. Everyone would then know how great a king Nebuchadnezzar was.

Nebuchadnezzar sent his servants out to let each high official and rich person know about this dedication. There was a huge crowd gathered there. And they were given instructions that when the music played everyone would fall down and worship this golden image. To disobey these instructions was serious! Remember, King Nebuchadnezzar was the ruler over all of Babylon. What he said was law. And Nebuchadnezzar said that whoever did not bow down when the music played would be thrown into the blazing furnace.

So, the day came. There were people there ready to play the instruments: horns, flutes, lyres, triogs, harps, bagpipes...many instruments. And when the music played they would all bow down and worship the golden image. To do this would be to worship an idol, which was against God's commandment. King Nebuchadnezzar did not care about God's commandment. He felt that he was the highest and most important person on earth. He was letting them all know that there was no one above him.

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were also invited to this celebration because they were important people. But do you think that they would bow down to this idol? We'll have to wait and see!

**Daniel
Week 10**

Review

This week is a review of the previous four weeks. As an idea, invite one of the families of the children in your group to come review the stories about Daniel. This will need to be done ahead of time. Give the family a set of the stories and ask them to present the stories, with each member of the family presenting one part.

Daniel Week 11

Point to Emphasize: We should always trust in God

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 3

Memory Verse: In God do I trust; I will not be afraid. / What can man do to me?
(Psalms 56:11)

Story Sample

King Nebuchadnezzar was a very proud man. He wanted to show off his wealth and his high position. He wanted everyone to know how important he was. So he made a huge image of gold. And he called all of the important men of Babylon together. He commanded that when the music played everyone would bow down and worship that golden idol. Anyone who did not would be thrown into the blazing furnace.

Now where were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah? The three of them were standing in that crowd. Daniel was not there. Maybe he stayed away so he could pray to God about the awful thing that the king was doing.

So the music played and everyone fell down and worshipped the image. Do you think Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah fell down? *[Ask a child.]* That is right! Those three did **not** do it. They were God's people, and they would not worship anything but God Himself.

Now there were some men in the crowd looking around. They wanted to be able to report anyone who did not follow the king's orders. If they could report it to the king, it would make them look like they were loyal to the king. Then the king would give them good jobs and even trust them. These men were jealous that the king had given top jobs to the Jews.

Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were Jews. So the men were looking to see what these three would do. And as the music played they saw that Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah did not fall down. Right away they went to report this to the king. They spoke against them in a way that made it seem that they were not loyal to the king, maybe that they were even against the king. But actually, they did not worship the image because they were for God.

Oh, King Nebuchadnezzar was so angry to hear that report! He was furious. He was in a rage. And when someone is this angry they often do things that are harmful to others. So he brought the three before him. He told them that he would have the music played again, but if they did not fall down, then he would throw them into the blazing furnace.

Then Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were very bold to speak to the king. They told the king that the God they served was able to deliver them and that He would deliver them. And even if God did not deliver them they would not worship the king's image nor serve

his gods. At this, the king commanded that the furnace be made SEVEN times hotter. He had his army men bind them up and throw them into the blazing furnace.

When the king looked into the furnace, he stood up and was astonished at what he saw. They had thrown three men into the fire all bound up. But the king saw four men loose and walking. I think God was there with them!

When they came out all the important men who were there saw that the fire had not burned these three. Not even the hair on their heads was singed nor did they smell of smoke! Because of this, the king blessed the God of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. And he made a decree that no one should say anything against their God because no other god could deliver men from the blazing furnace in this way. King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished at the care that God gave to these young men. You should know that God cares for us.

Daniel Week 12

Point to emphasize: We should honor what belongs to God

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 5

Memory Verse: You shall have no other gods before Me. (Deuteronomy 5:7)

Story Sample

After King Nebuchadnezzar, there was a king named Belshazzar. And this king decided to have a huge feast. Do you sometimes have a feast at your house? How many is the very most you've ever had your home for a feast? *[let 2-3 answer]* Well, that's big, but nothing like Belshazzar's feast. Do you know how many he invited? He invited **1000** people. That was HUGE. Yes, Belshazzar ended up drinking too much wine.

And because he was drunk and proud, Belshazzar did a very evil thing. He commanded his men to bring the vessels that King Nebuchadnezzar took from God's temple in Jerusalem so that they could drink from them at this feast. So, who did they really belong to? Yes, God! And do you think God would have wanted these vessels to be used in this way? No!

All of the guests at the feast drank wine from these vessels. And then they did something that was an insult to God. They began to praise the other gods. Remember what God said to the children of Israel on the mountain in the wilderness? He said, "You shall worship no other gods before Me." Only the one true God is to be worshipped! So this was a real insult to God, and He wanted Belshazzar to know.

In the midst of all this evil King Belshazzar looked across the room and saw only the fingers of a hand, writing on the wall of the palace. And the hand wrote these words: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. *(write on the board – you will explain the meaning in a future story so don't let the children get distracted by this)* God was writing a HUGE warning. God wanted to make sure that everyone got the point. What they were doing was so evil and insulting to God that His finger came to write a huge sign no one could miss.

When I was in school, one day my teacher needed to leave the room for a few minutes. She warned us not to play around while she was gone. As soon as she left, someone started throwing wadded up paper across the room. Before you knew it, EVERYONE was doing the same thing. When my teacher came back, we didn't see her, but she was very angry. She took a ruler and slammed it on a student's desk. We were so frightened! We were worried what she would do with us.

What do you think Belshazzar did when he saw this warning? He was frightened! And he really did have something to be worried about. Remember, God was warning him.

So Belshazzar decided to do something. He needed to know what this message on the wall meant. So he called for all the wise men to interpret the writing. He even promised to reward them. He would give them a purple robe and gold chain and allow them to be third ruler in the kingdom if they could tell him what the message meant. Does this sound familiar to you? Remember King Nebuchadnezzar, when he had his dreams? He did the same thing. He called for all the wise men to tell him his dream. Were they able to tell him? No! And now were these men able to tell King Belshazzar what the writing meant? No! Even the wisest men could not tell him.

What would King Belshazzar do?

Daniel Week 13

Point to Emphasize: 1) Mothers care for us and are very wise and 2) The kind of person we are will be remembered by others.

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 5

Memory Verse: Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing in the Lord. (Colossians 3:20)

Story ample

Last week we learned about King Belshazzar. He was the king after Nebuchadnezzar. Who can tell us the amazing thing that happened to him? *[Let children answer: when Belshazzar had a huge feast and used the vessels that were taken from the temple in Jerusalem, he looked across the room and saw only the fingers of a hand writing on the wall of the palace. The hand wrote these words: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.]* God was giving Belshazzar a strong warning. Belshazzar wanted to know what this message on the wall meant. But, even the wisest men could not help him.

Now there was a lot of talking going on about this strange happening. You all know how it is when something out of the ordinary happens – you want to talk about it, right? And sometimes, the more you talk about something the bigger and bigger it seems. Well, the king and his lords were talking a lot. And the mother of the king heard about this and came to the banquet house. She came to Belshazzar and told him not to be alarmed.

Moms are like this, aren't they? They always tell us not to worry. Why do you think they are like this? Because they love us, they know more than we do, and they have experienced more than we have.

So the queen mother reminded King Belshazzar that there was a man in the kingdom who was very wise. Who do you think this was? That's right, Daniel. She told him the history of Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar, how Daniel had interpreted his dreams. She gave all the facts about Daniel, how he had an excellent spirit and knowledge and insight and how he was able to resolve problems.

This is another thing moms do – they tell us about stories and people from the past, maybe even before we were born. They tell us about the good things and sometimes they even tell us about some of the bad things so that we will learn from them. I love it the most when my mom talks about someone who she really had respect for. We think what we do and say doesn't mean much but sometimes years later we are remembered for these things. I want to be remembered for being someone who acted wisely, like Daniel did, rather than someone who did evil things, like Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. Don't you? Daniel was humble, and he honored God. Belshazzar and Nebuchadnezzar were both proud and did evil things to insult God.

So the queen mother told Belshazzar to call for Daniel so that he could give the meaning of the handwriting. And he listened to his mother. This was maybe the only wise and proper thing that Belshazzar did. He was an evil man, and yet still he listened to his mother. It's very important to listen to our mothers, even if sometimes we don't like what she has to say. Moms really do know best, so I hope all of you listen to your moms!

So Daniel was brought before the king. The king told him what he had heard about him, how he was so wise. He told Daniel the wise men were unable to tell him what this meant. He promised Daniel a reward if he could tell him this. He told him that he would be clothed in purple, given a gold chain around his neck, and that he would be the third ruler of the kingdom.

Do you think Daniel was tempted by this reward? No! He didn't want the reward of the king. He was a man of honor and only wanted to please God, not the king. Do you think we should only do things if we know we will get a reward? No! So Daniel told the king to keep his rewards or give them to someone else. And then he told him that he would tell him what the handwriting meant.

So next week we will find out what the writing meant.

Daniel Week 14

Point to emphasize: We can be sure that God will fulfill His word

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 5

Memory Verse: Pride goes before destruction, ... (Proverbs 16:18a)

Story ample

Who remembers the writing on the wall? Today we will find out what those words mean.

Before Daniel told Belshazzar about the handwriting on the wall, he first reminded him about Nebuchadnezzar. I'm sure Belshazzar knew about his forefather, but Daniel insisted on reminding him about some very important things about his past. Are there times when your parents tell you stories about their past and you think to yourself, "Oh, Mom, I've heard that story 100 times!" Well, sometimes it's important to retell stories about our history because they teach us lessons. And this was the kind of story that Daniel needed to tell.

He started by reminding Belshazzar that it was GOD who had given Nebuchadnezzar the kingship, the glory, and the majesty. Everyone who heard about Nebuchadnezzar feared him, he was so great. If he wanted to kill someone, he did. If he wanted them to live, they did. He had the power to make people very important or very despised.

But, the problem with power is that it can make you very, very proud, even arrogant. And that's what happened to Nebuchadnezzar. He became so proud that eventually this pride led to his fall from the kingship. Proverbs 16:18 says, "Pride goes before destruction." Everything that happened to him after that was so that he would finally realize that it was God who was the real ruler of men and it was God who had made him king.

Daniel then went on to speak to Belshazzar about how he should have learned the lesson of Nebuchadnezzar, but he did not. He was just like his forefather, exalting himself against God. He told him he should never have taken the vessels from God's house to drink from and praised other gods. He told him he had not honored the one true God, and this was a very evil thing.

After reminding Belshazzar of all these things, Daniel then went on to explain the handwriting. [Write the word MENE on the board] Daniel told him that this meant - "God has numbered your kingdom and brought it to an end." [Write the word TEKEL on the board] Daniel told him that this meant - "You have been weighed in the scales and found to be lacking." [Write the word UPHARSIN on the board] Then Daniel told him that this meant - "Your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

When Daniel finished speaking, Belshazzar did what he had promised. He clothed Daniel in purple, put a chain of gold around his neck, and made him third ruler of the kingdom.

He kept his promise, even though what Daniel told him was not good news for Belshazzar. First, Daniel told Belshazzar that his kingdom would end. Was this good? No! Do you know that in that very night Belshazzar was killed? Second, Belshazzar was found lacking, and he did not match God. Last, Daniel told him the kingdom would be divided. And it was. Darius the Mede came in to receive the kingdom of Babylon. This matched just what the handwriting had said. God had done exactly what He had written. He had kept His word. Belshazzar should have feared God and honored God. But he didn't. So this was the end of Belshazzar. God can make a man king, and He can destroy a kingdom also because He is the REAL ruler of the universe.

**Daniel
Week 15**

Review

This week is a review of the previous four weeks. Try to have the children involved in the review as much as possible. As an idea, divide them into four teams and have each team review one week. Then present it to the others at the end of the time. Keep the point to emphasize in mind as you plan.

Daniel Week 16

Point to Emphasize: We shouldn't be proud or jealous; we should regard and fear God

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 6

Memory Verse: And you shall not wrong one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am Jehovah your God. (Leviticus 25:17)

Story Sample

By now Daniel had lived a long time in Babylon. He had seen God's judgment on two different kings because of their pride and insulting of God. He knew that God ruled and God caused kings and kingdoms to come and go.

At this time God caused Darius the Mede to come from the area south of the Caspian Sea and conquer Babylon. In one night the Babylonian Empire was ended. Now, Darius, a Medo-Persian ruled the whole land of Babylon.

King Darius was very different from the other two kings that Daniel had seen rule Babylon. He was not proud! The other two kings had been so proud, uplifting themselves above God and even insulting God. But King Darius feared God. He was not proud. Even though he was not a Jew, one of God's people, he had the proper fear of God.

You see, the first two kings that Daniel saw rule in Babylon did not fear God. They did not regard God as higher than themselves. They made decisions to do things without considering God. They never considered that God would judge them.

Let me tell you a little story. When I was about your age I had the proper regard and respect for my mom and dad. It was very important to my folks that you did not lie. No matter what bad thing you did and no matter what big mistake you made it was always better if you told the truth rather than lie about it. In our house lying was most serious. You got into more trouble for lying than for doing the naughty thing you had lied about. I remember wanting to lie to my folks and then something in me decided it was better to confess. This was the proper fear or regard for parents. *[Insert your own example of regarding, considering your parent's ways]*

Daniel was nearly 100 years old now. That is as old as some of your great grandparents would be if they were alive today. You see, here he was a youth when he was brought into King Nebuchadnezzar's palace to live. Then he grew up and became a man. Nebuchadnezzar gave him a very important job then. Years went by and then the next king gave him a very important position in his kingdom. More years went by and now he was about as old as your great grandparents. And because he had held these very important jobs for the kings, everyone in Babylon knew that Daniel was excellent.

He was faithful in serving the kings and in carrying out the tasks they gave him. He always did his best job, working very hard, being diligent, being trustworthy and having wisdom. And everyone also knew that through all these years Daniel had been faithful to God. He kept God's commandments. He worshipped God. He thanked God. He praised God. He did not worship idols or eat anything offered to idols, like the Babylonians around him did. Everyone knew that he prayed three times a day to God. He loved and served God. You see how excellent Daniel was.

Let's go back to what was happening in the story...King Darius was ruling the kingdom. He set 120 very good men to be the "protectors of the kingdom" over his whole kingdom, the Persian Empire. These 120 would carry out his ruling over the people. (*use kingdom chart*) Then he set three chief ministers over these 120. In this way he could rule the whole of the Persian Empire. Daniel was one of the three chief ministers. King Darius was considering putting Daniel over the whole kingdom. That would mean that he would rule over the whole kingdom. What an important position that would be! He would nearly be like the king himself!

Now let's say you are one of the chief ministers or the 120 protectors. How might you react if you knew that the king was thinking to set Daniel over you? Would you say, "That is a good decision. Daniel is a fine person," or do you think you might be jealous? To be jealous means to want what someone else has. Now if these men had feared God they would have thought King Darius was making a very wise decision to set Daniel over them, but these men were jealous. They wanted the king to set them over the whole kingdom. Why was Daniel being chosen over them? Next week we will see what they do because of their jealousy.

Daniel Week 17

Point to Emphasize: We should always be faithful to God

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 6

Memory Verse: A faithful man will abound with blessings,... (Proverbs 28:20a)

Story Sample

Last week we heard that King Darius was considering putting Daniel over the whole kingdom. What an important position that would be! He would nearly be like the king himself!

The other men were so jealous because of this. They put their heads together to figure out a way to make Daniel look bad before the king. If they could find fault with Daniel they could tell the king, then the king would make one of them ruler instead of Daniel. First they examined how he did his job. To examine something is to look very closely at it.

Could they accuse Daniel of lying to the king? No. Could they accuse him of cheating the king out of money? No. Could they accuse him of being lazy or of not doing a good job? No. Could they accuse him of disobeying? No.

Oh, they tried so hard to find fault with Daniel. But they could not find any fault in the way he carried out his job for the king or in how he behaved. They would have to make a plan for Daniel to be guilty of something. It would have to be related to the law of his God. So they had a special meeting and plotted to get Daniel into trouble. They had to come up with a way to make keeping God's law a bad thing. Keeping God's law is a good thing. How could they make it a bad thing?

Isn't jealousy an ugly thing?! It causes people to do ugly things, sometimes even evil things to others. *[Insert a story about jealousy leading to an evil deed.]*

Well, these jealous men decided to ask the king to make a law that would punish anyone who made a petition to any god or man besides the king. This was their evil plot against Daniel. So they wrote it up and presented it to the king. It said: "Whoever makes a petition within the next 30 days to any god or man besides the king shall be cast into the lions' den." They asked the king to make it a law. So King Darius, not realizing their evil plot, signed the writing, making it a law.

Now Daniel came to know that the king had signed this writing. It was now a law. What would Daniel do? He did what he always did three times a day. He went to his house into the upper room where he had open windows toward Jerusalem, and he knelt down and prayed and gave thanks before his God.

Some of you might see your parents praying like this. I don't mean going to the window to pray, but do you see them sometimes in the morning praying? Or in the evening? Or praying at mealtime? It is so good to have this habit of praying and thanking God for everything! I hope all of you will follow these habits of your parents to pray every day.

So...we see how faithful Daniel was to God. Even though he knew there was a law against making a petition to any god or man, he continued to pray to God. A weak person might have been afraid and decided not to pray to God. Or at least not to pray for 30 days until the law was over. That would not be so bad, would it? Daniel could have decided just not to pray for 30 days. But Daniel was the same his whole life, both when he was young and when he was old. He obeyed God rather than man. He was faithful to God.

The jealous men who had made the evil plot against Daniel assembled and found Daniel praying to God. Now they had him! They did not waste a minute. They went straight to the king.

But to make sure that the king would not forgive Daniel, they set a trap for the king. They questioned the king to make sure that he could not make an exception or forgive Daniel once they brought their accusation against him. Of course, the king did not know their evil plot, so he told them strongly that any law he made would be fully enforced. If anyone broke this law they would be thrown into the lions' den.

Once they heard this they let the king know that Daniel had broken the law; Daniel had prayed to his God. Now what would the king do? What would his reaction be? Next week we will hear the end of the story.

Daniel Week 18

Point to Emphasize: We should not blame others for what we do ourselves

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 6

Memory Verse: Beloved, if our heart does not blame us, we have boldness toward God;
(1 John 3:21)

Story Sample

Last week we talked about the proclamation that no one could worship any other god that came from King Darius due to the men who were jealous of Daniel. Daniel came to know that this was now a law. What would Daniel do? He did what he always did three times a day. He went to his house into the upper room where he had open windows toward Jerusalem and knelt down and prayed and gave thanks before his God. The jealous men who had made the evil plot against Daniel gathered together to watch. They saw Daniel kneel on his knees to pray and give thanks before God. Now they had him! They went straight to the king. The king did not know about their evil plot, so he told them strongly that any law he made would be fully enforced. If anyone broke this law they would be thrown into the lions' den.

Once they heard this, they let the king know that Daniel had broken the law; Daniel had prayed to his God. When the king heard this he was very displeased that he had made such a law that would mean death for such a faithful and top servant. It would have been easy for King Darius to blame those evil, jealous men who had made this plot but Darius knew that even though they had been so evil, it was he who had made the law. He could blame no one but himself for this.

Have you ever blamed others for something? Let's say that there is a plate of cookies on the table. Mom told all the kids playing in your house that the cookies were not to be eaten. The cookies were supposed to be saved until after dinner. As you are playing catch, one of your friends talks about those cookies, and as you play army, he talks about those cookies. All afternoon he talks about those cookies! Finally, you give in and go into the kitchen. Your friend takes a cookie and heads outside. You take a cookie and follow right behind. And just when you take a bite, your older sister comes along and sees. She says, "*(Boy's name)*, what are you doing?! Mom told us all not to eat those cookies." But instead of taking the blame, you blame others. You say, "But *(another boy's name)* did it first. He made me do it." This is to blame others instead of taking the blame for doing something that was wrong.

King Darius now knew that making that law was wrong, but he did not blame others. He realized that he must take the blame because no matter what part the others had in it, he was the one that made it a law. He was at fault. Daniel would have to be thrown in the lions' den, because it was the law.

Daniel Week 19

Point to Emphasize: We should feel bad inside when we do something wrong; we should feel peaceful when we trust God to take care of us

Reference Reading: Daniel, Chapter 6

Memory Verse: Jehovah is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped;... (Psalm 28:7a)

Story Sample

(review last week)

King Darius was upset with himself, and he tried to find a way to undo the law he had made, but he couldn't. So by evening he had Daniel brought to him. Now, do you think Daniel came and begged the king for his life? He knew the king had to throw him into the lions' den because of this law, and he surely knew that no one came out of the lions' den alive. So it would have been natural for Daniel to beg the king to let him escape. But this is not what Daniel did. He was calm.

Then the king said, "Daniel, your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you." Then they threw Daniel into the lions' den. Daniel was about to be fed to the lions, and yet he was peaceful. My, how he believed in God!

Then a stone was brought and set over the mouth of the den. The king sealed it with his signet ring so that nothing might be changed regarding Daniel. Then King Darius went to his palace. He did not have any entertainment or food that night. And he could not sleep the entire night. He could not find a way to change the law so he had to have Daniel thrown into the lions' den but his conscience and his heart were so upset about it. This showed that he knew what he had done was wrong. What he had done caused him not to be able to eat, sleep or have a good time. It is hard to find such a man today. Many make big mistakes, but they cover it up and act like it does not matter.

Once when I was teaching school, kids' belongings started to disappear. Someone in the class was stealing. Eventually we all knew who it was. But the saddest part of the story was that this boy could so easily steal from one of the kids and then go and play with that one at recess. The next day he would steal from another one, and he could sit and have lunch with the very person he stole from. It was so sad that his conscience and heart did not work in the normal way. *[Use your own example]*

King Darius had the right response. He could not eat or play or sleep because he knew he had made a big mistake, and there was no way to undo it.

Very early in the morning, when the first light of the dawn came, King Darius went quickly to the lions' den. He shouted to see if Daniel had been saved from the lions. Then Daniel replied that God had saved him. The king was so happy! God had delivered

Daniel! So Daniel was let out of the lions' den, and he was completely unhurt because he had trusted in God.

Then King Darius wrote to the whole land. The Bible says (Daniel 6:26-27), "I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; For He is the living God and enduring forever; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, and His dominion will be unto the end. He delivers and rescues, and He does signs and wonders in heaven and on earth; It is He who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

And Daniel prospered all the years that Darius was king.

Daniel
Week 20

Final Review

This is the last week of Daniel stories. Go back through the whole book as well as the previous stories. Find 3-4 main character traits with stories to emphasize them. Involve the children in a discussion about Daniel – what they liked best about the story of Daniel, how they might want to be like Daniel in his . . . (faithfulness, diligence, trust, etc.)

Or you can do a craft that might be a summary of the book of Daniel.