

## **Intermediate Level, Block 7, Week 1** **David—Wanting to Build a House for God**

Point to Emphasize: We can be someone who cares for what God needs and desires.

Reference Reading: 1 Chronicles 17, 22; 2 Samuel 6—7

Memory Verse: One thing I have asked from Jehovah; / That do I seek: / To dwell in the house of Jehovah / All the days of my life... (Psalms 27:4a)

### Story Sample

Last week we heard the story of David becoming a king. Today we will hear something concerning David's last years as king. While Saul only cared for himself, David cared about God!

David had become king and God established his kingdom. David was king over all the children of Israel. He had God's presence. He lived in Jerusalem and had a beautiful palace there. He really had everything he needed. Just like us, David had family, a place to live, clothes to wear and good things to eat. God cared for him in every way.

But still David was concerned about something. He was concerned that God would again have a way to dwell among His people. From the time God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, He dwelled in the tabernacle (a big tent) among His people. This is what God wanted. He wanted to be with His people, to dwell among them. So, throughout their journey through the wilderness until the time they came into the good land of Canaan, the children of Israel worshipped God as He dwelt in the tabernacle among them.

The children of Israel no longer lived in tents. Now, in the good land, they had cities and houses. But God, Whom they worshipped, still lived in a tent. David was concerned about God's house. God still desired to be with His people, but He needed a permanent dwelling place among His people. God needed a temple. God's heart was to dwell among His people, and David had this desire for God's house because he was a man according to God's heart.

We also can be like David caring for what God desires. Today, God does not dwell in a physical temple, but His desire is still the same—to dwell with His people. We can be in a meeting hall or in our homes caring for people, and in this way, we are still caring for God's needs and desires. I know of a family who had a boy and a girl about nine and seven years old. This family often had people over for meals and also held meetings in their house. It was always the children who answered the door and welcomed those who came. They greeted each one so warmly, letting you know that they were truly happy to have you in their home. Then they would take your coats, sweaters or purses and put them into the closet. The children would show you into the living room, kitchen or backyard depending on where their parents were. Those children may not have known it but by caring for those coming to their home in such a good way, they were caring for the same thing God desires. There was another family who had a seven year-old son. Every time anyone came to stay at his home, he would tidy up his room, putting everything in its place. He then would give up his bed so the guest could stay in his room. He was always happy to do this! He got to meet different ones from other cities. He felt it was his way to be part of a normal Christian family. He too, had a heart like David. *[Storyteller, use your own example of experiencing or giving hospitality.]*

We want to be according to God's heart. But do we just have to wait until we are older? NO! We have many ways to be for God's need today. Who has helped clean up the house when God's

people are coming over to eat? Who has gone with your folks to help clean the meeting hall? Who has given up your bed so that people from other cities could have a place to sleep? Who has been ready to go on time Lord's Day morning? All of these things show that we have a heart for God. Remember, David started having a heart for God when he was young, and we can be just like him today.

## **Intermediate Level, Block 7, Week 2** **Solomon—Building a House for God**

Point to Emphasize: We need to be those who carry out instructions according to how they were given.

Reference Reading: 1 Chronicles 22—23; 1 Kings 5—8

Memory Verse: Hear instruction, and be wise; / And do not neglect it. (Proverbs 8:33)

### Story Sample

Last week we learned about someone who was concerned for God's house because he was a man according to God's heart—who was he? That's right, it was King David. Because David cared for what was on God's heart, God gave the design of the house to David. And David prepared everything, all the materials, according to the design. David really wanted to build it for God; instead, God promised that David's son would build the house for God.

So when Solomon, David's son, became king, David gave his son the charge to build the house for God. Now Solomon was a very wise man. In fact, he was the wisest man in all the land, because God had given him wisdom and understanding of heart. But do you think he built the house of God according to his wise mind? He could have looked at the design and said, "I think I can improve this part and that part, maybe change this part a little bit." No! In fact, Solomon was very wise by actually listening to instructions; he built the temple according to his father's charge, with the materials prepared by his father, and according to God's own design given to David. Solomon followed God's design perfectly, down to the last measurements, using all the materials that were prepared by his father, David. He gathered workers, officers over the work, and materials such as timber, stone, silver, and gold. But all was done according to his father's instructions and preparations. This huge task of building the house of God, the temple, took seven years to complete.

As children, we are told HOW to do many things, such as picking up your things, taking out the trash, clearing the table, washing the dishes, sorting the dirty laundry, doing our homework, and so many other things. Well, someone older than us and who have more experiences than us such as our parents, teachers, and serving ones already know how to do all these things. Maybe they've already tried all sorts of different ways and they found that this is the best way to do something. We simply need to carry out how to do everything by following their pattern and their instructions, not thinking that our idea is better. The Bible tells us that we are blessed if we do this.

One day, my son and I were preparing breakfast for some guests we were having the next day. We decided to make a yummy French Toast Casserole. We found a recipe and collected all the ingredients. While we were making it, we decided to skip a step. We thought, "why is it asking us to do something that makes no sense at all!" So, we made the French Toast Casserole OUR way. Well, the next morning, we put it in the oven, and when it was ready...oh...it smelled SO good!! But when we took it out of the oven...it looked SO bad and tasted SO bad. There were flavorless areas and hardened areas. We realized we really needed to follow the instructions as they were given. *[Storyteller, insert your own example about how you followed or did not follow instructions.]*

After the temple was built correctly and according to God's instructions, do you know how we know that God was pleased? God's glory filled the temple! That means that God's presence was there. That is quite something. God now had a house that He could dwell in among His people!

## **Intermediate Level, Block 7, Week 3** **The Division of the Kingdom of Israel**

Point to Emphasize: We want to be those who keep our hearts turned to God.

Reference Reading: 1 Kings 11:9-13, 29-37

Memory Verse: If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. (John 14:15)

### Story Sample

Today we are going to talk about three people: King David, King Solomon, and a man called Jeroboam. Some of the stories we tell you in children's meeting are exciting, and some are happy, but today's story is a little serious. It is the story of how God's people became divided.

But before we talk about the division, we want to talk about these three people. We've talked a lot about King David, right? What do you remember about him? Good! Of all the things we know about David, one thing is very important to remember: David had a heart for God. The Bible tells us that he "fully followed Jehovah." David was really precious to God.

Do you remember the name of King David's son? Right! Solomon. Solomon was responsible for some amazing things—he even built God's house! But, sad to say, in the end, Solomon did not follow God as well as his father. Even though he followed God when he was young, Solomon turned away from God when he was old. He turned so far away from God that he built a place to worship idols, that is, other gods! How could this be? How could the king *of God's people* build a place to worship gods other than Jehovah? The king who had built God's house was now building a place to worship idols?

This reminds me of when we are all here in children's meeting. We all start really happy, singing together, and happily following all the instructions from the serving ones. But then, little by little, one child may decide to turn their heart away from the serving ones and do their own thing. This child is dividing themselves from the group, making their own little group and what they are really saying is, "We don't want to do that, we want to do this instead!" When I was young, I started my own little group and divided myself from the serving ones. We ended up having a sad time and not enjoying what the rest of the children were doing. When my mom came to pick me up, I had to tell her what I had done. I couldn't even believe how quickly I had changed from following the serving one to turning my heart away and dividing myself from them. *[Storyteller, add personal example of turning away from instructions and dividing yourself from someone causing loss.]*

God had given Solomon some specific instructions, but he failed to keep them. His heart went after other things. Do you think God was happy about this? No, He was not; God was angry. This was a serious offense to Him. God had given His people very specific commandments regarding how to worship Him and to worship only Him. So the Bible tells us that Jehovah became angry with Solomon, because his heart turned away from Jehovah the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and who had commanded him concerning this very matter, not to go after other gods. But Solomon did not keep that which Jehovah had commanded. And Jehovah said to Solomon, "Because you have done this and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant." God was going to give the kingdom to someone else to rule—to Solomon's servant—because Solomon had done such a terrible thing.

Let's come back to King David for a minute. Do you remember what we said about David having a heart for God? Well, God remembered that, too. Even while God was angry with Solomon, he remembered Solomon's father, David. And God decided that since David had honored Him so much, there would still be some Israelites who were ruled by the descendants of David. Furthermore, God would wait for Solomon's son to be king. This shows how much our heart matters to God. Even when God was angry at Solomon, He could not forget David's precious heart.

Because of his disobedience, King Solomon would still lose the kingdom. To see how that happened, we have to talk about a third person: a man called Jeroboam. When Jeroboam was young, he was a hard worker, and King Solomon saw that. Because Jeroboam was so capable, King Solomon put him in charge of certain things. Do you remember God had told Solomon that He would give the kingdom to his servant? That servant was Jeroboam. When Solomon's son Rehoboam was king, Solomon's servant Jeroboam led a rebellion. Ten tribes joined in this rebellion, and in the end, the children of Israel were divided into two kingdoms. In the south was the kingdom of Judah, which was ruled by the descendants of David. And in the north was the kingdom of Israel, the rebellious ten tribes and their king, Jeroboam. The kingdom of Israel in the north turned farther and farther away from God. King Jeroboam led his people to worship idols and to ignore things that God had asked them to do. Eventually, God's people were completely divided.

This divided situation among His people made God very unhappy. When you are older and read about this time it will make you sad, too. But the situation could have been so good if only Solomon would have continued to keep his heart turned to God by keeping God's Word. As we grow, we can be those who keep our heart turned to God by keeping His Word.

## **Intermediate Level, Block 7, Week 4**

### **The Kings**

Point to Emphasize: We need to take care of who we are, how we behave, and how we conduct ourselves.

Reading Reference: 1 and 2 Kings; 1 and 2 Chronicles

Memory Verse: Be very careful therefore for yourselves, that you love Jehovah your God.  
(Joshua 23:11)

#### Story Sample

We have been talking about David, Solomon, Rehoboam and Jeroboam—the first kings in the kingdom of Israel. But did you know there were many kings that came after them? And, because of the dividing of the kingdom by Jeroboam, now there were kings of both Judah and Israel. A lot of kings! There were nineteen kings in Judah and nineteen kings in Israel. That makes 38 kings! Some of them were good kings, but most of them were bad kings. All of these kings are recorded in the Bible in the books of 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles. These books of the Old Testament are a record of who they were and what they did.

How would you like someone to record your day? One time a new teacher was recorded as she taught her class. Everything she did and said, even how she said it was recorded. Later, she and other teachers watched parts of the video and made comments on what they saw. This is kind of like the record of the kings in the Bible.

Let's talk about a few of the kings. Of the nineteen kings of Judah, only eight were good and did what was right in God's eyes. They removed the idols the people were worshipping and took away the high places where they worshipped. But they all fell short in one very important thing; they never returned to serve God in the place that He had chosen. It is very important to God where we worship Him!

Of the nineteen kings of Israel, only ONE was good. His name was Jehu. Only Jehu did God's will and even he was not completely absolute in doing it. There are many more stories of many more kings. The Bible is a record of all these kings. These examples show how they were, how they behaved themselves, how they did things, how they faced different situations, what their intentions were, what their interests were, and what their goals were as kings in the good land.

What do you think it would be like if there was a record of everything you have done or said? Would there be more good things or more bad things? Would there be a record of you talking back to your mom, or being obedient to her? Would there be a record of you crying when you didn't get your way, or accepting the rules? Would there be a record of you being nice to someone just so that they would do something for you, or being nice to everyone because you love them?

We can learn from the kings that how we behave, what kind of person we are, and how we act really matters. I hope that we all want a good record.

**Intermediate Level, Block 7, Week 5**  
**Elijah the Prophet—Loving and Worshipping the One True and Living God**

Point to Emphasize: We should be those who love and follow God.

Reference Reading: 1 Kings 18-19

Memory Verse: ...And I will be your God; and you shall know that I am Jehovah your God...  
(Exodus 6:7b)

Story Sample

God's intention for the children of Israel was for them to be in the good land, enjoying the produce of the land and worshipping God. They were already in the land. However, they stopped worshipping God and started worshipping idols. The children of Israel had many kings. Some kings were good and some were bad. Most were bad because they did not love God or His Word, rather their heart loved other things. If they worshipped God, they were good kings and did good things. If they worshipped idols, which was a horrible thing to do, they were bad kings.

One of the worst kings was named Ahab. Ahab did what was evil in the eyes of God more than all those who came before him. Ahab was against anyone who loved and worshipped God. Let me tell you what he did. He built an altar and worshipped an idol named Baal. He was supposed to worship God! But, instead he was worshipping an idol. How terrible!

God was very unhappy with Ahab. He used the prophet named Elijah to show how foolish Ahab was for not worshipping the only true and living God. The things that happened between Elijah, the prophet and King Ahab were so incredible! Once, Elijah challenged Ahab to have a test to see who the real God was—Baal of the heathens or Jehovah of Israel. The challenge consisted of taking a bull, cutting it into pieces and putting it on some wood WITHOUT applying fire. After this, they needed to call on the name of their "god" and the "god" who would answer by fire, would be the one true God. Who do you think won? Let's see! Ahab called everyone up and gathered 450 prophets of Baal. They got their bull, cut it up and placed on the wood. They begged Baal, calling on the name of Baal from morning until noon to burn their offering. Was their offering burnt by their "god"? Of course not! There was no voice and no one answered their call.

Then Elijah came! And, all by himself, he repaired the altar of Jehovah which was broken down with twelve stones (one for each of the 12 tribes of Israel). Next, he dug a trench around the altar. He cut the bull and laid it on the wood. He said, "Fill four jars of water and pour them on the offering and on the wood." They did this three times until the water went around the altar. He also filled the trench with water. Then Elijah prayed to God and said, "O Jehovah, God of a Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known today that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and that I have done all these things by Your word. Answer me, O Jehovah; answer me, that this people may know that You, O Jehovah, are God and that You have turned their heart back again" (1 Kings 18:36-37). Do you want to know what happened? Jehovah sent fire that not only consumed the bull, but also the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. Amazing, isn't it?! When all the people saw what had happened, they fell on their faces and said, "Jehovah—He is God! Jehovah—He is God!" Elijah won the challenge! Ahab and all his prophets lost! Since Jehovah is the One and True God, He will not tolerate it when His people worship other things besides Him.

I remember one day in my school they were going to have a celebration that was not according to the Bible. I should have known from the very beginning that in that celebration, they were not

loving and following God. I should have from the beginning said I was not going. But, part of me really wanted to go. I talked to my mom and she helped me see that we were God's chosen people who enjoy being with the people of God above any other celebration. So I decided not to go. My mom invited another family over and we had a good meal and a good time together singing children songs and doing some crafts. My heart was so happy! I am glad I didn't join that celebration. There are many things that we see others doing that are not what God wants us to do who love Him. It is so good that we are in families who like Elijah love God, keep His Word, and take God's way. *[Storyteller, insert your example of not doing what others are doing but being with the people of God, loving and following God.]*

God had used the prophet Elijah to deal with a bad king who did evil things against those who loved and worshipped the true God. I hope that we will all love and follow God like Elijah, ALL the days of our lives! We know that our God is the true God. We are God's chosen people and we want to love and follow God all the time!

## **Intermediate Level, Block 7, Week 6**

### **Stubbornness Leading to Destruction and Captivity**

Point to Emphasize: When we disobey, we need to admit we did wrong and apologize.

Reading Reference: 2 Kings 17: 4-6, 7-18, 24—25; 2 Chronicles 36

Memory Verse: For whom Jehovah loves He disciplines, / Even as a father, the son in whom he delights. (Proverbs 3:12)

#### Story Sample

Have you ever done something wrong and refused to apologize? You are no longer a kindergartener or even 1<sup>st</sup> grader, so by now, you know you need to obey your parents in EVERYTHING, right? I know you always try to obey as much as you can. However, sometimes you might disobey. The important question is, what do you do after you have disobeyed? Do you immediately recognize you did something wrong, apologize, and try to make it right? Or do you try to hide your mistake and refuse to apologize?

In past weeks we have heard that after the children of Israel asked God to set kings over them, some of the kings were good and some were bad. In fact, there were more bad kings than good kings. The bad kings disobeyed God. The last two kings set over the children of Israel, Jeconiah and Zedekiah, were very disobedient and caused all of the children of Israel to also be stubborn and to disobey God. Out of His love and patience, God sent them prophets to warn them to stop the evil things they were doing and to return to God. However, the children of Israel were stubborn. They acted like they didn't care about what God said and continued to disobey. They should have just admitted they were doing evil things. They should have apologized to God and should have done the right thing. But they did not. They were stubborn.

I will give you an example of what it means to be stubborn. When I was in grade school, during lunchtime the older children were allowed to walk out of the schoolyard to a little candy store on the sidewalk right in front of the school. But some children would leave school and walk a whole block to go to another store to get "better candies." Even though my parents had strongly told me NOT to leave the school beyond the sidewalk, one day I disobeyed them. I went to the other store to get the "better candies." Although nothing bad happened and I came right back to school, my friend's dad saw me and told my dad. When I got home in the afternoon, my dad asked me where I went during lunch, and I lied to him. I told him I had stayed at school. My dad was VERY loving and patient, just like God. He tried to give me hints that he knew where I had been and guided me to apologize. But I was stubborn and did not want to admit what I had done and apologize. My dad had no other option but to tell me he knew I had disobeyed. As a consequence, I was not able to go even to the store on the sidewalk for an entire month. *[Storyteller, insert your story of disobeying, being stubborn and missing an opportunity as a consequence.]*

Now let's go back to our story. The good land got taken away from the children of Israel because they refused to obey God and refused to turn from their evil ways. Eventually, they were carried away from Jerusalem all the way to Babylon. Unbelievable! So Jehovah placed them in the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Chaldea, who not only took them as slaves but also took all the vessels of the house of God to Babylon, great and small, and the treasures of the house of Jehovah. The Chaldeans then burned the house of God and broke down the walls of Jerusalem and burned all the palaces. This was SO sad. The kingdom of the children of Israel was destroyed. They were taken away into captivity and they ended up as slaves AGAIN. All because they would not confess that they had disobeyed and rejected God.

From this sad history, we can realize that things turn out poorly if we do not admit when we disobey. We really don't have to be so stubborn. We all know that sometimes we disobey. It is really best if we can admit we were wrong and apologize for disobeying.

**Intermediate Level, Block 7, Week 7**  
**Daniel and His Companions—Following God’s Ways**

Point to Emphasize: We should follow our parents’ way, even when they are not around, because they take God’s way.

Reading Reference: Daniel 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

Last week we spoke about how the stubbornness of the children of Israel caused them to be taken captive to Babylon, in Chaldea. 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 Chaldea. Chaldea was a land full of idols. No one there worshipped the true and living God. The children of Israel were captive in Babylon and there was no 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.

Today we want to talk about four young people who had been captured and brought out of Canaan, Daniel and his three companions—Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. 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. A top servant of the king changed their names to Chaldean names which had nothing to do with God. Their Israelite names —Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah— showed that they belonged to God. But their true names were changed by the king’s servant to Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.

Now, before Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were brought to the king’s palace, they lived in Canaan with all God’s people. These were boys growing up in Israelite families. 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 families’ 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 families who thanked and praised the true and living God.

Growing up in the king’s palace meant that they were expected to eat food that had been offered to idols! What were they to do? They would surely get into trouble if they did not eat it, but how could God’s people eat food that had been offered to idols? God told His people that they should have nothing to do with idols, for only He was God.

But now these four were not with their families. They were on their own. And they were surrounded by 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?

Sometimes we are in the same spot as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. *[Insert a personal story about being invited to a celebration or something we know is different from what we are taught—Will we be those who even when our parents are not with us, will refuse to do something we know is wrong?]*

Well, these young people decided to take their parents' way, God's way.

There was a lower servant, a steward, who came and brought the food to them. 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." (Daniel 1:12)

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.

Daniel was young, yet he decided in his heart to take the way he had learned from his parents and from God's Word, that is, to have nothing to do with idols. We can do this too. We can choose to follow our parents' way. In taking this way, we are choosing God and God's way.

**Intermediate Level, Block 7, Week 8**  
**Daniel—Interpreting Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream**

Point to Emphasize: We can pray with our companions for help from God.

Reading Reference: Daniel 2

Memory Verse: Let my cry come before You, O Jehovah; / Give me understanding according to Your word. (Psalm 119:169)

Story Sample

Who remembers King Nebuchadnezzar? That’s right—he was the king of Babylon at the time Daniel lived. In those days, sometimes God would give people dreams that had special meanings, and one night, King Nebuchadnezzar had this kind of dream. This dream really bothered him. The king knew that it meant something, but he could not understand AT ALL what the meaning was. He was so bothered that he could not sleep; he just kept thinking about this dream. Finally, he called his advisors and wise men and demanded that they tell him not only what the dream meant but also what he had dreamed.

The wise men didn’t know what to do! None of them had any idea what the king had dreamed, much less any idea what it might mean. They tried some sneaky ways to get around the king’s demand, but the king knew what they were up to. He asked them again what he dreamed and also what the meaning of his dream was, but no one could answer. Finally, the wise men gave up. They told the king that no one on earth could explain the meaning of the dream! Oh, that made King Nebuchadnezzar so angry! He was furious—so furious that he ordered all the wise men in Babylon to be destroyed!

This harsh order put Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah in danger! They were among the people that the king had ordered to be destroyed. When Daniel heard about the order, he asked to be given some time to learn what the dream meant. Then right away, he went and talked to his companions. He told Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah what was happening. These young men had been raised in families who trusted God, and they knew that what they needed to do was pray.

Daniel and his companions knew that they could never find the answer to this problem by themselves. You know, most people think that if they can figure something out on their own that means they are pretty smart. But actually, this is not wisdom. A big part of being wise is to know that you don’t know everything and can’t solve all your problems by yourself. A wise person is one who knows when to ask for help. These young men were wise, and they knew that they needed God’s help.

So they prayed, and do you know what happened? God answered their prayers! God showed Daniel what Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed and what that dream meant. Do you think Daniel could have ever figured this out on his own? Could you ever guess what someone else dreamed at night? No, of course not! The only reason Daniel was able to know this was because he prayed and God answered.

Have you ever been in a situation where you really did not know what to do? *[Storyteller, insert your own story of praying with others in a difficult situation.]*

After Daniel got the answer to his prayers, he thanked God. He knew that all this wisdom came from God. Then Daniel went to the king's commander and told him that he had an answer for the king. He asked the commander not to kill the wise men, and the commander brought Daniel to the king.

When Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar what he had dreamed and what it all meant, the king was so impressed. He fell on his face and said, "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." Then he rewarded Daniel with gifts and made him ruler over all of Babylon and chief over all the wise men of Babylon. Daniel's companions were given high positions in Babylon too. So you see, their faithfulness to pray brought them blessing. They had started out in fear of being killed, but they ended up being responsible men in Babylon!

**Intermediate Level, Block 7, Week 9**  
**Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah—Not Worshipping the Image**

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who trust in God because He will always be with us.

Reading Reference: Daniel 3

Memory Verse: ...For Jehovah your God is with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9b)

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, an idol of gold. And he called all 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 a blazing furnace.

Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were standing in that crowd. When the music played and everyone bowed down and worshipped the image, do you think Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah fell down? No, they did **not**. They were God's people and they would not worship anything but God Himself.

When this happened, certain Chaldeans were in this crowd and were looking around for 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 may give them good jobs and even put his trust in them. These men were jealous of what others had. They were jealous that the king had given top jobs to the children of Israel.

Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were children of Israel. So the jealous men of Chaldea were looking to see what these three men of God would do. As the music played, they saw that Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah did not fall down and bow to the idol. Right away the Chaldean men went to report this to the king. By speaking in this way against them, it made Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah look like they were not loyal to the king...maybe they were even against the king. Actually, these three men were for God. They did not worship the image because they wanted to honor God.

Oh, King Nebuchadnezzar was so angered by that report that he brought the three who wouldn't bow down before him. He roared at them in anger. He told them that he would have the music played again, and if they did not fall down, he would throw them into the blazing furnace.

Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego (the Babylonian names they had been given by the king) 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 was astonished at what he saw among the flames. He exclaimed, "Did we not throw three men into the midst of the fire bound up?" (Daniel 3:24b). And then he said, "Look, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not harmed. And the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods" (v. 25). Then the king called into the furnace for them to come out. The three came out of the midst of the fire. And 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!!! Then the king said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him." The king then 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.

It was a big deal for these three to trust God so much that they would be willing to go into a fiery furnace on His behalf. But God was with them—even in the midst of the fire.

Now, none of us has ever had to do something as extreme as this. But I know there are times when we have to stand for what we believe. And at those times we can always trust that God is with us. At times, I have been in places where people have made fun of me for loving God. Though it is frustrating, embarrassing, and hurtful, I always know deep inside that God is with me. He is with me when I am happy, sad, frustrated, or lonely. He is with me all the time! *[Storyteller, insert your personal story of standing up for God and the things of God.]*

This week, if something like this happens to you, remember the story of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah—how they stood up for God and He was with them. We can know that God is always with us!

**Intermediate Level, Block 7, Week 10**  
**Daniel—His Faithfulness to God and Being Delivered from the Lions’ Den**

Point to Emphasize: We should always be faithful to pray to God and He will take care of us.

Reading Reference: Daniel 6

Memory Verse: ...And three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had always done so previously. (Daniel 6:10b)

Story Sample

King Nebuchadnezzar dishonored God and died. Nebuchadnezzar’s son named Belshazzar followed his father’s kingdom. He also dishonored God and he also died. After him, Darius the Mede received the kingdom. King Darius was considering to put Daniel over the whole kingdom. This made the other high-ranking men so jealous! They put their heads together and plotted how to get Daniel into trouble. They came up with a way to make keeping God’s law a bad thing. They decided to ask the king to make a law that would punish anyone who within the next 30 days would make a petition to any god or man besides the king. The punishment for such a one was to be cast into the lions’ den. King Darius, not realizing their evil plot against Daniel, signed the writing, making it a law.

Now Daniel came to know about this law. What would Daniel do? He was a man of prayer. He did what he would always do 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. Daniel had read in the Bible the prophecy which said that the children of Israel would serve the king of Babylon for 70 years and then be free. Knowing this, Daniel was faithful to pray. Even when he knew he would be thrown into the lions’ den, he prayed. God needed someone faithful to pray and Daniel was such a person.

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 praying in the morning? 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. *[Storyteller, add your personal experience of habits of prayer.]*

Well, the jealous men told the king that Daniel had broken the law. Now what would the king do? He had to follow his law and throw Daniel in the lions’ den. But the king told him, “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 and went to his palace. He did not have any entertainment or food that night. He could not sleep the entire night. His heart was so upset about what had happened. 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. Unbelievable!

Daniel was faithful to pray to God. And even when a plot from jealous men caused him to be thrown in the lions’ den, God took care of Daniel. When situations are difficult, we need to be faithful to God and know that God will take care of us.

Later, The Bible says that King Darius wrote to the whole land, "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." (Daniel 6:26-27)

And Daniel prospered all the years that Darius was king.