

HEROES

OF THE

FAITH

Ordinary Men and Women . . .
Super Ordinary Power

25

**DANIEL SPENDS THE NIGHT
WITH HUNGRY LIONS**

HEROES OF THE FAITH CURRICULUM—2012

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Arlington † Metroplex
Taking church to the people



DANIEL SPENDS THE NIGHT WITH HUNGRY LIONS

Memory Verse:

Do not worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks. (Philippians 4:6 NCV)

Lesson Goals:

#1 - Understand how ordinary Daniel was

#2 - Discover what faith led Daniel to do

#3 - Desire to let God do extraordinary things in the life of the ordinary student

Audience:

Young, un-churched learners

Adaptable for all ages, including adults (See **For more training** on Activities page)

Scripture to Study:

Daniel 1, 6



DANIEL SPENDS THE NIGHT WITH HUNGRY LIONS

Daniel 1, 6

Who can tell me what a hero is? A hero is someone who is courageous and brave and compassionate. There are heroes and heroines in the Bible. All of them are brave and courageous and more, but not in the way you would expect.

Our hero: Daniel

His Heroic Feat: Prays to God even when it's illegal

Praying to God even when it's illegal may not sound very heroic, but let's look at the facts and see what you think when you have heard the whole story!

Do you remember King Josiah? He became king when he was only eight years old. He loved God's word and obeyed what he read there. Do you remember that God promised His judgment on the people of Judah because of their years of disobedience? Well, Josiah's son, Jehoahaz, was king after his father. He was king for just three months. Then a man named Jehoiakim became king. During the third year of Jehoiakim's reign, God's word through the prophet Isaiah came true. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem, surrounded it with his army, and captured King Jehoiakim. The king of Judah was carried off to Babylon along with some of the things from the temple and some of the smarter, more handsome young men from Judah. These men were taken away from their families. The king wanted them trained for three years, then they would be his servants.

Four young men in particular were carried away to Babylon: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. When they arrived in Babylon their names were changed. "Daniel's new name was Belteshazzar, Hananiah's was Shadrach, Mishael's was Meshach, and Azariah's was Abednego.

These four, along with the others, were taught the Babylonian language and its writings and they were fed from the king's table. "Daniel made up his mind to eat and drink only what God had approved for his people to eat. And he asked the king's chief official for permission not to eat the food and wine served in the royal palace. . . God had caused the official to be kind and friendly to Daniel," but Ashpenaz, the king's chief official, was scared of the king. (Daniel 1:8-9 NIV) He didn't want to do anything that would cause Daniel and his friends to look worse than the others. So Daniel pleaded with the guard who watched him. He asked the guard to test them for ten days. Rather than eating the king's food, they would eat only vegetables and drink only water. The guard agreed and "after ten days they looked healthier and better fed than all the young men who ate the king's food." (Daniel 1:15 NCV) Daniel and his friends continued with their vegetable diet during the three years of training. God gifted these young men with wisdom and the ability to learn many things.

At the end of the three years, there was no one quite like Daniel and his three friends, even among the king's own wise men! Daniel served the king well and was promoted often. Daniel continued to serve in Babylon through the reign of Nebuchadnezzar's son Belshazzar as well as a new king from another country, Darius the Mede.

Daniel stood out among all the other officials and when King Darius planned to set up governors and supervisors over those governors, Daniel was one of the men chosen. Because Daniel did such good work, "the king planned to put Daniel in charge of the whole kingdom." (Daniel 6:3b NCV) The other officials were jealous and looked for ways to accuse him concerning his work. "But they couldn't find anything wrong with him or any reason to accuse him, because he was trustworthy and not lazy or dishonest." (Daniel 6:4b NCV) These men finally decided that the only way to discredit Daniel was in regards to his loyalty to God, so they convinced the king to make a new law - for the next thirty days no one was to pray to anyone except the king. Anyone choosing not to obey would be thrown into the lions' den. King Darius liked the idea and signed the law. According to the Medes, any law a king made couldn't be changed, not even by the king making the law.

"Daniel found out that the king had signed the order. In spite of that, he did just as he had always done before. He went home to his upstairs room. Its windows opened toward Jerusalem. He went to his room three times a day to pray. He got down on his knees and gave thanks to his God." (Daniel 6:10 NIV) The other officials reported Daniel to the king. The king was very upset, but not in the way you might think. King Darius wasn't angry at Daniel for praying, he was upset that Daniel would have to be thrown into the lions' den. The king wanted to save Daniel and tried everything he could. When it couldn't be avoided, "King Darius gave the order, and Daniel was brought in and thrown into the lion's den. The king said to Daniel, "May the God you serve all the time save you!" (Daniel 6:16 NCV)

King Darius didn't sleep all night. He didn't eat and he didn't even want any entertainment. First thing the next morning, King Darius was at the lions' den. He called out to Daniel, hoping for an answer . . . and he got one! Daniel told him, "My God sent His angel to close the lions' mouths. They have not hurt me." (Daniel 6:22a NCV)


King Darius was so happy and so amazed, that he made a new law. This time it was for everyone to fear and respect the God of Daniel!

YOU CAN BE A HERO, TOO!

When you live a life of faith in Jesus Christ, you don't have to leap tall buildings to be a hero. Daniel prayed to God even when it was illegal. Daniel's faithfulness paid off.

How about you? Are you faithful in your time with the Lord? If a law were passed making it illegal to pray to God, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

You see, we have a beautiful gift in being invited into a relationship and conversation with the God of the universe. He wants to talk with you. Will you make time for Him?



NEXT WEEK
Shadrach, Meshach and
Abednego Survive the Fiery
Furnace

PRE-SCHOOL!

LESSON

Who can tell me what a hero is? A hero is someone who is courageous and brave and compassionate. There are heroes and heroines in the Bible. All of them are brave and courageous and more, but not in the way you would expect.

Our hero: Daniel

His Heroic Feat: Prays to God even when it's illegal

Praying to God even when it's illegal may not sound very heroic, but let's look at the facts and see what you think when you have heard the whole story!

One day, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. He surrounded it with his army and he captured the king. Some of the smarter, more handsome young men from Judah were also captured. These young men were taken away from their families. The king wanted to train them for three years and make them his servants.

The Bible tells us about four of them, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They learned the Babylonian language and its writings. They were supposed to eat from the king's table, but Daniel had decided to obey God, even with the things he ate and drank. He asked their guard to test them for ten days. They ate only vegetables and drank only water. After ten days they looked so much healthier that the guard agreed to let them continue to eat that way during the three years of training.

At the end of the three years, there was no one like Daniel and his three friends, not even among the king's own wise men! Daniel served the king well. He received promotions. Daniel continued to serve in Babylon through the reign of Nebuchadnezzar's son Belshazzar as well as a new king from another country, Darius the Mede. Because Daniel did such a good job, "the king planned to put Daniel in charge of the whole kingdom." (Daniel 6:3b NCV) The other officials were jealous and convinced the king to make a new law - for the next thirty days no one was to pray to anyone except the king. Anyone choosing not to obey would be thrown into the lions' den. King Darius liked the idea and signed the law. According to the Medes, any law a king made couldn't be changed, not even by the king making the law.

When Daniel found out that the king had signed the order, he kept doing what he did every day, he got down on his knees and gave thanks to God. The other officials reported Daniel to the king. The king was very upset . . . he was upset that Daniel would have to be thrown in the lions' den. King Darius gave the order because he had to and Daniel was brought in and thrown into the lions' den.

King Darius didn't sleep all night. He didn't eat and he didn't even want any entertainment. First thing the next morning, King Darius was at the lions' den. He called out to Daniel, hoping for an answer . . . and he got one! Daniel told him, "My God sent His angel to close the lions' mouths. They have not hurt me." (Daniel 6:22a NCV)

ACTIVITIES!

- Memory Verse Activity - Make a paper chain of praying hands. Accordion fold a long strip of paper. Transfer the outline of one hand, being sure that each side of the hand touches the folded edges. Cut out around the hand, leaving part of the folded edges. Write a word from the memory verse on each hand, being sure to include the reference.
- Continue adding heroes' names and heroic feats to your "Heroes Banner."
- Sing "Dare to Be a Daniel," "Trust and Obey," "I Will," "Sweet Hour of Prayer" or other praise songs related to the lesson.
- Make lions masks from paper plates.
- Blindfold a student and have them taste a baby food vegetable. Ask them if they know which vegetable it is. If they are struggling, give several others an opportunity before giving clues.
- Place several different vegetables in a paper bag. Allow one student at a time to grab a vegetable and determine what they have chosen. Encourage your students to name the vegetable before revealing it.
- **For more training:** Read Daniel 1:3-7. Discuss the drastic changes taking place in these young men's lives. Talk about what kept them strong. (See Daniel 1:8 and even review the story of King Josiah and the changes brought about by discovering the word of God that had been lost in the temple.)
- **For more training:** Read Daniel 6:3-5. Can the same be said of you? Take time in prayer, confessing, if necessary, and talking to God as Daniel did so regularly.

Do not worry
about anything,
but pray and ask
God for everything
you need,
always giving thanks.

Philippians 4:6

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Ordinary Men and Women . . .
Super Ordinary Power

HERO IN TRAINING

Daniel Spends the Night with Hungry Lions

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HERO TRAINING!

Scripture: Daniel 1, 6

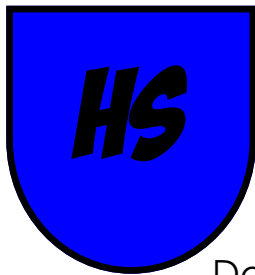
Memory verse:

Do not worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks. (Philippians 4:6 NCV)

Our Hero: _____

What did our heroine do that was so heroic? _____

What can you do to be a **Hero of the Faith**? _____



What power do Heroes of the Faith possess?

Do you have the power? _____

Read Daniel 6:10. How did Daniel react to a very scary situation?

HIDDEN MESSAGE!

Can you crack the code to find the Hidden Message?
Beginning at the arrow, follow the letters counterclockwise around the lion. Copy the letters into the spaces below.



Philippians 4:6

WORD

SEARCH!

B S O C K N E D S L G D E
D S B A B Y L O N O M E R
R E E E N A I T N V O N E
H E Y N E D S N O I L O L
E L G O V A R E A D E L P
Y S O S E S A P C G I T M
C A D I D E Y E B O N H E
R C A A T M Y R H D A T T
E I G H T I E A A S D L D
M N S M T T E Y I W D O E
M I S H A E L N R O F E N
D J V L S E T Y A R P H A
O T E E A R F A Z D I U E
G N R N S H A N A N I A H
H T B U I T F T E G P L C

- Daniel

- Hananiah

- Mishael

- Azariah

- Babylon

- obey God

- pray

- three times a day - lions' den

HIDDEN MESSAGE!

Answer Page

Can you crack the code to find the Hidden Message?
Beginning at the arrow, follow the letters counterclockwise around the lion. Copy the letters into the spaces below.



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(Philippians 4:6 NCV)

WORD

SEARCH!

Answer Page

B	S	O	C	K	N	E	D	S	L	G	D	E
D	S	B	A	B	Y	L	O	N	O	M	E	R
R	E	E	E	N	A	I	T	N	V	O	N	E
H	E	Y	N	E	D	S	N	O	I	L	O	L
E	L	G	O	V	A	R	E	A	D	E	L	P
Y	S	O	S	E	S	A	P	C	G	I	T	M
C	A	D	I	D	E	Y	E	B	O	N	H	E
R	C	A	A	T	M	Y	R	H	D	A	T	T
E	I	G	H	T	I	E	A	A	S	D	L	D
M	N	S	M	T	T	E	Y	I	W	D	O	E
M	I	S	H	A	E	L	N	R	O	F	E	N
D	J	V	L	S	E	T	Y	A	R	P	H	A
O	T	E	E	A	R	F	A	Z	D	I	U	E
G	N	R	N	S	H	A	N	A	N	I	A	H
H	T	B	U	I	T	F	T	E	G	P	L	C

- Daniel
- Azariah
- pray
- Hananiah
- Babylon
- three times a day
- Mishael
- obey God
- lions' den