

DANIEL

Servant of the Most High God

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum • Summer 2021

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LESSON 1

Scripture: Daniel 1:1-21, 2 Kings 22, 2 Chronicles 34

Memory Verse: Proverbs 18:10 (NIV)

The name of the LORD is like a strong tower. Godly people run to it and are safe.

*Unless otherwise noted, Scripture is from the New Living Translation of the book of Daniel.



LESSON 1: The Most High God Allows His People To Be Taken Captive

Have you ever wondered why things happen? Why do you live where you do? Why did you have to move? Why do you have to learn certain things at school and why is so-and-so in power? Those are really very big questions, but not too big for a very big God; the Most High God!

As we study through the book of Daniel we will begin to see the answers to many of those questions and we will learn more about the Most High God who rules and reigns over everything! Knowing that He is in control helps us when situations are bad, like they were for Daniel.

The first thing we read in the book of Daniel is that Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the country of Babylon, declared war against the people of God, the Most High God - the God above every other god, and He let Nebuchadnezzar win. God gave the city to him and even let the Babylonians take away some of the special objects used in the temple to worship God. God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to take things from the temple and put them in the treasury of his own god.

Doesn't that make it seem like Nebuchadnezzar's god is more powerful? The Most High God may not sound like a God that you want in control of everything, but let's look back a few years before Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Jerusalem so that we can really understand what is happening. You see, about 30 years before, there was a young boy who became king. His name was Josiah and, unlike his father and grandfather, he began seeking God as a teenager. During his thirty year reign, his love for God led him to repair the temple that his ancestors before him had misused. God's people had turned away from the one True God to worship idols formed out of the things God had created. They had used the temple for their idol worship and then had abandoned it altogether.

In repairing the temple they found "the Book of the Law," which was either the first five books of the Bible or the Ten Commandments. Either way, it had been lost where it should have been read and studied regularly. Josiah asked someone to read him "the Book of the Law" and he responded to it. He became aware of his sin. He knew that God was very angry with his people because Josiah's ancestors had not obeyed what he had just heard read. Josiah called everyone to the temple and shared the message with them. They heard it and pledged themselves to obey God. "And as long as Josiah was alive, the people continued to serve the LORD." (2 Chronicles 34:33 ERV) After Josiah's death they were back to their old ways. They had received the message of God many years ago through Moses. It was a message of instruction and love. God told His people what to expect and asked them to obey. Their obedience would bring blessings, but they constantly turned away from God; they were disobedient and God punished them. So you see, God had good reason to punish His people. They had been unfaithful and disobedient.

All of this happened during the life of four young men: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. These events shaped their beliefs, but they suffered the consequences of their country's sin. They were carried off to Babylon with the "strong, healthy, good looking young men" of Judah's noble families. (1:3) They were probably teenagers when they were separated from their families and carried to that foreign land.

God had prepared them; they knew who their God was and He would be with them.

When Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah arrived in Babylon, they were put into a training program that would last 3 years. Their names were changed to Babylonian names based on Babylonian gods. They were taught the Babylonian language and its literature and they were fed from the king's own kitchen. In the midst of what amounted to brainwashing, "Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given them by the king." (1:8) You see, Daniel had learned that there is a God in heaven, the Most High God, who rules and reigns over the circumstances of man. He trusted God with the things that happened, with the move from one country to another, and with the leaders who were in control.

Daniel spoke to the person who was in charge and requested a diet of water and vegetables. After a ten day testing period, Daniel and his four friends looked "healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king." (1:17) So, for the next three years, Daniel and his friends continued their training and a diet of vegetables and water. At the end of those three years, all the young men who were taken captive to Babylon were taken before King Nebuchadnezzar. "The king talked with them, and no one impressed him as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah," even the magicians who were already employed by the king. (1:19)

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So, have you ever wondered about any of the questions we began the lesson with? (Reread the first paragraph) Why were Daniel and his friends carried off to captivity? (the nation's sin) Why was Nebuchadnezzar even in power? (to punish God's people) What in the world was God doing? God was at work in a way they couldn't even imagine. (Habakkuk 1)

Do you remember the name of God used over and over in the book of Daniel? (The Most High God) He rules and reigns over everything. When it looks like your world is turning upside down, do what Daniel did. Run for safety in the name of your God.

ACTIVITIES

- Memory verse activity:
- Look at an ancient map of Babylon and Canaan. Talk about how far Daniel and his friends traveled. Then compare it with a modern day map and talk about what country is Babylon today.
- Discuss the name changes mentioned in Daniel chapter 1.

Daniel (*God is my judge*) -----> Belteshazzar (*Bel's Prince*)

Hananiah (*God is gracious*) -----> Shadrach (*Illumined by Aku*)

Mishael (*Who is like God?*) -----> Meshach (*Who is what Aku is?*)

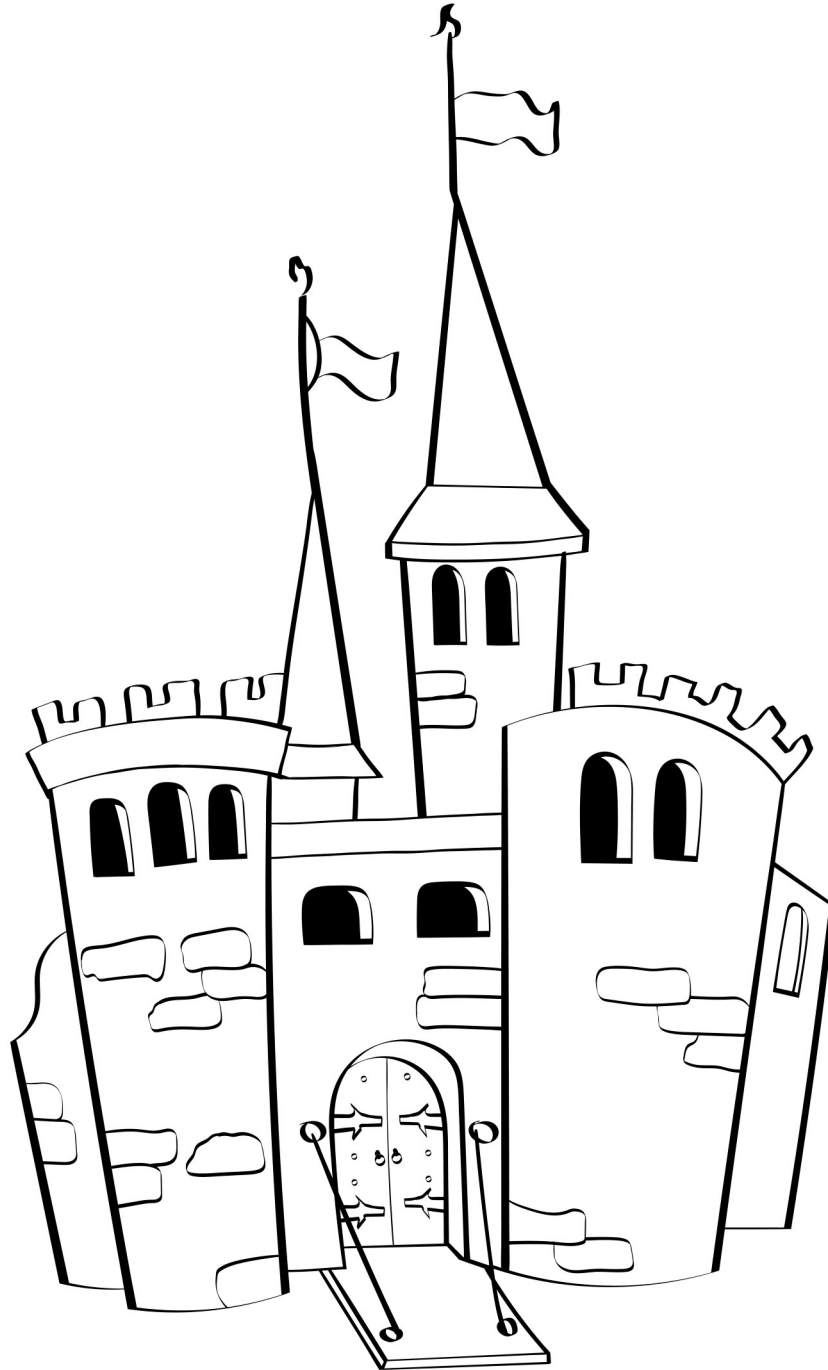
Azariah (*The Lord is my help*) -----> Abednego (*servant of Nebo*)

- Provide a book, or search the internet, to give each student the meaning of their name. If possible, provide each student a certificate including their name, its meaning, and a Scripture that goes along with that meaning.
- Appoint students as characters in the story and have them stand each time their character is mentioned.



PROVERBS 18:10

The name of the LORD is like a strong tower. Godly people run to it and are safe.



WORD SEARCH

D A N I A L A W H A N I N A

Babylon

E L E I N A D I A Z A R I A

B A B A B Y L O N T E R A N

Nebuchadnezzar

A N U B E C H D A N E Z Z A

Daniel

Z E C H A D T A N W I R A Z

J E H U S A L E I S H A D R

Hananiah

M E A C H S A Z A R I A H A

Mishael

A B D N E L E A H S I M I S

S O N Y B A B A B Y L A N O

Azariah

H S E L B A T E G E V S I W

vegetables

A V Z S H A D R A C E T A W

E L Z G I Z A E Z R G A G E

water

L E A E A W N W A I E W E B

E N R V Z I I A P D T E V Z

wise



WORD SEARCH

ANSWER PAGE

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

Babylon

Nebuchadnezzar

Daniel

Hananiah

Mishael

Azariah

vegetables

water

wise

