

Bible Story 25: SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDNEGO IN FIERY FURNACE; DANIEL IN LIONS' DEN

SCRIPTURE: DANIEL 1:1-20; 3:1-30; 6:1-28

MEMORY VERSE: PSALM 66:19

BIBLE STORY:

King Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah, and the people were taken away as prisoners to Babylon. Among the prisoners, some youths from the royal family and noble families were chosen to serve the king. These youths were highly intelligent, good looking and had no physical defect. In preparation, for three years they learned to read and write the Babylonian language, before going to the palace to serve the King Nebuchadnezzar.

Among the chosen were four youths from Judah: Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They decided to continue to respect and obey the teachings of God. They would not drink wine nor eat the king's food, but eat vegetables and drink water. God blessed them. As time passed, the king discovered that these four Jewish youths were more intelligent than all the others.

After sometime, King Nebuchadnezzar commanded a large gold statue to be made. It would be ninety feet high and nine feet wide. He ordered all the people in the area to kneel and worship the golden idol whenever they heard instruments playing. Whoever disobeyed this order would be thrown into a fiery furnace. However, when Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego heard the instruments playing, they did not kneel nor worship this golden idol. The king became angry. He demanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than normal. The three Jewish youths were tied and thrown into the flaming furnace. But later when the king looked into the furnace, he saw four men walking freely. The fourth man was an angel of God who was protecting the youths from the blazing fire. The king shouted for the

youths to come out of the furnace. King Nebuchadnezzar recognized that these Jewish youths served and were protected by their all powerful and almighty God. Afterwards these youths received very important responsibilities in Babylon.

Many years passed, and Daniel was now serving King Darius in Babylon. The king liked Daniel and knew he did an outstanding job. He was even thinking of putting Daniel over all his kingdom. The other officers found out and were very jealous. How could they do away with Daniel? They knew that Daniel prayed three times every day to his God. So they cleverly got King Darius to sign a document saying that all people must pray only to the king for the next thirty days. Whoever did not obey the law would be thrown into a lions' den. When Daniel heard about the new law, he went home. With the window open, he knelt and prayed, giving thanks to God three times each day. As a result of disobeying the new law, Daniel was thrown into a den with lions. With sadness the king said, "*Daniel, I hope the God you serve saves you.*" A stone was placed over the opening of the den.

The king went back to his palace, but he could not eat nor sleep. He was very worried about his friend Daniel. Early the next morning, Darius quickly went to the den. There was Daniel, alive! An angel had closed the mouths of all the lions and protected Daniel. God was all powerful! Happily, the king demanded that they let Daniel out of the den. King Darius ordered all the people in his kingdom to respect and honor Daniel's powerful God!

LIFE LESSONS:

1. Daniel and his friends took care of their health. Take care of your health. How? (Eat healthy food; do physical exercise; brush your teeth, get the proper amount of sleep, etc.)
2. The three youths from Judah continued to be faithful and worship God even when they were taken away as prisoners. Trust in God to give you the ability to face any difficulty. Also, worship God wherever you are.
3. Daniel did not hide, but openly prayed to God in front of a window. Do not be embarrassed to pray. Be courageous like Daniel and pray openly.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What were Daniel, Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego doing in the palace? What did they eat and drink at the king’s table? Why?
2. Why do you need to eat healthy food and drinks? What are some other things you can do to have a healthy body?
3. Why were Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego thrown into the fiery furnace? How did God protect their lives? What happened afterwards?
4. Do you think it took a lot of courage not to worship the golden idol when everyone else was doing it? Why?
5. How can you resist and not do wrong things that everyone around you are doing? Why should you resist?
6. Is it hard to go to church when you have friends that stay home and play games, etc. Why should you go to church to worship God?
7. Why was Daniel, who was a friend of King Darius, thrown in the lions’ den? How did God protect his life? What happened afterwards?
8. Have you ever been hurt by a friend? How?
9. Why is it important to pray to God? What are some things you can pray to God about today? (*As a group pray together for any special needs in the class.*)
10. Is it hard to pray when other people are around you? What can you do when you feel timid or feel embarrassed about praying?
11. Are you ever afraid? How can you ask God for help? What are some ways that God can help you? Who are some people who can help you when you are afraid?

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS BIBLE STORY:

Choose activities that may be used in your specific situation. Consider the age and maturity of each person, locality where the story will be told (customs and traditions), and available resources, time and space.

PRESENTATION:

– Start the class by doing some exercises. Then serve a healthy snack (piece of fruit, handful of cereal, etc. (Be aware of any food allergies of people in your group and avoid giving these items to them.) Ask: “*Why do we need to exercise? What are some good exercises to do? What are some good, healthy food and snacks to eat? Why do we need to eat healthy food?*” Then share that today’s Bible story is about four healthy, strong, intelligent, courageous boys. Tell the Bible story.

GUEST: “LION’S MOUTH”

- **Option 1:** Invite a dentist to come and speak to the group about taking care of their teeth. Talk about how to brush properly, how often to brush teeth, etc. If possible, give a tooth brush and tooth paste to each person.
- **Option 2:** Invite a doctor or nurse to come and talk about how to take care of their bodies.
- **Option 3:** Invite someone to come talk about the harm of taking drugs and its consequences.

DRAMA:

– Dramatize the stories: “The Young Men in the Fiery Furnace” and “Daniel and the Lions’ Den.”

OUTING:

– Visit a zoo together. When you are at the lions’ cages, tell the Bible story.

HEALTHY CHOICES:

- Each person chooses a healthy activity to pursue, such as walking, eating healthier meals, etc.
- Each person keeps a personal journal on ways he is improving his health.

PROGRESSIVE DINNER:

– Plan a progressive dinner, each course being at a different location, house or restaurant. Example: **1ST place** - salad/soup; **2ND place** - main dish; **3RD place** - dessert. After the dessert, tell the Bible story.

GAME: “LION’S MOUTH”

– Draw and color the figure of a lion. Cut it out. Put this figure on the wall or on a tree outside. Cut out pictures of fruit and food from old magazines. In class, give each one of the fruit/food pictures.
 - **Play the game:** Blindfold an individual, turn him around, leaving him facing the figure of the lion. The person goes forward, putting his fruit/food picture onto the lion. The person who places his picture closest to the lion’s mouth wins.

DAILY BIBLE READING - Daniel 1:1-20; 3:1-30; 6:1-28

1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	4 TH	5 TH	6 TH	7 TH
Daniel 1:1-8	Daniel 1:9-20	Daniel 3:1-7	Daniel 3:8-18	Daniel 3:19-30	Daniel 6:1-14	Daniel 6:15-28