

Daniel in the lions' den



Daniel 6

8

Under King Darius, too, Daniel was a very respected man of high standing. At a window facing Jerusalem he prayed and praised his God three times daily. His wisdom and blameless walk of life aroused envy, and hatred, among his colleagues. By means of a cunning ruse, they forced King Darius to have Daniel cast into the lions' den. But God did not forsake his servant in his hour of need. With God's help and through powerful angel protection, Daniel remained unharmed.

God guides and strengthens his faithful children, and can also save them miraculously from the greatest danger.

Daniel now serves the third king of Babylon. Also to King Darius he is a loyal, honest and wise advisor. Darius holds Daniel in very high esteem and wants to appoint him the highest governor of his kingdom.

"Have you heard? Now the king wants to appoint Daniel governor over his entire kingdom. He will then also be master over us. That we must not allow to happen," are the angry comments made about the virtuous Daniel by some of the most powerful and influential men of the land. They are filled with hatred and envy and consult together as to how they can ruin Daniel. "If we watch him closely, we are bound to find some fault in him, and we can immediately report him to the king."

But Daniel performs his duties so well that they can find no fault in him.

Daniel is a faithful servant of the Lord. Three times daily he prays to God. In his room he kneels before the open window facing Jerusalem. In this way he praises God and feels connected in spirit with the holy city of Jerusalem. He yearns to return to his native land.

2

Those who are jealous of Daniel search in vain for faults which they can use to defame him before the king. They revert to a cunning ruse and make the following suggestion: "Great King Darius, we would like to propose that you establish a royal decree that no one will be allowed, for a period of 30 days, to make a petition to any god or any man, other than to you, O king. Whoever does so, shall be severely punished and shall be cast into the lions' den."

"Splendid", calls out Darius enthusiastically. "I will have this decree proclaimed throughout the land at once "

Daniel also hears of this royal decree, but continues to pray to God at his open window. He praises, thanks and asks the Lord to allow his people to return to their native land soon.

Daniel's enemies pounce on him as soon as they observe him disregarding the royal decree. They surprise him while he is praying, and immediately hasten to the king to accuse Daniel: "Your servant, Daniel, does not comply with your command. You must have him cast into the lions' den "

The king is very sad. He likes Daniel and would, therefore, like to save him. But Daniel's enemies know that the king cannot save Daniel any more. They say to the king: "You know, O king, that the law of our land says: What the king has decreed, no one can alter, not even the king himself."

God is close to his own - Daniel

King Darius has Daniel summoned and says: "Daniel, unfortunately I cannot help you. I hope, however, that your whom you serve so faithfully, will help you and save you."

Daniel is cast into the lions' den.



The king returns to his palace very sorrowfully. He cannot sleep that night. Early the next morning he goes back to the God lions' den.

3

"Daniel, Daniel," he calls down anxiously into the pit. He is overjoyed when he hears Daniel answer him from out of the lions' den: "O king, my God has saved me! He has sent an angel down to me so that the lions would not harm me. The dear Lord saw that I was innocent."

The king is very relieved and orders that Daniel be taken out of the lions' den.

Alive and healthy, Daniel stands before the visibly relieved and happy king. What a wonderful miracle Daniel has experienced through his trust in God!

The king has Daniel's enemies cast into the lions' den. But now there is no angel there to help them...

After this Daniel prospers. He is made the king's highest servant and advisor and the king sends out a new decree: "Daniel's God is to be worshipped throughout the land!"

4

Because of God's help, Daniel was not harmed in the lions' den. King Darius was very surprised. The Lord protects, strengthens and saves his children. He is close to them!

- 1 We begin the lesson by looking at the picture of the three men in the fiery furnace with the children. We remind them of the great trust in God and the miraculous escape of Daniel's three friends. We begin the story with the sentence: Daniel, who has grown old in the meantime, now experiences a situation very similar to that of his three friends.
- 2 With the children we look at the picture of Daniel praying. We remind the children that these prayers are a constant source of great strength for Daniel. God helped Daniel, and answered many of his prayers.
- 3 We look at the picture of Daniel in the lions' den. The children will certainly notice that the lions surrounding Daniel appear quite friendly. Why did they behave so tamely? We marvel with the children at the miraculous protection Daniel had.
- 4 The children draw a picture in their workbook depicting one of their own experiences with angels.