

## DEVOUTNESS – DANIEL

Objective

The children find out what devoutness is and how God blesses those who are devout.

Contents

- Daniel's life-style (Daniel 1; 6).
- God's blessing (Daniel 2; 5).
- What is our attitude toward God?



## Lesson Plan

### Lead-In

#### Workbook, Exercise 1

The children read exercise 1. In a discussion, elaborate on the story, “Daniel in the Lions’ Den”, by answering the questions.

(Procedural Note: It can be assumed that the children are familiar with the basics of this story. Should this not be the case, take on the role of the father; otherwise, merely supplement the children’s knowledge.)

### Implementation

#### Discussion

The following points should be brought out:

- The Persian King Darius, who reigned over Babylon, wanted to set Daniel as ruler over the entire kingdom. This made the other governors and rulers jealous. They became his enemies and thought about how to trick him.
- They knew that Daniel prayed regularly, and made the king pass the decree that everyone who would worship someone other than the king during the next thirty days was to be thrown into the lions’ den.
- But Daniel remained faithful to his God. He continued to pray to him three times daily, despite the king’s decree. His enemies caught him praying and started proceedings against him before the king, who, with a heavy heart, had to have Daniel thrown into the lions’ den. However, he also wished him God’s help.
- God preserved Daniel. He sent his angel who held the lions’ jaws shut. When the king found Daniel unharmed the next morning, he was happy and had the miracle of Daniel’s rescue proclaimed to all the peoples of his kingdom.
- The men who had accused Daniel were thrown into the lions’ den with their families, and the lions tore them apart.

Analyze these events with the children.

- Daniel was faithful to God in every respect. His enemies were unable to find anything for which they could have reproached him, other than the fact that he served the living God.

## Workbook, Exercise 2

Some of the windows of Daniel's house were directed toward Jerusalem where he prayed three times daily to God. Although he had already lived many years at the court of the king in Babylon, Daniel had kept his faith.

- Courageously Daniel continued with his prayers, despite the fact that this endangered his life.

Work on exercise 2 with the children. Roles are allocated for reading the text. At the request, "Do you also know the story? Tell it!" let the children describe Daniel's upbringing at the Babylonian court.

## Discussion

- Daniel did not want to transgress against God's commandments by having the food and drink of the king. That is why he asked the first chamberlain to let him and his three Israelite friends have only vegetables and water.

- The chamberlain allowed himself to be talked into a ten-day trial period, despite his fear of the king. At the end of that time, the four friends looked better than all the others and also were able to continue doing without the king's food.

- When their education was completed three years later, the king selected Daniel and his friends to serve at his court from among all those who had been educated.

## Workbook, Exercise 2

The children finish reading exercise 2.

## Discussion

Analyze the story.

While in Babylonian captivity, the people of Israel did not have the same rights and protection as the Babylonians. However, they also were not slaves in the customary manner. Although Daniel was not treated like a Babylonian, he did nevertheless enjoy certain privileges because he was of noble lineage.

When Daniel was chosen to be educated at the king's court, this was preferential treatment. By refusing to eat the king's food, he risked losing this privilege. Following God's commandments and leading a life pleasing to God was most important to Daniel.

**This shows Daniel's devoutness.**

Write the following on the board:

## Board

Daniel was devout because he

- obeyed God’s commandments, and
- led a God-pleasing life.

## Workbook, Exercise 3

The children transfer what is written on the board into their workbook and then work on exercise 3.

## Discussion

Discuss the answers.

■ God gave Daniel wisdom, intelligence and the gift of interpreting dreams whereby Daniel was able to reveal many obscurities to the kings under which he lived in Babylon. For example:

- He interpreted Nebuchadnezzar’s dream about the four empires and God’s eternal kingdom which will never again be destroyed (Daniel 2).

This kingdom of God referred to Jesus Christ. With him this kingdom began on earth and we are included in it.

- He explained the mysterious writing on the wall to Belshazzar (Daniel 5).

Note: If there is sufficient time during this lesson, tell the children the story of Nebuchadnezzar’s forgotten dream about the four empires and the kingdom of God as found in the workbook.

■ Although he was not a Babylonian, Daniel obtained a high and respected position in Babylon. He

- was put above all the wise men, astrologers and soothsayers, and
- was a ruler in Babylon.

■ God declared his support for Daniel by rescuing him from the lions.

## Question Prompt

What can we learn from Daniel?

We want to be devout (i.e., obey God’s commandments).

- We learn God’s timely will through the word from the altar.
- We grasp this word and keep it in our hearts.

## Conclusion

### Question Prompt

■ To translate God's will into action means, for example that we

- pray,
- forgive,
- are faithful and upright,
- endeavour to be an example, and
- trust God in all situations of life.

### What does this mean in our daily life?

- We try to live in peace with everyone.
- In our prayers we tell God everything that moves us and then trust in his help.
- We also forgive those who have dealt unjustly with us.

When we fulfil this, God will also bless us richly.

## Notes

[illegible]