



Daniel remained captive in the land of Babylon. Now, a different King ruled the kingdom. Daniel faced a very big challenge when he had to choose to either obey God or obey the King. God proved that He rescues His children.

Day #1: Work for the Lord

Daniel was a wonderful servant for King Nebuchadnezzar. In fact, Daniel was a godly influence on the King, and in time, Nebuchadnezzar came to follow Daniel's God, the one true God.

Daniel was such a wise and trustworthy man that every King who ruled after Nebuchadnezzar kept Daniel in a high position. When King Darius was in power, he needed help running his large kingdom. He divided Babylon into 120 states, and put a governor in charge of each one. Daniel was one of these governors. Soon, King Darius saw that Daniel did his work far better than any of the other governors or officials. The King wanted to put Daniel in charge of the entire kingdom (Daniel 6:3). With Daniel in charge, the King wouldn't have to worry about a thing.

Just imagine: Daniel wasn't even from Babylon, but the King planned to put him in charge of everything! That is because even though Daniel wasn't in his homeland working for his own King, he served to the best of his ability right where he was. He honored God by his faithful, honest service to King Darius.

✝ *Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ. - Colossians 3:23-24 NLT*

✱ Did you know this applies to your mom, your dad, your teachers - and YOU? Whatever you work at, remember that you are working for the Lord. This may be pulling weeds, washing dishes, feeding your neighbor's pet, or doing your schoolwork. When you realize that your hard work will bring eternal rewards, there is never room for a half-hearted effort. Discuss what chores or jobs you have. Do you work as though it is for the Lord? How can you improve?

Day #2: Habitat

Do you have any habits? Does anyone you know have habits? Often we think of habits as bad things like nail biting or gum smacking. But did you know there are also good habits? List a good habit that you have. (Brushing your teeth, practicing piano)

Daniel was in the most wonderful habit of praying to the Lord. Every single day, Daniel knelt down in front of his window, facing the direction of Jerusalem, and prayed. Daniel prayed in this direction, because God's temple was in Jerusalem; it was in his homeland of Judah. Facing the direction of the temple in prayer was a special instruction for the Israelite captives (2 Chronicles 6:36-39).

In obedience, Daniel turned toward the Holy temple and prayed three times each day. This was Daniel's way of abiding in, or remaining with, God. Because Daniel abided in the Lord this way, God gave him great wisdom, and favor even with Kings. There is no better habit than spending time with the Lord!

✱ Do you have a set time and place to read God's word and pray? While you can go to the Lord anytime and anywhere, it is GREAT to have a special place that is just for you and God to get together everyday. The dictionary defines a **habitat** as "a place where a person or thing is found; a place where something grows."

Select a special place that is comfortable, with good lighting, and keep your Bible there. Every day, set a certain time and get into the wonderful habit of meeting with the Lord. This time and place will be your **habitat** - it's where your habit's at!

✝ The morning is a terrific time to meet with the Lord: *Lord, in the morning You hear my voice. In the morning I pray to You. I wait for You in hope. - Psalm 5:3*

Some people say that it takes doing something 21 times to form a habit. Try out your new **habitat** for 21 days, and you will be well on your way to the most beneficial habit you could ever have.

Day #3: Evil Advice

List some characteristics of a good leader. You may list things like truthful, dependable, and wise. Daniel was all of these things and more. But there were also some very devious men who worked for King Darius.

Daniel 6:3 says that Daniel stood apart from all the other officials in Babylon. If the Bible describes Daniel as honest, never stealing, hard working, and trustworthy, what does that tell us about the other officials? (They were *not* honest, trustworthy, or dependable.)

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These men didn't want Daniel to be in charge of Babylon. They looked for a way to get him arrested. They tried hard to find anything that Daniel had done wrong. Of course, there was nothing to be found because Daniel was upright in everything he did.



Finally those men said, "It's almost impossible for us to come up with a reason to bring charges against this man Daniel. If we do, it will have to be in connection with the law of his God." - Daniel 6:5

So the men came up with a wicked plan. They met with King Darius. They told him that he should give an order that no one in the kingdom could pray to any god or man except King Darius for 30 days. If anyone broke this law, he would be thrown into a den of hungry lions. The King was not a follower of the one true God. In his eyes, the order seemed like a good idea. Once he signed the order, it could not be undone.

King Darius took the advice of wicked, selfish men. Very soon, he would regret this decision.

God blesses those people who refuse evil advice and won't follow sinners or join in sneering at God. - Psalm 1:1 CEV



Be alert! Some people want to lead you into sinful behavior. Do not take the advice of these people. Is there anyone in your life who gives you bad advice? Who can you trust to give you godly advice? Never follow advice that is against God's word.

Day #4: The Choice

Daniel heard about the King's new law. Daniel had to make a choice.

- He could pray to King Darius,
- He could stop praying for 30 days,
- He could pray to God secretly, or
- He could continue to pray at his window as he always had.



He went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God. - Daniel 6:10b

Daniel was one of the most important leaders in the Babylonian kingdom. He was known for his consistent prayer time. Surely many people were watching to see what he would do about the king's order. Daniel would not spend one day without praying to His Lord. But he would not pray in secret. He would let everyone know that He depended on God every day, even if it meant facing a den full of hungry lions. Daniel's actions proved that he had faith in God's protection.

The evil men couldn't wait to report Daniel's prayer time to the King. King Darius was very upset that Daniel's life was in danger. But there was no way to

Day #4 continued:

change the law. Darius wanted to save Daniel, but he could not. The king had made a foolish decision, and now he was trapped by it. He was forced to have Daniel thrown into a cave of lions.

The King spent a long, restless night worrying about his friend. He would have to wait until daybreak to see what happened to Daniel.



Just like many people watched to see what choice Daniel would make, people also watch you. You are never too young to be a good example to others (1 Timothy 4:12). At times, you may even be a godly example to those in authority over you, just as Daniel was.

Day #5: The Rescuer

Is God stronger than a lion? Is He stronger than ten lions? What if the lions are really big and really hungry? Of course, God is immeasurably stronger than every lion on earth put together!

What happened next is one of the most well known stories in the Bible. God sent an angel to shut the roaring mouths of the fierce lions.

As soon as the sun came up, King Darius ran to check on his favorite official. The King was probably afraid to go near the cave. He hoped against hope that God had rescued His loyal servant. When he arrived, he called to Daniel with a trembling voice.

He said, "Daniel! You serve the living God. You always serve him faithfully. So has he been able to save you from the lions?" - Daniel 6:20b

To the King's surprise, Daniel called back!



My God sent his angel. And his angel shut the mouths of the lions. They haven't hurt me at all. That's because I haven't done anything wrong in God's sight. I've never done anything wrong to you either, my king." - Daniel 6:22

King Darius was overjoyed! Daniel came out without a scratch. Right away he sent out another order. It was quite different than the first. This time he ordered everyone to praise Daniel's God - the one true God.

Of course, God could have stopped all of this from happening in the first place. But God chose to allow this event, so He could rescue Daniel, and show the Babylonian King and people that He is the all-powerful God who rescues His children.



The next time you are faced with a situation that feels like you are stepping into a den of hungry lions, trust God. Ask Him for the faith to trust Him fully (Ephesians 2:8). He may even rescue you in a way that points everyone around you to Himself.