

# GOD THE GOOD SHEPHERD

## UNIT TWO: God's Messengers

**Lesson 5:****Daniel in the Lion's Den****CONTENT:**

1. Daniel was another Jewish exile in Babylon. In the days of King Darius he was given charge of one third of the Kingdom and fulfilled his duties wisely and honestly.
2. The other leaders were jealous and tried in vain to find some fault with Daniel. At last they got the king to sign an edict stating that any person who prayed to anyone other than the king would be thrown into a den of lions.
3. Daniel knew of the law but continued to pray three times a day to the Lord. The leaders demanded that he be thrown to the lions and the king gave the command much against his wishes.
4. In the morning King Darius found Daniel unharmed. He was taken out and the wicked leaders thrown into the den in his place. The king sent a letter to the whole kingdom, ordering everyone to honour Daniel's God, 'the living God'.
5. Jesus would go off into the mountains to be alone with God and pray. He asked us to pray out of love for God, not to show off to others.
6. *Our God is truly a 'living God'. He hears our prayers and desires that we remember him and pray to him. We should remember God at all times, but it is good to pray at specific times every day: In the morning, at night and before and after meals. [CCC 2566, 2697-98.]*

**ASSIGNMENT:** Read handout at home; learn the morning offering.

**REFERENCES:** Daniel Ch6. Matthew 6: 5-6.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Handouts and prayer handouts; Coloured card paper for each student (a little larger than A4); scissors, glue.

**I. STARTER:**

- At our last class we heard about martyrs. [*Write MARTYRS on the board.*] Can anyone tell me who a martyr is? [*Someone who suffers a lot or even dies for the sake of God.*]
- We heard about 3 young men who were ready to suffer for God. What were their names? [*Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.*] Let's sing the song we learnt to remember their story. [*Sing the jingle 'Three Brave Men'*]
- What did the king want the young men to do? [*Bow down and worship the golden statue.*]
- What happened to them when they refused? [*They were thrown into a fiery furnace.*]
- What happened to them there? [*God sent an angel and a cool, wet wind so they did not get burnt.*]
- Many years later, Mother Mary appeared to 3 children at a place called Fatima. What were the children's names? [*Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta.*]
- What did Mother Mary ask the children? [*If they were ready to suffer for God and bring sinners back to him.*]
- Did the children suffer? How? [*Yes. People didn't believe them and punished them. An officer caught them and put them in prison. He pretended that he was going to boil them in oil if they didn't tell him Mother Mary's secret.*]

**II. DEVELOPMENT:**

Today we'll hear about another good man who was taken along with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as a prisoner to Babylon. His name was Daniel and he was also a prophet like Samuel and Elijah: God spoke to him and he gave God's message to the people.

Now King Nebuchadnezzar and his son were proud and did not respect the Lord. They died and their kingdom went to a king called Darius. This king saw that Daniel was very wise and honest, and he realised that God was with him, so he put him in charge of one-third of his kingdom. Daniel governed so well that the king said, "Let me put him in charge of my whole kingdom!"

But the other leaders didn't like this plan one bit! Each one wanted the position for himself. They got together and said, "Let's find out something bad about Daniel and complain to the king. Maybe he has not done his work properly, or made himself rich with the king's money."

For some time they spied on him and watched him carefully, but they couldn't find any fault with him. At last someone said, "The only way to catch him is through his religion!"

They sat together and made a wicked plan. One day, when Daniel was not there, they went to the king with a new law. "O King, may you live forever! We, your officers have all agreed that you should make a law: For 30 days everyone in the kingdom should pray to you alone. If anyone prays to any other God, he should be thrown into a den of lions! Now sign this law! It is all ready. Make it firm, so that it cannot be changed!"

The king didn't realise what the men were up to. He signed the law. Soon everyone in the kingdom heard about the new law. Daniel heard about it too, but he loved the Lord, and he continued to pray to him as he had always done. Three times a day he would climb up to his upper room and open the windows which faced Jerusalem, where God's temple was. There he would kneel down and pray to the Lord his God.

The wicked leaders were waiting for this. They saw Daniel praying as usual in front of his open window and rushed off to the king. "O king, live forever! Didn't you sign a law that no one should pray to anyone except you for 30 days?"

"Yes, I did."

"This law cannot be changed!" the men shouted. "We have found someone who has disobeyed the law: Daniel, the exile from Jerusalem still prays 3 times a day to his own God!"

When he heard this, King Darius was very very upset. All day he tried different ways to help his friend Daniel to escape, but in the evening the leaders came back to him and said, "Remember O king that no law signed by the king may be changed."

Then the king gave the order. Daniel was caught and brought to a pit full of lions. As Daniel was lowered into the pit, the king shouted, "Daniel, may your God, whom you serve so faithfully, save you!" A big stone was brought and placed over the opening to the den.

The king went to his palace, but he didn't sleep or eat the whole night. Then, early in the morning he hurried to the lions' den and ordered that the stone should be rolled away.

"O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God been able to save you from the lions?"

Daniel's voice came out from the pit, "Yes O king! My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they would not hurt me, because I had done no wrong!"

The king was full of joy. "Take Daniel out at once!" he shouted, "And bring those wicked leaders and throw them into the den instead!" Then he sent a letter to be read to all the people of his kingdom: "I command that all the people should respect Daniel's God because he is the living God. He saves and works miracles in heaven and earth!"

*[Students enact the story of Daniel.]*

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#### NEXT CLASS:

- Last time we heard the story of Daniel in the lions' den. Think now, does that story remind you of another story we heard?...When someone else went early in the morning and found their friend alive instead of dead? *[Like King Darius, Mary Magdalene went to visit Jesus' grave. She found the stone rolled away and found that Jesus was alive.]*
- Do you remember what King Darius called Daniel's God? *[He called him 'The Living God']*
- Is our God a living God? Can he hear us? Does he help us? *[Yes! He is alive.]* He hears our prayers and even speaks to us in our hearts, especially when we listen to his Word from the Bible.

- Daniel knew that God was a living God that's why he prayed every day. How many times did he pray every day? [*3 times.*]
- What about us? Should we pray every day, or only on Sundays in church?
- We should talk to God many times all through the day, but like Daniel we should also have special times to pray: In the morning, at night before going to sleep, and before and after meals. It is also good to pray together with our families.
- When do you pray? What do you say, do during this prayer time? [*Allow students to share their personal prayer habits. Bring out the following: ]*
- IN THE MORNING soon after we wake up we should offer God our day. God is the one who has given us everything, even our life, so it is right that we should offer him everything back. That means, we should try and do everything for him and with him. In the morning we also ask God to help us to obey him and make him happy. You could say the prayer to your Guardian Angel too. (We learnt this prayer in Std I.)
- At night, before sleeping, we should quietly think about the whole day and thank God for all his blessings. After that, we try to remember if we have made him sad in any way. As we remember our sins we ask him to forgive us. Then we could ask him to help us have a good night's sleep. If you give someone something, you expect them to say thank you! We also should remember God before and after we eat, since he has given us food. Before we eat we ask him to bless us and our food. 7. The next morning, the king found that an angel had kept Daniel safe.

*[Go over the grace before and after meals (These were introduced in Std III Unit1, Lesson9) Give out the handouts and read the written matter, filling in the missing words:]*

1. King Darius wanted to put Daniel in charge of his whole kingdom.
2. The other leaders spied on Daniel but could not find any fault with him.
3. They got the king to sign a law that people should pray only to the king.
4. The law said that anyone who disobeyed would be thrown into a den of lions.
5. Even though Daniel knew about the law, he continued to pray to the Lord 3 times a day.
6. Against his wishes, the king ordered Daniel to be thrown into the lions' den.

### III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

- Let us become quiet now and close our eyes. Think of Daniel, who knew that God was alive, a living God... He knew that God was waiting for him to come to be alone with him. Even when it was dangerous for him to pray, Daniel went up to his room to pray.
- Let's ask God to help us to love him and pray to him every day morning and night, like Daniel.  
*[Lead the students in a prayer:]*

Lord Jesus/ I believe that you are a living God/ You hear me when I pray /  
You talk to me in my heart. / You are waiting for me to come to you /  
and to be alone with you. / Please help me to remember you /  
and to pray every morning and night / and at meal-times. / Amen.

### IV. ACTIVITY:

*[In their 'Prayer Sheet' students:*

*-fill in sketches of 1. 'BLESSINGS' E.g. food, friends, family, school, play etc 2. 'SINS' E.g. hurting someone, stealing, saying no to God etc.*

*-They colour and decorate the sheets, cut on the dotted line, and stick them onto coloured card paper leaving a border around. One prayer is stuck on either side of the paper. Remind them to use it to pray, morning and night.]*

<b>Home assignment:</b> × Read handout at home.    × Learn Morning Offering.
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