

## Daniel reader's theater

CHARACTERS: Daniel, Narrator 1, Narrator 2, Nebuchadnezzar, Ashpenaz, Arioch, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Wife, Belshazzar, King Darius, Chaldeans 1, 2 & 3, Satraps 1, 2 & 3; Queen, Angel (doubling Satraps and Chaldeans possible)

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Daniel 1-6, (Holman Christian Standard Bible)

FK Reading level 7.8

### Scene 1 - Daniel's Captivity & Faithfulness in Babylon

NARRATOR 1: In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, the Lord handed him over to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Bring some of the Israelites from the royal family and from the nobility back to Babylon.

ASHPENAZ: Which ones, sire?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Young men without any physical defect, good-looking, suitable for instruction in all wisdom, knowledgeable, perceptive, and capable of serving in the king's palace.

ASHPENAZ: Yes, sire.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Teach them our Chaldean language and literature for three years. At the end of that time they will serve in my court.

NARRATOR 2: From the descendants of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were selected.

ASHPENAZ: You shall have other names. Daniel, we shall call Belteshazzar. I change Shadrach to Hananiah, Meshach to Mishael, and Abednego to Azariah.

NARRATOR 1: Daniel determined that he would not defile himself with the king's food or with the wine he drank.

NARRATOR 2: God had granted Daniel favor and compassion from the chief official, Ashpenaz.

DANIEL: Please give me permission to not defile myself by eating wine or the king's food.

ASHPENAZ: My lord the king assigned your food and drink. I'm afraid of what would happen if he saw your faces looking thinner than those of the other young men your age. You would endanger my life with the king.

NARRATOR 1: So Daniel spoke to the Arioch whom the chief official had assigned to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

DANIEL: Please test your servants for 10 days. Let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then examine our appearance and the appearance of the young men who are eating the king's food, and deal with your servants based on what you see.

ARIOCH: I agree.

NARRATOR 2: At the end of 10 days they looked better and healthier than all the young men who were eating the king's food.

NARRATOR 1: So the Arioch continued to remove their food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables.

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NARRATOR 2: God gave these four young men knowledge and understanding in every kind of literature and wisdom.

NARRATOR 1: Daniel also understood visions and dreams of every kind.

ASHPENAZ: King Nebuchadnezzar, here are the Judeans ready for service in your court.

NARRATOR 1: Nebuchadnezzar interviewed them, and among all of them, no one was found equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: These four, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, are ten times better than all the diviner-priests and mediums in my entire kingdom in every matter of wisdom and understanding.

### Scene 2 - Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: (*troubled*) I have troubling dreams and cannot sleep. Summon the diviner-priests, mediums, sorcerers, and Chaldeans to explain these dreams.

ARIOCH: Yes, sire.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: I have had a dream and am anxious to understand it.

CHALDEAN 1: May the king live forever. Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: (*emphatic*) No. My word is final: If you don't tell me the dream and its interpretation, you will be torn limb from limb, and your houses will be made garbage dump. (*ad lib shocked and concerned "Oh no", "What?"*)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: But if you make the dream and its interpretation known to me, you'll receive gifts, a reward, and great honor from me. So make the dream and its interpretation known to me.

CHALDEAN 1: May the king tell the dream to his servants, and we will give the interpretation.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: (*stern*) You are trying to gain some time, because you see that my word is final. If you don't tell me the dream, there is one decree for you. You have conspired to tell me something false or fraudulent until the situation changes. So tell me the dream and I will know you can give me its interpretation.

CHALDEAN 2: (*panicked*) No one on earth can make known what the king requests.

CHALDEAN 1: (*pleading*) Consequently, no king, however great and powerful, has ever asked anything like this of any diviner-priest, medium, or Chaldean.

CHALDEAN 3: (*trying to reason with the king*) What the king is asking is so difficult that no one can make it known to him except the gods, whose dwelling is not with mortals.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: (*violently angry*) Destroy all the wise men of Babylon! Issue a decree that the wise men be executed.

NARRATOR 2: They searched for Daniel and his friends, to execute them.

ARIOCH: Yes, sire. (*to DANIEL*) Open up in the name of King Nebuchadnezzar. The king has ordered death to all the wise men of Babylon.

DANIEL: Why is the decree from the king so harsh?

ARIOCH: The king has decided that unless a man knows the dream by supernatural means, he will only be making up an interpretation. By knowing the dream, he proves he is not a fraud.

DANIEL: I will ask the king for some time, and my friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah will ask the God of heaven for mercy concerning this mystery.

ARIOCH: If your God grants this, you will not be killed with the rest of Babylon's wise men.

NARRATOR 1: The mystery was then revealed to Daniel in a vision at night.

NARRATOR 2: Daniel praised the God of heaven

DANIEL: May the name of God be praised forever and ever, for wisdom and power belong to Him.

SHADRACH: He changes the times and seasons;

MESHACH: He removes kings and establishes kings.

ABEDNEGO: He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.

MESHACH: He reveals the deep and hidden things

SHADRACH: He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him.

DANIEL: I offer thanks and praise to You, God of my fathers, because You have given me wisdom and power;

MESHACH: and now You have let us know what we asked of You

ABEDNEGO: for You have let us know the king's mystery

DANIEL: Arioch, don't kill the wise men of Babylon! Bring me before the king, and I will give him the interpretation.

ARIOCH: (*to NEBUCHADNEZZAR*) I have found a man among the Judean exiles who can let the king know the interpretation.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Daniel, are you able to tell me the dream I had and its interpretation?

DANIEL: No wise man, medium, diviner-priest, or Chaldean is able to make known to the king the mystery he asked about.

MESHACH: But there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has let King Nebuchadnezzar know what will happen in the last days.

DANIEL: Your dream and the visions that came into your mind as you lay in bed were these: Your Majesty, while you were in your bed, thoughts came to your mind about what will happen in the future. The revealer of mysteries has let you know what will happen. As for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but in order that the interpretation might be made known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

NARRATOR 2: Then Daniel described the dream.

DANIEL: My king, as you were watching, a colossal statue appeared. That statue, tall and dazzling, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was terrifying. The head of the statue was pure gold, its chest and arms were silver, its stomach and thighs were bronze, its legs were iron, and its feet were partly iron and partly fired clay. As you were watching, a stone broke off without a hand touching it, struck the statue on its feet of iron and fired clay, and crushed them. Then the iron, the fired clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were shattered and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors. The wind carried them away, and not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

ABEDNEGO: This was the dream; now we will tell the king its interpretation.

DANIEL: Your Majesty, you are king of kings. The God of heaven has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and glory. Wherever people live—or wild animals, or birds of the air—He has handed them over to you and made you ruler over them all. You are the head of gold.

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After you, there will arise another Kingdom, inferior to yours, and then another, a third Kingdom, of bronze, which will rule the whole earth. A fourth Kingdom will be as strong as iron; for iron crushes and shatters everything, and like iron that smashes, it will crush and smash all the others. You saw the feet and toes, partly of a potter's fired clay and partly of iron—it will be a divided Kingdom, though some of the strength of iron will be in it. You saw the iron mixed with clay, <sup>and</sup> that the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly fired clay—part of the Kingdom will be strong, and part will be brittle. You saw the iron mixed with clay—the peoples will mix with one another<sup>[r]</sup> but will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with fired clay.

In the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a Kingdom that will never be destroyed, and this Kingdom will not be left to another people. It will crush all these Kingdoms and bring them to an end, but will itself endure forever. You saw a stone break off from the mountain without a hand touching it, and it crushed the iron, bronze, fired clay, silver, and gold. The great God has told the king what will happen in the future. The dream is true, and its interpretation certain.

NARRATOR 1: King Nebuchadnezzar fell down, paid homage to Daniel

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Present Daniel with an offering and incense

ARIOCH: Immediately, sire.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Your God is indeed God of gods, Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, since you were able to reveal this mystery.

NARRATOR 2: Nebuchadnezzar promoted Daniel and gave him many generous gifts.

NARRATOR 1: He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon.

DANIEL: If it pleases you, King Nebuchadnezzar, appoint Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to manage the province of Babylon.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: As you wish, but you, Daniel, remain at my court.

### **Scene 3 - Nebuchadnezzar's Gold Statue**

NARRATOR 1: King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue, 90 feet high and nine feet wide.

NARRATOR 2: He set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Send word to assemble the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the rulers of the provinces to attend the dedication of the statue, I, King Nebuchadnezzar have set up.

NARRATOR 1: So the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the rulers of the provinces assembled for the dedication and stood before of the statue the king had set up.

ARIOCH: *(loudly proclaiming)* People of every nation and language, you are commanded: When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, drum, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire.

ARIOCH: Therefore, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, and every kind of music, people of every nation and language fell down and worshiped the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

CHALDEAN 1: King Nebuchadnezzar, may the king live forever.

CHALDEAN 2: You as king have issued a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, drum, and every kind of music must fall down and worship the gold statue.

CHALDEAN 3: Whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire.

CHALDEAN 1: There are some Jews you have appointed to manage the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

CHALDEAN 2: These men have ignored you, the king; they do not serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: (*furious, enraged*) bring in Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego!

CHALDEAN 2: Here they are.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, is it true that you don't serve my gods or worship the gold statue I have set up?

SHADRACH: Yes. We serve the God of heaven and him only.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Now if you're ready, when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, drum, and every kind of music, fall down and worship the statue I made. But if you don't worship it, you will immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire—and who is the god who can rescue you from my power?

MESHACH: Nebuchadnezzar, we don't need to give you an answer to this question.

ABEDNEGO: If the God we serve exists, then He can rescue us from the furnace of blazing fire, and He can rescue us from the power of you, the king.

SHADRACH: But even if He does not rescue us, we want you as king to know that we will not serve your gods or worship the gold statue you set up.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: (*enraged as the expression on NEBUCHADNEZZAR's face changes toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*) Heat the furnace seven times more than is customary. Have the strongest soldiers in my army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the furnace of blazing fire.

SHADRACH: So we three, in our trousers, robes, head coverings, and other clothes, were tied up and thrown into the furnace of blazing fire.

MESHACH: Since the king's command was so urgent and the furnace extremely hot, the raging flames killed those men who carried us three, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, up.

ABEDNEGO: We fell, bound, into the furnace of blazing fire.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: (*alarmed*) Didn't we throw three men, bound, into the fire?

CHALDEAN 1: Yes, of course, Your Majesty.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: (*exclaiming*) Look! I see four men, not tied, walking around in the fire unharmed; and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.

NARRATOR 2: Nebuchadnezzar then approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire and called out.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you servants of the Most High God—come out!

ABEDNEGO: So we three came out of the fire.

MESHACH: When the satraps, prefects, governors, and the king's advisers gathered around, they saw that the fire had no effect on our bodies.

SHADRACH: Not a hair of our heads was singed.

MESHACH: Our robes were unaffected.

ABEDNEGO: There was no smell of fire on us.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent His angel and rescued His servants who trusted in Him. They violated the king's command and risked their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. Therefore I issue a decree that anyone of any people, nation, or language who says anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego will be torn limb from limb and his house made a garbage dump. For there is no other god who is able to deliver like this.

NARRATOR 1: Then the king rewarded Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

ARIOCH: From King Nebuchadnezzar, to those of every people, nation, and language, who live in all the earth:

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: May your prosperity increase. I am pleased to tell you about the miracles and wonders the Most High God has done for me.

ABEDNEGO: How great are His miracles,

MESHACH: and how mighty His wonders!

SHADRACH: His Kingdom is an eternal Kingdom,

DANIEL: and His dominion is from generation to generation.

#### **Scene 4 - Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream**

NARRATOR 1: Nebuchadnezzar was at ease in his house and flourishing in his palace.

NARRATOR 2: He had a dream which frightened him.

NARRATOR 1: The images and visions in his mind alarmed him.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Issue a decree to bring all the wise men of Babylon to me in order that they might make the dream's interpretation known to me.

ARIOCH: Yes, sire.

CHALDEAN 1: When the diviner-priests, mediums and Chaldeans came in, Nebuchadnezzar told us the dream.

CHALDEAN 2: None of us could not its interpretation known.

CHALDEAN 3: Finally Daniel, named Belteshazzar, in whom resides the spirit of the holy gods came.

CHALDEAN 2: Nebuchadnezzar told him the dream.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Belteshazzar, head of the diviners, because I know that you have a spirit of the holy gods and that no mystery puzzles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I saw, and its interpretation.

DANIEL: Describe the dream.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: There was a tree in the middle of the earth, and its height was great. The tree grew large and strong; its top reached to the sky, and it was visible to the ends of the earth. Its leaves were

beautiful, its fruit was abundant, and on it was food for all. Wild animals found shelter under it, the birds of the air lived in its branches, and every creature was fed from it. As I was lying in my bed, I also saw in the visions of my mind an observer, a holy one, coming down from heaven.

ANGEL: (*loudly*) Cut down the tree and chop off its branches; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it, and the birds from its branches.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: He said “But leave the stump with its roots in the ground, and with a band of iron and bronze around it, in the tender grass of the field.

ANGEL: Let him be drenched with dew from the sky and share the plants of the earth with the animals.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: (*frightened*) Let his mind be changed from that of a man, and let him be given the mind of an animal for seven periods of time.

ANGEL: This word is by decree of the observers; the matter is a command from the holy ones.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: This is so the living will know that the Most High is ruler over the Kingdom of men.

ANGEL: He gives it to anyone He wants and sets the lowliest of men over it.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now, Belteshazzar, tell me the interpretation, because none of the wise men of my Kingdom can make the interpretation known to me. But you can, because you have the spirit of the holy gods.

NARRATOR 1: Daniel, whose name is Belteshazzar, was stunned for a moment, and his thoughts alarmed him.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Belteshazzar, don't let the dream or its interpretation alarm you.

DANIEL: My lord, may the dream apply to those who hate you, and its interpretation to your enemies! The tree you saw, which grew large and strong, whose top reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth, whose leaves were beautiful and its fruit abundant—and on it was food for all, under it the wild animals lived, and in its branches the birds of the air lived—that tree is you, the king. For you have become great and strong: your greatness has grown and even reaches the sky, and your dominion extends to the ends of the earth.

The king saw an observer, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump with its roots in the ground and with a band of iron and bronze around it, in the tender grass of the field. Let him be drenched with dew from the sky, and share food with the wild animals for seven periods of time.’ This is the interpretation, Your Majesty, and this is the sentence of the Most High that has been passed against my lord the king: You will be driven away from people to live with the wild animals. You will feed on grass like cattle and be drenched with dew from the sky for seven periods of time, until you acknowledge that the Most High is ruler over the Kingdom of men, and He gives it to anyone He wants. As for the command to leave the tree's stump with its roots, your Kingdom will be restored to you as soon as you acknowledge that Heaven rules. Therefore, may my advice seem good to you my king. Separate yourself from your sins by doing what is right, and from your injustices by showing mercy to the needy. Perhaps there will be an extension of your prosperity.

NARRATOR 1: All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar.

NARRATOR 2: At the end of 12 months, as he was walking on the roof of the royal palace in Babylon, the king exclaimed,

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Is this not Babylon the Great that I have built by my vast power to be a royal residence and to display my majestic glory?

NARRATOR 1: While the words were still in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven:

ANGEL: King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared that the Kingdom has departed from you. You will be driven away from people to live with the wild animals, and you will feed on grass like cattle for seven periods of time, until you acknowledge that the Most High is ruler over the Kingdom of men, and He gives it to anyone He wants.

NARRATOR2: At that moment the sentence against Nebuchadnezzar was executed.

CHALDEAN 1: He was driven away from people.

CHALDEAN 2: He ate grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with dew from the sky,

CHALDEAN 3: until his hair grew like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: But at the end of those days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven, and my sanity returned to me. Then I praised the Most High and honored and glorified Him who lives forever:

DANIEL: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,

ANGEL: and His Kingdom is from generation to generation.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: All the inhabitants of the earth are counted as nothing

ANGEL: and He does what He wants with the army of heaven

DANIEL: and the inhabitants of the earth.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: There is no one who can hold back His hand

DANIEL: or say to Him, "What have You done?"

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: At that time my sanity returned to me, and my majesty and splendor returned to me for the glory of my Kingdom.

DANIEL: His advisers and nobles sought the king out, and he was reestablished over the Kingdom,

ANGEL: and even more greatness came to him.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt, and glorify the King of heaven,

DANIEL: because all His works are true and His ways are just.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR: He is able to humble those who walk in pride.

### **Scene 5 - Belshazzar's Feast**

NARRATOR 1: King Belshazzar held a great feast for 1,000 of his nobles and drank wine in their presence.

BELSHAZZAR: (drunkenly) Bring in the gold and silver vessels that Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem, then you my guests, my nobles, wives, and concubines can drink from them.

NARRATOR 2: So they brought in the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem

NARRATOR 1: The king and his nobles, wives, and concubines drank from them.

BELSHAZZAR: More wine! Let us praise the gods made of gold.

WIFE: And gods of silver.

CHALDEAN 1: Thank you, gods of bronze!

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WIFE: Praise the gods of iron, wood, and stone.

NARRATOR: At that moment the fingers of a man's hand appeared and began writing on the plaster of the king's palace wall next to the lampstand.

WIFE (side to audience) Look, the king's face is pale.

CHALDEAN 2: He is shaking and his knees knock together.

BELSHAZZAR: (terrified and pointing) Look! A hand, just a hand, is writing on the wall!

CHALDEAN 3: (shocked) A hand without a body!

WIFE: (screams and then terrified) What is it?

BELSHAZZAR: Bring in the mediums, Chaldeans, and CHALDEAN 2s, all the wise men of Babylon.

WIFE: They are here, O King Belshazzar.

BELSHAZZAR: Whoever reads this inscription and gives me its interpretation will be clothed in purple, have a gold chain around his neck, and have the third highest position in the Kingdom.

CHALDEAN 1: It says Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin, but I cannot interpret it, sire.

CHALDEAN 2: Nor do I know what it means.

CHALDEAN 3: I haven't a clue what the inscription or its interpretation is.

NARRATOR 2: King Belshazzar became even more terrified.

NARRATOR 1: His face turned pale, and his nobles were bewildered.

QUEEN: May the king live forever. I heard the uproar, sire, and have come. Don't let your thoughts terrify you or your face be pale. There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him.

CHALDEAN 2: In the days of your predecessor he was found to have insight, intelligence, and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods.

CHALDEAN 1: Your predecessor, King Nebuchadnezzar, appointed him chief of the diviners, mediums, Chaldeans, and astrologers.

QUEEN: Your own predecessor, the king, did this because Daniel, the one the king named Belshazzar, was found to have an extraordinary spirit, knowledge and perception, and the ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems. Therefore, summon Daniel, and he will give the interpretation.

BELSHAZZAR: Send for him at once.

NARRATOR 2: Daniel was brought before the king

BELSHAZZAR: Are you Daniel, one of the Judean exiles that my predecessor the king brought from Judah?

DANIEL: I am.

BELSHAZZAR: I've heard that you have the spirit of the gods in you, and that you have insight, intelligence, and extraordinary wisdom.

CHALDEAN 2: We, the wise men and mediums, were brought before the king to read this inscription and make its interpretation known.

CHALDEAN 3: But we could not give its interpretation.

BELSHAZZAR: However, I have heard about you that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Therefore, if you can read this inscription and give me its interpretation, you will be clothed in purple, have a gold chain around your neck, and have the third highest position in the Kingdom.

DANIEL: You may keep your gifts, and give your rewards to someone else; however, I will read the inscription for the king and make the interpretation known to him. Your Majesty, the Most High God gave sovereignty, greatness, glory, and majesty to your predecessor Nebuchadnezzar.

QUEEN: Because of the greatness He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages were terrified and fearful of him.

CHALDEAN 2: He killed anyone he wanted and kept alive anyone he wanted; he exalted anyone he wanted and humbled anyone he wanted.

DANIEL: But when his heart was exalted and his spirit became arrogant, he was deposed from his royal throne and his glory was taken from him. He was driven away from people; his mind was like an animal's.

QUEEN: He lived with the wild donkeys.

DANIEL: He was fed grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with dew from the sky until he acknowledged that the Most High God is ruler over the Kingdom of men and sets anyone He wants over it.

But you his successor, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this. Instead, you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven. The vessels from His house were brought to you, and as you and your nobles, wives, and concubines drank wine from them, you praised the gods made of silver and gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or understand. But you have not glorified the God who holds your life-breath in His hand and who controls the whole course of your life. Therefore, He sent the hand, and this writing was inscribed.

BELSHAZZAR: This Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin.

DANIEL: Mene means that God has numbered the days of your Kingdom and brought it to an end. Tekel means that you have been weighed in the balance and found deficient. Peres means that your Kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians.

BELSHAZZAR: (*troubled*) Clothe Daniel in purple, place a gold chain around his neck, and issue a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the Kingdom.

NARRATOR 2: That very night Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans was killed.

NARRATOR 1: Darius the Mede received the Kingdom at the age of 62.

### **Scene 6 - The Plot against Daniel**

NARRATOR 1: Darius appointed 120 satraps over the Kingdom, stationed throughout the realm

NARRATOR 2: and over them three administrators, including Daniel.

NARRATOR 1: These satraps would be accountable to the administrators so that the king would not be defrauded.

NARRATOR 2: Daniel distinguished himself above the administrators and satraps because he had an extraordinary spirit

KING DARIUS: I plan to set DANIEL over the whole realm.

SATRAP 1: (*aside*) We must find a charge against Daniel regarding the Kingdom.

SATRAP 2 We can't find any charge or corruption against Daniel.

SATRAP 3: He was trustworthy, and no negligence or corruption is found in him.

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SATRAP 1: We will never find any charge against this Daniel unless we find something against him concerning the law of his God.

SATRAP 2: Right. Let us go to the king with a proposal.

ALL SATRAPS: (*in unison*) May King Darius live forever.

SATRAP 2 All the administrators of the Kingdom, the prefects, satraps, advisers, and governors have agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an edict that for 30 days.

KING DARIUS: What edict would that be?

SATRAP 1: An edict stating that, anyone who petitions any god or man except you, the king, will be thrown into the lions' den.

SATRAP 2: Therefore, Your Majesty, establish the edict and sign the document so that, as a law of the Medes and Persians, it is irrevocable and cannot be changed.

NARRATOR 1: King Darius signed the document.

NARRATOR 2: When Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went into his house.

NARRATOR 1: The windows in its upper room opened toward Jerusalem, and three times a day he got down on his knees, prayed, and gave thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

SATRAP 1: Look, there is Daniel, kneeling in prayer.

SATRAP 2: Petitioning and imploring his God.

SATRAP 1 Let us approach the king and ask about his edict.

SATRAP 3: Didn't you sign an edict that for 30 days any man who petitions any god or man except you, the king, will be thrown into the lions' den?

KING DARIUS: As a law of the Medes and Persians, the order stands and is irrevocable.

SATRAP 3: Daniel, one of the Judean exiles, has ignored you, the king, and the edict you signed.

SATRAP 2: He prays three times a day.

NARRATOR 1: As soon as the king heard this, he was very displeased;

NARRATOR 2: he set his mind on rescuing Daniel and made every effort until sundown to deliver him.

SATRAP 2; You as king know it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no edict or ordinance the king establishes can be changed.

KING DARIUS: Throw Daniel into the lions' den.

SATRAP 1: (*aside to audience*) Finally we are rid of Daniel.

KING DARIUS: May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!

SATRAP3: Place a stone over the mouth of the den.

SATRAP 2: Your majesty, will you please seal it with your own signet ring?

SATRAP 1: Now we will with the signet rings of us nobles

SATRAP 3: Thus nothing in regard to Daniel can be changed.

NARRATOR 2: Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting.

NARRATOR 1: No diversions were brought to him, and he could not sleep.

NARRATOR 2: At the first light of dawn the king got up and hurried to the lions' den.

KING DARIUS: (*in anguish*) Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you serve continually been able to rescue you from the lions?

DANIEL: May the king live forever. My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths. They haven't hurt me, for I was found innocent before Him. Also, I have not committed a crime against you my king.

KING DARIUS: (*overjoyed*) Take Daniel out of the den!

DANIEL: As you can see, I am uninjured, because I trusted in God.

KING DARIUS: Throw those men who maliciously accused Daniel into the lions' den—they, their children, and their wives.

NARRATOR 1: They had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

NARRATOR 2: King Darius wrote to those of every people, nation, and language who live in all the earth.

KING DARIUS: May your prosperity abound. I issue a decree that in all my royal dominion, people must tremble in fear before the God of Daniel:

DANIEL: For He is the living God, and He endures forever

KING DARIUS: His Kingdom will never be destroyed, and His dominion has no end.

ALL: He rescues and delivers

DANIEL: He performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth,

KING DARIUS: for He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.

NARRATOR 1: So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Online interactive games

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<http://www.quia.com/ba/520673.html>

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<http://www.quia.com/cb/785700.html>

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