

PERSONAL APPLICATION

- What area of character do you need to improve (trustworthy, not corrupt, not negligent)? What's one thing you can do this week to improve your character?
- What is one way you can improve your prayer life this week to make it more consistent and more fervent?
- What is one thing good that God has done in your life? Who can you tell about it this week?
- What is one thing you can do to get better at giving consistent, effective testimony to God's goodness?

PRAYER

- Ask God to help you develop exceptional character, qualities that will bring honor to him at work, at home, and with your friends.
- Ask God to teach you to pray consistently and effectively. Let God know that you want to talk to Him more consistently and that you want to hear Him.
- Ask God to help your life be a testimony to Him and to give you the boldness and wisdom to tell others about Him and the things He has done in a way that will draw them to Him and worship Him.

NOTES



WEEK 5: DANIEL

CONNECT

- How old were you when you moved away from home? How did you feel?
- Do you eat for health or for pleasure?
- How did you act when you are scared, frightened, or threatened? Recall the scariest experience of your life?
- Have you ever done something you felt really good about only to have others be jealous of you? How did they act toward you? How did you respond?

WHAT

Daniel is one of the most fascinating books in the bible. The first half has powerful, well-loved stories of Daniel's exploits which have inspired believers and non-believers alike through the ages and spawned phrases like 'the writing is on the wall' in popular culture. The latter half of the book is full of apocalyptic visions that have challenged even the most astute theologians. Today we'll focus on the story of Daniel in the den of lions. Here we have a story of jealousy, resolute faith, and miraculous salvation. It's a story that resonates with all of us in one way or another because we all know what it is to have our beliefs challenged, to face hopeless odds, and to need the help of a transcendent God.

WORD

“²⁰In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them (Daniel and his 3 friends) ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.”

Daniel 1:20 (NIV)

“¹⁴I have heard that the spirit of the gods is in you and that you have insight, intelligence and outstanding wisdom.”

Daniel 5:14 (NIV)

1. Daniel’s Exceptional Qualities.

“³Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. ⁴At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent.”

Daniel 6:3–4 (NIV)

Daniel excelled ‘because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent.’ Describe those three character traits in your own words? What words do you think people would use to define your character?

2. Daniel’s Fierce Commitment To Prayer.

“¹⁰Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.”

Daniel 6:10 (NIV)

As soon as Daniel heard that the decree that anyone worshiping anyone other than King Darius would be thrown to the lions had become law, he immediately went home to worship, just as he always did, three times a day. How would you have responded to the decree? Skipped prayer? Closed your windows to pray? Describe your current prayer life?

3. Daniel’s God.

(Daniel speaking)

“²²My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty.”

Daniel 6:22 (NIV)

(King Darius speaking)

“²⁶“I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. “For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end.”

“²⁷He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.”

Daniel 6:26-27 (NIV)

Daniel always gave credit to God, whether it was for wisdom in interpreting dreams or solving problems or shutting the mouth of the lions. This resulted in the pagan King giving God honor, and decreeing that all of his kingdom must honor God as well. Do people correlate the good things in your life with the goodness of God? Epic lives require 3 qualities: Exceptional Character. Devoted Prayer. Consistent Testimony. Evaluate your own life in these three areas. Where are you strong? Where can you improve?
