

Lesson 6

Obey God Above All

Lesson Overview

BIBLE LESSON: Daniel 6

MEMORY VERSE: Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. Colossians 3:20

CHALLENGE MEMORY VERSE: “We must obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29b

CATECHISM: The Fourth Commandment: Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not despise our parents and superiors, nor provoke them to anger, but honor, serve, obey, love, and respect them.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: The student will:

- know God desires that we honor our leaders
- understand that it is better to obey God rather than man
- believe that God is our Rescuer and wants us to pray to Him

MATERIALS: Lessons, activity sheets,

LESSON OVERVIEW: The lesson teaches us that we also need to honor and obey other authority figures in our lives. Examples would be pastors, teachers, firemen, police, government leaders. The lesson is the story of Daniel when he was put in the lion’s den for disobeying the King’s command which was against God. The King asked all the people to worship him. Daniel did not seek to dispute the King’s order, he just quietly continued to pray to God every day. The student lesson is written as if Daniel is telling the story. God saved Daniel which was such a powerful witness to the King that the king made a new law stating that the people had to serve Daniel’s God. Even in difficulty Daniel put God first and God was honored. If time permits briefly share the story of how Daniel came to be one of the leaders under King Darius.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS: What other people in our lives do we need to honor and obey? What happened to Daniel when he was a young boy? What did he remember? How did this help him? How did Daniel respond to the law set down by King Darius? What was the King’s response when he found out that Daniel had disobeyed his law? How did God save Daniel? What did God’s actions demonstrate to King Darius and all of the people in the land?

ACTIVITY 1: Fill in the blank letter activity.

ACTIVITY 2: Word maze activity: We should fear and love God

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach

Thank God for your own parents and your leaders.
Pray for wisdom to teach this lesson well.

Prayer Preparation

- Talk to God about how to honor authorities while always honoring God first.
- Ask God to bless the children and help them understand this aspect of the Fourth Commandment.
- Spend time in heart-to-heart conversation with the Lord.

Prepare Materials

- Activity sheets and lessons
- Have memory verse(s) written on the board

Bible Background

Romans 13:1, Daniel 6:1-28

Leaders and authorities are sometimes treated with great disrespect today. This should not be so, regardless of “political” opinions. This attitude of disrespect often begins in the home when children do not honor their parents (even when it is hard to do). Parents must also be consistent in commanding respect from the children. Allowing disobedience or failing to provide consequences for disrespectful words, tone of voice or actions will lead to problems in the children’s future.

God provides order and security in the home through Godly parents. Leaders and authorities are placed by God to provide order in society. Romans 13:1 says, “Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.”

When we serve God and are subject to the governing authorities He has placed over us, God will provide for His people. Therefore God asks to pray for kings and all those in authority (1 Tim 2:1-4). There are two kingdoms in play here: the kingdom of the world, and the kingdom of God. As citizens of the Kingdom of God we need to honor and respect the authority in both, but we are ultimate subject to the authority of God.

Daniel’s behavior under a godless government is a good example of obedience to rulers in the world and to God’s authority (Dan 6:1-28). Daniel (all Judah) had been taken into captivity and lived under a government that didn’t honor God. King Darius didn’t know or fear God, but he was King in Babylon, and God allowed this government to exist and was using it for His purposes. Daniel was obligated to obey King Darius, but Daniel still honored God. Even in captivity, Daniel prayed twice a day to God. He no doubt prayed for King Darius, too. God blessed and honored Daniel and his friends.

After some years, Daniel rose to a high position in the government and was respected by both the king and the people. He had become one of three commissioners overseeing lesser leaders in the kingdom (Dan 6:1-3), and they feared he would rise above them. Being envious of Daniel they tried to find a legitimate charge against him to bring him down. But they could find no ground of accusation

or evidence of corruption, because he was trustworthy, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him” (Dan 6:6).

Ungodly men with deceitful and unclean hearts (Jer 17:9, Mt 15) will always find a way to do what they want. The only thing left for these men to do was to attack Daniel’s faith, a charge that has always been an effective means of exercising control and power over God’s people. To do this they needed another law so they “consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who offers a prayer to any god or person besides you, O king” (Dan 6:7). The penalty was for that person to be thrown into the lion’s den. Darius signed into law

Daniel responded to the new rule with pious disobedience. He neither hid his faith nor made a show of it. Daniel continued to pray to God every morning and evening in front of his window as was his habit. Daniel was a man of courage and was steadfast in prayer. He hadn’t prayed all those years in vain, and he hadn’t prayed for King Darius in vain either.

When Daniel’s enemies found him praying by his open window, they went to the king and reminded him of the law and its punishment and accused Daniel of continuing to pray (Dan 6:12-13). When the king heard that it was Daniel, he was deeply distressed because he loved and respected Daniel. He tried to fix it but was reminded that the laws of the Medes and Persians could not be changed.

Daniel was thrown to the lions, and that night the king could not sleep. Early the next morning the king went to the lion’s den and called out to Daniel who replied: “My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths, and they have not harmed me, since I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime” (Dan 6:22). The king made a new law saying “that in all the realm of my kingdom people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel” (Dan 6:26).

If man’s laws require us to disobey God’s higher law, then we “must obey God rather than man” (Act 5:29). But we need clear discernment and understanding of scripture to do that rightly. Another reaction is to simply rebel against man’s authority, which usually leads to greater harm and even death. Opportunities for change, at least for us, are best made at the ballot box. It might take a while, but it will tend to keep things in order while God’s greater will is done.

Learn the New Words

It is okay to explain the new words in the beginning or as you encounter them.

Daniel: a man who loved and honored God. Daniel was taken from his own country where he served God and a king who didn’t believe in God

superiors: People who God has put in charge of teaching us, helping us, and protecting us. These leaders are usually adults.

lions’ den: probably a big hole or pit where lions were kept for punishing people

One true living God: God who tells about Himself in the Bible. He is the only real God. Sometimes people make up a god of their own because they don’t want to worship the real God. That kind of god is written with a lowercase “g”.

jealous: wanting what isn’t yours and that someone else has. Can be possessions, positions, or qualities of another person.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Greet the children as they come in.

Open the class with prayer, praying for each child by name, if you like.

Read the Memory Verse

Remember the appendix of ways to teach memorization of the verse. Read the verse clearly,

“Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.” Colossians 3:20.

Read the challenge verse as well:

“We must obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29b.

Be sure to read it together aloud. Remind the children you’ll repeat the verse again at the end.

Review the Recent Lessons

Remember we have been learning about the Fourth Commandment. See if the students can remember something from the stories in the last 2 lessons as this will wrap up the focus on the Fourth Commandment.

TEACHING TODAY’S BIBLE LESSON

Introduce the Lesson

ASK: Do you know any leaders? Is there a leader in your home? Your classroom? Your church? Have any of these leaders ever told stories about what happened long ago?

Today, someone in our lesson tells us what happened to him. Let’s think about what it would have been like to be Daniel long ago.

Read the Lesson

READ the opening paragraph. **SAY:** Imagine what Daniel would say if he were here today. Who would like to take the part of Daniel and read the next paragraph?

Choose two more volunteers to “be Daniel” for each of the next two paragraphs.

READ the fourth paragraph. Another volunteer can read the last paragraph.

ASK: Did Daniel serve King Darius well? (response). **ASK:** What did Daniel remember to do? He prayed—for himself, his friends, for the King and the country. **SAY:** After a while, King Darius made Daniel a leader. Why do you think the evil men hated Daniel? (response) These

evil men planned to get rid of Daniel. They got the king to make a law they thought Daniel would disobey.

ASK: What law did King Darius make? (response) The king couldn’t change a law even if he wanted to once he made it.

Daniel prayed by his window like he always did. He did not stop praying. Daniel loved and obeyed God even though he knew he would be punished.

King Darius couldn’t sleep that night. In the morning, he ran to the lions’ den, calling out, “Daniel, was your God able to save you from the lions?”

He was!

What important thing did Daniel tell King Darius? (“God was still watching over me.”)

Because Daniel loved God best and told the king that God had taken care of him, King Darius believed in God and wanted the people to worship Daniel’s God: the One, True, Living God.

Repeat the Memory Verse

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Do the Activities Together

Daniel and Darius

Activity 1

Fill in the blanks to write a letter telling what you've learned.

Activity 1

DANIEL AND DARIUS

Write a letter to a friend or family member telling them what you learned.

ACTIVITY CENTER

Date _____ (enter today's date)

Dear _____ (write name of friend or family member)

Did you know God has power to shut the mouths of lions? God is amazing! In the Bible, a man named Daniel had an important job. King Darius made Daniel one of his leaders. Then some evil men tricked the king into making a new law. The new law said people could only pray to King Darius. Daniel did not pray to King Darius. Daniel prayed to the one true God. Daniel was thrown into a den of lions because he did not pray to the King. But God shut the lions' mouths. Daniel was not hurt. King Darius knew God had protected Daniel. Darius made a new law for his kingdom to love and serve the living God. I want to love and serve the living God too. Do you? He rescues, saves, and lives forever!

Love, _____ (student's name)

Word Maze

Activity 2

Follow the words to escape the maze and discover an important message, circle the first letter and draw a box around the last. Finish by writing the message below the maze.

Activity 2

WORD MAZE

Follow the words to discover an important message. Circle the first letter. Draw a box around the last letter.

Write the message from the maze. How did Daniel follow these words?

W E S H O U L D F E A R
A N D L O V E G O D

Daniel remembered the Fourth Commandment. Daniel honored and served king. But Daniel knew it was most important to obey God.

CLOSING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Closing Prayer

Ask about prayer requests. Allow students to pray if they choose. Allow time for silent prayer. Encourage students to bow their heads and close their eyes.

Additional Teaching Options

Hymns and Songs:

Additional activities for a multi-age class: