

## Lesson C2.4 - Put God First



### Teacher's Pages with Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

#### For Lower Elementary Students and Classes

Recommended for students in Preschool, Kindergarten, and Grades 1-2.

#### Quick Facts for the Teacher

##### Lesson Summary: Daniel 5:1-30

► Bible Characters: King Belshazzar, queen, Daniel, God

King Belshazzar used stolen goblets from God's temple to serve wine at a party, and praised many false gods while he drank. When writing appeared on the wall, the king called Daniel to interpret it. Daniel told him that his disregard for God meant he was not fit to be king. By the next day, the nation was conquered and the king was dead.

##### Brief Bible Background

- Today's Lesson is from the Old Testament
- Scripture Section: Exile

God's people were attacked and conquered in the north by the Assyrian Empire, then later in the south by the Babylonian Empire. During this time, many Israelites lived in exile under foreign kings.

##### For More Information

The primary role of a Sunday School teacher for Preschool, Kindergarten (pre-readers), and Early Elementary (new readers) is to simply tell children the stories of Scripture and introduce them to the major characters of the Bible.

*Teachers who want to know more about the lessons for their own familiarity with the story are encouraged to read the information in the SEED Upper Elementary and Youth Teacher's Pages.*

#### a. Classroom Greeting

Teachers should arrive 10 to 15 minutes before class and greet students and parents by name. Write the day's Bible Message on the white board or poster board for all the kids to see. Have kids gather on a rug or in a dedicated meeting space. Encourage the children to learn each other's names.

#### b. Opening Prayer Song

This same opening song should be sung every week with young kids — remember, repetition is good. The words to this song are sung to the tune of the **Alphabet Song**.

**Welcome everyone today!**

**Now let's settle down and pray.**

**Thank you, Lord, that we are here.**

**Keep us healthy through the year.**

**Help us listen, learn and grow.**

**Teach us all that we should know. Amen!**

#### c. Introduction to Today's Message

*Teacher's Script (student responses are in **bold**).*

If I asked you to tell me about your favorite things, what would be at the very top of your list? (*Call on volunteers.*)

God has given us so much, and he wants us to enjoy these blessings. But we also want to remember to **Put God first**. Say that with me: **Put God first!**

Here's a question: How could something we like ever take the place of God in our lives? (*Call on volunteers*)

In today's story, a king loved gold and silver so much that he forgot about everything else. He didn't **put God first**. How did that work out for him? Let's hear our story and find out!

#### d. SEED Bible Story Video

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This may be displayed simply on a laptop computer or tablet. If the classroom is equipped with a computer video monitor or video projector, the video can be displayed in a larger size.

## e. Read the Story with Poster Pictures

The Bible Story has been divided into four parts, each with an accompanying Poster Picture. The teacher should hold up or point to the relevant Poster Picture while reading the individual part of the story, asking questions while reading. Posters may be printed on letter-sized paper, or enlarged and printed on ledger-sized paper if a bigger printer is available. Poster pictures may also be opened as a PDF on a computer screen, scrolling through each of the four pages.

**Picture 1**

*Tell the children:* There was once a king who loved gold and silver. Years ago, his father had taken many fancy cups from God's temple. This king didn't return them. He thought they would be good to use for parties.

*Read the caption:* One day, the King of Babylon had feast. He used stolen gold and silver cups from God's temple to serve wine to his guests.

- *What is the king doing in this picture? [Offering wine in a gold cup to the queen.]*
- *Why is this not a good thing? [Because the cup was stolen from God's temple. The cups should have been returned, but the king didn't care.]*

**Picture 2**

*Tell the children:* It would have been bad enough to use stolen cups. But the king did more than that. He didn't thank God for all he had, but turned to fake gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood and stone instead!

*Read the caption:* The king and his guests praised many false gods as they drank. Then, all of a sudden, a large hand wrote several words on the wall!

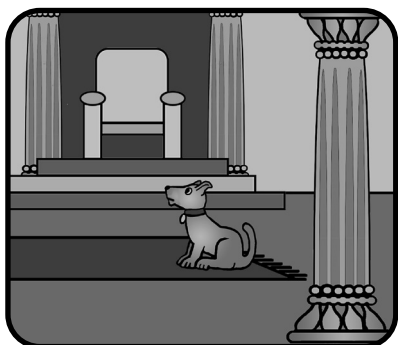
- *Who wants to try reading the words on the page? [Call on a volunteer.]*
- *What do you think those words might mean? [Call on volunteers.]*

**Picture 3**

*Tell the children:* No one had ever seen anything like this before. They didn't understand the writing, either. But the queen was calm. "Don't worry," she said to the king. "There is a wise man in your kingdom who will be able to read this for you."

*Read the caption:* The king was scared. He asked a man named Daniel to tell him what the words meant. Daniel was a servant of God.

- *What would you do if you were at that party? [Call on volunteers.]*
- *How do you think Daniel felt when he had to appear before the king? [Call on volunteers.]*

**Picture 4**

*Tell the children:* When Daniel got there, he reminded the king of all the ways God had shown his power to the king's father. "You saw all this," Daniel said. "How could you forget God and put these other things first? You have not been humble at all."

*Read the caption:* Daniel said, "You have not honored God. So you will no longer be king." Daniel was right. By the next day, the king was gone.

- *Where do you think the king went? [He died. His time as king was done.]*
- *What does the word "humble" mean? [It means to not think you are more important than anyone else, and especially not more important than God.]*

Remember today's message: **Put God first!**

## f. Bible Story Rhyme (optional)

The Bible Story Rhyme below is the same one found on the Upper Elementary Student sheet. The teacher can read the beginning of the line and see if the children can finish the last rhyming word of the phrase.

*King Belshazzar of Babylon  
said to his servant, with a yawn,  
"Fill all the vessels from God's house  
with wine to serve my guests and spouse!"*

*But then, a hand wrote on the wall  
a phrase he did not know at all.  
In fear, he called for someone who  
could tell him what to say or do.*

*Wise Daniel read the words and said,  
"God is not pleased with how you've led.  
"And since you pray to gold and wood,  
You'll lose your kingdom soon, for good!"*

## h. Young Children's Activity (optional)

Simple in-class crafts or activities may be completed by the children if there is time left at the end of class. (Note: For the youngest children, simply providing crayons and letting them complete the Coloring Page may serve as the "craft" for the day.)

**Craft: Jeweled Cups****Materials:**

- Clear or colored plastic cups
- Stick on jewels
- Permanent markers

**Instructions:**

King Belshazzar used the goblets from God's temple, but did not honor or care much about God, himself.

To remind the children of today's story, let them decorate a cup of their own with designs and stick-on jewels.

To do this, give each person a clear or colored plastic cup. Invite kids to press the stick-on jewels around their cup in different patterns.

Using permanent markers, have them write their initials on the bottom of their cup. They can use the permanent markers to draw designs on the cup as well. (Be sure they don't draw too close to the top of the cup, though, in case they drink from it later.)

*King Belshazzar put things before God. It is fine to have nice things, but we must remember that they do not last. Our relationship with God matters most.*

## h. Song (optional)

Sing this song to the tune, "If You're Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands." You can listen to the tune online on YouTube, Vimeo, or other sites.

**If You Trust God and You Know It (2)**

For this song, kids can hold up their pointer finger to show "number one" when they sing, "put him first."

**If you trust God and you know it,  
put him first!  
If you trust God and you know it,  
put him first!  
If you trust God and you know it  
then your actions now will show it,  
If you trust God and you know it,  
put him first!**



## i. Story Review: Then What Happened?

*Then What Happened* is a learning game that helps kids retell the story and remember the flow of events. The teacher reads the starting sentence and then chooses a student to continue the story. There are two rules: each student may only add one sentence or say one new thing, and events in the story need to be in the right order.

- **Start: A selfish king threw a huge party. He used stolen gold and silver cups from God's temple to serve wine. Then what happened?**

*If the younger kids have trouble, cut a Take-Home Page into four pieces (with no words) and let the kids put the illustrations in order while they tell the story.*

## j. Closing Prayer

Send the children home with the Take-Home Page, and tell them to ask their parents to read the story to them again (or, perhaps, they can read it to their parents).

End class with this closing prayer, repeated each week for memorization.

*Dear God,*

*Thank you for loving us,*

*For teaching and for helping us,*

*For always watching over us,*

*We love you too.*

*Amen!*