



The Awesome Book About God for Kids

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THE AWESOME BOOK ABOUT GOD FOR KIDS

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To Amelia and Paige

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God Is
**My Defender
& Protector**

The LORD spoke to Abram in a vision and said to him, "Do not be afraid, Abram, for I will protect you, and your reward will be great."

GENESIS 15:1

Daniel and the Infamous Den of Hungry Lions

Daniel 6

When King Darius the Mede took control of Babylon, he chose three men to help him lead the country. He called them administrators and gave them great authority and power so they could supervise his interests and promote his royal command.

One of these three administrators was a Hebrew named Daniel who had come to Babylon as a young man. His education, professional capabilities, and special talents quickly earned the attention of King Darius. In fact, the king eventually decided to promote Daniel to be his second-in-command—a decision the other two administrators (whom we'll call Abban and Nigel) found utterly nauseating.

“Who does this guy think he is?” complained Abban. “What makes him so special?”

“He’s not even Babylonian,” Nigel said. “We should figure out how to get rid of him before he gets that promotion. We should be the ones getting raises, not him!”

“Right,” said Abban. “We need a little dirt on Daniel.”

That same day, Abban and Nigel began sifting through Daniel’s trash, reading his mail, and secretly listening to his conversations—searching for anything they could bring before the king and criticize. But Daniel was responsible. He filed every document alphabetically and always checked everything twice. In addition, Daniel always told the truth! Always.



The next day, Abban resorted to stealing Daniel's calendar book, hoping Daniel would miss a few important meetings. But Daniel kept every appointment—and even arrived early! Abban was so frustrated he could have screamed.

“This isn't working!” Abban said. “Daniel is a real Goody Two-Shoes. There must be something else. Think, Nigel, think! Do you know anything about his religion?”

“Well,” said Nigel, “I can only think of one thing. Every day during lunch, he goes home and opens his kitchen windows. Then, before he eats, he prays to his God. Could that be useful?”

“Yes!” Abban slapped Nigel on the back. “It's perfect. We'll make it illegal to pray to anyone but King Darius, and then we'll trap Daniel. The king will love the new law—you know how vain he is!”

“So what will happen to those who pray to their own gods?” asked Nigel.

“They'll be thrown into the Infamous Den of Hungry Lions!”

“The Infamous Den of Hungry Lions?” Nigel's eyes twinkled. “Where the bones of a thousand men are gnawed on day and night? How gruesome...it's perfect!”

That afternoon Abban and Nigel presented King Darius with their new idea. Just as they had predicted, he loved it.



“You mean everyone will bow to me? Whenever I say the word?” asked the king.

“Of course, divine King! That’s the whole point,” said Abban.

King Darius smiled broadly as he signed his name to the new law and sealed it with his signet ring. He ordered his messengers to spread 400 copies of the document throughout Babylon immediately so that everyone would be informed without delay. Then King Darius hurried to his dressing room to change into his silk robe with the ermine collar—the perfect outfit in which to be worshipped.

The “bow before me” law (as it was already being called) arrived on Daniel’s desk just before lunch. He unrolled the scroll and began reading through the new statute. His shoulders sagged as its meaning sunk in. He surmised that its true authors were Abban and Nigel...who else would write such a senseless law? *Oh well*, Daniel thought, *nothing can be done now*. King Darius had approved the document with his own royal seal. Heartsick, Daniel slowly rolled up the scroll, filed it in its proper place, and set off for home.

After making a grilled cheese sandwich, Daniel did what he did every day—he bowed his head in thanks to God for a good meal, a steady job, and such beautiful weather. Underneath his open window, he heard an excited gasp.

“Gotcha!”

Daniel opened his eyes. Nigel stood on the sidewalk below, pointing at Daniel. “That’s him! Praying to his God! Get him, boys—he’ll be lion meat tonight!”



Sixteen royal guards barreled through Daniel’s door, knocking over his kitchen table and trampling his grilled cheese sandwich into a crumbly grease spot on the floor. They tied Daniel’s hands behind his back, pushed him down his stairs, and marched him straightaway to the prison. Meanwhile, Nigel ran as fast as he could back to the palace, breathlessly calling for an audience with the king. Abban was already sitting at the king’s lunch table (enjoying a tuna sandwich on rye) when Nigel was ushered in.

“Nigel!” greeted the king, “come in, sit down. Have a Cheez-It!” He slid the crackers toward Nigel.

“In a moment, dear King,” Nigel said in his most pathetic voice. “But first...I’ve run here as fast as I could. Did I misunderstand you this morning? Didn’t you enact a new law? And hasn’t that law already been circulated throughout the kingdom?”

“Indeed!” said King Darius. “That’s why I’m wearing this robe.” He fluffed up the ermine collar so that each hair stood on end. “Why? Would you like to worship me?”

“Of course!” said Nigel, “But first, we’ve got a problem, King Darius. One of your own staff members has just been caught in full defiance of your new decree!”

“Really? An employee? Who wouldn’t like my law?” asked the king, putting down his sandwich.

“Daniel,” said Nigel. “He has defied you. He chose to pray to his own God rather than you. I witnessed it myself!”

Abban pushed himself back from the table in mock disgust. “Daniel? Our fellow administrator? I can’t believe it! How rude! How loathsome!”

“I know!” said Nigel. “It’s hard to believe. I just wanted to let you both know before Daniel was thrown to the lions tonight.”

“Wait!” shouted King Darius. “Are you sure you have the right man? You’re talking about Daniel, my most trusted advisor?”

“That’s him.”

“Daniel...” said King Darius thoughtfully. “He’s a Hebrew. He worships God, and...well, I never thought about what the new law would mean to him.”

King Darius’s forehead squished together. Minutes passed. Then

he looked up hopefully. “We can’t throw Daniel into the Infamous Den of Hungry Lions—he’s a foreigner!”

“That’s true,” said Abban, “but the law specifically includes foreigners, and of course, the law of the Medes and Persians cannot be changed.”

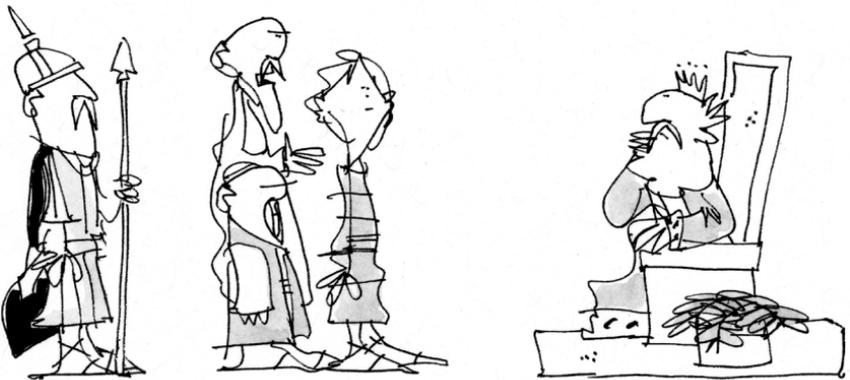
“B...b...but,” said King Darius, “he can’t be thrown to the lions because we’re friends! I said so, and I’m the king!”

“I’m afraid friends count too.”

King Darius burst into tears as Abban and Nigel marched out of the lunchroom and toward the prison. King Darius cried over his tuna sandwich and Cheez-Its until they were soggy and uneatable. He pushed his plate away and called for a box of Kleenex. One wasn’t enough. King Darius used up six more boxes of tissue, crying through an afternoon choir performance, a tiger-taming show, and his four o’clock snack. Minutes before the dinner bell, he managed to pull himself together.

“Bring Daniel to me,” he commanded, patting his swollen eyes with a cold washcloth.

Daniel was led into the king’s throne room between two heavily armed guards and seated opposite the ruler.



“All afternoon,” blubbered the king, “I’ve tried to think of ways to save you from the Infamous Den of Hungry Lions, but I haven’t come up with anything. I never thought about you being eaten alive! How will I ever replace you?” He blew his nose into a napkin. “I just want you to know I’m rooting for you. May your God, whom you worship, rescue you.” He put out his hand. “But just in case He doesn’t...goodbye.”



“Thank you, King Darius,” replied Daniel as he shook the king’s hand. Right away, guards lifted Daniel off his feet and carried him straight out of the palace and through the animal menagerie.



When they reached the foul-smelling Infamous Den of Hungry Lions, they threw Daniel inside. The huge cats howled with pleasure, their orange eyes glowing in the dim light.

That evening, King Darius had a stomachache. He couldn’t eat his steak dinner. He didn’t enjoy any of the jugglers or cartwheeling monkeys at the after-dinner show. All he could think about was his friend Daniel. Even the harpist he called for did nothing but keep him awake. All night long he thought about the new law and how it had affected his friend. Finally he concluded that Abban and Nigel had certainly duped him into creating the treacherous scheme.

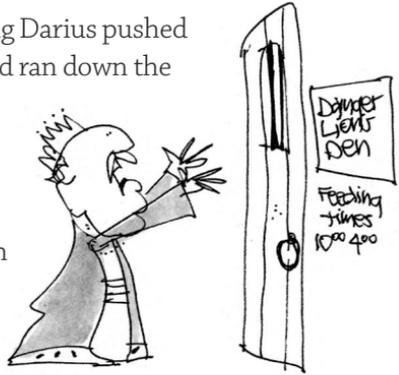


At the first glimmer of daylight, King Darius pushed the sleepy harpist out of the way and ran down the palace corridor.

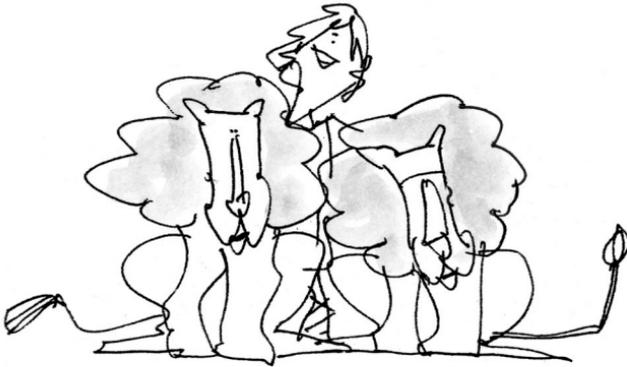
“It’s morning!” he shouted, “Everybody up! To the lions’ den! Hurry!”

Out the door and down the path ran King Darius until he came to the Infamous Den of Hungry Lions.

The stench of rotting meat flowed from the cavernous hole, prompting the king to hold his nose in disgust as he shouted, “Daniel! Are you alive? Did your God rescue you?”



A small voice called back, “Of course my God rescued me! I’m innocent, O King! I would not wrong you. My God sent an angel to shut the lions’ mouths—they lay here and purred all night.”



“Amazing!” cried King Darius. “Guards, open the door and let Daniel out!”

Immediately, the door was opened and Daniel walked out unscathed—but very, very stinky.

Later that morning, Abban and Nigel were arrested. They had tricked the king into throwing Daniel into the Infamous Den of Hungry Lions, so they were given the same treatment themselves.

Unfortunately for the two con men, the lions were now ravenous and made quick meals of them.

King Darius issued a new proclamation to his kingdom. “Good citizens of Babylon! Do you know the God of Daniel? He is the true God. His rule is never ending, He is a protector and defender of His children, and everyone should worship Him! He has rescued Daniel from the lions’ den!”

God Is **My Defender & Protector** ~~~~~

Betrayed by his coworkers and set up to fail, Daniel didn’t have a lot to be confident in—except his God. He believed God could defend and protect him, even in the Infamous Den of Hungry Lions.

Let Daniel’s story inspire you. Stand up for God, and He’ll stand up for you!

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