

God Rescues Daniel and his Friends from Ruthless Pagan Tyrants
About 8 minutes, from the Book of Daniel

Participants (*No need to memorize lines; the aim is to relive sacred events, not to perform*)

- Daniel
Shadrach
Nebuchadnezzar
Prompter Shouts brief phrases, and Echoes repeat them.
Echoes Children and adults who want to take part. Echoes need no script.
- Nebuchadnezzar I am Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylonia, far to the east of Israel.
Daniel, I chose you four young Jewish captives to serve in my
government because you've shown yourselves to be wise and practical.
You refused my rich food and have eaten healthy vegetables instead.
I wish my older sorcerers had the same common sense.
- Daniel We are here to serve you, O King!
- Shadrach I am Shadrach, Daniel's companion. Nebuchadnezzar is angry.
Listen to him.
- Nebuchadnezzar I had a dream and I am anxious to know its meaning.
I told my sorcerers to tell me the dream before giving its interpretation
since they claim to hear their gods' voices.
They could not do it; their claim is a lie, so I plan to slay them.
- Prompter & Echoes How ruthless!
- Daniel O King, let us pray to the God of heaven about this mystery,
so that we your counselors shall not be destroyed.
- Prompter & Echoes Time for serious prayer!
- Nebuchadnezzar Daniel, I have given you time as you requested.
Can you interpret my dream?
- Daniel Yes, O king. You saw an enormous and fearsome statue;
its head was gold, its arms silver, its body bronze,
its legs iron, and its feet iron and clay mixed.
- Prompter & Echoes Wow!
- Daniel A stone cut out without hands came rolling
and struck the statue's feet of iron and clay.
The statue became as chaff carried away in the wind,
but the stone grew and filled the earth!
- Nebuchadnezzar That is what I dreamt, Daniel, but what does it mean?
- Daniel You, O King Nebuchadnezzar, are the head of gold.
The God of heaven has given you power to rule over all.
After you will arise an inferior kingdom,
then a third kingdom of bronze that will rule all nations,
and then a fourth kingdom of iron that will crush other kingdoms.
The toes of clay and iron mixed will be a divided kingdom,
partly strong and partly brittle.
- Nebuchadnezzar And the stone that smashes the statue?

Daniel It is the eternal kingdom of God.

Nebuchadnezzar Your God reveals mysteries! He is over all gods.
You, Daniel, will serve in my highest court.

Prompter & Echoes Deliverance!

Shadrach We have a problem, Daniel.
King Nebuchadnezzar has grown proud;
he set up that huge golden statue for everyone to worship.
Anyone who does not fall before it when the music plays
will be thrown into a huge furnace.

Prompter & Echoes Now the music plays!

Shadrach We three companions of Daniel refuse to worship an idol,
and the king flies into a violent rage.

Nebuchadnezzar Heat the furnace seven times hotter than usual!
Tie up these rebels and throw them into the flames!

Prompter & Echoes They will burn to death!

Nebuchadnezzar Oh! What is this? What is happening?
Were not three men thrown in the fire?
I see four walking in the fire without harm,
and the fourth looks like a son of the gods!

Prompter & Echoes Come out of the fire!

Shadrach This has changed things for us, Daniel!
Nebuchadnezzar decreed that anyone speaking against our God
will be torn limb from limb, as no other God delivers in such a way.

Daniel Unfortunately, king Nebuchadnezzar again grows arrogant,
and God drives him away from men, to be with the beasts
of the field and eat grass until he repents.

Nebuchadnezzar O God in heaven, you have rightly punished me.
I was foolish! Ah! My reason has returned;
I am restored to my kingdom.

Prompter & Echoes God humbles the proud!

Daniel Now Nebuchadnezzar's son, Belshazzar, has become King;
he holds a great feast, using the gold vessels that his father
looted from God's temple in Jerusalem.
He and his concubines are drinking from them,
mocking Israel's holy God.

Prompter & Echoes Look! A hand is writing on the wall!

Shadrach Belshazzar sees the hand and grows pale.
His wise men cannot interpret the writing,
and he is painfully perplexed, Daniel.

Daniel O King, our God has given me the meaning of the writing:
you have been weighed on the scales and found lacking;
your kingdom has been given to the Medes and Persians.

Prompter & Echoes That night the king is slain!

Shadrach The conqueror, Darius the Mede, receives the kingdom.
Daniel distinguishes himself among the new commissioners.
They envy him and set a trap in order to kill him.
They get the king to decree that anyone praying to any god
besides the king for 40 days will be fed to the lions.

Daniel We must not obey such a godless decree, Shadrach.
I will keep praying on the roof three times a day in plain sight.

Prompter & Echoes Lord, hear his prayers!

Shadrach Enemies tell the king that Daniel is defying his edict.
Since the law of the Medes and Persians cannot be revoked;
the king is forced against his will to throw Daniel to the lions.
The sorrowful king hopes that Daniel's God will save him.
At dawn the king rises and rushes to the lion's den.

Daniel O King, live forever!
My God sent his angel to shut the lion's mouths.

Prompter & Echoes The lions go hungry!

Shadrach The king orders Daniel's accusers to be thrown to the lions,
and they overpower the evil men before they hit the floor.

Daniel From that time on, king Darius praises God,
and protects God's people.

Shadrach Daniel again foretells details about future kingdoms,
and predicts when the Messiah would be cut off
on behalf of others.

Prompter & Echoes God keeps his word!