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Overview of the Book of Daniel

OVER-ARCHING SPIRITUAL TRUTH FOR DANIEL:

God is sovereign.

OVER-ARCHING AIM:

For students to trust that God is in control.

KEY VERSE:

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Book: The book of Daniel is the historical account of the faithful Jews in Babylonian captivity and demonstrates God's sovereign power over all nations and events — past, present, and future.

Summary Statement: To reassure His children that He is in complete control even when situations seem impossible. He is faithful and can be trusted in all circumstances.

AIM: For students to look forward to the study of Daniel and begin to build a caring bond among themselves.

LESSON 2: IN BABYLON

Passage: Daniel 1

Summary Statement: Daniel and his friends choose to obey God and refuse to conform to Babylonian culture while in captivity.

Central Spiritual Truth: God calls us to trust and obey Him in all circumstances and to stand firm in our faith.

AIM: For students to walk in obedience to God.

LESSON 3: THE KING'S DREAM

Passage: Daniel 2:1-23

Summary Statement: After Nebuchadnezzar makes impossible demands of his wise men (including Daniel and his friends), Daniel turns to God and is then able to reveal the contents and meaning of the king's dream.

Central Spiritual Truth: God is in control of all things.

AIM: For students to trust that God is in control.

LESSON 4: THE DREAM'S MEANING

Passage: Daniel 2:24-49

Summary Statement: With God's help, Daniel describes and interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

Central Spiritual Truth: God controls all people, nations, and their rulers — past, present, and future.

AIM: For students to trust God to reveal His plan as He sees fit.

LESSON 5: THE FIERY FURNACE

Passage: Daniel 3

Summary Statement: Daniel's three friends are thrown into a fiery furnace because they will not worship the golden image of King Nebuchadnezzar.

Central Spiritual Truth: God will give us courage to do what is right in difficult circumstances, and we can trust Him with the outcome.

AIM: For students to trust God to be with them always—no matter what challenges they face.

LESSON 6: THE GREAT TREE

Passage: Daniel 4

Summary Statement: King Nebuchadnezzar gives his personal testimony to the Most High God. He tells of his great pride and time of insanity which lasts until he humbly acknowledges God as sovereign over all nations and the giver of power to anyone He chooses.

Central Spiritual Truth: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above" James 1:17.

AIM: For students to recognize that all their abilities and blessings are from God and should not be a source of pride.

LESSON 7: THE WRITING ON THE WALL

Passage: Daniel 5

Summary Statement: King Belshazzar arrogantly dishonors God. He loses his kingdom because he will not humble himself before God and acknowledge His sovereignty.

Central Spiritual Truth: "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" James 4:6.

AIM: For students to honor God in all aspects of their lives.

LESSON 8: THE LIONS' DEN

Passage: Daniel 6

Summary Statement: Daniel is thrown into the lions' den for continuing his prayer and worship to God, according to His Word.

Central Spiritual Truth: We can demonstrate our faithful devotion to God even when our life is at stake.

AIM: For students to stand up for Jesus and trust God regardless of the circumstances or consequences.

LESSON 9: A STRANGE VISION

Passage: Daniel 7-8

Summary Statement: Daniel has prophetic visions of beasts, a ram, and a goat. The visions include the second coming of Christ.

Central Spiritual Truth: God is in control of all events.

AIM: For students to always be ready for Jesus' return by first trusting Him as their Savior.

LESSON 10: DANIEL'S PRAYER

Passage: Daniel 9

Summary Statement: After studying Scripture, Daniel humbly intercedes for God's deliverance of His people in a prayer of repentance and praise.

Central Spiritual Truth: God hears and answers the prayers of His people not "because of our righteousness, but because of Your great mercy" (Daniel 9:18).

AIM: For students to study God's Word and pray every day for God's guidance in their lives and in the lives of fellow believers.

LESSON 11: SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Passage: Daniel 10:1 - 11:35

Summary Statement: Daniel had a vision of a great war.

Central Spiritual Truth: God knows the future just as people know history. Kings and rulers will plan and scheme, but their success is in the hands of God who controls the future of man and nations.

AIM: For students to pray for our national leaders and to put on the full "Armor of God" found in Ephesians 6:10-18.

LESSON 12: GOD PROTECTS HIS PEOPLE

Passage: Daniel 11:36 - 12:13

Summary Statement: Daniel's vision of the great war, explained by an angel, includes the events beginning with the Babylonian captivity, leading to Jesus' death and resurrection, and ending with His second coming and the final judgment.

Central Spiritual Truth: We may not understand everything that is happening in the world today; however, we can be confident that although evil is all around us, God is in control and our future is secure in Christ.

AIM: For students to be assured that God has provided them with all they need to know to be saved and to live as His children.

Overview of the Book of Mark

OVER-ARCHING SPIRITUAL TRUTH FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING:

Jesus, God's Servant, gave His life to bring truth, freedom, and salvation to the world.

OVER-ARCHING CHALLENGE:

For students to repent, believe in the gospel, and follow Jesus.

KEY VERSE:

"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

LESSON 1: WHAT TO EXPECT IN MARK'S GOSPEL

Purpose of the Book: The Gospel of Mark was written by John Mark, one of Jesus' disciples, and was most likely the first gospel written after Jesus' death and resurrection. The Gospel presents Jesus, the Son of God to be a man of action ... the true "Superman".

Spiritual Truth: This Gospel presents Jesus as the suffering Servant of God and as the One who came to serve and sacrifice for both Jews and Gentiles, including us today.

Challenge: Enthusiastically study Mark's exciting account of the life of Jesus in order to know His purpose for coming.

LESSON 2: THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Passage: Mark 1:1-20

Summary Statement: John baptizes Jesus and Jesus is tempted in the wilderness 40 days. John is arrested and Jesus calls the first disciples.

Central Spiritual Truth: Jesus calls His disciples to leave everything and follow Him into His Kingdom.

Challenge: Accept that Jesus is the Savior and choose to follow Him.

LESSON 3: JESUS HEALS MANY

Passage: Mark 1:21-2:12

Summary Statement: Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law, preaches in Galilee, cleanses a leper, heals a paralytic lowered through the roof, and is Challenged when he teaches forgiveness of sins.

Central Spiritual Truth: The Son of Man has the authority to forgive sins. "Your sins are forgiven" (Mark 2:5).

Challenge: Accept Jesus's forgiveness of our sins.

LESSON 4: CHANGED LIVES

Passage: Mark 2:13-3:6

Summary Statement: Jesus befriends sinners, defends His ministry, and expresses the true intent of the Law.

Central Spiritual Truth: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." Mark 2:17

Challenge: Learn and imitate Jesus's great compassion for sinners.

LESSON 5: FRIENDS AND ENEMIES

Passage: Mark 3:7-35

Summary Statement: The crowds follow Jesus because of His miracles; the demons fear Him; the leaders malign His nature, and some truly trust Him.

Central Spiritual Truth: Jesus is the Son of God whether people believe Him or not.

Challenge: Follow Jesus, become His disciple.

LESSON 6: JESUS TEACHES IN PARABLES

Passage: Mark 4:1-34

Summary Statement: Jesus teaches in parables about the sower and the seed, a lamp under a basket, the growing seed, and the mustard seed.

Central Spiritual Truth: Parables are intended to reveal God's truth for those willing to hear and understand.

Challenge: Be attentive listeners and ask God to open your heart to the truth of His word.

LESSON 7: MORE MIRACLES

Passage: Mark 4:35-5:43

Summary Statement: Jesus calms a storm, drives out demons into a herd of pigs, heals a woman of a blood disorder, and raises Jairus's daughter.

Central Spiritual Truth: God's powerful ways are not man's fear-filled ways.

Challenge: Experience and understand the relationship between God's power and our faith.

LESSON 8: JESUS IS MISUNDERSTOOD

Passage: Mark 6

Summary Statement: Jesus is rejected in Nazareth; He sends out the twelve disciples, and John is beheaded. Jesus feeds the five thousand, walks on water and heals the sick in Gennesaret.

Central Spiritual Truth: Jesus is the Son of God regardless of what man thinks about Him.

Challenge: Strive to know all about Jesus.

LESSON 9: JESUS HELPS MANY PEOPLE

Passage: Mark 7:1-8:26

Summary Statement: The Pharisees choose tradition above the intent of the Law; only things that come from the heart defile a man. Jesus heals and feeds people. The Pharisees demand a sign and Jesus warns against the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod.

Central Spiritual Truth: Only Jesus knows our hearts and how to meet our needs.

Challenge: See, hear, and understand with your whole heart that Jesus desires to meet all of your needs.

LESSON 10: WHO IS JESUS?

Passage: Mark 8:27-9:29

Summary Statement: Jesus asks His disciples who the people think He is; Jesus foretells His death and resurrection; Jesus is transformed, and heals a boy with an unclean spirit.

Central Spiritual Truth: Everyone who answers, "The Christ," needs to deny himself, take up the cross, and follow Him.

Challenge: Believe that Jesus is Christ and follow Him.

LESSON 11: WHO IS THE GREATEST?

Passage: Mark 9:30-50

Summary Statement: Jesus foretells His death, teaches the first must be last and servant to all; who is not against us is for us; beware the temptations to sin; be salt.

Central Spiritual Truth: "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all" (Mark 9:35).

Challenge: Follow Jesus's example to put others first.

LESSON 12: FOLLOWING JESUS

Passage: Mark 10

Summary Statement: Jesus gives instruction on discipleship: divorce, wealth and humility. Jesus heals blind Bartimaeus.

Central Spiritual Truth: A person must enter God's kingdom as a child and forsake all to follow Him.

Challenge: Forsake all to follow Jesus.

LESSON 13: IN JERUSALEM

Passage: Mark 11:1-25

Summary Statement: Jesus triumphantly enters Jerusalem, curses the fig tree, and cleanses the temple.

Central Spiritual Truth: God desires a genuine faith in Him, not fruitless religion.

Challenge: Let go of pride, forgive, and believe God.

LESSON 14: HARD QUESTIONS

Passage: Mark 11:27-12:44

Summary Statement: Jesus's authority is challenged; He teaches on the Parable of the Tenants, paying taxes to Caesar, the resurrection, the greatest and second most important commandments, and contrasts the scribes to the widow's offering.

Central Spiritual Truth: God wants our best, our all.

Challenge: Give our best, our all to God.

LESSON 15: FUTURE EVENTS

Passage: Mark 13

Summary Statement: Jesus foretells the destruction of the temple, the signs of the close of the age, the abomination that causes desolation, the coming of the Son of Man, the lesson of the fig tree, and how only God knows the day and hour.

Central Spiritual Truth: Prophecy is given to encourage and warn believers to stand firm in their faith and be on guard.

Challenge: Be alert, be on guard, keep watch, and be spiritually prepared for the coming of the Son of Man.

LESSON 16: JESUS PREPARES TO DIE

Passage: Mark 14

Summary Statement: A plot is devised to kill Jesus: He is anointed at Bethany and Judas agrees to betray Jesus. The disciples partake of the Passover meal: Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper, and predicts Peter's betrayal. Jesus pray in Gethsemane is arrested, tried before the council and Peter denies Jesus.

Central Spiritual Truth: Jesus willingly faces the cross to save us from our sins, as part of God's plan.

Challenge: Understand Jesus's deep love for us.

LESSON 17: THE CROSS

Passage: Mark 15

Summary Statement: Jesus is delivered to Pilate, is tried, mocked, crucified, dies and is buried.

Central Spiritual Truth: Jesus suffered and died to fulfill God's requirement for sin.

Challenge: Believe and accept that Jesus paid the price for our sin.

LESSON 18: HE IS RISEN

Passage: Mark 16

Summary Statement: The stone is rolled away; an angel tells the women Jesus is risen: Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene and to the disciples; Jesus commissions the disciples and ascends to heaven.

Central Spiritual Truth: Jesus is risen from the dead.

Challenge: Eagerly tell others the good news about Jesus Christ!