

‘ACTING THE BIBLE’

at

Beckley School

DANIEL IN THE LION’S DEN

(Daniel 6)

21 September 2023

Joint Benefice of

**The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley St. Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover
St. Barnabas, Horton-cum-Studley St. John the Baptist, Stanton St. John**

The Four Parishes 'Acting the Bible' team (previously known as 'Open the Book') leads assembly once a fortnight in Beckley School. The team take stories fresh from the pages of the Bible, and make them into mini dramas, to be acted out by themselves, together with Beckley schoolchildren. Through this, it is hoped that the Bible stories are brought alive, and remembered by the children, especially as they too are involved in the acting.

The team is led by Betty Dye, a Licensed Lay Reader, and includes members from Forest Hill, Stanton St John and Beckley. They meet once a fortnight to write the scripts, with the aim of adhering as closely as possible to the original Bible texts. This often involves comparing different Bible translations and even reading the New Testament in the original Greek!

ACTING THE BIBLE SEPTEMBER 2023

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN DANIEL 6

CAST: NARRATOR, DANIEL, KING DARIUS, MANAGER 1, MANAGER 2 (pupil), GUARD, CHORUS

THRONE IN THE CENTRE, DANIEL'S HOUSE TO THE SIDE, LION'S DEN BEHIND CURTAIN. CHORUS ON BENCH AT RIGHT ANGLES TO THE STAGE

NARRATOR: About 600 years before the birth of Jesus, God's people, the Jews, were taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. The king took some of the cleverest young Jews back to Babylon and had them trained to serve in his court. One of these Jews was called Daniel. Daniel was so hard-working, honest and clever that he became very important. Then Nebuchadnezzar died, and eventually King Darius took over. (DARIUS ENTER AND SIT ON THRONE WITH GUARD BEHIND.) King Darius decided to appoint 120 new governors, and then he chose Daniel and two other men to be in charge of them. (DANIEL AND THE MANAGERS WALK IN FROM THE CURTAIN SIDE AND BOW TO DARIUS) The other managers were very jealous of Daniel's success.

(DANIEL WALK OFF TOWARDS DOOR, MANAGERS WALK IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION AND STAND IN FRONT OF THE CURTAIN)

MANAGER 1: We must get rid of that Daniel, he is far too clever and popular with King Darius! But he is so honest, so hard working, it is hard to find anything to complain about.

MANAGER 2: That's true, but look how he prays to his God every morning, lunch time and night!

MANAGER 1: So he does! Now I know how we can trap him. Listen friend, this is what we will do.

(MANAGERS GO BEHIND CURTAIN, HANDS OVER MOUTHS, WHISPERING AND NODDING)

NARRATOR: So together they planned a trap with which to catch out Daniel. First of all, they went to see King Darius. (MANAGERS RETURN AND BOW VERY, VERY LOW BEFORE DARIUS)

MANAGER 1: Oh mighty and great King Darius, all of us who administer your empire - the managers and the governors - have agreed that Your Majesty should make a law which says that for 30 days every one of us must pray to you and to no other God.

KING DARIUS: How clever of you, I like that idea! I now declare a new law. (STAND UP) For the next 30 days everyone must pray to me and me alone. Remember once I have made a law it cannot be changed in any way at all.

MANAGER 1: And if any one breaks this law he must be fed to the hungry lions?

**CHORUS: (make claws) GRRRRR The lions growl and the lions prowl.
GRRRRR The lions are powerful, the lions are hungry.
GRRRRR Their teeth are sharp, their claws are strong.
GRRRRR GRRRRR GRRRRR**

KING DARIUS: Yes of course. (DARIUS STARTS WRITING ON SCROLL.
MANAGERS WALK A LITTLE WAY TOWARDS DANIEL'S HOUSE)

MANAGER 1: Come on now, let's go over to Daniel's house. (DANIEL WALK A LITTLE WAY ONTO THE STAGE) Watch and see what happens. (DANIEL KNEELS DOWN)

MANAGER 2: Look, he is kneeling down!

MANAGER 1: I can hear him praying to the Lord, his God! We have him now! Let's go and tell King Darius!

(MANAGERS WALK TO DARIUS AND BOW VERY, VERY LOW)

MANAGER 1: Oh mighty and great King Darius, you know that you have made a law which says that for 30 days every one of us must pray to you and to no other God.

KING DARIUS: Yes! And remember, once I have made a law it cannot be changed in any way at all.

MANAGER 1: Daniel does not respect your law.

MANAGER 2: He prays to his God three times a day!

KING DARIUS: (STAND UP, WRING HANDS). Oh, no! Not my loyal servant Daniel! But I made a ruling. I cannot break my word. Go and get him. Bring him here!

(GUARD MARCH ACROSS TO CURTAIN AND DRAG DANIEL BACK OVER TO DARIUS)

KING DARIUS: Daniel! My laws cannot be changed or broken. You will be thrown into a pit with the hungry lions. (AND THEN QUIETLY) May the God whom you serve keep you safe. (GUARD DRAG DANIEL OFF BEHIND CURTAIN)

**CHORUS: (make claws) GRRRRR The lions growl and the lions prowl.
GRRRRR The lions are powerful, the lions are hungry.
GRRRRR Their teeth are sharp, their claws are strong.
The night is dark and very long. GRRRRR**

KING DARIUS: Oh, I will not eat this evening. I will have no dancing or entertainment. I don't think I will sleep a wink, I am so worried about Daniel in the pit with the hungry lions! (LEAN BACK IN CHAIR FACE IN HANDS.)

**CHORUS: (make claws) GRRRRR The lions growl and the lions prowl.
GRRRRR The lions are powerful, the lions are hungry.
GRRRRR Their teeth are sharp, their claws are strong.
The night is dark and very long. GRRRRR**

NARRATOR: As soon as it was dawn King Darius went anxiously to the top of the lion pit. (DARIUS CAUTIOUSLY APPROACH THE CURTAIN)

KING DARIUS: Daniel? Daniel? DANIEL? Has your god kept you safe?

DANIEL: (FROM BEHIND CURTAIN) Oh mighty and great King Darius, The Lord my God kept me safe all night.

KING DARIUS: Guard, bring him out! (GUARD PULL DANIEL FROM BEHIND CURTAIN) Let me look at you. Why, not even a scratch!

DANIEL: God sent an angel to close the mouths of the lions so that they would not hurt me.

KING DARIUS: Guard, go and get those men who reported Daniel to me, bring them here and throw them into the hungry lion pit. (GUARD MARCH OFF)

KING DARIUS: I will send this message to everyone in my kingdom. "The Lord is the Living God, and he will rule forever. He saved Daniel from being killed by the lions. He rescues and saves, he performs miracles and wonders in heaven and on earth. His kingdom will never be destroyed, and his power will never end."