

DANIEL THE SPANIEL **By Rod**

Based on the main events in the life of Daniel. The poem could be read as it stands, or a group of players could act out little scenes to illustrate the events as the poem is read.

Now this is the story of Daniel,
More faithful to God than a spaniel.
Deported abroad with his nation,
Made light of his forced emigration.

Dan was handsome, clever and striking,
Much to his conquering king's liking.
But first Dan and three pals faced a test:
Told to eat the king's meat with the rest.

"That is something", said Dan, "we can't do
'Cos non-kosher's offside for a Jew.
No, we'll just eat the veg. on its own;
After ten days you'll see how we've grown."

And it happened just so as Dan said,
The 'Gang of Four' raced quickly ahead.
So children, you know what this means –
It is vital you eat all your greens.

The king's name was Nebuchadnezzar.
Nothing rhymes with Nebuchadnezzar,
So instead we'll just call him King Neb –
In those days he was quite a celeb.

But at night poor King Neb had some dreams,
And they tore him apart at the seams.
So he called his magicians to tell
The dreams' meaning – and contents as well.

"That's much too tricky for us to do"
They wailed. "Neb, can you give us a clue?"
But Dan said "What a fuss you all make;
With God's help it's a mere piece of cake.

Your dream's a statue, head made of gold,
That gets broken as matters unfold.
And your kingdom will come and will go –
The one true God just wants you to know."

And good King Neb, by Dan was impressed;
His insights were quite clearly the best.
So he promoted Daniel on high,
And his three pals did well by the by.

Neb's successor was called Belshazzar,
Much easier to rhyme with by far.
Bel, he had no dreams to speak of at all;
No, his problems were writ on the wall.

Mene Mene in words written tall,
Tekel Pharsim completed the scrawl.
Belshazzar, he was cut to the quick;
The king's wise men remained pretty thick.

But the queen said, "No need to be sad,
You can use the same man as you dad.
When puzzled he consulted old Dan.
The wise can't but you'll find that Dan can.

So for Daniel the king he did send,
Who said "Mene, your reign's at an end.
You've been weighed up by God in the scale,
And found wanting – you're down as a fail.

When the Medes took over from Bel -
Spaniel Daniel fared equally well.
He became the top dog in the land,
'Til some evil against him was planned.

All knew of King Darius's pride;
Lions with sharp teeth and jaws opened wide.
The satraps set traps for our Dan,
Who prayed to God not Darius the man.

Dan was thrown to the king of the beasts;
Main attraction at one of their feasts.
But Dan prayed to the Lord and was heard;
The big cats just rolled over and purred.

Laws were passed by Darius the Mede:
"Rev'rence be to Dan's God", he decreed.
And then Danny himself had some dreams
In which God showed Him clearly His schemes.

Danny boy put his faith in the Lord,
Whether home or, the most part, abroad.
Even faced with pending disaster,
The spaniel stayed true to his Master.

And so Daniel, the vision'ry man,
Teaches us to trust God for His plan.
For now things could be looking quite bleak,
But they might well look up in a week.

Or p'rhaps we'll be faced to wait longer
So our faith grows stronger and stronger.
But our faith we should try not to hide:
Rely on God, 'tis He whose our pride.