



DANIEL & THE DEN OF LIONS

DANIEL 6

GOAL

- ▶ **To illustrate to the children how, in the midst of danger, adversity, and even death, we can rely on God to protect us.** He fills us with the courage to stand up for our belief in Jesus Christ.
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CHARACTERS

- ▶ **Daniel:** Devoted to God and bold in his beliefs; he resolved to obey God rather than men, even though it meant possible death at the jaws of hungry lions

King Darius: The king of Persia who appointed Daniel as one of three local rulers over a Persian province; Darius was friendly toward Daniel

High officials and satraps: A group of Daniel's colleagues who were envious of his authority

MEMORY VERSE

- ▶ **2 Timothy 1:7:** For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.
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OVERVIEW

- ▶ **Read Daniel 6:** Daniel's enemies envied his position and were jealous of his good character. They invented a scheme to put Daniel to death for his prayer to God. When Daniel was thrown into the lion's den, God shut the lions' mouths. Daniel was saved, and the wicked men were put to death instead.



SUGGESTIONS

Following God got Daniel into serious trouble—not because following God made him do bad things, but because following God made him so good personally and professionally that none of his fellow workers could look good compared to him. **Following God can put us in harm’s way, but those who love and obey God enjoy His incomparable protection.**

1. Promotion: Observing God’s commandments and laws helped Daniel to work hard and avoid corruption. Working in such a manner made him easy to trust, and he was given great responsibility.

2. Respect: Observing God’s commandments and laws helped Daniel to develop a good character and reputation. People, including the king, respected and admired him.

3. Protection: Having a close relationship with God helped Daniel to trust that God would save him from the lions.

PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY

Animal Charades

Divide the class into teams. The teams should choose an actor each time it is their turn. Whisper to the actor the animal that he or she should try to imitate. Give the team 30 seconds to guess correctly. Correctly guessing the animal within 30 seconds wins the team one point. Continue the game until each student has a chance to be the actor (if you have a large class, set a time limit for the game). The team with the most points wins.

MEMORY VERSE MEANING

2 Timothy 1:7: Explain that God does not make us afraid. Instead of being afraid, we have God's power, God's love, and self-control. It is important to point out that we can't come up with this power, love, and self-control on our own—it must come from God.



POST-LESSON ACTIVITY

- ▷ **Fear Factor | Supplies:** create worksheets with the following information: At the top, the paper should read: "One thing I am afraid of;" in the middle, the paper should read: "One thing I can do about it;" at the bottom, the paper should have the memory verse printed.

Ask the students to complete their worksheets on their own or with the help of a parent.

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TAKE HOME

- ▷ Obeying God can lead to incredible blessings and a sense of deep love; however, it also can lead us to some scary or uncomfortable situations. Daniel maintained his faith despite living in a foreign country surrounded by jealous men who used his faith as a reason to have him killed. His obedience and love for God helped him bravely face the lions, and God saved him. How can we be more like Daniel?

1. Obedience: Daniel obeyed God's commandments and laws. This made him a highly regarded, trustworthy man who was given great responsibility. To be like Daniel, we should recognize the leading of the Holy Spirit and avoid sin. When we're not sure what to do, we should always pray for wisdom—God promises to give us wisdom when we ask.

2. Relationship: Daniel loved the Lord. He studied Scripture and prayed on a regular basis. Daniel knew about the character of God. Daniel knew that God promises to care for those who love Him. To develop a relationship with God like Daniel had, we need to pray and talk to God on a regular basis. We should seek answers to problems through prayer and studying Scripture.

3. Faith: Daniel's relationship with God led to him having a strong faith, which helped him to trust that God would save him from the lions. When we develop a strong relationship with God, we build faith, which helps us to trust that God will help us in any situation.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: What was the plan to remove Daniel from his post?

A1: They proposed an edict requiring everyone to worship only the king.

Q1b: Do you know someone who seems to be good at everything?

TN: Most of us know someone like this. It can be discouraging to not be as good at things as someone else, and it is very easy to become jealous of their success. The officials in this story were jealous of Daniel's successful work for the king. They decided that it would be easier to get rid of Daniel than to figure out why he was successful and try to change their ways to more closely align with how Daniel worked. When we encounter someone who is good at many things, we should look to see how they achieve their success. We should try to determine whether we can learn from them rather than become jealous.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: Did the king know what this law would mean for Daniel?

A2: No, the king was Daniel's friend.

Q2b: Has a friend ever volunteered you for something without asking you if you wanted to participate?

TN: Because our friends are important to us and we are important to them, it is easy to take for granted that friends will have time to help each other. Because he was in a position of power, the king assumed that everyone would be willing to worship only him. Because he didn't look past his own self-interest, he failed to see the problems his new order could cause for people, including his friend Daniel.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: Who did Daniel worship?

A3: He worshiped the One True God.

Q3b: How do you like to worship God?

TN: Let the students answer. If they get stuck, remind them that we can worship God in many ways, including singing, dancing, drawing, writing, and praying.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: What punishment did Daniel face for disobeying the new law?

A4: He was to be thrown into the lions' den.

Q4b: What would you do if a law made it illegal for you to tell your parent "I love you"?

TN: That's a ridiculous law! Just like worshiping God is always right, showing our love and appreciation for our parents and loved ones is always right. This new law told Daniel to do something that would cause him to disobey God. Daniel broke the law, but in this case, he did not sin.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What did the soldiers do after throwing Daniel into the lions' den?

A5: They rolled a stone over the mouth of the den.

Q5b: Have you ever wanted to help someone but didn't know how to help?

TN: The king, as powerful as he was, couldn't figure out a way to keep Daniel out of the lions' den. There was nothing he could do. When we find ourselves in situations in which we don't know how to help someone in need, all we need to do is pray. We can pray for God to fix the situation, or we can pray for God to give us wisdom and direction on how to help the person. God will always help us help others.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: What happened once Daniel was in the lions' den?

A6: God closed the lions' mouths.

Q6b: If you made an airplane, would you be confident flying it off of a cliff?

TN: Without really knowing what makes an airplane fly or at least being able to test the aircraft to see if it will fly, we probably wouldn't believe that the plane would fly. But if we studied what makes airplanes fly, applied that knowledge to the construction of our plane, and tested it out in a safer environment than a cliff, we could build confidence in our plane's ability to stay in the air. Daniel had a close relationship with God that he built over years of prayer. He studied Scripture and understood God's love and plans for him. In less life-threatening situations, Daniel was able to see God work in his life. Without that relationship, knowledge, and evidence, Daniel would not have entered the lions' den with the level of confidence described in this story. He knew God and trusted Him. Through prayer and reading Scripture, we can build a close relationship with God that will give us confidence to face any trial this life can hand us.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7



Q7a: What happened to the evil officials who plotted against Daniel?

A7: They and their families were thrown into the lions' den.

Q7b: Daniel's faith inspired the king. Does his faith inspire you to do what is right no matter what?

TN: Daniel didn't stop worshiping God, even though it could have cost him his life. Daniel faced the lions with courage because he trusted God to save him. Daniel continuously did what was right, no matter what the consequences might be. Daniel's steadfast faith inspired the king to embrace the God of Israel as his own God. Ask the students how Daniel's faith inspires them.



**MEMORY
VERSE**

▷ **2 Timothy 1:7:** For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

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BIG IDEA

▷ A close relationship with God can give us confidence to do what is right no matter what.

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**CLOSING
PRAYER**

▷ Dear God, thank You that you are powerful and good. Thank You that you can protect us from anything we are afraid of. Help us today to have the power, love, and self-control that You give to us. We ask these things in in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



The Israelites were living in Babylon, a foreign land. Daniel, who was one of those Israelites, became an influential leader in King Darius' court. God gave him the very special ability to understand and interpret people's visions and dreams. All over the court, people respected this wise, kind, and godly man. The king promoted Daniel to the position of governor over the whole kingdom. As Daniel rose in the ranks of the government, some men became jealous. Their envy burned so fiercely that they devised a sinister plan to remove Daniel from his post. The jealous officials knew Daniel was an upright man with good character. They knew this was going to be a hard task to turn the king against him. At last, they came up with a plan. The king could sign an edict that declared that everyone had to worship only the king. If anyone failed to do so, he or she would be thrown into a den of vicious lions.

SLIDE 2



Darius liked the idea, but he had no idea what these sneaky men were up to, so he quickly signed the new law. Daniel was his friend, and Darius would never do anything to purposely harm Daniel. Once the law was set in place, no one could change it. The evil men went to Daniel's home to spy on him.

SLIDE 3



Because Daniel worshiped the One True God of Israel, he prayed multiple times a day. The jealous officials knew they could trap Daniel and report Daniel's disobedience to the king.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 4



Their chance came. They gave news to the king. The guards came and arrested Daniel. By the newly enacted law, Daniel was to be thrown into the lions' den.



SLIDE 5



Helplessly, the king watched as Daniel was thrown to the lions. Quickly, the soldiers rolled a stone over the mouth of the den, and the stone was sealed with the king's official sign.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 6



Daniel found himself in a dark cave with huge lions all around, ready to rip him apart. But something happened: God closed the mouths of the lions. There, in the dark lions' den, Daniel was surrounded by God's saving power.



SLIDE 7



The king was overjoyed the next morning when he discovered that Daniel's God miraculously kept him alive. Daniel was taken out of the lions' den and restored to his leadership position. A new decree was sent out that said: "The God of Daniel is the living God, enduring forever. His kingdom shall never be destroyed, and His dominion shall be to the end. He has saved Daniel from the power of the lions." The king then arrested the jealous officials and threw them, their wives, and children into the lions' den. Their evil plan backfired, and they paid with their own lives.