



UNIT 16 | SESSION 3 | DECEMBER 7-8, 2019

4th-5th Lesson

Daniel in the Lions' Den

Bible Passage: Daniel 6

Story Point: God shut the mouths of the lions to save Daniel.

Key Passage: “Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in everything; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

Big Picture Question: Why do we pray? We pray because we trust God, and know He hears us.

**KID CONNECT:
10 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:
30 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:
20 MINUTES**

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Daniel was an old man, probably in his early 80s. He served the new king as one of the three leading supervisors in the kingdom. Daniel was very good at his job—so good, in fact, that King Darius planned to put him in charge of the entire kingdom. The other supervisors and governors were jealous of Daniel. They watched for him to do something wrong so they could complain to the king. Read Daniel 6:4. Daniel was “trustworthy, and no negligence or corruption was found in him.”

The king’s leaders convinced King Darius to pass a law that no one could pray to anyone but him, the king, for 30 days. But Daniel continued to pray boldly to God.

Guide kids to imagine how Daniel might have felt. Was he worried about getting caught? Did he have nightmares about being eaten by lions? Even the king’s threat of death did not stop Daniel from praying. The jealous officials turned him in, and Daniel was thrown into the lions’ den.

As you teach kids, emphasize that Daniel was faithful to God—the true King—and God rescued Him. God’s protection of Daniel served to show all the people that the God of Daniel “is the living God, and he endures forever; his kingdom will never be destroyed, and his dominion has no end” (Dan. 6:26).

God also calls us to trust and obey Him no matter what. God sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue us from something much more dangerous than lions. Jesus rescues us from sin.

KID CONNECT

WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: INTRO MUSIC)

Play intro music and greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Ask kids to tell you about a time when they heard something unbelievable. Maybe they heard news that was so good it was hard to believe or perhaps they saw something amazing that they had never seen before.

SAY • We learn about many miracles in the Bible. Miracles are amazing because they are wonderful things God can do that are not limited by the laws of nature. All the miracles in the Bible really did happen. Today we'll hear a story of how God miraculously saved Daniel from the lions' den. How do you think Daniel wound up there?

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as you transition to Large Group. Set it to end as the session begins.

LARGE GROUP GAME

(CG: GAME TIME SLIDE, VIDEO: FACE THE COOKIE, SFX: GAME MUSIC)

FACE THE CHRISTMAS COOKIE

(2 Christmas cookies, 2 Chairs)

SAY • It's game time again! I need 2 contestants- 1 boy and 1 girl, BUT before everyone raises their hands, you should know that you have to be good at manipulating your facial muscles. What do I mean? Watch this Minute to Win It video.

For us in KidCity though, it's going to be Christmas themed. This is called Face the Christmas Cookie! Who wants to try? *Choose 2 kids and have them sit in the chairs.* OK, you 2 are going to go head to head, or face to face, against each other. Whoever can get the cookie from their forehead to their mouth using ONLY their facial muscles wins! And don't worry, unlike Minute to Win It, we won't be timing you. If the Christmas cookie drops, just pick it up, put it back on your forehead and try again. Got it? Ok, get ready...and Go!

WORSHIP

(VIDEO: HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING, VIDEO: CHRISTMAS THIS YEAR)

SAY • Let's worship God!

INTRODUCE THE SESSION

(CG: NC ZOO IMAGE)

(no supplies needed)

SAY • Hello again, everyone. I have a question for you. How many of you have ever been to the zoo? Awesome! I just went to the North Carolina Zoo with my small group and we had a really fun time.

I got to go behind the scenes with the zookeepers and see some of the animals up close! Talk about exciting! We got to see lemurs and bison and even a honey bee garden. My favorite part though was getting to see the lions.

That reminds me of a Bible story about lions. But the lions in this story weren't at a zoo or part of a fun family outing...and they were very hungry! Do you want to hear it?

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)

SAY • Do you remember our big picture question that we've been thinking about each week? [*Allow kids to respond.*] Yes! Our question is, *Why do we pray?* And the answer is, *We pray because we trust God, and we know He hears us.* Today, we are going to talk about a man named Daniel who knew the importance of trusting God through prayer.

GIANT TIMELINE

(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY • Let's take a look at our giant timeline. We've already heard two stories that took place while God's people were exiled to Babylon because of their disobedience.

First, we heard that God delivered Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the king and the fiery furnace.

Even though God's people were in a foreign country with a king who didn't worship the one true God, it's clear that He was still with them. In each story we've seen God display His power. Let's find out what happens in today's Bible story.

WATCH OR TELL THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN, CG: STORY POINT, CG: QUESTION 1, CG:

QUESTION 2) (Bible)

Show the Bible story video “Daniel in the Lions’ Den.”

SAY • Did the jealous leaders ever find anything they could use against Daniel? Daniel glorified God through his life by serving Him faithfully.

What did the leaders know they could do to get Daniel in trouble? [*Allow kids to respond.*] They knew Daniel was a man of God and that he would obey God’s laws. Daniel chose to pray, even though he would be punished. He trusted God and knew that God heard him when he prayed.

What do you think Daniel’s night was like in the lions’ den? [*Allow kids to respond.*] We can imagine that Daniel was afraid, but God protected Daniel. God shut the mouths of the lions to save Daniel.

What do you think Daniel’s faith and God’s protection over him taught King Darius? [*Allow kids to respond.*] After seeing that God shut the mouths of the lions to save Daniel, King Darius acknowledged the Lord as the living God who rescues and delivers.

QUESTION 1: What does this story teach us about God?

SAY • God was Daniel’s rock as he chose to honor the Lord even when he would be punished. God was Daniel’s fortress, shield, and stronghold when he spent the night in the den surrounded by hungry lions. God was Daniel’s salvation when he came out of the den unharmed. God is still all those things for those who know and trust Him.

QUESTION 2: What do you think Daniel’s faith and God’s protection over him taught King Darius?

SAY • Lead kids to recall that after seeing that God shut the mouths of the lions to save Daniel, King Darius acknowledged the Lord as the living God who rescues and delivers. Suggest kids find and read Daniel 6:26-27 in the Bible.

CHRIST CONNECTION

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

SAY • Daniel needed saving from the lions, and we all need saving from a much bigger enemy: sin. Sin is anytime we choose what we want over what God wants for us. God showed His power to rescue Daniel from the lions, but Daniel was just a small part of a much bigger story. God ultimately rescued us from a much bigger problem— sin and death— through His Son, Jesus.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)

SAY • Do you remember our big picture question that we've been thinking about each week? [Allow kids to respond.] Yes! Our question is, *Why do we pray?* And the answer is, *We pray because we trust God, and we know He hears us.* Today, we are going to talk about a man named Daniel who knew the importance of trusting God through prayer.

KEY PASSAGE

(CG: KEY PASSAGE)

(Bible)

Show the key passage slide. Open Bible and lead the kids to read together 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

SAY • “Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in everything; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

How can someone pray constantly? You have to go to school, talk with other people, and sleep; so how is that possible? This passage is about living a life of prayer. Praying should be a natural part of our daily life. When something exciting happens, we should pray. When something bad happens, we should pray. Prayer shows our trust in the Lord.

We can trust God with the big things and the little things. When we pray, we can bring everything to Him. Because we can trust God, we can give thanks in everything.

PRAY AND DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

SMALL GROUP

Bible Passage: Daniel 6

Story Point: God shut the mouths of the lions to save Daniel.

Key Passage: “Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in everything; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

Big Picture Question: Why do we pray? We pray because we trust God, and know He hears us.

DISCUSSION

(Bibles – 3-4 per group)

SAY • Praying should be a natural part of our daily life. When something exciting happens, we should pray. When something bad happens, we should pray. Prayer shows our trust in the Lord. We can trust God with the big things and little things. We can bring anything to Him.

- What should you do when someone asks you to do something wrong?
- How can God use your faithfulness to Him as a way for others to learn about Jesus?

Distribute Bibles. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Daniel 6. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Daniel 6:10. In today’s story, King Darius (duh RIGH uhs) was now the king, and he appointed Daniel as an important leader in the government.

Choose another volunteer to read aloud Daniel 6:10 again. Point out that Daniel trusted God and knew God would hear him when he prayed. Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

1. How did Daniel’s obedience to God point others to God?

Invite kids to discuss. Point out that after God shut the mouths of the lions to save Daniel, King Darius realized that God is the “living God” who “rescues and delivers.” (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Gal. 1:3-4.)

2. Is everything in life easy if we just obey God?

Invite kids to share their ideas. Emphasize that obedience leading to an easy life wasn’t true for Daniel and it is not true for us. The Bible says following God will cost us, but He is worth it. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 16:24-25.)

3. How can you trust God when facing something hard?

Assure kids that even when we face difficult times, we have a loving heavenly Father. Jesus prays for us according to God’s will. God will use each situation in our life for His glory and our good. He cares for us, sees us, knows us, and loves us. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 8:26-28.)

KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

(Bibles, 1 pair of gloves or mittens – per group, 1 dry erase board or large sheet of paper – per group, 1 dry erase marker or regular marker per group)

Instruct kids to open their Bibles to 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Lead the kids to read the key passage together. Form two or more teams of kids. Explain that each player will take turns writing one word of the key passage. Before a player writes, he must put on a glove or mitten. The team that finishes writing out the key passage first wins. Play again as time allows.

MAKE A PRAYER JOURNAL

(1 “Prayer Journal” printable – per kid, markers, crayons, and pencils - per group)

Give each kid a prayer journal paper. Demonstrate how to fold the paper in half along the width. Provide markers, crayons, and pencils for kids to decorate their journals. Encourage the kids to draw three things they can pray for each day throughout the week.

SAY • Even though the king passed a law making it against the law to pray to anyone other than him for thirty days, Daniel still prayed to God as he had always done. Daniel loved God and knew that obeying Him was worth any punishment he faced. The same is true for us. God is our Creator and King. We need Him each and every day!

REFLECTION AND PRAYER

(Journal Page - 1 per kid, pencils)

Ask the kids the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Make time for prayer requests and pray for your group. If time allows, have kids complete the Journal Page provided with this session.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(Activity Page - 1 per kid)

Send home the Activity Page and encourage kids to complete it with their family.