



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

K-1 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 and separation from God.

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. As kids arrive, ask them to share the most amazing thing they have ever seen or experienced.

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 about 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 • You kids have done a great job answering our big picture question, *Why do we pray? We pray because we trust God, and we know He hears us.* The Bible tells us that we can pray continuously, or all the time! Prayer is simply talking to God. We can talk to Him no matter where we are or what we are doing. God loves it when we come to Him in prayer and He speaks to us through His Word, too.

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. Last week 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 THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN, CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT)

(Bible)

Show the Bible story video "Daniel in the Lions' Den."

SAY • Daniel was an honest man and worked hard at his job within the kingdom. When he returned to his house to pray, Daniel wasn't trying to be rebellious against the king. Daniel knew that

God was greater than any earthly king, and Daniel wanted to obey God rather than King Darius. Daniel was willing to risk being thrown to the lions to remain faithful to God. It might seem surprising that God allowed Daniel to get caught and thrown to the lions at all. But because Daniel went into the lions' den, God received glory. God shut the mouths of the lions to save Daniel. God showed King Darius that He is the living God who rules forever.

Sometimes it may feel like God isn't watching, especially when we are going through hard times. Maybe you have prayed, and it seems like God won't answer or that He doesn't hear you. But one thing we learn from this story is that God is always listening. He is always watching out for us. He uses even our scary situations to show His power! Remember, we *pray because we trust God, and we know He hears us*. And God always answers our prayers, even when He gives an answer we do not expect. Whenever God does something differently from how we expect, we can trust that God's way is much better than ours.

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 separation from God— through His Son, Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE

(CG: KEY PASSAGE)

(Bible, Key Passage Marker)

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.

Daniel knew how important prayer is. He had heard the law King Darius passed and yet Daniel still prayed. Prayer is talking with God to praise Him, ask Him for help, and tell God we are sorry for disobeying Him. Maybe Daniel was asking God for help when he was caught. We can ask God to help us in times of need too. God shut the mouths of the lions to save Daniel. He will rescue us from our greatest enemy too: sin.

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.

KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

(1 Key passage poster – per group, 2 “Key Passage Phrase” printables – per group, 1 pair of mittens or gloves- per group, 2 paper bags – per group)

Form two teams within your group. Create two sets of the key passage phrases. Place one complete set in each paper bag. Distribute one paper bag and one mitten or glove to each team. The first person in each team will put on a mitten to be a “lion paw” and then pick out one phrase from the bag. The team will then work to display the key passage in the correct order, while each phrase is added. Each kid will pass the mitten to the teammate next to them, allowing each person to have a turn picking out a phrase until they are all gone. The team that displays the key passage in the correct order first wins. Make sure kids only chose one phrase at a time while wearing their “paw.”

SAY • You all did great working as a team of lions to get your key passage in order! Let’s keep working on it for a few more weeks.

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 said it was 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 made us and He is the King of our lives. We need Him each and every day!

DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions and lead the group to discuss:

Why did the other leaders want to get Daniel in trouble? (*They were jealous of him, Dan. 6:3-4.*)

What law did King Darius create? (*For thirty days; people could not pray to anyone except him, Dan. 6:7.*)

What was Daniel’s response to the king’s law? (*Daniel continued praying to God, Dan. 6:10.*)

Why do you think Daniel obeyed God rather than King Darius? *Guide the kids to see that God made us and that we should obey God above any earthly leaders. If Daniel were to obey the king's law to pray to him, Daniel would have been sinning against God. Daniel believed in and loved the one true God. Daniel wanted to obey Him.*

Is it always easy to obey God? Why or why not? *Help kids understand that obeying God can be really hard sometimes. We have to fight against our own sin, and other people might not like that we obey God. Jesus reminded His disciples that we will be blessed when people mistreat us for His sake. (Matt. 5:11-12; John 15:18-19) We can also remember that Jesus faced punishment and even death when He was obedient to God's plan to save people. (Heb. 5:7-9)*

How can your obedience to God show other people that God is good? *Explain that our obedience shows others that we really do love God and believe the Bible. When we choose to follow God, especially when disobeying might seem easier, we show the world that God is important to us.*

SAY • God shut the mouths of the lions to save Daniel. It's not always easy to obey God, but God is faithful and He cares for us. He is all-powerful and good. We can trust that obeying Him is best 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 separation from God— through His Son, Jesus.

REFLECTION AND PRAYER

(Bible Story Coloring Page - 1 per kid, crayons)

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 Bible story coloring 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.