

LESSON 75

Daniel in the Lions' Den

DANIEL 6



BIBLE TRUTH

GOD PRESERVES HIS PEOPLE BY HIS SOVEREIGN HAND

LESSON SNAPSHOT

- 1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
- 2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN**
Read Daniel 6 from the Scriptures or read story 75, “Daniel in the Lions’ Den,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
- 3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN**
Courage
SUPPLIES:
✓ a big cardboard box
✓ a live hamster or small toy stuffed animal (pretend it is alive)
✓ a small hamster box
✓ a pair of leather work gloves
✓ two other adults to participate in the skit
- 4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN**
- 5. OBJECT LESSON 2 15 MIN**
Being Daniel’s Counselor
SUPPLIES:
✓ pencils
✓ worksheets (attached)
✓ *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs* (<http://www.ccel.org/f/foxe/martyrs/home.html>)
- 6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN**
- 7. ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN**
Out of the Lions’ Den
SUPPLIES:
✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper
- 8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN**
- 9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN**
We Are Sinners Like the Satraps
SUPPLIES:
✓ whiteboard and dry-erase markers

TOTAL 85 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

A trap is set for Daniel—We've learned how Daniel's three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, refused to obey when King Nebuchadnezzar demanded that they worship an idol. Once again, a law has been made that any faithful worshiper of the God of Israel could not obey, and again God provides a miraculous deliverance that brings him glory.

By this time in his life, Daniel has been an important official in the palace of various kings for many years. The kingdom of Persia has defeated and taken over the kingdom of Babylon. Yet with this change of power, Daniel is still serving in the royal palace under the king of Persia, Darius. Darius gives Daniel so much authority that it makes other officials jealous. They plan to ruin Daniel by convincing Darius to sign a law that they know Daniel will disobey. To persuade Darius to sign the law, the officials lie and say that all the officials agree that it is a good law. But they never asked Daniel!

Daniel enters the lions' den with faith—Even though this new law makes Daniel's prayers illegal, he is not worried. We can be sure he remembers God's deliverance of his three friends from the furnace. Daniel does not fear but places his trust in God and continues to pray each day. His enemies carry out their plan and catch Daniel breaking the new law. Even though Darius did not want Daniel to be hurt or killed, he had to follow the law. So Daniel is thrown into a large pit full of lions. The king encourages Daniel, hoping his God can protect him (Daniel 6:16).

God delivers Daniel but judges his accusers—By the time Darius returns to the lions' den in the morning, he realizes his officials have lied to him. When the king finds Daniel alive, it confirms that Daniel has done nothing wrong for God has protected him. To punish the jealous officials the king orders them thrown into the den. They are not protected like Daniel and are killed.

The fact that the lions immediately attack the people thrown into the pit after Daniel is removed proves that Daniel's salvation comes by the grace of God. At the end of this story, just like at the end of the story of the fiery furnace, God miraculously saves his own and receives glory from a pagan king in a foreign land.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Persecution

Persecution is being mistreated for what you believe. In the case of Christianity it is being mistreated because you believe in Jesus Christ. Persecution should be no surprise for the believer. Because Jesus is the stumbling stone and rock of offense, he was persecuted and we will also be persecuted (John 15:20). Jesus claims to be the only way of salvation, and as a result, he is an affront to all other systems of belief. Jesus said: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

This message is offensive to those who reject Christ. When we are persecuted for our faith or for sharing the truth about Jesus, the Bible tells us to rejoice because God will reward us in heaven (Matthew 5:12).

WHERE IS JESUS? _____

How does today’s Bible story fit into God’s greater plan of redemption?

Read 1 Timothy 1:15–16.

Like Paul, we are all sinners. We have broken God’s law and deserve a death sentence. God’s law cannot be repealed or changed. Similarly in Daniel’s day, the law of the Medes and Persians could not be repealed. When the king’s law was broken, the person who broke the law had to be punished. King Darius could not save Daniel. God, however, could save Daniel.

Like Daniel, we have all broken a law that cannot be changed: God’s law. But, we have a heavenly king who can save us, not by changing the law but by taking the punishment we deserve. God saved Daniel from the lions by the angel and God has saved us by the death of his Son, Jesus, on the cross. Our God is a God who saves! By remaining in the lions’ den overnight, Daniel satisfied the law of the Medes and Persians. By taking our punishment on the cross, Jesus satisfied the law of God.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Daniel 6 from the Scriptures or read story 75, "Daniel in the Lions' Den," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Courage

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a big cardboard box
- ✓ a live hamster or small toy stuffed animal (pretend it is alive)
- ✓ a small hamster box
- ✓ a pair of leather work gloves
- ✓ two other adults to participate in the skit

Act out or ad-lib this skit in front of the class.

Teacher #1: Hey, guess what I just got?

Teacher #2: What did you get?

Teacher #1: I got a pet hamster. Do you want to see him?

Teacher #2: Sure. Where is he?

Teacher #1: (*pointing to the big box*) He's in that box.

Teacher #2: Why such a big box?

Teacher #1: Well, he came in a little box, but when I first tried to take him out of the box, he got upset and bit me. Somehow he got away and wouldn't let me hold him. I couldn't get him in the little box so I used this big one.

Teacher #2: I thought hamsters were supposed to be gentle.

Teacher #1: Not this one. At least not so far. Hey why don't you get him out of this big box for me and put him back into this one. (*holds up the little box*)

Teacher #2: (*looking fearfully into the big box*) No chance. I'm not sticking my hand in there only to get bitten.

Teachers go back and forth making a real scene until a third helper enters the conversation.

Teacher #3: Hey guys, I've got a solution for you. *(hands them a pair of leather work gloves)*

Now both Teacher #1 and Teacher #2 want to get the hamster out to show the other up. The skit ends with one of the teachers using the gloves to take the hamster out of the big box and place it in the little box.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- Why were the teachers so afraid?
(They didn't want to get bitten by the hamster.)
- What happened to give them courage enough to retrieve the hamster from the big box?
(The gloves protected them from being bitten. They placed their trust in the gloves.)
- Thinking of our story from today, what gave Daniel the courage to endure the lions' den?
(Daniel trusted God to protect him. Just like the gloves, if we believe God is in control and can protect us, we can do his will with confidence.)
- Who are we called to trust in our lives?
(We are called to trust God, specifically Jesus Christ. Our greatest fear should be death and judgment, but if we trust in the work that Jesus did on the cross, we can be confident that we will go to be with Jesus in heaven when we die, free from sin and free from judgment.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 15 MIN

Being Daniel's Counselor

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ pencils
- ✓ worksheets (attached)
- ✓ *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* (<http://www.ccel.org/f/foxe/martyrs/home.html>)

Read 2 Timothy 3:12; 2 Corinthians 4:8–16; and Matthew 5:10–12. Write a paragraph describing how you would counsel Daniel if he was being thrown into the lion’s den for praying to God. (Hints: We would want to encourage Daniel that God could save him, and we would want to have the perspective represented in these Bible verses.)

There is a special honor in being like Christ through persecution. Paul knew this and refused to give up preaching the gospel in spite of the many persecutions he received (2 Corinthians 11:23–25).

We must remember that our ultimate reward will come not in this life but in the life to come. Using *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs* share a few stories with the class. Explain to them the persecution that is currently going on around the world. Take time to pray for those in the world that are currently under persecution. Ask God to give them the faith of Daniel and to preserve them like Daniel and use their suffering for the promotion of the gospel.

We celebrate the deliverance of Daniel, which is a picture of the coming salvation through Jesus. Now we place our hope in Jesus and look forward to everlasting life with him in heaven.

Compare the prayer of Darius after Daniel’s deliverance from the lions in Daniel 6:26–27 with Nebuchadnezzar’s prayers in Daniel 4:3, 34–35. It is interesting to see a person’s reaction when confronted with the power of God.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN

Out of the Lions’ Den

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper

Have the children draw a picture of Daniel coming out of the lion’s den unharmed.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

We Are Sinners Like the Satraps

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ whiteboard and dry-erase markers

After reading the story from Daniel 6 to the children, ask them to tell you what sins the officials committed. Write their suggestions on the whiteboard.

- The officials were jealous of Daniel.
- The officials lied, saying that every one of them agreed to the new law.
- The officials meant to harm Daniel, knowing that the law would affect him only.

After writing these and any others the children come up with, ask them to point out how children their own age can sin in similar ways.

- Children can be jealous of other children's possessions.
- Children lie to their parents to get their siblings in trouble.
- Some children may plan together to bully another child.

Help the children identify with the officials by raising their hand if they have ever been jealous, ever told a lie, or ever tried to get another person in trouble. All of the children should raise their hands.

Use this as an opening to share how we are all sinners and need to be saved. Talk about what Jesus did on the cross so that our sins could be forgiven. Mention how Jesus lived a perfect life so that he could give us his righteousness in exchange for our sinfulness.

LESSON 75—OBJECT LESSON 2 WORKSHEET

1. Read 2 Timothy 3:12; 2 Corinthians 4:8–16; and Matthew 5:10–12. Write a paragraph describing how you would counsel Daniel if he was being thrown into the lions' den for praying to God. (*Hints:* We would want to encourage Daniel that God could save him, and we would want to have the perspective represented in these Bible verses.)

2. Compare the prayer of Darius after Daniel's deliverance from the lions in Daniel 6:26–27 with Nebuchadnezzar's prayers in Daniel 4:3, 34–35. It is interesting to see a person's reaction when confronted with the power of God.
