

12. Daniel and the Lions (Daniel 6:1-28)

“Your word is a lamp before my feet and a light for my journey.” (Psalm 119:105)



PLAN

Session Outline

1. Gather

Greeting
Puzzlers
Unfair Rules
Transition to Explore

2. Explore

Sacred Conversations
Hear and See the Bible Story
Interact with the Bible Story
Say the Bible Verse
Transition to Respond

3. Respond

Bravery Prayer
Lions
Loving God, Loving Neighbor
Transition to Bless

4. Bless

Inviting
Praising
Blessing
At Home with God

Supplies

Basic Supplies: Pencils | Newsprint | Markers

Gather: TV/DVD player | Dry-erase board | Dry-erase markers

Explore: TV/DVD player

Respond: Internet access | Images of lions | LED candle | Tablecloth | Tent

Bless: LED candle | Tablecloth | Tent

Before You Teach

The story of Daniel and the Lions is one that children may be familiar with from previous classes or home Bible reading. In this story, Daniel has been appointed as one of three main officers who oversees King Darius's one hundred chief administrators. Daniel does well and soon surpasses the other officers, and the king begins to consider putting Daniel in charge of the whole kingdom. The other officers and chief administrators become jealous and try to find fault with Daniel's work.

They could not find any problem or corruption in Daniel so they created a situation to try to get Daniel in trouble with the king. They knew that Daniel was faithful in his prayers to God, so they got the king to create a law that prohibited praying to anyone but the king for thirty days. Sure enough, Daniel continued to praise God three times per day, right in front of a window in his upper room. The men saw him there and told the king. Although the king really liked Daniel and did not want to punish him, he knew he had to obey his own law. So he had Daniel brought to him and thrown into a pit of lions. However, even the king hoped that Daniel's God would rescue him.

Daniel stayed in the pit overnight, and the next morning the king came to check on him. Daniel was found to be well. He said to the king, "My God sent his messenger, who shut the lions' mouths" (verse 22). Daniel was taken out of the pit, and the men who accused him were thrown in and killed by the lions. The king was overjoyed that Daniel was alive and declared that everyone should worship Daniel's God. He also made Daniel prosperous in the kingdom.

This session offers opportunities to explore what to do when rules are unfair, what is worth standing up for, and being brave. This is also a place to explore praise and prayer. The main thing that you will want the children to come away from the lesson with is a sense that they can be brave for their faith, and that a relationship with God will help them be brave in other aspects of their lives.

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GATHER

Greeting

Before class: Display your choice of “Attendance Chart” (Class Kit—pp. 15 & 18, or 16–17) at eye level.

- Play “God’s Stories” (Adventure DVD), as you welcome each child.
- Show the children where to place their offerings on the worship table.
- Have each child mark the “Attendance Chart.” For the “Community Attendance Chart,” the children can write their first names or initials on the building marked #12.

SAY: Our Bible story is about a man named Daniel who was brave because of his faith.

A—Puzzlers (Activity Sheets)

Before class: Tear out the Session 12 Activity Sheets for each child.

- Give each child a copy of “Daniel” (Activity Sheets—p. 25). Let them complete the puzzle.
- Allow them to work on the “The Lions” activity (Activity Sheets—p. 26).

SAY: Today’s Bible story reminds us that we can bravely stand up for what we believe because of our faith.

OR

B—Unfair Rules (Discussion)

Before class: Gather newsprint and markers or a dry-erase board and dry-erase markers.

SAY: Our Bible story for today is about a man named Daniel whose king made an unfair rule.

ASK: What do you do when you think a rule is unfair?

- Hold an open discussion with the children and let them express their ideas about how to deal with unfair rules.
- Write down the ideas on your newsprint or dry-erase board.

TIPS: *You may want to help guide the children away from less than desirable ways to handle unfair rules, but be sure to let them express their ideas without judgment.*

Transition to Explore

- Encourage children to bring chairs or to sit on the floor in a carpeted area.
- Invite children to form a circle on the floor.

TIP: *Transitions are a useful way to help children easily move from one activity to the next.*

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EXPLORE

Sacred Conversations

- Encourage children to join and sit in the circle.
- Demonstrate a listening position for the children.
- Ask wondering questions.

ASK: I wonder:

- Have you ever broken a rule?
 - Why did you break it?
 - What happened when you broke the rule?
-

Hear and See the Bible Story

- Read the Bible story together (*CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible*—Daniel 6:1-28).
- Watch the Adventure DVD Session 12.

SAY: Today, we’re learning about a man named Daniel who bravely faced lions.

ASK: Who helps you be brave?

Interact with the Bible Story

- Assign parts and act out “Daniel and the Lions” (Bible Story Sheets—Session 12).
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Say the Bible Verse

Before class: Display the “Unit 3 Bible Verse” poster (Class Kit—pp. 10 & 23).

- Read the memory verse to the children: “Your word is a lamp before my feet and a light for my journey” (Psalm 119:105).
 - Have the children repeat the verse after you.
 - Have the children say the verse to another child.
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Transition to Respond

- Encourage children to put away their chairs and/or get back to their places.

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RESPOND

Bravery Prayer (Writing/Spiritual Practice)

Before class: Photocopy “Bravery Prayer” (Leader Guide—p. 78) for each child and gather pencils.

SAY: In the Bible story, Daniel prayed, even though it was dangerous to do so. Let’s each write a prayer to help us be brave.

- Give each child a copy of “Bravery Prayer” and a pencil. Let them have time to write their own individual prayer.
- When the children are finished writing, let them have some quiet time to pray their prayer.

SAY: Now you have a prayer that you can pray anytime you feel afraid.

OR

Lions (Activity/Discussion)

Before class: Gather some images of lions from the internet to share with your children. Add facts to the ones below if you would like.

SAY: Daniel bravely faced the lions in our story. Lions are very interesting animals. Let’s see if you can guess the answers to the following questions.

ASK: What type of animal is a lion? (*cat*); At what age do you think a lion is grown up? (*2 years*); What do you call a baby lion? (*cub*); What do you call a female lion? (*lioness*); Do male or female lions have a mane around their neck? (*male*); What do you call the group that lions live in? (*a pride*); How fast can a lion run? (*50 miles per hour*); How far can a lion jump? (*up to 36 feet*) How many teeth do lions have? (*30*); What do lions eat? (*meat/other animals*); How long do lions live? (*10 to 14 years in the wild, more than 20 years in captivity, such as in a zoo*)

- Show pictures of lions after your discussion or as you go through the questions or after.

ASK: Is there anything about lions or their appearance that surprises you?

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

ASK: Being part of a community sometimes means standing up for what you think is right when something about your community seems unfair, like Daniel did.

ASK: What do you think is worth standing up for?

- Have a discussion and let the children share their thoughts.
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Transition to Bless

- Ring a bell to announce the transition.
- Create a worship center with a tent, a small table with a tablecloth, and an LED candle.

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BLESS

Inviting

Before class: Display “Unit 3 Bible Verse Signs” poster (Class Kit—p. 31) on a wall or bulletin board.

SAY: Let’s learn to sign today’s Bible verse.

- Gather the children around the “Bible Verse Signs” poster. Have the children read the Bible verse.
- Teach the children to sign the verse.
- Have each child sign the verse to another child.

PRAY: Thank you, God, for helping us be brave. Amen.

Praising

SAY: Today, we learned about how Daniel praised God three times per day even though the king made a rule against praying to anyone except the king. Let’s each offer praise to God three times as we remember Daniel’s bravery.

- Have the children form a circle.
- Ask for a volunteer to step into the circle and shout, “praise God” three times. (You can demonstrate.) Have that child call on another child who will do the same, and so on until all children have had a chance to offer praise.

TIPS: *This should be a joyful activity. It is OK if there is laughter.*

Blessing

Before class: Set up a tent and light the LED candle.

- **SAY:** Today, we learned about how Daniel went to the upper room in his house and prayed and praised God three times per day even though the king made a rule against praying to anyone except the king. Today, we have a tent in our classroom. Let’s use it as our special place to pray, the way that Daniel prayed in his upper room.
 - Let each child, one at a time, have a few moments for prayer inside the tent, while the rest of the class waits quietly.
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At Home with God

SAY: What is one thing that you learned today about Daniel and the Lions? What is one thing that you learned about being brave for what you believe in? Can you share what you learned with your family?

- Send Bible Story Sheets, Session 12, and the Unit 3 Song Sheet home with each child.

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Bravery Prayer

Write a special prayer for yourself. Use the letters in the word brave to start each line. For example, for the R in brave you could write, "Remember God is always with you." Take some time to say your prayer today, and pray this prayer whenever you are afraid in the future.

B

R

A

V

E
