

Bible Passage: Daniel 6

STORY POINT: God shut the mouths of the lions to save Daniel.

Key Passage: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

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

Daniel in the Lions' Den

Daniel 6

King Darius (duh RIGH uhs) was the new leader in Babylon. Babylon was a large kingdom, so the king picked men to be leaders over small parts of Babylon. The king picked Daniel to be one of the leaders. Daniel was very good at his job, so Darius **decided to put Daniel in charge of all of Babylon.**

When **the other leaders** heard about this, they **were jealous.** They watched Daniel and waited for him to do something wrong so they could get him in trouble. But Daniel did what was right.

The leaders knew Daniel obeyed God, so they made a plan to get Daniel in trouble for praying. They said to King Darius, "King, all of your leaders think it would be a good idea to pass a law: For the next 30 days, no one may pray to any god or man except to you. Anyone who disobeys the law will be thrown into the lions' den." King Darius agreed to pass the law.

Daniel knew the law meant he was not allowed to pray to God. Still, Daniel went into his house and prayed to God three times a day, just like he had always done.

The jealous leaders saw Daniel praying, and they told the king that Daniel had broken the law. King Darius was upset. He didn't want to punish Daniel. The king thought all day about how he could save Daniel from the lions. **"The law can't be changed,"** the men reminded King Darius.

So King Darius ordered Daniel to be thrown into the lions' den. "May the God you serve save you," he said. The king went to his palace for the night. He did not eat and he could not sleep. He thought about Daniel with the lions.

As soon as the sun came up the next morning, the king hurried to the lions' den. He cried out, "Daniel, has your God rescued you from the lions?"

Daniel shouted back, "God sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths! I am safe!"

The king was so happy! He ordered for Daniel to be taken out of the lions' den. Daniel wasn't hurt because he had trusted in God.

King Darius made a new law: everyone must respect God. King Darius wrote, "He is the living God ... he has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions."

Christ Connection: 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.

Discussion & Bible skills (Ask 3 to 4 questions from the list)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Why did the other leaders want to get Daniel in trouble?

(They were jealous of him, Dan. 6:3-4)

2. What law did Darius create?

(For thirty days; people could not pray to anyone except him, Dan. 6:7)

3. What was Daniel's response to the king's law?

(Daniel continued praying, Dan. 6:10)

4. Why do you think Daniel obeyed God rather than King Darius?

Guide the kids to see that God is our ultimate authority. We are called to obey God above any earthly leaders. If Daniel were to obey the king's decree to pray to him, Daniel would have been sinning against God.

5. Is it always easy to obey God? Why or why not?

Help kids understand that obeying God can be difficult. We have to fight against our own sin, and we may face persecution from non-believers. 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 rescue sinners. (Heb. 5:7-9)

6. How can your obedience to God point others to His goodness?

Explain that our obedience shows others that we really do trust God and believe the Bible. When we choose to follow God, especially when disobedience might seem easier, we demonstrate to the world that God is worthy of our obedience.

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.