

# Den of Lions

**TEXT** Daniel 6:1-23

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to detail how God spared the life of Daniel when he did what he knew was right. They will recognize the importance of praying even when others make it hard to pray.

**MEMORY VERSE** My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths. — Daniel 6:22

## MEMORY VERSE SONG

My God hath sent his an-gel, my God hath sent his an-gel,  
my God hath sent his an-gel, and hath shut the li-ons mouths.

## MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

**MY GOD** — Both hands up, looking up.

**HATH SENT HIS ANGEL** — Hands at shoulders pointing out, flutter like wings.

**AND HATH SHUT** — Slap hands together, one on top of the other like a mouth shutting.

**THE LIONS' MOUTHS** — Point to mouth.

## MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Cut apart into sections the angel hovering over the lion. (See pattern at end of lesson.) Put each portion of the puzzle on the board as that part of the verse is learned.

## BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Give each child a pair of praying hands (see Patterns). Fold the hands, and on the outside write the words, "Because Daniel prayed, he could say . . . ." Have each student open the hands and on the inside write the words to the memory verse.

Progression of events:

1. King Darius gave Daniel the position of chief among the three presidents of his realm. The others sought to find fault with him, but could not do so.
2. They caused the king to sign a decree forbidding petitions to be asked of any other beside himself.

3. Daniel prayed three times a day as usual.

4. King Darius was compelled to have him thrown into the den of lions.

Climax: God sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths and Daniel was not harmed.

Conclusion: God delivered Daniel because he was faithful in doing what he knew to be right.

Response: Your students will be able to evaluate Daniel's behavior and tell why God honored and delivered him. They will be able to relate how God would have us respond when others make it hard for us to pray.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

"God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths." Angels are created, heavenly beings described in Hebrews 1:14 as ministering spirits. The Bible does not tell the time of their creation but certainly it was before man, to whom they were sent to minister. They were created holy but some fell from their state of innocence and were cast out of Heaven.

The work of angels is varied: Some stand in the presence of God and worship him; they assist, protect, and deliver God's people. They sometimes guide God's people (as when one directed Philip in Acts 8:26), and

they bring encouragement, comfort, and deliverance (Paul and Peter).

The Bible indicates that good angels will continue in the service of God throughout all ages, while the angels who fell will eventually have their part in the lake of fire.

Daniel's jealous colleagues, after diligent search, could find no evil in him and could contrive his downfall only through his faithfulness to God and prayer. No angel came to the rescue of his accusers, but they were devoured by the hungry lions, when condemned to a similar fate.

## IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Trace praying hands from Patterns, Lesson 1a. Adapt cuffs to look like a girl's or boy's sleeve. Have enough girl hands for each girl in the class and enough boy hands for each boy. Let the children color the hands and glue lace to the girl's wrist and buttons to the boy's cuff.

Have two flannel boards and two identical sets of jumbled word strips for the verse. Divide group into two teams (with their backs to each other) and see which team can put the verse in order on the flannel board in the shortest length of time. Use a stop watch or a watch with a second hand and report how long it took each team to put the verse in order.

Lion Puppet — Trace the head and jaw of the lion (see Patterns). Glue the head to the bottom of a paper lunch bag and the jaw under flap so his mouth will open and close. The children could make these and tell the story.

Explain to your class that although we will probably never have to face a den of lions, we probably **will** have to face some situations in life which may cause us to feel afraid. But God will be with us, just as He was with Daniel. Pass out pieces of paper cut out in the shape of a lion (see Patterns). Ask each student to write on one side of the lion a situation where they might be afraid. Collect the lions and redistribute them. Then ask the students to read what was written on the lion they now have and write on the reverse side how God could deliver. Then discuss the situations and responses together.

Reproduce the picture of the lions' den (see Patterns). Let your students paste on the figures of Daniel and the angel as you come to that part of the story. You may wish to put double-stick tape on the lion's mane and give the students 1" strands of brown yarn to apply. They may also color the picture.

Give each child a marking pen, a pair of scissors, an 8½" x 11" piece of yellow construction paper, a 3"

orange construction paper circle and a piece of brown construction paper 4" x 6¼". When you tell how the presidents and princes met to discuss Daniel and his possible faults (Daniel 6:4), have the children cut a rectangle for the table top around which they might have held their meeting. Daniel prayed faithfully three times a day. As you talk about this, have the children cut a triangle of brown construction paper to represent the three prayer times. As you tell of King Darius' signing the decree prohibiting prayer, have the children cut what might represent the stone in such a ring: a kite shape, like his signet ring or seal. As you talk about Daniel's going into the den, have them cut radial slashes into the circle to represent the awful roars. Discuss how Daniel might have felt as he faced the lions. The king passed hour by hour without sleep. Have the children represent four of those hours by cutting four stick-like rectangular pieces from the brown paper. After completing the telling of the story, assemble the parts on the yellow piece of construction paper. The face of the lion is drawn in (see Patterns). The children can complete their picture by adding a figure representing Daniel. You may also add the memory verse for the day. The orange "ruffles" around the lion's head can be bent outward for a 3-D effect.

## QUESTIONS

Why did King Darius like Daniel and show favor to him?  
Why couldn't the princes find anything wrong with Daniel?  
What law did the princes want the king to sign?  
Could that law be changed?  
What did Daniel do when he knew it was against the law to pray?  
Why didn't Daniel just quit praying?  
What happened to Daniel because he prayed?  
What happened to the lions when Daniel was put in the den with them?  
Why was Daniel saved from being hurt by the lions?  
Did Daniel and the king thank God?  
Tell about a time when God's angel was near you to protect you from danger.

## PRE-SCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Make a large lion from brown construction paper for each child in the class (see Patterns). Let the children glue yarn on for his mane, or reproduce the pattern on white paper and let the children draw in the long, fluffy hair and color the picture.

Use doll figures to act out the story, including the angel and the king (with crown). Use a cardboard shoe box for a house with an open window and with a doll inside, praying. Make a paper clock with moveable hands to show Daniel prayed three times a day — morning, noon, and night. Use tape to "shut" the mouths of pup-

pet lions while explaining about the angel's coming to the den.

**REVIEW IDEAS**

Focus your review on the importance of praying even when it's hard to pray. Explain the importance of brushing your teeth even when it's hard to remember. Brushing your teeth helps to keep them free of cavities; praying every day keeps sin spots out of your heart. Excuses: hurrying to school in the morning — no time to brush (or pray), too tired at night to brush (or pray), none of your friends brush their teeth (or pray).

"Are you boys and girls afraid of our policemen? You don't need to be. We have laws in our country which are to help us to be safe. Our policemen are supposed to enforce those laws for our protection. If we drive too fast we will get a ticket. If we drive as we should we get a good feeling because we know we're doing right, but if we do wrong we will get into trouble. But in some countries there are laws which are against God. If you love God and therefore cannot obey their laws you could be put in jail. Or you might not be allowed to attend Sunday school anymore. Daniel did what was right and God delivered him just like He will do for us if we listen to His Voice when He talks to us."

Make the point of your object lesson how we should pray and talk to God. Show a telephone and ask: Why do we use a telephone? We use it to talk to someone

who is not near enough for us to talk to them in person. We didn't just pick up the phone and start talking — we had to learn how to dial the number, how to hold the phone the right way, and how to speak into the mouthpiece. When we want to talk to God it is much like using a telephone. We have to learn how to pray. Maybe we will make mistakes like we did when we were learning to use the telephone. But if we pray every day we will soon learn the right way to pray and it will be just like talking with a friend on the telephone or with someone who is in the room with us.

**COORDINATING SONGS**

- "Whisper a Prayer"
- "Why Worry When You Can Pray"
- "My God Is So Great"
- "Daniel in the Lions' Den" to the tune of "Who Did?"

**SUPPORT MATERIAL**

- Daniel and the Lions — Happy Day Book, Standard Publishing
- Daniel in the Lions' Den — Arch Book, Concordia
- Daniel in the Lions' Den — Bible Story Inlay Puzzle, Standard Publishing
- Daniel in the Lions' Den — Visual Graph, Scripture Press
- Daniel and the Lions — Palm Tree Book, Concordia
- Daniel: Faithful Captive — by Lou Heath, BibLearn Book, Broadman Press

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