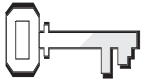


In and Out of the Lions' Den



References

Daniel 6:10-28;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 543-545



Memory Verse

"My God sent his angel,
and he shut the mouths
of the lions"
(Daniel 6:22, NIV).



Objectives

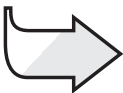
The children will:

Know that we

worship a God who
answers prayer.

Feel that God can be trusted to
hear and answer prayers.

Respond by often praying and
praising God for answered prayer.



The Message

I worship when I
pray and wait for
God's answers.

Monthly Theme

We learn why we worship God.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

The men who plot against Daniel sneak to Daniel's house to see if he will continue to pray three times a day to his God—and he does. They remind King Darius of the decree to pray only to the king, which Daniel has transgressed. Therefore, Daniel must be thrown into the lions' den. The king is very sad and tries to save Daniel. But the law cannot be changed, so Daniel is put in the lions' den. The king expresses faith that Daniel's God will deliver him. God sends an angel who shuts the lions' mouths, and Daniel is safely removed from the den.

This is a lesson about worship.

Daniel's faithfulness in worshipping God demonstrated to those around him his trust in God's power and love. In the same way, our consistent, faithful worship demonstrates God's power and love to those around us.

Teacher Enrichment

Darius—"son of Ahasuerus, unknown by that name except in Daniel. . . . He appointed various governors, making Daniel one of his three most intimate counselors" (*The SDA Bible Dictionary*, p. 270).

Den of lions—Kings at this time often had a collection of fierce animals. The den would probably be a large pit in a bottle shape. The top would be covered with a large stone. These pits were often also used for temporary prisons or storage areas. (See *The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 6 [New York: Abingdon Press, 1956], p. 441.)

Room Decorations

See Lesson 5.

Program Overview

Lesson Section

Minutes

Activities

Materials Needed

Welcome

ongoing

Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled

none

1

Readiness Options

up to 10

A. Lion Masks/Puppets

lion face drawing (see page 142), scissors, crayons or markers, glue, paper lunch bags, yellow or orange yarn

B. Lion Facts

lion face cutouts (see page 142), tape

Any Time

Prayer and Praise*

up to 10

Fellowship
Songbook
Mission
Offering

Sing for Joy
Children's Mission
offering container with a lion picture attached
class prayer list, chalk/white board and chalk or markers

Prayer

2

Bible Lesson

up to 20

Experiencing the Story

lion masks or puppets made during Readiness A, tape recorder, items to create a lions' den, flashlight, angel picture or cutout, window frame cut from cardboard box
scissors, angel cutouts (see page 143), marker
14 strips of paper, Bibles

Memory Verse

Bible Study

3

Applying the Lesson

up to 15

Your Lions

lion cutouts (see page 142), markers, scissors

4

Sharing the Lesson

up to 15

Share-a-Prayer

construction paper, pencils, markers, crayons, etc., scissors

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Give directions for the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- lion face pattern (see p. 142)
- scissors
- crayons or markers
- glue
- paper lunch bags
- yellow or orange yarn

A. Lion Masks/Puppets

To make a puppet: Have the children color the lion face, cut it out, and glue it to a paper bag. Glue on the yarn for a mane. Insert hand into the bag to make the puppet move.

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you enjoy making the lion puppet?** (yes, sort of) **Can you think of any Bible stories about lions?** (yes, Daniel in the lions' den) **God saved Daniel from lions. What would you do if you had to face something scary like lions?** (don't know; pray, run, hide, etc.) **Today's message helps us know what to do:**



I WORSHIP WHEN I PRAY AND WAIT FOR GOD'S ANSWERS.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- 10 lion face cutouts (see page 142)
- tape

B. Lion Facts

Prepare in advance one lion face for each question below. On each lion's beard write a question. On the back of the paper write a fact about the lion. Tape the lions to the wall around the room. Have children pick a lion, read the question, and ask the class to answer it. If no one knows the answer, let the child turn the lion over and read the answer to the class.

1. What is the lion commonly known as? (king of the beasts)
2. What is the place where the lion lives called? (a den)
3. How much does a male lion usually weigh? (350–400 pounds [158–180 kg], but can weigh up to 500 pounds [225 kg])
4. What kind of prey do the lions prefer? (large prey—zebras, antelope, buffalo, etc.)
5. In what part of the world do lions live in the wild today? (Africa)
6. To what animal family do lions belong? (cat family)
7. What is a group of lions living together called? (pride)
8. How long does a lion generally live? (20–25 years)
9. How many hours a day does a lion frequently sleep? (20)
10. What is a young lion called? (cub)

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you learn about lions that you didn't know before?** (Accept answers.) **What would you do if you met a lion in the wild? If you meet something in life that scares you, what should you do?** (Trust God, pray, get help, etc.) **Our message for today is:**



I WORSHIP WHEN I PRAY AND WAIT FOR GOD'S ANSWERS.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "The Lord Hears Me" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 105, verses 1 and 4)
- "Dare to Be a Daniel" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 116)
- "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 133)
- "A Little Talk With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 98)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. If possible, draw today's message from the mission story.



Offering

Say: **Giving our money is one way we worship God. It will help to answer the prayers of people in** (name of country where offering goes) **for** (what the offering will build or help).

You Need:

- offering container with a picture of lion attached



Prayer

Say: **When we pray to God or Jesus, we worship Them. They always answer, but not always at once. Sometimes the answer is "yes," sometimes "no," and sometimes "wait a while."** Write God's three answers on the board. Ask the children to share answers to prayer and have them decide what category it is. Then divide into groups and pray for requests on the class prayer list.

You Need:

- class prayer list
- chalk/white board and chalk or markers

2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- lion puppets made during Readiness A or make some for this lesson
- tape recorder
- items to create a lions' den
- flashlight
- angel picture or cutout
- window frame cut from cardboard box

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Daniel, 2–3 governors, king, the rest of the class.

Setting the Scene

Before the lesson story is told, have the children record their loudest, scariest lion-roaring sound. In advance, create a "lions' den."

Use large cardboard boxes taped together or move tables together and cover them with blankets or other material. Inside the "den" place the tape recorder with the children's lion sounds, a flashlight, and an angel picture.

Position Daniel next to one side of the window frame and the governors on the other side. Have the king sit on a chair near the lions' den. Invite the rest of the children to bring their lion puppets into the darkened "lions' den," where you will tell the story. At the appropriate point, play the lion sounds and encourage the children to "roar." As you tell of the angel who appeared, shine your flashlight on the angel.

Note: Save the lions' den for next week.

Read or tell the story.

Everyone (except the governors and Daniel) goes into the "lions' den" to listen to the story.

Hurrying to a spot where they could watch Daniel's window, several of the king's governors waited quietly. *[Governors wait by the "open window."]* Their law that no one could pray to anyone except the king for 30 days had been signed and sealed. Would Daniel pray to the God of heaven as always? They could hardly wait to catch him breaking the law. Finally there

would be a reason to complain to the king about Daniel.

The governors didn't have long to wait. Daniel knew that the law requiring everyone to pray only to the king was now in place. And he understood exactly why the law had been made. He knew the governors would try to trap him. But Daniel had decided to put God first, no matter what. He knew that he needed to talk to God more than ever now. No law that any person might make could keep him from worshiping God in prayer. So Daniel went to the window as he always did. He opened the shutters, and knelt down to pray. *[Daniel kneels by the open window.]*

"Yes! Yes! There he is!" The spying governors spoke in hushed, tense voices. *[Governors whisper and look very happy.]* They watched Daniel as he spoke to his best Friend, God.

The spies watched Daniel for a whole day. Early the next morning they hurried to the palace. *[Governors and Daniel leave the window and go before the king.]* "Oh, king, live forever. Did you not make a law requiring everyone to pray only to you for 30 days?"

The king looked at the faces before him. He could tell that they had some sort of twisted plan, and it troubled him.

"King Darius, sir, we have found someone who has broken that law. Daniel prayed to his God, not once, but three times yesterday."

Instantly the king understood why the men had been so anxious to pass the law. He saw that he had been tricked, but there was nothing that could be done now. A law that the king made could not be changed.

Sadly, King Darius ordered Daniel to be thrown to the lions. *[The governors lead Daniel to the lions' den. Daniel joins the group inside the den.]* "Daniel, may your God res-

cue you," said the king. *[Play the lion sounds on the tape recorder and encourage the children to "roar." King and governors step to one side of the den.]*

That night King Darius couldn't sleep. When the first rays of sunlight touched the palace walls, he dashed out to the lions' den. "Daniel, Daniel, are you alive? Did your God save you?"

From the den, Daniel answered respectfully, "O king, live forever! My God sent His angel. *[Shine flashlight on the angel.]* He shut the mouths of the lions so that they have not harmed me in any way."

"He's alive!" shouted King Darius. "Wonderful! Quickly, men, get Daniel out of there!" ordered the relieved king. *[Everyone leaves the lions' den and sits in a circle.]*

The people around Daniel saw God's love and power because Daniel was faithful in his prayer time every day. They saw that Daniel's God, our God, is a God who answers prayer.

Daniel knew God could be trusted, no matter what. How about you? Just like Daniel, you can show God's love to those around you by your faithful worship. You can be sure that God hears and answers your prayers. You can trust God, no matter what!

Debriefing

Ask: **What is your favorite part of today's Bible story?** (Accept answers.) **If you were the governors, how would you feel about Daniel being put in the lions' den? If you were Daniel, how would you feel about being put in the lions' den?** (probably not happy, but trusting in God, at peace) **What lesson can we learn from this story?** (That we can trust God, no matter what happens; that we should always put Him first; He will always be there for us, etc.) **Let's say today's message:**



**I WORSHIP WHEN I PRAY
AND WAIT FOR GOD'S
ANSWERS.**

Memory Verse

Write each word of the memory verse on a separate angel cutout, large enough for all to see. (Don't forget the reference.) Mix up the angels and distribute them to the children. (Large class, form groups with a set of words for each group. Small class, give children more than one word.)

The memory verse is **"My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions" (Daniel 6:22, NIV).**

Ask the children to hold their angel in front of them and form a circle in the order in which they think the words should appear. Allow time. If the children are not in the correct order, read the text and have the children regroup. Once the correct order is established, mix up the words again and repeat the activity until all know the verse.

Bible Study

Divide the verses of Daniel 6:10-23 among the readers in your class. Write each reference on a small strip of paper and give one to each of 14 children (small group: each child gets more than one). Have the children find and read (in order) the verses.

Debriefing

Ask: **When in our story was King Darius unhappy?** (when Daniel was doomed to the lions' den) **Why? When was King Darius very happy?** (when Daniel was rescued from the lions) **How does this story make you feel?** (Happy that God's way wins at last; happy that God is on my side, and I can trust Him.) **The next time you are worried about doing the right thing, remember Daniel's prayer habit. Let's say today's message together:**



**I WORSHIP WHEN I PRAY
AND WAIT FOR GOD'S
ANSWERS.**

You Need:

- scissors
- marker
- 14 angel cutouts (see page 143)

You Need:

- 14 strips of paper
- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- lion cutouts (see page 142) for each child
- markers
- scissors

Your Lions

Say: **Daniel prayed for protection from hungry lions. The things that you are afraid of or that trouble you could be called your "lions."**

Ask the children to either think of or name their personal "lions," such as a friend's illness, parent's divorce, a death, a problem at school, a hard school test, etc. Encourage them to let God take care of their "lions."

Have them write or draw their "lion" on a lion cutout and put it in their Bible. Then suggest that they pray about the "lions" during the week, and wait for God to guide them.

Debriefing

Ask: **How can we wait for God to answer our prayers about our "lions"?** (Pray daily; be patient and believe that He will take care of it in His time; ask God to help you do your part in solving the problem.)

What answers to prayer do you remember from your own life? (Allow the children to share answers to prayers with the class.) **How do you feel about your God?** (He's the greatest! He's awesome! He answers prayers, etc.) **When you pray, remember today's message:**



**I WORSHIP WHEN I PRAY
AND WAIT FOR GOD'S
ANSWERS.**

4

Sharing the Lesson

Share-a-Prayer

Ask the children to think of someone to pray with and for in this coming week, someone who does not go to their church—perhaps someone in their neighborhood or school.

Have the children make a bookmark to give to that person. Draw a picture or put cutouts or stickers of lions on the bookmark. Then write “God Answers Prayer” on the bookmark.

Suggest that the children share the story about Daniel in the lions’ den, then ask how they can pray for the “lions” in that person’s life. Ask the children to come prepared next week to share with the class their “share-a-prayer” experience.

Debriefing

Ask: **Have you decided whom you will pray with this next week?** (Accept responses.) **Think about an answer to prayer that you experienced so you can share it with them.** (Allow time for the children to think of personal answers to prayer that they can share with their chosen prayer partner.)

How do you feel about this assignment? (Don’t know; am glad to share with someone; a bit nervous, etc.) **As you pray with someone, remember:**



**I WORSHIP WHEN I PRAY
AND WAIT FOR GOD'S
ANSWERS.**

Closing

Pray that God will lead the children to someone who feels a need for prayer and who will be happy to have the children “share-a-prayer” with them.

You Need:

- construction paper
- pencils, markers, crayons, etc.
- scissors



**God
Answers
Prayer**

In and Out of the Lions' Den

References

Daniel 6:10-28;
Prophets and Kings,
 pp. 543–545

Memory Verse

“My God sent
 his angel, and
 he shut the mouths
 of the lions”
 (Daniel 6:22, NIV).

The Message

I worship when I
 pray and wait for
 God’s answers.

In some places in our world today people aren’t allowed to worship where they want. Our Bible story today is about someone like that. He was told he could not pray to God. Let’s see what he did, and what God did about it.

Hurrying to a spot where they could watch Daniel’s window, some of the governors waited quietly. They had tricked the king. He had signed their law. No one could pray to anyone except the king for 30 days. Once a law had been signed and sealed, it could not be changed.

Would Daniel pray to the God of heaven as he always had? They hoped so! They knew he prayed by his window morning, noon, and night. Eagerly they waited to catch him breaking the law. Finally there would be a reason to complain to the king about Daniel.

They didn’t have long to wait. Daniel knew that the law requiring everyone to pray only to the king was now in place. And he understood exactly why the law had been made. He knew what the governors were trying to do. But Daniel had decided to put God first, no matter what. He knew that he needed to talk to God more than ever now. No law that any person might make could keep him from worshipping God in prayer. So Daniel went to the window as he always did. He opened the shutters and knelt down to pray.

“Yes! Yes! There he is!” The spying governors spoke in hushed, tense voices. They smiled as Daniel spoke to his best friend, God. “Now we’ve got him!”

The spies watched Daniel for a whole day. They saw him kneel in prayer morning, noon, and again early in the evening.

Early the next morning the governors hurried to the palace. “Oh, king, live for-



ever,” they began as they knelt before Darius. “Did you not make a law requiring everyone to pray only to you for 30 days?”

King Darius studied the faces before him. He could tell that they had some sort of twisted plan, and it troubled him. He waited for them to continue.

“King Darius, sir, we have found someone who has broken that law. Daniel continues to pray to his God. He has broken your law.”

Instantly the king understood why the men had been so anxious to pass the law. He knew now that he had been tricked. But there was nothing that could be done. A law that the king signed and sealed could not be changed.

Sadly, King Darius ordered Daniel to be placed in the lions’ den. “Daniel, may your God rescue you,” the king said as the soldiers led Daniel away.

That night King Darius couldn’t sleep. When the first rays of sunlight touched the palace walls, he dashed out to the lions’ den. “Daniel, Daniel, are you alive?” he called. “Did your God save you?”

Still in the lions' den, Daniel answered respectfully, "O king, live forever! My God sent His angel, and He shut the mouths of the lions. They have not harmed me in any way."

"He's alive!" shouted King Darius. "Quickly, men! Get Daniel out of there!" ordered the relieved king.

The people around Daniel saw God's love and power because Daniel was faithful in his prayer time and worship every day. They saw that our God is a God who answers prayer.

Daniel knew God could be trusted, no matter what. How about you? Can you show God's love to those around you by your faithful worship? You can be sure that God hears and answers your prayers. You can trust God, no matter what!

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go to a zoo with your family. Especially notice the lions. What would it be like to be in with the lions as Daniel was?
- Find a quiet place and read your lesson story together. Teach Daniel 6:22 to your family.
- Look in an encyclopedia or nature book and learn at least three new things about lions.
- Thank God for animals.

Sunday

- For family worship, read together Daniel 6:10-15. What was Daniel's position in the government? What position was the king planning to give Daniel? Why? Why did the other government officers ask the king to make a new law?
- Sing "The Lord Hears Me" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 105).
- Draw, decorate, and cut out an angel. Write your memory verse on it. Save it.

Monday

- Together with your family, read and discuss Daniel 6:16-18 for worship. What did the king say to Daniel? Did the king believe in Daniel's God? How do you know?
- Make a "lions' den" with a margarine tub or a small box. Put some stones on the bottom. Make a small lion. Put it in the tub or box and put the lid on. The lid is like the cover that kept the lions in the den. Save this for another day.
- Read the text on your memory verse angel. What does this verse mean to you? Thank God for angels who care for you.

Tuesday

- With your family, read and discuss Daniel 6:19-23. Describe the king's actions. What did Daniel

say? Who else is like a roaring lion? (See 1 Peter 5:8.) Who will protect us from him? (See Psalm 34:6, 7.)

- Make a small angel and a figure of Daniel to put into the "lions' den" you made yesterday. How did the angel protect Daniel?
- Sing "Dare to Be a Daniel" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 116). Then ask God to make you as brave as Daniel.

Wednesday

- Read these Bible texts together during family worship. Tell who and how the people were helped by angels in answer to prayer:
Genesis 19:15-24 _____
Acts 12:5-10 _____
Luke 22:39-43 _____
- Review your memory verse. Sing a song about angels before prayer.

Thursday

- During worship ask your family: Are you afraid or worried about anything? Read 1 Peter 5:7 together. List your fears and cares on paper. Read your list to Jesus. When finished, tear up the paper. Believe that Jesus is taking care of your fears and cares. Thank Him for doing so.
- Say your memory verse together. What does this verse mean to you and your family? Sing "A Little Talk With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 98).

Friday

- During worship tell the whole story about Daniel to your family. Or create a lions' den out of cushions and chairs and have your family act out the story.
- Sing songs about angels and God's care for you. End with "Dare to Be a Daniel."
- Ask your family to tell how they will dare to be like Daniel. Then ask God to help you do so.