



LESSON 4

DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Can Protect Us in Amazing Ways

SCRIPTURE: Daniel 6

GOD'S BIG STORY: When Daniel is thrown into a den of lions for praying to God, God sends an angel to shut the lions' mouths, protecting Daniel in an amazing way.

WORD OF WONDER: God has said, "I will never leave you. I will never desert you." —Hebrews 13:5b

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Welcome Question: If you were face to face with a hungry lion, what could you use to protect yourself?
- Curiosity Questions
- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Word of Wonder: Hebrews 13:5b
- Word of Wonder Activity
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: God, Protect Me



God With Us Elementary Spotify playlist

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Can Protect Us in Amazing Ways

SCRIPTURE: Daniel 6

WORD OF WONDER: Hebrews 13:5b

When my son was two years old, we went to the zoo and saw the lions. Huge, majestic-looking creatures—safely behind a wall of thick glass. As my son stood with his face pressed to the glass, the lion suddenly leaped toward him, and with a giant crack, the lions' teeth hit the glass! The huge animal fell back a little, stunned. I have never been more glad for the protection of "lion-proof" glass.

When I read Daniel 6, I don't see any lion-proof glass. As you read this chapter, put yourself in the place of King Darius. After being tricked into enforcing his decree against Daniel, he was distressed and determined to rescue Daniel ... but the damage had been done. As the stone is put over the opening to the lions' den, he calls out, "May your God ... rescue you!" (Daniel 6:16, NIV). He then can't sleep all night, worrying about his best advisor. He runs to the den in the morning, calling out in an anguished voice, "Has your God ... been able to rescue you?" (Daniel 6:20, NIV).

God has done what the human king could not do. Daniel trusted in his God, and no wound was found on him.

What do you need to be rescued from? Have you tried to find your own way out and felt like King Darius—distressed, worried, anguished? What could happen if you trusted in your God's protection for no wound to be found on you?

—**Courtney Wilson**

Children's Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Daniel's life is featured in the book of Daniel. Along with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, he was taken from his home in Jerusalem and moved to Babylon. Daniel was a dream interpreter, and he remained committed to Yahweh even in a foreign land.

WHAT?

Daniel was well liked by King Darius, but Darius is tricked into passing a law prohibiting prayer to anyone other than the king. Daniel continues to pray to God and is caught. He is thrown in the lions' den, but God protects him from harm.

WHERE?

The story takes place in the great city of Babylon. The Babylonians and Assyrians were known for capturing lions and keeping them for pets, and these royal pets had a special role of acting as a means of execution.

WHEN?

The book of Daniel spans from about 605 to 536 BC. Daniel 6 takes place after the Persian kingdom conquered Babylon in 539 BC. The prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel were contemporaries of Daniel.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

When King Darius sees Daniel's salvation from the mouths of the lions, he proclaims that Daniel's God is the living God, who acts on behalf of His people. Jesus is the ultimate example of God being alive and acting within human history.

Small Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Can Protect Us in Amazing Ways

SCRIPTURE: Daniel 6

WORD OF WONDER: Hebrews 13:5b

Pre-Service Connection (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: [Coloring Page](#), whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils
Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have play stations with various board games, activities, or use games from the extra Games & Activities Guide to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them!

Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.

As kids arrive..

Invite them to write/draw the answer to the Welcome Question: on the designated board: **“If you were face to face with a hungry lion, what could you use to protect yourself?”** Set out sheets of paper and colored pencils.

While kids are playing in their opening activity groups..

Pose the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

- **When was a time you needed someone to protect you?**
- **When was a time you protected someone else?**

****NEW!!** Large Group leaders will now lead an opening game or activity 10 minutes before service begins. It is very important that you are with your groups and ready to participate with them!

Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids 5–8 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid), [Laugh and Grow Bible](#) (optional), [Bible Story Picture \(1/SG\)](#)

Model for kids how to use their Bibles' table of contents to locate the book of Daniel 6. The book of Daniel can be found near the end of the Old Testament. Remind kids to look for the big number six, which is the chapter.

Read Daniel 6:6–12, 16–23, 28. Consider inviting kids to give a quiet baby lion “roar” every time they hear the word lion read.

****For K-1st, consider reading pages 212-217 from the [Laugh and Grow Bible](#). Then discuss the following:**

- Who was Daniel devoted, or showing his love, to?
- What did Daniel do that made the other leaders jealous?
- What amazing thing did God do to protect Daniel?
- Even though Daniel knew the king's command, he chose to be devoted to God. What do you think you would have done if you were Daniel?
- How did King Darius respond when he saw God had protected Daniel from the lions?
- When has God protected you or someone you know in an amazing way? What does this experience show you about God?

"What God did for Daniel was amazing! Daniel remained faithful even when the situation got hard. We might not face a den of lions, but, like Daniel, we will face hard things. No matter what we face, God promises He will be with us. He can protect us in amazing ways. Even when we get hurt or feel sad, God loves us and is with us. Let's talk to God in prayer and thank Him for being a God who can protect and who is always with us."

Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Gather the kids together in a circle and share praises and prayer requests with one another. Consider providing a simple list of praise and prayer request ideas to prompt kids. Remind kids that God can protect them in amazing ways. He promises to be with them and never leave them.

Leader Tip: Be aware of situations kids may be facing, and ask God to protect them. Respond with care and love in each situation. There is no need to rush. Allow time for the Holy Spirit to meet each child where she is.

Small Group Discussion: Older Kids 8–12 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid), Bible Story Picture (1/SG)

Model for kids how to use their Bibles' table of contents to locate the book of Daniel 6. The book of Daniel can be found near the end of the Old Testament. Remind kids to look for the big number six, which is the chapter.

Turn to Page 3 of this guide and help kids understand the context of this passage.

Ask 2–3 kid volunteers to read Daniel 6:6–12, 16–23, 28. Consider inviting kids to give a quiet baby lion "roar" every time they hear the word lion read. Then, discuss the following:

- Who are the characters in God's big story today?
- Why were some leaders in the kingdom jealous of Daniel?
- What command did King Darius make that affected Daniel? How did Daniel respond?
- What do you think Daniel may have been thinking and feeling as he was thrown into the lions' den? What about as he spent the night in the den?
- Imagine you were there watching as Daniel was thrown into the lions' den and taken out again the next morning. What would you have seen? Heard? Felt?
- In what ways did God protect Daniel?
- Think about a typical day in your life. What are ways God protects you that you might not usually think about? What does this show us about God?

"Daniel saw God do an amazing thing when He protected him from the den of lions. Can you imagine being there and going through what Daniel experienced? Daniel knew God was with him and loved him, no matter what he faced. God can protect us in amazing ways too! No matter what we face, God isn't going anywhere! Let's talk to God in prayer and thank Him for being a God who can protect and who is always with us."

Prayer Time: Older Kids

Gather kids together in groups of two or three to share praises and prayer requests with one another. Encourage kids to remember that God never leaves them or deserts them. He is with us and can protect us in amazing ways.

Leader Tip: Be aware of situations kids may be facing, and ask God to protect them. Respond with care and love in each situation. There is no need to rush. Allow time for the Holy Spirit to meet each child where she is.

WORD OF WONDER

God has said, "I will never leave you.
I will never desert you."

—Hebrews 13:5b (NirV)

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

"The Word of Wonder for the God with Us series is Hebrews 13:5b. In God's big story today, we saw how God was with Daniel, even in the lions' den! He loved Daniel so much, and even though Daniel faced something difficult, God kept His promise to never leave Daniel. This verse is God's promise to us too! Let's read the Word of Wonder together."

Invite kids to open their Bibles to Hebrews 13:5b. Read the Word of Wonder three times together. Tell kids to first read it in a normal volume voice. Then read it like a rap, and then as a whisper.

Gather kids to talk about these questions:

- **God says He will never leave you or desert you. What does this say about how God feels about you?**
- **Think about other stories in the Bible. What are some other examples of when God was always with His people?**

Leader Tip: Be sensitive to kids who are new to church and the Bible. They may not know other stories of God being with His people, but hearing others share is a great opportunity for them to learn about God and His love!

Word of Wonder Activity

SUPPLIES: disposable resealable bags (3 per group), scissors (prep only)

RESOURCES: [Puzzled Sheets for Older Kids NlrV \(3 sets/ SG older kids \)](#),
[Puzzled Sheets for Younger Kids NlrV \(2 sets/SG younger kids\)](#)

Before kids arrive, print one set of the Puzzled Sheets for Older Kids NlrV for each small group of older kids and one set of the Puzzled Sheets for Younger Kids NlrV for each small group of younger kids (if possible, on cardstock). Cut out the puzzles. Place each puzzle in its own disposable resealable bag. (There will be three puzzles per group.)

"Now, let's play a game to help us remember our Word of Wonder!"

Divide kids into groups based on older and younger ages. Give each group its three puzzles. Challenge kids to open one puzzle and work together to assemble it. They will know it is correct when they see the image of a lion and the Word of Wonder verse in order. Leaders can help younger kids read their completed puzzles, and older kids can read their completed puzzles together. Encourage kids to put all three of their puzzles together.



Head to Large Group!

When you return from LG, continue with these activities until parents arrive.

Responding in Worship: God, Protect Me

SUPPLIES: posterboard (5 sheets), permanent marker (prep only), scissors (prep only), glue stick (prep only), tape (prep only), sticky notes (5 pads with 1 sheet per kid), pens or pencils

RESOURCES: [Lion Face Template \(5 copies/service\)](#); [God with Us Elementary Spotify playlist](#);

Before kids arrive, prepare each posterboard by printing five copies of the Lion Face Template. Cut out each lion's face and glue it to the middle of a posterboard. Write a different statement (below) at the top of each posterboard, and tape the posterboards to the wall around the room.

- God, protect me when I'm at ...
- God, protect me from ...
- God, help me to protect ...
- God, protect my ...
- God, because You can protect me in amazing ways, I will ...



Leader Tip: Kids may share deep hurts or ways others have hurt them. Remember, God's protection isn't always from physical harm. When kids share difficult situations, remind them God is always with us, even when we are hurt by others. God sees us and loves us, and it isn't OK when others hurt us. If you are concerned about possible abuse or neglect, share your concerns with your ministry leader.

"In God's big story, Daniel served God faithfully. Day after day, Daniel prayed to God and served Him. When the king made a law for the people not to pray to anyone but him, Daniel kept praying to God even though he knew he would be thrown in a den of lions. But God sent His angel to shut the mouths of the lions! God protected Daniel in an amazing way, and He can protect you too!"

Invite kids to do an interactive call and response. You will read the first statement in each pair below, and kids will respond after each with a prayer: "God, protect me."

Invite kids to stand. **Like Daniel, there will be times when you face difficult thing . Let's ask God to protect us.**

Leader: **When I'm teased and made fun of ...**

Kids: **God, protect me.**

Leader: **When I have to stand up to someone who is mistreating someone else ...**

Kids: **God, protect me.**

Leader: **When I am afraid of something, and I need Your help ...**

Kids: **God, protect me.**

Leader: **When someone hurts me ...**

Kids: **God, protect me.**

Leader: **Quietly think of a situation where you need God's protection. When you have thought of it, say, "God protect me" out loud.**

Kids: **God, protect me.**

God can protect us in amazing ways, even in ways we may never expect!

"Let's spend some time with God as we respond to Him. Around the room are posterboards with a lion's face on each of them. Walk to each of the five posterboards, place a pad of sticky notes next to each, and read the prayer prompt at the top aloud. Hand out pencils or pens to the kids. As you walk around the room, stop at each posterboard and finish the prayer started at the top by writing or drawing on a sticky note. Then stick it on the board to make the lion's mane." Model this activity for the kids by stopping at one of the posterboards, writing your own prayer response on a sticky note (share it with the kids!), and sticking it at the top of the lion's head.

Give kids time to write responses and respond to the prayer prompts on the board. Consider playing music from the [God with Us Elementary Spotify playlist](#) during this time. After kids are finished, pray together as a group.