

## Daniel Was Rescued

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Daniel 6

**MAIN POINT:** Daniel was faithful to God, and God rescued him.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Daniel 2:20-21

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** How can we obey God? We trust God to give us strength to obey Him.

**SMALL GROUP OPENING**  
(10–15 MINUTES)

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**LARGE GROUP BIBLE STUDY**  
(25–30 MINUTES)

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**SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES**  
(25–30 MINUTES)

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## Leader BIBLE STUDY

The fifth chapter of Daniel ends with the death of King Belshazzar when the Persians took over Babylon and Darius was put on the throne. Babylon was on the decline—no longer the powerful, prosperous empire it once was. By this time Daniel was an old man, probably in his early 80s. He served the new king as one of the three leading supervisors in the kingdom.

Daniel was very good at his job. So good, in fact, that King Darius planned to put him in charge of the entire kingdom. The other supervisors and governors were jealous of Daniel. They watched for him to do something wrong so they could complain to the king. Read Daniel 6:4. Daniel was

“trustworthy, and no negligence or corruption was found in him.”

Through the malevolent persuasion of the king’s leaders, King Darius passed a law that no one could pray to anyone but him, the king, for 30 days. Daniel continued to pray boldly to God.

Guide kids to imagine how Daniel might have felt. Was he worried about getting caught? Did he have nightmares about being eaten by lions? Even the king’s threat of death did not stop Daniel from praying. The jealous officials turned him in, and Daniel was thrown into the lions’ den.

As you teach kids, emphasize that Daniel was faithful to God—the true King—and God rescued Him. God’s protection of Daniel served to show all the people that the God of Daniel “is the living God, and He endures forever; His kingdom will never be destroyed, and His dominion has no end” (Dan. 6:26).

God also calls us to trust and obey Him no matter what. God sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue us from something much more dangerous than lions. Jesus rescues us from sin and death. Pray that through your faith, and that of the kids you lead, “may the name of God be praised forever and ever” (Dan. 2:20).



Additional resources for each session are available at [gospelproject.com](http://gospelproject.com). For free training and session-by-session help, visit [www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject](http://www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject).

## Daniel Was Rescued

### *Daniel 6*

**King Darius** (duh RIGH uhs) was the new leader in Babylon. Babylon was a large kingdom, so Darius picked men to be leaders over small parts of Babylon. King Darius 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 new 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 new 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 they had seen Daniel praying to God.

King Darius was upset. He knew that Daniel deserved to be punished for breaking the law, but 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.

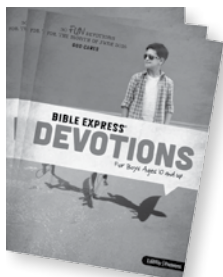
**As soon as the sun came up the next morning, the king hurried to the lions' den. He cried out, "Daniel, has your God rescued you from the lions?"**

**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. He wrote that 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.*



**WANT TO  
DISCOVER  
GOD'S WORD?  
GET  
BIBLE EXPRESS!**

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover that God was with Daniel in the lions' den. Believers can take courage because God promises to be with us. (Josh. 1:9)

Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out [www.lifeway.com/devotionals](http://www.lifeway.com/devotionals).

# Small Group OPENING

**SESSION TITLE:** Daniel Was Rescued

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Daniel 6

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**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** How can we obey God? We trust God to give us strength to obey Him.

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## Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Ask kids to think of impressive things only God can do.

**SAY** • You all have described some incredible works and miracles only God can do! When God does incredible things, it is always for His glory and His good purposes. Today, we will hear about an incredible thing God did that saved a man's life and helped other people see that God is the one true God.

## Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Babylon Word Search" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the "Babylon Word Search" on the activity page. Kids should find and circle the 14 key words.

**SAY** • These words all come from our Bible story today. Can anyone guess what Bible story we are going to learn about? [*Allow kids to respond.*]

Our Bible story is about a man named Daniel. Daniel ended up in a lions' den! We will soon find out what happened.

## Session starter (10 minutes)

### OPTION 1: Animal noise talent show

Invite volunteers to show off their best animal noises. Kids should take turns, allowing the rest of the kids to guess what animal sound they are making. Finish by leading all the kids to roar like hungry lions.

**SAY** • Imagine being a hungry lion. Imagine that some guards tossed a tasty meal into your den. Now imagine that, no matter how hungry you were and no matter how hard you tried, you just couldn't eat your meal! That is what happened in today's Bible story. Daniel was thrown into a den of lions, but God kept him safe.

### OPTION 2: Daniel grab

Before the session, cut 24 index cards in half to form 48 cards. Write *lion* on 40 of the cards and *Daniel* on 8 cards. Prepare a set for every four kids in your group.

Invite kids to play a card game. Form groups of four and instruct them to mix up the cards and distribute them facedown, 12 cards per player.

On the count of three, each player will turn over his top card and place it on the table. If a player sees a card that says *Daniel*, he should slap his hand over it. The player to collect the most *Daniel* cards wins.

**SAY** • Today we are going to hear a story from the Bible about Daniel being rescued from lions. Daniel was thrown into a den of lions, but God kept him safe!



- index cards
- scissors
- marker

## Transition to large group

# Large Group LEADER

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## Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

## Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire

• zoo props

*[Large Group Leader enters wearing a casual outfit—like jeans, a T-shirt, and a baseball hat. Leader also carries props you might find at a zoo: a map, binoculars, a souvenir cup, a stuffed animal lion, and so forth.]*

**LEADER** • Hey, everyone! Oh boy! I haven't had a day off from working in the pizza parlor in so long! My coworkers got together to cover my shift, and they bought me and my family tickets to the zoo! Have any of you ever been to the zoo? What are your favorite animals? *[Allow kids to respond.]*

My favorite animal from my trip to the zoo was the lion! *[Begin walking toward the giant timeline as you talk.]* Did you know the lion is called “the king of the jungle”? Mamma mia! They are huge! Male lions can grow to be more than 400 pounds, and they're close to 4 feet tall! *[Motion to where four feet would be on your own body.]* Lions live in big groups and can hunt

down really big animals for dinner, like zebras and small elephants. Lions are massive and very powerful and ...[*notice the timeline.*]

## Giant timeline (1 minute)

**LEADER** • Look at that! [*Point out today's Bible story, "Daniel Was Rescued."*] Today's Bible story has lions in it! How perfect because I have just learned so much about them. Uh-oh. These lions look very hungry!

• Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

## Big picture question (1 minute)

**LEADER** • Before we hear today's story, let's remember that the most important part of the story isn't the lions. The most important thing we are focusing on right now is who God is and how we can obey Him. So, ***how can we obey God?*** [*Allow for responses.*] That's right; ***we trust God to give us strength to obey Him.***

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Daniel 6. Tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the Bible story video "Daniel Was Rescued."

**LEADER** • Daniel had to make a choice—just like he and his friends had to do when they first got to Babylon. Wow ... he can't catch a break! Once again, Daniel was in a situation where he had to make a choice between following man's rules and being disobedient toward God, or obeying God and breaking man's rules. Instead of getting frustrated that his faith was being tested again, Daniel trusted God to give him the strength to obey Him.

The king did not want to punish Daniel, so the

• Bibles  
• "Daniel Was Rescued" video  
• Big Picture Question Poster  
• Bible Story Picture Poster



king hoped God would protect Daniel.

Like Daniel, we have all disobeyed; we have disobeyed the rules in our homes and classrooms, and—more importantly—we have all disobeyed God. Disobedience deserves punishment. The king’s law was not right, but the king would not be fair if he didn’t punish Daniel. We know God’s laws are always right; He gives us rules because He knows what is best for us. God is right to punish sin.

**Daniel was faithful to God, and God rescued him.** 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.

## The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me (optional)

Use Scripture and the guide provided with this session to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions.

Encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

## Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Daniel 2:20-21.

**LEADER** • As we are learning this key passage, we have been talking a lot about God’s wisdom and His power. In our Bible stories, we have seen how people like Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego showed wisdom and faith by obeying God, and God

Tip: Provide *I’m a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

- Key Passage Poster
- “Name of God” song

powerfully protected them.

But in today's story, we see that the king was starting to recognize God's wisdom and power for himself. The law said the king had to punish Daniel, but the king hoped God would protect Daniel.

**Daniel was faithful to God, and God rescued him.**

May the name of God be praised forever and ever!

Let's sing.

Lead boys and girls to sing "Name of God."

### **Discussion starter video (4 minutes)**

**LEADER** • We often think of obedience as *not* doing the *wrong* things, but did you know that obedience is about *doing* the *right* things, too? Watch this.

• "Unit 16, Session 3"  
discussion starter  
video

Show the "Unit 16, Session 3" discussion starter video.

Lead kids to discuss if the cupcake should have followed the directions. Was it OK to do the wrong thing if he had good intentions? Why should the cupcake have been faithful to the baker's instructions?

**LEADER** • Why is obeying God sometimes difficult when others are against us? God calls us to live differently than unbelievers.

Think about Daniel. What if he had chosen to obey the king instead of obeying God? How would God have felt? Would the people have seen God's power if Daniel had *not* been thrown in the lions' den? What about you? How do you think God feels about you when you sin?

Remind kids that Jesus died for sinners. Because of this, we should want to obey God; but when we sin, we still have hope. God does not reject us.

Jesus took our place on the cross, and God forgives

those who trust in Him. Even when we are faithless, God is faithful. (See 2 Tim. 2:13.)

### **Sing (4 minutes)**

• “It Is Well” song

**LEADER** • The king was so excited when he discovered that Daniel was safe. **Daniel was faithful to God, and God rescued him.** God still protects His people and gives them wisdom and strength to trust and obey Him no matter what the situation. Let’s praise His name together.

Sing together “It Is Well.”

### **Pray (2 minutes)**

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups.

**LEADER** • God, we praise You for Your wisdom and power. Thank You for helping Your people and for teaching us to trust You. Give us strength to obey You and to follow Jesus every day. Thank You for rescuing us from sin and death through Jesus. We pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.

### **Dismiss to small groups**

## The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

# Small Group LEADER

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## Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- chalkboard or dry erase board
- marker or chalk

Write the key passage on a chalkboard or dry erase board. Divide the passage into two sections. Then form two groups of kids: group A and group B.

Explain that group A will say the first part of the key passage, and then group B will echo them. Then group A will read the second part, and group B will echo.

Lead kids to read and echo again, this time with group B starting and group A echoing.

**SAY** • Our key passage reminds us that wisdom and power belong to God. He is in charge of everything—time, seasons, and even kings!

If you haven't memorized the key passage yet, keep working on it! When we memorize God's Word, we can remember what is true about God all the time—even when we don't have the Bible with us.

## Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster

Provide Bibles and guide kids to locate Daniel 6. Remind them that the Book of Daniel is in the Old Testament.

Ask kids to identify at least four people who are mentioned in the Book of Daniel. (*Daniel, Shadrach,*

*Meshach, Abednego, King Nebuchadnezzar, King Darius)*

**SAY** • Just like the past couple of weeks, today's Bible story taught us about someone who made a hard choice to follow God. Let's see what you can remember about the details of Daniel's story.

Ask the following review questions. Call on kids to answer:

1. How often did Daniel pray? (*three times a day, Dan. 6:10*)
2. The kingdom's officials convinced the king to enforce a new law. What new law did the king enforce? (*For 30 days, people couldn't pray to any god other than the king; Dan. 6:7,12*)
3. How did the king feel when he heard that Daniel broke the law? (*The king was upset and wished he could change the punishment for breaking the law, Dan. 6:14*)
4. What did the king do when he punished Daniel? (*He tried to rescue Daniel. Then he fasted and prayed for Daniel's protection; Dan. 6:14,16-18*)
5. How did God reward Daniel's faithfulness? (**Daniel was faithful to God, and God rescued him.**)
6. What did God do to protect Daniel? (*God sent an angel to close the lions' mouths, Dan. 6:22*)
7. What did the king do after he learned that God protected Daniel? (*The king ordered that people should worship the one true God, Dan. 6:25-27*)
8. **How can we obey God? We trust God to give us strength to obey Him.**

**SAY** • Good listening today, everyone. Obeying God is not always easy, but **we trust God to give us strength to obey Him!**

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.



LOW PREP

• play dough

## Activity choice (10 minutes)

**OPTION 1:** Sculpt a scene

Give each kid a lump of play dough. Invite kids to sculpt their favorite scene from the Bible story. Suggest that kids sculpt Daniel praying, a worried-looking king, or a hungry lion. When kids finish, guide kids with similar sculptures to tell about the corresponding scene from the Bible story.

**SAY** • In today's Bible story, Daniel was stuck in a difficult position. He could obey the king and disobey God, or he could disobey the king and obey God.

Either way, he would be obedient and disobedient at the same time. Daniel trusted God to give him the strength to obey God's commands. **Daniel was faithful to God, and God rescued him** from the lions. God was glorified by saving Daniel. Daniel and the king worshiped God for His faithfulness.

**OPTION 2:** Letters to missionaries

Before small group, identify a missionary family your church supports. As a group, write a letter to a missionary family on a large piece of paper.

Thank the missionary family for their work. Encourage them to remain obedient to God alone, and remind them of God's goodness.

You may choose to begin the letter and call on kids one by one to suggest the next sentences as you write them on the paper. Kids may draw pictures, make cards, or write short notes of their own to include with the letter. Suggest kids tell the missionary family something they learned from the story in Daniel 6.

**SAY** • The Bible is full of stories that tell about people making hard decisions to trust and obey God.

- paper
- pencils, markers, or crayons
- large envelope

These kinds of choices still have to be made today. Missionaries choose to follow God to new cities, and they must trust Him to give them strength and courage to share the good news of Jesus.

In our Bible story today, **Daniel was faithful to God, and God rescued him.** We can be faithful to God and obey Him even when it is not easy. For example, when others dislike us for our faith in Jesus.

***How can we obey God? We trust God to give us strength to obey Him.***

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.

## **Journal and prayer (5 minutes)**

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Encourage kids to list in their journals ways they can obey God in their everyday lives and with their everyday choices.

**SAY • *We trust God to give us strength to obey Him.*** We can trust God to help us obey and honor Him in big ways and with small decisions and actions, too.

Lead kids in prayer, thanking God for His Word, for Jesus, and for strength to obey Him.

As time allows, lead kids to complete “God in Babylon” on the activity page. Kids should circle how each Bible story about Daniel ended. Review the answers:

- God blessed Daniel and his friends. (Dan. 1)
- **God was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fire.** (Dan. 3)
- God rescued Daniel from the lions. (Dan. 6)

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- “God in Babylon” activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week’s *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.