



LESSON 4 FOR LEADERS

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, a lion suddenly leaped toward him, and with a giant crack, the lion's 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 had 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

LESSON 4 FOR LEADERS DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN

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 is 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.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: magnetic tiles, small plastic toy people, pom-poms, coloring utensils

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Daniel and the Lions' Den Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?

Play Station: Magnetic Tile Forts

Set-up: Set out magnetic tiles, small plastic toy people, and pom-poms.

Play: Encourage kids to build forts of protection using magnetic tiles. Have kids hide a small plastic toy person inside the fort. Encourage kids to toss pom-poms at their forts to see if they made them strong enough to protect the toy inside.

Play Station: Daniel and the Lions' Den Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the Coloring Sheet. Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a lion.



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LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, please show us Your love today. We ask for Your Holy Spirit to guide, teach, and lead us as we learn about Your love and protection. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? The Bible

Ask: Why is the Bible special? Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.

Tell the Bible story

The Beginner's Bible, pages 251-256

Daniel and the Lions

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Whom did Daniel worship? *(God)*
- Why did the other leaders in the kingdom want to get Daniel in trouble? *(They were jealous of him.)*
- What amazing thing did God do to protect Daniel? *(He sent an angel to shut the mouths of the lions.)*
- Even though Daniel knew the king's command, he chose to worship only God. What do you think you would have done if you were Daniel?
- Why do you think King Darius was so surprised God had protected Daniel from the lions?
- When has God protected you or someone you know in an amazing way? How does this experience show us God's love and care?

We might not face a den of lions like Daniel did, but we will face hard things. God promises to 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.

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

God has said, “I will never leave you.”

— Hebrews 13:5b

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the Word of Wonder with you.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **God says He will never leave you. How does it make you feel to know God is always with you?**
- **Think about other stories in the Bible. What are some other examples of times when God was with His people during tough situations?**



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LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Game: True or False

Ahead of time, designate an area of the room to be a lions' den. **For God's big story today, we took a walk. Now let's play a game called True or False to see how well we remember our story. If you think what I say about the story is true, walk to this side of the room. Point to one side of the room. If you think what I say about the story is false, go to that side of the room with the lions' den.** Point to the other side of the room.

Have kids gather in the middle of the room to start the game.

Daniel was a follower of God who lived in a land called Babylon. True or false? Let kids decide. **True! OK, back to the middle.**

King Darius made a law that everyone should eat popsicles. True or false? Let kids decide. **False! King Darius made a law that everyone should pray only to him! OK, back to the middle.**

Daniel prayed only to God. True or false? Let kids decide. **True! Even after King Darius made the law, Daniel still prayed to God. OK, back to the middle.**

King Darius threw Daniel into a swimming pool. True or false? Let kids decide. **False! King Darius threw Daniel into the lions' den. OK, back to the middle.**

An angel shut the mouths of the lions. True or false? Let kids decide. **True! God protected Daniel by sending an angel to shut the mouths of the lions! It was amazing! OK, back to the middle.**

This is our last question. King Darius wrote a new law saying that everyone in his land must follow Daniel's God. True or false? Let kids decide. **True! King Darius was amazed by how powerful God was! He wanted everyone to follow God just like Daniel did.**

Great job remembering our story today! God protected Daniel in an amazing way.