

SKY

Knowledge
Series 2—Lesson 2

StoryTime



Safety in a Lions' Den

Primary 3–7

Bible Text:

Daniel 6:1–23

Lesson Aim:

To teach children to have
the courage and faith to
obey God in difficult times.

Memory Verse:

“We ought to obey God
rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

Words to Learn:

- Courage
- Brave

Always Close in Prayer

The Teacher's Bible Study

Darius was a common name given to rulers of the Medo-Persian Empire. The king in our story was Darius the Mede. He was made king of Babylon by Cyrus the Great, the powerful king of Persia, after the death of Belshazzar.

King Nebuchadnezzar and his army destroyed Jerusalem in 605 B.C. Daniel was a young man when he and other people of Judah were taken as their captives. It was customary in those days to take the leaders and the most promising young people away from their country. This was done so that they would not rise up against the new rulers.

Daniel was in this group taken back to Babylon; a young man taken away from family and familiar surroundings. Not much is known about his family. It must have been a devout family because Daniel worshiped God and refused to be drawn into the idolatry that surrounded him in his new home.

King Darius learned to trust and admire Daniel very much. Daniel was a hard worker and honest in his duties. He proved himself to be worthy of this respect. The young man was thoroughly committed to following God and the principles God had given him. Daniel understood that obedience to God does not compromise us in honest service to others. Whether large or small, service should be done faithfully. Daniel used this knowledge in his life.

Daniel talked with God three times each day. Prayer is the way man communicates with God, and Daniel was faithful in prayer. He made it a part of his pattern of life. While no one can dictate the amount of time one should spend in personal prayer, Paul's admonition to “be constant in prayer” (1 Thessalonians 5:17) epitomizes that proper mental attitude. The Christian is to always be CLOSE to God. Each day we seek God's help, His blessing, His comfort, and His encouragement. This miracle of communication is a thought away.

Although praying on one's knees is a common biblical example (Acts 20:36; 21:5), there is no official posture or position of prayer. One can pray at any time, in any place, in any position, and for any reason—and know with assurance that God is listening.

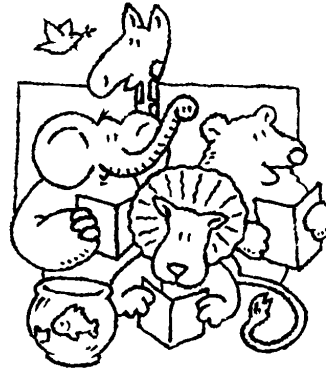
God reassures us by the many examples of courage exhibited in the face of pain, distress, and even death. This courage is given to us by God when He recognizes the heart of obedience.

You may want to begin your class by asking a few questions such as these: Have you ever been tempted to not do what you know is right? Such as obeying your parents, going to church, meditating, telling the truth?

In the examples of Daniel we find a timeless example of separation from impurity, courage against compromise, faith in prayer, determined obedience, and dedication to Him whose “kingdom is from generation to generation” (Daniel 4:34).

God wants us to do what is right at all times. Our story today is about a young man who was faithful to God regardless of what would happen to him. He did not struggle with whether he would obey God. He would please God rather than man. □

Simple as 1,2,3...



Additional Reading for Teacher Study

Psalms 119:41–48

Romans 5:1–5; 12:3

Hebrews 11

Are You Listening?

After you read or tell the story you may ask the following questions:

1. What was the name of the king in our story—*DARIUS*
2. *True or false:* Daniel was a young man when he was taken captive—*TRUE*
3. *True or false:* Daniel's enemies were jealous of him—*TRUE*
4. Did the king like Daniel?—*YES*
5. *True or false:* The king was tricked into making the law that would condemn Daniel—*TRUE*
6. *True or false:* Daniel knew that he was in God's hands and God would take care of him—*TRUE*
7. *True or false:* We should always seek to obey God—*TRUE*

Word Definitions

These definitions were taken from *Webster's New World Dictionary*:

- **Courage**—the ability to face difficulty or danger without fear
- **Brave**—exhibiting courage in difficult times

SKY StoryTime

Safety in a Lions' Den

King Darius was the king of Babylon. He wanted all the people in his kingdom to obey him and keep his laws. It was very important that the people obeyed the rules, so 120 princes were put in charge to help him rule the land. He then assigned three rulers to oversee the princes. A man named Daniel was the most important of the high rulers. He was in a powerful position, right next to the king!

Daniel was a man that could be trusted and this is why King Darius put him in this position. The king knew that Daniel was faithful to the living God. Daniel was a very honest, wise, and good man.

There were others who thought that they should have this special position. They were jealous of Daniel. So, these evil men were looking for a way to get rid of Daniel. They thought for sure Daniel would do something wrong. However, they could not find a fault with Daniel because he was honest. He was not like them.

While the men watched Daniel, they discovered he kept all of the king's laws, and three times a day, looking toward Jerusalem, he prayed to God. Daniel did not pray to the idols of Babylon. Then these men said to one another, "We cannot find anything to

charge Daniel with unless we find it against him concerning the law of HIS God."

Now they began to work out their wicked plan against Daniel. These men used flattery to trick the king into signing a law that stated that all prayer should only be addressed to the king! They told the king that this would be a way to honor him. "If anyone should pray to any god or man for the next thirty days, except to you O king, they shall be thrown into the den of lions." King Darius thought it was very nice that the princes wanted to honor him in some way. So, he signed the law. He did not know these men really wanted to get rid of Daniel.

When Daniel heard about the new law, he did not struggle with whether he would obey God. Daniel knew the commandment that said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). If Daniel prayed to the king, he would be breaking the commandment of God and he would be saying Darius was God.

Daniel prayed by an open window in his house, just as he had done every day. When the men saw Daniel praying, they rushed to tell the king. They said, "O king, did you not sign a law that every man must only pray to you for the next thirty days and if he does not

he will be thrown into a den of lions?" The king answered, "Yes, this is true." The men then gleefully said, "Daniel does not show you respect for your law. He still prays three times a day to his God."

King Darius felt very foolish now. He realized that he never should have believed the flattering words. There was nothing the king could do to change the law and save Daniel's life. He could only command that Daniel be thrown into the den of lions. Before Daniel was thrown into the den, the king came and said, "Your God whom you serve always, He will deliver you."

The king was so worried about Daniel that he could not sleep. He spent the night fasting and he did not have his musicians play for him. Early the next morning, the king hurried to the lions' den to see if Daniel was alive. The king spoke, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?"

Daniel shouted back, "O King live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."

The king was so happy! When Daniel was removed from the den there was not one scratch on him. Nothing happened to Daniel because he believed God would take care of him.

The king gave the command that those men who accused

Daniel would receive the same punishment the men had devised for Daniel; and not the men only but their families, too.

The king then sent a letter to all of the people in the land that said, "Men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, and steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed. And His dominion shall endure to the end. He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

Let's Talk About It

Our lesson today was about a young man who was very brave. This man's name was Daniel. Daniel prayed every day for God's help. We can pray to God every day as well and ask God to help us to be brave and do what is right. God searches our hearts and will give us courage when we need it. Aren't we glad we serve God?

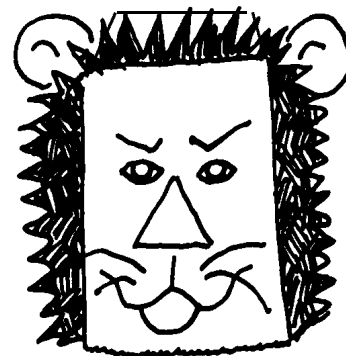
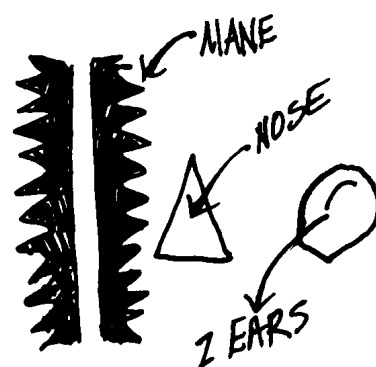
The End

Crafty Ideas

Lay the paper bag flat to assemble. Glue the ears, nose, and the mane strips cut from the construction paper onto the bag. Use markers to create the facial features (eyes and mouth). Glue short pieces of brightly colored yarn around the muzzle for whiskers. When the puppet is dry you have a "fierce" lion! □

Crafty Ideas

The Lion of Babylon



Materials To Use:

- small lunch bag for each student
- black and brown construction paper for ears, nose, and mane
- crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- white glue or paste
- scissors
- red or yellow yarn