



# God Delivers Daniel from the Lions' Den

*Daniel 6*



## LESSON GOAL

Students will live a faithful life before God.

## BIBLE TRUTHS

- Daniel faithfully obeyed God.
- Daniel was thrown into the lions' den for obeying God.
- Darius was happy that Daniel was alive.

## KEY VERSE

"The king spoke, saying to Daniel, 'Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?'" (Daniel 6:20b).

## APPLICATION

- Live a faithful life.
- Make it a habit to pray continually.
- Serve God continually.
- Trust that God will be faithful to those who belong to Him.

### Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group



## PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

*"Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul. You shall teach them to your children" (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).*

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God's Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

### Bible Background

Nebuchadnezzar's vision had begun to come true. The gold head (representing Belshazzar) had fallen from power, and the chest and arms of silver (representing Medo-Persia) had begun to reign (Dan. 2). The Medo-Persian empire was the most powerful kingdom the world had ever seen. The Lord had faithfully delivered Israelites such as Daniel, Meshach, Shadrach, and Abed-Nego under the Babylonian empire, but would His faithfulness continue throughout the time of Gentile domination? In Daniel 6, Daniel reveals that God's faithfulness did not change with the fall of Babylon, but that God will always faithfully defend those who are faithful to Him. God used Daniel's faithfulness to display His own attributes.

#### Daniel's New King, New Position, and New Enemies (Daniel 6:1–3)

Although Daniel had been mostly forgotten during the reign of Belshazzar, Darius, the new ruler of Babylon, recognized Daniel's potential. When Darius (perhaps another name for King Cyrus) began his reign, he reorganized his kingdom, dividing it under 120 officials called "satraps" and then placing three governors in charge of those satraps (Dan. 6:1–2). Perhaps because of Daniel's nearly 40 years of serving Nebuchadnezzar, as well as his recent interpretation of the writing on the wall, Darius made Daniel one of the three governors. God blessed Daniel's work so much that the king planned on putting him in charge of both the administrators and the satraps (6:3). Unsurprisingly, both satraps and administrators were jealous of Daniel's upcoming promotion and desired to discredit him before the king.

#### Daniel's Faithful Life (Daniel 6:4–5)

The satraps and administrators tried to discredit Daniel, but they could find "no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him" (Dan. 6:4). Daniel was blameless, both personally and professionally. He not only was morally above reproach, but he also did his job well. The only weakness the officials could perceive in Daniel was his profound commitment to obey God's Law (6:5). After living in pagan Babylon for 65 years, Daniel's reputation was so spotless that even his enemies recognized his holiness.

Daniel was known not only for his professional excellence and personal holiness, but also for his prayer life. Three times a day he fell on his knees, prayed, and gave thanks to God, "as was his custom since early days" (6:10). For at least 65 years, Daniel (who was now over 80 years old) had faithfully devoted himself to seeking God's face in prayer three times a day. (A powerful example of Daniel's prayer is recorded in Daniel 9:4–19.) Daniel's prayers were matched by his life. Not more than a year or two had passed since Darius had begun to rule Babylon, but Darius already recognized that Daniel was someone who served his God

continually (6:16). The pagan king appreciated that whatever Daniel did, he did in service to God. Men could see Daniel's prayers and recognize his devotion, but the greatest evaluation of Daniel's faithfulness came from God. When God delivered him from the lions, Daniel was able to say that he had been "found innocent before Him" (6:22). Daniel was confident that his sins had been forgiven by God and that God was pleased with the life he lived. His evaluation of his own heart had been confirmed when God rescued him. Later, the text says that Daniel was saved "because he believed in his God" (6:23). Whether in daily prayer or in the lions' den, Daniel lived his life faithfully unto the Lord.

### **Daniel's Enemies Plot to Kill Him (Daniel 6:6–17)**

Unable to find any fault with Daniel's life, the satraps and administrators developed what seemed like the perfect plan to get Daniel put to death for breaking Darius's law. But first they had to get Darius to make a law they knew Daniel would have to break! Aware of Daniel's prayer life (Dan. 6:11), the officials lied and said that all the officials wanted the king to make a law that every prayer had to be addressed to the king (6:6–7). They recommended that whoever did not obey should be punished by being thrown into the lions' den. King Darius, no doubt flattered by the request, signed the unchangeable decree (6:8–9). Little did Darius know that he had just signed the death sentence of his favorite advisor!

After Daniel learned of the decree, he went home and prayed. He would not let the death sentence change his pattern of prayer. As always (and probably knowing he was being watched), Daniel opened up his windows and looked toward Jerusalem, where the temple had been. The three prayers he offered that day clearly were not being addressed to the king (6:10). Daniel was not making a show of his prayers, but neither would he change his pattern of prayer to avoid persecution.

The officials' plan was working perfectly. As soon as they saw that Daniel's prayers had not changed, they went to the king and proclaimed Daniel's disobedience (6:11–13). King Darius regretted making the law and did everything he could to deliver Daniel (6:14). But as the day wore on, the officials reminded Darius that the king's law could not be changed (6:15). Although not wanting to, Darius gave the command for Daniel to be thrown into the lions' den. Before sealing up the den so no one would rescue Daniel, Darius announced his hope to Daniel: "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you" (6:16). Perhaps Darius had heard about God's rescue of the Israelites from Egypt, or Meshach, Shadrach, and Abed-Nego's deliverance from the fiery furnace. Or perhaps Daniel's devotion to God had convinced Darius that this God was different from the myriad of idols the pagans served. Darius certainly hoped to see Daniel alive the next morning.

### **Daniel's God Delivers Him (Daniel 6:18–24)**

After a sleepless night spent fasting (Dan. 6:18), Darius went to the den early in the morning to check on Daniel's condition. His call to Daniel betrayed mixed emotions. His voice was "lamenting" (6:20), showing that he feared the worst, yet he still called into the hole, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" (6:20). The king was "exceedingly glad" when he heard Daniel's voice (6:23).

Daniel gave God glory for his safety through the night. While still in the den, he told the king that God had sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths because he was innocent before both God and the king (6:21–22). While he had broken the king's unjust command, Daniel was righteous because he had obeyed God's commands. Just as his three friends had exited the fiery furnace without even their clothes

being singed, Daniel came out of the lions' den without a single scratch from the lions (6:23). The true miracle of God's deliverance was emphasized when the accusers and their families were thrown into the den to suffer the punishment they intended for Daniel. Their bodies were crushed by the lions in midair (6:24). The lions were healthy, hungry, and capable of destroying Daniel, but God had rescued Daniel because of his faith (6:23).

### **Daniel's God Is Praised (Daniel 6:25–28)**

Just as Nebuchadnezzar had done when God rescued the three men from the furnace, King Darius responded to God's miracle by praising Him. Darius published a decree that the inhabitants of his kingdom "tremble and fear before the God of Daniel" (Dan. 6:26). Having seen God's miraculous deliverance, Darius praised God because "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" (6:26). Although the Medo-Persian empire was magnificent, it was nothing compared to God's unending kingdom. Darius had personally seen that God "delivers and rescues, and He works signs" (6:27). God had worked through Daniel's faithful life to show His own power. Darius finished by praising the God "who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions" (6:27). God had rescued Daniel and continued to bless him throughout his life in Babylon (6:28).

### **Conclusion**

Unlike many Bible characters, Daniel remained faithful throughout his life. He served God continually and prayed without ceasing. He had an unblemished testimony and unwavering confidence in God. His dependence on the Lord allowed for unique opportunities to see God's glory demonstrated in his life. God used Daniel's faithfulness to bring Himself glory among the most powerful men in human history.

Believers who desire their lives to be a faithful testimony to God's faithfulness must look at Daniel's life and recognize his complete dependence on God. Only by depending on God, relying on the death of His Son for forgiveness, and submitting to His Spirit's control can the believer live a faithful life like Daniel's. While depending on God, the believer must follow Daniel in making wise choices, such as being committed to pray daily and continually, to obey God's law, and to serve God wholeheartedly. God will glorify Himself when a believer devotes his life faithfully to Him.

## POINT TO THE TRUTH

*"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth"*  
(Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



### Review Questions

*Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.*

Did Belshazzar listen to Nebuchadnezzar's warning to be humble?

*No. Belshazzar did not listen but was proud.*

Why was Belshazzar so proud?

*The city of Babylon was being attacked, but Belshazzar believed that he was invincible against the attack. He trusted in his own strength rather than the strength of God, and instead of praising God, he praised gods of gold, silver, and wood.*

What did the king see during his meal?

*The king saw a hand writing a message on a wall.*

What did the message say?

*The message said "counted, counted, weighed, divided."*

What did the king do when he could not read the message?

*He called for the wise men to try and interpret it.*

What did Daniel say that this message meant?

*Daniel explained that God had numbered Belshazzar's kingdom and ordained how many more days the king would live. He also said that God had weighed the king and found him wanting.*

What happened that night to the king?

*He was killed when the Medes and Persians conquered Babylon.*



### Again and Again

A habit is something that you do repeatedly, again and again. Some habits are good and some are bad; some are necessary and some are personal preferences. Ask the students what some of their habits are (brushing teeth, bathing, eating, saying prayers before going to bed, etc.). You could have a competition to see which student is able to stop blinking for the longest time. Blinking helps keep our eyes healthy, and so our body does it without us even thinking about it. How important is praying for our health? How long should we or could we go without praying? Daniel was in a habit of praying every day, and he would not go without it even to save his own life.



### Faithfulness

Faithfulness is being true to your word and your commitments. God is faithful in that He never breaks a promise but always does what He says He will do. God



expects us to be faithful like Him. Have the students ever made a promise and then broken it, or said they would do something and then forgot? Have the students agree not to smile or talk, and then play a game in which you attempt to get them to smile or to talk. Would the students be faithful to their commitment even if faced with death? Daniel was faithful in prayer even when his life was at stake.

### Lions

Bring a stuffed lion to show the students. It's very soft and cuddly. Are real lions like that? Use the following facts to discuss the strength and disposition of lions: The big, powerful lion is the largest member of the cat family. You can hear its thundering roar across the African plains where it lives. The male lion's long, thick mane gives him a royal appearance and makes him look bigger than he really is. It also protects him during fights with other males. The female does a lot of the hunting, mostly at night. They prefer to eat large game, such as zebras, antelopes, and giraffes. But they will eat anything they can catch, including fish, rodents, birds, and other small prey. They cannot chew their food and have to swallow it in chunks. They can eat 75 pounds of meat at one meal. Lions spend 20 hours a day resting or sleeping. They live to be about 15 to 20 years old. Full-grown males weigh approximately 350–400 pounds and are about 9 feet in length. Females weigh approximately 250–300 pounds and are about 8 feet in length. They both have a shoulder height of approximately 40 inches and a roar that can be heard up to five miles away. What a majestic beast God has created. (Show a color shot of a real lion out of a book or magazine as you give the students these facts.)

## PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

*"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done" (Psalm 78:4).*

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

### Bible Lesson

Daniel had lived a full life serving God in a foreign land. He had seen God perform great miracles. God had revealed the meaning of two of King Nebuchadnezzar's dreams to him, had saved the lives of his friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego from the fiery furnace, and had revealed to Daniel the meaning of the writing on the wall during King Belshazzar's party. These are only the highlights of Daniel's life that were recorded in the book of Daniel. God most certainly blessed Daniel in many other ways that were not written down in the Bible. But there is one other great miracle in Daniel's life that was recorded in the Bible: the time when God saved Daniel from being eaten by lions. Daniel was an old man, around 80 years old. He had lived in Babylon under three different kings. This king, named Darius, greatly respected Daniel. He knew that Daniel had a lot of experience being a leader in the government and had surely heard the stories of how Daniel's God had performed great miracles through him. For these reasons,

King Darius put Daniel in one of the highest positions of leadership in his kingdom. Daniel was very good at his job, and the king liked him very much. In fact, the king liked him so much that he was thinking about making Daniel the most powerful man in the kingdom, next to himself.

Many of the other leaders in the kingdom heard about the king's plans, and they became very jealous. They did not want Daniel to get a better job than they had. They all talked and decided that they would watch Daniel very closely so they could catch him breaking a law. But they could not catch him doing anything wrong! Daniel was so faithful and righteous that even when people were watching him all the time, they could not find anything that he did wrong.

The leaders talked again and decided that since they could not catch Daniel breaking any of the laws, they would make a law that they knew he would break. They came up with a law that would forbid Daniel from praying to and worshiping God. They gathered together and came before the king. "King Darius, live forever!" they said. "All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal [law], that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions" (Dan. 6:6-7). This was a serious law! For 30 days, if anyone worshiped anything or anyone other than the king, that person would be thrown into a pit where hungry lions would be waiting to eat him! The leaders asked the king to sign the paper that would make this a law, and King Darius did. The leaders knew that Daniel would break this law because they knew how much he worshiped God. They were right. Daniel heard about the law, but he went right on worshiping God. He was caught breaking the law when they saw him kneel down to pray. They went right to the king and asked him, "Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" (Dan. 6:12). The king said yes, he had signed that law, and they reminded him that he was not allowed to change it. Perhaps the king thought they wanted him to change the law, but the leaders knew that the king could not. They were trapping him. They told the king that Daniel had broken the law and therefore had to be thrown into the lions' den.

The king was very upset. He liked and respected Daniel very much, but he had been trapped by his leaders. He knew that he had to enforce the law. Daniel was brought before the king. After the king thought about it, he realized that Daniel's God had saved him before and could do it again. As Daniel was being thrown into the pit of hungry lions, the king said to him, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you" (Dan. 6:16). The king went home to his palace. He was so upset that he would not eat and did not sleep all night. Finally, very early in the morning, he went back to the lions' den. He called out, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" (Dan. 6:20). "O king, live forever!" Daniel called back (Dan. 6:21). He was alive! The hungry lions had not eaten him.

"My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him," Daniel told the king (Dan. 6:22). The king was so happy that God had spared Daniel. He commanded that he be brought out of the lions' den. Everyone saw that Daniel did not have any injuries, not even a scratch, from the lions. God had spared Daniel! The king commanded that the men who had trapped him, who had set up Daniel to break the law, be brought to him. When they arrived, the king had them and their families thrown into the lions den as punishment. Before they hit the floor, the lions had eaten them.

The king sent a letter out to all the people in his kingdom, praising God for all the miracles He had performed, including saving Daniel from the hungry lions. He commanded that everyone in the kingdom fear God.



## Lesson Questions

Why was Daniel thrown into the lions' den?  
*He chose to obey God rather than King Darius.*

How did Daniel disobey the king?  
*He continued to pray to God even though the king had made a law that no one was to call upon his god for 30 days.*

Did the king want to throw Daniel to the lions?  
*No.*

What did the king say would happen to Daniel after he was thrown in the lions' den?  
*The king said that God would protect Daniel.*

Did God protect Daniel?  
*Yes. God stopped the lions from eating Daniel by sending His angel to shut the lions' mouths.*

## Presentation Ideas



### A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



### Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.



### Muzzle

Bring in a dog's muzzle. Ask the students what it is for. After listening to their ideas, explain that the muzzle is used to keep a dog quiet and to prevent it from biting people. Ask what animals you could use a muzzle on. Then ask the students whether they think a muzzle would stop a lion from biting them. Ask what they would do if they were locked in a cage with a hungry lion. Instruct them to listen to today's lesson and see what happened when Daniel was facing a hungry lion.



### Hungry Lions

At the beginning of class, give the students a snack they will like a lot (a piece of candy, a snack cake, etc.). (Make sure to ask the parents whether the snack is acceptable.) Tell the students that they cannot eat the snack, no matter how hungry they are, until you say so. As you describe the hungry lions and how God stopped their mouths from eating Daniel, ask the students how many of them at even a little of their snack. God stopped the lions from eating even a little of Daniel. But just as the lions eventually were fed, make sure the students get to eat their snacks at the appropriate time!

## Praise and Worship

*God Is So Good*

*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*

*I Will Call upon the Lord*



*Make Me a Servant  
My God Is So Great  
Trust and Obey*

### **Daniel in the Lion's Den**

As always, Daniel knelt to pray where everyone could see.  
*(Clasp hands and bow head; shield eyes with hand; look around.)*

He chose to obey God, and not the pagan king's decree.  
*(Point up and nod; hold hands up at head to indicate crown, and shake head.)*

So he was punished, thrown to die down in the lions' den.  
*(Shake index finger sternly; spread fingers like claws.)*

Yet Daniel trusted in His God. Would He deliver him?  
*(Place hand over heart; point up; hold hands out at sides, palms up.)*

When early morning finally came, the king went to the den  
*(Tap wrist to indicate watch; walk in place.)*

And cried, "O Daniel, did your God deliver you?" and then  
*(Cup hands around mouth.)*

He heard an answer from the den: "O king, don't be alarmed."  
*(Cup hand at ear.)*

The Lord has closed the lions' mouths and rescued me from harm."  
*(Spread fingers; close hands.)*

## **PRACTICE THE TRUTH**

*"That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments" (Psalm 78:7).*

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



### **Pass the Letter**

We learned in this chapter of Daniel that two letters were sent throughout the kingdom. In verses 4–9, it was bad news of a command to pray only to the king for 30 days. Then, in verses 25–27, it was good news of a decree to fear the living God. Play various pass-the-letter games.

Hot Potato: Have the students sit in a circle. While music plays, pass a scroll around the circle. When the music stops, the student holding it is out. You also could send around two scrolls. Whoever is holding a scroll when the music stops opens it to find either good or bad news. Students who receive bad news are out. For younger students, the good and bad news could be pictures of a happy face or a green light and a sad face or stop sign.

Pass the Baton: Divide the class into teams, and send one member at a time across the room to deliver a scroll or bring it back. Or you could let the students take a bad news scroll to one end of the room and return with a good news scroll.



### **"Daniel's Habit"**

Materials: copies of "Daniel's Habit" craft pages, brads, scissors, glue, crayons

Directions: Give each student a copy of the craft pages. Instruct the students to cut out the two circles and to cut along the slits on the clock to form flaps. Glue the two circles together, with the clock on top. Cut out the arrows and attach them to the clock using a brad. When the students lift the flaps, they will see that Daniel had a habit of praying.



### **"Circle Lion"**

Materials: copies of the "Circle Lion" craft pages on colored paper (see craft pages for color instructions), blank sheets of paper, scissors, glue

Directions: Give each student a copy of the craft pages and a blank sheet of paper. Direct the students to cut out the orange circles and glue them onto the blank sheet, forming a slightly flattened circle or rectangle shape. This will be the lion's mane. Then have the students cut out the yellow circles and glue the larger one to the orange circles to make the lion's face. Then they can glue the medium-sized black circle on as the nose, and the two small black circles on as the eyes. Then the students can glue the remaining five circles to the face, using two for the ears and three to form the mouth. Finally, they should glue the verse to the bottom of the page.

### **Coloring Pages**

Give each student a copy of the coloring pages at the back of the lesson. Students can color the pages in class or at home.

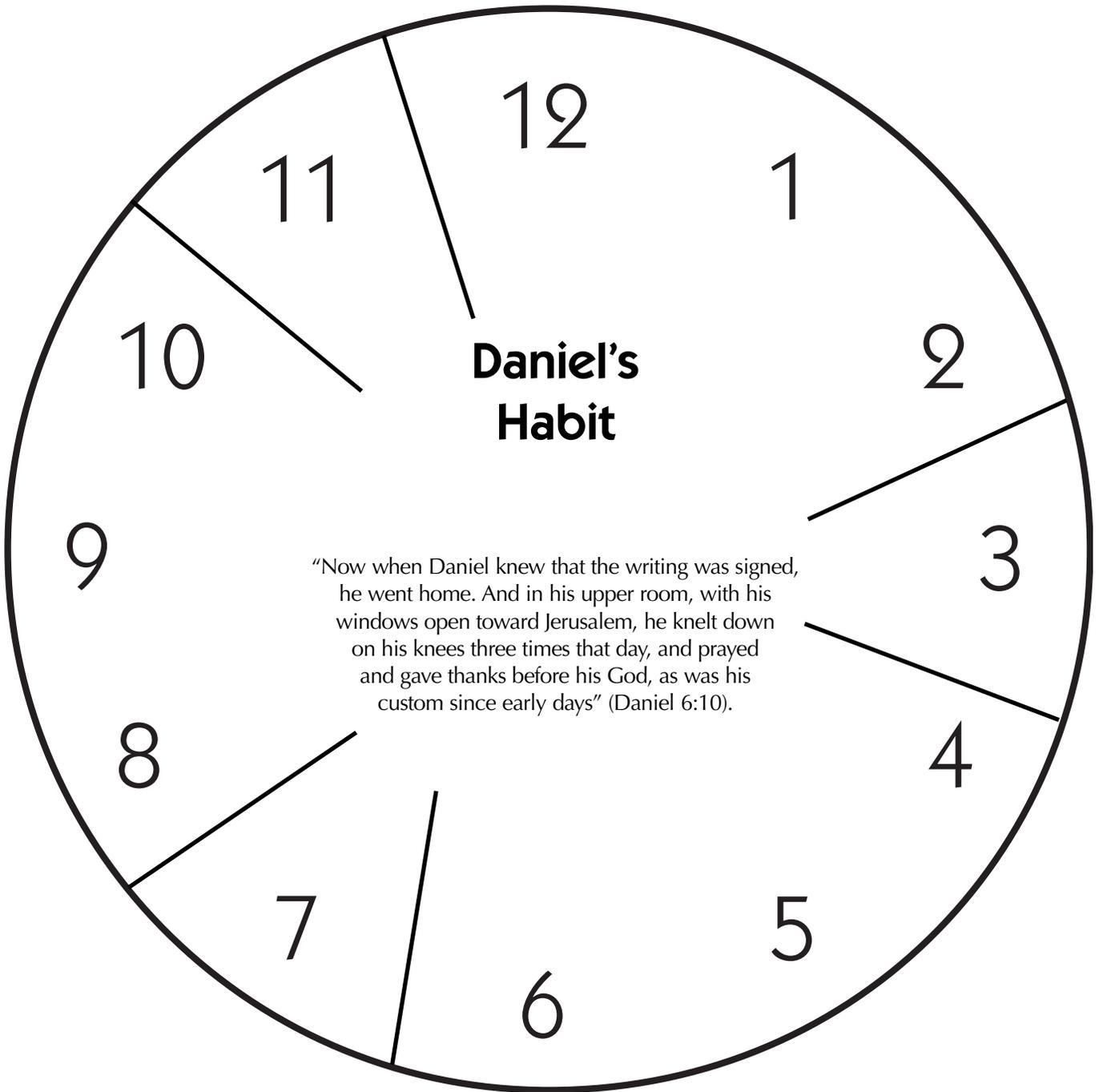


### **MEMORY VERSE**

"Keep my soul, and deliver me; Let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in You"  
(Psalm 25:20).



# Daniel's Habit



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# Daniel's Habit

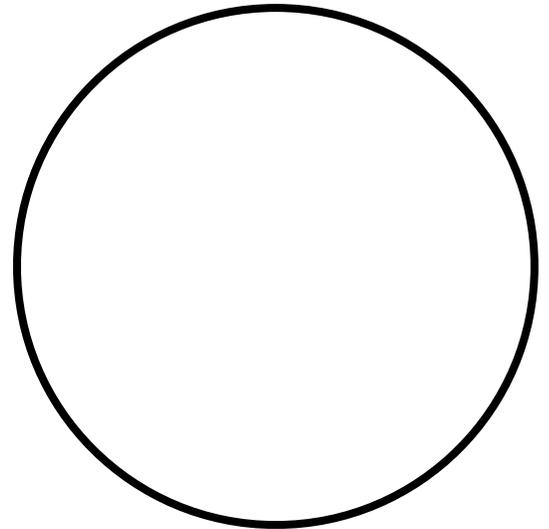
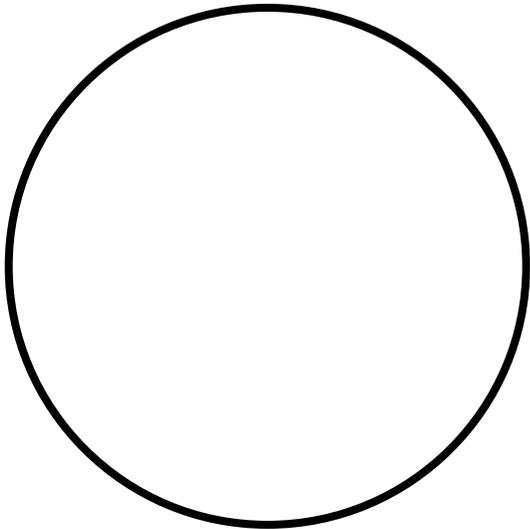
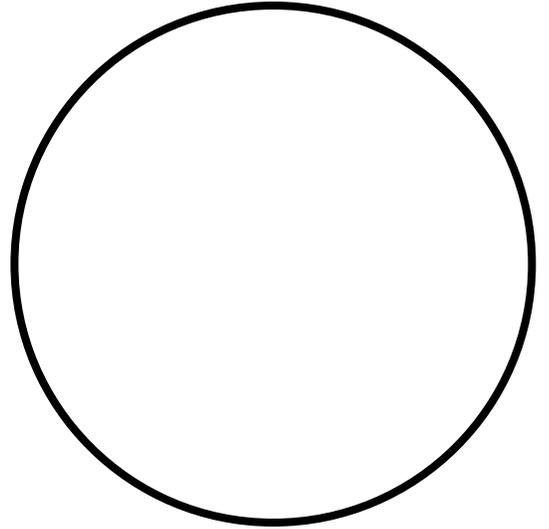
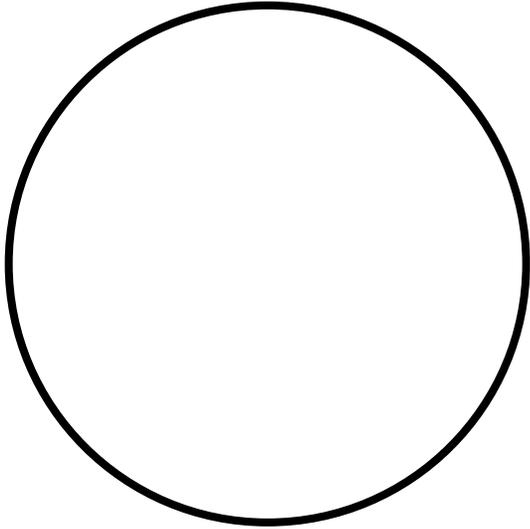




# Circle Lion

Template One

(copy twice per student on orange paper)

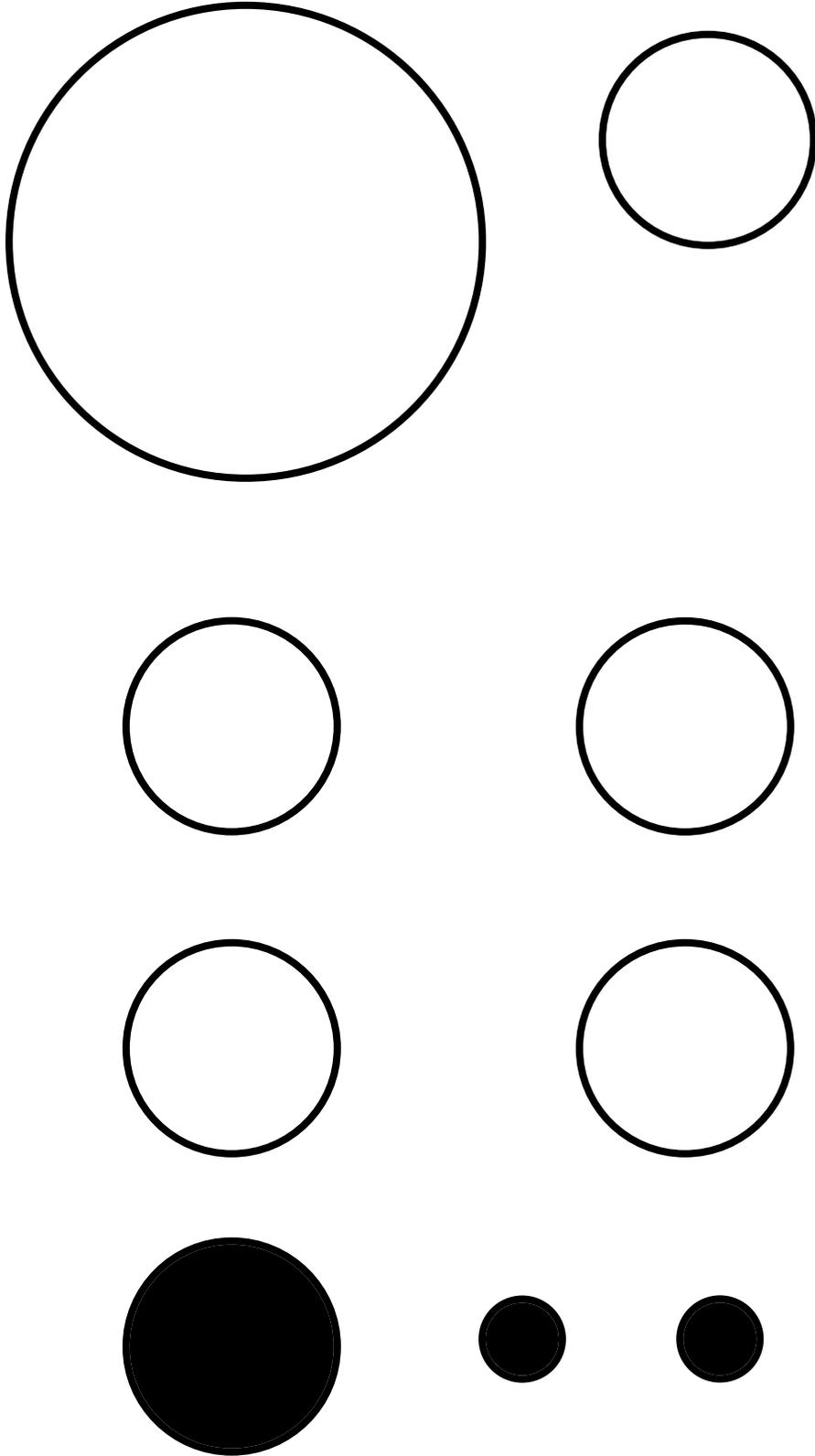




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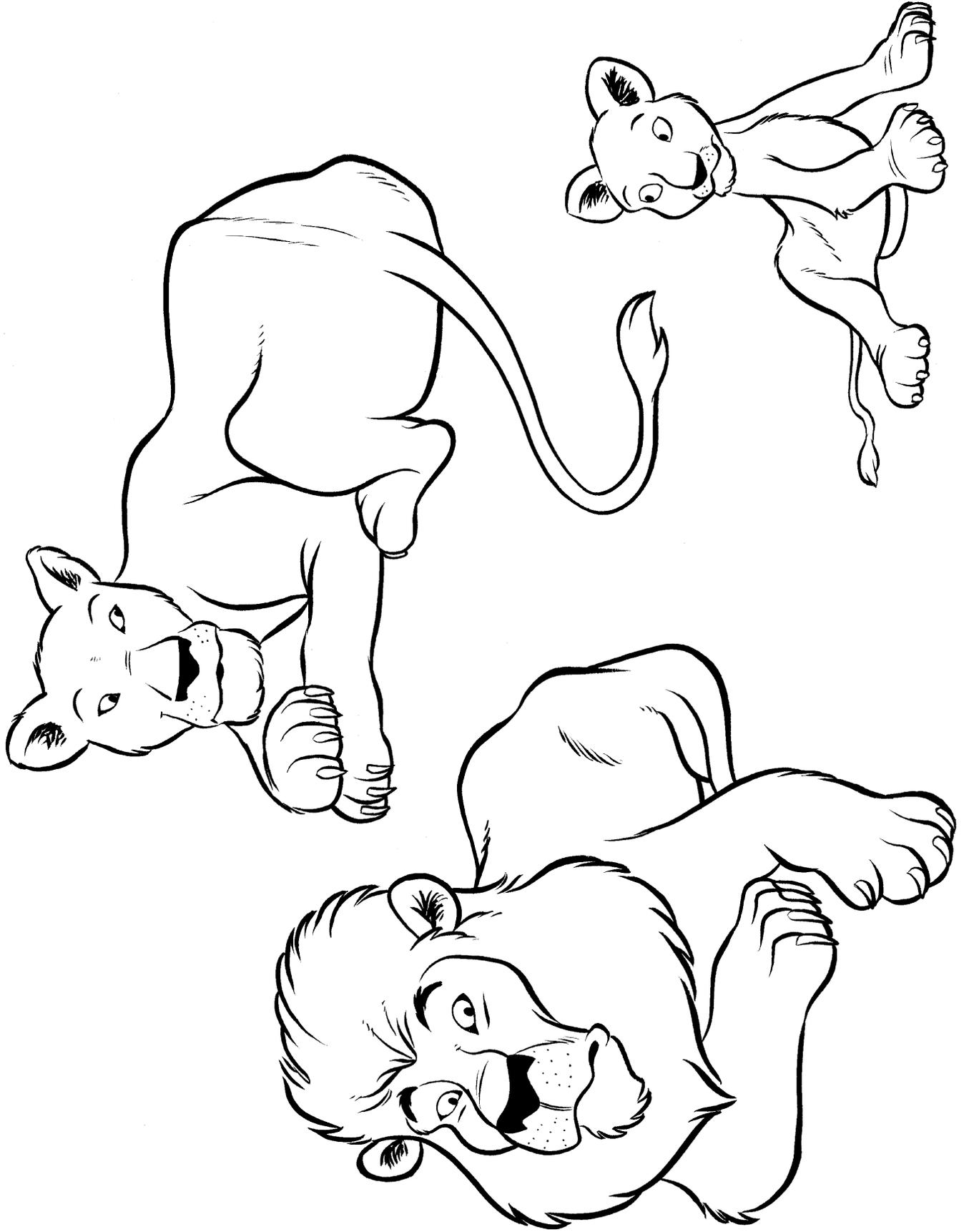
Template Two

(copy once per student on yellow paper)



“So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, ‘Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you’ (Daniel 6:16).”













**“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” (Daniel 6:22).**

