

# LESSON 12

## DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

### BEFORE YOU TEACH

#### Persian Customs and Practices

In the Medo-Persian Empire, when a decree was made, it was irrevocable. Even the king couldn't change it. As much as Darius was pleased with Daniel, he could not do anything to save him from the lions.

Lions were greatly feared and respected by the people. Some kings hunted lions for sport. The Persians captured lions and kept them in large parks where they were fed and taken care of. Of course, they were used for executions as well.

It was also the Persian custom to transfer the punishment to those who had conspired against the king by falsely leading him to an influenced action (Dan 6:24; Esther 7:9-10). The officials who had accused Daniel were executed along with their families.

### UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

The power of prayer has been manifested in many of the Bible stories of this quarter. Esther, Mordecai, and the Israelites fasted and prayed to God. In the end, they were delivered. Here, Daniel continued to pray three times a day, despite the law that had been decreed. Even though his life was being threatened, Daniel did not hide his prayers to God nor did he stop due to pressure. He knew that he had to constantly pray for guidance and help while living in a foreign land.

Prayer is an important part of your students' lives. Fortunately, they will not face the same threats as Daniel did. If their prayers are affected at all, it will likely be due to their own excuses or pressure. Perhaps they feel too tired at the end of the day to pray. Maybe it is not a good time when their friends are around. Either way, they choose to cut out prayer from their lives. While it may not be necessary at this age to designate the number of times they need to pray each day, building up a prayer habit is important. Remind your students that they need to pray every day. It is a time when they can communicate with God and ask Him for help. Daniel continued to pray under the worst circumstance. As a result, God abided with him. When your students forget or brush aside prayer, their relationship with God will change. Discuss with them what they can tell God during their prayers on a daily basis. It is a good opportunity to review the Lord's Prayer, as in the first lesson. Testimonies about the power of prayer are also appropriate. When your students understand the significance of prayer, it will become an intrinsic part of their lives.

### BIBLE TEXT

Daniel 6

### BIBLE TRUTH

God will deliver all those who believe in Him.

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To realize the importance of developing a habit of daily prayer.
2. To understand that God answers the prayers of the righteous.

### MEMORY VERSE

"He knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God."

(Daniel 6:10b)

### PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Heavenly Father, thank You for gathering us together once more on this wonderful Sabbath day to pray and learn Your words. Today, we are going to continue learning about Daniel. Daniel was a great man of faith and courage. He prayed three times a day, even when his life was in danger. Because of his faith and trust in You, he was able to be victorious. Lord, help us to have the faith and courage of Daniel. Help us to believe and trust in You, no matter what problems we may face. We know that You love us and will protect us continually. Thank You, Lord Jesus. Hallelujah! Amen.

## VOCABULARY

**lions' den:** a pit where lions were kept and fed

## REVIEW

Last week, we learned how King Belshazzar dishonored God. What did he do? During the feast, he brought out the vessels from the temple of God and allowed everyone to drink wine from them. As they drank, they also praised their many gods. Suddenly, a hand appeared and its fingers began writing some words on the wall. Can anyone remember what the hand wrote on the wall? That's right. The writing on the wall read, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN." No one in the king's court could interpret the meaning. When Daniel was called in, he told King Belshazzar that God was going to end his kingdom because he had sinned. He was too proud and did not give glory to God. That same night, the king was killed and a new empire called the Medes and Persia came into power. We learned that we should always honor, respect, and worship God.

Before our story today, I would like to ask if anyone here owns a pet? [Allow students to respond.] Yes, our pets are usually small, cute, and friendly animals. In our lesson today, we are going to talk about an animal that is quite different from our pets—the lion. Has anyone been to the zoo to see the lions? What are they like? Today, we're going to learn about how Daniel spent a whole night in the lions' den!

## BIBLE STORY

### King Darius

Now that Babylon had been conquered, the new empire Medes and Persia came into power. Its new king was called Darius. By this time, Daniel was already over eighty years old but he was still working in the king's court. King Darius found Daniel to be a faithful and trusted worker. He also saw that Daniel was wiser than the other governors so he began thinking about putting him in control over the whole country! How do you think the other governors felt when they heard this? Yes, they were extremely upset and jealous. They didn't want Daniel to be in a higher position than they were. So they thought of ways to get him into trouble. However, Daniel did not do anything wrong, so they had no reason to complain to King Darius. Finally, they came up with a very clever plan to get rid of Daniel.

### The Wicked Plan

These men knew that Daniel had a habit of praying. Three times a day, Daniel would go into his upstairs room, get down on his knees, and give thanks to God. If the other officials made a new law saying that no one could pray to anyone but the king for thirty days, then Daniel would definitely get into trouble. They thought that this was an excellent idea, so they quickly went to tell King Darius. When they saw the king, they proposed their new law.

"King Darius," they said, "we have made a new law for you to sign. All your top officials agree that this is a good law. It says that no one can pray to any god or man except you for the next thirty days. If a person disobeys this law, they shall be thrown into the lions' den."

This new law sounded good to the king. So, King

Darius signed the law. Once the law was made, absolutely no one could change the law, not even the king.

### Daniel Prays to God

When Daniel found out about the new law, how do you suppose he felt? If you were Daniel, what would you do? [Have students think of solutions and share with the class.] Some of the ways Daniel could have avoided getting into trouble would have been to stop praying for thirty days until the law had passed, or to pray in a secret place. Let's see what Daniel did. Please read Daniel 6:10.

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days."

Even though Daniel knew that he would be thrown into the lions' den if anyone found him disobeying the law, he continued to pray three times a day, as he had always done.

Daniel was truly a very courageous man! He was not afraid of being discovered nor was he afraid of being thrown into the lions' den. He continued to worship God and no law was going to stop him from doing that. Why do you think Daniel had such courage? Yes, he fully believed that God was the only one he should bow down to. Daniel also believed that God would protect him.

When the men who wanted to trap Daniel saw him praying as usual, they were of course thrilled that their plan had worked. They quickly went to inform the king.

"King Darius," they said, "you signed a law that said,

for thirty days, people could only pray to you. Everyone is obeying your orders except for Daniel. He still prays to his God. Now he will have to be thrown into the lions' den."

The men were very happy that they had trapped Daniel, but the king was very upset. He didn't want Daniel thrown into the lions' den. All that day, he thought very hard on how to save Daniel. Unfortunately, King Darius had to follow the law that he had signed. That night, the king gave the order to put Daniel into the lions' den. Before Daniel was put into the den, the king said to Daniel, "Your God will rescue you!" Then the king's servants rolled a heavy stone over the opening so that Daniel could not escape. King Darius returned to his palace. That night, Darius couldn't eat or sleep because he was very worried about Daniel. He wanted the morning to come quickly so that he could find out how Daniel was.

### Daniel Is Delivered

At the crack of dawn, King Darius hurried to the lions' den. He told his servants to remove the stone.

Then the king shouted into the pit in a loud voice, "Daniel, Daniel! Are you still alive? Was your God able to

save you from the lions?" The king waited and waited, hoping for an answer. Suddenly from inside the pit, he heard a voice speaking to him.

"Yes, King Darius," replied Daniel, "God sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths. God knew that I had not done anything wrong and He kept me safe."

The king was overjoyed to know that Daniel was safe! "Bring Daniel out at once!" he ordered.

When they brought Daniel out of the den, they found that there were no bite marks or scratches found on his body because Daniel had trusted in his God.

The king then commanded the men who had plotted against Daniel to be thrown into the lions' den. Before they even hit the bottom of the den, the lions attacked them and broke all their bones!

After Darius saw the great power of God, he wrote a new law for everyone to follow. It said that everyone had to honor Daniel's God because He was the living God, the one who saved Daniel from the lions. After that, Daniel continued to work for the king and was greatly blessed by God.

## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

### True or False/Questions to Think About

1. **King Darius trusted Daniel because he was honest and faithful.** True.
2. **Daniel prayed to God two times a day.** False; he prayed three times a day.
3. **The men who plotted against Daniel were jealous of him.** True.
4. **King Darius wrote a new law that said that everyone had to honor and worship Daniel's God, the living God.** True.
5. **How did the officials try to cause trouble for Daniel?** They made the king sign a law that would cause Daniel to be thrown into the lions' den.
6. **How did God protect Daniel?** God sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths.
7. **God saved Daniel because he did not do anything wrong. What did he do that was right?** He didn't listen to what the people around him told him to do since it was against God's law.
8. **How did Daniel show that he still had faith in God even after hearing the law?** He continued to pray to God, not caring that he would be thrown into the lions' den for doing so.

## MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.  
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

**"He knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God."  
(Daniel 6:10b)**

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## SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

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### 1. To realize the importance of developing a habit of daily prayer.

Daniel had a disciplined prayer life—he prayed three times a day as he always had. Students, how many times a day do you pray? Do you have a disciplined prayer life? Daniel made no attempt to hide his daily prayer routine from his enemies—those in the government—even though he knew that this would be disobeying the new law. He continued to pray because he believed that only God could provide what he really needed. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 tells us to “pray without ceasing.” Ephesians 6:18 also tells us to “pray always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.” Why is praying so important for us? Prayer is the only way we can communicate with God, our heavenly Father. What do you think will happen to your relationship with your parents if you don’t ever talk to them? [Let students answer.] You would become a stranger to your parents, or vice versa. You would feel very distant from them. In the same way, we want to maintain a close relationship with God. We want to talk to God on a daily basis. Some people only pray to God when they need help. But if we only talk to God when we need help, our relationship with Him will never be close. In fact, God doesn’t just want us to pray to Him when we need help. He wants us to talk to Him daily. We can repent and tell God what we may have done wrong, ask for forgiveness, give thanks, seek help, or just talk—God wants to hear it all! If we pray every day, God will become like a close friend—a friend who genuinely cares about us and listens to everything we have to say. Don’t you want a friend like this?

In the Bible, Jesus also set us a very good example of persistent prayer. Even though He had so many followers, He often went up to the mountain to pray alone. He kept a close father-and-son relationship with God. Many people persecuted Him since the start of His ministry, but He was strengthened each day through prayer—His every day talk with God. Jesus taught His disciples to always “pray and not lose heart.” (Lk 18:1) He also told them, “Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation” (Mt 26:41). After Jesus ascended to heaven, His disciples remembered what He told them, so they prayed every so often for strength and wisdom from God. Today, we are also the disciples of God. We need to have a habit of daily prayer so that we can hear God’s voice and understand how His wisdom and knowledge apply to our daily lives. Students, do you believe that prayer is our lifeline to God? Do you want to be able to reach God quickly every time you pray? If you do, delay no more. Develop a habit of daily prayer starting from today!

### 2. To understand that God answers the prayers of the righteous.

#### I. Pray Without Ceasing

Why do you think God heard Daniel's prayers? Daniel was a righteous man. Let's turn to Proverbs 15:29. Here it says that, “The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.”

From the verse, we can see that God hears the prayers of the righteous; the righteous are those who do what is right in the eyes of God. God does not hear the prayers of the wicked. King Darius and all those around him could see that Daniel was an honest, faithful, and trustworthy person. Even though the other officials tried to find fault in Daniel, they could not.

In our daily lives, if we are kind to our friends, and obey our parents and teachers, God will listen to us when we cry out to Him. But if we constantly fight with our siblings, and lie to our parents and disobey them, do you think that God would want to listen to our prayers? No, God would not want to hear our prayers.

Why did Daniel have such good qualities? Yes, Daniel was a man of prayer. He had a habit of praying to God three times a day. The more Daniel prayed, the closer he grew to God. That's why we need to follow Daniel's example. We should never stop praying. In order for our faith to be as strong as Daniel's, it is important that we set aside a time to pray each day. Daniel was an important and busy official, but he developed the good habit of praying three times a day. When do you think the best time to pray is? [Have students respond.] We can pray to God at any time of the day, no matter where we are. However, we should have the habit of praying in the morning and in the evening. The more we pray, the closer we are to God. When we meet with problems or difficulties, God will answer us when we call to Him. Let me share a testimony with you!

My mom is a very prayerful woman. Growing up, I remember coming home from school or waking up in the middle of the night and hearing my mom praying in her room. Sometimes, my siblings and I would be curious to know why she would pray at random times during the day. Each time, she was praying for a different reason—sometimes for a church member, other times for our family, and even more times for reasons she wouldn't say! I always thought to myself, "Why can't Mom just leave everything she has to say to God for her prayer before bed? She has so many things to pray about. She prays 4, 5, 6, sometimes even 10 times a day! Wouldn't it be easier for her to just pray once a day? Maybe she's afraid that she will forget by the end of the day?" One time, my mom was praying again in the middle of the day. She prayed for so many hours that it passed dinnertime and we were all starving! But we didn't bother her. My dad cooked us some food and we went to bed. We didn't know how long exactly Mom prayed for, but my dad told my siblings and me that Mom was still praying when he went to bed after midnight. The next day, we asked Mom what she was praying about. She told us that a church member was in labor in the hospital and there were many complications during the process. So, my mom was praying for that member the whole time she was in labor. She only stopped when she found out that the member and her baby were both safe. That day, I learned a lesson—there isn't a fixed time to pray every day. We can pray at any time of the day and God will be listening. We need to have a habit of praying constantly so that when we face situations like that member in labor, we can easily reach God with our prayers instantly. Praise and thank God, I learned a very edifying lesson from my mom.

## II. My Finger Prayer

Let's learn the finger prayer together. We all have five fingers on each of our hands. Each finger reminds us of what we should pray for.

1. "My **thumb** lets me show that something is the best."  
Our thumb reminds us that God is the greatest. We should begin our prayer by praising and thanking God. We should thank Him for dying and saving us, and for all the good things He has given us.
2. "My **index finger** points out things that I don't always see."  
Our index finger refers to the people who instruct, help, and guide us. It reminds us to pray for our parents, grandparents, and family members who care for, love, and lead us.
3. "My **middle finger** stands taller than the rest of my fingers."  
This finger reminds us to pray for the church, the pastors, and our Religious Education teachers who work hard to teach us about God.
4. "My **fourth finger** is weak and cannot stand alone well."  
This finger reminds us to pray for those who are weak, those who don't come to church, or those who may not like to pray or read the Bible. We should pray for those who are sick, too.
5. "My **pinkie finger** is the smallest finger."  
This finger reminds us that we should pray for ourselves. We should pray about things that we have done wrong and ask God to forgive us. We can ask God to help us be more like Jesus and to fill us with the Holy Spirit. We can also tell God about our needs.

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## ACTIVITIES

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1

**Praying Hands Collage****Objective:** To enable students to pray using the Finger Prayer.**Materials**

- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers/crayons
- Poster paper

**Instructions**

1. Have the students trace one of their hands on the construction paper and then cut it out. On each finger, ask students to write something/someone that they can pray for. Encourage them to be specific. Have them decorate the hand.
2. At the end of the lesson, gather all of the prayer hands and stick them onto a large poster-sized paper so that the students can see everyone's prayer requests and be reminded to pray for others.

2

**Paper Bag Puppets** *(optional)***Objective:** To help the students review the story of Daniel using puppets.**Materials**

- Paper bags (11" x 5")
- Yarn (preferably yellow, orange, and brown)
- Glue
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Markers

**Instructions**

Copy and cut out the puppet patterns. Give each student one set of patterns and two paper bags.

For the lion

1. Use markers to color in the ears, nose, eyes, and mouth of the lion.
2. Cut the pattern at the perforated line. Glue the top part of the pattern onto the folded bottom of the paper bag. Glue the mouth part of the pattern on the bag, just below the face.
3. Glue pieces of colored yarn around the lion's face to create a mane.

For Daniel

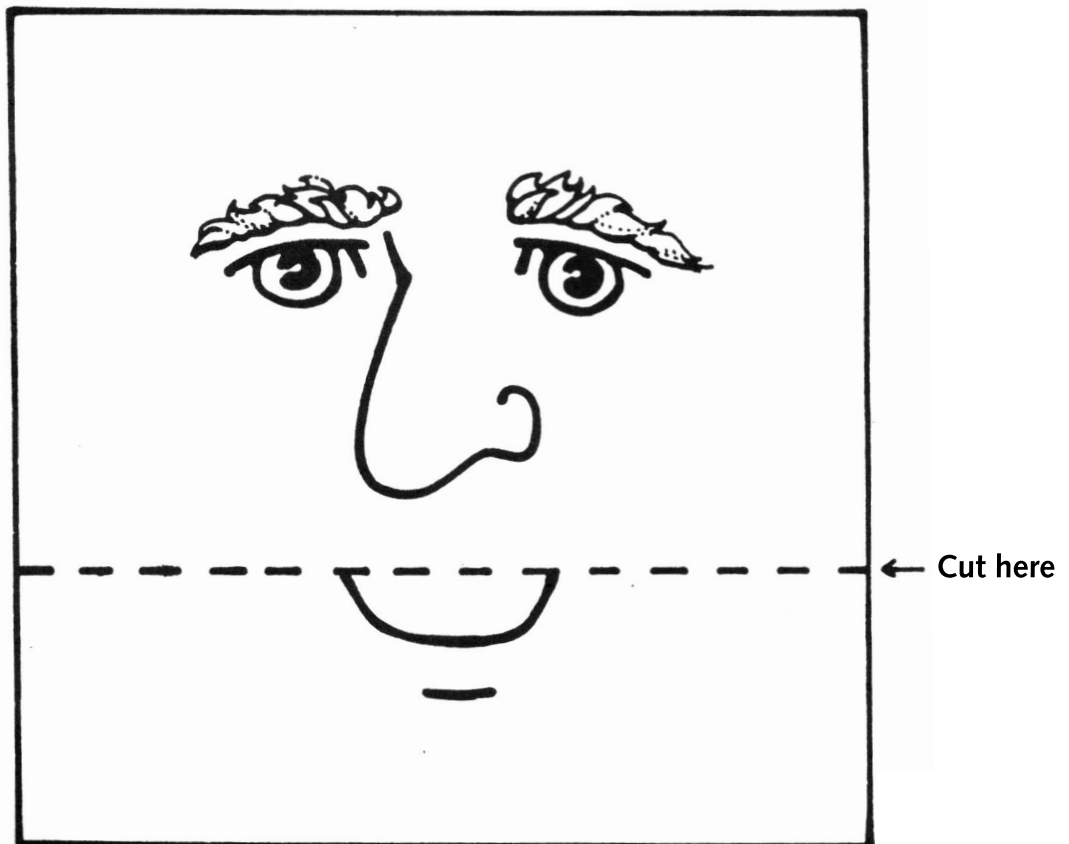
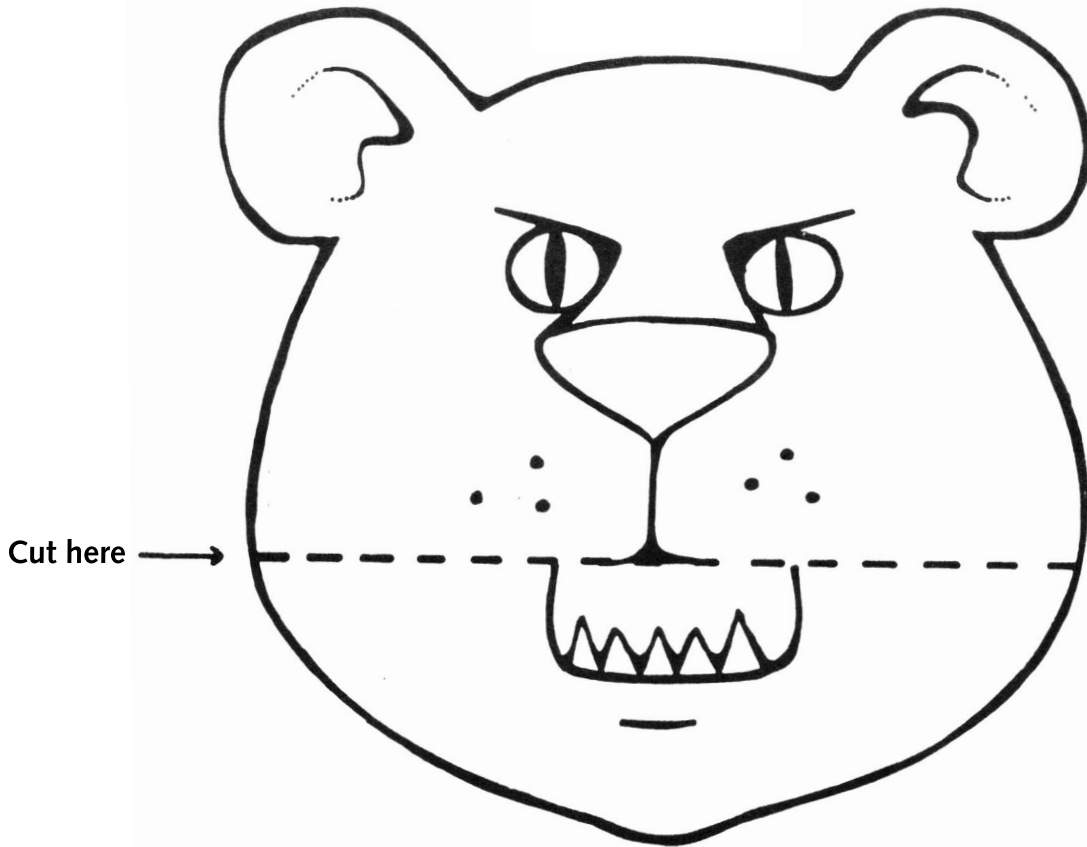
1. Use markers to color in the ears, nose, eyes, and mouth of Daniel.
2. Cut the pattern at the perforated line. Glue the top part of Daniel's face onto the folded bottom of the paper bag. Glue the mouth part of the pattern on the bag, just below the face.
3. Glue pieces of colored yarn around Daniel's face for his hair, mustache, and beard.
4. Now use these puppets to act out the story of Daniel. You may wish to get together with some friends to act it out.

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## HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

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1. C
2. B
3. C
4. True
5. True
6. False; God only hears the prayers of the righteous.
7. Answers may vary.
8. Answers may vary.
9. "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith." (1 John 5:4)



E1 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 12—Daniel in the Lions' Den

# Homework Assignment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Truth:** God will deliver all those who believe in Him.

**Lesson Objectives:** 1. To realize the importance of developing a habit of daily prayer.  
 2. To understand that God answers the prayers of the righteous.

**Bible Reading:** Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

**Prayer:** Please put a check mark in the space provided on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

## Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Daniel 6:10b)

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## What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



# Homework Assignment

*Understanding What You Have Learned*

## Multiple Choice

- \_\_\_\_ : When Daniel learned of the law, \_\_\_\_\_.
  - He went to talk to the king about changing the law.
  - He prayed secretly in the closet.
  - He went to his room, opened the window, and prayed as he had done before.
- \_\_\_\_ : When Daniel was thrown into the lions' den, he was unharmed because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - The lions had already eaten a big meal and were not hungry.
  - God sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths.
  - He was able to kill the lions.
- \_\_\_\_ : When the men who had plotted against Daniel were thrown into the lions' den, \_\_\_\_\_.
  - God also sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they were unharmed.
  - King Darius changed his mind and set them free.
  - Before they even hit the bottom of the den, the lions had broken all of their bones.

## True or False

- God heard the prayer of Daniel because he was an honest, faithful and righteous man. \_\_\_\_\_
- The men who plotted against Daniel were jealous of him. \_\_\_\_\_
- God hears the prayers of the righteous and the wicked. \_\_\_\_\_

## Short Answer

- What do you admire most about Daniel?

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- Imagine that you are Daniel. You are about to be thrown into the lions' den. What would your prayer be? Write out your prayer.

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- Write out the Bible verse from 1 John 5:4.

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