

Daniel in the Lions' Den

Teacher's Notes

The story of Daniel in the lions' den pictures the final battle between loving ourselves or being led by our conscience. Daniel trusted in the Lord and had the courage to obey him, even when he knew that he would be put into a den of lions. The Lord sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths, and Daniel was brought out of the den and made second ruler in the kingdom.

Daniel 6 Lesson Plan		Materials Needed	New Church Concept Lions
1. Welcome Activity (2-3 minutes)	Pretend Angels and Lions pp. 1-2		A lion symbolizes truth in its power, as can be seen from the power of the lion, which surpasses that of every other animal on the earth. See <i>Apocalypse Revealed</i> 241
2. Focus on the Word (5-7 minutes)	Read Daniel 6 and discuss p. 2	shortened version included on p. 3	In the opposite sense, a lion means infernal falsity as to the power of destroying Divine truth, and thus the Word. By a lion is also meant the desire to destroy the truths of the Word. See <i>Apocalypse Explained</i> 782
3. Learn by Doing Choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes)	Shut the Lion's Mouths pp. 4-6	brad (split pin), scissors, glue, crayons or markers	
	Act Out Daniel in the Lion's Den pp. 7-8	space to act the story <i>optional:</i> simple costumes; toy lions; chairs, blankets, or cushions to outline different acting areas	
	Picture to Color p. 9	crayons or markers	
4. Recitation & Closing (2-3 minutes)	Recitation and Closing p. 10	Parent Note p. 11	

Welcome Activity: Pretend Angels and Lions

Seat children in a circle. Ask questions such as,

- Have you ever seen a lion—perhaps in a zoo?
- How strong are lions? How big are lions?
- How can you tell the difference between a daddy and mommy lion?
- Why are lions dangerous?
- What do lions do?

Let's pretend to be lions in a den. Show children an area where they are to stay. Lions walk on four feet, so we will get down on our hands and knees. Let's roar like lions and show our big fierce teeth.

continued on next page

Pretend Angels and Lions continued

Once children are being lions, stand up and say, "Now I'm going to be an angel. When I touch each lion, you must shut your mouth and sit down." Touch each child until all are quietly seated. Our story today is about a time when Daniel was in a den of lions, and an angel protected him by shutting the lions' mouths so they couldn't hurt him.

Focus on the Word

Read: Daniel 6. A shortened version is included on page 3. For young children you may wish to summarize some of the story and read aloud the sentences printed in **bold**.

1. **Today's story takes place in Babylon, but there is a new king. His name is Darius** (pronounced Da-rious, or Dare-iuss). **Let's say his name together:** Darius.
2. **Daniel was King Darius's faithful servant and one of the top three leaders in Babylon. He was such a good leader that King Darius wanted to put him in charge of the whole kingdom. What did the other leaders think of that?** They did not like it and wanted to stop it.
3. **The other leaders were jealous of Daniel. What does "jealousy" mean?** Jealousy is wanting something that another person has, e.g. a toy, or a turn. **People who are jealous may even want to hurt the other person.**
4. **Some jealous leaders tricked King Darius into making a rule that everyone must worship him or be thrown into a den of lions. What did Daniel do?** Daniel went to his room and prayed to the Lord, just as he had every day. **He was a brave hero and remained faithful to the Lord.**
5. **Did King Darius want Daniel to be thrown in the lions' den?** No! King Darius tried hard to stop Daniel from being put into the lions' den but the law could not be changed and so he had to do what it said.
6. **Darius loved Daniel and was very worried about him. That night he couldn't stop thinking about Daniel in the lions' den. King Darius was so worried that he couldn't sleep. What did he do when the morning came?** He ran to the den and called out to Daniel.
7. **How did the Lord protect Daniel?** He sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths so Daniel wasn't hurt at all.
8. **The men who were jealous and wanted to hurt Daniel got the punishment they intended for Daniel. You see, hurting others really hurts us more than it hurts them.**
9. **King Darius was so impressed by Daniel's God that he made a rule that everyone should worship Him.**
10. **The Lord sends angels to protect us, just as He protected Daniel. In fact, angels are with us all the time, keeping us safe from danger. And like Daniel, we can be heroes, trusting in Him and obeying His Word.**

Daniel in the Lions' Den

¹It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps [provincial governor in ancient Persia] to rule the kingdom,²with 3 governors over them, one of whom was Daniel. ³Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the governors by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.⁴ At this, the administrators tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel but they were unable to. Finally they said, “We will never find any basis for charges against Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.”

⁶So the governors said to the king: “May King Darius live forever! The advisers have agreed that the king should issue an edict that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, shall be thrown into the lions’ den. Now, O king, put the decree in writing so it cannot be altered.” So Darius put it in writing.

¹⁰Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home. And in his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem, he knelt down three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before God. Then the administrators found Daniel praying.¹² So they went to the king and said: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lions’ den?”

The king answered, “The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”¹³ Then they said to the king, “Daniel, one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.”¹⁴ When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.

¹⁵Then the men went to King Darius and said to him, “Remember, Your Majesty, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed.”

¹⁶So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!”

¹⁷A stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring, so that Daniel’s situation might not be changed.¹⁸ Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating or entertainment. And he could not sleep.

¹⁹At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions’ den.²⁰ When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?”

²¹Daniel answered, “O king live forever!²² My God sent His angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in His sight. Nor have I done any wrong before you, O king.”

²³The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.²⁴ At the king’s command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought and thrown into the lions’ den. And the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

²⁵Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language in all the earth: “May you prosper greatly!²⁶ I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel.”²⁸ So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

(Daniel 6:1-28 adapted from the NIV)

Shut the Lion's Mouth

Materials Needed

copies of *Shut the Lion's Mouth* p. 5 and *Lion Mouth and Angel Arm* p. 6, brads (split pins), scissors, glue, crayons or markers

Prepare in Advance

Print pages. Each child will need a copy of p. 5 and one of the mouths and arms from p. 6. Cut out the lion's mouth circles and fold them in half. Cut out the rectangle around the angel arms. Fold it in half along the dotted gray line and cut out around the arms.

When Daniel was thrown into the lions' den an angel protected him by shutting the lions' mouths. Children will create a moving picture showing the angel shutting a lion's mouth.

1. Our story today is about an angel who protected Daniel.

What kind of clothes might an angel wear? When Mr. Swedenborg visited heaven, he met many angels. He told us about their homes and about the lovely clothes they wear. Angel clothes have many colors—just as our clothes do here. If you could draw an angel, what color might you use for the angel's clothes?



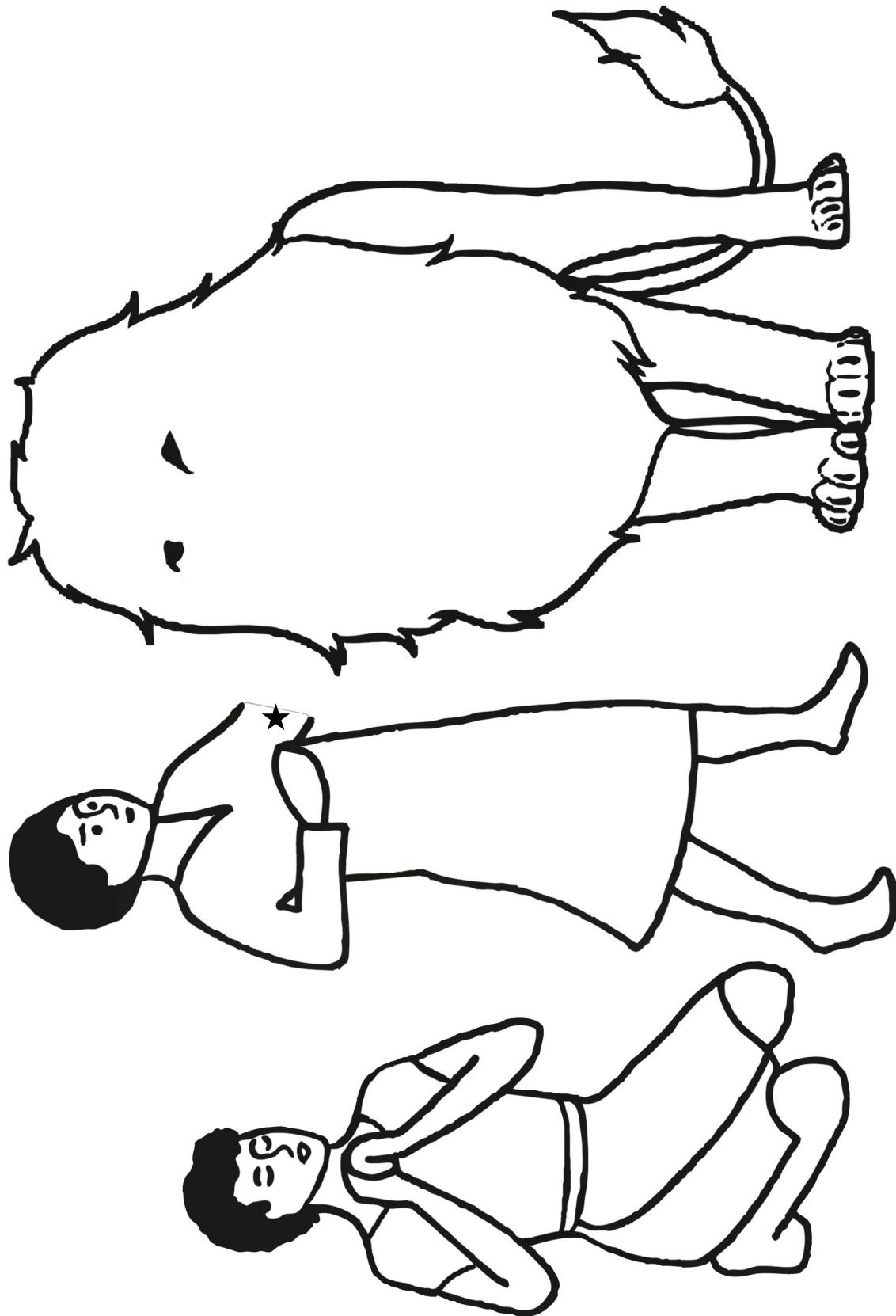
New Church Concept Protection

Nothing at all can harm people whom the Lord is protecting, not even if all of hell were surrounding them. *Arcana Coelestia* 968

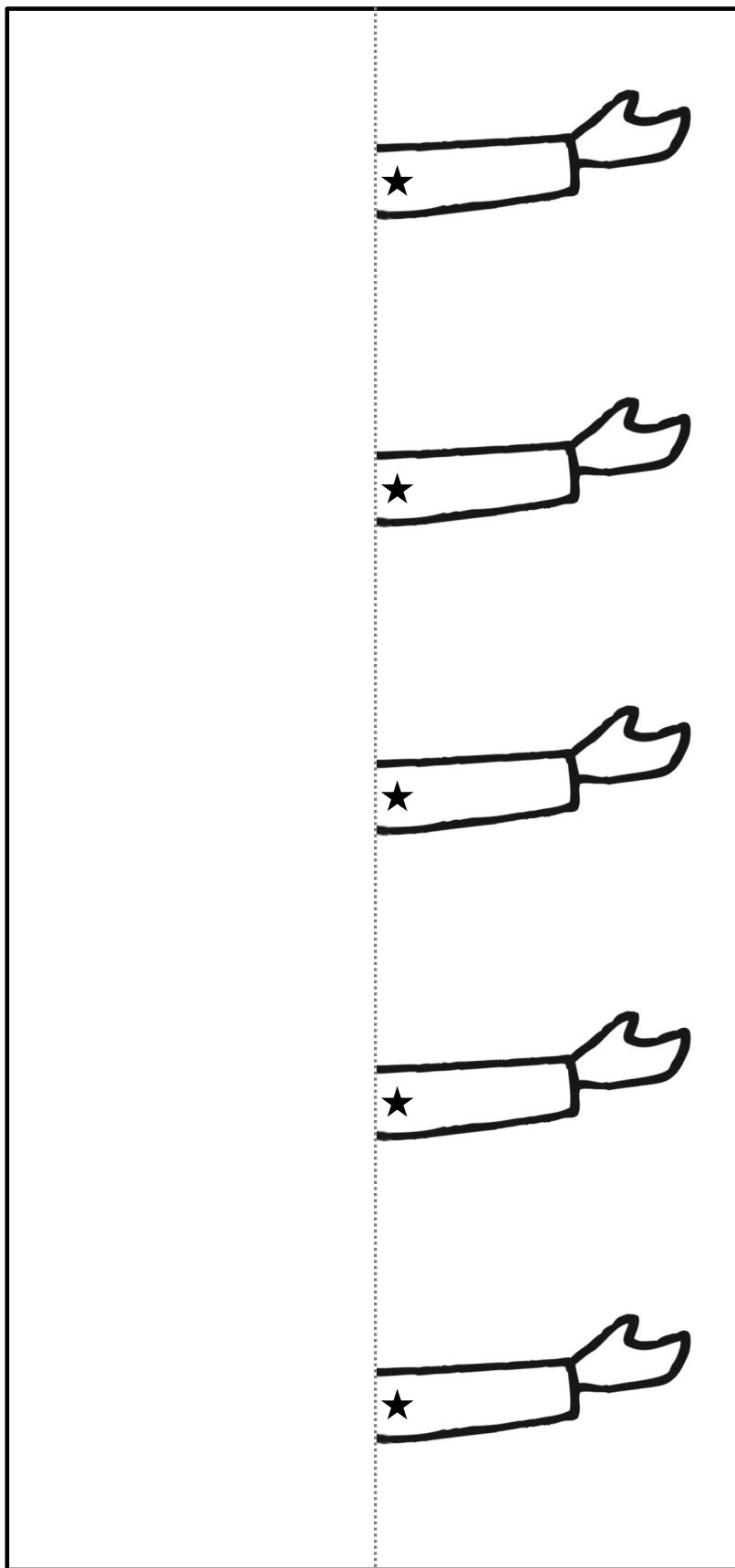
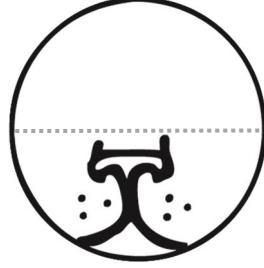
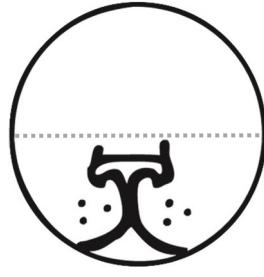
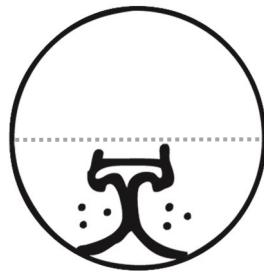
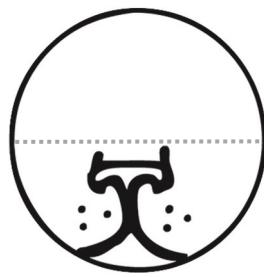
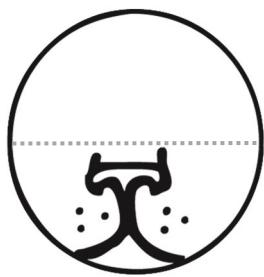
Peace holds within itself trust in the Lord, that He governs all things and provides all things, and that He leads toward a good end. When a person believes these things about Him he is at peace, since he fears nothing and no anxiety about things to come disturbs him. How far a person attains this state depends on how far he attains love to the Lord. *Arcana Coelestia* 8455.1,2

2. Hand out copies of *Shut the Lion's Mouth* (p. 5). Invite the children to color the picture. Daniel is praying to the Lord. The angel is next to the lion. The angel's arm is missing because we are going to make a special moving arm for the angel in a moment. The lion doesn't have a mouth because we will make a special mouth that can move.
3. Give each child one of the mouths from 6. Color the lion's face the same color as the lion. Open the circle up and draw some big sharp teeth inside the lion's mouth. Now glue the mouth to the lion's face so it can open or shut (see picture, above).
4. Give each child an angel arm from p. 6. Glue the two sides of the arms together to strengthen them. Color the arm so that it matches the rest the angel's clothes.
5. Children may need help fastening the arm to the picture. Poke the brad (split pin) through the top of the angel's arm. Line the brad up with the star on the angel and poke through to the back. Open the brad to secure in place.
6. Once the project is complete encourage children to use the picture to retell the story, showing how the angel shut the lion's mouth to protect Daniel.

Shut the Lion's Mouth



Lion Mouth and Angel Arm



Act Out Daniel in the Lions' Den



The story of Daniel's protection in the lions' den is one of the most dramatic stories in the Word. Act out the story using simple costumes and props.

1. We are going to act out the story of Daniel in the lions' den.
2. Decide who will play the parts of Daniel, King Darius, the jealous leaders, the angel and the lions. If more than one child wants a role, consider switching roles part way through the play, or doing the play twice with different players.
3. Read the script (p. 8) aloud and direct the children as their turns come up. Children who are not doing anything can quietly sit and watch.

Materials Needed

Daniel Script p. 8, space for acting including an area for a throne "room", Daniel's "room" and a lions' den
optional: simple costumes for Daniel (T-shirt, scarf), king Darius (crown), jealous leaders (T-shirts, scarf), angel (white shirt), etc.; toy lions for children playing the lions to hold; chairs, blankets or cushions to outline the different spaces

Prepare in Advance

Set up the room for the play.
Optional: Outline the different spaces and arrange toy lions in the lions' den. Make a costume pile for each part in the play.

New Church Concept Window

A person's understanding part, that is, his internal sight is called a "window". *Arcana Coelestia* 655

New Church Concept Prayer

Prayer is speech with God, and some internal view at the same time of the matters of the prayer, to which there answers something like an influx into the perception or thought of the mind, so that there is a certain opening of the person's interiors toward God. If prayer springs from love and faith, and if they are wholly celestial and spiritual things about which and for which a person prays, something like a revelation is present within prayer which manifests itself in the affection of the person praying in the form of hope, comfort, or some inward joy. See *Arcana Coelestia* 2535

New Church Concept Lions

"The teeth of lions" stand for falsities destructive of truths, "lions" being falsities arising from evil in their power. *Arcana Coelestia* 9052.3

Daniel Script

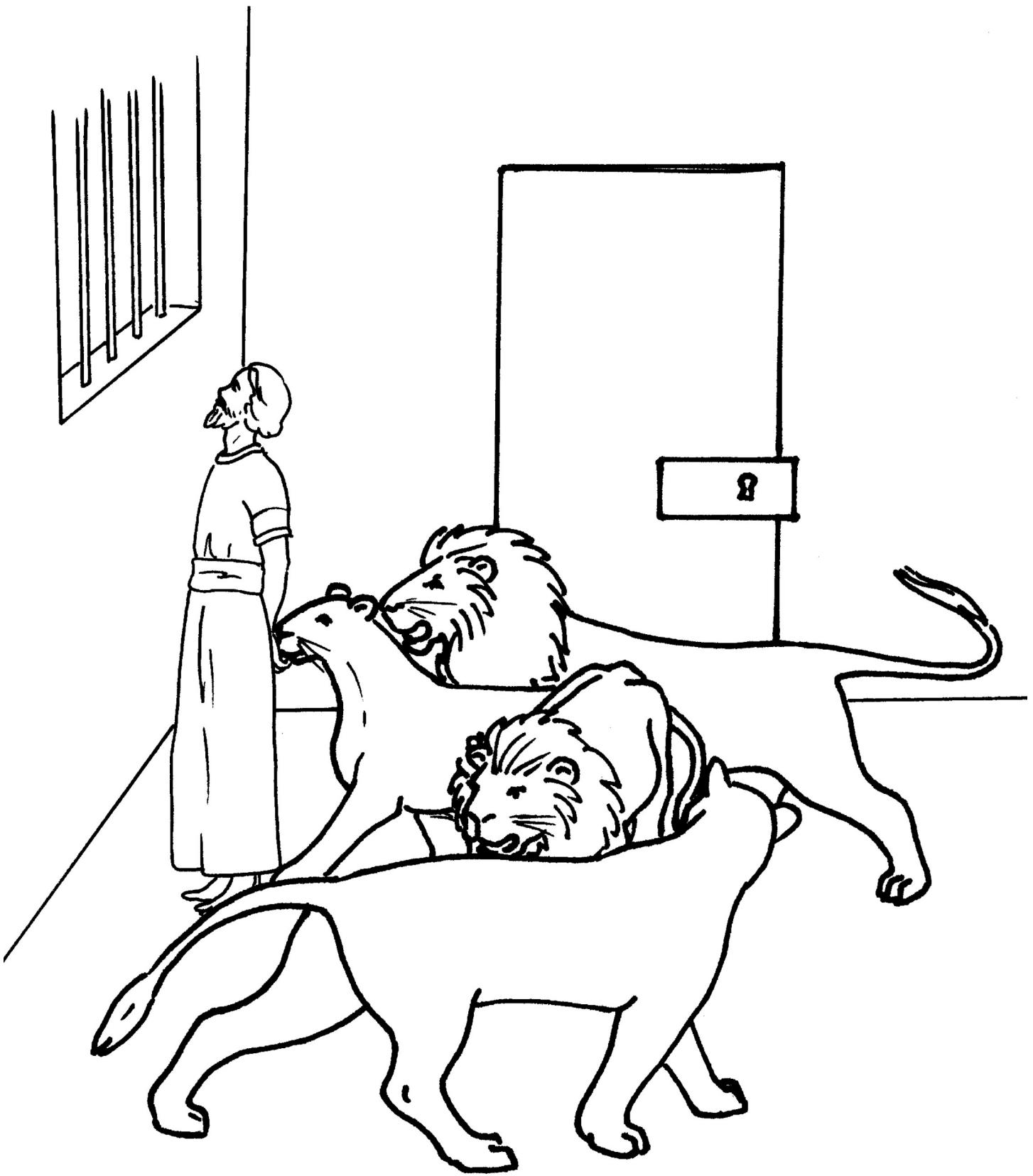
Parts: Daniel, King Darius, Jealous Leaders, Lions, Angel

Optional Costumes: T-shirts, crown (king), scarves or shawls

Optional Set-Up: Use chairs, blankets or cushions to outline a throne room, Daniel's room, and a den for lions.

Set the players up to start the play. The King is sitting on his throne. The Jealous Leaders are persuading him to pass a law making people worship the King. Daniel is standing nearby. The Angel is offstage.

Throne Room King Darius, Jealous Leaders, Daniel <i>Jealous Leaders stand before the throne talking to Darius.</i>	The Jealous Leaders said, "O King, live forever! We want you to make a royal decree that whoever prays to anyone but you for the next thirty days will be thrown in a den of lions. Please make a law saying this because the law cannot be changed." King Darius wrote the law.
Daniel's Room Daniel, Jealous Leaders <i>Daniel opens the window, kneels down and prays. The Jealous Leaders look into the room to watch him.</i>	Daniel knew about the law. He went to his room to pray. He opened the window toward Jerusalem, knelt down and prayed. The Jealous Leaders looked into Daniel's room and saw him praying.
Throne Room King Darius, Jealous Leaders <i>Jealous Leaders go back to talk to the King.</i>	The Jealous Leaders went to the King and said, "Didn't you make a law that whoever worships anyone except you will be thrown in a den of lions?" The King said, "This is true." So they said, "Daniel is not obeying the law. He prays to his God three times a day." The King was very sad with the news. He was worried about Daniel and wanted to save him. The Jealous leaders said, "Remember, the law cannot be changed."
Lions' Den Daniel, King Darius, Jealous Leaders, Lions, Angel <i>Daniel is put in the den.</i>	So the King gave the order and Daniel was put in the lions' den. But the King said, "Your God who you serve will deliver you." So they brought a stone and sealed the den. The King and the Jealous Leaders sealed the stone.
Lions' Den Daniel, King Darius, Lions, Angel <i>Angel shuts the Lions' mouths.</i> <i>King Darius goes to the den and takes Daniel out.</i>	The King did not sleep that night. When morning came he ran to the lions' den and shouted, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God been able to deliver you from the lions?" Daniel called back, "O King, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths so they have not hurt me because I have done nothing wrong."
Throne Room King Darius, Jealous Leaders, Daniel <i>King Darius sends the Jealous Leaders away.</i>	So the King called for the Jealous Leaders and put them into the lions' den instead. Then the King decreed that everyone should worship Daniel's God because He delivers and rescues people; He works signs and wonders and delivered Daniel from the lions' den.



Recitation and Closing

Each lesson in the Daniel series includes a recitation. The recitations are taken from prayers in the book of Daniel. We have been learning one sentence with each lesson, and building on each sentence until all six sentences can be recited together.

Introduce the 6th sentence of *Prayers in Daniel*, the recitation for this lesson: “I thank You and praise You, O God.” Daniel and King Darius were both grateful that the Lord delivered Daniel from the lions.

Try saying the sentence aloud and inviting the children to repeat it after you. If needed, break the sentence into phrases, e.g. “I thank you”, “and praise you”, “O God”. Invite children to repeat just one phrase at a time. End by joining the phrases together and saying the entire sentence.

Review sentences 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 and then recite all the sentences.

Prayers in Daniel

1. Blessed be the name of God forever and ever.
2. He reveals deep and secret things.
3. How great are His signs!
4. He gives wisdom to the wise.
5. He removes kings and raises up kings.
- 6. I thank You and praise You, O God.**

Daniel 2:20-23; 4:3 adapted

Closing

King Darius was so impressed by Daniel’s God that he made a rule that everyone should worship Him. This is a good rule for us too! Just as the Lord sent an angel to protect Daniel, He sends angels to protect us too. They are with us all the time, keeping us safe from danger. Like Daniel, we can trust in the Lord and follow His commandments.

Give *Parent Notes* (p. 11) to children as they leave.

Daniel in the Lions' Den

Dear Parents,

This is the last lessons in our series about Daniel—a hero who loved the Lord no matter what happened to him.

Today we learned about Darius, a new ruler in Babylon who was tricked into making a bad rule by some jealous men. Ask your child about the rule, the danger that Daniel was put into, and the amazing miracle the Lord did to save him from danger.

Today we learned sentence 6 of the *Prayers in Daniel* recitation. Please help your child say the whole recitation.

Thank you.

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