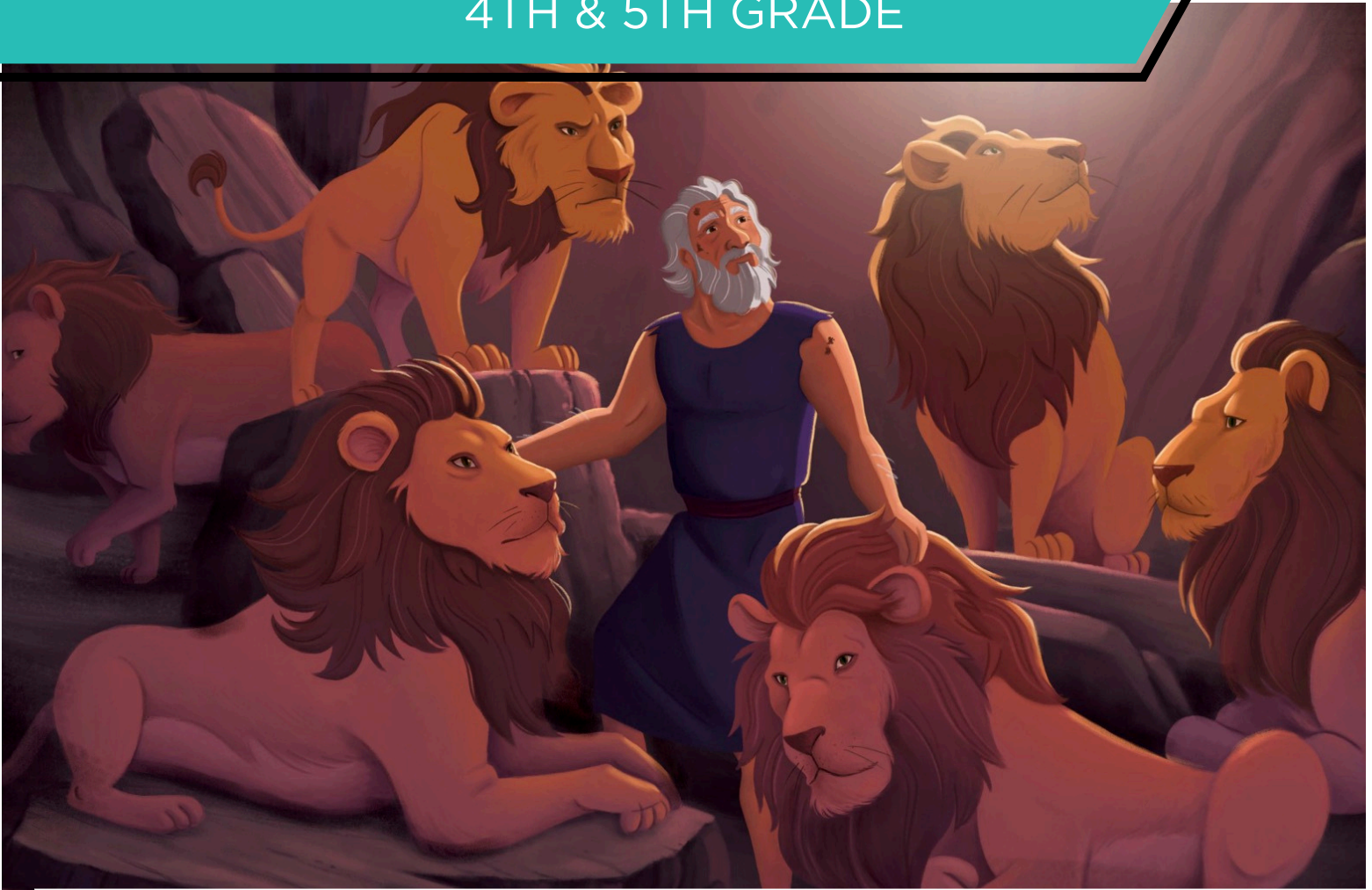


# PRETEEN MINISTRY

4TH & 5TH GRADE



JANUARY 18, 2026

## DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

DANIEL 6

## CHRIST CONNECTION

**Daniel continued to trust God**, even though it meant he might be thrown into the lions' den. **Jesus was faithful to follow God's plan** even though it meant He would die on the cross for sinners.

# LEADER DEVO

As Daniel grew into an older man, God continued to show him favor as Daniel served under a new king—King Darius. Yet, Daniel’s place in the government of Babylon was a subject of jealousy. In an attempt to trap Daniel, royal officials petitioned Darius to enact a law that forbade anyone from praying to any god other than the king. Just as the officials suspected, Daniel continued praying to the one true God.

The Bible points out that Daniel prayed as an act of defiance to the new law. When Daniel was faced with the possibility of death if he prayed, he made a courageous decision. Daniel 6:10 says, “When Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went into his house. The windows in its upstairs room opened toward Jerusalem, and three times a day he got down on his knees, prayed, and gave thanks to his God, just as he had done before.” Instead of hiding his prayers, Daniel boldly walked in obedience, knowing his life would be put in danger.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus faced a similar decision with even greater consequences. Following the Last Supper, Jesus spent time with the Father in prayer. Jesus wrestled with His coming death as He asked the Father to take the cup from Him if possible. Luke describes the agony that Jesus went through in this decision by telling us that Jesus’ sweat fell like blood due to the intensity of His time with God. Jesus surrendered to the will of the Father even though it led to death. God honored the obedience of both men. He delivered Daniel from the lions’ den, and He delivered Jesus—the only person to always obey God perfectly—from the grave in victory over death.

One final detail of this story should challenge us in our walk with God: Darius was rooting for Daniel. Right before Daniel was thrown into the lions’ den, the king hoped out loud that Daniel’s God would deliver him from death. Eventually, after Daniel’s deliverance, the king declared that all people must respect Daniel’s God. This week, encourage the kids in your class to live a life that honors God, even when others around them are making different choices. May we model lives that are so honorable to God that even people who disagree with us might want us to be right about God.

# ARRIVAL

When kids arrive, they can play in the game room, Large Group room, or the balcony area. They can go between the areas as they want until Large Group starts. Leaders should be spread out in these areas to watch kids. Use this time to interact with kids and build relationships with them. Ask them about their week, big events coming up, or follow up on a prayer request from the week before.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

### THIS MONTH'S MEMORY VERSE

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

*1 Corinthians 10:31*



NEXT BIBLE BUCKS DAY

**JAN 25**

There are many techniques and tools to help kids (and you!) memorize Scripture.

### THIS MONTH'S TOOL: POST-IT NOTES

Write the verse out on a Post-it note and put that note somewhere you'll see often, such as a bathroom mirror, the fridge door, etc. Every time you see the note, read the verse aloud 2-3 times.

# LESSON

King Nebuchadnezzar, who brought Daniel and his friends from Judah to Babylon, had died. The new king, King Darius, appointed Daniel as one of three main leaders over the whole kingdom. King Darius was especially impressed with Daniel and planned to put him in charge of the whole kingdom!

The other leaders were jealous of Daniel. They wanted to find something Daniel was doing wrong so they could tell King Darius. But Daniel was an honorable man. He lived according to God's laws and was trustworthy. The leaders said, "We will never find any charge against Daniel unless we discover something that goes against his God."

They went to King Darius and convinced him to make a new law that would last 30 days. The law said that if anyone prayed to any god or man except the king, they would be thrown into the lions' den. King Darius signed the new law so it was permanent and couldn't be changed.

When Daniel learned of this new law, he went upstairs to his house. He went to his window that looked toward Jerusalem, got down on his knees, and prayed and gave thanks to God, just as he had done three times a day, every day. The other leaders went as a group and found Daniel praying to God, so they approached King Darius and told him that Daniel had broken the law.

When King Darius heard this, he was very displeased. He was sorry he had made the law, but he could not undo it or take it back! So, the king gave the order, and the leaders brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. King Darius said, "May your God, whom you serve always, save you!" The lions' den was sealed with a large stone.

King Darius was worried about Daniel all night long. As soon as the sun came up, Darius hurried to the lions' den. He cried out, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Has your God been able to rescue you from the lions?"

# LESSON

Daniel replied, “May the king live forever. My God sent his angel and shut the mouths of the lions. They haven’t harmed me for I was found innocent before God.”

The king was overjoyed. When Daniel was brought up from the lions’ den, all could see that he was completely unharmed. King Darius then issued a new decree: “Everyone in my kingdom must tremble and fear the God of Daniel. He is the living God! He rescues and delivers!”

## CHRIST CONNECTION

**Daniel continued to trust God**, even though it meant he might be thrown into the lions’ den. **Jesus was faithful to follow God’s plan** even though it meant He would die on the cross for sinners.

# SMALL GROUPS

## OUR GOAL

**To create opportunities that invite preteens to discover for themselves what it means to own and live out their faith.**

## DISCUSSION / APPLICATION

- 1) Is obeying God always easy? Why not?
- 2) How did Daniel's obedience bring God glory?
- 3) What can you do to help you remain faithful to obey God even when the pressures around you make it difficult to?

Emphasize the importance of having Christian community around to help and encourage you in these times. Prayer and memorizing God's Word are other ways to help you remain faithful. (Psalm 119:11)

- 4) Why is prayer so important?
- 5) Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. What does it mean to pray without ceasing?
- 6) Do you find it easy to pray or hard? Why?
- 7) How can you begin to pray without ceasing this week?

# PICK UP

After small group, kids can play in the game room, Large Group room, or the balcony area. They can go between the areas as they want until they are picked up. Leaders should be spread out in these areas to watch kids.

Use this time to interact with kids and follow up on any questions or discussions from small group time.

As parents arrive upstairs, direct them to the game room, Large Group room, or balcony to pick their kids up. Make sure to match their security code with their kid's name tag and remove the name tag before they leave!

# CLEAN UP

- Put away any supplies used during small group.
- Turn off TVs and lights in the small group rooms.
- Turn off both air hockey tables and put away extra pucks or paddles.
- Gather any balls or other items left out in the game room and put them away in the correct bins.
- Put away any games, books, or supplies in the balcony area.
- Check for any items left behind by kids and put them in the lost and found.

# THANK YOU FOR SERVING!