

GOD WATCHES OVER DANIEL

Bible Basis: Daniel 6:1–23

Key Verse: [Daniel] went to his room three times a day to pray. He got down on his knees and gave thanks to his God. —Daniel 6:10

Bible Point: Daniel is loyal to God and God protects him. I can be loyal to God.

Resource: *The Story for Children*, Chapter 18: “God Watches Over Daniel”

STEP 1: COME TOGETHER

As children gather, challenge them to a concentration game. Begin by asking them to balance on their left foot and swirl the right foot in a circular motion. After everyone is in rhythm, ask them to move their left arms in an up and down motion—not circular. See if they can concentrate enough to keep arms and legs moving in two distinct motions. Ask:

- Why was that a little bit hard to do (or very hard for some)?
- Tell me about something else you have to concentrate on to do right.

Say, **Our Bible story today is about a man who concentrated hard on one thing—staying loyal to God.**

STEP 2: HEAR THE STORY

Stuff You Need: copies of *The Story for Children*, Bibles, *The Story Elementary Trading Card 18*

Tell the story from *The Story for Children*, Chapter 18. You can also have children find Daniel 6 and mark it in their Bibles. Either you or a child in your class can read the Scripture passages listed throughout the story.

Daniel Stays Loyal

Cut apart the cards on the Bible Story Word Cards Activity Sheets. Be careful to keep the cards in sets as labeled. Pause when indicated during the story and take out the corresponding set of cards. Hold them in your hand or put them on a table, face down. Ask a volunteer to come up and choose a card. Children should not see the words before they choose. Depending on the word chosen, continue the story with the story chunk that uses that word. These chunks appear in boxes below. Use only one story chunk for each set of cards.

God’s people were carried off as prisoners to another country called Babylon. They lived in Babylon for a long time. After many years, another kingdom took over Babylon. Darius was the king of Persia. He appointed 120 rulers over his kingdom, then he put three people in

charge of all the rulers. Daniel was one of the top three officials. It turned out that Daniel was also the best of the top three officials or any of the 120 rulers. He did the best of anyone in the entire kingdom. So the king planned to put Daniel in charge of the whole kingdom of Persia. The other rulers were not happy about this.

Pause to take out cards labeled Set 1. Have a volunteer choose a card. Continue with the story chunk below that corresponds with the word selected.

JEALOUS

The other officials were **jealous** of Daniel. They didn't want him to have the top job. They thought one of them should be in charge of the whole kingdom.

ANGRY

The other officials were **angry** with the king's decision to put Daniel in charge of everything. They thought one of them should get the top job, not Daniel.

FEARFUL

The other officials were **fearful** of what might happen if Daniel was in charge. Maybe they thought he would get rid of them because they didn't do their jobs well.

Read Daniel 6:4–5.

Pause to take out cards labeled Set 2. Have a volunteer choose a card. Continue with the story chunk below that corresponds with the word selected.

CHEAT

The officials hatched a plan to **cheat**. If they couldn't get rid of Daniel the fair way, they would cheat.

TRICK

The officials came up with a plan to **trick** the king into giving them what they wanted.

FOOL

The officials figured out a way to **fool** the king. It would look like getting rid of Daniel was his idea.

All the rulers except Daniel went to talk to the king. They said, "We've agreed you should give an order. For 30 days, don't let anyone pray to anyone except you. If they do, throw them into the lions' den!" The king liked the idea of everyone praying to him, so he went along with the new law. He liked Daniel a lot, but in that moment, he didn't think about Daniel at all.

Daniel paid no attention to the new law. He was in the habit of going to his room three times a day to pray. He did it in front of an open window. He didn't care who saw him. This is what the other officials were counting on. When the king made the new law, Daniel did just what he always did.

Pause to take out cards labeled Set 3. Have a volunteer choose a card. Continue with the story chunk below that corresponds with the word selected.

PRAY

What Daniel did three times a day was **pray**, so that's what he did on this day. He got down on his knees to pray.

KNEEL

Daniel liked to **kneel** when he prayed. So just like always, he got down on his knees to pray.

GIVE THANKS

Give thanks is what Daniel liked to do when he prayed. So he got on his knees to give thanks, just like always.

Some of the royal officials went to where Daniel lived. They saw him praying, just as they expected, and they went running to the king to tattle on him. The law the king had made couldn't be changed. As much as the king liked Daniel, he had to follow the law. So Darius gave the order for Daniel to go into the lions' den. He sealed the opening to the lions' den himself. Then he went back to his palace.

Pause to take out cards labeled Set 4. Have a volunteer choose a card. Continue with the story chunk below that corresponds with the word selected.

SLEEPLESS

The king was **sleepless**. He couldn't sleep a wink all night because he was so worried about Daniel.

RESTLESS

The king was **restless**. All night long, he couldn't eat or sleep because he was so worried about Daniel.

SAD

The king was **sad** about the new law. He worried about Daniel all night long.

Read Daniel 6:19–22.

King Darius had never been happier in his life! He ordered his servants to get Daniel out of the lions' den, and it was all true. He didn't have a scratch on him. Daniel had stayed loyal to God, and God protected him.

After you have told the Bible story, give each child a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 18*. Ask children to look at the picture and tell you about how Daniel was loyal to God. As a class, read the key verse from the back of the card or from the Bible. Ask:

- How did Daniel show he was loyal to God?
- What does this story about Daniel teach us?

Say, **For Daniel, being loyal to God was the most important thing. What a great example for us to follow.**

Collect the cards for now. You'll send them home with the children later.

STEP 3: EXPLORE MORE

Choose from these activity options to help your class explore the lesson further.

OPTION 1: KNEELING DANIEL

Stuff You Need: Kneeling Daniel Activity Sheet, safety scissors, markers

If possible, duplicate the handout on sturdy paper or card stock ahead of time.

Say, **Let's make a reminder that Daniel was loyal to God by praying even when it was dangerous. He got down on his knees and gave thanks to God.** Give an activity sheet to each child and have

children cut on the heavy lines. Caution them not to cut off the hands or feet. Then fold the figure in half so the edge of the head is lined up with the edge of the toes and with the writing on the inside of the fold. Fold the head back in the opposite direction. Then fold the toes back in the opposite direction, creating knees. Children can use markers to give Daniel a face and decorate his clothing. Read the verse on the figure together. Ask them to hold the figures in a standing position. Ask a series of questions that cause the children to make the figures kneel in response.

- **What did Daniel do three times a day?**
- **What did Daniel do when he gave thanks to God?**
- **What did the other officials catch Daniel doing?**
- **Why did the king have to put Daniel in the lions' den?**

Say, **Daniel got down on his knees and prayed because he was loyal to God. God showed his power by saving Daniel.**

OPTION 2: DANIEL DRAMA

Stuff You Need: Bible-time clothes, props

Let children reenact today's Bible story. You will need actors for Daniel, King Darius, and the other officials. Children will enjoy using Bible-time clothes and other props throughout the drama. Allow children to perform the drama on their own, only stepping in to prompt the next part of the story. If you have time, do the drama multiple times, changing roles each time.

OPTION 3: DANIEL IS LOYAL AND BRAVE

Stuff You Need: Daniel is Loyal and Brave Activity Sheet, crayons

Give an activity sheet to each child. Say, **Look at the coloring page. What is on it? (a lion) Daniel must have known that being taken to the lions' den would be dangerous. What made him brave? Color the lion. Then write some things that might scare you.**

OPTION 4: DANIEL AND THE LIONS

Stuff You Need: tan and brown construction paper, glue

For this age group you can precut the circles to make the craft easier. For each child, you will need:

- Eight (8) large brown circles (with the circumference roughly the size of a soda can)
- One (1) large tan circle (with the circumference roughly the size of a soda can)
- Four (4) medium tan circles (with the circumference roughly the size of a fifty-cent piece)
- One (1) medium black circle (with the circumference roughly the size of a fifty-cent piece)
- One (1) medium white circle (with the circumference roughly the size of a fifty-cent piece)
- Two (2) small black circles (with the circumference roughly the size of a dime)

1. Find and count eight large brown circles. Glue them together so they form a slightly rectangular circle. There should be a hole in the middle. This will be the lion's mane.
2. Find the large tan circle. Glue it in on top of the brown circles, though a little above center. This will be the lion's face.
3. Find the medium black circle. This will be the nose. Glue it to the bottom of the face.
4. Find the two small black circles. These will be the eyes. Glue them onto the face above the nose.
5. Find the four medium tan circles. Use two to make ears. Glue to the top of the face.
6. Use the other two to create a muzzle. Glue them side-by-side about halfway down the nose.
7. Ask students what circle they have left. They should have one medium white one.
8. Take the remaining white circle and glue it under the muzzle to form a mouth.

STEP 4: GOING HOME

Pray together that God will help you be loyal to him. Make sure each child takes home a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 18*, Activity Sheet(s)/Crafts, and the Parents' Page.