

# GOD WATCHES OVER DANIEL

**Bible Basis:** Daniel 6:1–13, 16–23

**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, NIV

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

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

## STEP 1: COME TOGETHER

As children gather, challenge them to a concentration game. Ask them to count by fours. Get the group started together. As they count, call out other random numbers. Use some that are close to what the children ought to be saying as they count, and others that are just wild distractions. See how many children can stay on track and keep counting till they get to 100. Talk about:

- Why was that a little bit difficult to do (or very difficult 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 Kids*, Bibles, *The Story Elementary Trading Card 18*

Tell the story from *The Story for Kids*, Chapter 18. You can also have the 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

Choose actors to be King Darius, Daniel, and a narrator. Two actors can be the officials. The rest of the large group are the rulers. Whenever they hear, “Get rid of Daniel,” they respond with, “Yeah, what they said!”

**Narrator:** 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.

**Darius:** Here's how I will organize my kingdom. We will have 120 rulers. Three officials will be in charge of the rulers.

**Narrator:** Daniel was one of the three main 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 job at his work out of anyone in the entire kingdom.

**Darius:** I think I will put Daniel in charge of the whole kingdom of Persia.

**Official 1:** I don't like that idea.

**Official 2:** Me neither. We have to get rid of Daniel.

**Rulers:** Yeah, what they said.

*Read Daniel 6:4.*

**Official 1:** He never does anything wrong!

**Official 2:** His work is always perfect!

**Official 1:** He always does what he is supposed to do.

**Official 2:** We have to get rid of Daniel.

**Rulers:** Yeah, what they said!

**Narrator:** *Read Daniel 6:5.* The officials came up with a plan to trick the king into giving them what they wanted.

**Official 1:** We've agreed you should give an order. For 30 days, don't let anyone pray to anyone except you.

**Official 2:** If they do, throw them into the lions' den!

**Darius:** I like this idea! Everyone can worship me or else!

**Narrator:** The king liked Daniel a lot. But in that moment, he didn't think about Daniel, even one little bit.

**Daniel:** This new law is not going to change anything. I pray three times a day, and I'm going to keep on praying three times a day.

**Official 1:** Daniel always prays in front of an open window.

**Official 2:** We'll see when he prays. The king signed the law. Even Daniel has to follow the law.

**Official 1:** This is how we'll get rid of Daniel!

**Rulers:** Yeah, what they said!

**Narrator:** So Daniel went to his room and got on his knees, just like he always did. He prayed and thanked God.

**Official 2:** Our plan is working perfectly.

**Official 1:** He's right there in the window, just like he always is.

**Official 2:** Time to go see the king.

**Darius:** What do you want?

**Official 1:** We have to give you a report about Daniel.

**Darius:** Ah, Daniel! My favorite official!

**Official 2:** I'm afraid your favorite official has been breaking the law.

**Darius:** That's impossible! Daniel never does anything wrong.

**Official 1:** He has this time. He's praying to his own God.

**Darius:** He always does that.

**Official 2:** Yes, but you made a new law that says everyone must pray to you.

**Darius:** Oh no! Do you mean I have to throw my friend Daniel into the lions' den?

**Official 1:** That is the law.

**Official 2:** We'll have to get rid of Daniel.

**Rulers:** Yeah, what they said!

*Read Daniel 6:16–7.*

**Darius:** I can't sleep! I can't eat! I can't do anything fun! I'm so worried about Daniel.

**Narrator:** Finally morning came. As soon as the sun peeked out of the sky, the king hurried to the lions' den.

**Darius:** Daniel! You serve the living God. Has he been able to save you from the lions?

**Daniel:** My God sent his angel, and his angel shut the mouths of the lions. They haven't hurt me at all.

**Narrator:** 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. Daniel 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 any or all of these activity options to help your class explore the lesson further.

#### OPTION 1: BALL AND BOX ROLL

**Stuff You Need:** Bible Story Strips Activity Sheet, three boxes, several rubber balls, tape, scissors, paper, bowl or basket

Ahead of time, make three signs that say: 1) Scene 1: Officers Plot; 2) Scene 2: Daniel Prays; 3) Scene 3: Lions' Den. Set three boxes against a wall on their sides with the opening facing the play area. Hang the signs above the boxes. Cut apart the story strips on the activity sheet and mix them up in a bowl or basket. Explain that the task is to organize the story strips into the correct scenes where they belong. Children will pull a random strip, wrap it around a ball, tape it in place, and try to roll it into the appropriate box representing the scene where that strip belongs. It may take some experimenting to roll the ball into the box and not have it bounce back out. For a competitive version, set up a double set of supplies and have teams. Race to see which team completes the story first. For a cooperative version, simply take turns rolling the balls. You or a volunteer can be stationed near the boxes to remove the strips and roll the balls back to the players. After the game, talk about:

- Summarize what happened in each of these three scenes from the Bible story.
- How could the lesson you learn from Daniel affect your real life?

Say, **Daniel was ready to be loyal to God no matter what was going to happen. His relationship with God was the most important thing in his life.**

## OPTION 2: PRAY LIKE DANIEL

**Stuff You Need:** copies of *The Story for Kids*, Bibles, paper, and markers

**Optional:** floor pillows

Give children time to spend in prayer like Daniel did. Give them options to pray quietly, write their prayers out, or pray using prayers in the Bible. Floor pillows can make a comfortable place to pray or journal quietly. If children would like, let them pray together as long as they stay focused.

- Why did Daniel end up in the lions' den?
- How did God protect Daniel in the lions' den?

Say, **Daniel was loyal to God even when he knew it could be dangerous. He trusted that no matter what happened, God was in control.**

## OPTION 3: SCENE BY SCENE

**Stuff You Need:** Scene by Scene Activity Sheet, colored pencils

Give an activity sheet to each child. Talk about the story of Daniel and how he became a leader in the country. Include why other leaders were jealous of him and why they wanted him to be in trouble with Darius. Have the children choose six events in the story and draw them in the comic grid. Be sure the children add words in the scenes, showing how important Daniel felt loyalty to God was.

## OPTION 4: STRONG FAITH

Say, **The story of Daniel in the Lions' Den is a well-known one for most young church-goers. Daniel's great faith in God and his insistence that he will never stop praying and praising God is legendary.**

Talk with the group about others in our faith that have not given in to what others say must happen and refused to turn away from God. Ask:

- What does it take to have that kind of belief?
- Do you think your faith is that strong?
- How can we help our faith to grow and become that strong and never-ending?

## 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.