

*Get Ready!***Daniel's Story****By: Kara Huffer****Text**

Daniel 6:1-28

**Key Quest Verse**

“ Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.” Deuteronomy 31:6 (NIV)

“ Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” 2 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

Bible Background

Daniel, very distinguished and respected, was working under King Darius. Because of Daniel’s exceptional qualities, King Darius’ administrators were very envious of him and then decided to pursue a plan of action against him. The administrators researched Daniel, but were unsuccessful with finding any corrupt qualities about him. They came to the decision that they could only punish Daniel for something that dealt with his faith. This, of course, will become an example of persecution, which is a recurring theme throughout the Bible, (see John 15:20-21) but God will always save His people from it.

The administrators were able to pass a law with King Darius that stated if anyone was caught worshipping another King aside from Darius, he was to be thrown into a lion’s den. Faithful Daniel; however, did not let this diminish his relationship with God, so he continued to pray alone in his room. Although the administrators found him asking God for help and took him to King Darius to be punished.

Since the decree stood with the law of the Medes and Persians, he was sent to the den. However, the king felt disappointed that Daniel should suffer when he had been so faithful to the Lord. King Darius then went to the den to release Daniel, but the lions had not done anything to him anyway. The administrators did end up getting thrown into the den, where they suffered. However, the Lord protected Daniel because he was his faithful son. God rescued him from possible danger, just as He saves us throughout the troubles of our daily lives.

Get Ready!

Lesson Quest

What I want my students to:

Know: God provides safety to those whose trust is in Him.

Feel: Protected even in the most dangerous of situations

Do: Pray always, to grow closer to God.

Leader's Devotion

We all have experienced times of persecution for our faith or moments that we have felt like we were placed in a den. However, when this happens to us, it actually means that we are not afraid to express our beliefs, so it is really a positive experience.

The fall of 2002 when I started ASU, I felt like I was in a den with thousands of people staring at me. I felt this way, because it was rare to find devoted Christians among that campus. I had to pray continually to keep myself from being discouraged. The Lord then opened my eyes to John 15:19 as encouragement, "If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you." I was then able to accept my times of loneliness with only having a couple of friends, because I was able to see that as time went by, where I was growing closer to God and developed a firm standing for my faith.

In times of persecution, the treatment from the world shouldn't discourage us, because we do not belong to them. God's amazing love chose us out of the world, so we could only live for Him.

Get Set!

Option A**Into the Den!**

Materials: Bible, classroom chairs, table

Procedure: Has anyone prayed recently? Hold up the Bible, has anyone studied the word of God lately? What about singing a worship song? The students will answer yes to at least one of those. Okay, I'm sorry I have to do this, but I'm going to have to put you all in the den for our class today. Tell the students they must crawl under their tables and stay there for the lesson. Once they've made their reactions, tell them this is not for real. It would be very uncomfortable and unfair to be thrown into a den, because you were honoring God, wouldn't it? Well, in our lesson today, we are going to learn about a man named Daniel who was thrown into a den because of his love for God, but he was able to survive it.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Option B**I'm Isolated**

Materials: None

Procedure: Would anyone still worship God if their friends made fun of them? What about praying silently at school even though it's not the coolest thing to do? After asking these questions, only choose one student. Well, I'm sorry, but you will have to stand outside alone for class today. Once the student is outside, allow some stalling time. Then go and bring your student back inside. Actually, this was just a demonstration. I would never punish anyone for honoring God. If you want, you can give this student a prize for their cooperation. Then ask your volunteer, how would you feel if someone really did this to you? Today, we are going to learn about someone who was very strong in his faith, but did get unfairly treated for believing in God.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Get Set!**Bible Story**

Teacher Tip: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles.

A faithful servant of the Lord, Daniel, worked for a King named Darius. He was the king's best worker, so the others who worked for him often got very jealous. They did not only get jealous, but went out of their way to find a way to get Daniel in trouble. Since Daniel was so hard working and honest, the other workers had a hard time finding something that they could use against him.

They did, however, remember that Daniel was very close to the Lord. The workers thought that if they could get Daniel in trouble for worshipping God, then their plan would finally work. So, the workers went to the king and asked him to pass a law that stated that the only one people of the land could worship was himself, Darius. The workers were able to convince him and pass the law.

Daniel of course, did not agree with the law. Since he was so close to God, he continued praying to the Lord even though the law stated not to. The workers thought that Daniel would feel this way, so they went inside his room where he always prayed and found him asking God for help.

The workers took Daniel to the king to be punished, and since the law was disobeyed, he was taken to a lion's den to be punished. Daniel did not get upset, but instead prayed to God for protection. Surprisingly, King Darius felt that Daniel did not deserve this punishment, so he went to the den to release Daniel. Although, when he arrived at the den, nothing was wrong with Daniel anyway. He said, "The lion's mouths were closed and did not hurt me, because God protected me." King Darius was grateful that the lions did not harm Daniel, because he did not deserve it.

Daniel thanked the Lord for giving him safety in that dangerous situation and kept praying to God all of his days after that.

Go!



Gumdrop Den Challenge

GAME

Materials: At least 15-20 toothpicks and about 11 gumdrops per student, several books.

Quest Connection

We are going to make dens representing strength, which will actually be able to hold weight. When you look at your den you can be reminded of how strong Daniel was in such a scary situation. This serves as encouragement for the next time they are in a hard time. Also, this can help you to remember to pray everyday to God. Praying was the only way that Daniel was able to get through that danger. Instead of focusing on the lion's den as something negative, we should look at it as a way that God provided strength and safety.

Procedure:

- 1) Use your gumdrops to connect five toothpicks in a ring. This serves as your base.
- 2) Next, use two toothpicks and one gumdrop to make a triangle on one side of the base. The two toothpicks make an upside down "v" when placed into the gumdrop. One gumdrop is placed on the top of your new triangle. You are now building upward.
- 3) Repeat all the way around the base until you have five triangles.
- 4) Use your toothpicks to connect the gumdrops at the tops of the triangles, almost as an outer ring.
- 5) Push one toothpick into each of the top gumdrops, creating an upward point.
- 6) Use one last gumdrop to connect the toothpicks at the top.
- 7) Now you have a completed den.

For the next part, try it at home first, so you can make sure it works for you. Now, since our dens are a symbol of God's strength, we are going to do a demonstration that stands for its power. Cluster about three of your student's dens into the middle of your table. Then take a book (not too heavy) and place it on top of the dens. Because of the triangle bases, your dens will hold the book. At home, see how many you can get your dens to hold and go up to that number in class. Look how strong our dens are! How do you think this can relate to our story today? Allow responses. From this experiment, we can remember that even when Daniel was in the den, he still had the power of God inside with him.

Close

It was very horrible that Daniel had to be placed in a den, but he was able to get through it because of God. Even in our worst situations, we don't have to be scared, because God promises to always take care of us. Mention Key Quest Verse from Deuteronomy 31:6. Let's pray and ask God that He would remind us to always come to Him, so He can continue to keep us safe.

Go!

Improvisation



GAME

Materials: Clean mop(s), scroll (rolled paper) crown or something resembling a robe, Bible and classroom chairs

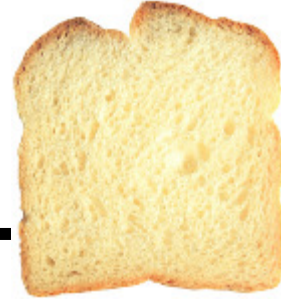
Quest Connection

The purpose of this game is to allow the students to re-tell the Bible events in the correct order. This is a great way to make sure your student's followed the story. It involves those who volunteer and the rest of your class as well.

Procedure: Before class, lay out your materials on the floor. Then place several chairs in a circle, creating a den. **I need a couple of volunteers to come help me out. I have several items laid out on the floor here. They each can represent an event that took place in Daniel's story. Your task is to pick up the item that could stand for the first thing that happened in the story.** If it is the scroll, for instance, encourage your students to open it up and pretend they are reading it. **Then, the rest of the class must shout out what the event is, and if they think it is correct. If it is, then you can go on to what happened second.** Remember, the volunteers stay silent, while the class communicates. However, the volunteers can talk amongst themselves as they are deciding. Continue the process throughout the exercise, until all events are covered. If you really encourage your students to get into the activity and animate themselves, they will very likely do so.

Close

What do you think was the bravest risk that Daniel took? When he prayed in his room. Or, surviving the lion's den. **Daniel was brave in every event of this story, but he didn't get that way by himself. How did he turn out like that?** From God's love and protection. **God loves us too much to allow us to suffer in any event in our lives. This week, let's not concentrate on being brave ourselves, but relying on God since He is the only one who can keep us strong.** End with prayer.

Go!**Roaring Treat****FOOD**

Materials: Bread, peanut butter, crunchy ready- to- eat noodles (Chinese will work well) raisins, paper plates and plastic knives

Quest Connection

We are going to make a lion today out of our ingredients. It's a good thing that we are eating it, because that shows that they have no power over us. Even though Daniel was trapped inside a den with lions, he still did not get hurt. This was because he prayed to God for safety.

Procedure: Place a piece of bread on each student's plate. To make our lion, first we are going to spread peanut butter on the bread to create the face. Next, let's take our crunchy noodles and arrange them at the top of the bread, so we create his mane. Now, take your raisins and make eyes, a nose and his mouth. Make sure that your lion's mouth is closed shut because it never opened, as we learned in the story. As you can see, we now have a lion. Feel free to eat and enjoy your snack.

Teacher Tip: To get creative, use a small banana slice for the nose or red M&M's for the mouth, whichever works for you.

Close

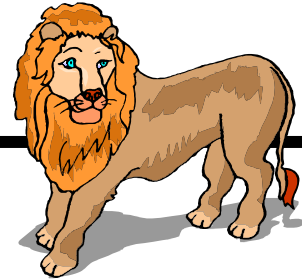
In our lives, animals, people or even things may try to pull us away from God. We don't have to worry about that happening though, if we are already close with the Lord. Let's focus on becoming close with God, so in bad situations or in any situation, we will feel safe and protected because of God's strength.

Go!

Welcoming Den

GAME

Materials: None



Quest Connection

This game will allow the students to answer questions about the lesson. The purpose of this activity is to allow the students to associate the power of God with any event that seems negative to them.

Procedure: Utilize a large open space, or grassy area for this game. Before this game you will create questions that relate to the lesson. For instance: what did the new law state? What was the king's name, etc. Also, designate two selected areas to be your dens. This might be under a tree, for example. You want to create two teams among your class. You can evenly divide them, or do a boy vs. girl competition if you would like. Now you should have them make two lines. As I ask a question, one student from each team will come up and try to answer the question. To answer, you must first raise your hand. Whoever gets it right will then go into their team's den. You want to get as many people as you can inside your team's den. Those who did not answer can step aside and support your team. **If they went back in line, you would be creating an odd number of players.** Whoever ends up with the most people in their den by the end of the game, wins.

Close

Did anyone think it was a little strange that you had to go to the den after you answered a question right? Allow responses. Well yes, it was different, because in the story we learned that the den was a bad place that Daniel had to be sent. But, the den did not scare Daniel. In fact, it just strengthened his faith in God, because he was able to overcome that scary experience. Let's think of the den or any other bad place as just another way to get closer to God. With any event in our lives, the Lord will help us get through it, because He is stronger than anything!

Go!



Ya Don't Scare Me

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Materials: Cardboard or cardstock, yarn, scissors, glue, markers, popsicle sticks, pattern from Teacher Resource

Quest Connection

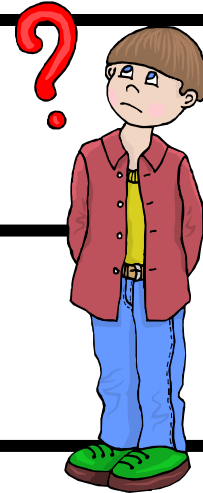
We are going to make a lion mask today. On the front side will be his face, but on the backside will be examples of things you do to express your love for God. This tells us that even though a lion may seem powerful, it is not strong enough to stand in the way of your love for God. **Or, if you would like, just focus on courageous acts of faith. For example, showing my love for God at school, where I might get teased. Maybe you want to focus on things we could ask God to help us with in our prayers, either way.**

Procedure: Prior to your lesson, cut out faces (or heads) from your cardboard or cardstock. Cut circles out for the eyes, but leave nothing open for the mouth. **First, we are going to write a way that we show our love for God on the backside of our masks. While our masks are flipped over, we are going to glue our Popsicle stick to the bottom edge of the mask. After you do that, you can flip it around. To make his mane, let's glue our yarn around the top edge of its face. Orange or brown yarn will work best. Next, with your markers give your lion a nose and a mouth. Make sure we keep the mouth closed, because remember they had no power to open it. The lion's face is now complete. You can try on your masks and tell your neighbor that even something as powerful as a lion could not separate you from God!**

Close

When we look at our masks that we have made today, what do you think we could be reminded of? Allow answers. We can remember how Daniel survived those lions with the protection of God, and most importantly, how God will never let anything separate us from His love for us. When we look at the act of love for God we wrote on our masks, we can remember that God will always love us even so much more in return! Let's end by thanking God for always loving us, and preventing anything from standing in the way of Him and us.

Go!



Who Am I?

DRAMA

Materials: None

Quest Connection

The students will be focusing on creating a separate character from the lesson. This will enable them to visualize the character's position, and of course help them remember and understand the story that they just learned.

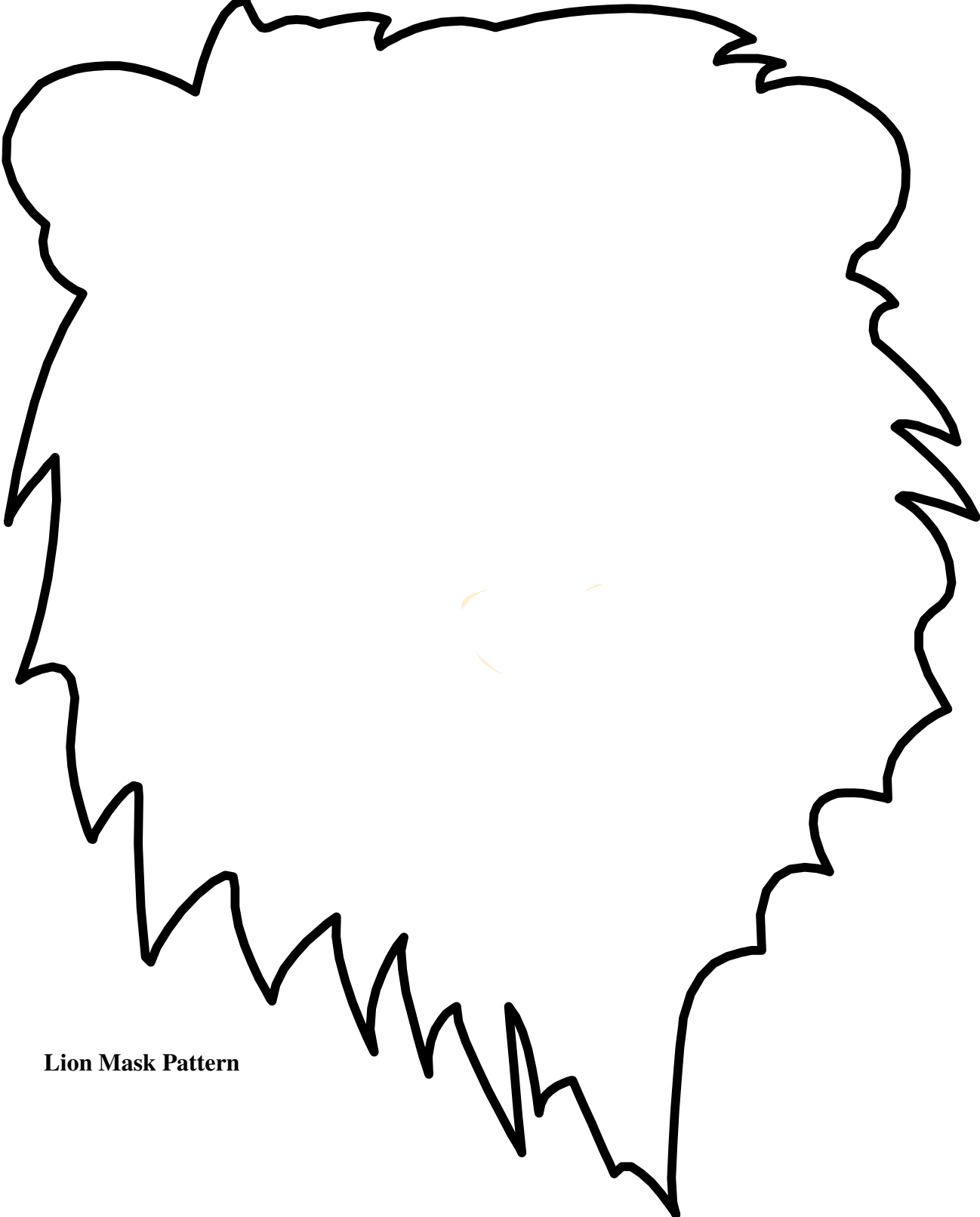
Procedure: For this drama, you need to find some scenery to work with. A recommendation is to go to an area that will feed your student's imagination. My suggestion is your church playground. Once your group has found a destination, divide your student's into threes. Or, if you have a small class, just make sure a student has a partner. **We are going to create some characters from our Bible story today. I will give the name of a character to each group and it is your group's job to find an area that will serve as your environment.** For instance, if you are in the playground, a group may go over to the slide and use it. **Then, you will discuss with your group how you will describe this character to the class. You can use words, actions or noises to create the character.** Once each group has been given their character and found a destination, allow some time for them to brainstorm and use their imagination. **When you are ready, I will call on the first group to show us your character creation. It will be the other group's task to name that character from our Bible story.** For a greater challenge, have the student's decide on their own when they should go according to the order that their character comes into the story.

Teacher Tip: If you are not quite visualizing the exercise, here is an example. A group who was given the lions may all go underneath some playground equipment (as their den) and when it is their time to go, they could crawl on their hands and knees like lions.

Close

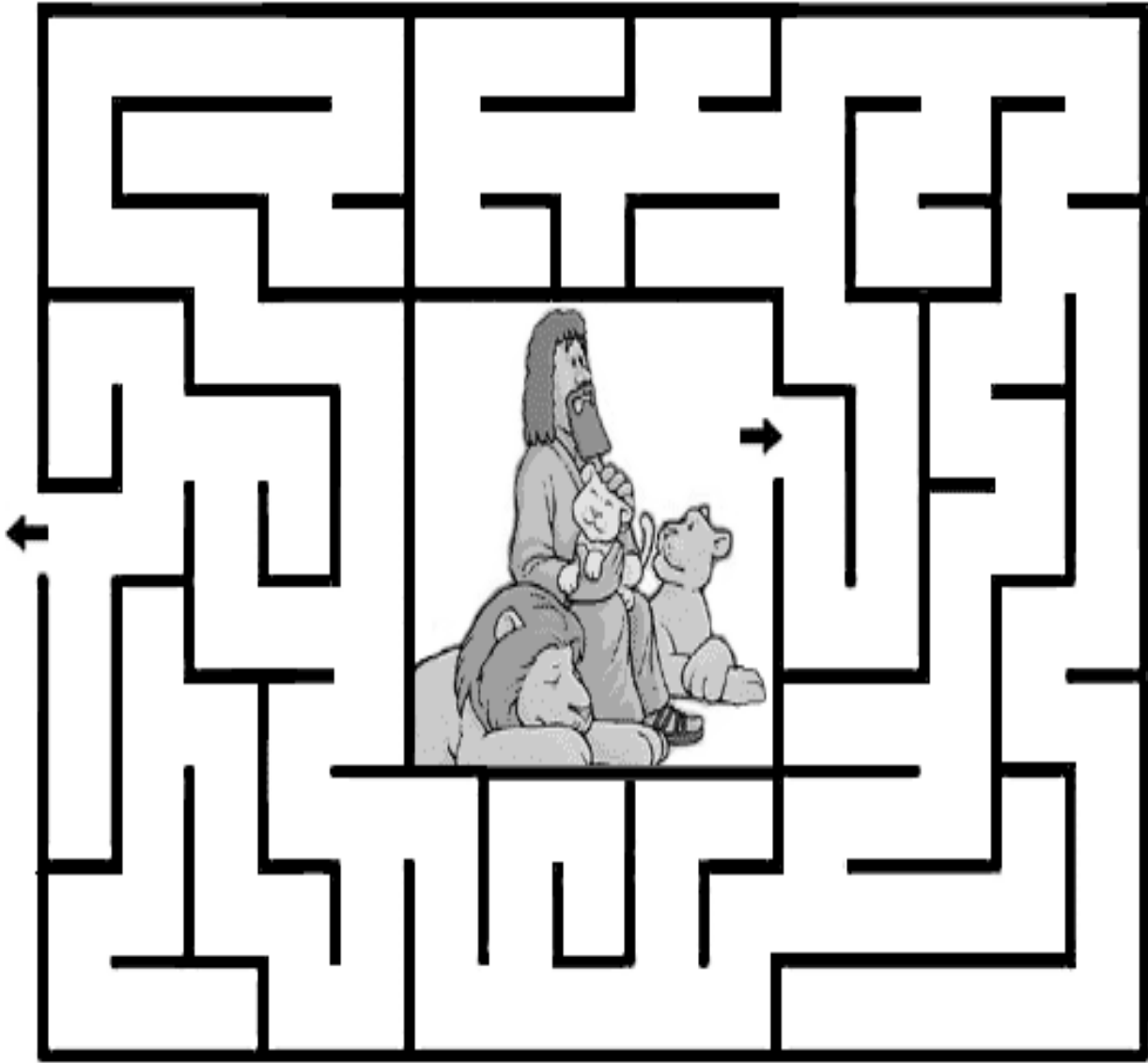
There were many different types of characters in our story today, such as kingly, jealous, honest and noble. Even though we are all different in life, God loves each one of us. Which character in the story though, do you think God would want us to be the most like? Daniel. Why should we follow Daniel's example? Responses.

Daniel was the most faithful to God and always remembered to pray, because he had such a love for God. Let's remind ourselves to continue to pray everyday, so we can develop a close relationship with God. Mention Key Quest Verse 2 Thessalonians 5:16-18, and end in prayer.



Lion Mask Pattern

Can you help Daniel find his way out of the lion's den?

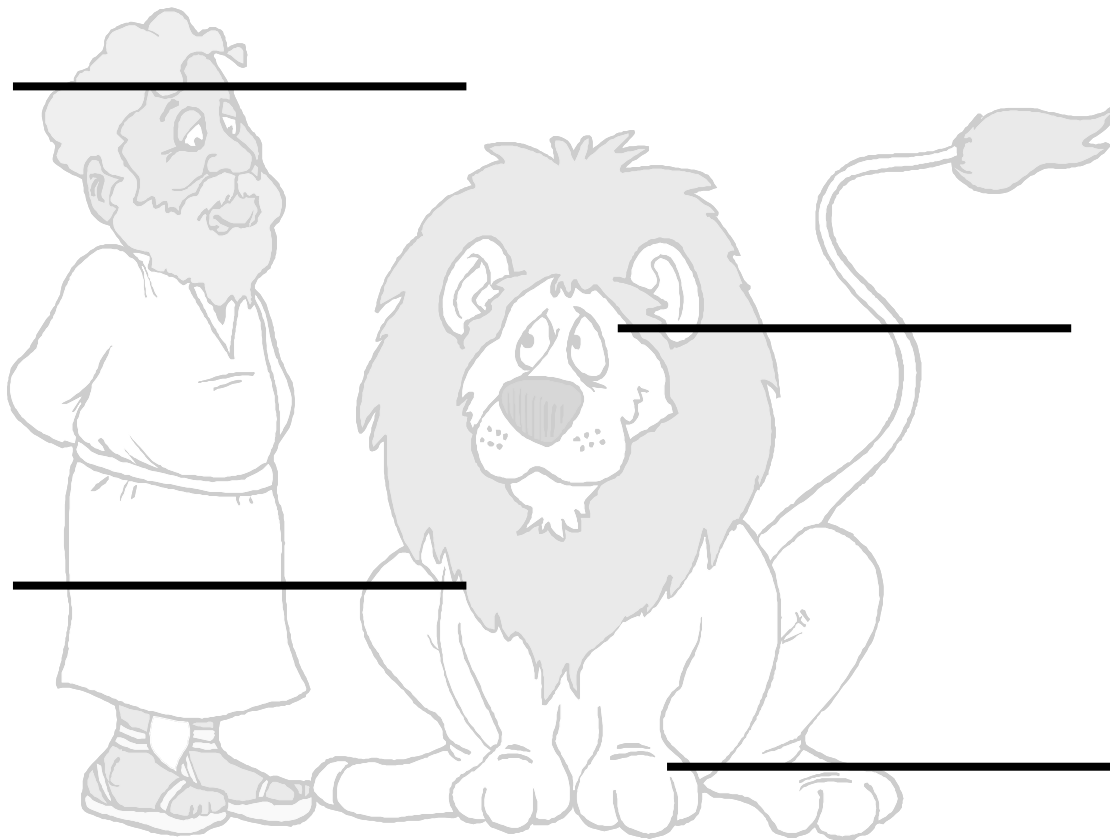




Daniel

Daniel 6:1 -28

Write some words to describe how Daniel felt when he was thrown into the lion's den on the lines below.



" Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you." Deuteronomy 31:6 (NIV)

My Journal Page

Describe an experience when you were scared. For instance, have you ever been lost in a store or some other time that was new and different? Write about the event and the way it made you feel. Last, write about how your faith in God will give you courage.

