



# God Hears Daniel's Prayers

Goal: To know we can pray to God everyday.

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

### . . . In Daniel 6:6-23

After the fall of Jerusalem, Daniel and three of his friends were exiled to Babylon where they were being trained so they “could serve before the king” (1:1-7, CEB).

After a series of incidents in which the young men maintained fidelity to their Jewish faith, officers and chief administrators persuaded the king to issue a law that “for thirty days anyone who says prayers to any god or human being except you, Your Majesty, will be thrown into a pit of lions” (6:7, CEB).

In response, Daniel prayed and praised God three times a day, “just like he always did” (v. 10, CEB). His enemies found him praying and reported this to the king. When the king tried to save him, the men invoked that “the law of Media and Persia, including every law and edict the king has issued, cannot be changed” (v. 15, CEB). So the king gave the order and Daniel was thrown into a pit of lions.

But the next morning, Daniel was unharmed. He said God had shut the lions' mouths and “not a scratch was found on him, because he trusted in his God” (v. 23, CEB). God's grace had preserved the faithful Daniel. He was grateful for God's protection.

### . . . In Your Children's Experiences

For children, their “moral compass,” that which helps them know how to make good decisions, is something they learn at home, at school, and at church. This story about Daniel tells about a time when he acted faithfully in response to God, and how God protected him from harm. Children can connect easily with the drama and danger in the story as they hear it read and act it out. Having them imagine modern-day situations they face can help them consider how to make good and right decisions about living in response to God. It would be a great way to help them see the connections between this story and their lives.

### . . . In Your Relationships with the Children

This memorable and vivid story of Daniel surviving the life-threatening danger of the lions' den is included in all children's Bible storybooks. As you tell this story to the children, be aware of their ways of engaging with the story. Some may connect with the miraculous nature of the way God protected Daniel. Others may be curious about God's saving presence with people today. Some children may be curious about Daniel's commitment to following God in spite of the consequences. As you can see, this story presents many options for their engagement and reflection.

*God, who comes to us as Word, open my mind to a deeper understanding of the richness of faith. Amen.*



## Supplies

### Music & Melodies

[bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies](http://bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies)

### Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i-iv, 13, 15, 21

basic supplies  
(see p. vii)

internet-connected  
device

blanket or mats

candle

## Guided Play

choice 1: paper plates  
(fluted edges); yellow,  
orange, brown, and  
black crayons

choice 2: toy animals

choice 3: small rug or  
large piece of fabric,  
floor pillows, children's  
Bibles, battery-operated  
tea lights

## Exploring

choice 1: copies of **Grace Notes (GN) 1**

choice 3: copies of  
**GN 2** and **GN 3** on  
cardstock, brass paper  
fasteners

choice 4: copies of **GN 4**

## GATHERING IN GOD'S GRACE

### Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so their backs will be to the door.

Use **SCM i-ii**, "Your Visual Schedule," to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii-iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children with special needs or disabilities.

Before the session, for "Welcoming and Guided Play" choice 1, make a sample paper plate lion. Color the center of the plate yellow for the lion's face. Color the rim of the plate orange for the mane. With a black or brown crayon or marker, make two eyes, a nose, and a mouth for the lion.

Select the activities that will work best for you and your children. You do not need to do everything suggested!

"Exploring God's Grace" choice 3 requires more prep.

### Welcoming and Guided Play



Greet children as they arrive and say, "Grace and peace be with you." Prompt them to respond, "And also with you."

Be sensitive to any children who might be coming for the first time.

Introduce yourself to parents/caregivers. Explain to them that the children will hear a story about Daniel, a man who prayed every day and was faithful to God.

Invite the children to choose a guided play activity to start:

**1. Make a Lion**—Invite the children to make a paper plate lion.

Tell them to use your example as a model. If the children are able, they can enhance the mane by cutting about inch into the plate all around the rim. Invite the children to make two eyes, a nose, and a mouth for the lion. Demonstrate how to draw the lion's nose as an upside down triangle and the mouth as a line down from the point of the triangle with a U-shape connected to each side of the line.

**2. Toy Corner**—Invite the children to play with toy animals.

**3. Prayer Corner**—Create a prayer corner by placing a small rug or large piece of fabric on the floor to designate the space. Put a couple of pillows for soft seating, several children's Bibles, and one or more battery-operated tea lights in the space. Invite the children to sit quietly and talk with God.

**T** *Transitions can be difficult for children. Do not force reluctant children to join a group activity. Instead, allow them to observe quietly from their own play area or to listen to a story read to them by an adult helper until they are ready to join the group.*



## Transitioning to Story Time

When you sense the children are ready to move into group time, call them to the story corner, singing “Thank You, Holy God”—SCM 15.

### Jump and Shout

MS

Say the following poem and do the motions indicated, inviting the children to repeat each phrase.

God made me to jump and shout. (*jump*)  
 God made me to move about. (*wiggle hips*)  
 God made me to wiggle around. (*wave arms and turn around in a circle*)  
 And God made me to sit right down. (*sit cross-legged on floor and fold hands in lap*)

### I Can Pray

L

Invite the children to repeat your words and follow your actions.

I am strong. (*stand in a “strongman” stance*)  
 I am kind. (*gently pat a neighbor on the back*)  
 I am brave. (*arms stretched out in front*)  
 I am faithful. (*arms reaching up in praise to God*)  
 I can be quiet. (*sit down quietly*)  
 I can pray. (*place hands together in prayer*)



Today's story can be found in *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible*, edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2018), [www.pcusastore.com](http://www.pcusastore.com).

## Hearing the Story

L

Turn on the candle, saying, “God, your Word is our light.” Repeat the phrase, prompting the children to say “light” with you.

Open the Bible to Daniel 6 so the children know the story comes from the Bible. Tell the children that they are going to hear a story about a man named Daniel who prayed every day and was faithful to God.

Read **SCM 13**. Express the emotions of the story in your voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, “Amen.”

Read the story again and tell the children to do the following actions when they hear these words in the story.

- ▼ Daniel (*put hands on hips*)
- ▼ Faithful (*raise hands up*)
- ▼ God (*clap hands*)
- ▼ Pray or prayed (*put hands together in prayer*)
- ▼ King (*place hands on head with fingers up like a crown*)
- ▼ Lions (*roar*)

Turn off the candle.



## EXPLORING GOD'S GRACE

### 1. Sequencing the Story



Give the children a copy of **GN 1** and invite them to color the pictures. When they have finished, cut out the pictures. Invite the children to put the pictures in order telling the story of Daniel. You may need to prompt them by asking, "What happened first?" and "What happened next?"

1. Daniel prayed to God every day.
2. The king made a law that praying to God was not allowed.
3. Daniel was thrown into the lions' den.
4. An angel shut the lions' mouths.
5. God was with Daniel in the lions' den.
6. Daniel praised God.

You may have the children mix up their pictures and try sequencing them again. Name ways you have trusted God to be with you in glad and sad times.

### 2. Praying Together



Remind the children that Daniel was faithful to God and prayed to God every day. Invite the children into a time of praying together. Ask them to take turns sharing something they are happy or thankful about. After each one shares, invite the children to say, "Praise God!" Then, invite them to share something they are sad or sorry about. After each child shares, invite the children to say, "Be with us God." End your prayer time by inviting all the children to say, "Amen."



### 3. Daniel Prayed, I Can Pray



*Before the session, cut out the circles as directed on **GN 2** and **GN 3** for each child.*

Remind the children that Daniel prayed to God every day. Give the children the prepared circles from **GN 2**, a circle with one-fifth of it cut out. Tell the children that it is a picture of Daniel. Invite them to color the picture. After they have colored this circle, tell the children that the circle says, "Daniel prayed to God. I can pray to God."

Give the children circles prepared from **GN 3**, a circle with five sections. Read the times and places written in each section. Invite the children to draw themselves in each of the places and times. Encourage the children to tell about their drawings and affirm their drawings. Remind them that they can pray every day too. Then put this circle underneath the circle with one-fifth cut out. Push a brass paper fastener into the center of the two pictures so that you create a wheel where the children can see the pictures in the cut-out space, reminding them that they can pray at different times throughout the day like Daniel.



Use “wonder” questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wonder questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to [www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads](http://www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads), where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).

#### 4. Coloring Page FM

Hand out **GN 4** and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture of Daniel praying. Engage the children in conversation using the following questions:

- ▼ I wonder, “What do you think Daniel prayed about?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What do you think Daniel told his friends?”

**T** *Transitions can be difficult. This may be a good time for some quick physical activities, such as hopping two times, clapping two times, and repeating.*

#### LOVING AND SERVING GOD FA LG

Call the children together, singing “Dance and Sing”—**SCM 21**—and celebrate that God took care of Daniel when he was afraid and takes care of us as well. Invite the children to pray this week and ask them about the best times to pray.

Call the children to snack time. Invite the children to listen while you pray.

Thank you, God, for never leaving us alone.

Thank you, God, for being with us.

Even when we are scared and frightened, you are with us.

Thank you for this snack today. Amen.

As the children leave, remind them to pray and bless them.  
“[Name], God is always with you. Go in God’s grace.”







The king made a law that praying to God was not allowed.



God was with Daniel in the lions' den.



An angel shut the lions' mouths.



Daniel prayed to God every day.



Daniel praised God.



Daniel was thrown into the lions' den.

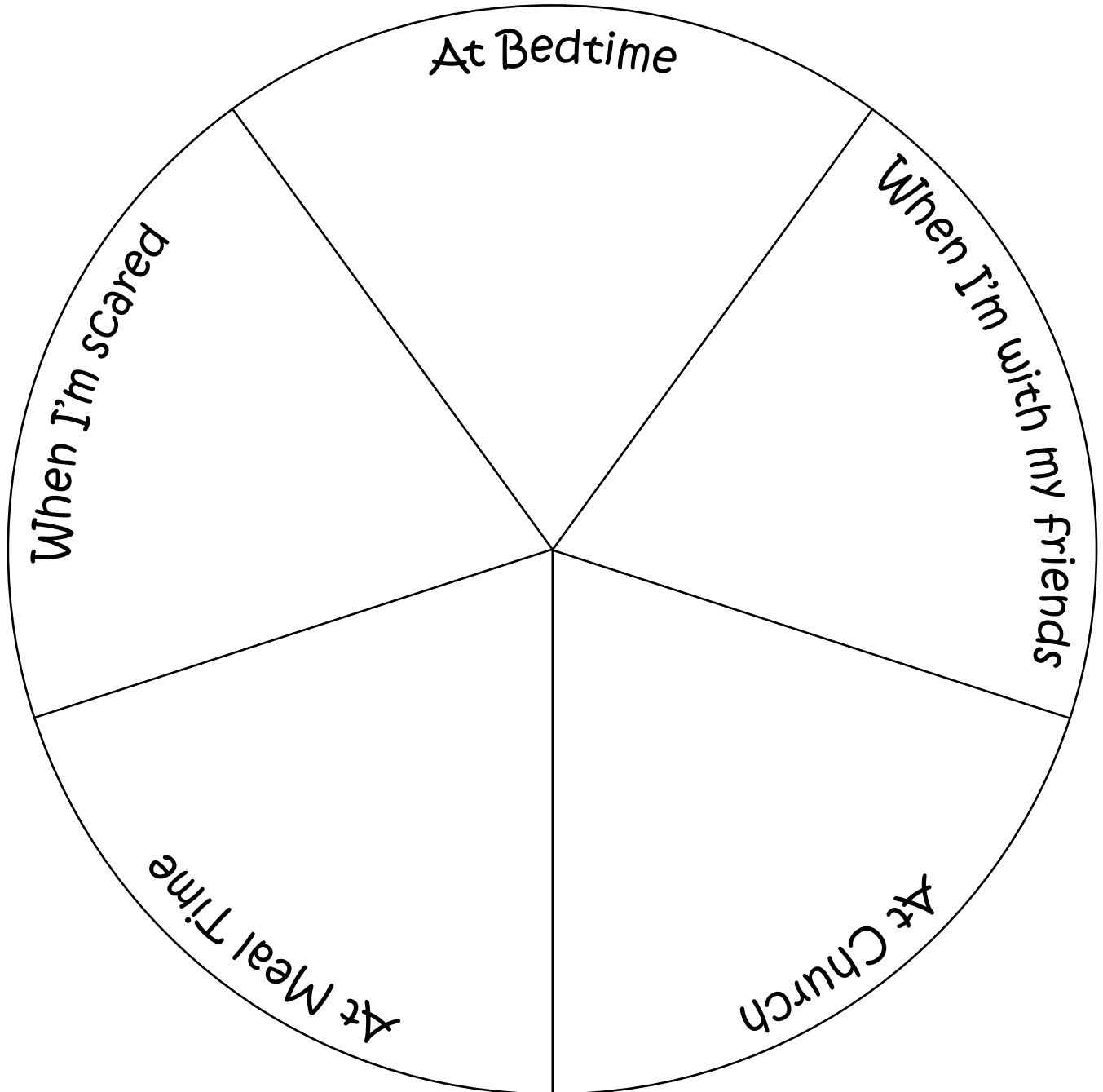




Daniel prayed to God. I can pray to God.









# God Hears Daniel's Prayers



Daniel prayed to God. God took care of Daniel.