

The Big Picture: Finding Jesus in the Old Testament:

Week 12 — Daniel: Faith in the Lions' Den

Daniel 6:1–23

Opening Prayer: Faithful God, quiet the distractions around us and open our hearts to your Word. As you were present with Daniel in the lions' den, remind us that you are present with us in every place we find ourselves. Give us courage to trust you and strength to remain faithful. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Theme: Daniel 6 is often remembered as a miraculous rescue story, but Daniel's faithfulness begins long before he encounters the lions. When praying becomes illegal, Daniel doesn't suddenly develop a courageous faith. He simply continues doing what he has always done:

“Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.” — Daniel 6:10

The lions' den didn't create Daniel's faith. **It revealed it.** And God did not prevent Daniel from entering the den. God met Daniel **inside it.**

Secular Quote: *“Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear—not absence of fear.”*
— Mark Twain

Starter Question: Think of something you do almost automatically because you've done it repeatedly for years. How did repetition turn that action into a habit? Now bring that idea into your spiritual life: **What spiritual practices could become so deeply rooted in us that we naturally turn to them when life becomes difficult?**

Digging Deeper Questions:

Read Daniel 6:1–5 — A Faith That Can Be Seen

Daniel's enemies search for something they can use against him, but they cannot find corruption, negligence, or dishonesty.

Discuss: If someone examined your everyday life without knowing you were a Christian, what evidence might lead them to suspect that you follow Jesus? Daniel's enemies eventually realize that the only way to attack him is through his relationship with God.

Go Deeper: What is the difference between simply *saying* we believe in God and developing a life in which our faith becomes visible?

Read Daniel 6:6–10 — “Just as He Had Done Before”

Daniel knows about the decree. He knows the consequences. Yet he returns home and prays. Notice that Scripture doesn't say Daniel created some dramatic public protest. He simply continued being Daniel.

Discuss: Why are the words “just as he had done before” so important to understanding this story? What habits do you think had prepared Daniel for this moment? What compromises could Daniel have justified?

Go Deeper: We often imagine that extraordinary faith appears during extraordinary circumstances. What if courageous faith is actually built through hundreds of ordinary decisions made beforehand?

Read Daniel 6:11–17 — Faith Doesn't Prevent the Den Daniel does everything right... and still gets thrown to the lions. That challenges an assumption Christians can sometimes carry: **“If I am faithful to God, God will keep bad things from happening to me.”** But Scripture repeatedly shows something different.

Joseph is faithful—and imprisoned.

David trusts God—and faces Goliath.

Elijah obeys God—and gains enemies.

Daniel prays—and enters the lions' den.

Jesus is perfectly faithful—and goes to the cross.

Discuss: Why can it be difficult to accept that faithfulness doesn't guarantee an easier life? How can we distinguish between trusting God and expecting God to make life go the way we want?

Read Daniel 6:18–23 — God in the Den

Daniel tells Darius: **“My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions.”** — **Daniel 6:22** God could have prevented Daniel from entering the den. Instead, God met him there. The lions remained. The darkness remained. The stone remained. But **Daniel was not alone.**

Discuss: Have you ever prayed for God to remove a difficult situation and instead discovered God's presence carrying you through it?

Why might experiencing God's presence **in** suffering sometimes transform us more deeply than simply escaping suffering?

Actionable of the Week:

Daniel's courage in the den began with his ordinary practice of prayer. This week, choose **one small spiritual practice** and commit to doing it every day. It might be five minutes of prayer before starting your day, reading a short passage of Scripture, naming three things for which you are grateful, praying for someone who is difficult to love, or ending your evening by asking, **“Where did I notice God today?”** Don't make it complicated. The goal isn't an impressive spiritual achievement. The goal is **faithfulness**. Because someday, when the lions roar, the habits we develop today may become the practices that remind us: **God is with me—even here.**

Closing Prayer:

God of Daniel, teach us to be faithful in ordinary moments so that we can trust you in difficult ones. When the lions roar and the night grows dark, remind us that we are never alone. Give us courage to follow Jesus wherever faithfulness leads. Amen.

Suggested Daily Scripture Readings

Monday — Be Faithful: Daniel 1:8–17 — Daniel’s faithfulness began long before the lions’ den. *Focus:* Faithfulness in the small decisions prepares us for the big ones.

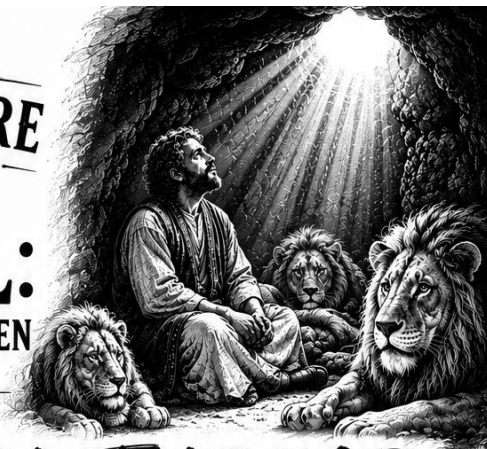
Tuesday — Keep Praying: Daniel 6:6–10 — Daniel continued praying “just as he had done before.” *Focus:* Build habits of faith before the crisis comes.

Wednesday — Stand Firm: Romans 12:1–2 — “Do not conform to the pattern of this world.” *Focus:* Following God sometimes means refusing to simply go along with everyone else.

Thursday — Trust His Presence: Isaiah 43:1–3 — “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.” *Focus:* God doesn’t promise we will avoid every trial; God promises to be with us through them.

Friday — Take Courage: 2 Timothy 4:16–18 — Paul describes the Lord standing beside him and rescuing him “from the lion’s mouth.” *Focus:* We are never abandoned when faithfulness becomes costly.

Saturday — Look to Resurrection: Matthew 28:1–10 — At dawn, the stone is rolled away and the tomb is empty. *Focus:* Daniel emerged alive from a sealed place of death; Jesus emerges victorious over death itself.



THE BIG PICTURE
FINDING JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

DANIEL:
FAITH IN THE LIONS' DEN

DANIEL 6:1-23

WEEKLY THREAD

GROWING FAITH EVERY DAY

	MONDAY	BE FAITHFUL	DANIEL 1:8-17
	TUESDAY	KEEP PRAYING	DANIEL 6:6-10
	WEDNESDAY	STAND FIRM	ROMANS 12:1-2
	THURSDAY	TRUST HIS PRESENCE	ISAIAH 43:1-3
	FRIDAY	TAKE COURAGE	2 TIMOTHY 4:16-18
	SATURDAY	LOOK TO RESURRECTION	MATTHEW 28:1-10

“ MY GOD SENT HIS ANGEL,
AND HE SHUT THE MOUTHS OF THE LIONS. ”

DANIEL 6:22