

When I decided to start the Bible as Literature series, I knew I'd learn some things. Daniel in the Lion's Den is one of the Bible stories that I knew in name only. Reading Daniel can be confusing. I had take a side-trip through the children's Bible story resources, then go back to the Bible for research/confirmation. I have left A LOT out, paring down to focus on how it can help children understand conviction.

Daniel was an administrator for King Darius. He was eventually given charge over the whole Kingdom's affairs, making his fellow administrators jealous. Try as they might, the other administrators were incapable of finding ways to 'dethrone' Daniel. They would eventually use the Word of God to ensnare Daniel. By royal decree, praying became punishable by death:

"All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions." ~Daniel 6:7

Did that stop Daniel from praying to his God? Hecks no! He continues to pray like the decree is worthless: Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." ~Daniel 6:10

Well, no King likes to be so rudely disrespected, and as a result, Daniel finds himself being flung through the air--only to land in a den full of Lions--Lions! The I'll casually kill you with one swing to the jugular kind of Lions--by the end of Chapter 6, verse 16. King Darius spends the night wrought with guilt, only to command that Daniel is taken out of the den the next morning. Low and behold, Daniel's God sent angels down in the night to save him! The story ends with King Darius ordering the conspiring administrators to be placed in the lion's den--sin ayuda from any angels.

I really like the story of Daniel. It teaches young people to have courage in the face of those who wish to control their thoughts and actions. Unless you're doing something to hurt someone else, or hamper their chance for happiness, you should be allowed to think whatever you desire. Daniel was a man of conviction; a man of mental strength. When I read this story, tyranny, suppression and control came to mind. How can we teach young people to have courage and conviction? And, does conviction always have to lead to death? Since we can't depend on prayer alone to solve our problems, how do we teach young people to weigh their options? For example, was there a better way to solve the problem of not being allowed to pray: was that Daniel's ONLY way to solve his problem?

**Raffi also has a version of Daniel in the Lion's Den on his Rise and Sunshine album; you can find it at his website, [here](#).

Wanna make a kid's brain churn? Give them a 'situation' that presents several ways of being solved. It will be interesting to see how they respond. Psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg used the scenario below with young boys. A later study included boys and girls. How would your young ones solve this problem:

Heinz Steals the Drug

In Europe, a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to make. He paid \$200 for the radium and charged \$2,000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about \$ 1,000 which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said: "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz got desperate and broke into the man's store to steal the drug-for his wife. Should the husband have done that?