

24.05 Daniel and the Lions (Daniel 6:1–28)

✓ “*Check*” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows.

[. . .] Brackets indicate a remark to the teacher that will not be read aloud; they also show answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials. Please give credit to the sources of pictures. Likenesses of characters might change with the variety of pictures. Hopefully, this isn’t too confusing to young minds.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print on colorful cardstock and cut apart.

- *petition*: something asked for. If I ask, “Please get me a pencil,” what is my petition? [To get a pencil.]
- *to deliver*: to rescue or to save from harm
- *Medes and Persians*: the united countries that conquered Babylon.

Scripture: (NKJV)

Daniel 6:1 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; 2 and over them three high officials, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. 3 Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. 4 Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. 5 Then these men said, “We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God.”

6 Then these high officials and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, “O King Darius, live forever! 7 All the high officials of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. 8 Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked.” 9 Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction.

10 When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. 11 Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. 12 Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, “O king! Did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?” The king answered and said, “The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked.” 13 Then they answered and said before the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or the injunction you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.”

14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him. 15 Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, “Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed.”

16 Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!” 17 And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. 18 Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

19 Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. 20 As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, “O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?” 21 Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever! 22 My God sent his angel and shut the lions’ mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm.” 23 Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. 24 And the king commanded, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

25 Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: “Peace be multiplied to you. 26 I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, enduring forever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end. 27 He delivers and rescues; he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions.” 28 So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Introduction/Review:

Today’s story is the next-to-the-last one about Daniel’s life. He wrote many more prophecies, but we will not be studying them.

Story:

Daniel’s promotion

Daniel had been in Babylon about 60 years.¹ If he had come to Babylon when he was fifteen years old, ✓he would now have been around seventy-five years old. Nevertheless, Darius, the new king of Babylon under Cyrus, regarded him as a wise and fine worker, for when he set up 120 state governors over all Cyrus’s conquered land and three presidents over those 120 governors, he appointed Daniel to be one of the three presidents. What a lot of responsibility! What an honor! Actually, Darius thought so highly of Daniel that he considered making him the chief president over the other two presidents.

Why did Darius think so highly of Daniel? Because, as the Bible says, “He was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him.” This means that he knew how to do his work very well and that he was truly honest. Daniel was a great testimony because of his God-honoring character. Are you a testimony for God by your good behavior?

The governors’ jealous plot

Sometimes people don’t appreciate a person who does well because it makes them look worse. Perhaps they are jealous of a person who does well enough to advance. That’s how the two other presidents and some of the 120 governors seemed to feel toward Daniel. ✓“Check to see if you can find a mistake he’s made,” said one. “Find out if he’s been late for work,” said another. “Can’t anybody think of a foolish decision he’s made?!” exclaimed someone else. “No, he hasn’t made a mistake at all.” “No, he’s never been late for work.” “No, all his decisions have been wise ones.”

✓“Looks as if we won’t be able to find anything wrong with his character. What can we do to him? We don’t like a goody-two-shoes being over us even if he does everything right. Think of something, men!”

✓“I have an idea,” said one of the leaders. “Clearly, we won’t be able to find anything bad about his character or his work, for he is faithful and faultless. But—he is a Jew, and I hear that he prays to his God every single day. In fact, he prays three times a day. Let’s get the king to make a law about praying.”

✓“Hey, that’s a good idea! Let’s put something together right now to bring to the king,” agreed the other presidents and governors.

Sure enough, ✓as soon as their plan was hatched, those governors and presidents hustled in to see the king. “O King, live forever!” they cried. Then they flattered him and appealed to his pride, saying, “All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counselors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a law—a firm decree—that no one can ask for something from any god or man for thirty days, except from you, O king. If someone asks a petition of someone other than you, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be changed.”

Darius’s law

✓Without thinking and maybe being truly flattered and acting out of pride, King Darius signed the law: No one could ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days. They could ask only King Darius or be thrown into a den of lions. What do lions eat? They eat meat, and they will eat humans.

What would this law mean for Daniel? It would mean he could not pray to God Almighty. Would Daniel quit praying? What would you do if your praying meant you would be thrown into a den of lions?

Daniel’s obedience

Daniel, like Joseph, is a man about whom the Bible says not one bad thing. Daniel, even after he knew the new law, did as he always had done. ✓At morning, at noon, and at night he went to his house, opened his windows toward Jerusalem, got down on his knees, and prayed to God as usual.

I don’t know how they did it, but those men spied on Daniel. Maybe they hid in the bushes of his next-door neighbor. Maybe they had Daniel’s servant tell on him. However it was, they found out what they knew would happen: Daniel prayed, not to King Darius but to the Most High God.

The presidents and governors hustled off to the palace. “O king,” they said, “didn’t you sign a decree that any man who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?”

The king answered, “I sure did, and it is a law according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be changed.”

Then they answered the king [Teacher, speak derisively], “That Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, doesn’t pay attention to you, O king, or to the law you have signed, but prays to his God three times a day.”

[Teacher, look downcast.] ✓“Oh, oh,” thought the king, upset with himself. “What have I done? What can I do to save Daniel? Counselors, is there some way we can fix it so that Daniel isn’t cast into the den of lions?”

✓“No, O king, for we have proof that Daniel has prayed to his God instead of to you. The unchangeable law states he must be cast into the lions’ den.”

✓“Keep working on this problem. Let’s find a way to save Daniel,” answered the king.

All day long King Darius tried to find a way to save Daniel from the lions. But, alas, it was all to no avail. Nothing could be done, for the law was unchangeable.

At sunset the presidents and governors hustled into the palace with their reminders: “You know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is that no law which the king makes may be changed.”

“Yes, I know. Bring Daniel before me.”

Daniel’s sentence

When Daniel came, the king said to him, “May your God, whom you serve continually, save you.”

Maybe the king didn’t really believe what he just said, but he sure hoped Daniel’s God would save him. Then he said to the servants, “Now cast him into the den with the lions. [Pause.] Hmmm! So far so good. No

lion attack yet. Put a large stone over the hole to the den. Seal it with my seal so that no one can break in. I'm going to my palace. Supper? No, I don't want any supper. No, I don't want any music tonight either. I'm just too agitated about Daniel. What have I done? Will Daniel's God save him? ✓Oh, why was I so proud as to think that all petitions had to come to me? What a miserable man I am! I just can't sleep for worry about Daniel."

All night King Darius thought about Daniel. All night he could not sleep. Very early in the morning, he ran to the lions' den. He cried with a sad and anxious voice, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is your God, whom you serve continually, able to deliver you from the lions?"

Daniel's deliverance

The moment of suspense was answered by Daniel's voice, calling, "O king, live forever. My God sent his angel and has shut the lion's mouths so that they have not hurt me because I was innocent before Him, and also before you, O king, I have done nothing hurtful."

"Oh, how glad I am to hear your voice, Daniel!! Servants, take him up out of that pit. ✓There now. Daniel, are you okay? Let me check you. I don't see anything—no scratches or tooth marks. You truly believe in your God! He has saved you from the lions! Now, bring those men who accused Daniel. Cast them into the den of lions."

When those men were cast into the den of lions, they didn't even make it to the floor of the pit, for the lions broke their bones and devoured them before they hit bottom.

Then King Darius made another law. This was it: "In every part of my kingdom all people must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for He is the living God and faithful forever. His kingdom shall not be destroyed and he will rule even to the very end. He delivers and rescues and works signs and wonders in heaven and in earth. He delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

So Daniel continued to serve King Darius and King Cyrus, until the day of his death.

¹Daniel was deported to Babylon in 597 B.C.; Darius began his rule in 539 B.C. That's 58 years.

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:

The angel who protected Daniel in the lions' den is very likely the Lord Jesus Christ. John Gill states, "[Daniel] asserts God to be his God, of which he had given him a proof in sending his angel to him that night; either one of the ministering spirits about him, or *the Angel of the covenant, the same with him, said to be like the Son of God, that was seen in the fiery furnace, even the Messiah in human form*" ([Daniel 6:22 - Bible Verse Meaning and Commentary \(biblestudytools.com\)](http://biblestudytools.com/daniel-6-22-bible-verse-meaning-and-commentary), emphasis added).

- Be a testimony: Live a life like Daniel—diligent and careful in your work and true to God—and God will be honored. Is God honored by disobedience? [No.] It's important to honor God at all times.
- Be true to God: Not everyone who refused to pray to a king has been saved from lions. Many Christians in the years following Jesus' ascension refused to worship the emperor. They were thrown to the lions and died. They remained true to Jesus, even unto death.
- Let's pray three times a day or more—and not just in thanks for meals.
- Sometimes we must obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29).

Activities:

- Play dough: lion

- Snack: lions made of bread, Cheez-It® crackers, etc. Photo and ingredients found at [Pin page \(pinterest.co.uk\)](#)
- Watch a 5.75-minute, well-done cartoon video, “Daniel Gets Pet Lions, Instead of Getting Eaten,” at [Bible Stories for the Young : Stories \(biblestoriesonline.com\)](#). (Click on “Stories” and scroll about halfway down the page.)
- Sing “Daniel Was a Man of Prayer” and “Dare to Be a Daniel” found below.
- Review questions: (Game: Print the 2 pages of lion fun facts found below. Separate each fact by cutting horizontally across the page, and fold in half so that the picture and fact face outward. A student who answers a question correctly may select and read a fun fact about lions. Students who cannot read may select and hold the paper as the teacher reads the fact.)
 1. Who was the new king of Babylon? [Darius.]
 2. Fill in the blank. Darius set up a new organization of government in which Daniel was one of three _____. [Presidents; or the highest officials.]
 3. Why did Darius want to set Daniel over the other two presidents? [Because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him.]
 4. Trick question. What fault did the scheming leaders find when they searched Daniel’s life? [They found none.]
 5. What did the other leaders get King Darius to decree? [That no one could make petition to any person or god except Darius for thirty days.]
 6. Why was Daniel thrown into the den of lions? [Because he prayed to the one true God in spite of the king’s decree.]
 7. How did God protect Daniel? [He sent His angel, probably Jesus Himself, to shut the lions’ mouths.]
 8. What was Darius’s new decree? [All people under his rule had to respect the true God.]

Memory Verse[s]: (ESV)

- Daniel 6:26, 27: “. . . The God of Daniel . . . is the living God, enduring forever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end. He delivers and rescues; he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions.”
- Or Psalm 55:17: “Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.”

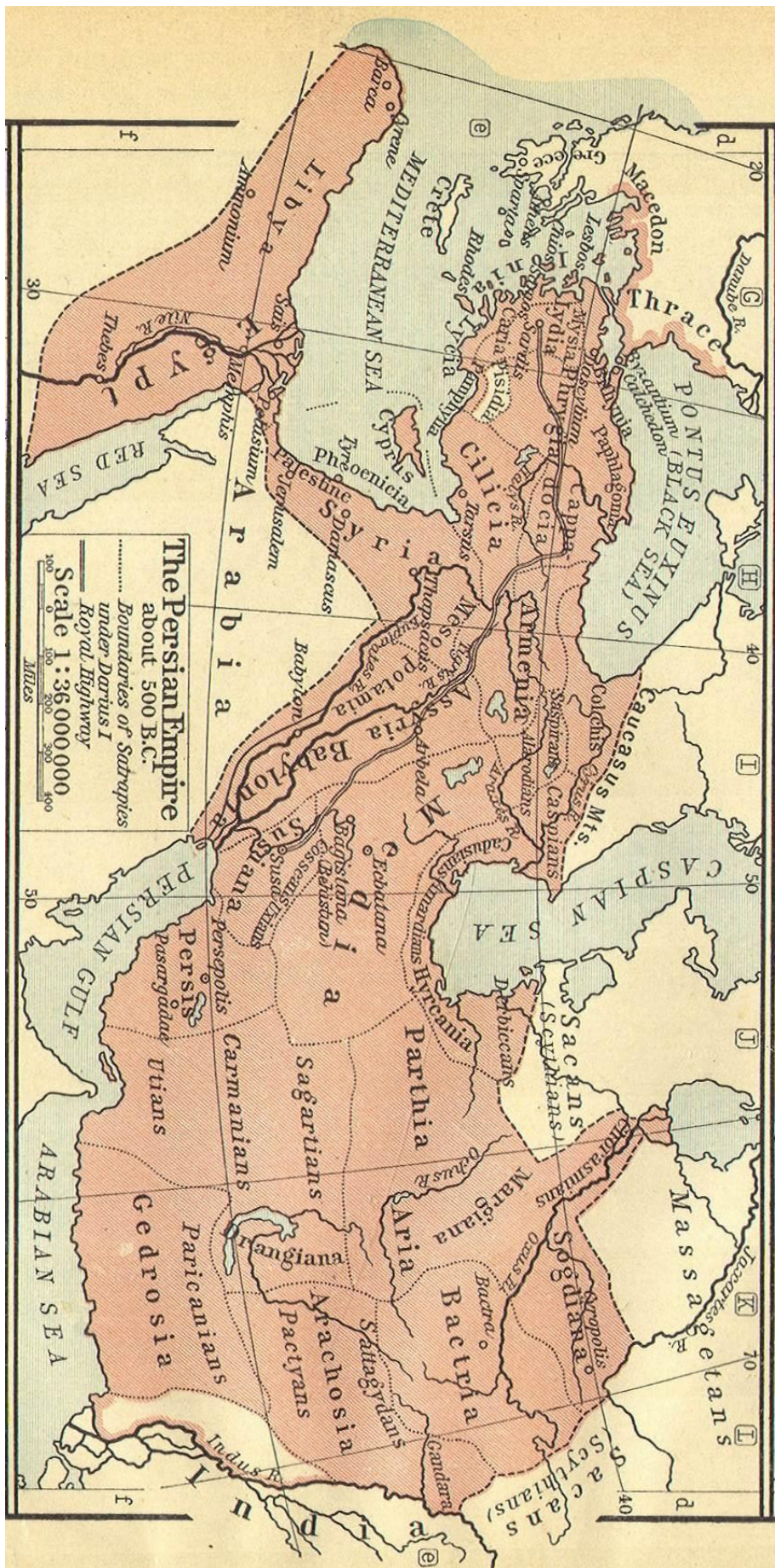
Handwork:

- Color one of the clipart pages found below.
- Or, do one of the dot-to-dot pages found below.

petition

to deliver

Medes and Persians

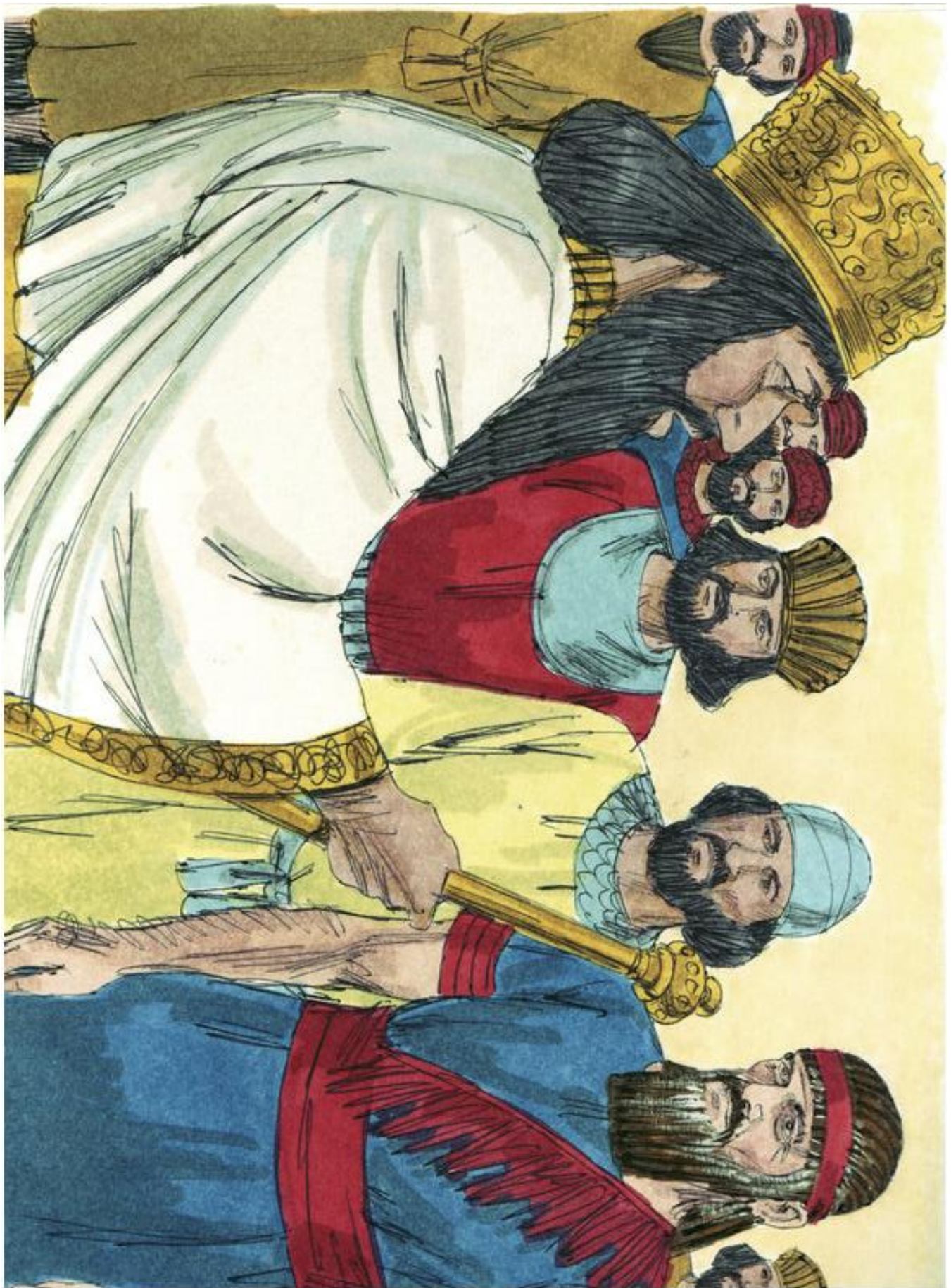


Persian Empire around 500 B.C.

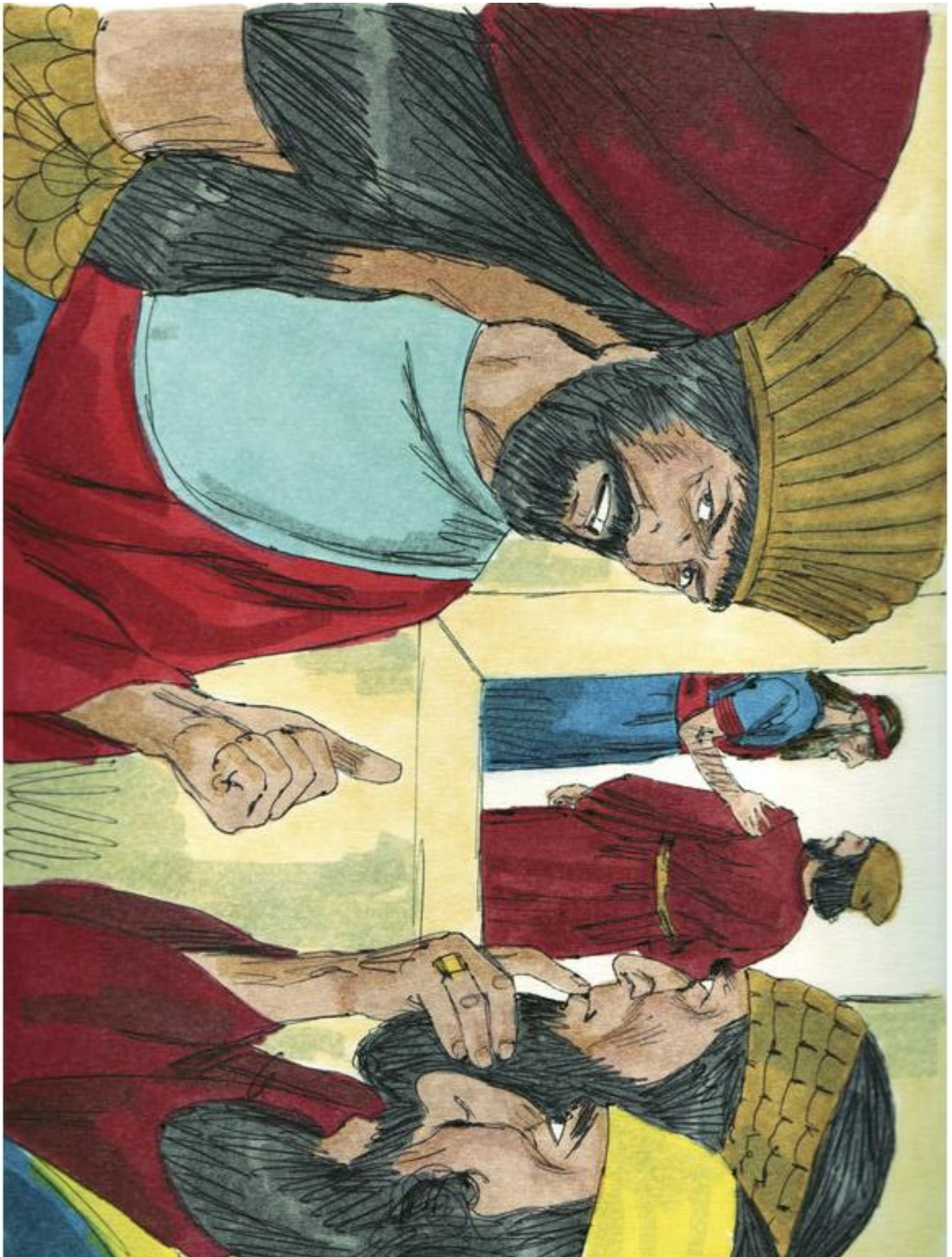


God sent His angel, and shut the lions' mouths.

From *Favourite Bible Stories*, illustrated by C. E. and H. M. Brock (altered)



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DANIEL WAS A MAN OF PRAYER

F. NORMAN BARRINGTON
ELSIE LESLIE

(Near The Cross)

W. H. DOANE

1. Dan-iel was a man of prayer, Dai-ly prayed he² three times,³ Till one day they
2. Just like Dan-iel you should be, Faith-ful to the Sav-iour; There are oth-ers

had him cast,⁴ In the den of li-ons. ⁵E-ven then,⁴ in the den,⁵ Fears could not a-
stand-ing near, Watch-ing your be-hav-iour. Trust and pray, and o-bey, When life's trials a-

larm him,⁶ God just shut the li-ons' mouths, So they could not harm him.
larm you, God is there to take your hand, Noth-ing then can harm you.

MOTIONS: ① Hands clasped in attitude of prayer ② Hold up three fingers ③ Motion of casting him down ④ Point down ⑤ Shake head ⑥ One loud snappy clap, or finger on mouth and long pause.

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DARE TO BE A DANIEL

P. P. B.
ELSIE LESLIE

P. P. BLISS

1. Dare to be a Dan-iel, Dare to stand a-lone!
2. Dare to be like Dan-iel, To the Lord be true!

Dare to have a pur- pose firm! Dare to make it known!
Pur- pose in your heart to serve Him; He will care for you.

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Lions sleep about 20+ hours a day.



Lions can run up to 50 miles per hour.



A lion's roar can be heard up to 5 miles away.



Although called "the king of the jungle," lions prefer to live on grasslands.



Lions do not walk
on their heels;
they tiptoe.



Female lions do the
hunting while the
males guard the
cubs and pride area.



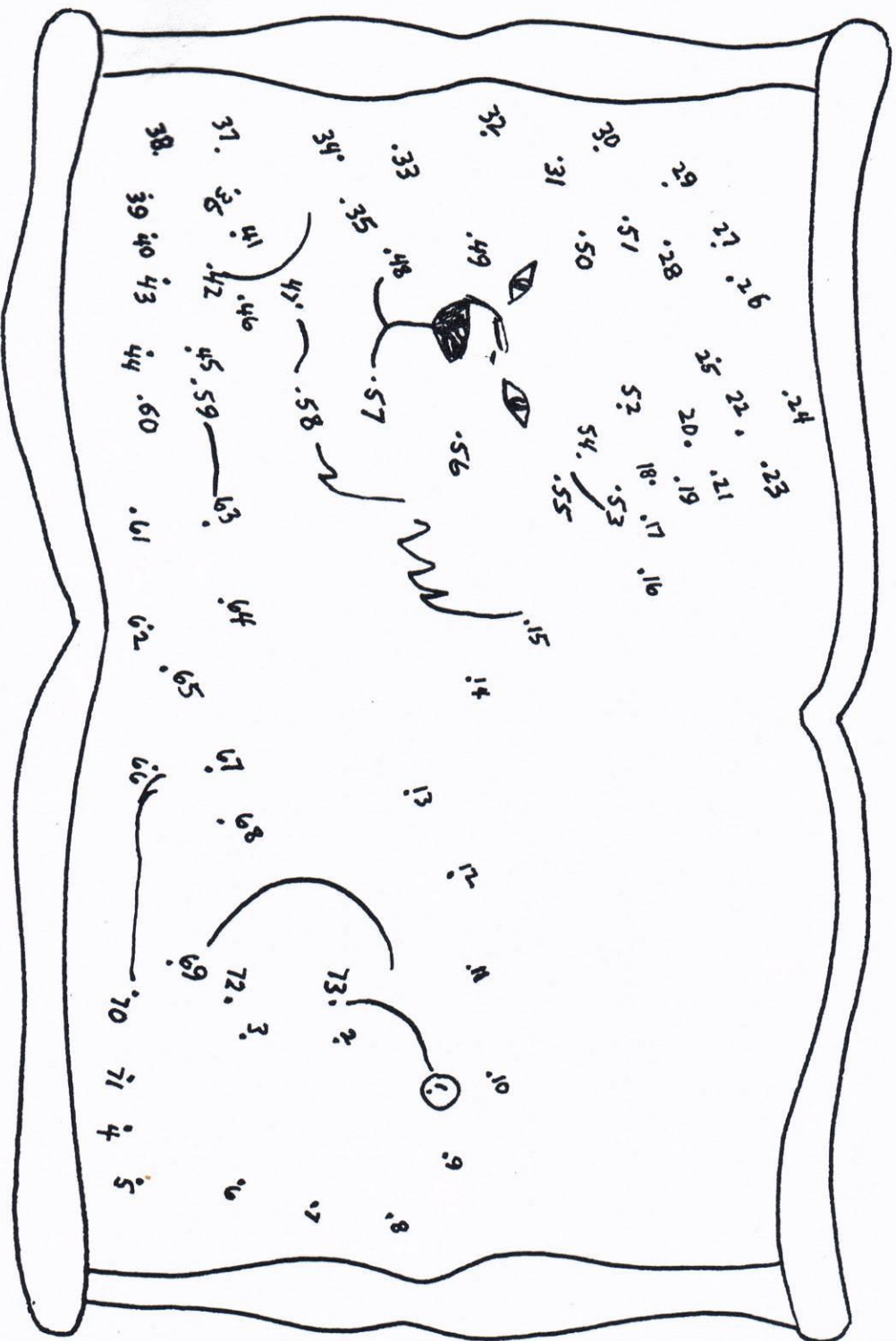
Lions live in
groups called prides.
More females than
males are in a pride.



Lions can leap
up to 35 feet.



3. PUZZLE TIME - Connect the dots and see what is in the picture. No. 1 is circled so you know where to begin.

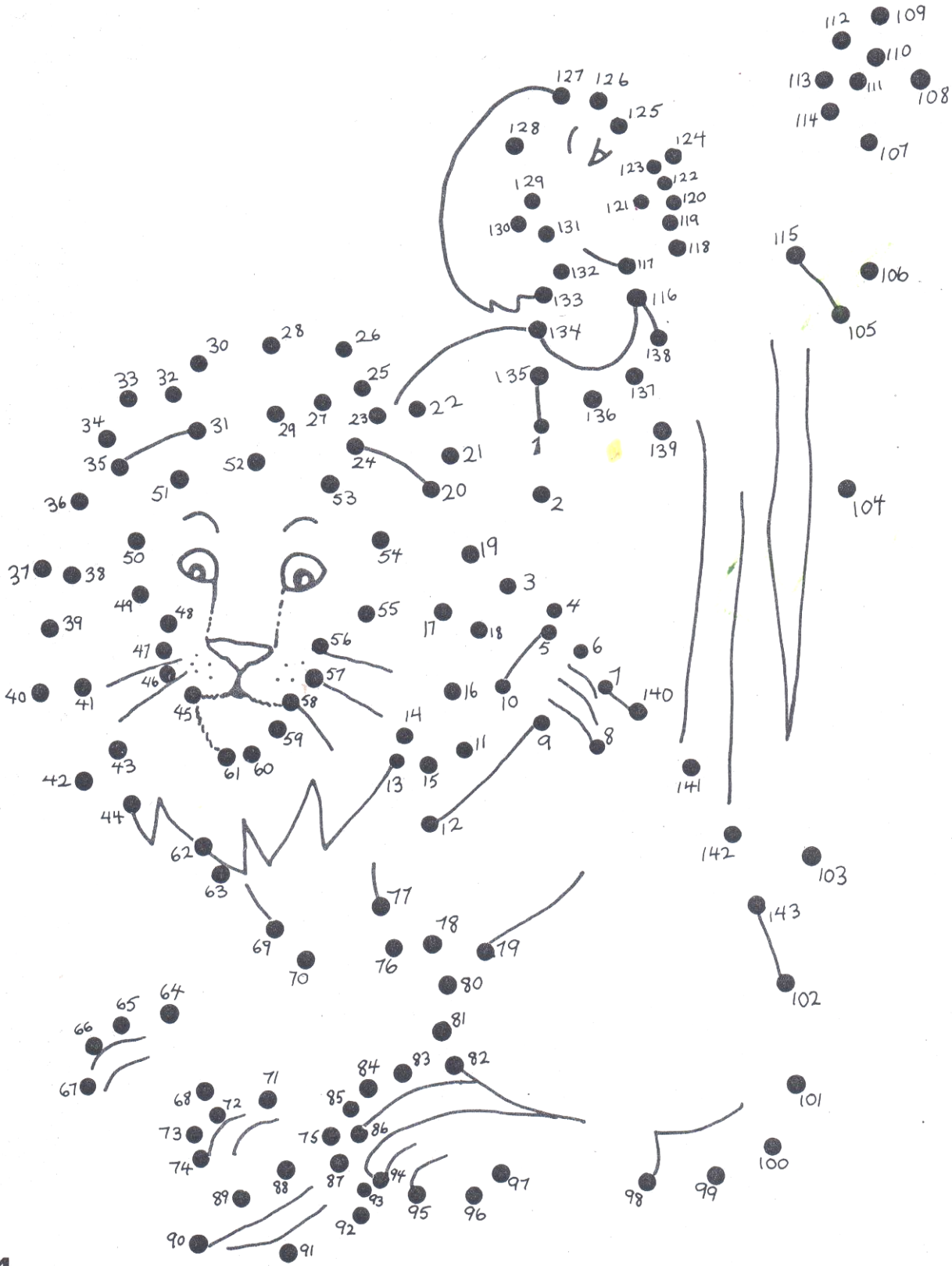


Psalm

55:17:

"Evening,
and
morning,
and at
noon, will I
pray, and
cry aloud;
and he
shall hear
my voice."

Dot To Dot



4

Daniel 6:26, 27: "... The God of Daniel ... is the living God, enduring forever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end. He delivers and rescues; he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions."





God protects Daniel in a den of lions. Daniel 6:1-28