

God ★ Be you ★ Stand Out ★ In God ★ Be you ★ Stand Out ★

# Sunday School lesson

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# Footprints: Be you, stand out!

## Introduction to the lesson

This Sunday school lesson is very extensive. You might want to divide it into sections and use it in two or three Sunday school classes.

The aim of the lesson is that children understand the impact that Daniel had on the life of King Darius and that children think about the impact they can have on others.

The questions in bold are key in this lesson. Make sure you take time to listen to the children and acknowledge their answer. There are no 'wrong' answers. Children use their imagination and personal spirituality to understand what God is saying to them. We are just 'facilitators'.

### Memory Verses: Daniel 6:26-27

***'For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end. He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions'***

## Introduction to the theme 'footprints'

### Footprint

#### noun

foot·print | \ 'füt-,print \

**Definition of footprint:** *An impression of the foot on a surface*

**Ask the children and listen to their response.**

**Have you ever noticed your footprints in the sand?**

*When you step, you leave a mark which can last a long time after you have left. Footprints are the impressions or images left behind by a person walking or running.*

**Ask the children to have a look at their feet, the shape, size as well as other unique traits of it. Ask them if they perhaps have a 'beauty spot' on it.**

### Did you know?

After Daniel and his three buddies were taken as captives to Babylon, the king changed their names. He wanted to turn them into Babylonians (It didn't work)

**Read Daniel 1:6-7 to see what their new names were**





### Lesson Activity

Do a little icebreaker or game that relates to the theme 'footprints'. Here are some suggestions<sup>1</sup>:

1. **Toe skills:** All players or members of the team sit next to each other and try to pass on corks from neighbour to neighbour with their toes.
2. **Balancing balloons:** Only using the feet, one or more balloons must be kept up in the air without the balloon touching the ground. This can also be timed.
3. **Bare foot park:** Different materials must be identified while blindfolded using only the feet to feel the items.

**Ask the children and listen to their response:**

**What do you think of when you think about your footprint?**

**Acknowledge the answers by repeating or rephrasing them.**

Today we are looking at the story of Daniel which is found in the Old Testament. The Bible story of Daniel shows the confidence, commitment and courage of four young men in a very difficult time. They were taken captive by King Nebuchadnezzar. The Bible story shows how Daniel and his friends left a big footprint in the lives of others – and especially King Nebuchadnezzar and King Darius – by their dedication to God and service to others in very tough times.

## The story of Daniel

Find a creative way to read the story of Daniel together with the children. Maybe you want to use a special children's Bible or a YouTube video. Be as creative as you can! In the lesson we will focus on chapter six.

**Here are some suggestions for you:**

### 1. Books:

- [\*'Daniel in the Lions' Den'\*](#), The Brick Bible for Kids by Brendan Powell Smith. The Brick Bible Book Store

### 2. Videos:

- [Daniel in the Lions' Den](#)
- [Daniel and the Lion's Den - Animated Scripture Lesson for Kids](#)
- [VeggieTales - Daniel and the Lions' Den](#)

<sup>1</sup> For more game suggestions, visit: <https://www.youthwork-practice.com/games/feets-toes-legs-games.html>



**Ask the children and listen to their response: Can you describe yourself in three words? And what are those words?**

**Acknowledge their response by repeating or rephrasing it.**

Maybe you describe yourself as 'humorous, intelligent and lazy', but it could also be 'polite, shy and helpful'. All these words describe your character. Our character has a huge impact on our lives and our relationships. If you are honest, people will trust you. If you are lazy, you will not be seen as a hard worker. In the story of Daniel we see how his character impacts the lives of people around him.

Darius became king when he and his armies overcame Belshazzar and entered Babylon under the walls. As the ruler of this new territory, Darius chose 120 satraps or governors to have authority over the people living in the different territories. The 120 satraps/governors were under the leadership of three vice presidents that the king chose.

**Ask the children and listen to their response: What three words describe the character of Daniel?**

**Acknowledge their response by repeating or rephrasing it.**

### **Background information about the story in Daniel chapter 6**

Daniel had a very good reputation before King Darius, and because of his excellent reputation the king was planning to promote him and planned to set him over the whole kingdom.

The two other vice presidents did not like the idea that the king was planning to make Daniel ruler over the entire kingdom. They were jealous because the king thought Daniel was an excellent man with an exceptional reputation. They didn't want him promoted as ruler over the entire kingdom. They were looking hard for something wrong with Daniel instead of looking out for his best interest.

The only way they could keep Daniel from looking good in the eyes of the king was to look for something that Daniel was doing wrong in his work. Surely, they could find a time when he was dishonest in his job or took money that didn't belong to him. Maybe they could catch him taking a nap at his desk when he was supposed to be working. They searched and searched for something bad to say about Daniel but couldn't find anything wrong. In everything Daniel was trustworthy and faithful.

It frustrated the two vice presidents that they could not find anything wrong with Daniel's behaviour. They still wanted to make him look bad to the king so they thought about it and realised that the only way they could make Daniel look bad is if they made him break God's laws. They knew that Daniel was faithful to his God and the only way he could do something wrong was if he sinned against God.

The two vice presidents gathered many of the satraps that were serving in the kingdom and told them their plan to bring Daniel down. They wanted so desperately to get Daniel in trouble that they began to negatively influence the satraps as well. When they came up with their plan and got the crowd of people pumped up about their plan, they took it to King Darius.





Imagine being King Darius on the day his appointed leaders show up before him. They stood before him and spoke flattering words. They said, 'O King Darius, live forever! We have gotten together and have agreed that we think that you should make a law that for the next 30 days no one should pray to any other god except to you. If anyone breaks your law the punishment will be that they are thrown into the lions' den.'

**Ask the children and listen to their response: How would King Darius respond, do you think?**

**Acknowledge the responses by repeating or rephrasing them and say: 'Let's have a look how King Darius responded.'**

The king was flattered. Here was a group of his leaders suggesting that all the people only pray to him for the next 30 days. It sounded like a good idea to him because he was probably thinking how wonderful it would be to be praised by the people of his kingdom. He wrote out the law and signed and sealed the law making the law unchangeable. What was written must take place and no one could change the king's law.

**Ask the children: Who do you think has a positive impact on King Darius? Daniel or the vice presidents? Why do you think so?**

**Acknowledge the responses by repeating or rephrasing.**

The vice presidents left a negative impact on the satraps and the king: their aim was to hurt Daniel and sin against God. Daniel's impact was positive; he helped the king with his exceptional qualities.

When Daniel heard that the law was written and signed by the king he went home and did what he always did. He opened his window that was facing in the direction of Jerusalem, a place he lived with God's people many years before. He got on his knees and began to pray and asked God for help.

Daniel was faithful to God and did not let anything keep him from praying and talking to God.

As Daniel was praying with his window open, the administrators and satraps came to his house and found him praying to his God. They rushed back to King Darius and said, 'Daniel, who is one of the exiles (someone who was taken from their own land) from Judah pays no attention to you, O King, or to the law you put into writing. He still prays three times a day to his God.'

King Darius was very troubled. He knew Daniel was a faithful man with an excellent spirit. He tried very hard to keep Daniel from being punished because he broke this law. He worked hard until the day was over trying to rescue Daniel from his punishment.

**Ask the children and listen to their responses: How do you feel about King Darius? Acknowledge the responses by repeating or rephrasing them.**

**Ask the children and listen to their responses: Have you ever felt like Darius, regretting an action because it hurts someone else? Acknowledge the responses by repeating or rephrasing them.**



The administrators and satraps came to the king and reminded him that he could not break his own law and that Daniel was to be punished in the lions' den.

King Darius didn't use wisdom when he made his law. He was influenced by people who wanted to hurt Daniel. He might have thought the law would make him feel happy and loved. But eventually it made him feel sad. He knew he made a mistake. And because of that Daniel now was being placed in a dangerous situation. Knowing that he had no other choice, Darius ordered Daniel to be thrown into the lions' den. As Daniel was being taken to the den, the king said: 'May your God, whom you serve continually rescue you!'

As Daniel was thrown into the lions' den the king had a stone placed over the mouth of the den and sealed it with his signet ring. Darius returned to his palace and spent the entire night without eating or having any kind of entertainment.

***Ask the children and listen to their responses: I wonder what else King Darius did that night and how he felt...***

***Look around to see who wants to respond and acknowledge each response by repeating or rephrasing it.***

We don't know exactly what he did, but we know that it must have been a long night for Darius.

As soon as it was daylight Darius ran to the lions' den. When he got to the den he called out to Daniel in an anguished voice, 'Daniel servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?'

What a relief it was for Darius to hear Daniel say, 'O King, live forever! My God sent his angels and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O King.'

Daniel had been protected by God all the time! Continue to have confidence in God, to commit to his will and to be courageous in difficult times. God will protect you and help you in your difficulty. If you stay connected to God each day, by listening to him, praying and reading his Words, you will gain strength through his holy spirit, just like Daniel.

The king was overjoyed that Daniel was alive! He gave orders to lift Daniel up out of the den. They brought him out and there wasn't a bite mark or a scratch found on his body because of God's presence!

King Darius wrote a new law that said that everyone in his kingdom must honour and respect Daniel's God. King Darius saw God's power in Daniel's godly life and his protection from the hungry lions. Darius praised the living God before the people.

***Ask the children and listen to their response: What footprint did Daniel leave on the life of King Darius? Or: What impact had Daniel's life on the life of King Darius?***

***Acknowledge the responses by repeating or rephrasing them.***

Daniel's confidence, commitment and courage influenced those around him. Look at the impact that Daniel had on the life of King Darius!





**Ask the children and listen to their responses: How can you leave your footprint/ can you have a positive impact on others with your character, talents, gifts and skills?**

**Acknowledge the responses by repeating or rephrasing them.**

If you are trying to be a good influence it is important that you ask God to show you if you have any habits or attitudes that might not be a good example to those who are watching you.

If you have not accepted God's love for you and his forgiveness, then simply ask for that and ask for his Holy Spirit to help you.

Let us choose to live good lives among others so we can be a light for others and glorify God!

## Lesson Review Questions

- What part of this story did you like the most?
- Who is Darius?
- How many satraps did Darius have in his kingdom?
- Why were the two vice presidents jealous of Daniel?
- Why were they looking for something that Daniel had done wrong in his life?
- How did they plan to get Daniel in trouble before the king?
- Why was Darius upset when they told him about Daniel praying?
- What did Darius do at night when Daniel was in the lions' den?
- How was Daniel protected in the den?
- Which person from this story would you like to be and why?
- What do you think is the most important part of this story?
- What can you do this week that will be a positive influence in another person's life?

These questions are based on ministry to children<sup>1</sup> and wonder questions from Godly Play<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ministry to youth - Daniel & the lions den (lesson activities)

<sup>2</sup> Godly Play UK – A Christian movement centered on childhood spirituality



# Following in Daniel's example:

## Keys to leaving your footprints where you are.

1

### Love God

God's love is for you, his love is all around you. God gave his only son Jesus that whosoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16). If you are to make the impact where you are, God's love is all that you need. His love will enable you to love others and yourself. It is his love that will make you go the extra mile to see God's will fulfilled

2

### The word of God and prayer

It's important to study the Bible because God's Word guides you in the right direction in life. It lights the way ahead of you so you can see clearly which way to go. Through every season of your life, you can be confident that God is always leading you through his Word (Psalm 119:11).

Studying the Bible gives you God's heart and mind for your life and for people around you. God delights to answer when you pray from this place of abiding in Christ and his Word. Daniel and his friends understood the role of God's Word and prayer in their lives and continued listening to God under every circumstance.

3

### Be sold out to God – Obedience

People who really left a footprint like Nelson Mandela and Mother Teresa have one thing in common: they focused on others and not themselves. If you want to leave eternal footprints, focus on Christ and others and care less about your position, status or reputation.

Daniel and his friends were totally sold out to God and lived in obedience to his will for their lives. Daniel loved God more than anything, so he wanted to stay connected to God, no matter what others said. It only takes one boy or girl who is willing to be obedient to be used by God to impact a family, community, school, city or even an entire nation. Simple obedience can lead to things you cannot imagine.

4

### A man of the Spirit and power

Just like Daniel, you can be full of the Holy Spirit and power if you are to make indelible marks with infallible proofs.

5

### Wisdom of God

Wisdom is the ability to discern and judge which aspects of that knowledge are true, right, lasting and applicable to your life. Knowing the difference between the two can sometimes be difficult. For you to leave your footprints wherever you are, you need wisdom too. Make sure you have wise and spiritual people around you that can help you making the right decisions.





6

### Spiritual family

Just like Daniel, we need friends who journey with us, also in our journey of faith. Make sure you are surrounded by spiritual friends and a loving community of faith. They will support you in tough times and you will support them!

**Every person can make a difference by changing his or her pattern of behaviour.**  
**How can you?**

Incorporate these suggestions to reduce your ecological footprint and make a positive impact!

1. **Consume consciously:** This is really important, sometimes we are not aware of the huge impact our consumerism and spending habits have on the environment... Try to think about the things you REALLY need to buy.
2. **Incorporate sustainable practices into your lifestyle:** There are many things we can do about it, but we don't have to do it all at once... Making lifestyle changes can be harder than it seems, so try to focus on the small steps you can take at home, at work or even at church.

Perhaps you can start by using public transport more often, taking your re-usable coffee mug to the coffee shop, cutting down on your meat consumption, and reducing your use of single use and disposable plastics.

3. **Support sustainable and socially responsible companies:** Look for trusted labels when shopping! This can be difficult at times, but try to look for fair trade, ethical trade and cruelty-free labels.
4. **Make your voice heard:** Tell others about what you are doing to reduce your ecological footprint and why they should join you too.
5. **And never stop praying.**



### More resources

1. Visit <http://www.myfootprint.org> to accurately calculate your footprint.
2. If you want to know more about your carbon footprint and how to reduce it, visit <https://www.funkidslive.com/learn/what-is-a-carbon-footprint-and-what-can-we-do-to-reduce-it/>
3. Check out our [‘Faith talks’ card game](#).



## Fun foot facts<sup>1</sup>

1. During your lifetime, it's likely that you'll walk approximately 115,000 miles. That's like circling the globe on foot over four times.
2. There are 26 bones in a foot. That's one-quarter of all the bones found in your body. Each foot also has 33 joints, 107 ligaments and 19 tendons and muscles.
3. Your feet may just be the most ticklish part of your body.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nyfoothealth.com/blog/2021/8/18/did-you-know-fun-facts-about-feet>

