

**GUEST SPEAKER
SATISH KUMAR**

Leaders: Due to having a guest speaker, *there are no Sermon Notes this week.*
Please use the space below for your personal notes

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

Note: Due to having a guest speaker this weekend, we do not have **Sermon Based Leader Notes** or Small Group questions. We have prepared questions for you that will be easy to use even if your group doesn't get to see them ahead of time. However, you can send the Small Group Questions to your group or encourage them to download them from our website.

Please connect with your group before you meet and encourage them to read Daniel 6 this week!

Getting Started

1. Lions are viewed as fear-inducing. What is it about these animals that give them this type of reputation? List out some of their intimidating attributes (e.g., strength, poise, ferocity, speed, etc.). If you were asked to walk into a literal lion's den and spend one hour with them (no protective barrier between you and them), would you choose to do so? How about 10 minutes? 1 minute? Why? **You might open the discussion with your own experience of going to the zoo and watching this imposing animal up close. What were your internal reactions to the lion? Are you a person who naturally likes being close to animals or do you feel fear at this idea?**
2. Read 1 Peter 5:8. Describe how a human being can behave like a lion. What is it about this type of person that can be seen as challenging or fear-inducing? When have you observed someone acting like a predator toward another person? What was it like for you to witness this scenario? **We see people act like lions in just about every example of life (as a spouse, parent, boss, customer, salesperson, friend, etc.). Lion-types are generally "looking for someone to devour" (from 1 Peter 5:8). Even though the "lion" might deny that devouring is his/her motive, his/her actions would indicate otherwise. When have you (leader) had a conflict with a lion-type in your life?**

Going Deeper

1. Read Ephesians 6:11 and 1 Corinthians 16:13. What determines someone's ability to stand firm before an aggressor? What are the most important concerns in this person's life? How might their daily life (their habits, relationships, character, personal boundaries, etc.) prepare them to defend themselves mentally and emotionally? Conversely, what keeps a person afraid of interpersonal lions? **Simple as it may sound, we all prepare for something. We either prepare to face reality (proactive), or we prepare to be impacted (reactive). Standing firm can be as simple as a deliberate daily practice (this will be dealt with later). Also, you can talk about the difference between a *paralyzing* fear and a *motivating* fear.**

2. How do people typically deal with the lions in their lives? Let's look at three scenarios: **This section is designed to help the small group connect with the reality that at different times in our lives we all have been one of the three types mentioned below.**
 - a. *The Runner who runs away*: What do you think goes on inside a Runner's head and heart? What causes them to run away? What kind of lifestyle, habits, and intentions (or lack of) make them the kind of person to run away when a lion shows up? How might they view themselves? How might they view God?

 - b. *The Ostrich who hides his/her head*: These types of people choose to hope the problem (issue or person) simply goes away. When have you seen someone deal with a life issue this way? What else might be going on in their lives that makes "hiding" seem like a reasonable response to any challenge? Describe a real-life example of observing an Ostrich.

 - c. *The Facer who stands firm*: What separates the Facer from the Runner and the Ostrich? Describe the choices this person habitually makes that are different from the choices that the Runner and Ostrich make. Describe what goes on inside a Facer's mind and heart when they face a lion. **Have you (leader) been a Runner, Ostrich, or Facer? Share a story from your own life.**

3. Read Daniel 6:10. Talk about the daily life of Daniel and how it prepared him for his lion challenge. Describe how his daily customs determined the actions that Daniel took. Describe someone you know who maintained a specific daily custom and how this determined the way they faced their own challenges. **We don't always have the awareness of how our daily practices help us face the threats and problems in life. But life seems to be filled with lions. Since we live in a predator-populated world, all of us either have *just* faced a lion, are *currently* facing a lion, or are *getting ready* to face another lion. Talk about how preparation allows us to think long-term about our challenges.**
4. Read Daniel 6:4-5. These men are lions. What might their practices have been like? Why would Daniel have been such a threat to them? Describe their desires and ambitions. Have you ever known someone like these men? Describe your interactions with this person. **It's good to understand lions. They have an operational method. The more we are aware of their method, the better we can prepare for their attack.**
5. Just as we watch people, they watch us. Read Daniel 6:14-20. What was King Darius' experience of watching Daniel? What types of behaviors had he observed that would have given him specific insights into Daniel's character? **Daniel lived his life "out in the open." He didn't hide his worship of God or deny his allegiance to God. Daniel lived in such a way that King Darius took notice. Walk your members through a typical "day in the life of Daniel." Imagine what it might have been like to spend a day with this prophet of God. This might help them catch some of the seemingly insignificant things he was doing that would have caused King Darius to know there was something different about him. Remember, Daniel's lifestyle was not obtrusive, rude, or self-righteous. Yet, he made a specific impression. He earned influence in the King's world. Who might you know like Daniel?**

6. Read Daniel 6:23. Why do you think the last words of this verse – “he believed in his God” – are so important? Describe how Daniel’s active belief in God determined the outcome of his face-off with the lions. How does a person engage his/her belief in God? How have you engaged your belief in God? **There is a difference between active and passive belief, and we all experience both. For example, we show that we actively believe that our marriage is worth the work by *doing* work (we act on the belief). But we *passively* believe that people in general also believe this way about marriage (it’s a fact we believe that takes no action to demonstrate). One causes us to act; the other does not. Why is *active* belief so crucial when it comes to our faith?**

Applying the Message

1. Think about the lions in your life. What do you observe about them: habits, friendships, choices, challenges, mistakes, sin? Which relational predator holds the top place in your mind and heart? How did he/she get there? How long has she/he been there? How are you dealing with that lion (Runner, Ostrich, Facer)? **The people in your group (even you) are at different places regarding lions (Runner, Ostrich, or Facer). The point of this question is to help them get clear about it. Exploring this question is the key to helping them move forward in faith.**
2. How does this lesson on Daniel challenge you to face your lion? What fears rise in your heart as you contemplate doing this? What will happen if you don’t deal with it? What might happen if you do?
3. What do you need to do next to face this lion? Whose help do you need? In what way do you need to hand this battle over to God? **God wants to deliver us from our lions. He is simply waiting for us to be honest with Him about what we need from Him and to engage our trust in Him.**