

Daniel in the Lion's Den

Daniel 6:18-28

By Scott Huckaby

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Daniel 6:1-17 Summary: Men plotted against Daniel influencing King Darius to decree a law that they would use against him. Daniel was forced to choose between obeying God or yielding to the new law of man. He remained faithful to God which meant that he was to suffer the consequences of going to the lion's den.

What applications are there from this discussion?

- God blesses His servants who do excellent work.
- Obey the authorities unless their rule causes us to disobey God; then civil disobedience is called for.

Daniel Saved from the Lions, Daniel 6:18-23

¹⁸ Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep ¹ went from him. ¹⁹ Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. ²⁰ And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "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, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."

²³ Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.

What did the king do while Daniel was in the lion's den?

He fasted, isolated himself and lost sleep because of worry.

How did King Darius show concern for Daniel?

- How he spent the night
- Going to the lion's den at first dawn
- Calling out to Daniel hoping for a response!
- He was glad when he realized Daniel had survived the lion's den

How did Daniel respond to the king calling out to him?

With respect... "O King live forever! My God sent his angel, and shut the mouths of the lions..." (v21-22)

v22 – How was it that Daniel had done no wrong before the king?

- He was still faithful to the king as God's governing proxy on earth (Romans 13).
- His prayers were simply to the only One who was able to hear him and had the power to affect change
- He had done nothing to harm his throne, or to cause any dissatisfaction among the King's subjects

v23 – How did Daniel manage to survive the lion's den unscathed?

Because "he had trusted in his God"

Darius Honors God, Daniel 6:24-28

²⁴ And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.

²⁵ Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. ²⁶ I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, and steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, And His dominion shall endure to the end. ²⁷ He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. ²⁸ So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

What happened to those who conspired against Daniel?

- Those governors and satraps who accused Daniel were thrown into the lion's den along with their wives and children
- They were killed before they even reached the bottom of the den

What is the principle here?

Sin always has consequences & conspiring against God will not end well...

Psalm 7:14-16 – *Behold, the wicked brings forth iniquity; Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood. He made a pit and dug it out, and has fallen into the ditch which he made. His trouble shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown.*

God will cause our enemy to be impaled on the very snare our enemy has set for us.

Why were the wives and children included in the execution?

- Sin impacts others, especially those close to us
- It kept family members from holding a grudge and attempting retribution

What decree did this situation cause Darius to make?

- The new “decree” resembled the decree King Nebuchadnezzar issued after Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had been removed from the fiery furnace (Dan 3:29)
- That people must fear and have reverence for the God of Daniel.
- It was a testimony of recognizing God’s existence, capabilities, and His control over circumstances

Did King Darius come to trust in the Creator-God?

It certainly appears so...

- King Darius and probably others were brought to God through the miracle of Daniel being delivered from the lion’s den!

How did it work out in the end for Daniel trusting in God?

“Daniel prospered under the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian” (v28) [6th Century B.C.]

Note: Daniel was about eighty years old and had been in obscurity for some years since Nebuchadnezzar’s death. This event caused the Persians to recognize his genius in administration, and he prospered for the remaining years of his life.

What do we know about King Cyrus who superseded King Darius?

It was King Cyrus who made the decree permitting the Jews to return to their land and rebuild the Temple...

2 Chronicles 36:22-23 – *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put*

it in writing, saying, thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who is among you of all His people? May the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up!

As prophesied...

Jeremiah 29:10 – *For thus says the Lord: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.* [7th Century B.C.]

Even prophesied by name...

Isaiah 44:28 – *Who says of Cyrus, ‘He is My shepherd, and he shall perform all My pleasure, saying to Jerusalem, ‘You shall be built,’ And to the temple, ‘Your foundation shall be laid.’* [8th Century B.C.]

The fulfillment...

Ezra 1:2 – *Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah.*

Was Cyrus a believer?

No; in Isaiah 45:4, God said of Cyrus, *“though you have not known me.”*

- Cyrus was a polytheist who acknowledged a pantheon of gods.

God routinely uses unbelievers so that His will be done:

Proverbs 21:1 – *The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.*

What observations have you made about the story of Daniel and the lion’s den?

1. Jealousy is a powerful sin that can cause much harm to others
2. Daniel remained faithful to God being steadfast in his prayers
3. Compromise with the world of men was not an option to Daniel
4. Integrity matters and is rewarded by God
5. Daniel remained untouched by the immorality and idolatry of those about him and had a testimony among all men of his faithfulness to his God

This concludes the strictly historical section of the Book of Daniel. From this point forward, the book is mainly concerned with the visions and prophecies which were given to Daniel over the long period of his life spent in a foreign land...

Chapter 7 – Vision of the four beasts; the vision of the Son of Man coming in the clouds

Chapter 8 – Daniel’s vision of the ram and the he-goat and its meaning

Chapter 9 – The prayer of Daniel; prophecy of the Seventy Weeks

Chapter 10 – The vision of Christ glorified; transforming effect on Daniel; message from an unidentified heavenly messenger

Chapter 11 – Antiochus Epiphanes; type of the Antichrist

Chapter 12 – The Great Tribulation; resurrection of Old Testament saints; Sealing of Prophecy until the end time; the Abomination of Desolation; time between Tribulation Period and the Millennium Period

What applications are there from this discussion?

- God delivered Daniel from the Lion’s den and won over King Darius and others as a result.
- Sin always has consequences & conspiring against God will not end well.
- Sin impacts others, especially those close to us
- Integrity matters and is rewarded by God