

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

BOOK OF DANIEL

PLOTTING (DANIEL 6:1-9)

A NEW EMPIRE

A little time had passed since Babylon fell, and Darius the Mede had come into power and was organizing the empire by appointing 120 satraps (governors)

- Darius was a reasonable man that created healthy systems with multiple levels of responsibility and accountability so he “would not be defrauded”

CHAPTER 6 HAS A HUGE MORAL

The simple lesson of living righteously in alien surroundings and depending on God to deliver us from danger is just, or maybe more so, important as prophecy

- Often times **the believer can be so focused on heaven that they forget the day-to-day lifestyle that will lead us to our eternity!**

DISTINGUISHED ABOVE THE ADMINISTRATION

We're not sure why Daniel was spared when the Medo-Persian army came in, but we do know his reputation, work ethic, and abilities made him stand out in the kingdom. Because of this, Darius made him 2nd in command

- This is also a reminder to all Believers that our work ethic and reputation must be strong

POLITICAL CORRUPTION

Darius had set up a system to hold politicians accountable, but he could not ultimately stop jealousy and deception.

- 1st point of attack is Daniel's competence. This was problematic because he was **“trustworthy and no negligence or corruption was found”**

THERE WAS A VULNERABILITY

Daniel's mastery of the language, culture, laws, and literature would make age and race a non issue, but Daniel was a monotheist living in a land of polytheism and would have faced prejudice much like racism or ageism today.

- Like today, **exclusivity of one God is a source of major contention**

A HURDLE FOR THE BAD GUYS

Though Daniel was different, there was no law prohibiting monotheistic worship, so they had to play to the king's ego in order to create a legal trap for Daniel

- **The early advantage usually goes to the one with malicious intent**, and we see this in the plotting by the satraps in the capital

DARIUS WAS NO THEOLOGICAL GIANT

Though intelligent, he did not realize that the edict proposed to him to worship only the king for 30 days would target his most important leader. On the surface, the edict looked like a great plan to unify the Middle and Near East.

- **Unification must be calculative, and is not always an option.**

COUNTER-CULTURE

- The ways of Christ will always bring tension with the culture of the world. We are not to “conform to this age,” but to be transformed by God renewing our thinking. (Romans 12:2)

THE DEN (DANIEL 6:10-16)

IN TIMES OF TROUBLE

v10 is central to the message of this chapter and to the character of Daniel. When Daniel learns of the edict, his reaction is to approach God with thanks and prayer

- What is our outlet for stress, confusion, heartache, anger, or the other curve balls of life? **Do we run to the “strong tower,” or a quick fix?**

BY HIS WINDOW FACING HIS HOMETLAND

It was custom to face the temple when Jews prayed, and the fact that Daniel did this openly means most people knew it.

- Because of the edict, it would've been tempting to compromise his worship, or at least shut the window, since it would only last a short time.

THEY SAW HIM BREAKING THE LAW

Christians are called to uphold the law unless it contradicts God. In Dan's case, if a law is passed to worship a man, his duty to God allows him to break that law.

- Romans 13 tells us to obey the government, but if in contradiction to God, we turn from man's law

SOME ELEMENTS TO DANIEL'S PRAYER TIME

He had a place of prayer, was persistent, had a posture(s), praised God, had consistency, and he petitioned God

- **Prayer needs to be sporadic, intentional, casual, formal, long, short, strategic, focused on God, others, and then you**

THE SATRAP'S PLAN HAD WORKED; THEY CAUGHT DANIEL BREAKING THE LAW

Darius was deeply upset that one of his closest leaders had fallen in a trap. He tried to free Daniel, but public opinion was more powerful than absolute power

GIVING IN TO THEIR DEMANDS

The satraps reminded Darius one more time that he could not back out of the edict. So, he was forced to throw Daniel into the lion's den. The Persians didn't use fire like the Babylonians, but this method was equally cruel and unusual

THE PLACES SIN LEADS US

The sin of the Persians led them to brutality. The king realized too late what his lifestyle was producing, and he had to follow Daniel, his innocent leader, to the den

- **Unforgiven sin can take us to unimaginable depths.** Hopefully we will realize the depravity sin leaves us in sooner, rather than later.

IN GOD'S HANDS

Darius had tried human deliverance and failed. Then, he realized Daniel's fate was in the hands of God. We too must humble ourselves enough to realize He is our only way for healing the past, equipping in the present, and giving us hope for a future.

DELIVERED (DANIEL 6:17-24)

IT MUST HAVE BEEN A LONG NIGHT

Darius would have usually spent his nights dining in luxury, but this night was spent fasting and meditating to Daniel's God

- After little to no sleep, the king rushed to the den with some expectation that Daniel might be alive. This was more than a rescue, this was a test of deity!

DANIEL WAS DELIVERED AGAIN

He tells Darius the lion's mouths were shut because he was innocent before God. He also assures him he hasn't committed a crime against him.

- Was the angel the same one in the furnace? Was it Christ incarnate?

WHAT WAS THAT NIGHT LIKE?

Daniel not only spent the night with lions, but with either an angel or the pre-incarnate Son of God, Jesus!

- **In our toughest and most terrifying times we can grow closer to God than we ever imagined.** Suffering has an odd way of creating community and making us better people.

OVERJOYED (WITH A TOUCH OF BARBARISM)

The king was ecstatic as he had Daniel hoisted out of the den unscathed because he had trusted in God. Then, he has the accusers and their wives and kids thrown to the lions where they were instantly killed

RESCUED FOR 2 REASONS

- Daniel was saved because he was innocent in front of God, and he had not committed crimes against others. This is our mandate throughout the Bible: Honor God with our lives, and treat others with respect and love.

ANOTHER DECREE (DANIEL 6:25-28)

DARIUS SENDS OUT ANOTHER DECREE

Similar to the decree of Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 4, Darius wants all people, nations, and languages in the known world to know the testimony of God's power

- We don't know the exact state of Darius' soul, but he at least acknowledges God, especially in his account of the sovereignty of God

ACKNOWLEDGING THE ALMIGHTY

Daniel's attitude, choices, and actions made a mark on another pagan king

- The life of a Believer that acknowledges the supremacy of Christ will result in a testimony that may show others the grandeur of God.

DANIEL PROSPERED AGAIN MUCH LIKE THE DAYS OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR

He lived several more years to study the scriptures and to revise his memoirs, which were likely published around 532 B.C.

A DEAD FAITH (JAMES 2:14-17)

- Darius had faith in the “God of Daniel” that He could do amazing things, but we are not sure if he devoted his life solely to the True God. So, a belief in the ability and person of God is incomplete. A faith that does not produce action is called “dead faith”

A SAVING FAITH

- There is a faith that says, “Even if lions tear me apart, I find hope, contentment, and love in Christ.”
- This is the kind of faith that changes the heart, thoughts, and actions of people. This is the faith that enables us to see like Jesus, and to be a part of the story of mankind's redemption