

# Daniel 6

## Daniel 6 – Introduction

### Background:

- The Babylonians attacked Jerusalem 3 times before the city fell: 606 BC, 597 BC, and 586 BC
- Daniel was probably taken captive (along with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego) in the attack of 606 BC
- The city was finally captured and destroyed in 586 BC

### Daniel and his three friends were in a foreign country

**What problems would people of God have in a foreign country?** They were away from their homeland, and they would have been tempted to "adapt" to the lifestyle of the new country

- Many men take business trips for their company, and it is always tempting to commit sins in another city that they would never consider doing in their home town
- So also Daniel was a long way from home and could have easily partaken of the wicked lifestyles of the Babylonians
- But he did not do that – he, along with his 3 friends, were faithful to God, even in the far-off land of Babylon

The nation of Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians in 539, but many of the Jews decided to stay in the new country (the Medo-Persian Empire)

- Daniel was in the group that chose to stay in Babylon

The new ruler was Cyrus the Great, but he turned over the empire to Darius [pronounced: da-ri'us – accent on the second syllable]

- Cyrus went off to conquer new parts of the world, while Darius was the acting ruler of the empire
- Cyrus remained the force uniting the Medes and the Persians

**What examples of courage do we see in *Daniel 1-5* with these 4 men?**

- Daniel 1* – Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego refused to eat the king's food (it would have violated the food laws of the Law of Moses)
- Daniel 2* – Daniel was brave enough to tell King Nebuchadnezzar the truth about the future fall of his kingdom
- Daniel 3* – Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego chose to be thrown into the fiery furnace, rather than violate the Law of Moses concerning bowing down to idols
- Daniel 4* – Daniel faithfully told Nebuchadnezzar the true meaning of his dream
- Daniel 5* – The prophet Daniel chose to speak the truth to Belshazzar, rather than cover up the fact that he was about to die at the hands of the Medes and the Persians

**Daniel 6** – Daniel was now an old man (probably 85-90 years old)

- He was serving in the Medo-Persian Empire under King Darius
- There were 3 commissioners over the empire and 120 "governors" or "satraps"
- Daniel was one of these 3 commissioners

**What does this show us about the reputation of Daniel?** He was a "foreigner" and a Jew, but the King respected Daniel – he had an excellent reputation and had been placed in a very high government position

But the other officials of the empire were jealous of Daniel

**Are there any other examples in the Bible of the problems that jealousy can bring on?**

- Joseph and his 10 brothers (they sold him to the Ishmaelite caravan because of their jealousy about his two dreams)

-The Pharisees were jealous of the crowds of people that Jesus was drawing, and it was that jealousy that cause them to come up with the plan to have him crucified  
Let us notice how the plot of these jealous commissioners unfolded

## **Daniel 6.1-5**

**V1-2** – Explain again the basic plan of government under King Darius? 3 commissioners who were over 120 satraps (regional governors)

-**What was the job of these officials?** To protect the kingdom that belonged to King Darius (v 2b)

**V3** – What kind of example did Daniel set? He distinguished himself over the other officials

-**How did he distinguish himself?** He had an "extraordinary spirit"

**V4** – How did the other officials begin to plot against Daniel? They tried to find some kind of charge they could bring against him

-**Were they able to find any flaw in his character that they could use to have him removed from government service?** No – there was no corruption or neglect of his assignments

**V5** – What did they come to realize? That they could only have him removed if they could trap him in his service to his God (his religion)

## **Daniel 6.6-9**

**V6** – Flattery

**V7** – What had all the government officials (except for the king himself) decided to recommend to the king? Anyone who worshipped any god other than the king would be thrown into the lion's den

-**How long would this decree last?** 30 days

**V8** – How long did the king have to consider this proposal? No time at all – they wanted him to sign it immediately

-**What was an unusual part of Persian law?** Once a law was passed, it could never be revoked

-**Where else do we read about this provision in Persian law?** In the book of *Esther* with the law that Jews could be killed on a certain day

**V9** – What was his decision? He signed it into the law

## **Daniel 6.10-13**

**V10** – What reaction did Daniel have to the new law? None at all – he kept on praying three times a day facing Jerusalem with his window open

-**Why does the Bible tell us that Daniel opened his windows as he was praying?** Because Daniel did not take the easy way out (to pray in secret) – he had no fear of the Persian law

**V11** – Notice that they must have been watching to see if Daniel still prayed three times a day to God

**V 12 – What do the men do?** Went and talked to the king

**-What do they remind him of?**

- Reviewed the new law
- Anyone violating the law would be thrown into the lion's den
- The laws of the Medes and the Persians could not be revoked

**V 13 – How had Daniel supposedly insulted the king?** By paying no attention to the king and the new law

**-How did his accusers describe Daniel?** One of the exiles from Judah (prejudice against Jews, even in Babylon)

## **Daniel 6.14-15**

**V 14 – What was the reaction of the king to the news from the evil men?** Very distressed

**-What did the king do until sunset?** Kept trying to find a way to get around this law, so that Daniel would not perish

**-What does that tell us about the king and his relationship to Daniel?** He had much respect for Daniel as a prophet of God

**V 15 – What did the evil men do once again to the king?** Reminded him that laws could not be revoked, once they were passed

**-We may think that this part of Persian law was very odd, but in the U.S. today, it is still almost impossible to overturn a law that has already been made legal**

**-Only on very, very rare occasions do we ever read of a law being overturned**

## **Daniel 6.16-18**

**V 16 – What did the king order to be done?** To cast Daniel into the lion's den

**-What did the king believe would happen?** That the God of Daniel would somehow save him

**-What does this show about the king?** He had a great amount of faith in Daniel's God

**V 17 – What happened next?** The king ordered to have Daniel "cast" into the den of lions

**-How was the place officially sealed?** With the signet ring of King Darius (pressed into hot wax with the image on the ring)

At the Oriental Institute in Chicago (on the campus of the University of Chicago), you can see the actual signet ring of King Darius of the Medo-Persian Empire

**-It is under glass, so that it cannot be touched, but it is the actual signet ring of King Darius, which archaeologists have uncovered in the ruins of the Persian Empire**

**-The author of these notes has seen it, and it is a very moving thing to realize that this is his ring which is mentioned in *Daniel 6.17***

**V 18 – What effect did this have on the king?**

1. He spent the night fasting
2. He did not have any entertainment brought before him
3. He did not sleep at all that night (Very interesting: "*and his sleep fled from him*")

## **Daniel 6.19-24**

**V 19 – What time did the king get up the next morning?** At dawn (worried about Daniel)  
-**What did he do when he got up?** Went "*in haste*" to see the lion's den

**V 20 – What question did he shout into the lion's den?** "*Was your God able to save you?*"

**V 21 – What was the first message of Daniel to the king?** "*O king, live forever!*"

**V 22 – How had God saved Daniel's life?** An angel shut the mouths of the lions  
-**Why did God save Daniel?** Because he had done no wrong against the king

**V 23 – What condition did they find Daniel in when he was brought up out of the den?** No injuries whatsoever

**V 24 – What did the king do next?** Ordered that those who had accused Daniel, along with their wives and children be thrown into the lion's den  
-**What happened to them?** They were eaten by the lions before they ever hit the bottom (very hungry lions!)

## **Daniel 6.25-28**

**V 25 – What did the king decide to do next?** Make a decree to all the provinces of the empire

**V 26 – What was the decree?** That the people were to "*fear and tremble*" before the God that Daniel worshipped

**V 27 – How did the king describe the God that Daniel worshipped?**

1. He can deliver and rescue his faithful people
2. He can perform all kinds of miracles and signs
3. He was able to rescue Daniel from certain death

**V 28 – What happened to Daniel because of these events?** He was faithful to King Darius and also King Cyrus all the days of his life

### Great lessons from Daniel 6:

1. God is faithful to watch over his people when they are faithful to him.
2. We are to show respect to government officials (as representatives of God).
3. Ultimately God is in control of the governments of the world, not us. In time, God brought down the Medo-Persian Empire and replaced it with the empire of Alexander the Great (as the world continued to be prepared for the coming of God's Son).

Other lessons (from the class):

If time, ask: "What is your favorite verse from Daniel 6?"

Also, read from an article about lions from an encyclopedia

Revised 2012-09-15