

"Daniel and the Lion's Den"

Daniel 6

Introduction: This past week was rather busy and tiring and in the midst of it all God placed on my heart the 6th chapter of the book of Daniel. This is most likely one of the most well-known chapters in the entire Bible. It is the story of Daniel and the Lion's Den that has been the subject of many Sunday School lessons.

Now as we approach this chapter there are several things we need to consider. First of all as this chapter opens up Daniel is living in the Medo-Persian Empire. Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar are no longer around. The Babylonians have been conquered by the Medo-Persians and that happened at the end of chapter 5. Daniel is now about 83 years of age and has been serving foreign kings now for more than 60 years.

As we approach this chapter, we must be very careful to see the purpose so as not to become misled. There are those who will teach and have taught this chapter and applied it to everyone's life to say that God rescues His people from the dangers of this life. But that is misleading. Not everyone who faces a "lion's den" is delivered.

Hebrews 11:33-37

³³ *Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.*

³⁴ *Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*

³⁵ *Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:*

³⁶ *And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:*

³⁷ *They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;*

Therefore this chapter cannot be used to teach that God delivers us when we are facing the lions. Some are delivered and so are not.

The purpose of this chapter can be best understood by knowing the purpose of God in the events of world. That is the past, present, and the future. The purpose of God is that He

will be glorified in all that happens. He is glorified in salvation, in the rise and fall of nations, in rulers, in the Church and in all of creation. The chapter before us is about God being glorified in the lives and the events of individuals. In this chapter there are many lessons for us.

I. Daniel's Position

Notice Daniel 6:1-3

No matter who Daniel had to serve he did so in a way that glorified his God. Daniel had served Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar and now Darius and he did his very best no matter what leadership he was under.

Application:

Knowing that we are to live our lives in a way that glorifies our God, let me ask you, "How well do you do under those who have authority over you?" Let me remind you of what we looked at when we studied 1 Peter.

1 Peter 2:13-18

¹³ *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;*

¹⁴ *Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.*

¹⁵ *For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:*

¹⁶ *As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.*

¹⁷ *Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.*

¹⁸ *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*

We are called to be model citizens and model employees. This is exactly what Daniel was as he lived in a foreign land.

Colossians 3:22-24

²² *Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God;*

²³ *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;*

²⁴ *Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.*

II. The Plot

Notice Daniel 6:4-9

Hese men watched Daniel very closely and could not find one thing of which he was guilty. This is a tremendous statement! The only way they could declare him guilty was to make a new law which would cause him to break the new law in the worship of His God. This is what envy looks like when it is carried out. These men started out being jealous of Daniel and their jealousy turned to envy. Envy is the sin of not only longing for and despising the blessings of another, but then desiring to see them experience pain as they would lose what it is with which they were blessed. These men were very quick to write up a new law that stated Darius would be a god for 30 days. All petitions were to be directed to him and anyone who rebelled would be cast into the lion's den. This was known as "THE DIVINTY OF THE KINGS." It was a common practice in Egypt as well as other nations. Now if the king signed this document, it would become law and it was impossible to reverse. This was all designed to kill Daniel.

There are several verses that come to mind here:

2 Timothy 3:11-13

¹¹ *Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.*

¹² *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

¹³ *But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

1 Peter 4:12-13

¹² *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:*

¹³ But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

III. Daniel's Prayer

Notice Daniel 6:10

When Daniel knew the document was signed, he immediately went to his room to pray. This was not arrogance on his part. This was his faithful practice every day and we know this because this is how the other leaders knew they could trap him.

Application:

What is the first thing that you do when faced with a painful situation? Some run in panic others turn to the world and others blend in with the world so as to escape any harm. But we should immediately go to the Lord.

Philippians 4:4-9

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

⁵ Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

⁹ Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

Notice Daniel 6:11

Daniel was caught in the trap.

IV. The Prosecution of Daniel

Notice Daniel 6:12-18

Not only was Daniel caught in a trap but so was the king. Both of these men found themselves in very uncomfortable situations.

Now I want to pause here for a moment to help you to see something. God has allowed Daniel to be caught in this trap so that the end result would be God's glorification. God also allowed Darius to make a poor decision for the same reason. All night long Darius would be tormented because of his decision. He loved Daniel and he knew he had made a great mistake.

God allowed this because He longed for Darius to be saved and therefore God had permitted all of this to happen so that Darius and others would know more about Daniel's God.

2 Peter 3:8-9

⁸ *But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

⁹ *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

Application:

Let us clearly understand that God will often allow His people to face some very trying situations because in the moment He longs to glorify Himself. Let me remind you of another situation.

Daniel 3:13-18

¹³ *Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.*

¹⁴ *Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?*

¹⁵ *Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made: well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the*

midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

¹⁷ If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

¹⁸ But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

God will also torment the unsaved to eventually bring them to know Jesus Christ.

V. The Protection of Daniel

Notice Daniel 6:18-24

God had delivered Daniel and the men who attempted to take his life were given to the lions with their families.

Conclusion:

Notice Daniel 6:25-28

Here we see that God was glorified in all of this. This is what God desires in our lives also. That means there will be times when life is difficult and painful. It may mean losing people close to us or it may mean us losing our lives. Last week we looked at how Israel was to keep their distance from the ark so all could see.

We are to live our lives in situations when we face the lions so that all can see Jesus Christ at work in our lives.