

The Chronicle

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Every Knee Shall Bow

Exploring the Book of Daniel

Please read Daniel chapter six

“Familiarity breeds contempt” or at least the assumption that we know all that we need to know. This can be particularly so when we are faced with a passage of Scripture like Daniel six: “Daniel in the lions’ den! What’s there to say?” But let’s not get hung up on the lions but look more closely at this man, Daniel.

The challenge of Daniel’s life.

One thing’s for sure; he provoked responses! **He was regarded.** Darius, the new king on the block, sets about organizing his kingdom and amongst those he chooses to do the job is Daniel and soon he is promoted to top position. Now why? v3 Daniel made an impact by the way he shouldered responsibility, did his work and showed integrity and the king appreciated his qualities and worth. The story shows Darius had genuine respect and regard for him – see v14.

This speaks to **us**: this is an important way of affecting our society and bearing witness (note I Timothy 3:7; Titus 2:9-10). It is not the advancement we achieve or the greatness of our gifts but the quality, reliability and loyalty in our work.

But **he was also resented** v4(a). Why was this? Jealousy? Their own desire to exploit their position? Or “He’s not one of us” (v14)? Always the possibility of adverse reactions because the believer’s life is a challenge. Look at the inadvertent compliment they paid Daniel – v5. Only way to get rid of him would be because of his faith. Attitude prevalent today in many organizations and groups who dislike the ethics of Christianity.

So they approach the king vv4-7 and start with a blatant lie “All...” Hang on, where’s Daniel? **He** doesn’t know about this, **he** hasn’t put his name to this! But the king falls for the fulsome ego-stroking that exalts him to be the only representative through which his subjects may approach their gods.

The decree is signed and in Daniel’s response we see **The characteristics of Daniel’s life.**

First, **he was God centred** see v10. This is a description of the reality of his prayer life and his immediate instinct to turn to God in the midst of danger and trial.

Then **he was consistent.** He realized what was at stake: whether he kept or broke the first commandment. Should he stop praying for the thirty days or hide away when he prayed? But he knew these reactions would dishonour God and compromise his witness so he stays consistent with his previous practice. And it is pretty certain that he was able to be consistent now because he had been consistent down through the years (see Daniel 1:8).



Remember “each victory will help you some other to win.”

He was determined. He knew the value of prayer, the necessity of communion with God, the privileges and delight of meeting with God so v10 three times a day. We often find ourselves scrabbling for time to pray but think of Daniel’s workload! He was determined to make time.

It was Murray McCheyne who said, “What a man is on his knees before God, that he is and no more.” Prayer is that important.

He was reverent – v10 on his knees – a man over eighty! Our posture in prayer is not everything but can reflect our inner attitude. Daniel was aware of the utter holiness and awesomeness of God and his own utter dependence upon him.

He was thankful v10. Surprising in his situation? But he believed in the sovereignty of God, he’s seen it in action in his own life and others. No doubt he thanked God that he was in control. He remembered God’s past faithfulness, deliverances, blessings, guidance. Are we, are our prayers, characterized by thankfulness?

The confidence in Daniel’s life.

So Daniel is fed to the lions, the king spends an anguished, sleepless night, Daniel’s enemies celebrate but next morning what a wake-up call! vv21-23. Daniel can say “not hurt” and “no kind of hurt” and that is always true ultimately of every believer who trusts (note Matthew 10:28). We tend to focus on the lions in the den but the real lions were the ones Daniel met in his prayer room. It was there and then that the battle was won.

There are many lions God’s people will face but we need to trust God. Psalm 22 is a Messianic psalm and verses 20-21 emphasize the struggle that the Lord Jesus had to face. His lions were confronted and beaten in Gethsemane. That victory offered no escape from the cross but there was a glorious resurrection! Significantly the early Church regarded Daniel’s rescue as illustrating Jesus’ resurrection and this is depicted in the catacombs in Rome.

The concern of Daniel’s life.

Not his position or preservation but the glory of God. If he had forgotten and forsaken that he would have lost everything. If he had succumbed to the temptation to accommodate to the king’s decree so that he could survive and be useful later his testimony would have been ruined. But because he stood firm look what happened vv 25-27! We too need that desire and concern that the God who has done so much for us should be exalted.

Conclusion. So Daniel faces us with certain questions. Are our lives a challenge to an unbelieving world? Are our lives and prayers characterized by God-centredness, consistency, determination, reverence and thankfulness? Is our confidence in God; are we really trusting him amidst our “lions”? Is our driving concern the glory of God?

Daniel shows us how to live in a godless society. But what about the other D – Darius? Here’s a man who appreciates the worth of God’s servant, who has seen this great deliverance and, realizing the greatness of Daniel’s God, issues this astounding edict vv26-27. He has learnt so much about God, he has come so far – but did he ever actually come to a personal faith in this God? And there are so many today who may value the Christians they know, may respect their faith, may know the gospel but who never take that final, decisive step of submitting to Jesus Christ. How sad. How terrible.

Ineffable Glory

By Robert Dingley

And the city had no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Rev 21v23

Our eyes shall see the palace of the great King, the glittering glory of the New Jerusalem; it is at large described by Saint John in Revelation 20.

Made of Crystal, Gold, Pearl, and several kinds of most precious jewels.

We read that the foundations, pavements, and gates are made of these treasures. How resplendent then will be the roof? How astonishing the throne?

Well, our eyes shall see it, and our fingers shall handle it, and eternity shall be little enough to take the survey of its glory, and to wonder at its splendour.

If the world that was made in six days is a fabric so excellent, what will that city be, which has been building and beautifying from eternity?

'Enter' will Christ say, 'into the Kingdom prepared for you!' God is still preparing, furnishing, perfuming heaven for you.

What shall I say? 'For eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man.' ("1 Corinthians 2:9...") To conceive the things that God has provided for them that love Him.

That joy cannot enter into us, it is sufficient that we shall enter into it. When we come to see ourselves encompassed with all this glory. We shall say, as the Queen of Sheba of Solomon, when she saw the order and splendour of his court, 'The one half of his glory was never told us.' And thus you see what it is herewith our eyes shall be feasted, though the manner is ineffable, when we come to our Father's house, we shall reflect upon ourselves and see our own glory.



Vera Effigies Roberti Dinglei
in Artib. Magistri.

Pub. Feb 11 1728 by W. Richardson N^o. 31 Strand

1619-1660

Dingley was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford. Though at first a staunch Anglican, he became a puritan and rejected Anglican worship. He was a rector of Brightstone on the Isle of Wight, where he had a reputation as a great practical preacher. His opposition to ignorant and scandalous ministers, caused him to be censured. He died in 1660, and was buried in the chancel of his church.

May the God — — fill you with all joy and — as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the — —. Romans 15:13

Let us run with perseverance — — marked out for us. Let us — — — on Jesus, the — and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at — — — of the throne of God. Consider Him who — such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not — — and lose heart. Hebrews 12:1

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face — of many kinds, because you know that the — of your faith produces perseverance. James 1: 2-3

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a — — within me. Do not cast me from Your — or take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your — and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Psalm 51:10-12

In that day you will say:.....'Surely God is my salvation; I will — and not be —.The Lord, the lord Himself, is my strength and my defence; he has become my salvation.' With joy you will draw water from the — — —. Isaiah 12:1-3

You have made known to me the — — —; You will fill me with joy in Your —, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. Psalm 16:11

*Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts,
Thou fount of life, Thou light of men,
From the best bliss that earth imparts,
We turn unfilled to Thee again.*

*Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood;
Thou savest those that on Thee call;
To them that seek thee, Thou art good,
To them that find Thee, all in all.*

*O Jesus ever with us stay!
Make all our moments calm and bright,
Chase the dark night of sin away,
Shed o'er the world Thy holy light.*

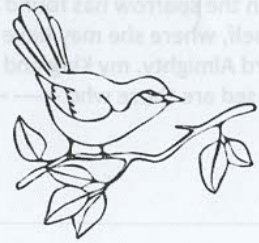
Bernard of Clairvaux 1091-1153



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BIRDS OF THE BIBLE

EAGLE	CORMORANT
BUZZARD	PARTRIDGE
VULTURE	PIGEON
DOVE	TURTLEDOVE
RED KITE	QUAIL
FALCON	RAVEN
STORK	ROOSTER
HAWK	STORK
HERON	SWALLOW
HOOPOE	THRUSH
OSTRICH	OWL
SEAGULL	PELICAN
SPARROW	HEN



They who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:31



Devotional Pages for Sundays.

Especially for those unable to get to Church



Sunday 5th September

Read Psalm 125

Hymn

**1 Those who rely on the Lord are unshakeable,
Firm as mount Zion, supremely assured;
Just as the mountains encircle Jerusalem,
Round us forever is standing the Lord.**

**2 Evil shall not always rule over righteousness,
God's time will come when oppression shall cease:
Lord, bless the righteous, restrain the impenitent,
Grant to Your people the gift of Your peace.**

Christopher Idle from Psalm 125

© Christopher Idle/Jubilate Hymns Ltd

Thought

V1-2 Around Jerusalem the mountains surround the city. The Lord surrounds and protects His trusting people forever.

V3 -5a Pray that the people may be separated from the influence of the wicked. And for the Lord to do good to those of upright heart.

V5b Pray for God's peace upon His people

Prayer

Circle us, Lord,
Circle us with the light of Your presence within this dark world,
Enable us to be overcomers of fear and temptation,
Enable us to be victors over sin and despair,
Enable us to become that which You would desire.

(Silent prayer)

Lord of creation, Lord of Salvation,

Circle us with the light of Your presence

Circle us, Lord,

Circle our family within the shelter of Your outstretched arms,

Protect them in each moment of their daily lives,

Protect them in the decisions that they face,

Protect their homes and relationships.

(Silent prayer)

Lord of creation, Lord of Salvation

Circle our families with the light of Your presence

Circle us, Lord,

Circle this world with the joy of Your Salvation,

Where there is sickness and disease bring healing,

Where there is hunger and despair bring hope,

Where there is torture and oppression bring release.

(Silent prayer)

Lord of creation, Lord of Salvation

Circle this world with the light of Your presence.

Written by John Birch, and posted on his

[Faith and Worship](#) website

Sunday September 12th

Read Psalm 126.

Thought

V1-3 The Psalmist recalls the joy of the people returning from captivity knowing God has done great things.

V4 Only a small percentage of the exiled returned to Jerusalem. The Psalmist prays for completion. God will bring His elect people to Himself when He returns.

V5-6 Those who sow in tears shall reap with joy.. We sow the gospel seed with tears of compassion and will find joy as sinners come to repentance and find joy.

Hymn

1 Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness,

Sowing in the noontide and the dewy eve;

Waiting for the harvest, and the time of reaping,

We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Refrain:

Bringing in the sheaves,

Bringing in the sheaves,

We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves;

Bringing in the sheaves,

Bringing in the sheaves,

We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

2 Sowing in the sunshine, sowing in the shadows,

Fearing neither clouds nor winter's chilling breeze;

By and by the harvest, and the labour ended,

We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves. [Refrain]

3 Going forth with weeping, sowing for the Master,

Though the loss sustained our spirit often grieves;

When our weeping's over, He will bid us welcome,

We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves. [Refrain]

Prayer

Come to this sanctuary, this house, this home, Holy Christ,

And let us receive You with lavish welcome.

You are the Restorer of our fortunes,

The Promise of new life –

We pour out our praise to You.

Fill this room with Your Spirit:

And fill our hearts with Your compassion,

Not just in this time and place,

But in all times and in all places,

So that as we celebrate the great things You have done for us,

We may also embody the love You give to all. Amen.

Sunday September 19th

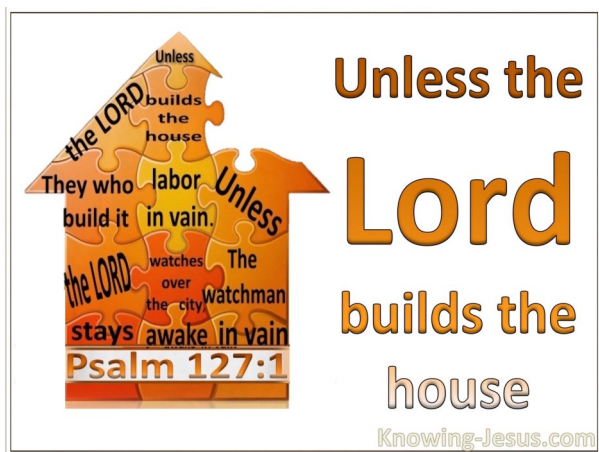
Sunday September 19th

Read Psalm 127.

Hymn

**Unless the Lord has built the house,
It must be built again;
Except the Lord defends a town
Its watchmen wake in vain.**

**What value has a life of haste,
Of endless, anxious toil?
God has for those who keep His law
A garland none can spoil.**



**Among God's gifts, a happy home
A blessing rich indeed;
A joyful, loving partnership,
A strength to those in need.**

**That home, that house, as years go by
Must weather storm and strain:
Unless the Lord has built the house
It must be built again.**

After Psalm 127, David Mowbray (born 1938)
© David Mowbray/Jubilate Hymns

Thought

V1-2 Unless the Lord builds the house the people labour in vain. The Lord gives all of us work to do and we need to do it by His Spirit and empowerment.. Even when strengthening us He uses sleep as a source of blessing.

V3 Such a blessing to have Children. But also spiritual 'Children' that come through us sharing the Good News of the gospel.
Pray for Sunday School teachers.

Heavenly Father, thank You for the benefits of a good night's sleep, but thank You also for the day by day provision of the gifts and graces, that are ours in Christ - and which are even poured out on us during the night-time hours. Thank You for the work that You have given me to do, during my time on earth. Lord, I know that without You, I can do nothing, and yet I praise You that I can do all things through Christ, Who strengthens me. Keep me from the worries of the day, the fears of the night, and from trying to sort out my personal problems, without coming to You, and relying on Your sufficient strength and promised grace.

May I never forget that it is YOU who provides for my daily needs, and I pray that from this day forward, I may do all for Your greater glory and praise. This I ask in Jesus name I pray, AMEN.

"It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep."
(Psalm 127:2)

Source: <https://prayer.knowing-jesus.com/Psalm/127>

Sunday September 26th

Read Psalm 128

**1 Blessed are those who fear the Lord,
Walking in God's perfect ways;
All they do shall bring reward,
Love enriches all their days.**

**2 Blessings greet the husband, wife,
Parents, children, old and young;
Fruits of faith be theirs for life,
Joy in songs together sung.**

**3 Bless us, Lord! Your kingdom come;
Children's children shouting praise:
Prayer in nation, church and home,
Peace in Christ to crown our days.**

Christopher Idle from Psalm 128
© Christopher Idle/Jubilate Hymns Ltd

Thought

V1-2 Again in this Psalm God pours out His blessings on family who acknowledge Him with reverent fear. But we cannot rest there and it is good to provide for your family

God provides but if we are able we have to work hard..

V3-4 Families of husband, wife and Children. To know God's blessing parents must take up their responsibility.

V5-6 God's blessing is not only on Jerusalem it is on the children of godly children.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, You are my God and my Saviour. Thank You for your free gift of grace, which I receive by faith. May I reverence Your name forever and walk in Your ways all the days of my life - for all my blessings are rooted and grounded in Christ Jesus my Lord, in Whose name I pray, AMEN

Source: <https://prayer.knowing-jesus.com/Psalm/128>

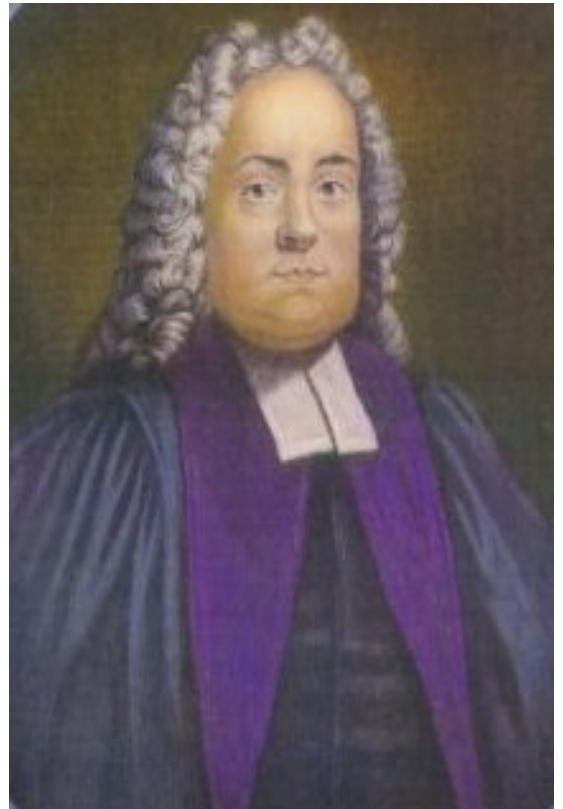
Matthew Henry on prayer...

“It is good for us to keep some account of our prayers, that we may not unsay them in our practice.”

“God’s promises are to be our pleas in prayer.”

“Prayer time must be kept up as duly as meal time.”

“A truly religious life is a life of constant joy. And we should rejoice more, if we prayed more. Prayer will help forward all lawful business, and every good work. If we pray without ceasing, we shall not want matter for thanksgiving in every thing. We shall see cause to give thanks for sparing and preventing, for common and uncommon, past and present, temporal and spiritual mercies. Not only for prosperous and pleasing, but also for afflicting providences, for chastisements and corrections; for God designs all for our good, though we at present see not how they tend to it.”



“Prayer is a salve for every sore, a remedy for every malady; and when we are afflicted with thorns in the flesh, we should give ourselves to prayer. If an answer be not given to the first prayer, nor to the second, we are to continue praying. Troubles are sent to teach us to pray; and are continued, to teach us to continue instant in prayer.”

“The best we can say to God in prayer, is what He has said to us.”

“Here is a precept in three words to the same purport, Ask, Seek, Knock (Matthew 7:7); that is, in one word, ‘Pray; pray often; pray with sincerity and seriousness; pray, and pray again; make conscience of prayer, and be constant in it; make a business of prayer, and be earnest in it.’” —Matthew Henry

“Let us watch against unbelief, pride, and self-confidence . If we go forth in our own strength, we shall faint, and utterly fall; but having our hearts and our hopes in heaven, we shall be carried above all difficulties, and be enabled to lay hold of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus.”

If therefore our houses be houses of the Lord, we shall for that reason love home, reckoning our daily devotion the sweetest of our daily delights; and our family-worship the most valuable of our family-comforts ... A church in the house will be a good legacy, nay, it will be a good inheritance, to be left to your children after you.