



REVEALER OF MYSTERIES

the book of Daniel



Lesson 6

Daniel 6

Many people who have almost no knowledge of the Bible have heard the story in this chapter. Like Noah and the ark, Jonah in the fish, and David fighting Goliath, Daniel in the lions' den has probably worn out hundreds of flannel-graph boards over the years! But it's more than a great story—it's also a true example of how God displays His power to rescue those who choose to trust Him in difficult situations, and how He triumphs over those who try to discredit Him.

6 It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, ² with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. ³ Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.

¹⁰ Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. ¹¹ Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. ¹² So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: "Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or man except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lions' den?"



Who is Darius, and what kingdom does he command? (see a Bible dictionary)

Read verses 4-9. How and why does the administration plot to discredit Daniel? This is reminiscent of a similar situation in what previous chapter in Daniel? Has anyone ever gone to great lengths to try to discredit you?

Verse 10. When Daniel finds out that his relationship with God has been basically outlawed, how much time does he spend debating if he should stop praying?

Civil Disobedience: What's the Principle?

A similar incident to this one in Daniel happens in the book of Acts. There the apostles are specifically told to stop talking about Jesus. Normally the Christians did not intentionally cause trouble, and they would try to comply with the authorities, but not in this case. Taking the Acts & Romans passages together, come up with some guidelines for this kind of situation.

Acts 4:18-20 "Then they (the highest Jewish authorities in Jerusalem) called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Romans 13:1 "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities..."

The king answered, "The decree stands—in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed."

¹⁶ So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!"

¹⁷ A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation might not be changed. ¹⁸ Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep.

¹⁹ At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. ²⁰ When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?" ²¹ Daniel answered, "O king, live forever! ²² My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king."

²³ The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

²⁴ At the king's command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

²⁵ Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language throughout the land...

Read verses 13-15.

How would you picture the facial expressions of the accusers in verse 13?

How are they in contrast with the king and his attitude?

What does he try to do? Why do you think he is "on Daniel's side"?



Is Darius more like Nebuchadnezzar, or Belshazzar?

Thought: How would you compare and contrast Darius with the Roman ruler Pontius Pilate, who finds himself in a similar situation?

Verse 17. What is the purpose of "sealing" an enclosure in this way? (see also Matthew 27:65-66. Do you see any parallels in these two situations?)

Read Daniel 6:25-28. What does this pagan king say about Daniel's God? How does it compare with Daniel's poem in the middle of chapter 2, and Nebuchadnezzar's proclamations at the beginning and end of chapter 4?

LIFE RESPONSE –

- This chapter certainly underscores the passage in Hebrews 11 which states that God "rewards those who earnestly seek Him." In this case he delivers Daniel from an impossible situation. Has God ever come through for you when you thought there was no way out?
- While God wanted Israel to be unique, He always intended them to be a light to the rest of the world. However, they had a tendency to assume that God only loved them, and they looked down on everyone else. Do you have that same tendency? What can keep us from thinking and acting that way?

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