

AM Daniel 6 Daniel and the lions' den

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[0 : 00] Information sheet, so look at that passage now, Daniel and the Lion's Den. So we read as we summarised earlier.

It pleased Iris to set over the kingdom 120 satraps to be throughout the whole kingdom. And over them three presidents, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account.

So the king might suffer no loss. Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps.

Because an excellent spirit was in them. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. Then the presidents and satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom.

But they could not find no ground for complaint or any fault. Because he was faithful and no error or fault was found in him.

[1 : 10] Then these men said, we shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God.

Then these presidents and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, O king, Iris, live forever. All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the councillors and the governors, are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction that whoever makes a petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.

Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it cannot be changed according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be rebuked.

Therefore, King Iris signed the document and injunction. When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber, opened towards Jerusalem, He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God and he had, as he had done previously.

Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. Then they came near and said before the king concerning the injunction, O king, did you not sign an injunction that anyone who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?

[3 : 02] The king answered and said, The thing stands fast according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked. Then he answered and said before the king, Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or the injunction you have signed.

But makes the petition three times a day. Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel.

And he laboured till the sun went down to rescue him. Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establish can be changed.

Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you.

And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den. And the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lord's, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.

[4 : 22] Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting. No diversions were brought into him and sleep fled from him.

Then a break of day, the king arose and in haste in the den of lions. As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish.

The king declared to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you were continually serving, been able to deliver you from the lions?

Then Daniel said to the king, O king, live forever. My God sent his angels and shut the lion's mouth and they have not harmed me because I have found blameless before him and also before you, O king, I have done no harm.

Then the king was exceedingly glad and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no kind of harm was found on him because he had trusted in God.

[5 : 39] And the king commanded that those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought out and cast into the den of lions their children and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all the bones in pieces.

Then king Dyrus wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth, peace be multiplied to you. I make a decree that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble in fear before the God of Daniel for he is a living God enduring forever.

His kingdom shall never be destroyed and his dominion shall be to the end. He delivers and rescues, he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth.

he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions. So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Dyrus and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

May God add his blessing to us reading from his own inspired word. We'll now turn to sing again in Psalm 34. I think it's always difficult to preach a passage that's so well known and we'll look at this passage generally in Daniel chapter 6 today about how as we read how Daniel was fearless and continued his prayer life as it says in verse 10 and Daniel knew that the document had been signed he went to his house for he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem he went down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before the God as he had done previously.

[7 : 41] The story of Daniel is continuing here way back in the early chapters another king called Belshazzar he saw some writing on a wall and Daniel was able to interpret that writing and tell Belshazzar more or less his days were over and it appears from here that Dyrus was aware of that history and knew of Daniel's gifts and probably even before that how Daniel was able to help away at the beginning of the story of Daniel how he maintained his stance about what he was going to eat yet he prospered.

So Dyrus was aware of Daniel's sort of confession of faith he was aware of Daniel's gifts is aware that these prophecies way back in chapter 2 said that one kingdom was a big statue you might remember and it was a picture of how one kingdom will fall and another will replace it and that's exactly what's happening here as the Medes and Persians took over from the Babylonians as prophesied way back there and if that prophecy was fulfilled way back so was the other prophecy in chapter 2 which said a rock cut out of the mountain would be set up and a kingdom won't be destroyed so it's encouraging to know that as the prophecies in Daniel are being fulfilled it points forward to a greater prophecy the one of Jesus Christ whose kingdom will never be destroyed the first kind of even in the ASV it kind of stops at there there's a break there and it kind of tells us the story the account of how these different officials with all these different names they were attacking this

Daniel his consistent life there was a malicious attack upon Daniel's consistent life in these verses Daniel was a very gifted person as I've said and he was able to interpret it this writing on the wall he was given this job to do he was recognised amongst all the work the slaves not only were three elected as president but Daniel was actually over them all so his gifts were well recognised within the kingdom and God used these gifts to help Daniel live his life as a believer in that environment and these gifts stood out in that land that they were in Babylon as the

Medes and Persians kingdom was developing and all that came with it yet Daniel's life seemed to have a different odour about it different witness about it within that whole environment that he was brought up in and that was recognised by this heathen king Dyrus and he promoted him and given a quite high profile job within that community and it just reminded me of how like the days we were living in is it not a secular society who have gone way way astray from the word of God and we like Daniel are called to live in a different lifestyle that will be recognised and we are called to do that and even though it might present difficulties for us so Daniel was able to do this not out of his own strength but we read that he was given a portion of

God's spirit if you read through Daniel it was obvious that the spirit in chapter one was enabled Daniel to prophesy and enabled Daniel to make this stand and it's helpful to remind that as we try to overcome any temptations or any problems that by our own efforts we might not be able to achieve much and we need to pray for that same spirit as Daniel had to be within us and about us so that like him we can demonstrate to people whose we are and whom we serve so it's humbling to remember it's not with our own abilities that we can do that but we're dependent upon the Holy Spirit to use us in these circumstances so Daniel distinguished himself I think it's in verse 5 chapter 5 verse 12 it says

[13:15] I've noted that down it says because an excellent spirit knowledge and understanding to interpret the dreams explain riddles and solve problems were found in Daniel an excellent spirit and that's what we pray for in our own lives an excellent spirit God's spirit and he will enable us to live in the environment that we are in and to maintain a stand for Christ so some of the children's story books have pictures of Daniel in the lion's den I haven't seen one myself the one that Kyrie uses I don't like picking that age on the picture but it doesn't look like a man of 80 certainly an older man I've seen some other children's story bibles of a young very young

Daniel but Daniel was 80 over 80 you can calculate that by going through his story and we're assured by the folk who know better than I do that Daniel was about 80 at this time and it reminds us those of us who aren't quite so young it reminds us even in our 80s or 70s we can still serve God and be consistent and that's what Daniel did even in his 80s he was able to stand up for that jealousy and he continued to have a life of commitment to Christ over 70 years in a strange environment and it's encouraging for us not quite so young to take that and remember that although there might be 80 or 70 maybe 90 I don't know if MD's 90 here not looking at MD but even in our latter ages we're called to live a consistent life 70 years of commitment for Daniel and may

God help us to have similar commitment whether it's 70 60 50 whatever God allows us to serve him we're called like Daniel even at our older age to continue to serve him with the gifts that he has given us now the problem was that when Daniel was exercising these gifts that God had given him and demonstrated his maturity and his patience and his service to God and how the king recognised that read briefly earlier that all these different officials with these different names presidents the satraps and all these other folk became jealous of Daniel you see Daniel was a foreigner he had come into this land and they were brought up in this country and the king was giving preference to this foreigner over them and so they became very jealous of Daniel and interesting enough when they write we have to find something that is done wrong now many of you who follow politics

I don't follow it a lot just what we're told mainly but you know what happens when somebody becomes unpopular they dig and dig and dig until they find something and they look for things maybe that happened 10 years ago or 20 years ago and they dig it up and say look this is what this guy's done this is what this lady's done and she's meant to be in parliament he's meant to be in parliament they search and of course when they find things it's all over the newspaper and they find things because everyone's human they make mistakes they're sinners but when these jealous people went into Daniel and believe me they were looking the records they'd be looking just like today the politicians are looking for anything you might have done wrong nothing they couldn't find anything isn't that amazing and then they thought to themselves well we need to find something to do with this God let's develop this law about 30 days nobody was to pray to anyone but to the king or to a man so here we have this proclamation these accusers trying to find fault with someone that had no fault and turning to something that was against his God it reminded me a bit of Jesus because remember as they came to his trial they tried what they could to find fault with Jesus and at the end just like here they had to bring in false witnesses and the only thing that they could find was a misquote how they misquoted it he said he destroyed this temple and rebuilt it in three days of course

Christ was talking about his own life but they brought that up oh he said he was the son of man and he would be at the right hand and so they brought that up trying to find something so that they could condemn Jesus so just like Daniel they tried to bring up these false accusations and digging here and there it reminded me of Jesus his own life how they tried to plot against him to see what they could find in him of course like Daniel you couldn't find anything and that turned out to be ended up with Jesus being crucified nowadays to claim Jesus is the only way will lead to persecution if we speak up for Christ today we find ourselves persecuted there's a hatred that seems to have been developed in our country

[19:55] I don't know if hatred is too strong a word but I think there is a hatred that has developed in our own country against Christianity and this is what we find here a hatred against Daniel because of what he stood for and they wanted to kill him to get rid of him he had powerful enemies enemies but Jesus had powerful enemies and his faithfulness was also met by these powerful enemies so it's very difficult in this environment that we're in I happen to be at a meeting of Steadfast Global have you heard of Steadfast Global it's Malcolm MacLeod who goes around it's about persecuted Christians and don't permit to read a part of this article I like

Steadfast Global don't want to be political but this is what they said recently as SNP leadership campaign launched Christians across Scotland were given a powerful reminder of how unpopular true followers of Jesus have become in our homeland after witnessing the venomous attacks against Kate Forbes following her very open and honest responses to the questions aimed at her we like many others felt compelled to make a statement which we shared on social media in revisiting the manner of her treatment here it remains important to stress that Steadfast Global has no political affiliation as all our supporters know we are the evangelical Christian ministry serving persecuted followers of the Lord Jesus Christ across the globe the treatment of Kate Ford's Panamedia supporters and representatives of powerful and influential minority pressure groups and fellow parliamentarians where it was inexcusable and demonstrated clear parallels with those areas of the world where human rights are aggressively curtailed in such a way that makes it extremely detrimental and dangerous to speak with a message which is out of step with the party line 15 years ago he says when this ministry was established they were often asked if we believed that

Christians were persecuted here in the United Kingdom our answer was very simply no at this time he says we believe that there were sufficient legislative safeguards in place to ensure freedom of religion and also freedom to express opinion sadly times have changed very much for the worse the current social and political trajectory here in Scotland is spiralling downwards at an alarming rate into what is a very dark place and so on I hope you don't mind me reading that it seemed very appropriate to what's happening to Daniel and our own society today if you pardon that reference the plot of those enemies trying to find a single fault with Daniel reminded me of these recent political events in our own

Scotland so I think just like the article said perhaps persecution just like we find in Daniel might be upon us sooner than we think but it didn't defect Daniel from his outward profession of the service of God he continued to serve God he said you know you couldn't pray for 30 days maybe after 30 days you could pray so he might have thought well 30 days ok I'll refrain from 30 days of prayer won't do much harm but no he was faithful I wonder what we would do if we felt we had to spend 30 days without prayer so that was Daniel there was a trap set to try to find fault with Daniel and there was a trap set to find fault with Jesus so there's a lot of comparisons between this account and the account we read in the

New Testament of Jesus as you'll see that his trial too was so unjust wasn't it there was a trial mock trial in Edinburgh recently near Easter where the session court was opened up and Christians took part and they reenacted the trial have you still to watch that it's on if Andy wants that link I have it at home I haven't watched it yet I knew about it just emphasising I think what it would have been emphasising is the unjust nature of Jesus' trial just like the unjust nature of Daniel's trial here but then we jump to verse 10 onwards to verse 16 where we read of Daniel's steady and courageous response to this decree there's certain things that

[25 : 49] Daniel did I remember many many years ago probably in the 70s was it some of you might remember there was a guy called Arthur Blessed who carried a cross around United Kingdom in Scotland I still remember he preached on Daniel I still remember because I was quite young and I was struck by it and he kind of being American kind of I shouldn't say that should I he was outspoken and I still remember him saying he went up to his roof three times a day to play with the windows open and that's what he did but interesting enough he had his windows open towards Jerusalem and it seemed to help and focus perhaps Daniel was thinking about obviously thinking about Jerusalem and how they were going to return back and how that was his true home and he was praying perhaps for a time where would come and there was a different king because

Cyrus where they would return back to Jerusalem in fact that did happen in the book of Ezra Nehemiah you can read about that but it's interesting that he prayed towards Jerusalem in 1 Kings chapter 8 verse 35 you can look it up afterwards I won't read it all I've just highlighted these words if they pray towards this place it goes on to say it's all talking about Jerusalem in 1 Kings if they pray upon this I will forgive their sins and so on so it seemed to be a practice encouraged in the book of Kings to look towards Jerusalem and repent and here's Daniel looking towards Jerusalem and that seemed to stimulate him in prayer what stimulates you in prayer some people use prayer notes now each week we have praying for one another and I don't know like you like myself you receive various requests coming through your emails home this as you you

I know sometimes in a that it in the of the the business is to I I Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[30 : 10] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[32 : 40] Thank you.

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[35 : 10] Thank you.

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[37 : 40] Thank you.

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[40 : 10] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.