

Daniel 6:25-28

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[0 : 0 0] Okay, here we go. All right. This talk is for you as well as the grown-ups. So let me remind you what Darius said after he saw this amazing mural.

! Darius said, Daniel's God is the living God, enduring forever. His kingdom shall never be destroyed. His dominion shall be to the end. He delivers and rescues. He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth.

He who saved Daniel from the power of the lions. Now, you could say that a little bit simpler, I think. Darius learned that Daniel's God is living, that he is a forever God, and he is a God who saves. He is living, he is a forever God, and he is a God who saves.

So what I'm going to do now for a couple of minutes is I want to talk about each of these three things and give one reason why it matters. First, God is a living God, a living God. Remember, back in the days, a lot of people thought Daniel's God was a pretend God.

Now, I know we don't think that, but sometimes it's easy to go through our day and forget that God is real, that God is really, really real.

[1 : 1 0] There was a man called Francis Schaeffer who lived a long time ago. He was a great Christian man. Fifty years ago, he wrote a book with one of the best titles ever. The book was called He is There and He is Not Silent.

Isn't that a great name for a book about God? He is there and he is not silent. And it's a great reminder that God is really real. He doesn't just stand back and watch what happens. He gets involved and he gets involved in the world and our lives. He's involved in your life too.

God is doing something in your life right now. He didn't just do stuff back in the days. He doesn't have just plans for the future. God is with us now. I'll give you one example.

You know, sometimes we can get a bit anxious and a bit stressed out and our imaginations make up crazy stuff. I was reminded last week, God reminded me that when I get stressed or anxious, God reminded me to talk to Him about it.

To pray to Him about it. We can do that because He's a living God. Sometimes we just talk to the stress. Does that make sense? I'll explain it a bit more. Sometimes we fight our anxiety by arguing with it.

[2 : 2 5] Like, oh, I'm worried this thing's going to happen. Don't be silly, Aaron. The chances are small. We have this conversation in our brain, which is not a bad thing. But God says, remember, you can talk to me.

Like Daniel talked to God all the time. In the Bible, there was a man called Peter and he wrote a book of the Bible. And he said, cast all your anxiety on Him, on God, because He cares for you.

We can do that because God's alive. He hears us. He's not like the statues. Remember the statue in the play that was made out of gold and silver and bronze? Those statues, they can't talk.

They can't help. They can't hear. But God can. So first point. God is a living God. Darius realized that.

Isn't that awesome? Okay, next thing Darius learned about God is that God is eternal. Remember, he says that. He says, living God, enduring forever, His kingdom shall never be destroyed and His dominion shall be to the end.

[3 : 27] That means God always exists. Forever and ever and ever. He is eternal. Now, why does that matter? Well, lots of reasons. One reason is this.

If God is eternal, if He's forever and ever and ever, that means that the promises He makes are forever and ever and ever as well. The forever God can make forever promises.

You know, last month, we've had a lot of fun here at church, haven't we? We had a huge gala. We had lots of other big parties. You've got a picnic coming up after the service.

We just had Bible camp. But there's also, we've had some sadness in our community, haven't we, recently? We've had quite a few funerals where we say goodbye to people.

And at those funerals, though, we remember the forever God makes forever promises. Now, that same guy, Peter, I told you about, talking about anxiety, he also talks about life after we die.

[4 : 32] And he uses three big words to describe what life is like after we die with God. And the big words are, he says, life with God after we die is imperishable, it is undefiled, and it is unfading.

So, let me give you 10 seconds on each of these words. It's imperishable means it will never decay. Do you know like old fruit and vegetables decay? Have you opened up the fridge in your house, and you've seen old fruit and vegetables, and they're just getting older and older and older, right?

And your mum and dad, in their brains, are thinking, no, I'll totally make a stir fry out of that one day. They don't ever make a stir fry, do they? But they can't bring themselves to throw it away, because they spent good money on it.

Like, we spent good money on this. I'm going on too much about this, obviously. But anyway, like, life with God after we die is not like that. It's not like old fruit. It gets worse and worse and worse.

It never decays. Secondly, it's undefiled. Meaning, life with God after we die is peaceful. No wars.

[5 : 42] No anger. No conflict. If you're like me in my house, I don't know what your dads are like, but at 9.30, I get immediately grumpy. Immediately, because I just want to go to bed.

I just want to go to bed then. Life won't be like that after we die. Lastly, it's unfading. That means it'll never wear out. It will only ever be beautiful.

When I buy my kids shoes, your shoes, they're expensive. And after like a couple of days, they're trashed. They don't last very long.

We remember at funerals that new life with God, it never wears out. So those are big promises, aren't they? Only a forever God can make forever promises like that.

Our God is a forever God. Darius learned that. So, so far, I've learned two things. God is living. And Darius learned that God is eternal.

[6 : 43] Finally, after seeing Daniel being saved from the lion, Darius learns that God saves. I'll remind you of verse 27 in chapter 6. He delivers and rescues. He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth.

He who saved Daniel from the power of the lion's den. One thing about the story, Daniel in the lion's den, that Darius learned is that Darius couldn't save.

He got tricked. And there was nothing he could do about it. He had to put Daniel into the lion's den. The most powerful king in the whole world, the most powerful man in the world, couldn't save Daniel.

But God could save Daniel. Because God saves. Now, why does God save Daniel in this story? What's important to know, really important, when God rescued Daniel, he wasn't just showing off.

God isn't a show-off. He wasn't just doing it because, like, he wasn't just saying, look at the cool things I can do. It's crazy. See, boys and girls, when I was a kid, I tried to show off once.

[7 : 43] Do you want me to tell you about that story? Okay. And our playground at elementary school was a simple school. Our playground was basically one just steel hurdle.

It kind of just went up, across, and down in the middle of a field. That was our playground. It's true. It's true. It's a true story. And when I was about 10 years old, I thought, I'm going to jump over that hurdle.

There were some girls watching, and I thought, if I do that, they will love me. Because that's what they want in a man, right?

So, this is a true story. So, I run, run, run, run, and just before I get to the hurdle, I jump up in the air, and I'm flying over the top of the hurdle.

I'm thinking, this is going really well. But I realized at sort of the peak of the jump, I hadn't really thought about the landing part.

[8 : 47] So, I just hit the ground. Luckily, though, I didn't hurt my knees, or my feet, or my back, because I absorbed the impact using my face.

So, this actually happened, James. My face hit the ground first, specifically my mouth.

And I wanted to, I know, I was still trying to act cool, so I sort of get up, and I walk over to the girls. To see what they thought of my super cool jump. But within a few seconds, my lips had swollen up, and there was blood everywhere.

So, I tried to talk to them to see what they thought, but I couldn't talk properly. So, I was just like, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Spitting blood on them is really terrible. What's my point?

I've sort of lost track of my point. But I think it's this. Showing off is not a good idea. All right?

[9 : 50] Now, this is actually a big theological point. When God does big stuff in the Bible, like these miracles, he's not showing off. He's not saying, look at the cool stuff I can do.

The miracles are always trying to tell us something. To teach us something. To tell us something. Daniel is rescued from the lion's den, because God wants us to know he's a God who rescues.

And he's pointing us to another really big rescue that's going to happen a long time later. And that really big rescue is when God would send Jesus to save us. And when we think about it, there's quite a few similar things about the Daniel story to the Jesus story, isn't there?

You might remember in the Jesus story, there was a group of powerful people who wanted a good person dead. Just like Daniel's story. There was a weak leader, Pilate, who couldn't save Jesus, just like Darius couldn't save Daniel.

And there was a stone rolled in front of a tomb cavey thing, just like the den of lions. And there was an angel there. An angel, just like there was an angel with Jesus and Daniel.

[10 : 58] And finally, Jesus and Daniel were both alive after everyone thought they were dead. Darius learned that God saves. God delivered Daniel because our God saves.

And this points us to the very big rescue that God would do later. God raises Jesus from the dead so we could know God. Friends, boys and girls, let's remember again the things that Darius learned.

There is a God, he's living. He can hear you when you talk to him and he wants to talk to you all the time. And he always wants to talk. Our God is eternal.

He's forever. Which means he can make forever promises. And he is a God who saves. He saves because he wants to know us.

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