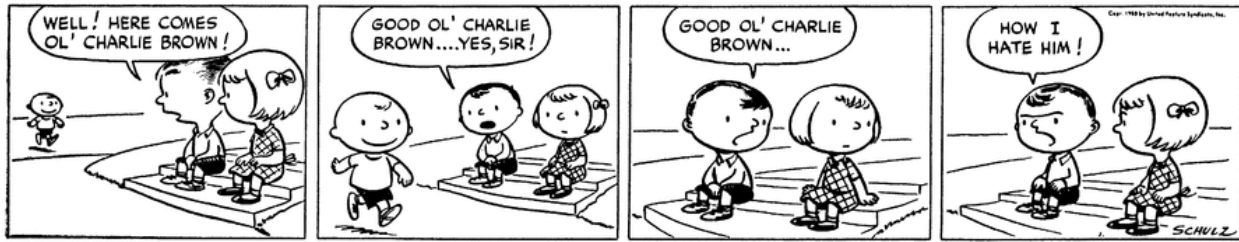


Daniel: A Lion's Share of Faith, Part 1

Daniel 6



I. Daniel's Detractors (vv. 1 – 9)

III. Daniel's Deliverance (vv. 19 – 24)

II. Daniel's Devotion (vv. 10 – 18)

IV. Daniel's Deity (vv. 25 – 28)

I. Daniel's Detractors (vv. 1 – 4)

The identity of “Darius” is far from certain. Some scholars believe that Gubaru “**received** the kingdom” (**Dan. 5:31**) from Cyrus the Great, King of Persia, as I mentioned last time. Others believe “Darius” is simply another name for Cyrus the Great. For example, in **Dan. 6:28**, some interpret “**the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian**” to be two names for the same man (“Darius” as “Cyrus”). Still others believe “Darius” was Cyrus’ son, Cambyses.

Regardless of who this man was, he wasted little time in establishing and organizing the government under his rule. In **verse 1**, “satrap” means “protector of the kingdom.”

In **verse 2**, the “high officials” would serve as watchdogs to keep the “satraps” honest; to ensure that all tax moneys were properly collected and thereby prevent corruption.

Daniel is one of these “three high officials.” Remember Daniel is in his eighties now. After Nebuchadnezzar’s death, Daniel had been placed on the sidelines, perhaps in semi-retirement, during Belshazzar’s reign. So, it’s rather remarkable that within perhaps a year of Babylon’s fall, Daniel rises to the forefront once again. This means that another administration has discovered that it was a servant of the God of Israel who was the most trustworthy.

According to **verse 3**, Daniel’s life was so admirable that he quickly “distinguished” himself “above all the other high officials and satraps.” Why? “Because an excellent spirit was in him.” God had gifted and blessed Daniel greatly. Daniel had a great attitude. He was a man of great ability, wisdom, knowledge, and intelligence. He was also an honest man, a man of integrity. These traits were apparent to everyone. “The king” took notice and desired to promote Daniel to second in the “kingdom.”

However, not everyone held Daniel in such high esteem. In **verse 4**, these men wanted to accuse Daniel because of financial concerns. They knew Daniel ran a tight ship. They knew he dotted all his “i’s” and crossed all his “t’s.” This meant that Daniel, desiring for the king to “suffer no loss,” would ensure none of his employees could skim a profit off the top. Therefore, these “high officials” and “satraps” wanted no part of Daniel being promoted over them. They wanted to prevent Daniel’s promotion at all costs.

But you know what? They couldn’t. Daniel did everything he was supposed to do, and he never left anything undone. He not only did his job, he also did it well. Daniel “was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him.”

So here were 122 men who tried their very best to uncover something, anything, they could use against Daniel. However, there were no moral inconsistencies in Daniel's life. There were no questions of disloyalty. They found him to be completely free of corruption. But they didn't stop there.

In **verse 5**, one of "these men" had an idea. ***You know, he said, Daniel is a very strict monotheist. We all know that he will only worship and serve the God of Israel.***

This means that Daniel never hid his religious convictions. He was never ashamed to proclaim his allegiance to God. These men knew that Daniel was so committed to the God of Israel, that he would rather die than compromise his beliefs and convictions. Therefore, the only charge these men could think of was that Daniel was too spiritual, too heavenly minded, too unapologetically devoted to the Lord.

So, it became politically expedient and personally profitable for "these high officials and satraps" to conspire together to rid themselves of Daniel (**Psalm 2:2 – 3**). These "high officials and satraps" didn't want "the LORD" ruling over them, and neither did they want His servant Daniel ruling over them.

In **verses 6 – 8**, with an agreed upon plan "these high officials and satraps" went as a group "to the king." These men were careful not to include him. And in such a large group, Daniel's absence could easily go unnoticed.

However, in their deceit, they did include Daniel. In **verse 7**, they proclaim that, "**All** the high officials of the kingdom..." of which Daniel was one, "are agreed." This was, of course, a lie. But they wanted to give an impression to "the king" of a united front.

Darius likely didn't view this proposition as a way to deify himself. Instead, Darius was setting himself up to be the only priestly mediator in the kingdom for one month. This meant that prayers of his subjects would be offered to the gods through him rather than through the priests. Darius probably saw this as an opportunity to unite his newly conquered kingdom. He hoped to unite the defeated Babylonians into loyal Persians.

As you can imagine, "the king" was flattered. It fed his pride. Therefore, in **verse 9**, "Darius signed the document" identifying himself as the sole mediator and supreme leader of the kingdom. However, "King Darius" didn't realize that he had fallen prey to a trap which had been set for his most faithful employee. Once the law was signed, it had to be implemented. Not even "the king" could change it.

II. Daniel's Devotion (vv. 10 – 18)

We aren't told how Daniel was informed of this new law being instituted, but it's very likely that one or more of his co-workers couldn't wait to tell him in person. However, Daniel never flinched. Daniel simply goes and does what he's always done. He prays. Given the choice of obeying God or obeying men, Daniel remained faithful.

For his entire exiled life, Daniel "got down on his knees three times a day," facing "Jerusalem" (**1 Kings 8:46 – 50**), "and prayed." Therefore, **Daniel's Detractors** expected Daniel to disobey the law. Therefore, for Daniel to change his practice would have resulted in compromising his faith and hindering his testimony.

What an impeccable life Daniel lived! Not only was he a man of great character and integrity, but he was also a man of great courage and conviction.

Daniel's life is extremely busy. He is one of the "three high officials" watching over the affairs of "the king." Yet, while Daniel was busy, he was never too busy to pray "three times a day."

Now, there is no command in Scripture to pray "three times a day." That fact is, Christians are to "continue steadfastly in prayer" (**Col. 4:2**) and to pray "without ceasing" (**1 Thess. 5:17**).

Daniel's prayer life was so disciplined that it didn't matter how he felt, what he faced, or how busy he was. He was going to visit his heavenly Father at the throne of grace.

The discipline and regularity with which Daniel prayed are significant components to a healthy and fruitful prayer life. Therefore, may we never be too busy to pray.

In **verse 11**, you can imagine "these" unscrupulous "men" were hiding in bushes and peeking around corners to catch Daniel in the act. They didn't have to wait for very long because Daniel valued his Lord more than his life.

Here in **verse 12**, **Daniel's Detractors** went to "the king" to remind him of the decree, its punishment of those who violated it, and most importantly, its unchangeability.

In **verse 13**, **Daniel's Detractors** rat out Daniel to "the king." "These men" emphasized that Daniel was an exile "from Judah." In other words, Daniel wasn't one of them. He's a foreigner who never really belonged. Then they accused Daniel of not honoring "the king." He "pays no attention to you" they said.

Daniel had disobeyed "the king" not once, not twice, but "three times a day." In other words, this was no accident, it was deliberate.

Well, Darius knew he had been duped. By now "the king" realized the decree he signed had nothing to do with him or his desire to unify the kingdom. Instead, the sole reason for this "injunction" was to frame Daniel and have him exterminated.

In **verse 14**, to his credit, Darius tried to get Daniel off the hook. However, time was of the essence because the sentence was to be carried out on the same day as the crime.

In **verse 15**, when sundown came and Daniel hadn't been sentenced, "these men" made another trip to see the king, to rub his nose in it, and force his hand.

We'll stop there until next time!