

Daniel: A Lion's Share of Faith, Part 2

Daniel 6

II. **Daniel's Devotion** (vv. 10 – 18) – *continued* –

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.

In **verse 16**, the Aramaic word *gōb* can be translated “den” or ‘pit,’ and it's not clear from the text whether this “den” is natural or manmade. In either case, the “den” may have been equipped with a dividing wall which could be raised or lowered to either increase or restrict the lion's mobility within the pit.

It's safe to say that we're not talking about one or two lions (see **v. 24**). And, as one commentator suggested, these lions were kept on the “**gnawing side of hungry**.”

At the end of **verse 16**, Darius expresses his heartfelt desire for Daniel to be delivered, for Daniel to survive the night. Notice that he says, “...your God, **whom you serve continually**...” Darius had been so impressed with the consistency of Daniel's confidence in God, with the consistency of Daniel's faithfulness and obedience. Daniel's witness was having an influence upon him, and “the king” genuinely wanted him to be delivered.

In **verse 17**, the placement of an official seal on the stone would discourage anyone from attempting to rescue Daniel from the lions, thereby removing all means and any hope of an escape.

In **verse 18**, we learn “the king” had a pretty rough night. He refused to eat. He refused entertainment. He couldn't sleep. Instead, Darius was preoccupied with Daniel's safety. Therefore, Darius likely suffered more than Daniel did! “King Darius” was the most powerful monarch in the world at that time, but he was powerless to save Daniel.

Sinclair Ferguson says, “[Darius'] helplessness suggests to us that it is better to be a child of faith in a den of lions than a king in a palace without faith.”

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

In **verse 19**, Darius had been sitting on pins and needles waiting for the first break of dawn. And “at the break of day, the king” took off running “to the den of lions,” perhaps an indication this wasn’t your typical execution.

This may be like a trial by combat (a.k.a. trial by ordeal). Daniel had been accused of a crime. It was his word against his accusers. Therefore, if Daniel was eaten by the lions, it would prove his guilt. But if he survived the night, it would not only prove Daniel’s innocence, but also the guilt of his accusers.

In **verse 20**, notice that Darius “cried out in a tone of anguish.” Darius hastens to the lion’s den in faith, but his cry “in a tone of anguish” was a cry of “help my unbelief!” (see **Mark 9:14 – 29**).

I can identify with that! My faith often takes me to prayer. But far too often, I’m unsure if I’ll be delivered from the lions. We pray for a cure from our illnesses, but cry out to the doctor in unbelief, “Doc, how bad is it?”

We all know that God doesn’t always heal. We know that God doesn’t always deliver. However, may that fact never diminish our faith.

Neither should we concern ourselves with how others are serving the Lord. When we face trials involving our health or our finances or our relationships, we shouldn’t be fixated on “why me?” Instead, our concern is to be fixated on our obedience and faithfulness. God’s concern is deciding where that obedience takes us (see **John 21:17 – 22**).

Therefore, may we never fear the results of our obedience. May we never worry about the outcome. Therefore, we cry out, “I believe; help my unbelief!” Darius’ cry was one of “anguish,” and fear and anxiety, yes, but it was also a cry of hope!

At the end of **verse 20**, we see Darius underline the faithful and consistent life of Daniel’s service to the Most High God. Daniel served his God “continually.”

In **verse 21**, words probably can’t express the reaction of Darius when he heard Daniel speak. His heart was overwhelmed that his friend and trusted official survived the night.

In **verse 22**, Daniel gives God all the glory. Was this “angel” a member of the angelic host, or was He the Angel of the Lord, the pre-incarnate Christ? It’s hard to be dogmatic about it either way. Regardless, God guarded Daniel that night.

Daniel emphasizes he “was found blameless before” God, “and also before you, O king, I have done no harm.” In other words, Daniel’s miraculous survival proved his innocence before both God and man.

Sinclair Ferguson suggests his miracle in the lion’s den is a foretaste of the lion lying down with the lamb in the Millennial Kingdom (**Is. 11:6 – 7**).

In **verse 23**, Daniel was given a physical examination “and no kind of harm was found on him.” Daniel had emerged from “the den” without a scratch. Therefore, this “angel” not only kept the mouths of those lions closed, but he also ensured they kept their paws to themselves. Why? “Because [Daniel] had trusted in his God.” Daniel had **A Lion’s Share of Faith**. Daniel’s entire life was characterized by what **Eugene Peterson** calls “a very long obedience in the same direction.” If faith were a muscle, Daniel exercised his and kept it in shape, and the result was that God gave Daniel **A Lion’s Share of Faith** when he needed it.

Like Daniel, may our lives be characterized by faith and trust and a very long obedience in the same direction, “looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith” (**Heb. 12:2**).

Tragically, in **verse 24**, **Daniel’s Deliverance** meant death for “those men who had maliciously accused Daniel.” The Aramaic phrase translated, “maliciously accused,” is only used twice in the Bible (here and in **Dan. 3:8**). It literally means “ate the pieces of.” It would be like us saying, “I’m going chew to you up and spit you out!” And in an incredible twist of irony, it would be the lions who would chew them up and spit them out!

However, it would not only be the fate of “those men,” but also of “their children, and their wives.” Israel had a law which prevented children from being put to death because of their fathers (**Deut. 24:16; Ezek. 18:20**), but there was no such law in Persia. The families were made to suffer the same fate as the guilty party.

To alleviate any thought that these lions weren’t hungry or weren’t very vicious, we are told that “the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.”

IV. Daniel’s Deity (vv. 25 – 28)

Daniel’s Deliverance, but more importantly, *Daniel’s God*, had made quite an impression on “King Darius.” Therefore, “the king” issued a proclamation that was to be circulated throughout the Persian kingdom “to all the peoples, nations, and languages.”

In **verse 26**, notice what Darius writes. He doesn’t refer to “my gods,” but to “the God of Daniel.” He doesn’t write about his blind, deaf, dumb, and mute idols, but about “the **living** God.” Darius doesn’t say his own kingdom will endure forever, but that God’s kingdom endures “forever.”

Darius proclaims that everyone in his “royal dominion...are to tremble and fear...the God of Daniel.” In other words, the people of Darius’ kingdom are to respect and honor and show reverence to “the God of Daniel.” **John MacArthur** said that if you didn’t know better, you’d think Darius was writing a Psalm.

Darius gives the reasons for his proclamation in **verse 27**. Who wouldn’t “tremble and fear” before the God who can perform “signs and wonders” such as these? Therefore, **Daniel’s Deliverance** wasn’t merely or even primarily for Daniel’s benefit. No, it was for His Name’s sake. It was to declare the reality and power of the God of Israel to a pagan king and a lost world.

In **verse 28**, Daniel got his promotion and continued to live his exemplary life! However, it is doubtful that he ever returned home to Jerusalem.

Tremper Longman III, pointed out the similarities between Daniel and Jesus:

Just as Daniel was framed on a false charge by the Persian administrators, so too was Jesus framed by the jealous religious leaders of His day. Just as Daniel was caught while praying at a private location, so too Jesus was arrested while praying at the Garden of Gethsemane. Just as Darius worked for Daniel’s release, so too Pilate worked for the release of Jesus, but in the end, both are turned over to be executed. Just as Daniel’s tomb was sealed with the king’s signet, so too was the stone at Christ’s tomb sealed with an official Roman seal. But that’s where the similarities end. For, though Daniel emerged from the lion’s den without a scratch, Jesus suffered, bled, and died. Yet, Christ emerged from His tomb victorious and triumphant.

This is **Daniel’s Deity**. This is our God. **Hallelujah! What a Savior!**