

DANIEL'S DELIVERANCE OUT OF THE LIONS' DEN

BIBLE TEXT : Daniel 6:1-28.

LESSON 423 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (II Timothy 4:18)..

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Daniel 6:1-28

1 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom;

2 And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel *was* first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage.

3 Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit *was* in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

4 Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he *was* faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

5 Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find *it* against him concerning the law of his God.

6 Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever.

7 All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

8 Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that

Bible References:

I The Kingdom of Darius

1. Darius sets 120 princes over his realm; over them three presidents, Daniel 6:1, 2.
2. Daniel was made chief because of his excellent spirit, Daniel 6:3; 5:12.
3. The princes and presidents become jealous of Daniel, Daniel 6:4, 5.
4. They seek a way to get rid of Daniel, but can find no fault, Daniel 6:5;

1 Samuel 29:3

³ Then said the princes of the Philistines, What *do* these Hebrews *here*? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, *Is not this David*, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these days, or these years, and I have found no fault in him since he fell *unto me* unto this day?

Luke 23:14

¹⁴ Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:

Jude 1:24

²⁴ Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

Revelation 14:5

⁵ And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

II Conspiracy

1. The princes conspire against Daniel, Daniel 6:7, 8.
2. The king, ignorant of their devices, signs the decree, Daniel 6:9;

Esther 8:8

⁸ Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal *it* with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.

3. Daniel prays as aforetime, Daniel 6:10-13;

1 Kings 8:44-45

⁴⁴ If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD toward the city which thou hast chosen, and *toward* the house that I have built for thy name:

⁴⁵ Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

Psalms 55:17

¹⁷ Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

4. The King is grieved and labours to free Daniel, Daniel 6:14.
5. The princes hold the king to the decree, Daniel 6:15.

III Daniel in the Lions' Den

1. Daniel is cast into the den of Lions, Daniel 6:16, 17.
2. The king spends a sleepless night, Daniel 6:18;

Esther 6:1

it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

9 Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.

10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

11 Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

12 Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask *a petition* of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing *is* true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

13 Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which *is* of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

14 Then the king, when he heard *these* words, was sore displeased with himself, and set *his* heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

15 Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians *is*, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

16 Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast *him* into the den of lions. *Now* the

¹ On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king.

3. Darius goes to the den early and calls to Daniel, Daniel 6:19, 20;

Jeremiah 32:17

¹⁷ Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, *and* there is nothing too hard for thee:

4. Daniel answers back and the king is happy, Daniel 6:21-23;

Isaiah 63:9

⁹ In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

Acts 12:11

¹¹ And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and *from* all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

2 Timothy 4:18

¹⁸ And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Hebrews 11:33

³³ Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

5. Daniel is taken out of the den and the princes cast into it, Daniel 6:23, 24.

6. The king writes to all nations, declaring Daniel's God as the living God, Daniel 6:25-28.

Notes:

Government of the Medes and Persians

The Babylonian government had been overthrown by the Medes and Persians. Because of an excellent spirit that was found in Daniel, he had been placed in a high position in the Babylonian government in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. All the 70 years that the Children of Israel were captives in Babylon, Daniel was held in high esteem by that government. Now Babylon had fallen and the Medes and Persians became the second world empire. No doubt they had heard about Daniel before the city was ever taken. Those mighty miracles that God had wrought in Babylon were not done in secret but were open for all to see.

For several centuries the miracles God wrought in Egypt under the hand of Moses were remembered and talked about by the nations around. They feared and trembled before the God of Israel, but still persisted in serving their own gods that had no power -- could not see, hear, or talk.

Jealousy

It is natural to suppose when Darius, the Mede, took over the kingdom he would seek the wisdom and help Daniel could give him. He set 120 princes over the kingdom, and three presidents over these, of whom Daniel was first. This aroused jealousy among the princes. The Bible tells us that "jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance" (Proverbs 6:34). "Jealousy is cruel as the grave" (Song of Solomon 8:6).

The princes sought to find fault with Daniel that they might accuse him to the king. Daniel was not only faithful to his God, but he was faithful to his country and to the king's business. They

king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

17 And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

18 Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of musick brought before him: and his sleep went from him.

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: *and* the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

23 Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

24 And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast *them* into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

could find no fault with him.

The scribes and Pharisees tried to find fault with Jesus. After all their accusations were made, Pilate, the Roman governor, came forth with this statement, "I find no fault in him." Daniel's accusers decided they could find no fault in his life, in his business transactions, or in his fidelity to the king; so they decided they would have to find occasion against him concerning the law of his God.

Prayer

Daniel was a man of prayer. Those princes possibly had seen him many times in his room with his window open toward Jerusalem making intercession to his God. A prayer life means a godly life, a life above reproach, a life that really makes men great -- not always great in the eyes of the world, but great in that they are rich toward God.

Criticism

It is easy for those with a critical eye to find fault with the Gospel. It is too straight; it is too narrow; it takes away your freedom; it makes you an oddity in the world, so they say.

They connived a decree that was sure to trap Daniel. They also caught the king with flattery. "They did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues" (Psalm 78:36). The penalty for disobedience to the decree was the lions' dens. The king, not realising their motive, signed the decree, which made it a law. The law of the Medes and Persians was unchangeable. When the king understood their plans and realised the trap they had gotten Daniel into, he laboured hard to deliver Daniel, but to no avail.

An Uncompromising Stand

Daniel was about 90 years old at this time but still able to attend to the duties of the kingdom. The purpose he had had in his heart, as a young man was still the purpose of his heart in his old age. His heart was fixed. No decree of man could swerve him from his personal devotions to his God.

Some might have compromised the issue by praying in secret. Had Daniel been of that type, this story of deliverance from the lions' den would never have been recorded to encourage our faith.

God's Deliverance

A deceiver is never open and aboveboard. He covers the truth. These princes slipped around to his home and found Daniel praying with his windows open to Jerusalem. They reported to the King. The edict was carried out. Daniel was cast into the lions' den. But an angel walked into the lions' den ahead of Daniel and locked the mouths of the lions. They may have been hungry, but they could not open their mouths to take one bite out of Daniel. We believe Daniel must have felt a wonderful peace in his soul, and thanked God for his protection from those savage beasts.

King Darius spent a sleepless night: no food, no music, no gay companions to break the long hours. He was torn between fear and hope. "Fear hath torment" (I John 4:18). His hope was based on past miracles about which he had heard. He did not have that living hope in his soul that gave him confidence that God would undertake.

Joy

As soon as the morning light appeared, the king hastened to the den of lions. When he arrived, he possibly could not see into the den to know if Daniel was still alive, so he cried out: "O Daniel, . . . is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to

25 Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

26 I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he *is* the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion *shall be even* unto the end.

27 He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

deliver thee from the lions?" Back came the answer, "O King, live for ever." Imagine that king leaping for joy when he heard Daniel's voice! He commanded them to take Daniel out of the den; and we believe that the angel who had been with Daniel came out, too, for as soon as his accusers were thrown in, the lions devoured them.

The rulers of the 120 provinces of Persia, combined with those savage beasts of the earth, could bring no hurt to Daniel, because he believed in his God. We are told in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, that faith "stopped the mouths of lions."

Caught in Their Own Trap

Those men who had accused Daniel were punished with the same punishment they had planned for Daniel. "Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt. For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul. Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall" (Psalm 35:4, 7, 8). This was a prayer of David, but how it fits the picture here!

An Everlasting Dominion

Darius was so much awed and inspired by the marvellous deliverance of Daniel that he published another decree: "That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end." This decree was sent to every province of his kingdom. What a marvellous way of telling all the world about the true God! Perhaps many of those people prayed and sought the living God.

One statement that the king made is striking in that he speaks of God's Kingdom not being destroyed and His dominion shall be even unto the end. How did that heathen king know that, unless inspired to speak those words by the Spirit of God? Was there such a gratitude in his heart for Daniel's deliverance that he lifted his heart and eyes heavenward and received an unction from the Holy Spirit to speak truths concerning our Lord's Kingdom?

**"Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone!
Dare to have a purpose firm!
Dare to make it known!"**

QUESTIONS

1. Why was Daniel chosen above the other princes?
2. What effect did it have on the other princes?
3. How did they conspire to get rid of Daniel?
4. How did they succeed in getting the king to sign the decree?
5. How did the king feel when he understood the plot?
6. What did Daniel do about it?
7. Why did not the lions devour Daniel?
8. What happened to the princes and their families?
9. Give the substance of another decree the king made.