

DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS

Daniel 6:1-28.

LESSON 142 -- Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Fear ye not" (Matthew 10:31).

BIBLE TEXT

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 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 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.

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.

Early Life

Daniel was an old man now. Many years before, he had been a little boy in the land of Palestine. Perhaps he was born in Jerusalem — the City of God. No doubt his mother and father had read their Bible to him every day and had told him how God had delivered the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt. God had brought them through the Red Sea, and on Mount Sinai in the wilderness Moses had talked with God.

God wanted His people to be good and kind and holy like Himself, so He gave Moses certain commandments and rules that would help the people to be good. God had told Moses to build a tabernacle, or beautiful tent, where He could live among His people. Later on, King Solomon built a beautiful stone Temple, or church, in Jerusalem where the people came to talk with God. Perhaps Daniel thought: Oh, I want to be close to God and talk with Him like Moses did! He listened carefully when the Law of God was read, so he would know just what God wanted him to do; and when he was old enough he read it himself. No doubt Daniel was happy and his heart was warmed and thrilled as he went to the Temple to pray morning and evening.

A Captive

One day when Daniel was just a young man, King Nebuchadnezzar and his soldiers came and took Daniel and many of the Jews away from their homes and brought them to Babylon. Perhaps on the long journey from Jerusalem, Daniel felt sad that he would not be able to go to the Temple to pray, but he knew that if he would just turn his face toward the Temple and pray wherever he was, God would help him. He may have thought: Wherever I am I will open my window toward Jerusalem and pray, and God will bring us back from captivity.

Daniel did not forget how his mother and father had taught him to live; and when he and his friends were given meat and wine from the king's table, perhaps he thought: I cannot eat this food; it has been offered to idols and this strong wine will make me dull and foolish. He may not have known just what to do at first, but he and his friends prayed; then they asked if they could have only vegetables and cereals to eat and water to drink. Daniel prayed every

day. He must have studied hard and been cheerful and pleasant, and ready and willing to do what he was told to do.

Finally, King Nebuchadnezzar died and there were other kings. Daniel did the very best he could for each one of them. They knew he loved and worshiped the living God, and they could trust him to do what was right.

Daniel Trapped

When Darius became king he had three presidents and 120 princes to help him. God had made Daniel wise, and he worked hard and was a big help to the king, so Darius thought about setting Daniel over the whole kingdom. The other presidents and the princes envied Daniel. They felt jealous and mean in their hearts, because they wanted to be leaders instead of Daniel.

They wanted to do something mean to Daniel and get him out of the way. They decided they would tell on him if he did something wrong: then maybe the king wouldn't like him so well. But God helped Daniel to do everything just right. Then they asked the king to make a law that no one in all the kingdom should pray to any god, or to any man except the king, for 30 days, and anyone who disobeyed that law should be put into the lions' den. The king was probably pleased, and may have thought: The people think I am a wonderful king and that I will be good to them and give them what they ask for. He did not know they wanted to hurt his good helper, Daniel. So King Darius signed the law that no one should ask anything of God, or of any man except the king, for 30 days.

Daniel heard about the law but he could not wait for 30 days to pray to God. He loved God and it would have made him very sad not to talk with God for 30 days. And he needed God to help him with everything he did. He would not quit praying for even one day, so he went into his house; and his windows being opened toward Jerusalem, he knelt three times a day and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, just as he did before. God had helped him so that he and his friends did not have to eat the king's food, and God had walked in the fiery furnace with his friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, so of course God would help him now, too.

The Den of Lions

The presidents and princes probably hoped: Now we will get rid of Daniel, and one of us can be first in the kingdom. They told the king that Daniel was not paying any attention to his law; he was praying to God three times a day.

When the king heard this, he was very unhappy because he had made such a foolish law. Now the good Daniel, whom he loved and trusted more than any of his helpers, would have to be put in the lions' den. He did not want Daniel to be destroyed, but the law could not be changed. No doubt he had heard how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego had been saved from the burning, fiery furnace, and thought that surely his God would save Daniel, too.

That evening Daniel was put into the lions' den, and the king went to his palace, but he did not feel like eating and he could not sleep because he felt so bad about Daniel's being in the lions' den.

Protection

Early the next morning the king hurried over to the lions' den and cried out, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" From the den came Daniel's voice, "O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me." He told the king that it was because God knew he had not done anything wrong that He had sent an angel to shut the mouths of the lions.

How glad the king was to hear Daniel's voice! He KNEW that Daniel's God was the living God, and sent a message to everybody in his kingdom to worship the God of Daniel, "for," he said, "he is the living God, . . . who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

The wicked presidents and princes had expected to hurt Daniel, but instead they were put into the lions' den themselves and were destroyed. We should be careful not to hurt other people; we are sure to hurt ourselves, too, when we try to hurt others.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did the King like Daniel and show favour to him? Daniel 6:3.
2. What did Daniel do when he knew it was against the law to pray to God? Daniel 6:10.
3. What happened to the lions when Daniel was put in the den with them? Daniel 6:22.
4. Why was Daniel saved from being hurt by the lions? Daniel 6:23.
5. What happened to the men who envied Daniel and wanted to hurt him? Daniel 6:24.

LESSON RESOURCES

TOPIC

DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS

Lesson 142

Daniel 6:1-28

MUSIC

Daniel Was A Man Of Prayer

WATCH & PRAY 90

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SONG

Daniel Was A Man Of Prayer

**Daniel was a man of prayer,
Daily prayed he three times,
Till one day they had him cast,
In the den of Lions,
Even then in the den,
Fears could not alarm him,
God just shut the Lions' mouths,
So they could not harm him**

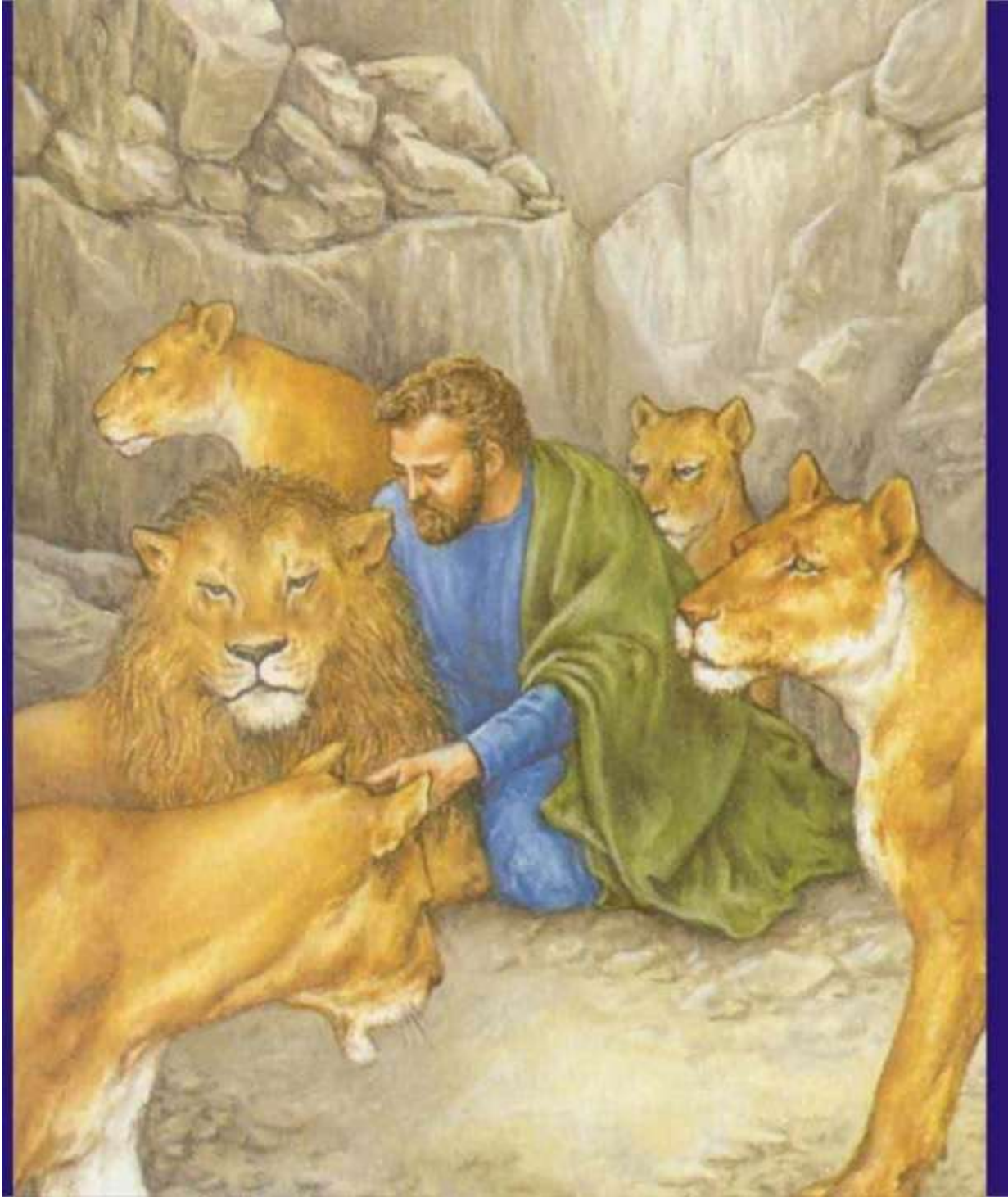
PICTURE 1



PICTURE 2



PICTURE 3



PICTURE 4

