

# Lesson 6

## Daniel In the Lions' Den

### Daniel 6

Begin today's lesson asking the Holy Spirit to illumine your mind and to teach you His precepts.

*"...the blameless in their walk are His delight."*

Before you start the questions for this week, read through all of Daniel 6.

*Proverbs 11:20*

1. Turn to the timeline on page 77. About how old was Daniel when Daniel 6 takes place (during the first year of Darius' reign)? Record this chapter number and details of the event on the timeline.
2. What was Daniel's official position in the government and why was he chosen?
3. What do you think was the motive behind the commissioners' and satraps' request of King Darius? What do you learn from this?
4. What do Esther 1:19 and Daniel 6: 8, 12 and 15 teach about the law of the Medes and Persians?
5. In what one area of Daniel's life was he vulnerable to being found "guilty"?
6. There is an old question: "If you were accused of being a believer in Jesus Christ, would there be enough evidence to bring a guilty verdict?" This is a searching question. How do you answer it?

7. Remember what we've learned earlier about our duty to obey God vs. man (see Lesson 3, question 11). How does Daniel respond to the dilemma? What consequences does he face? Discuss.
8. Daniel 6:10-11 tells us a lot about Daniel's prayer life. What do you learn from these verses about prayer? How can you follow Daniel's model in your life?
9. From Daniel 6:14-24, what is Darius's reaction to the trap he had fallen into concerning Daniel?
10. From Daniel 6:22-23, what happened to Daniel? Give his explanation of these events.
11. Read Hebrews 11 which is often called the "Hall of Faith." Would you say God always miraculously rescues those who are innocent and trust in Him? Discuss.
12. Do you think God is still working miracles today?
13. What do you learn about God and our proper response to Him from the decree of Darius?
14. Compare Daniel's position in the beginning and end of this chapter.
15. As you look back over this lesson about Daniel 6, what do you want to remember?

16. Consider the following scriptures and meditate on them using the prayer exercise that is explained page 81.

❖ Scriptures: **II Timothy 4:16-18**

❖ Word or phrase:

❖ Amplification:

❖ Invitation:

## Thoughts From Martha:

### **Question #6: If you were accused of being a believer in Jesus Christ, would there be enough evidence to bring a guilty verdict?**

Well, I'm afraid it would all depend on how the jury selection went. Unless I was real lucky, (or got to hand pick my own jurors-- yeah right!) I kinda doubt it would be a unanimous decision. When I really look at the big picture, at ALL the people I know, I'm kinda thinkin' a hung jury might be best-case scenario.

Why? Well, it's not what you might think! I'm not some kind of ogre out there on the streets or anything. No, by God's grace, I'm really a fairly decent person and certainly a long way from where I once was. In fact, if I was being accused of being a kindly sorta person, I would like to think that there might be enough reasonable evidence to put me away for quite a number of years without too much jury deliberation.

No, that's not what I'm concerned about. It's this 'Christian indictment' that leaves me shaking in my boots. Of course, there are some people I know --- some in certain circles-- who would definitely have some goods on me...at least enough evidence to present a decent argument. I would even be so bold as to say my own family members who, most assuredly would possess the preponderance of eye-witness information for such a trial, (including the aggravating factors of occasionally witnessing behaviors completely contradictory to my professed beliefs) even THEY would have enough tangible proof to tip the scales in my favor. But aside from my own family and certain groups of people, I'm afraid there are many people who have never seen ANY hard-core evidence to substantiate such a claim. Circumstantial evidence, well sure -- I certainly hope so-- but we all know you can't get a conviction based on THAT.

If I were accused, WOULD I be convicted? Definitely a searching question that leaves an unsettling answer. I got convicted all right ...convicted that there needs to be more evidence!

### **Question #12: Do you think God is still working miracles today?**

I think we can all quote a miraculous story or two. I suppose the first ones that come to mind are healings: the cancer that suddenly and 'mysteriously' no longer showed up on x-ray, the arthritis that was gone, the paralyzed father I knew in Florida who instantaneously sat up when his daughter laid hands on him and prayed. Those wonderful stories awaken us again to the knowledge of God's power and sovereignty, because we can see it so clearly and feel it so tangibly when the unexpected and impossible occurs.

I don't think there is any doubt in this group, that God does the miraculous. If we haven't seen it firsthand, we've certainly heard it, or been exposed to written accounts through our various studies. Yes, God does the miraculous, but I think we are just as aware of the fact that it isn't His usual modus operandi. So what do we do with the 'sawn asunder,' the 'slaughtered by the sword,' or the 'stoned to death'? What do we do with the cancer that wasn't healed, the church bus that crashed, and the victims of bombings?

When we first look at the miracles in Hebrews 11, we are essentially struck by their lack of consistency. Where is that direct one-on-one correlation to each person's faith and personal holiness that we expect to see? Sometimes it is there, but many times it is not and occasionally we find ourselves more dumbstruck by its absence than by the awesome presence of some of God's most heart-stopping, eye-popping, hand-clapping, unexpected displays of supernatural

power. Why is it that God's miracles, at first glance, appear to be only in fortuitous smatterings? Could they really be only random acts done by a capricious God, or was there something more: more than what first greets the eye? As we continue to wander down that hall of faith and take closer inspection, we begin to see how each miracle was strategically and purposely placed (and flawlessly timed) for reasons that stretched far beyond what even those 'heroes of the faith' would have dared to imagine. The miracles weren't just randomly given, nor were they just some personal seek-and-rescue operation either. Yes, they were personal (because God is personal) and they did rescue, but the effects of the rescue became infinitely greater as each miracle set off its own far-reaching chain of events spanning multitudes of people, various places, and distant times. They were all tied into something much, much greater... a larger story ... a master plan.

So, sometimes the miracles were there and sometimes they weren't. But what was uniformly there in that long hall of distinguished guests ... what all the miracles were eternally enmeshed in ... was the superabundant, passionate, risk-taking, all-human-reason-for-hope-being-gone faith that fueled their lives. Those hall-of-famers weren't counting on the miracles; just ask Shadrack, Meshach, and Abednego. They didn't doubt God was capable, but they were willing to step into the fiery furnace, no matter what the outcome, because their trust in God was greater than life itself. I suppose they all had that far-off look in their eyes in the midst of disaster, for they were continually looking beyond the visible real to the greater invisible realities. They had been given a taste, a glimpse, a touch, and a promise and they sold all they had to obtain the treasure -- miracle or no miracle. Those are the giants of the faith and the occasional recipients of miracles. And it is their shoulders we stand on in hopes that we too, might catch a glimpse, or get a taste, or touch the hem of the One who enraptures our hearts and whose love first set the whole story in motion.

*Thank you God for Your miracles, but thank You even more that there is something much greater upon which my faith can lie. For even greater than your miracles is your sovereign plan, of which they are only a part. May my trust in it grow stronger -- may I cling to it tighter-- with each passing year.*

## Lecture Notes: