

Daniel 6:1-10
SA230122

“A Lion Among Men”

1. Today we come to one of the most famous passages in all the Bible: Daniel in the lion’s den.
 - **At** this point Daniel had been a captive in Babylon for about 70 years and was in his late 80s.
2. And just when he probably thought it was smooth sailing from this point on, he had to face one of his biggest trials.
 - **He** had survived being taken as a teenager by the Babylonian army.
 - **Then** he faced the threat of execution if unable to interpret Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.
 - **Then** he dodged the event in the fire with Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego.
 - **And** now, he is facing a night in a lion’s den with starving lions.
 - **But** God was faithful through it all, and He always will be for us as well.
3. I think as Christians, we have to be very careful when it comes to earthly retirement not to think that means we can retire in our service with God.

- **God** will never force us to serve or continue to serve.
4. But you need to understand that it is God's will that each of us serve Him until the day we die.
- **And** Daniel knew this all too well.
5. Which means we have no guarantees that the trials of life will end until the day we are in the Kingdom.
- **But** all these trials made Daniel into a fearless man of God and if we are faithful, trials will do the same in our lives as well.
 - **The** longer we walk with God and the more trials we face, the more we see God's faithfulness which only makes us stronger and bolder for God
6. That is why I called today's teaching "a lion among men" because that is what Daniel has now become.
- **Although** always one of God's sheep, we will become as "bold as lion" as we follow Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah.
7. Which is interesting in that chapter one intimates that Daniel was of the tribe of Judah, the same line of Jesus.
- **Which** means lions run in Daniel's family and in ours as well once we become a part of the Lord's family.

- God desires all of us have the same courage and boldness as Daniel since we are children of the Lion of Judah.
8. We pick up today two years after the fall of the Babylonian Empire to the Medes and the Persians.
- **The** date is around 537 BC, and we are now entering the time of the 2nd portion of the image in Daniel's dream.
 - **The** chest and arms of silver in chapter 2 representing the Medes and the Persians coming into power.

v.3 1. Darius was a title rather than a name like Caesar or President.

- **Hence**, we don't know for sure who this "first" Darius actually was.
2. But now we see he is setting up his new government with 120 leaders over the Kingdom.
- **And** over the 120 were 3 governors or overseers, one of which was Daniel.
3. Now the fact that Daniel would be one of the three is obvious to us due to his character and godliness.
- **But** this would have been a real "eyebrow raiser" for the Medes and the Persians who had just taken over.

4. To be granted this position would create jealousy in those around him.
 - **But** even more they would feel slighted upon realizing Daniel was not even one of them.
 - **He** was a foreigner!
5. So why would Darius do this?
 - **We** will see in a moment because he not only saw Daniel's character, but also an "excellent spirit" within him.
 - **Which** we know was the spirit of God working in his life.
6. In addition, Daniel's reputation had no doubt preceded him as word spread of his connection to the "gods" in all that happened with Nebuchadnezzar.
 - **And** even the prediction that the Medes and the Persians would conquer and take over.
 - **So** Daniel was likely already inspiring great intrigue in the new leadership.
7. But if his appointment as one of the top 3 in the government wasn't bad enough, he was eventually elevated to the top of the top 3!
 - **Which** apparently made Daniel the 3rd most powerful in the kingdom, just behind Darius and Cyrus.

8. Which is also interesting in that he had just been elevated to 3rd in the Kingdom of Babylon the night Babylon fell.

- God is honoring that position!

9. And notice why he was exalted in both cases...

- **Because** he faithfully followed and honored God his whole life which led to an “excellent” spirit in him.
- **And** God will do this for us too.

v.4 1. Notice the result of their jealousy.

- **They** did the best they could to “find fault” in him so they could have him removed by spreading slander and lies.

2. And it’s no different in politics today.

- **Whether** it be politics in the world or even sadly sometimes in the church.

3. But his faithfulness to God and man and his life of integrity left him “faultless.”

- **Not** sinless, which of course is impossible.
- **But** “faultless” before God and man.

4. And if we live a life of faithfulness before God and man...

- **We** too will find ourselves above reproach and accusation throughout our life.

5. This doesn’t mean we will be perfect or never be spoken of falsely...

- **Only** that before God, we will be faultless, and when the truth comes out before man as well.

v.5 1. Oh, to have this as our testimony!

- **That** no one can find any fault in us except in the way we serve and worship our God!
- **But** this is the result of those who are faithful before God and man.

2. They knew that Daniel was so faithful to his God that regardless of what happened, he would pray 3 times a day as was his custom and practice.

- **If** they couldn't change him, they would try to change the law around him to make what he was doing for God illegal.

3. And we are currently seeing Satan use the very same tactic in our day as well.

- **Since** he has not been able to get everyone to go along with attacking and hating the church in America, he is now trying to change the mindset and laws to entrap us.

4. Just like in Daniel's day, there are those involved in politics today that are trying to outlaw certain things including certain speech that would rebuke those living in open sin in our society.

- **And** if you call it sin, they want to label it “hate speech” or now in some cases even “domestic terrorism.”

5. You see Satan’s tactics don’t change.

- **Just** different generations.

6. Which means if they can’t change us, they will do their best to change the language, viewpoints, and laws surrounding us that we may become entrapped.

- **And** that is exactly what they are doing here with Daniel.

v.7 1. Notice they “thronged” before the King and said they **ALL** agreed there was this action that needed to be taken.

- **But** obviously not **ALL** of them agreed because Daniel, who was 3rd in power, most certainly did not.
- **But** there was obviously a huge group of them that were in on this.

2. Notice also how flattering and firm it was.

- **“Flattering”** in that it would appeal to the king’s pride and **“firm”** in that the consequence would be death.
- **And THAT** by the lions!

v.9 1. Notice they emphasized that once signed, this decree could not be changed.

- **Explain** Babylon versus the Medo/Persian empire.

2. But also notice the position that Daniel finds himself in.

- **The** laws in the land have now changed against God.
- **It** is now illegal to obey the Lord, so what will Daniel do?

v.10 1. He did the same thing we all must do if this happens in America.

- **He** changed nothing; he simply continued to obey and keep God's Word as he was doing before and let the chips fall where they may.

2. After he knew the decree had been signed, he went home and did what had been his custom since his early days.

- **He** knelt 3 times that day as he did every day and gave thanks to the God of heaven.
- **It** didn't change his devotion or prayer life one iota.

3. And why 3 times a day?

- **Probably** because of the morning and evening sacrifice in the law which was a time of prayer.

- **To** add midday would have shown a greater level of devotion.
4. David said in **Psalm 55:17**, “Evening and morning and at noon will I pray and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice.”
- **So** David followed this tradition as well.
5. But this is why I said he was “a lion among men.”
- **His** faithfulness and fear of God was greater than his fear of man.
6. Jesus said in **Matt. 10:28**, “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”
- **Why?**
 - **Because** one is a temporary earthly body, but the other is eternal and concerns the soul.
7. Which brings up the question of how we are to respond to our governing authorities in such situations.
- **While** we are commanded to come under the governing authorities, we are not to do so if it denies God’s Word or our conscience before God.
8. When Peter was confronted by his earthly authorities, the Sanhedrin, about witnessing for

Jesus , Peter said in **Acts 5:29**, “We ought to obey God rather than men.”

- **This** didn't mean he wouldn't come under his earthly authorities.
- **Only** that he wouldn't do so at the expense of God and His Word which was a higher authority.

9. So how did Daniel find such boldness and faithfulness in this enormous trial he was facing?

- **First**, he simply continued on in his life's custom established in his early days.
- **Which** is where our power to obey comes from.

10. And if this is not our custom, we need to ask God to help us make it our custom.

- **Because** without this daily custom we will have no power to follow through.

11. Secondly it says he gave thanks to God even in the midst of the trial.

- **He** always gave thanks and now did so even in the trial.
- **And** if we truly trust God, we need to do the same.

12. Next notice he kept his eyes fixed on God by praying toward Jerusalem.

- **This** was in response to Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple to the Jews who were in foreign lands.
13. It's not that we all are to do that today, but it was symbolic to the Jew and to us that regardless of where we are in life, we are to keep our focus and eyes fixed on God.
- **And** that's what Daniel did and what we must do as well.
14. Notice Daniel didn't get loud and make himself obnoxious or bring more problems upon himself with the government.
- **He** simply carried on living for God as he had always done and let God handle the consequences.
15. So, the question for us today is: are we a lion among men or a lioness among women?
- **If** not, we need to start doing the things that accomplished this in Daniel.
 - **Being** faithful and obedient to God's Word.
 - **Becoming** men and women of prayer and thankfulness in all situations.
 - **Keeping** our eyes fixed on God.
 - **And** living it out daily, regardless of what the world around us is doing.