

Lesson 6 – Daniel 6

NOTES:

Daniel 1: The Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces the historical context of Daniel's deportation to Babylon following Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem in 605 BC. Daniel was among the royal Jewish captives first extradited to Babylon.

Upon Daniel's arrival, he and three companions were confronted with a difficult choice between defiling themselves with the king's appointed ration of choice food and wine or risking their lives by abstaining from the food for the sake of remaining undefiled in the sight of God. God rewards Daniel's righteous decision to abstain by granting him favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials. God also endows Daniel and his three companions with exceptional knowledge, wisdom, and intelligence that results in the honor of entering into the king's personal service.

Daniel 2: Daniel's Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's First Dream

Chapter 2 explains God's supernatural equipping of Daniel to reveal Nebuchadnezzar's first dream and its interpretation, demonstrating God's covenant attentiveness to His exiles. The dream reveals four successive Gentile dominions preceding the establishment of God's messianic kingdom that will never be destroyed. After Daniel reveals Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its interpretation, Daniel is promoted as ruler over Babylon and chief prefect over all its wise men.

Daniel 3: Nebuchadnezzar's Command and the Courageous Response of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego

Nebuchadnezzar erects a great image of gold, commanding peoples, nations and men of every language to fall down and worship the golden image when hearing musical instruments. The king's decree includes the penalty of being immediately cast into a furnace of blazing fire for anyone refusing to worship the image.

After the Chaldeans report the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego to worship the image, Nebuchadnezzar gives urgent orders for them to be cast into a furnace of blazing fire. The three men are tied up and cast into the furnace. When Nebuchadnezzar and his high officials look into the furnace, they are astounded to see four men walking unharmed in the midst of the fire. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego exit the fire unsinged. Nebuchadnezzar then issues a decree forbidding an offensive word to be spoken against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, whom the king causes to prosper.

Daniel 4: Daniel's Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream Predicting the King's Insanity

Chapter 4 provides Nebuchadnezzar's narrative of his second dream and Daniel's interpretation of the dream as a prediction of the king's temporary insanity. The dream is of a great spreading tree that a messenger from heaven commands to be cut down. Daniel interprets the tree as Nebuchadnezzar himself, predicting that Nebuchadnezzar would dwell among the beasts of the field for a seven-year period before finally ascribing glory to God. Afterwards, his mental health and kingdom are restored.

Daniel 5: Daniel's Interpretation of the Miraculous Writing on the Wall

Chapter 5 records Daniel's interpretation of a mysterious inscription on the palace wall of Belshazzar, the king of Babylon, coregent with Nabonidus (556–538 BC), and son of Nebuchadnezzar. During a great feast on the eve of the Persian conquest of Babylon (538 BC), Belshazzar was drinking out of the gold and silver vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem when a hand emerged and began writing on the palace wall. Seeing the hand, Belshazzar becomes alarmed and calls for the wise men.

After the wise men fail to interpret the inscription, Daniel is brought to Belshazzar, at the queen's request. Daniel interprets the message to read, "'MENE' – God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it. 'TEKEL' – you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient. 'PERES' – your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians'" (Dan 5:26-28). Belshazzar is slain that same night and Darius the Mede receives the kingdom, fulfilling the words spoken by Daniel.

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Daniel 6: Daniel in the Lion's Den

Chapter 6 tells the familiar narrative of Daniel in the lion's den. As a result of the plotting of his political subordinates, Daniel is cast into the lion's den by King Darius the Mede for defying the injunction against petitioning a god or man except the king. Just as God had miraculously protected Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the furnace of fire, God closes the lions' mouths so that they do not harm Daniel. While Daniel is delivered and enjoys success, his accusers are thrown into the den and crushed by the lions.

BIBLE TEXT: DANIEL 6 (NASB)

Dan. 6:1 It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom,² and over them three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one), that these satraps might be accountable to them, and that the king might not suffer loss.³ Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom.⁴ Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or *evidence of corruption*, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was *to be found* in him.⁵ Then these men said, "We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find *it* against him with regard to the law of his God."

Dan. 6:6 Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows: "King Darius, live forever!"⁷ "All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions' den."⁸ "Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked."⁹ Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction.

Dan. 6:10 Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.¹¹ Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God.¹² Then they approached and spoke before the king about the king's injunction, "Did you not sign an injunction that any man who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, is to be cast into the lions' den?" The king replied, "The statement is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked."¹³ Then they answered and spoke before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the injunction which you signed, but keeps making his petition three times a day."

Dan. 6:14 Then, as soon as the king heard this statement, he was deeply distressed and set *his* mind on delivering Daniel; and even until sunset he kept exerting himself to rescue him.¹⁵ Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, "Recognize, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or statute which the king establishes may be changed."

Dan. 6:16 Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lions' den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you."¹⁷ A stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing would be changed in regard to Daniel.¹⁸ Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him.

Dan. 6:19 Then the king arose at dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lions' den.²⁰ When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?"²¹ Then Daniel spoke to the king, "O king, live forever!"²² "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime."²³ Then the king was very pleased and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no injury whatever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.²⁴ The king then gave orders, and they brought those men who had maliciously accused Daniel, and

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they cast them, their children and their wives into the lions' den; and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

Dan. 6:25 Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language who were living in all the land: "May your peace abound!

²⁶ "I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel;

For He is the living God and enduring forever,
And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed,
And His dominion *will be* forever.

²⁷ "He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders

In heaven and on earth,
Who has *also* delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

Dan. 6:28 So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Whom does Darius appoint over the kingdom? In what capacity is Daniel appointed (6:1-2)
2. What does Daniel possess that causes him to begin to distinguish himself among the commissioners and satraps? What does the king plan to appoint Daniel to oversee (6:3)
3. What do the commissioners and satraps begin to seek against Daniel? What are they not able to find? Why? In what regard do these men begin to next conspire against Daniel? (6:4-5)
4. (A) What gifts and abilities has God given you so that You can glorify Him in Your workplace, school, home, and/or church? When have you become the object of unjust envy and jealousy? Knowing that gifts and abilities are given by God, why should we not act in envy and jealousy?
5. What do the commissioners and satraps tell the king to establish? What does King Darius do? (6:6-9)
6. Knowing that the document was signed establishing the injunction that anyone petitioning any god or man besides the king would be cast into the lion's den, what does Daniel do? What is Daniel's posture when he prays? How often does Daniel pray and give thanks before his God? (6:10)
7. (A) What is the greatest challenge to your prayer routine? How do you overcome this challenge? What is your posture when you pray? How often do you pray? How does this compare to Daniel?
8. What do the men find Daniel doing? What do they say to the king about the king's injunction? How does the king reply? What do they tell the king concerning Daniel? How do they identify Daniel to the king? (6:11-13) What does this tell you about the identity of the Jewish exiles in Babylon? What does this tell you about Daniel's devotion to God while living in exile?
9. How does the king respond to the men's report about Daniel? What does he set his mind to do? What do the men remind the king to recognize? What happens after the king gives orders? What does the king say to Daniel? How is the lions' den secured and sealed? What does the king do after Daniel is cast into the lions' den? (6:14-18)
10. What does the king do at dawn, at the break of day? What does he cry out with a troubled voice? (6:19-20) (O) Do you think that the king had genuine faith in the living God of Daniel?
11. What does Daniel tell the king that God had done? Before whom does Daniel say that he was found innocent? What had Daniel not committed? (6:21-22)

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12. (A) How do Daniel's miraculous rescue and his response to the king glorify God? How could you glorify God through the challenges that you are facing today?
13. What order is the king very pleased to give? Why is no injury found on him? (6:23)
14. (A) When has God rewarded your trust in Him through divine deliverance and provision? Whose faith is being strengthened through the witness of God's love and provision for you?
15. What happens to the malicious men who had accused Daniel along with their children and wives? (6:24)
16. What decree does Darius the king write to all the peoples, nations, and men of every language? List seven statements about God in Darius' decree.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.
 - 7.
17. What do you learn about God in Daniel 6?
18. How could you apply what you have learned about God this week?

Write a prayer response to Daniel 6.