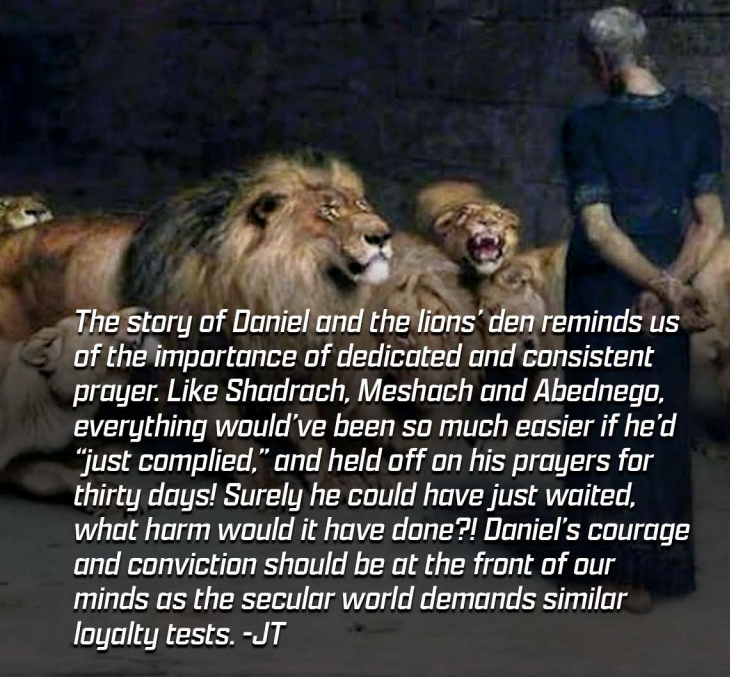


DANIEL 6

DEN OF LIONS



The story of Daniel and the lions' den reminds us of the importance of dedicated and consistent prayer. Like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, everything would've been so much easier if he'd "just complied," and held off on his prayers for thirty days! Surely he could have just waited, what harm would it have done?! Daniel's courage and conviction should be at the front of our minds as the secular world demands similar loyalty tests. -JT

1 It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, **2** with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. **3** Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. **4** At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. **5** Finally these men said, "We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God."

6 So these administrators and satraps went as a group to the king and said: "May King Darius live forever! **7** The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays

to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions' den. **8** Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." **9** So King Darius put the decree in writing.

10 Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. **11** Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. **12** So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: "Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions' den?"

The king answered, "The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed."

13 Then they said to the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day." **14** When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.

15 Then the men went as a group to King Darius and said to him, "Remember, Your Majesty, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed."

16 So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!"

17 A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation might not be changed. **18** Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep.

19 At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. **20** When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?"

21 Daniel answered, "May the king live forever! **22** My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty."

23 The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

24 At the king's command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

25 Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language in all the earth: "May you prosper greatly!"

26 "I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel.

"For he is the living God
and he endures forever;
his kingdom will not be destroyed,
his dominion will never end.

27 He rescues and he saves;
he performs signs and wonders
in the heavens and on the earth.
He has rescued Daniel
from the power of the lions."

28 So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Study Guide BlueLetterBible.org Commentary

They could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful: Daniel was such a faithful man that those who looked for a flaw in his actions or his character came up empty.

Sometimes today a candidate or nominee for political office is set under this kind of scrutiny, but imagine looking as hard as you can at a public servant in office some 50 years and finding *nothing wrong*. No fraudulent expense accounts. No intern scandals. No questionable business deals. No gifts from lobbyists. No accusations from his staff.

All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together: Daniel's enemies also knew that people could be persuaded to do things they wouldn't normally do if they thought everyone else approved of that thing. Of course, they lied when they said all the governors... have consulted together. We know it was a lie because Daniel was one of the governors and he was not consulted.

Therefore King Darius signed the written decree: "Suppose the law of the land were proclaimed, 'No man shall pray during the remainder of this month, on pain of being cast into a den of lions,' — how many of you would pray? I think there would be rather a scanty number at the prayer-meeting. Not but what the attendance at prayer-meetings is scanty enough now! But if there were the penalty of being cast into a den of lions, I am afraid the prayer-meeting would be postponed for a month, owing to pressing business, and manifold engagements of one kind and another." (Spurgeon)

When Daniel knew that the writing was signed: Daniel was confronted with a test of loyalties. He was a loyal subject of his king, yet he knew that the King of Kings deserved a higher loyalty. Daniel refused to give to the government the measure of obedience that belonged to God alone. "Unless you are prepared to be in the minority, and now and then to be called 'narrow,' 'fanatic,' and to be laughed at by men because you will not do what they do, but abstain and resist, then there is little chance of your ever making much of your Christian profession." (Maclaren)

He prayed three times that day, knowing that though a little prayer is good, much prayer is far better. We also remember that Daniel was one of three governors over an empire — yet still had time to pray. "That does not tell you how often he prayed, but how often he was in the posture of prayer. Doubtless he prayed 300 times a day if necessary—his heart was always having commerce with the skies; but thrice a day he prayed formally." (Spurgeon)

Bibles & Barbells is a weekly men's group that meets for weightlifting and Bible study. Find or start a group at BiblesAndBarbells.com.

God will cause our enemy
to be impaled on the
same snare set for us.

[PSALM 7:14-16]

His sleep went from him: Undoubtedly, Daniel had a better night's rest than Darius. We can be sure that Daniel prayed in the lions' den, because it was simply his habit to pray. He did not need to *start praying* on this remarkable occasion because the *habit of prayer* was well ingrained in his life. "In any case he must have had a glorious night. What with the lions, and with angels all night to keep him company, he was spending the night-watches in grander style than Darius." (Spurgeon)

God sent His angel to shut the lions' mouth: We don't know if Daniel saw an angel or not, but he certainly knew that God sent His angel to rescue him. Hebrews 1:14 says angels are *ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation*. God sent an angel to serve Daniel's need.

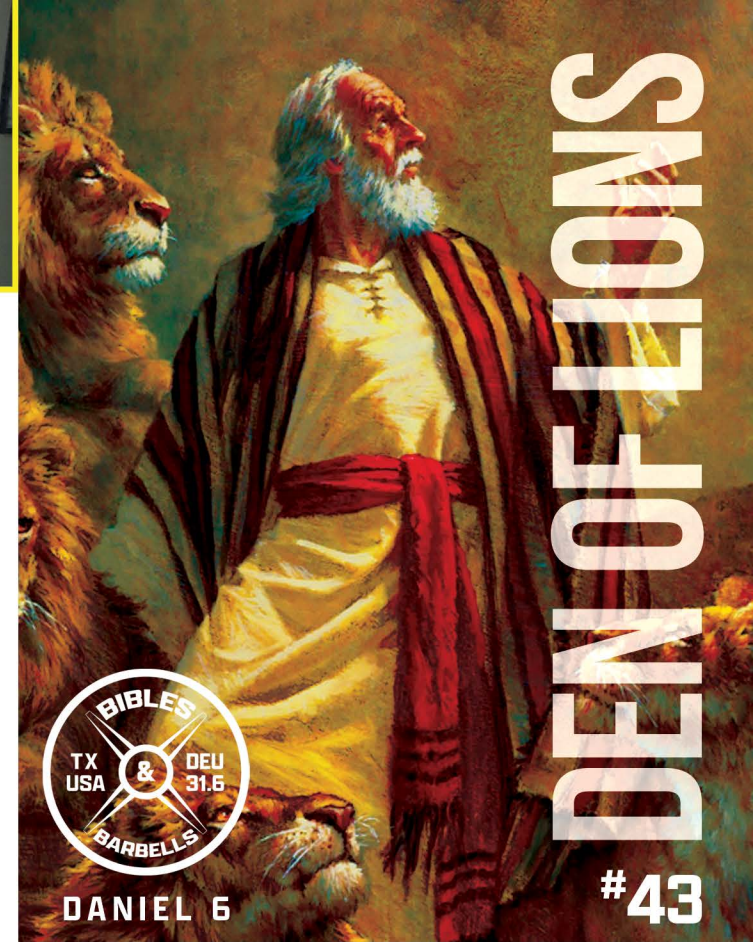
I have done no wrong before you: Daniel did break the king's law, but he did not go *against* the king or against the king's *best interests*. Daniel is an example of obedient disobedience.

Because he believed in his God: Daniel was preserved through *faith*. Though his cause was righteous and he was unjustly accused, those things alone did not protect him before the lions. Daniel needed a living, abiding faith in God, even in the most difficult circumstances.

The king gave the command: No one had to ask Darius to do this. He was ready and willing to bring justice to those who plotted against Daniel, and also to *their children, and their wives*. This was obviously severe, but it was also according to ancient customs among the Persians. An ancient writer named Ammianus Marcellinus wrote of the Persians, "The laws among them are formidable... by which, on account of the guilt of one, all the kindred perish."

The lions overpowered them... before they ever came to the bottom of the den: This proved that it was genuinely angelic protection that saved Daniel. It proves there was no *natural* reason why the lions did not eat Daniel. Daniel's accusers perished in the same trap they set for Daniel. This illustrates the work of the cross in reverse: the guilty were punished in the place of the innocent. This also illustrates a principle of spiritual warfare. God will cause our enemy to be impaled on the same snare set for us (Psalm 7:14-16).

BE STRONG & COURAGEOUS.
BIBLESANDBARBELLS.COM



MY GOD SENT HIS ANGEL
AND HE SHUT THE
MOUTHS OF THE LIONS

