









“But You, O LORD, do not be far off! O You my help, come quickly to my aid! Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog! Save me from the mouth of the lion! You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen! I will tell of Your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise You.” ~ Psalm 22:19-22

“At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them! But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion’s mouth.” ~ 2 Tim. 4:16-17

I wonder if Paul might have had Psalm 22 and Daniel 6 on his mind when he was nearing the end of his second letter to Timothy?

When Paul wrote 2 Tim. 4:17, what was he rescued from?

- Paul's death was imminent anyway—see 4:6.

Which leads to this question:

Why was his life preserved for a short time? Why was he not put to death right after his first trial?

- v. 17 gives us a clue—his work was not quite done.

He was rescued from the lion's mouth that time, but not the next time—his death was not the issue for him, see v. 18. The issue was the end of v. 18.

Daniel was rescued from the lion's mouth, but his life was preserved only for a short time. Why?

He had to write a book.

Its theme – The King of the Nations

Key verse 4:34b—“His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom endures from generation to generation.”

The book divides naturally into two halves...

- Daniel in the King's courts – chs. 1-6
- Daniel and the King's visions – chs. 7-12

Daniel 6—Guarded by God's power (see 1 Pet. 1:5)

- The plot against Daniel – v. 1-13
- The deliverance of Daniel – v. 14-24
- The decree of Darius – v. 25-28

Question: How long do you have to be faithful for?

Answer: Until the end.

*Daniel 6:22*

In Daniel ch. 3 we saw an example of faithfulness; we see another here in ch. 6. And in both cases we learn...what?

- A bunch of things. Not the least of which is this: faithfulness can be costly.
- Daniel's friends were faithful to the Lord, and it got them thrown into a super-heated furnace; Daniel was faithful to the Lord, and it got him thrown into a den of hungry lions.
- That God delivered them from these dangers is wonderful! But what about when He doesn't?

Question: How long do you have to be faithful for?

Answer: Until the end. *Daniel 6:22*

Babylon, the oppressor and captor of the Jews had fallen, and now the Persian empire ruled. Life will be better now, right? We can finally relax!

- Remember: it is not the external circumstances around us that determine whether we must be faithful or not—it is the will and word of God.
- A key concept in this chapter: “It (Daniel ch. 6) is a necessary reminder that the life of faith must be lived to the very end and that earlier victories and rescues cannot be taken as guarantees of absence of future crises.” – Bob Fyall

“And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.” ~ Heb. 11:32-34

Yes—and then they all died anyway. Faithfulness is not for a moment, or a shining triumph, or a season.

- We tell the story of Daniel in the lion’s den, and rightly so, but we don’t tell the story of his nearly 70 years of faithful service to God and Babylon/Persia that preceded it. Don’t miss that point.

# The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

“If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.” ~ John 15:19

- That is Daniel ch. 6. That is why there is a plot against Daniel.
- One more time, don't miss the significance of this point: for nearly 70 years now, Daniel has not only been faithfully serving the Babylonian empire (and now Persia), but has been faithful to His God and to His law. But *faithfulness* and *easy and comfortable* are not the same thing. Expect faithfulness to be hard.

## The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

So Darius has retained Daniel even after the change of governments, and he was installed as one of three *presidents, or overseers*, for this reason: “so that the king might suffer no loss” (v. 2).

- Darius wanted the tax revenue to keep flowing freely in to the king’s treasury.
- And Daniel—likely because he was an honest, faithful man—“became distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him.” Daniel evidently was very effective at making sure the king did not suffer loss—maybe asked uncomfortable questions, maybe was a whistle-blower.

The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

And so Darius decided to set Daniel “over the whole kingdom.” That didn’t go over well with the other two overseers or the 120 satraps (regional overseers who worked under the oversight of the three presidents). Daniel had to go. Permanently.

Conspiracy #1—find his weak spot, where he has shown a little corruption. There has to be some somewhere, we just have to dig and find it. ~ v. 4

- That one fizzled out and went nowhere, because “they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him” (v. 4).

The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

Conspiracy #2—figure out a way to use his faithfulness against him. ~ v. 5

Dale Davis says it well: “It is a tribute to Daniel’s character that his enemies savvy’d that they could only send him up the river if they resorted to some religious ruse, and their scheme takes for granted Daniel’s unbending fidelity—they simply know he will not turn aside from worshiping his God.”

And so they spring the idea to the king in v. 7—giving him the impression that this is a unanimous, kingdom-wide desire. Whether it was or not, it played into the king’s vanity and political ideals.

# The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

Conspiracy #2—figure out a way to use his faithfulness against him. ~ v. 5

- Darius needed to unify his vast empire—what better way than to say that for the next 30 days there is one mediator between the gods and man, the man Darius the Mede?
- Plus, the words “humble” and “absolute monarch” don’t really go together—for Darius to be held up before his empire as the one who could speak to the gods on their behalf would massage the royal ego. Even if it’s only for 30 days, it would at least remind the peasants that he has real power.

## The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

The king signs the document (v. 9), and it becomes irrevocable law—the law of the Medes and Persians.

- And once signed—the king's law was inflexible. It had to be—to revoke his own law would be to lose face, and *that* was unthinkable.

*So Daniel panicked and ran and hid!!!*

Well, not exactly. For him, nothing changed.

- Remember the big lesson for the exiles—and for us—in the fiery furnace incident? What was it?
- It was a first commandment issue: Daniel and his friends would have no other god before Yahweh.
- The king's decree would not sway Daniel.

# The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

In the face of a clear death sentence, what did Daniel do?

- He prayed. And he gave thanks.
- Like this: “as he had done previously” (v. 10).
- Not only that, but he blatantly, knowingly disobeyed the edict of the king whom he served faithfully—he did not pray to Darius, he “prayed and gave thanks before his God.”

Daniel did this:

- Psalm 1:1-2.
- And this: 1 Peter 1:17, 1 Peter 2:11-12.
- And this: Psalm 15.

## The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

Daniel was not swayed or shaped by the culture around him—for 70 years he had lived a consistent life, and toward its end he simply continued the same pattern he had followed for decades.

The accusation against Daniel in v. 12-13 is fairly straightforward ~

- The two presidents and assorted satraps come before the king and first ask him to reaffirm his unchangeable decree...which he readily does.
- And notice how the accusation itself is made: “Daniel, who is *one of the exiles* from Judah...”

The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

Jain Duguid says this: “They meant it as an insult, a slur that after all these years of living in Babylon, he was still essentially foreign and therefore untrustworthy. His deepest loyalties lay elsewhere. In fact, this was the highest commendation they could have given him. After all these years, even though Daniel served the empire faithfully, Babylon was not his home.”

In asking the king to reaffirm his decree, his officials have forced the hand of the king—he cannot revoke or circumvent his edict. This decree will condemn Daniel to the hungry lions.

# The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

What are some of the characteristics of exiles?

A few thoughts on life as an exile:

- They are different.
- They are not at home.
- They think differently.
- They want to go home.
- They are not surprised when life is hard (1 Pet. 4:12).
- They can't insist on their rights.
- They find their comfort elsewhere.
- They are patient and wait long.
- They may only find freedom at death.
- They comfort each other.

# The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

Daniel's enemies knew that he would rather die than compromise his devotion to his God.

- If given the choice of disloyalty to God or being lunch for a pack of ravenous lions, they knew he would choose the lions.
- If told to cease his practice of daily prayer, Daniel would refuse.

It is Daniel's practice of regular prayer that was their point of attack...

- ...I wonder: do I consider my practice of daily prayer so sacred and inviolable that I would willingly go to my death rather than cease it?

# The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

Question: In his regular practice of prayer three times daily, is Daniel obeying a command of God?

Answer: No. It is simply his practice of devotion. It is his pattern of life lived out over decades.

- This was not a crisis that drove him to his knees, he was there already. Crisis or no crisis, Daniel prayed.

Another question: Would it have been wrong of Daniel to have closed his windows for 30 days until the king's edict ran its course?

Answer: According to the law, no. But had he done that it would have been out of the fear of man.

# The plot against Daniel—Dan. 6:1-13

And notice too that Daniel didn't ask—as far as we know—for anything to be different. We have no indication that he prayed for deliverance or for circumstances to change.

- Facing an imminent death, he knelt and gave thanks to the King of the Nations.

“The more clearly we see who God is and the great things that He has done for us, the more consistently our hearts will be moved to praise and thank Him, whatever our external circumstances. What is more, by beginning with thankfulness, we tune our hearts to remember God's past faithfulness to us, which will render us better able to trust His wisdom and power to answer our petitions for the future.” ~Jain Duguid

“Grant, Almighty God, as Thou didst govern Thy servant Daniel when honors were flowing around on all sides, and he was raised to the highest dignity, and preserve him safe in his integrity and innocence amidst the universal licentiousness,—Grant, I pray Thee, that we may learn to restrain ourselves within that moderation to which Thou restrictest us. May we be content with our humble station and strive to prove ourselves innocent before Thee and before those with whom we have to deal; so that Thy name may be glorified in us, and we may proceed under Thy shelter against the malice of mankind...

...Whenever Satan besieges us on every side, and  
the wicked lay snares for us, and we are attacked by  
the fierceness of wild beasts, may we remain safe  
under Thy protection, and even if we have to  
undergo a hundred deaths may we learn to live and  
die to Thee, and may Thy name be glorified in us,  
through Christ our Lord—Amen.” ~ John Calvin

