

DANIEL CHAPTER 6 - DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN PART ONE by Pastor Faber McMullen, Union Grove Baptist Church-Whitehall © 2017

Scripture - Daniel Chapter 6: **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."



We are now in our 17th week of studying the Book of Daniel. Last week we left off as the Babylonian empire came crashing to an end. Let's take a moment to remember what we've seen these 17 weeks. We started our journey in Judaea with the Good King Josiah. He oversaw a great revival in the land of Judah which had been plagued for generations by one king after another who had done evil in the sight of the Lord.



Then we watched Josiah die and his son Jehoiakim took over as King of Judah. Jehoiakim was more wicked than all those kings that had gone before him and we learned together that **1) "God has No Grandchildren"**. Each person must have their own personal walk with the Lord. Even though his father had been godly and holy, Jehoiakim chose wickedness and rebellion. Jeremiah the prophet sent warnings to Jehoiakim but they went unheeded. The Bible tells us that Jeremiah sent warnings to Jehoiakim and he took God's Word and he cut it up and he burned it in a fire.



God had enough at that point and brought Judah under judgment. He sent Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, and



the first verses in Daniel tell us that God "gave Jerusalem and all of Judah into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar". This showed us very clearly the divine principle that

2) **"whatsoever you reap, that you shall also sow."**

Nebuchadnezzar then took the best young men of Judah and the descendants of King David into captivity and enrolled them in a 3 year brainwashing school. We watched Daniel (God is my judge), Hananiah (God is my Grace), Azariah (God is my help), and Mishael (who is like God) as they refused to defile themselves with the non-kosher food of the king's court. Instead they chose to eat only vegetables and water and in spite of their dietary deprivation, they prospered and looked better than all of

the others. Nebuchadnezzar changed their names in order to try to make them forget their identity. He gave them the pagan names of Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. We learned that is is important to know your spiritual identity in Christ no matter how the world labels you. **Because, 3) if you forget WHO you are you may end up forgetting WHOSE you are.** Each of us has been bought with a price. (1 Cor 6:20) You my friends are sons and daughters of the most high God. You men are princes and you ladies are princesses (the kings daughters). See Psalm 45:13 (The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.)



We then saw Nebuchadnezzar have a series of dreams and each time he did he would call on the wise men of his kingdom, but only Daniel was able to interpret those dreams. We looked on as Daniel ascended to power in the Kingdom as time after time the old king Nebuchadnezzar was humbled and brought down by God. Remember God gave him a vision of the entire gentile history which was to follow his kingdom. In his dream he saw a kingdom of gold, and of silver, and of

bronze, and of iron, and finally a kingdom of iron mixed with clay (possibly the USA). He then saw a stone come out of heaven which would replace all the kingdoms of man, and that stone was the Lord Jesus Christ.



Then in Chapter 4 we saw Nebuchadnezzar abuse the gift of the dream. Seventeen years after having the dream he set up an image to himself and ordered that all in the kingdom should worship him. Daniel is not seen in this chapter, but we see Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael thrown into a fiery furnace and

miraculously they are not burned nor do they smell like smoke. As the king looks into the furnace he sees one "like a son of the gods." This was a Christophany and we learned that 4) **no matter what trial we go through, Jesus will be with us in the midst of our trials and tribulations.**



Then we hear no more from our old friend Nebuchadnezzar, but we find his wicked son Belshazzar in charge of the kingdom, and for the last several weeks we have looked on as Belshazzar set up a fleshly feast. In the midst of his orgy, he calls for the holy vessels of the Jews to be brought out where this maggot of a man defiles the Holy One of Israel. He is in a hall where all the accomplishments of the Babylonians are painted on the walls. As the wine dribbles

down from his lips as he slurps and slops from God's holy articles, the King of the Universe says, "Enough is enough", and there the finger of God appears and writes the mysterious message "Mene Mene Tekel Upharsim", Meaning literally "Measure Measure, Weight, Divided". Scripture tells us that the "Queen" (probably the Queen Mother - Mother of Belshazzar) remembers that remarkable leader Daniel and tells Belshazzar to call for him.



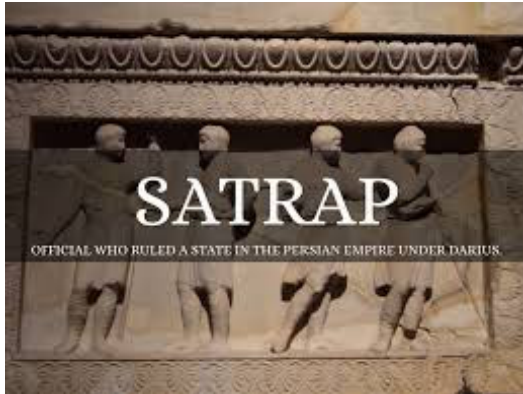
Daniel arrives to the banquet hall feeling no affection for Belshazzar like he had for his old friend Nebuchadnezzar, and he pronounces the Judgment, "King Belshazzar you have been measured twice, and you have been weighed and found lacking, and now your kingdom will be divided." And in an instant King Darius the Mede comes in under the city walls and Babylon the Great which has been a kingdom spanning some 1500 years and eleven dynasties passes into the

dust bin of history. So what happens next?

Well, it's hard to keep a good man down. As Darius takes control of the kingdom, let's take a look at our text and see what happens. We are now in the great chapter of Daniel in the Lion's Den. But, the story really isn't about the lion's den so much as it is WHY Daniel ends up in the lion's den. Let's look at the text. Chapter 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.



Darius appointed 120 "satraps" which means "keepers of the realm". These are in essence 120 governors who will rule over all of the territory of the Medes and the Persians. And then Darius puts three "commissioners" over them. This word means three "presidents". So do you see what has happened? Darius has kept Daniel and made him one of three presidents who will rule the kingdom. The text tells us that they are put in charge "so that the king might not suffer loss."

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¹Let's talk a minute about what that means. The text is telling us that three men are put in control to make sure these 120 governors don't steal from the coffers of the kingdom. Darius puts these three presidents in charge to hold these one hundred and twenty accountable. Let's read on:

- 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.

So once again, "this Daniel" begins to distinguish himself among these three presidents and Darius plans to put Daniel in charge of the whole kingdom. Remember the qualities that I spoke of last week that the old Queen Mother remembered about Daniel. She remembered that he was: special, superior, spiritual, and skillful. Guys don't you see what is happening. ⁵**Although Daniel lives through trial after trial, God is prospering Daniel because of Daniel's relationship with God.** The Babylonians have come and gone, but Daniel is still there.

- 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.

¹The New International Version. (2011). (Da 6:2). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

In the play Othello by William Shakespeare, Othello says, "O, beware, my lord, of jealousy; It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock The meat it feeds on." Well that's what is going on here. Darius' governors and the two other presidents are jealous of the relationship they see developing between Darius and this old man Daniel. They called up the FBI , the CIA, the NSA , the IRS and they even called Wikileaks to find ANYTHING, ANY DIRT they could on this man. Let me pause to say that in this last presidential election it seemed that finding dirt became the most important thing. You know when people are looking for dirt it means the merit of their positions is not enough to debate the ideas of others. And that's exactly what is going on here. So what did they find? The text tells us that "they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption". Why? The text tells us "inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him."

Guys, let me tell you when you begin to live your life in faithfulness others just can't stand it. They will do anything to discredit you, take pot shots at you, they will make stuff up about you, they will try to assassinate your character to knock you down.

- 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."

So they figure they've got to set him up and set the king up to. They've figured out that they've got to get him concerning how he worships. So in these next two verses they see how they'll set him up and how they'll set the king up.

- 6 Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows: "King Darius, live forever!

The original language says they convened hastily. They engage in falsehood.

- 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.

This is a lie. It's not true. The most important president isn't even there. Leaders sometime get caught in a trap of flattery. They said, "King....oh how we love you.... we've decided we're going to make you god for a month." That felt good! The more Darius thought about it more he liked it. The next thing that happens is that he signs a decree that he really doesn't like. And that is where we will take up next week. So my question today is this. 6)If you were on trial for your faith....if you were on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you? Because Daniel is going to be put on trial for his faith, and he may or may not be convicted. I'm not going to tell you because you'll have to come next week to find out if he ends up convicted and being put into the Lions' Den. Why does all this bad stuff happen to Daniel? "God cannot use a man greatly until He first wounds him deeply." - A.W. Tozer

**IF YOU WERE ON TRIAL FOR
BEING A CHRISTIAN--- WOULD
THERE BE ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO
CONVICT YOU?**

7) Evidence to Convict YOU of being a Christian: Note Point Number 1 is the only thing that will get you to heaven giving you an eternity in God's presence.

- 1 - HAVE YOU BELIEVED AND CONFESSED THAT BELIEF? - Romans 10:9 says, "because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Dear friend, have you "confessed with your mouth that Jesus is Lord". This is why at Union Grove we do not accept "transfers of letter" from other churches to accept you into membership. We want to hear you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord.
- 2 - HAVE YOU OBEYED BY BEING BAPTIZED? - In Acts 2:41 we observe that they received the word, THEN they were baptized. In Acts 10:43,44,47, it is plain to see that those who believed received the Holy Ghost, and THEN they were baptized. Submission to baptism is evidence against you.
- 3 - HAVE YOU BEEN LED BY THE SPIRIT TO DO GOOD WORKS? - Ephesians 2:8-9 is very familiar, but we seldom hear a pastor or a teacher quote Ephesians 2:10 which follows **10** For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Are there works to convict you? (Don't you see, you're not saved by your good works, but you are saved to DO good works)

Get these things right today by submitting to the will of God in your life. You can only do these things by allowing Christ to live in and through you. The Christian life is not a white-knuckle life where you are required to "just try harder". Let go and let God have control of your life today, and you will experience life and you'll experience it more abundantly". John 10:10

Let us pray.

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