

Study in Daniel 6 Daniel-6

by William MacDonald

Daniel's commitment to prayer is tested when he is cast into the den of lions, but he remains faithful and is ultimately delivered by God.

Duration: 41:34

Scripture: Daniel 6:10-28, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Studies"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Daniel in the lion's den from the Bible. The speaker emphasizes the incredible power of God and how He weaves His pattern in life. The story highlights Daniel's unwavering faith and trust in God, even in the face of danger. The speaker also mentions the importance of character and integrity, drawing a parallel between Daniel's character and the trustworthiness of a man who lost his job on principle.

Transcript

I hope you won't be disappointed that we're not on a Christmas theme today. We will be next week, Lord willing. Oh, I meant to mention that we're glad to have Derek Thomason with us today.

He's in from South Carolina on his way to Fresno. Yeah, fine. We've been going through Daniel, so I just thought we'd continue today and then go on next week to the unusual birth.

Some unusual features in the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sorry, Daniel 6, the chapter I really wanted. While you're turning to that, you know, we've been studying Daniel.

We've been studying how Daniel and his three young friends, how they had convictions, and how they had commitment, and how they were willing to stand up for the truth, even if it cost them. And, you know, the book of Daniel is still being written today. It isn't finished.

This week, I got a letter from a lady in the Chicago area. Where's Chicago? And she was telling me about, she was writing about her son-in-law. He happens to be a young Japanese-American fellow, good Christian.

She writes, Bob got fired the Monday after Thanksgiving. He went into work, and they had a pornographic job to be printed. He refused to work on him, so the one over him fired him.

Bob said, I would have quit anyway because I don't want to work for a company that takes jobs like that. His boss tried to get him to compromise, but Bob said no and left. Two days later, he got a letter from the boss saying he felt very bad that it happened, and promising to give him a good reference if he needed one.

And then this mother-in-law writes, I'm sure this will speak to Bob's two sons, 18 and 16. The Lord provides, as Bob is doing some work for a friend for whom he worked part-time previously. I'm sure that the Lord has some good thing for Bob, so we're going to trust and see and wait on the Lord.

And the last chapter for that one hasn't been written either, has it? Them that honor me, I will honor. This is a thread that goes through the book of Daniel, and we're going to see it again today in Daniel chapter 6. Nebuchadnezzar is no longer on the scene. The kingdom has changed, and now the Medes and the Persians have taken over, and Darius is the ruler.

And it says in verse 1, it pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps to be over the whole kingdom, and over these three governors of whom Daniel was one. Remember that Jewish fellow, captive? Over these three governors of whom Daniel was one. Cream rises to the surface, doesn't it? There's a tendency to do that.

And you watch Daniel going up, up, up, just as Joseph did in the book of Genesis, that the satraps might give account to them so that the king would suffer no loss. Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps because an excellent spirit was in him, and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom, but they could find no charge or fault because he was faithful, nor was there any error of fault found in him.

Pretty good, isn't it? Wouldn't that be nice to have that said about you? Daniel's one of two men in the Old Testament who wore throughout the white flower of a cloudless life. I don't mean he didn't sin, but there's no sin recorded of him or of Joseph in the Old Testament. What a eulogy to have said there was no error of fault found in him.

Then these men said, we shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God. So these governors and satraps, strong before the king, and said thus to him, King, Darius, live forever. All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors have consulted together to establish a royal statute to make a firm decree that whoever petitions any God or man for thirty days except you, O King, shall be cast into the den of lions.

Now, O King, establish the decree and sign the writing so that it cannot be changed according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter. Therefore, King Darius signed the written decree. Really, how foolish! He was really what you might call a wet noodle, wasn't he? Willing to sign a decree like that.

Now, when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home, and in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days. Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplications before his God, as they went before the king and spoke concerning the king's decree. Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any God or man within thirty days except you, O King, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which does not alter.

So they answered and said before the king, That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah," can't you see the curl in their lips when they say that, looking down their Medo-Persian noses at him? That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O King, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petitions three times a day. And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him, and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. Then these men approached the king and said to the king, No, O King, it is the law of the Medes and the Persians.

The trap had sprung, and now they are going to just remind him of it. The law of the Medes and the Persians, so that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed. So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions.

The king spoke, saying to Daniel, Your God, whom you serve continually, he will deliver you. Then a stone was brought and laid at the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring, and with the signet of his lord, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed. Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no musicians were brought before him.

Also his sleep went from him. Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions, and when he came to the den he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you serve continually been able to deliver you from the lions? Daniel said to the king, O king, live forever.

My God sent his angel, and shut the lions' mouths so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before him, and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you. Then the king was exceedingly glad for him and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him.

Amazing, isn't it? No teeth marks of a lion on Daniel, because he believed in his God. And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions. Them, their children, their wives.

The lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den. Then King Darius wrote, To all people's nations and languages that dwell in all the earth, peace be multiplied to you. I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom, men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God and steadfast forever.

His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, and his kingdom shall endure." He sounds like an evangelical, doesn't he? "...his dominion shall endure to the end. He delivers and rescues, and he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian. Daniel had arisen to a place of prominence in the kingdom.

We're not surprised at that. This has been the story of his life, a righteous man, a man of commitment, a man of consecration, a man who knew the Lord and loved the Lord, and was willing to stand and be counted. But we find in this chapter what we had before.

Some of his colleagues are jealous of him. Are people in the world jealous of Christians? Yeah, a lot of times they are. They never admit it, they never admit it, but there's a certain respect for Christians, and

they can be jealous when they see the Christians rising to places of prominence, and that was what was happening here.

All these satraps were subject to Daniel. They had to give accounts to him. He checked their books to make sure that King wasn't suffering any loss.

Daniel's conduct was above reproach, and his character was spotless, and he stood out in the crowd. He was conspicuous. Mind you, if he had drifted along with the crowd, nobody would have ever noticed him.

If he had merged himself into the woodwork, he wouldn't have made any waves at all. It's all you have to do to live an undisturbed life like that. Just go along with the crowd, float along with the stream.

But notice their unintended tribute to Daniel in verse 5. I said before, the world will never love a man like this, but it'll never forget him either. Never forget him. We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law.

They knew. They knew he was obedient to the laws of the land. They knew he was obedient to the king, and they said the only way we could ever trip him up was concerning the law of his God.

If there was any way at all, that's the only way we could ever do it, and so they made this plot to forbid him from praying to anyone but the king for 30 days. For 30 days. That's interesting.

Daniel was a man of prayer, wasn't he? Praying three times daily. There are three times in this book when you find him praying. I'm telling you, his prayers had power with God.

In chapter 2, you know, remember the king never had a dream? He wouldn't tell him what the dream was, and he called him and he wanted an interpretation of the dream. Doesn't seem too fair, does it? He called all of his own wise men, and he said, okay, I had a dream. Now you tell me what the dream was, and you interpret it for me.

Frankly, I thought, I think he suspected his wise men were phonies, because, you know, anybody could make up an interpretation, but it would be something else to tell what the dream was. Well, they couldn't do it, and their lives were in danger, and so was Daniel's life in danger. But finally, Daniel came in, but before he came in, he prayed.

He prayed, and he delivered himself, and he delivered his fellow young Jewish wise men there in the kingdom. Then here again, he's praying, and in chapter 9, it's very, very interesting, chapter 9 he prays, and his prayer in chapter 9 is a confession. It's toward the end of the Babylonian captivity.

Daniel's been studying his Bible, and he says, oh, those 70 predicted years are just about up. He got before the Lord, and he just prayed a prayer of confession, taking all the sins of his people and making them his own. You know what happened? Captivity ended.

Talk about power with God in prayer. And here, there's an unalterable decree written. You can't change the law.

Even the king couldn't change the law. Once he signed his name to that law, he knew that, even if he was reminded of it. And the decree was, of course, nobody must pray to anybody else but him for all those days.

What's he going to do? And he knows what the consequences are being thrown into a den of lions. Boy, that's enough to keep me awake at night. Huh? I can feel those teeth crunching on me right now.

I feel my bones breaking and wishing were all over. I could really create quite a scenario in my own mind about that. But Daniel refused to stop praying.

He didn't change his normal conduct. He hadn't changed. They had changed the law.

He hadn't changed. He was still the same praying Daniel. He had a place, a regular place for prayer.

It says it was his chamber, and he continued to pray there. He didn't do anything different. He didn't run down to the cellar where he wouldn't be seen.

Always prayed in his chamber? Pray in his chamber. He prayed toward Jerusalem. He said, what was that? Superstition? Do you pray toward Jerusalem? No, you don't.

Why did he pray toward Jerusalem? Because that's where the temple had been, and that was the dwelling place of God in that temple, and they associated. The same as the psalmist when he said, I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. The hills, Jerusalem.

Why? Because the dwelling place of God was there in Jerusalem. He would look to the Lord. When he looked up to the hills, he didn't expect the hills to help him, but the God who dwelt there would be the one that would help him.

So, his direction in prayer toward Jerusalem, his posture in prayer, he'd always knelt in prayer. So, he knelt in prayer. I think it's wonderful.

Actually, there's nothing in the Bible that says you have to kneel in prayer. There are all kinds of posture in prayer. Some people prostrate themselves in the Bible and pray.

They just get down on their faces and pray. Some kneel. Some pray standing.

Some pray looking up to heaven. All kinds of postures. It's really the posture of your soul that counts, not the posture of your body.

I think that he had always knelt in prayer. I wonder how many of us knelt in prayer before we came out this morning. I don't know about you.

I can pray better if I'm kneeling. It's so appropriate for me to be kneeling in the name of Jesus, that at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow. Huh? There's something just, I don't know, I can get closer to the Lord, I think, when I'm on my knees.

I'm glad that he knelt in prayer. Regularly. He didn't quit that either.

He had always prayed three times a day. Well, he could continue to pray three times a day. He hadn't changed.

He wasn't going to change. It was the law that had changed. His prayer was thankful.

It says he gave thanks. It's good for us to include thanksgiving in our prayer. In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

One of the marks of the heathen, of the pagan world, is neither were thankful. Romans chapter one, neither were thankful. We've got so much to be thankful for, and yet the tendency is to come into the presence of the Lord and say, gimme, gimme, gimme, and forget to thank him for all the things that he has done for us.

Fearless. His prayers were fearless. Opened windows.

He didn't even draw the Venetian blinds, did he? Or the Medo-Persian blinds. Fearless and earnest. Supplication.

There was an earnestness about his prayers. He could have said to himself, I can pray without kneeling, and he could have, too. He could have said, well, I don't have to be right by the window when I pray.

I mean, I don't have to be so obvious about it. I don't have to pray out loud. I can pray silently, in my heart.

He could have said all of that. No, he had always prayed like this, and he was going to continue to pray like this. Daniel preferred the lion's den to a day spent without prayer.

How do you like that? Wow! Daniel preferred the lion's den to a day spent without prayer. If the United States passed a law and said prayer meetings are absolutely prohibited on penalty of death, I wonder how many would come to the prayer meeting on Wednesday night. That's the situation Daniel was facing.

That's exactly the situation he was facing in this chapter. I tell you, it's great to have convictions and to stand by them, and God always honors it. He's bound to, he said he would, and he's faithful to his words.

Stephen Girard was a millionaire, and he was an infidel, and one time he told his employees that they'd have to work on Sunday. There was a great shipment coming in, and he needed them all to work on Sunday and unload this shipment, and one young fellow went to him and said, Mr. Girard, I'm very sorry, but I'm a Christian, and I will not work on the Lord's day. And Girard said to him, then you'll have to go and collect your pay and leave the company.

He said, I realize that. He said, I realize that. I realize that I have a widowed mother, but he said, I cannot work on Sunday.

He said, well, you go to the cashier and you get your severance pay. And for three long weeks that young fellow cramped the streets looking for work. One day a bank president was talking to Girard, and asked him if he knew of a trustworthy person that he could hire as a treasurer.

And after reflection, Girard mentioned the name of the he had fired. And the banker said to him, but I thought you fired him. Well, he said, I did.

He said, but the man who will lose his job on account of principle is the man to whom you can trust your money. We asked the question before, and I asked it again, where did Daniel get that? Where did he get that validity of his character that was willing to stand and pay the price? He got it from his mother. So Daniel, anyway, is reported to the, to the king, and he is condemned to the den of lions.

And the king, he's reluctant now, but he allowed himself to be cornered. He allowed his name to be put to that law and his signet ring, and now he has no alternative. And Daniel is cast into the den of lions.

For what? For doing what was right. Was this the reward for obedience? Well, you know, a lot of Christians have gone through things like that. They've been persecuted for doing right.

And it would be easy to think, I've been true to the Lord. I've been faithful to the Lord, and here I am. I think John the Baptist went through that, don't you? John the Baptist is a faithful disciple of the Lord Jesus, a forerunner of the Lord Jesus, and now he finds himself in prison.

And he could very well have said, this is disappointing. Well, you know, the Lord bathes it when we suffer for righteousness sake. Doesn't it say that? Doesn't Peter say that? It's when we suffer for righteousness sake.

We suffer for our own blunders and sins. There's no glory for God in that. But when we suffer for doing the thing that God wants us to do, that's very well pleasing in his sight.

What's the result? Well, the king has a very restless night, and Daniel has a very restful night. Incredible. Of course it's incredible.

But God is incredible. You know, the things that he does are incredible. Just think of that.

The king can't sleep. He fasts. There's no more music.

He needs a bottle of somnics or something to put him to bed. Even somnics wouldn't do it, whatever you take for that. It's really wonderful to see God weaving his pattern in life, isn't it? Really wonderful.

Picture Daniel down there in the lion's den. I don't think they're even snarling at him. In a recent National Geographic, there was an article about animals that play.

I don't know if you saw it. But I think I saw a picture of a polar bear playfully embracing a wolf. Is that right? A what? A dog.

Yeah. Playfully embracing a dog. And I thought of Daniel in the lion's den.

I wonder if they wanted to play with him. I mean, it wouldn't be surprising. It wouldn't be surprising.

Certainly they weren't fierce with him, I'll tell you that. He wasn't scared. God was there with him in the den.

And then in verse 24, what happens? Well, his accusers, the king gave the command they brought those men who had accused Daniel, they cast them into the lion's den. You know, those men seem to prosper for a while. They seem to be having their way for a while.

And ungodly people of this world, that's true. They seem to be getting away with it. So it's only temporary.

It's only temporary. God is still on the throne, and he will remember his own. His promise is true.

He will not forget you. God is still on the throne. You say, yeah, but what about their children, their wives? Says, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to them.

It's a problem, isn't it? You can see why his accusers would be thrown into the lion's den, but what about their wives and their children? It's a problem, isn't it? Well, all I can say is that our sins involve other people as well as ourselves. No man is an island, and what we do involves other people, and that's exactly what

you have here. It doesn't have anything to do with the eternal salvation of the children or the wives.

It has nothing to do with that. But if a man is foolish and drunken and sets his house on fire, his own family can be involved in that, can't they? That's what you have here. And then King Darius wrote this marvelous statement, and you know, I think the thing for us to remember is he never would have written this if Daniel had compromised.

It's when we're true to the Lord that God is glorified, and we're vindicated. Just think if Daniel had taken a back door, if he had tried some other thing. I tell you, some of these words would never have been written.

In fact, we wouldn't be talking about Daniel today. It's because he was loyal to the Lord, because he stood fast for the Lord in spite of these accusers. Notice, to all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in the earth.

Well, the Medo-Persians were really the world rulers at that time. They were the great kingdom at that time. And here is the king making an unalterable decree.

Law of the Medes and the Persians. I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom, men must tremble in fear before the God of Daniel. When I read that this morning, I thought, oh, how lovely.

The God of Daniel. God calls himself the God of Abraham, God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. Here he calls himself the God of Daniel.

Oh, another man. He allows the king, the Medo-Persian king, to call him that, to riot. I wonder if he would be ashamed to be known as the God of Bill.

Kind of searching, isn't it? God was not ashamed to allow this man to call him the God of Daniel. I got a thrill out of that when I read this morning. He is the living God and steadfast forever.

His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed and his dominion shall endure to the end. How could he? He never had a Bible. He never had an Old Testament, let alone a New Testament.

This man was a pagan. Well, we noticed before in our studies that God can control, don't forget, the intellect, the emotions, the will, the mouth of a person and make him say things he hadn't planned to say. He did it with Balaam, didn't he? How did Balaam ever say some of the marvelous things he said about the children in Israel? Rescues and works, signs and wonders in heaven and on earth who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

And what do you have, the chapter closes with what? Daniel's prosperity. Did he lose by being true to the Lord? No, this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian. And remember, it was Cyrus the Persian who wrote the decree that the children of Israel could go back to the land.

Interesting. Daniel isn't mentioned in Hebrews 11, is he? But without his name being mentioned, I think he's there. Who through faith stopped the mouths of lions? Don't you think? Whoever wrote Hebrews, I think, had one man especially in mind there, Daniel.

Who through faith stopped the mouths of lions? Think of the glory that has come to God through the faithfulness of Daniel. I'll tell you, it practically overwhelms me. Sometimes I think when we live the Christian life, when we do what's right, when we obey the Lord, we don't realize in this world of sin, the

glory it really brings to God.

It really does. What's the application of this? I often think of Martin Luther. He was a Catholic monk and he came to a full realization of the truth of justification by faith.

Justification through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm talking about back in the year 1516. And then he began to speak out against indulgences, the indulgences of the Catholic Church and purgatory and some of these other things.

He taught the priesthood of all believers. He branded the Pope as a real antichrist for courage. Not good for the health.

He reduced the number of the sacraments from seven to two. And he was called before the emperor and some of the emissaries from Rome and he was urged by his friends not to go. And he said, I love this.

He said, even though there be as many devils and worms as tiles upon the rooftops, still I will go. Just look at that. Just picture that German city and picture the tiles on the rooftops.

A few dozen. And he said, even though there be as many devils there as there are tiles upon the rooftops, I will go. And the tile, he said, the word of God is not my word.

I, therefore, cannot abandon it. But in all things short of that, I'm glad to be docile and obedient. You shall have my blood, my life rather than a single word of retraction.

It's better to obey God than man. It's no fault of mine that this matter creates confusion among you. Here I stand.

I can do no other. God help me. Amen, he said.

And at another time he said, and you've heard me quote this before, my conscience is captive to the word of God. I cannot and I will not recant. That man made history for God.

He wasn't perfect. He had his own faults and failures. I tell you, he made history for God.

I've told you this, some of you this before, but this whole subject came very vividly to me growing up in an assembly back in Massachusetts when one of the girls in our Sunday school class went to school, and the teacher told them that they had to memorize and recite the poem *Invictus* by William Henley. *Invictus* is an infidel poem. It's a humanistic poem.

It's a poem in defiance of God. And Edith Vale went to school and she said to the teacher, I can't recite that. And the teacher was furious.

And that's tough for a young girl to be in a classroom and have the teacher furious at her and all the other kids sitting there. Talk about peer pressure. Why wouldn't she do it? Well, because of what the poem says.

It says, out of the night that covers me black as a pit from pole to pole, I thank whatever gods may be for my unconquerable soul. In the fell clutch of circumstance, I have not winced nor cried aloud. Under the bludgeoning of chance, my head is bloody but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears looms but the horror of the shade, and yet the menace of the years finds and shall find me unafraid. It matters not how straight the gate, how charged with punishment the

scroll. I am the master of my fate.

I am the captain of my soul. And Edith Vale wouldn't get up and recite that. I'm reciting it under protest.

And then some dear friend came to Edith. Of course, it was in the newspapers. It was in the newspapers.

Our assembly hit the headline. Why? Because the girl had spunk. That's why.

She was willing to stand up and be counted. And a dear Christian friend came to her and said, you know, Edith, there's a Christian poet who has written a Christian version of that poem. She said, why don't you go and ask the teacher if she would like to recite it? This was a compromise, and it was a good compromise.

Some compromises are good. And so dear Edith went to the school teacher there in Malden, Massachusetts, and she said, you know, there's a poem similar to Invictus that I can recite, and I'd like your permission to recite it. And dear Edith got up in the classroom, and she recited, Out of the light that dazzles me bright as the sun from pole to pole, I thank the God I know to be for Christ, the conqueror of my soul.

Since his the sway of circumstance, I would not wince nor cry aloud. Under that rule that men call chance, my head with joy is humbly bowed. Beyond this place of sin and tears, that life with him, and his the aid that spite the menace of the years keeps, and shall keep me unafraid.

I have no fear, though straight the gate, though charged with punishment the scroll. No, sorry, I have no fear, though straight the gate, he cleared from punishment the scroll. Christ is the master of my fate.

Christ is the conqueror of my soul. As you know, it was a great victory for Jesus, wasn't it? It was a great victory for Jesus when a young girl would bear that testimony for him. I believe that the Lord Jesus was greatly glorified through that.

But there you have the story of Daniel in the lion's den. Just think of it. A man who preferred to be thrown into a den of lions than to give up his prayer life.

That speaks kind of loudly to me. What place does prayer have in my life? And I want to tell you in confession, it's not the place it should have. I think if many of us were honest, we'd have to admit that probably that's one of the weakest areas in our Christian life.

And maybe just the example of dear Daniel this morning will inspire us to throw away the bondage, to get rid of the bondage that keeps us from praying, and to know God more and more. Wouldn't it be wonderful to see things happen in our lives like the lives of Daniel and his three friends? I think it would. May the Lord help us to do it.

I'm going to ask Dennis if he would close in prayer. And I'm going to ask Gary if we can sing that hymn as a closing hymn, Alas Did My Savior Bleed. Is that okay? Dennis, would you like to close in prayer, please?

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/12/SID12752.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/william-macdonald/study-in-daniel-6-daniel-6/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net