

**CORE Seminar**  
**Spring 2024**  
**Book of Daniel: Part 1 [Chapters 1-6]**  
**Session 7: Daniel 6**

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**ICE BREAKER**

Choose an ice breaker from the *Spring Community Group Guide* or go to [www.fbcportland.org/icebreakers](http://www.fbcportland.org/icebreakers) to select an ice breaker to ask your group.

- Spend about 5 minutes discussing the question – this is a great way to “warm up” your group.

***Studies show that people who have a daily routine are some of the happiest people in the world. What is something you do every day?***

**INTRODUCTION**

Thank you for being a part of this CORE Seminar this semester. We’ve received a lot of great feedback and we hope that you all have enjoyed them. But, today marks the end of the teaching portion of this semester. And, today, we close our study with **chapter 6** – and in our story – we have this young, muscular Daniel [felt board Daniel] who’s cuddled up with this FAO Schwartz stuffed lion.

But this isn’t so. At this point in history, Daniel is probably closer to his mid-80’s. We don’t usually picture Daniel as a wobbly old man when he is lowered into the den of lions. And in looking at children’s books, most of them do not either. So think about that – Daniel is in his 80’s is still dealing with the same... ol... stuff from another pagan king! The Empires have changed BUT Daniel has not. He has been in captivity his whole life. At his current age, he is still singing the Lord’s song in a foreign land in a way that will not be silenced—under the control of a Sovereign God.

**QUESTION: Why do you think that the story of Daniel and the lion’s den connects so much with those who teach, read or hear this story?**

Let’s start off with a prayer and then we’ll move to **Daniel 6**.

**PRAYER**

## Have someone in your group read Daniel 6:1-3

*It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; <sup>2</sup> and over them three high officials, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. <sup>3</sup> Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.*

Let's clear something up really quickly. Do you remember who the Persian leader was last week? If you remember it was Cyrus – but this week it is Darius?

History shows that Cyrus – the King of the Persians – was still in control of the Empire at this time. In fact, history only refers to Cyrus as the King and does not refer to anyone named Darius. In fact, the name is more of a title that means “the one with the scepter.” So, “Darius” could in fact be the provincial governor/ ruler over the land of Babylon. And, in order to rule the land well – for Cyrus – “Darius” set 120 satraps and 3 high officials. Daniel was one of the high officials and was over the satraps.

God blessed Daniel with immense wisdom and as a result, he was “**distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him.**” What an amazing testimony that because God's wisdom and spirit shown through Daniel – he was distinguished above other high officials. His **reputation** was built on decades of discipline and on his **faithfulness** to God.

As a result, the text says that the king “planned” to promote Daniel over the whole kingdom – the plan was in process but had not been enacted yet.

**QUESTIONS: What kind of characteristics make Daniel stand out and allow him to ascend to high leadership positions in the kingdom?**

- **What can we learn from Daniel about how to live faithfully in a culture that does not honor God?**

## Have someone in your group read Daniel 6:4-9

*<sup>4</sup> Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. <sup>5</sup> Then these men said, “We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God.”*

<sup>6</sup> Then these high officials and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, “O King Darius, live forever! <sup>7</sup> All the high officials of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. <sup>8</sup> Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked.” <sup>9</sup> Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction.

To keep the promotion from happening, the other rulers had to act – but it would not be easy because of Daniel’s character. Throughout the book, we see that Daniel’s character was unchanged. It was established WAAY back from his teenage years in **chapter 1** to his later years in **chapter 6** [his 80’s]- where “**no error or fault was found in him.**”

#### QUOTE BY John Fawcett

**Our high calling is to be in the world and not of it. It is not us being in the world that ruin us, it’s our allowing the world to be in us. just as a ship sinks not by being in the water but the water getting into them.**

Daniel's unwavering **faith** in God defined his **character** and earned him a stellar reputation. His strong bond with God was well-known, leading the conspirators to create a law designed to test his loyalty. They determined to present a Persian law to King Darius that would oppose any “**connection with the law of his God.**” Despite the pressure, Daniel remained committed to God's law.

The law was this – “**the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.**” So, these conspirators presented to the king that no one in his kingdom could pray to their “gods” for 30 days. This meant the law would convict Daniel if he prayed to God within **30 days** of the laws enactment.

And, Darius signed the law into action. He apparently didn’t think about it. He obviously didn’t ask for Daniel’s wisdom – the guy he was preparing to promote. It really makes you wonder what was going through his mind.

**QUESTIONS: How do Daniel’s faithfulness and reliability pose a challenge to the administrators in their plot against him?**

- **What do they think is their only chance of catching Daniel doing something wrong?**

Why do you think that Christians – who are serving God faithfully – should expect opposition from the culture around them?

What ways can you prepare NOW for the day when opposition WILL come?

- What instruction does Jesus give about persecution? [Matthew 10:22; Luke 21:15-19; John 15:18-25, 16:33]

Have someone in your group read Daniel 6:10-17

<sup>10</sup> When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. <sup>11</sup> Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. <sup>12</sup> Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, “O king! Did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?” The king answered and said, “The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked.” <sup>13</sup> Then they answered and said before the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or the injunction you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.”

<sup>14</sup> Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him. <sup>15</sup> Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, “Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed.”

<sup>16</sup> Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!” <sup>17</sup> And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.

As we see, Daniel didn't flinch – and he didn't go on a prayer fast. Scripture states that as soon as he knew the law as put into place, Daniel immediately went to his house and prayed – as was his custom, 3 times each day. And of course, the conspirators were right there to see that Daniel is – in fact – doing what he does every day... three times a day.

**QUOTE BY Sinclair Ferguson**

**Past faithfulness was not meant to be a compensation for present unfaithfulness, but a preparation for more faithfulness. The life of faith is lived to the very end.**

If we **have not** faced conflict, we need to check one of two things:

- Our **world** – Maybe our world loves and follows Jesus [**nope**].
  - Since that's not the case - and I don't sense a great conflict - then maybe I am isolating from the world and am not engaging the world.
- Our **character** – *Maybe we are absorbed and assimilated - we're so much like the world* – that we won't face conflict.

We only have impact when we are the person God created us to be and because of the position He has placed us in. A great example of this is found in the book *The Hiding Place* by Corrie Ten Boom. **Have any of you read this book?** What Daniel did, reminds me can be compared to the actions of Casper Ten Boom – in the book *The Hiding Place*.

***Suddenly the chief interrogator's eye fell on Father. "That old man!" he cried. "Did he have to be arrested? You, old man!"***

***William led Father up to the desk. The Gestapo chief leaned forward. "I'd like to send you home, old fellow," he said. "I'll take your word that you won't cause any more trouble."***

***I could not see Father's face, only the erect carriage of his shoulders and the halo of white hair above them. But I heard his answer.***

***If I go home today," he said evenly and clearly, "tomorrow I will open my door again to any man in need who knocks."***

***The amiability drained from the other man's face. "Get back in line!" he shouted. "Schnel!! This court will tolerate no more delays.***

In the face of an arrest, Corrie's father [Casper Ten Boom] was given a way out of prison if only he would not help any Jewish man. But, his faith and understanding of Scripture would not allow him to DO what is easy. His reply was simple, ***"If I go home today," he said evenly and clearly, "tomorrow I will open my door again to any man in need who knocks."*** Ten days later, Casper died at the prison.

**And this is the question for Daniel – the exile is almost over - Why would you risk your life over daily devotions? Why not take 30 days off? All that Daniel – who remember he's in his 80s – had to do was stop praying for 30 days... AND HE COULDN'T DO THAT. **He is praying to God AND that's what prayer is – grabbing on to God!****

- Daniel will not stop clinging to God – even for 30 days! His whole life revolves around God.

## QUOTE BY Dale Ralph Davis

*... It is indeed a wondrous miracle that God preserves one of His children in the lions' den, but it is no less a miracle that God's gracious hand saved Daniel when all of Babylon, goaded on by Satan, attempted to pry apart those two aged hands tightly clasped in prayer. The great battle took place there – not in the lion's den – but in the open window, looking to the Lord.*

So Daniel was faithful to God – he prayed to God and was found guilty for breaking the king's law. And as a result, Darius **reluctantly** threw Daniel into the lion's den.

**QUESTIONS:** Daniel proved once again that he was faithful to God as he disobeyed King Darius's law. In what kinds of issues should we be prepared to serve God rather than man?

- What factors can complicate our "faithfulness"?

## Have someone in your group read Daniel 6:18-28

<sup>18</sup> Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him. <sup>19</sup> Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. <sup>20</sup> As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" <sup>21</sup> Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! <sup>22</sup> My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm." <sup>23</sup> Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. <sup>24</sup> And the king commanded, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

<sup>25</sup> Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: "Peace be multiplied to you. <sup>26</sup> I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel,

for he is the living God,  
enduring forever;  
his kingdom shall never be destroyed,  
and his dominion shall be to the end.

<sup>27</sup> He delivers and rescues;

he works signs and wonders  
in heaven and on earth,  
he who has saved Daniel  
from the power of the lions.”

<sup>28</sup> So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Did you catch the story in these last 10 verses? The story is not the lion’s den – that’s what we teach our kids – how God shut the mouths of the lions. But the story is Darius and the palace. The story is not Daniel’s **helplessness** – it’s Darius’s **helplessness**. Daniel had a better night’s sleep in the lion’s den than Darius has in the palace!

Now ask the question... why didn’t God shut the mouths of the men [the law] rather than the mouths of the lions?

- God’s will was to save Daniel from the lion’s and not from the men to show that He is not saving FROM trials BUT He is saving **THROUGH** trials!

What is the problem with this story’s famous and false lesson of, “if you are good, if you have enough faith – God will deliver you from \_\_\_\_\_.”

- OR “Be courageous and God will take care of \_\_\_\_\_.”

And you fill in the blank with your greatest fear or your greatest concern.

That’s not the message of **chapter 6**. The message of **chapter 6** is that God will take care of **YOU** NOT **IT**. God will deliver **YOU!**

When He does deliver – and He will – this deliverance will serve as a testimony/ reminder to those around us how great and how big our God is. Darius witnessed God’s power in delivering a faithful Daniel. As a result, Darius signed a decree which stated, “**all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel.**” **Trembling** and **fear** before God is the correct posture and the correct attitude to have before our Holy God. He is the Sovereign Creator of all. From **chapters 1-6**, Daniel knew this and he exhibited this understanding and attitude throughout his life to his countrymen and to the nations of Babylon and Persia. Let it too, be said of us.

**QUESTIONS: According to Daniel in verses 18-28, who proves to have the greater authority – God or king Darius?**

- **Then – since this is fact - why do we tend to worry about who our elected officials will be?**

## What does God's deliverance of Daniel reveal about God?

### CONCLUSION

If you went back and read the first **6 chapters of Daniel** – in bulk, and at the same time – you would discover:

- That there is a God - Who has all wisdom & all might. - He controls everything and rules over all nations. - He reigns over all of eternity. - He sees all & knows all - He reveals all mystery. - He lifts up and He brings down. - He inhabits eternity & delivers His people... He holds His people fast.

Because of Daniel **everyone** in Babylon and Persia knows about God. Everyone who encounters Daniel – encounters God. And, everyone who reads Daniel – encounters God. Daniel is a book on missions – it teaches us how to “sing the Lord’s song” in a culture that is completely opposed to God, His Son and His Word.

The question we dealt with from the our very first lesson in **Psalm 137:4-6** was this, “How do we sing the Lord’s song?” And the answer is – “why would we sing anything else?”

Was there anything that stood out to you from **Daniel 6 today**?

- Was there any “aha moment” for you?

### PRAYER

**Next Week: HANGOUT Night! Last week of Community Groups.**