

Daniel:

God's Divine Ambassador

New Hope
Baptist Church
Winter Bible Study
2010



The Story Thus Far:

- ❖ 605 B.C.: Nebuchadnezzar took over Judah
 - ❖ Took Daniel and other aristocratic youths to Babylon to serve his kingdom
 - ❖ Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah became Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
- ❖ 586 B.C.: Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, carried last of the Jewish leadership into exile
- ❖ 539 B.C.: Cyrus the Great conquered Babylon

The Story Thus Far:

- ❖ Chapter 1: Daniel & Friends remained faithful to God and the Covenant
- ❖ Chapter 2: Daniel received a vision from God both revealing and interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream
 - ❖ Foretold world history, including the 4 major empires (including Babylon)
- ❖ Chapter 3: The golden image; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego delivered from the fiery furnace by “the Son of God”
- ❖ Chapter 4: Nebuchadnezzar's boanthropy

Identity of Darius

- ❖ “Darius the Mede:”
 - ❖ Possibly a throne name, e.g. “Caesar” in Rome
 - ❖ Ugbaru, governor of Babylon after Cyrus’ victory (Nabonidus Chronicles)

“Empire of Silver”



- ❖ Cyrus' organization of the empire
 - ❖ 120 “satrapies”
 - ❖ Used conquered officials when possible
 - ❖ Daniel became 1 of 3 “presidents” over satraps

Resentment against Daniel

- ❖ v. 3: Recognition of Daniel's abilities
 - ❖ “Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom”
- ❖ Remember ch. 3: Babylonians resented Jewish presence in the upper levels of government
- ❖ v. 5: “Then the presidents 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”

Daniel's Only "Weakness"

- ❖ v. 5: "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God"
- ❖ Solution: "Whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions" (v. 7)
- ❖ Key phrase: "according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked"
 - ❖ Once a Persian ruler decreed a law, revocation was impossible (cf. Esther)
- ❖ Major risk: Conning the king

Daniel's Reaction

- ❖ v. 10: “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”
 - ❖ Daniel never considered wavering from his faith
 - ❖ God's record of protection in Daniel's life led him to believe God would protect him again
 - ❖ Key point: Remember spiritual milestones

Caught!

- ❖ v. 11: “Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God”
- ❖ vv. 12-13: Complaint 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”
- ❖ Daniel wasn't the only one trapped:
 - ❖ Daniel: Trapped by his enemies
 - ❖ Darius: Trapped by his own pride and decree
- ❖ v. 14: “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”

Paying the Penalty

- ❖ v. 16: “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!’”
 - ❖ Faithfulness sometimes incurs consequences
 - ❖ We cannot expect exemption from the law when disobeying it because of our faith

Distress of the Night

- ❖ v. 18: “Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him”
 - ❖ Period of soul-searching for Darius: Pride and gullibility led to the suffering of one of his closest advisors and (possibly) dearest friends

The Next Day...

- ❖ vv. 19-20: “Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. 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?’”
 - ❖ Daniel had probably discussed religion with Darius
 - ❖ Darius would have read the Babylonians records; would have read of Daniel’s abilities and testimonies

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- ❖ vv. 21-22: “Then Daniel said to the king, ‘O king, live forever! 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”
 - ❖ Daniel saw his trial as a vindication of his faith and his innocence in serving the king
- ❖ “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”

Repercussions

- ❖ v. 24: “Dan. 6:24 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”
 - ❖ Death of families: Eliminated any possible vengeance later
 - ❖ Lions didn’t spare Daniel because of appetite; hungry lions spared Daniel because of God’s protection

The Decree

- ❖ Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: “Peace be multiplied to you. 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. 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”
 - ❖ Recognition by Darius of God’s sovereignty: He would have read Nebuchadnezzar’s records
 - ❖ Recognition of God’s power: God preserves His people