

Lecture #7

Daniel 5:31-6:28

If you are a faithful believer who stands for the Word of God in any environment—whether home, family, friends, church, business or play, you may be certain that sooner or later you will come up against forces of evil who are against you and desire to silence you.

Now this chapter is not a prophecy like other portions of Daniel, but it is a key prelude to four major prophetic visions which Daniel will receive from God after these events. I am convinced that a key to great honor is faithfulness in great warfare.

Daniel had two visions during the reign of Belshazzar (Dan. 7:1; 8:1). There can be little doubt that Satan wanted to kill Daniel to prevent him from revealing such critical prophetic data. However, he will not succeed.

GOD, IN HIS SOVEREIGNTY, PERMITTED HIS FAITHFUL SERVANT TO BE DISCREDITED AND ATTACKED SO THAT HE COULD ULTIMATELY GET RID OF EVIL ENEMIES AND BRING HIS FAITHFUL SERVANT TO AN EVEN GREATER LEVEL OF HONOR AND USE HIM TO REVEAL MORE TRUTH.

There are times when God will allow phony evil people to do you great damage and the ultimate purpose behind it is to eventually remove them and bless you and use you.

Daniel 5:31 – Darius is somewhat older when he becomes political leader.

In the Old Testament, there are three men named Darius:

- 1) Darius the King of Persia—he restored the Persian Empire after Cyrus (521-486 B.C.)—
Ezra 4:5, 24; 15:5-6; 6:1, 12, 15
- 2) Darius the Mede—who was supreme ruler under Cyrus during the days of Daniel—
Daniel 5:31, 9:1, 11:1
- 3) Darius II—who ruled during days of Nehemiah—Nehemiah 12:22

Based on Daniel 9:1 and 6:28 we may assume that Cyrus, King of Persia, was on a European military campaign and appointed Darius, King of Medes, to be in charge of the Babylonian Empire. The verb “was made” (9:1) is a Hophal stem passive verb. Darius was the recipient of the appointment action, not the cause of it. Darius was sixty-two years old when the appointment was made.

Daniel 6:1-3 – Darius organizes the Kingdom.

Typically when a new power takes over a kingdom, a company or even a church, there is a reorganization that takes place.

Darius broke the Empire down into 120 princes or governors who were each responsible for a territory. Over these 120, he appointed three commissioners or presidents, of whom Daniel was one. Now the primary reason for this organization was financial. Daniel was a man who could be trusted. He was a “veteran administrator” who was now in his 80’s. Daniel was not out for political gain; in fact, as **verse 3** says, the king planned to put him in charge of the entire kingdom.

Obviously, Darius had taken notice of the aged Daniel and God wanted him in a high position because the seventy year period of captivity was near its conclusion. **The thing that got Daniel promoted was his faithfulness to God. Darius sensed Daniel was different. He was in his late 80's and he was very wise.**

Daniel 6:4-9 – The other commissioners and satraps are jealous of Daniel and devise a plan to destroy him.

There are at least three main reasons why these leaders were jealous of Daniel:

1) He had the king's favor; 2) He was Jewish, they were Gentile; 3) Daniel was not corrupt or greedy and they were.

Verse 4 tells us these diabolical agents tried to find anything they could on Daniel, but there was no corruption in him. There wasn't one area for which any valid charge could be given. He had an impeccable character. He was not sinless (Dan. 9:20), but he was a man who walked humbly and honestly with God. You could not bring any valid charge against him.

So **verse 5** reveals something very important; the only way they knew they could get Daniel was if they figured out a way to make a showdown between God's Law and man's law. For they knew Daniel would obey God's Word. To do this they lied by saying "all" agree (**verse 7**).

According to **verses 6-8**, they petitioned the king to honor himself by demanding that no petition should be made to any other "god" or man other than to Darius for thirty days or else be thrown into the lions' den. They appealed to the king to sign a law declaring this. We know that Medo-Persian laws could not be revoked (Daniel 6:12). Once a king had judicially decreed something, it could not be revoked for that was the law (Esther 1:19, 8:8).

This edict was evil, but it appealed to the ego of Darius and **verse 9** says he agreed to it and signed it. He did not see or sense the diabolical nature of the edict. He did not know this was designed to get rid of Daniel.

Daniel 6:10-11 – Daniel disobeyed the Medo-Persian law to obey God's Law about prayer.

Daniel was a man of God's Word. We know this from these verses. First of all, according to Daniel 9:2, we know he had a copy of the book of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 29:1). We also know that Daniel viewed Jeremiah as a prophet of God (Daniel 9:2). One thing Jeremiah taught was that those Jewish people who were exiled needed to pray (Jeremiah 29:12). We also know that Daniel knew of David's emphasis of praying three times a day—evening, morning and noon (Psalm 55:16-19). Daniel also knew the importance of praying to God from the Temple in Jerusalem (I Kings 8:33; II Chronicles 6:34-39) and he also knew the importance of praying toward the Temple when not in Jerusalem (II Chronicles 6:21). Since Daniel was not in Jerusalem, he would open his window and kneel and pray and make supplication to God, facing the Temple.

Daniel did not shut his window so no one would know; he did this right in front of the people. This is real integrity. He doesn't hide anything. He is up front with his faith. It is not hidden, it is out in the open. People knew where he stood and what he believed. Daniel was no phony.

One difference between great people of God and not so great people of God is that when backed into a corner, the great man or woman of God will not buckle to the pressure to do wrong.

Daniel 6:12-17 – The political leaders go to Darius to have Daniel killed.

In **verse 12**, the leaders ask the king a stupid question about whether or not he signed the injunction, which of course he did. Then in **verse 13**, they told him that Daniel, who is an exile from Judah, still prays three times a day, but not to Darius.

Darius was deeply distressed and set his mind on delivering Daniel even until sunset (**6:14**). But the men kept persisting that Daniel had violated the law and needed to be thrown into the lions' den. So the king cast Daniel into the lions' den, with the belief that Daniel's God would deliver him.

Daniel 6:18-20 – Darius worries about Daniel all night long.

The king did not sleep, he did not eat and he did not want to be entertained (**6:18**). He went very early in the morning, even before he could see in the den and cried out to Daniel and asked him if God had delivered him. Daniel wasn't worried but Darius was.

Daniel 6:21-23 – Daniel is delivered from the den of lions.

When the king yelled to Daniel, most would cry out "get me out of here." But not Daniel. Daniel was as calm as could be because God has sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths. Now God could have shut the mouths without sending an angel, but the angel kept Daniel company through the night. One might ask, why did God let Daniel go into the lions' den?

- 1) This meant Daniel could spend a quiet night with the physical presence of God;
 - 2) This meant God could get Daniel out of his dilemma and raise him to an even higher level.
- One reason why God lets bad things happen to His people is so that He may be glorified by the response of His people to the bad thing.

Daniel 6:24 – Darius executes all those evil planners and their families.

When people do something negative against a faithful servant of God, they will pay.

Only the ring leaders were destroyed; those who had maliciously accused Daniel. Not only were they destroyed, but also their wives and children. Now punishing the children for the sins of a father was something forbidden in God's Word (Deuteronomy 24:16; Ezekiel 18:20). However, this Gentile world was not operating by the principles of God's Word and in the political world it was easier to count corpses than to keep an eye on family traitors.

Daniel 6:25-27 – Darius makes a decree about God to all people in the Kingdom.

The decree was that the God of Daniel be revered and feared:

- 1) He is the living God.
- 2) He is the eternal God.
- 3) He is the ruling God.
- 4) He is the rescuing God.
- 5) He is the all powerful God.

Daniel 6:28 – Daniel enjoyed success in his final years of life with Darius and Cyrus.

Both men honored Daniel.

God may ask you to walk through some dangerous places and situations, but He'll go with you. If you are faithful to God, you will face your share of lions—sickness, death, business reversal, slander, domestic trouble, relationship problems. When you find yourself in these lions' den situations, purpose to do one thing—remain faithful to God. When all is said and done, those who honor God will be honored.

STUDY QUESTIONS – LECTURE #7

(Daniel 5:31 – 6:28)

1. Why would Satan want to kill Daniel in the middle of the book?

Satan wanted to kill Daniel to prevent him from revealing major prophetic truth.

2. What are three reasons why these leaders were jealous of Daniel?

He had the king's favor; He was Jewish, they weren't; He was not corrupt and they were.

3. What contributions did Jeremiah and David make to Daniel's prayer life?

Jeremiah taught that people who were exiled in Babylon needed to pray - Jer. 29:12.
David taught that one should pray three times a day – evening, morning, and noon (Psalm 55:16-19).

4. Why would God permit Daniel to go into the Lion's Den?

A. Daniel could spend a quiet night with the physical presence of God.
B. God would use this to promote Daniel to an even higher position.