



## **BIBLE STORIES EVERYONE OUGHT TO KNOW**

**Main and Oklahoma Church of Christ ^ Adult Bible Studies ^ Winter-Spring 2010**

**March 7, 2010**

**Daniel, Daniel 6**

### **Getting Started**

Daniel is a captive Jew, working in public administration for the king of Babylon. Although he has been in Babylon for many years, he continues to practice his Jewish faith. With idols and tyrannical government leaders in the community, God blesses Daniel with wisdom and protection.

### **What's the story?**

A new king, Darius, has come to power in Babylon. He knows he needs help to govern such a large area, so he appoints 120 men to be governors. He selects Daniel and two other men to supervise the 120 governors. Daniel is a better manager than the other two supervisors, so Darius decides to give Daniel responsibility for the whole kingdom. The other supervisors and governors try to find something to discredit Daniel in Darius' eyes in order to keep their jobs. Daniel worships God three times a day in keeping with his Jewish faith. His enemies conspire to use this habit to get rid of Daniel.

The conspirators ask Darius to sign a law that requires all the people to pray only to Darius for the next 30 days. Anyone who violates the law will be thrown into the den of lions. Darius signs the law. He is a Mede, and the Medes have a tradition that once a king signs a law, not even he can cancel it.

Daniel is aware of the new law but he continues to pray for God's help and to thank God three times each day. The conspirators are watching and they see Daniel praying to God. They report to Darius immediately. Darius is devastated! The law requires him to carry out the sentence. He spends the rest of the day trying to think of a way to save his best manager, Daniel, but there is no legal way to solve this problem.

King Darius gives the order to bring Daniel to the lions' den. Darius shows his concern for Daniel when he says (6:16b), "May the God you serve all the time save you!" This sounds like a prayer and a blessing coming from a king who believes in idols! The king's servants put Daniel into the lions' den (probably a pit), and they seal it so no one can open it to get Daniel out of the den. Darius is very upset. He goes back to his palace but does not have any appetite for dinner. He does not want any entertainment that night. He cannot sleep because of his concern for Daniel. At the crack of dawn, Darius hurries to the lions' den. He calls to Daniel (6:20), "Daniel, servant of the living God! Has your God that you always worship been able to save you from the lions?" Daniel answers that God sent an angel to close the mouths of the lions because God knew that Daniel was innocent. Darius is very excited and calls his helpers to lift Daniel out of the pit. They

lift Daniel out of the pit unhurt because he trusts in God. Darius turns his attention to the conspirators and delivers swift justice by sentencing them and their families to the lions' den. The lions are hungry by now because they did not eat Daniel. The lions grab the conspirators before they hit the floor. Darius' retribution for their conspiracy to use the king in order to do away with Daniel is harsh.

Darius sees the power of Jehovah in this heart-wrenching experience. He wants the people of his kingdom to fear and respect the God that Daniel worships. Therefore, he sends out a letter proclaiming that Daniel's God is the living God whose kingdom will never end. This is the God who rescues and saves people and does many miracles.

### **What does the story say about God?**

God wants all people to recognize Him as the creator and sustainer of the world. He wanted the Medes and the Persians to know Him. He worked through his faithful servant, Daniel, to show his power to Darius. This event spread the report of God's magnificent power throughout the known world when Darius wrote his letter to all of his people.

### **Now what about our faith?**

In *The Applause of Heaven*, Max Lucado describes a unique characteristic of God's kingdom on earth. Its subjects do not work in order to go to heaven; they work because they are going to heaven. Gratitude and joy replace arrogance and fear. May we daily seek opportunities to serve the Lord with gladness.

### **Monday: Read Daniel 6:1-5**

1. Why did King Darius appoint 3 supervisors over the 120 governors?
2. Why did the other supervisors and governors conspire against Daniel?
3. Have you ever felt that someone was scheming against you in a job, at school, or in a relationship? How did you feel about it?

### **Tuesday: Read Daniel 6:6-10**

1. What did the conspirators want King Darius to do?
2. Why do you think Darius agreed to this new law?
3. What was Daniel's response to the new law?

### **Wednesday: Read Daniel 6:11-15**

1. What did the conspirators do in today's reading?
2. How did King Darius feel after he heard about Daniel's devotion to God?

### **Thursday: Read Daniel 6:16-22**

1. How did King Darius try to encourage Daniel when Daniel was put in with the lions?
2. How do you think Darius felt after putting Daniel in with the lions?
3. What was King Darius' attitude toward God?

### **Friday: Reread Daniel 6:22 & continue to 28**

1. Do you think the conspirators' attitude toward God changed after Daniel's experience with the lions?
2. In the beginning of the story, King Darius was a worshipper of many gods, and even went as far as to proclaim himself as a god. Later on in the story, his attitude changed. Do you think God responds to this type of change? Explain your answer.
3. Have you ever experienced God's power working through someone who did not appear to believe in God? What impact did this have on you?