

Theme: Daniel still faced persecution under the new kingdom, reminding us that God's people must always live by trust in God rather than man in the land of our exile.

I. Intro - Won't Get Fooled Again

- A. Song by The Who in 1971
- B. See lyrics at end of notes
- C. Disillusionment after the revolutions of the 1960's
- D. The more things change, the more they stay the same
- E. Babylon is gone, Persia is now in charge. Different?

II. New Boss, Same As The Old Boss?

- A. A new kingdom has come
It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, Daniel 6:1
 - 1. Darius - a throne name for Cyrus?
 - 2. This is the largest empire in history to this point
 - 3. He has to organize it - 120 satraps (high officials)
- B. Perhaps Daniel can hope things will be better
It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, ² with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. ³ Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. Daniel 6:1-3
 - 1. Daniel knows Cyrus will restore the exiles to the promised land (Isaiah 44-46)

- 2. Daniel is again prospering in exile!
 - a. He prospered during Babylon's reign
 - b. Belshazzar promised to make him 3rd highest in the kingdom - but now he will in essence be second!
 - c. Daniel is a model for exile believers today - we are to be in the world but not of it.
 - d. We must press into our culture but not compromise the truth - this is not easy!
 - e. This is even true when the kingdom changes - we continue to press in and serve - but refuse to compromise!

- C. The same old problems are still here!
At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel ... Daniel 6:4
 - 1. This is the same old jealousy we have seen before!
 - 2. This is not even persecution regarding the faith at this point - they are just jealous of him!
- D. Daniel's exemplary faith and conduct
At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. ⁵ Finally these men said, "We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God." Daniel 6:4-5
 - 1. Their jealousy causes them to find corrupt conduct in Daniel - but they could not!
 - 2. Daniel is striving to serve God in his calling to serve the kingdom of his exile - and so must we!

3. They realize their only hope to trap Daniel is because of his commitment to God and his law
4. This shows that they know Daniel will not compromise his obedience to God. He would die before he would disobey. Do those around me know this about me?
5. Christian exiles are called to a life of integrity so that the only accusation against us would be our first loyalty being to Christ and His kingdom.
If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.
¹⁶ However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.
1 Peter 4:15–16
 - a. This sounds like Daniel!
 - b. Those who are in trouble for rebellious attitudes or actions are not suffering for the faith but for their poor character and conduct.
 - c. But even if our attitudes and conduct are right, some will persecute God's people simply because we are the people of God.
 - d. Exiles must realize that persecution may be their lot, no matter what kingdom is ruling.

III. The Plot To Kill Daniel

A. A devious proposed law

So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said: "O King Darius, live forever! ⁷ The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions' den. ⁸ Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered — in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." ⁹ So King Darius put the decree in writing. Daniel 6:6–9

1. A law to make Darius the mediator for all prayers
2. Probably given as a way to unify the new empire
3. This is reminiscent of Daniel 3 - unity in worship
4. Anyone who will not go along (Daniel!) will be thrown to the lions to be killed
5. Darius blindly agrees, not realizing the true intent
6. Can not be changed - also in Esther - only a counter-edict could apparently alter it

B. Daniel's faithful response

Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. ¹¹ Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. Daniel 6:10–11

1. Daniel knew the decree, and still went and prayed
2. Daniel does not react, protest, or make threats - he calmly goes to God in prayer as normal.
3. Three times a day, on knees, toward Jerusalem - his consistent practice in prayer.
4. Note that this is Daniel's regular practice - he does not begin to do this to flout the law; he simply does what he has always done as his duty to God.
5. But he also does not hide his obedience to God
6. Daniel had years of faithfully walking with God - the test did not create Daniel's character but rather revealed it.

7. The conspirators see this and spring the trap!

C. The report to Darius - and his response

Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.”¹⁴ When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.

Daniel 6:13–14

1. They accuse Daniel - pointing out he is an exile
2. Darius is distressed - he wants to save Daniel!
3. But Darius the powerful king is powerless to save Daniel - all human power is limited!

D. Thrown into the lion’s den

So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!”¹⁷ A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel’s situation might not be changed. Dan 6:16–17

1. Daniel is thrown into the lion’s den to be killed
2. A stone is placed over what will be Daniel’s tomb & sealed so no one can try to rescue him from death
3. Darius’ amazing wish for Daniel’s deliverance (v16)
4. Darius also frets all night - he wants Daniel to be delivered from his own law!

IV. Salvation and Judgment In the Pit of Death

A. Darius’ concern and question

At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions’ den.²⁰ When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?” Dan 6:19–20

1. First light of dawn - Darius’ clearly cares for Daniel
2. Darius’ anguished question - has God been able to rescue you?
3. Again, they all see how faithful and consistent Daniel has been (servant, serve continually)

B. Salvation and judgment in the pit of death

Daniel answered, “O king, live forever!²² My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king.”²³ The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. Daniel 6:21–23

1. Note Daniel’s gracious reply - O King live forever!
2. God’s Angel - probably Christ - came and saved Daniel from death!
3. I did not wrong God or you in all of this O king!
4. God delivered Daniel from the lions and death so that he did not get a scratch - similar to Daniel 3!
5. This shows the Sovereignty of God! Not even Darius could save Daniel, but God did!

6. However, also note that Daniel trusted God! We are called to walk in faithful trust - to trust and obey!

7. There was also judgment in the pit

At the king's command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

Daniel 6:24

- a. Clearly, the lions were capable of killing - God had saved Daniel
- b. This is not saying this punishment was just or that Daniel asked for this - it simply reports what happened.
- c. But this is also a powerful warning of judgment for those who persecute God's people.

C. Darius hymn of praise - we will look at next week

V. Applying the Word

A. Do I recognize my status as an exile?

1. Like Daniel, we are exiles - for our whole life!
2. Regimes change - but it all stays the same!
3. Daniel had every reason to hope things would be different under the Medo-Persian empire, but it was new boss, same as the old boss!
4. God's exile people must realize and actively embrace that we live in Babylon, and our only hope is the kingdom of God, not the kingdoms of man.
5. God's exile people must realize and embrace that our true citizenship and our ultimate loyalty is with Jesus and His kingdom, not our earthly home or any of its rulers.

6. God's exile people may not withdraw from our land of exile but must serve and fulfill our callings - even though we may be persecuted as we do this.

7. Have I realized and embraced that this will be my status throughout this life - no matter who is the "boss"?

B. Am I walking close with Jesus during my exile?

1. Daniel survived and thrived because he regularly communed with God in prayer - three times a day
2. Daniel consistently walked with God in prayer, in the Word, and in his personal conduct, so that when the trials of exile came upon him he did not falter.
3. Like Daniel, we must develop active trust in God via our daily walk. Mere intellectual assent will not sustain us through the trials of exile.
4. Am I walking close with Jesus - or has the weariness of exile worn me down?
5. Friends, commune with Him now so you are prepared to commune with Him in the lion's den!

C. A Table in the presence of my enemies

1. This whole episode points forward to Christ
 - a. Daniel and Christ were framed by jealous leaders
 - b. Daniel and Christ were both arrested during prayer
 - c. The rulers tried to release both Daniel and Christ and could not
 - d. Daniel and Christ must both go down into the pit - but Daniel was delivered while Jesus was not!
 - e. But Jesus crashed forth from the tomb, having shut the mouth of the Great Lions Satan and Death!

2. Christ our Shepherd has conquered death and spreads this Table for us in the presence of our enemies! (Psalm 23 responsive reading)

New Boss, Same As the Old Boss

Daniel 6

August 29, 2021

Communion

Breastplate prayer excerpt

Teaching keywords: Sovereignty of God; prayer; persecuted church; two kingdoms; exile and return

May Christ be your shield today: Christ before you; Christ behind you; Christ beneath you; Christ above you; Christ on your right; Christ on your left; May Christ be with you, Christ be in you alone and in multitude, near and afar; for all you face and for all your life, that you may live in the protection and power of his blessing.

It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, ² with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. ³ Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.

⁴ At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. ⁵ Finally these men said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.”

⁶ So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said: “O King Darius, live forever! ⁷ The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions’ den. ⁸ Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered — in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” ⁹ So King Darius put the decree in writing.

¹⁰ Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. ¹¹ Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help.

¹² So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or man except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lions’ den?” The king answered, “The decree stands — in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” ¹³ Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.”

¹⁴ When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him. ¹⁵ Then the men went as a group to the king and said to him, “Remember, O king, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed.” ¹⁶ So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!”

¹⁷ A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel’s situation might not be changed. ¹⁸ Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep. ¹⁹ At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions’ den. ²⁰ When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?”

²¹ Daniel answered, “O king, live forever! ²² My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king.” ²³ The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

²⁴ At the king’s command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions’ den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

²⁵ Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language throughout the land: “May you prosper greatly! ²⁶ “I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. “For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end. ²⁷ He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.” ²⁸ So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian. Daniel 6:1–28

“Won’t Get Fooled Again” by The Who

I'll tip my hat to the new constitution
Take a bow for the new revolution
Smile and grin at the change all around
Pick up my guitar and play
Just like yesterday
Then I'll get on my knees and pray
We don't get fooled again

The change, it had to come
We knew it all along
We were liberated from the fold, that's all
And the world looks just the same
And history ain't changed
'Cause the banners, they are flown in the next war

Yeah
Meet the new boss
Same as the old boss