



Lesson 157

Daniel in the Lion's Den

Story Elements

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Text: Daniel 6:1-28• Setting: circa 537 BC, in Babylon• Main Characters: God, Daniel, and Darius• Plot: Envy motivates Daniel's peers to entrap him with his own faith.• Key word(s): " _____ " | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Climax: <i>Daniel 6:13 Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.</i> |
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Fiendish Plot

1. (vv 1-3) King Darius had organized the kingdom under 120 princes (or satraps), over which 3 presidents would govern. Of these three, Daniel was the most gifted and stood to gain responsibility over the _____ kingdom.
 - (a) (vv 4-5) Daniel's fellow counselors were envious of the favor he had with Darius, so they sought a way to diminish the king's opinion of him. But Daniel lived above reproach, and his enemies knew if Daniel would be entrapped, it would have to be about his unwavering _____ in God.
 - (b) (vv 6-9) The satraps drafted a new law which would forbid prayer to any deity other than Darius himself for _____ days. Any violator would be punished with death by means of the lions' den. The decree appealed to Darius' sinful ego – ancient emperors were often deified, and such a law was not uncharacteristic of rulers.

Faithful Prayer

2. (v 10) When Daniel received news of the decree, he remained steadfast to his devotions and prayed thrice daily, facing Jerusalem. Such a posture and a commitment to prayer was what _____ had prayed for his nation in 1 Kings 8:44-53.
3. (vv 11-13) Daniel's enemies snatched up the opportunity to use Daniel's obedience in prayer as proof of his _____ to King Darius, and they immediately reported his violation to the emperor.
 - (a) (vv 14-18) Darius cared for Daniel, so he was utterly dismayed when he realized that his royal ego may cost his friend and counselor his life. But the decree was not _____ – and Daniel was cast into the lion's den.
 - (b) Before a stone was placed at the entrance to seal Daniel in the den, Darius declared, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will _____ thee!"

Fervent Praise

4. (vv 19-23) The next day, Darius rushed to the lions' den to observe Daniel's fate. Much to the king's relief Daniel miraculously survived because God had sent an _____ that stopped the lions' mouths. Daniel was brought out of the den without a scratch.
5. (v 24) Enraged at the plotting of the satraps, Darius had the conspirators and their families tossed into the den. Before their bodies hit the ground, the lions tore them to pieces. Why do you think

this gruesome detail was included in the story? _____

6. (vv 25-28) Filled with awe and gratefulness, Darius wrote an encyclical to the people of his kingdom wherein he praised the living God whom Daniel worshiped and commanded all his subjects should _____ the God of heaven.

Application

7. Daniel lived above reproach so that he was blameless in the eyes of man. Matthew Henry remarks, "It is an excellent thing, and much for the glory of God, when those who profess religion conduct themselves so inoffensively in their whole conversation that their most watchful spiteful enemies may find no occasion of blaming them, save only in the matters of their _____, in which they walk according to their consciences."¹
8. Regarding persecution, the Savior said, "*Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*" (Matt. 5:11-12) Not everyone who is persecuted is delivered from the "lions' den," so then what should we rejoice about? _____

9. Daniel's example of prayer gives us a few suggestions for improving our own devotions:
- (a) Schedule – Daniel prayed daily – _____ times. Prayer was not something he had to squeeze in, it was something he squeezed everything else around.
 - (b) Environment:
 - i. Privacy – he prayed in his room where he could converse privately with God.
 - ii. Atmosphere – his window was open facing Jerusalem, not to be seen of men, but "that there might be no obstruction to his view of the direction in which Jerusalem, the earthly seat of Jehovah under the Old Testament, lay; and that the sight of heaven might draw his mind off from _____ thoughts. To Christ in the heavenly temple let us turn our eyes in prayer, from this land of our captivity."²
 - (c) Posture – he prayed on his knees, a posture that reflects _____ (and prevents sleeping).

Notes: _____

Answer Key: Key word(s): "prayed" • 1. whole; a) faith; b) thirty • 2. Solomon • 3. disloyalty; a) retractable; b) deliver • 4. angel • 5. To show that the lions were ravenously hungry and extremely dangerous – Daniel's survival was indeed a miracle. • 6. fear • 7. God • 8. We have a reward in heaven, which means that we please God when we serve him steadfastly despite suffering • 9 a) three; b) ii) earthly; c) humility

How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study: (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.

¹ Henry, Matthew. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994. Print.

² Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown. *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. Print.