

“Lesson 95: Daniel in the Lions’ Den

Scripture: Daniel 6

Memory verse: “He rescues and He saves; He performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth.” Daniel 6:27

Darius succeeded Belshazzar (who was Nebuchadnezzar’s son) as king of Babylon. And like the previous rulers, Darius developed a great respect for Daniel who proved himself wiser and more capable than all the other administrators and high officers. So, Darius made plans to place Daniel as the top officer over the entire empire.

Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in Daniel, but they couldn’t find anything to criticize or condemn. He was faithful, always responsible, and completely trustworthy. So, they concluded, “Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the rules of his religion.”

The administrators and high officers went to the king and said, “Long live King Darius! You are such a great man, so people should pray only to you. Make a law that states that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—excepting you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions.” The flattering puffed up King Darius’ pride, so he signed the law.

But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God. Then the officials went together to Daniel’s house and found him praying and asking for God’s help. They went straight to the king and tattled on Daniel. They told him that they caught Daniel praying to his God.

Hearing this, the king was deeply troubled, and he tried to think of a way to save Daniel. He spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of this predicament, but was unable to come up with anything. At last, the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, “May your God, whom you serve so faithfully, rescue you.”

They threw Daniel in, and placed a stone mouth of the den. The king sealed the stone with his own royal seal, so that no one could rescue Daniel. Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He was very sorry for what he did.

Very early the next morning, the king got up and hurried out to the lions’ den. When he got there, he called out in anguish, “Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you serve so faithfully, able to rescue you from the lions?”

Daniel answered, “Long live the king! My God sent his angel to shut the lions’ mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty.”

The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him, for he had trusted in his God. Then the king gave orders to arrest the men who had maliciously accused Daniel, and ordered that they be thrown into the lions’ den, along with their wives and children.

The King later sent this message **to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world:** “Peace and prosperity to you! I decree that everyone throughout my kingdom should tremble with fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, and He will endure forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed, and His rule will never end. He rescues and saves His people; He performs miraculous signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.”