

Daniel in the Lions' Den

Daniel's enemies trick the king into making a law against prayer. Daniel continues to pray, is thrown to the lions, and is miraculously preserved.

Daniel 6:1-28

CHARACTERS: Daniel, King Darius, Jealous officials, Lions

THEMES: Faithfulness in prayer, God's protection, Integrity

IT PLEASED DARIUS to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. Daniel so distinguished himself by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.

At this, the other administrators and satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they could find no corruption in him. Finally they 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.'

So they went to the king and said, 'May King Darius live forever! The royal administrators have all agreed that the king should issue an edict that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions' den. Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered.'

King Darius put the decree in writing.

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.

The men went as a group and found Daniel praying. They went to the king and spoke to him about his decree. 'Daniel pays no attention to you, Your Majesty. He still prays three times a day.'

When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him. But the men reminded him that no decree issued by the king could be changed.

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!'

A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it. Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating. He could not sleep.

At the first light of dawn, the king hurried to the lions' den. 'Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God been able to rescue you from the lions?'

Daniel answered, 'May the king live forever! 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, Your Majesty.'

The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. No wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

Then King Darius wrote to all nations: '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. 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.'

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