

“The Den Experience!”

Daniel 6:1-28

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction

- **We are citizens of two kingdoms.**
 - **As citizens of the United States, we are to...**
 - **Submit to our government and officials**
 - Romans 13:1-2-- *“Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.”*
 - **Pay our taxes and give honor to them**
 - Romans 13:6-7-- *“For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God’s ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.”*
 - **Pray for our government officials**
 - 1 Timothy 2:1-2-- *“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”*
 - **But we are also citizens of heaven.**
 - John 17:14-16-- *“I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.”*
- **What happens when the two kingdoms collide?**
 - Acts 4:19-20 -- *“Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”*

The Den Experience!

A. Daniel in the Critics’ Den-- Daniel 6:1-15

1. The Critics’ Problem

- Daniel 6:1-5-- *“It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him. Then these men said, “We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God.”*
- a. **Identification of “Darius the Mede”**
 - Daniel 6:28-- *“So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius, even the reign of Cyrus the Persian.”*
- b. **Qualifications of Daniel the Hebrew**
 - Daniel 6:4-- *“So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him.”*

1) **Personal Integrity**

2) **Steadfast Faithfulness**

- Proverbs 20:6-- *"Most men will proclaim each his own goodness, But who can find a faithful man?"*

2. **The Critics' Plot**

- Daniel 6:6-9-- *"So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: "King Darius, live forever! All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter." Therefore King Darius signed the written decree."*

3. **The Critics' Prey**

- Daniel 6:10-15-- *"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days. Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: "Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter." So they answered and said before the king, "That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day." And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed."*

a. **They caught Daniel Praying.**

1) **Various options Daniel had to circumvent Darius decree.**

2) **Daniel's Scriptural reasons for disobeying the King's order.**

- 1 Kings 8:46-50-- *"When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to the land of the enemy, far or near; yet when they come to themselves in the land where they were carried captive, and repent, and make supplication to You in the land of those who took them captive, saying, 'We have sinned and done wrong, we have committed wickedness'; and when they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who led them away captive, and pray to You toward their land which You gave to their fathers, the city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name: then hear in heaven Your dwelling place their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause, and forgive Your people who have sinned against You, and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You; and grant them compassion before those who took them captive, that they may have compassion on them"*
- Jeremiah 29: 12-13 -- *"Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.."*
- Psalm 55:17-- *"Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice."*

b. **But they also caught Darius in “Gotcha”**

1) **The Set-Up**

- Daniel 6:12-- *“And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king’s decree: ‘Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?’ The king answered and said, ‘The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.’”*

2) **The Surprise**

- Daniel 6:13-14-- *“So they answered and said before the king, ‘That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.’ And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.”*

3) **The “Squeeze”**

- Daniel 6:15-- *“Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, ‘Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed.’”*

B. The Lions in Daniel’s Den

- Daniel 6:16-23-- *“So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, ‘Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.’ Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed. Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him. Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, ‘Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?’ Then Daniel said to the king, ‘O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you.’ Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.”*

1. **The construction of Lions’ Den in Daniel’s day.**

2. **Darius’s prayer is one of despair, not faith**

3. **God’s supernatural deliverance of Daniel: Lions muzzled. Daniel rests peacefully and securely.**

4. **Darius’ Miserable Night**

C. The Critics in the Lions’ Den

- Daniel 6:24-- *“And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions—them, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.”*
- Proverbs 26:27 -- *“Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, and he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him..”*

D. Darius' Take on the Lions' Den Experience

- Daniel 6:25-28 -- *"Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, and steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall endure to the end. He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."*

Lessons for us from the Den Experience

1. **If living godly lives in Christ Jesus, we should expect persecution.**
2. **God is able to deliver even if man cannot.**
 - 2 Peter 2:9-- *"the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment."*
3. **The way to deal with crisis in life is to develop spiritual disciplines NOW!**
4. **Daniel's prayer life serves as both a rebuke and encouragement for us.**
5. **We need to be willing to obey God and pay the consequences, rather than obeying man. When the two kingdoms collide, God's kingdom wins!**