

I. Introduction and review.

- A. The most famous story in the book of Daniel.
- B. The structure of the Aramaic portion of the book of Daniel
 - 1a. Chapter 2: God's plan of the ages revealed: The great four part statue.
 - 2a. Chapter 3: God delivers His people: The fiery furnace.
 - 3a. Chapter 4: A proud monarch humbled: Nebuchadnezzar's humiliation
 - 3b. Chapter 5: A proud monarch humbled: Belshazzar's fall
 - 2b. Chapter 6: God delivers His people: The lion's den.
 - 1b. Chapter 7: God's plan of the ages revealed: The four great beasts

II. You will be attacked for your faith. v. 1-9

- A. Daniel flourishes under the new empire (Medes and Persians). v. 1-3 Ps. 92:12-15
 - 1. Why is Daniel elevated? v. 2-3
 - 2. Are you flourishing in your sphere of labor? Pr. 22:29 Col. 3:22f I Pet. 2:15ff
- B. Daniel's jealous enemies seek to bring him down. v. 4-9
 - 1. They are unable to find any evidence of corruption or mismanagement. v. 4
 - 2. Could you pass such scrutiny? I Ti. 3:1-7
 - 3. Daniel's only vulnerability is in his unconditional faithfulness to God. v. 5
 - 4. A vicious plot is hatched to bring Daniel down. v. 6-9 Pr. 29:5 II Thess. 2:4
 - 5. We too are under assault. I Ti. 3:12 Jo. 15:18ff II Co. 2:11 I Pe. 5:8-9 I Jn. 3:12f

III. Stand firm no matter what the cost. v. 10-18

- A. Daniel is an example of courageous trust in God. v. 10, 23b I Pet. 4:19 Gen. 15:6
 - 1. What reasons might some in his position have given in favor of compromise?
 - 2. Why did Daniel refuse to give in? Js. 4:7 I Pet. 5:8-9 Acts 5:29 Mt. 10:32
 - 3. Was Daniel showing off his religion? Mt. 6:5-8
 - 4. What would you do?
- B. The secret of Daniel's public success was his private prayer. v. 10 2:17-23 9:3ff
 - 1. Daniel prayed regularly: three times a day. Ps. 55:17
 - 2. Daniel prayed hopefully: looking toward Jerusalem. 9:2 II Chr. 36:6-9 Ps. 122:6 Jer 29:10,14 I Kings 8:41-50 Isa. 40:1ff
 - 3. Daniel prayed humbly: kneeling. Ps. 95:6 Luke 22:41
 - 4. Daniel prayed thankfully: accompanying his petitions with praise. 2:23 Ps. 145:10 Phil. 4:6
 - 5. How do our prayers measure up?
- C. Daniel suffers the consequences of his faithfulness. v. 11-18 II Cor. 11:23-33
 - 1. Daniel's enemies spy on him and demand his execution. v. 11-13 3:12
 - 2. King Darius is unable to deliver Daniel. v. 14-18
 - a. Why were the decrees of the Medo-Persian Kings irreversible? Esth. 1:19 8:8
 - b. Though the king loved Daniel, he was unable to change his decree. v. 14b

IV. God will deliver you. v. 19-28

- A. God, the true King, delivers Daniel in the lion's den. v. 19-24 He. 11:33 Ps. 34:7 91:13
 - 1. Like Shadrach, Mechach, and Abed-Nego, Daniel was delivered not from, but through the trial.

2. Your faithfulness under trials and suffering brings you into closer fellowship with the LORD. v. 22 3:25,28 Ps. 34:7 91:11f 119:67,71 Heb. 1:14
3. God continues to deliver His people and vindicate His Name: resurrection. 7:4 II Ti. 4:17 Ps. 91:13 7:1-2 I Pet. 5:8 Amos 3:12 Isa. 11:6-7 65:25 Rev. 5:5
4. God's enemies are crushed. v. 24 3:8 2:34-35 Esther 7:9-10

B. God is again glorified by Daniel's faithfulness. v. 25-27

C. Daniels' usefulness is magnified even more in his last years. v. 28

1. His tenure extends into the reign of Cyrus.
2. Did Daniel have influence over Cyrus' generous decree sending the Jewish exiles back to their land? II Chron. 36:22-23 Ez. 1:1-4 6:3-5

V. Concluding Applications.

A. Moral application: Dare to Be a Daniel.

1. Honor God through your diligence and integrity in your vocation.
2. Be prepared for the opposition of the world and the devil. John 3:19-20 I Pe. 5:8f
3. Pray with consistency, hope, humility and thankfulness.
4. Don't compromise your faith. Do you have a religion worth dying for?
5. Wait for God's deliverance -- whether it comes now or later. Heb. 11:13-16,32-40

B. Gospel application: Parallels between Daniel and Jesus.

1. Though blameless, He is condemned without justification by a deceitful conspiracy of those who were jealous. Mt. 26:59-60 27:18 Lu. 23:4,15 Acts 4:25-27 Ps. 2:1-3
2. His enemies manipulate a reluctant, but weak ruler. Jn. 18:38 19:12
3. He suffers in silence. I Pet. 2:22 Isa. 53:7
4. His execution is carried out and he is put in a pit sealed by a stone. Mt. 27:62-66
5. He is miraculously delivered from death: resurrection.
6. He prospers, even after suffering, resulting in the deliverance of many. Isa. 53:11f
7. God's enemies are crushed. Psalm 2:4-12 Col. 2:15 Heb. 2:14-15

C. Gospel application: A picture of God's deliverance of us.

1. The earthly anti-king Darius was unable to deliver Daniel whom he loved from the demands of the law (of the Medes and the Persians).
2. Our God and King was able to rescue His beloved ones from the demands of His law. Eph. 1:3ff
 - a. God's people have violated God's holy law and deserve to perish. Ro. 3:23 6:23
 - b. A dilemma: How can God (the great King) deliver His beloved people without compromising His justice?
 - c. Jesus Christ came to take upon Himself our unrighteousness and to pay the price we owe, fully satisfying God's justice. II Cor. 5:21 Isa. 53:6 I Pet. 3:18 Jn. 3:16 Rom. 1:16-17 3:25-26 I Jn. 1:9

Discussion questions

1. How does this passage encourage the elderly among us?
2. How does this passage encourage us in our vocation?
3. What kind of opposition should we expect because of our faithfulness to God?
4. Under what circumstances might our loyalty to the Lord be tested?
5. How is Daniel's prayer life a model for us?
6. How does this passage contrast God's greatness as the true king with the false king Darius?
7. What are some parallels between Daniel and Christ?
8. How does this passage remind us of God's great and just deliverance of us?