

Daniel.09. Chapter 6

This morning, we continue in the series on the Book of Daniel looking at chapter 6

- Daniel chapter 6 records the enactment of a law to prohibit prayer, Daniel's disobedience to the law, his being condemned to death in the lion's den, and God's deliverance of him

Outline of Chapter

- 6:1-3** - The king Intends to Promote Daniel to be Administrator over the Whole Kingdom
- 6:4-5** - High Officials Conspire Against Him but Find No Ground for Accusation
- 6:6-9** - The King Enacts a Binding Law Prohibiting Prayer
- 6:10** - Daniel Disobeys the Law by Praying to God
- 6:11-17** - Daniel Arrested, Condemned to Death in the Lion's Den
- 6:18-23** - Daniel is Delivered from Death
- 6:24** - Conspirators and Families Put to Death in the Lion's Den
- 6:25-27** - The King Gives Glory to God
- 6:28** - Daniel Prospers

6:1-3 - The King Intends to Promote Daniel to be Administrator over the Whole Kingdom

- **Daniel 6:1-3** = *It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; ² and over them three high officials, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. ³ Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.*

At this time, "Darius" is identified as "the king" "over the kingdom" of the Empire of the Medes and Persians, which is now the largest empire in history

- In the administration of "the kingdom," "120 satraps" have been appointed as officials who are responsible for the administration of the numerous provinces by maintaining civil order and raising taxes
- Having authority over these, Darius has appointed "three high officials to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss," and one of them is Daniel
- However, after a period of time, "Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps" and the king intends to promote Daniel "over the whole kingdom"
- The reason for this is because "an excellent spirit was in him"

It was the moral character of Daniel that "excelled" above that of all the other officials

- In this, Daniel is an example of the "excellent" moral character that all Christians are to have
- **2 Peter 1:3-5** = *His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, ⁴ by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue" which means "moral excellence"*
- **Philippians 1:9-11** = *It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and*

blameless for the day of Christ,¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

- Our moral character becomes “*excellent*” by “*the divine power*” of the Holy Spirit in answer to “*prayer*” as we are transformed in of our minds according to the “*knowledge*” of the truth of God so that we will have “*all discernment*” in moral judgement to test and “*approve*” what is “*excellent*” in order to “*love*” and live “*pure and blameless*” lives that are “*filled with the fruit of righteousness*” because we know and believe we will give account of our lives on the “*day of Christ,*” the Day of Judgment
- In this, Daniel, whose name means “God is my Judge,” is a model and example
- As demonstrated in this chapter, his prayer life is foundational to his “*excellent*” character

6:4-5 - High Officials Conspire Against Him but Find No Ground for Accusation

- **Daniel 6:1–3** = *Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him.⁵ Then these men said, “We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God.”*

Knowing the plan of “the king” to promote Daniel above them, “the high officials and the satraps” devise a conspiracy against Daniel with the goal, not only to discredit him, but ultimately to kill him

- Being government officials, their chosen tactic for their conspiracy is “lawfare”
- They intended to “*find ground for complaint or any fault or error against Daniel*”

The Scripture does not state what their motivation was but there are a number of options

(a) Jealousy/Envy

- Sinful jealousy that corrupts and destroys relationships is rooted in sinful comparison, insecurity, and envy in the heart arising from the “feeling” of being “less than,” “less esteemed and valued,” “excluded,” and/or “rejected”

(b) Selfish-Ambition to Gain Power

- Simply summarized, the three primary areas of corruption are the sinful desire (1) for sexual immorality, (2) for earthly wealth and money, and (3) for power, the evil desire to rule over, dominate, and control others, which is the highest level of evil

(c) Hatred

- Because of the sinful heart, people “naturally” hate righteous people such as Daniel

- **1 John 3:11-12** = *For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.¹² We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother’s righteous.*

(d) Satan

- As 1 John 3:12 says, the spiritual power working in people to do evil is “*the evil one*”

- Clearly, Satan did not want a righteous person like Daniel in the highest level of government authority because his righteous influence would advance the kingdom of God and hinder, thwart, and prevent Satan from accomplishing his evil desires to establish his evil rule and kingdom

The context of what the conspirators seek to accomplish shows that their conspiracy must be carried out with the uttermost wisdom to deceive

- This is because the person they intend to discredit and kill, Daniel, has so “*distinguished*” himself above and beyond any other government official, and specifically them, with his “*excellent*” moral character and administrative abilities that would bring the greatest benefit to the king and his kingdom, their scheme must be executed with the greatest possible deception

Desperately attempting to “get rid of” Daniel, they can find “no error or fault” in regard to the present laws or in the way Daniel faithfully administrated the king’s business

- Therefore, they conspire to create a new law “*in connection with the law of his God*” by which they can have him eliminated

- This is always the trajectory of totalitarian government officials and governments, which cannot tolerate any competing authority, most of all the authority of God, and therefore conspire to gradually and ultimately eliminate the rule, laws, and, if needed, the people of God

6:6-9 - The King Enacts a Binding Law Prohibiting Prayer

- **Daniel 6:6-9** = *Then these high officials and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, “O King Darius, live forever!”⁷ All the high officials of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.⁸ Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked.”⁹ Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction.*

Having come to “agreement” about the specific law to be enacted in order to accomplish their conspiracy, they come to the king and recommend he enact it

- The depth of the evil that has been able to permeate the government is evident in that “*all the high officials of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors*” had been contacted, knew the law, and agreed that it should be recommended to the king

- While this can be interpreted as meaning every single one consciously conspired to create the law that they knew was intended to eliminate Daniel, it is better to understand that it was the “*high officials and satraps,*” meaning those in the highest levels of government authority, who were the real conspirators and deceived the others to agree with the law

- Thus, they are able to report to the king that the “poll” of all the officials was 100% in favor of the law and, thereby, be as persuasive as possible in what they are recommending to the king

There are two parts of the law

- First, the law itself, that no one make “*petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you*”

- Second, the sanction or punishment, to “*be cast into the den of lions,*” thus making the violation of this law a capital or highest possible crime and worthy of the death penalty

- The ethical law deserving of the death penalty that this law is based on is that, because the king is the highest governing authority, to violate this law is to commit treason

To ensure that this law is given the highest possible authority and that the punishment must be carried out, the conspirators request that it would be “according to the law of the Medes and the Persians” which would make it legally impossible to “be changed”

- Because of this, there would be no possibility of amendment to the law, appealing to a “higher court,” or even “amending the Constitution” so that it could be “*changed*”
- Whatever was the king’s motivation, whether (a) the ego-trip of being “like” a god, (b) being the sole mediator between the gods and the people, or (c) simply a “good idea” to unify the nation under his rule, as Nebuchadnezzar sought to do with the worship of the “*statute*,” the king is deceived, not realizing the evil consequence of the law which is its real intention, and “*signed the document and injunction*”
- Because of their “political skill” to make what is intended for evil appear to be good, the king does not know he has just signed the future death warrant for his most faithful servant

6:10 - Daniel Disobeys the Law by Praying to God

- **Daniel 6:10** = *When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.*

Daniel consciously and intentionally does not submit to obey the law but continues praying

- The culpability and “legal” guilt of Daniel is stated in the fact that he “*knew*” the law had been enacted yet violates it anyway
- He did not in any way seek to secretly continue his life of prayer by going behind closed doors or varying the established times in his daily life that he devoted to prayer, which was not merely once a month, week, or day, but that he “*prayed and gave thanks to his God three times a day*”
- He consciously and boldly prays with his “*windows open toward Jerusalem*”

In order to completely establish the guilt of Daniel when they prosecute their case, the conspirators document that they have witnessed him praying “three times a day”

- This indicates they observed or secretly “spied on” him praying over a period of days
- They do this in order to establish that Daniel is guilty “beyond a reasonable doubt”

While some might call prayer “the secret of the power” of Daniel’s spiritual gifts and “excellent spirit,” his prayer life was no secret

- It was his prayer life that got him in trouble, being the very reason that the conspirators created the law which they knew he would violate because it was “*the law of his God*” (v. 5)
- They knew that Daniel was a devout, religious person who obeyed the “*law of his God*,” and that his prayer life was the most prominent and established aspect of his daily life
- His total commitment to live his life holy and totally devoted to God was first tested and then established when he was a “*youth*,” as made known in chapter 1
- Now as an “older man,” prayer is so much an essential part of his daily life that his enemies’ conspiracy is based on their knowledge of Daniel’s faithful prayer life
- ➔ It is his devoted to prayer that is at the heart of the spiritual warfare taking place in these events because Satan doesn’t want Daniel praying and schemes to destroy him through “his servants”

Daniel's conscious and deliberate actions to not submit to the law of the human government is based on the ethical standard that God's law is higher than human law

- While the basic "operating" ethical principle for believers is to "submit to" the laws and authority of the human government because it is given authority over them from God (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-15), when human laws are enacted that are contrary to the kingdom purposes and "law" of God, we "*must obey God rather than man*" (Acts 5:29)
- We saw this ethical hierarchy of God's law being the highest law to be obeyed in chapter 3 when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not submit to the law to worship the "statute"
- Now the same ethical choice is made by Daniel, and like them, he knows he will probably die
- It is the same thing now taking place with the persecutions against Christians all over the earth, and increasingly manifesting against Christians from the government of the United States

6:11-17 - Daniel Arrested, Condemned to Death in the Lion's Den

- **Daniel 6:11-17** = *Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. ¹² Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, "O king! Did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." ¹³ Then they answered and said before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or the injunction you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day." ¹⁴ Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him. ¹⁵ Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed." ¹⁶ Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" ¹⁷ And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.*

Knowing the devoted prayer life of Daniel, the conspirators join together in a "raid" on Daniel's home and, as assumed, agreed upon, and planned, they "found" him praying

- The word translated "agreement" (v. 18) is the same word in Psalm 2:1 used of those who conspire against God and is translated in the ESV as "rage" and the NASB95 as "uproar"
- **Psalm 2:1-2** = *Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? ² The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed*
- This is the manifestation of the Satanic spirit of Antichrist, which seems to be indicted in their charge against Daniel as they state that he is "*one of the exiles from Judah*"
- Such a statement would seem to be completely irrelevant to the case since it was something that happened decades before in a completely different government of the Babylonian Empire

Having achieved their purpose in finding the evidence, they arrest Daniel and bring the charges of his violation of the law to the king

- The accusers begin prosecuting their case before the king by first stating the law, along with the punishment to be "*cast into the den of lion's,*" and, undoubtedly, remind the king that it is "*according to the law of the Medes and Persians*"
- The king affirms this, saying that it "*cannot be revoked*"

- The accusers then “spring the trap,” presenting the charge against “*Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah*”
- The magnitude of the charges is emphasized in that Daniel has (1) demonstrated personal contempt toward the king because he “*pays no attention to you,*” (2) committed treason against “*you, O king,*” the highest governmental authority, “*and the injunction you have signed,*” and (3) and that the gravity of his crime is proven by him continuing to pray “*three times a day*”

Realizing he has been deceived, the king becomes completely *distressed*” and attempts all day to “*deliver Daniel*”

- But since Daniel was clearly guilty of violating the irrevocable “*law of the Medes and Persians,*” he commands that Daniel suffer the punishment to be “*cast into the den of lions*”
- Upon having this done, the king says the only words of prayer recorded in this chapter, “*May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!*”
- Then, it was sealed with the “*signet rings of the king and lords,*” like the tomb of Jesus

6:18-23 - Daniel is Delivered from Death

¹⁸ Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him. ¹⁹ Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. ²⁰ As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, “O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?” ²¹ Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever! ²² My God sent his angel and shut the lions’ mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm.” ²³ Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

After humbling himself before God by “*fasting*” and spending a sleepless night, the king wants to find out what happened to Daniel

- The king does not send a servant, but at the first light of dawn rushes himself to the den and, not in the typical tone of a king, but an anguished shout, cries out, “*O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?*”
- In answer to the king’s fasting and prayer, Daniel responds that he suffered “*no harm*” because his God, the Supreme Judge of the universe, “*found him blameless*” and “*sent his angel*” to protect him “*because he had trusted in his God*”
- ➔ In these things Daniel was of prophetic type of Jesus, condemned, sealed in a tomb, and risen

As a consequence of this miraculous deliverance by God, three things take place:

(1) The conspirators and their families are put to death in the lion’s den (6:24)

- In accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, and God’s law (Deut. 19:16-21; Joshua 7:25), they justly suffer the punishment they “*had intended*” Daniel to suffer

(2) The king gives glory to God (6:25-27)

- In total contrast to the law prohibiting prayer to any other “god,” Darius testifies to his whole kingdom what the “*living God*” Who “*delivers and rescues*” did for Daniel, and decrees that all should “*tremble and fear before him*” because His “*kingdom and dominion are forever*”

➔ This is the theme of this chapter, and the transition to the next chapter and section of Daniel

(3) Daniel prospers (6:28)