

‘Life in a Lions’ Den’ (Daniel 6:1–28)

The commercial begins with a little girl standing alone in a picturesque meadow.¹ The camera then pans to another part of the field where it shows a gigantic African rhinoceros. The ominous beast begins a lethal charge towards the girl, whose serene and happy face remains unmoved. As the rhinoceros gets closer, the words appear on the screen, “Trust is not being afraid.” A split second before the rhino tramples the helpless child, it stops, and the girl, her smile never wavering, reaches up and kisses the animal on its massive horn. The final words then appear, “even when you are vulnerable.” The commercial was designed to tout the abilities of St. Paul Insurance Company to protect its clients from the uncertainties of life.

You and I will deal with ferocious charging rhinos. Perhaps you’re dealing with one today. Maybe you’ve learned that a loved one has a terminal disease. Perhaps you’ve recently lost your job and you’re absolutely overwhelmed with stress. Maybe your financial investments have totally tanked and you have no idea how you’re going to have any retirement. Perhaps your spouse has just informed you that he or she no longer wants to be married to you. Maybe your reputation is being slandered all over your work or neighborhood.² Daniel 6 has a word for you today: *Courage to face adversity comes through godly character.*³ Maybe you’re thinking: “Keith, get real! You’ve been spending too much time up in your ivory tower. Why don’t you come back down into the real world?! Courage is the farthest thing from my mind. I’m stressed and worried over my circumstances. I’m just in survival mode.” I understand this response; I can even identify. However, I’m not here to preach my thoughts, feelings, or empathies; I’m here to preach God’s Word, even when I don’t understand it or practice it the way I might like. God’s Word is a supernatural book; therefore, we must learn to adopt a supernatural perspective. Remember, the title of this series through Daniel is: “Courageous Living in Chaotic Times.” The theme is: “God is large and in charge.” So in spite of present appearances God is in control.⁴ This is why I can say: *Courage to face adversity comes through godly character.*

Act 1: The Plot against Daniel (6:1–9). In Dan 5, King Belshazzar of Babylon had a dream that Daniel interpreted (5:17–28). Belshazzar rewarded Daniel for his efforts (5:29) and then was promptly killed by the Persians (5:30). Chapter 5 concluded with a note that Darius took the throne at age sixty-two after he conquered the Babylonians (5:31). Now in 6:1–2 we read: **“It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps [guardians] over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom, and over them three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one), that these satraps might be accountable to them, and that the king might not suffer loss.”**⁵ Darius set up a new governmental structure in order to ensure that proper revenues were received without financial loss to the king’s treasury.⁶ **“Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom”** (6:3).⁷ I like how this verse begins: “Then this Daniel.” Daniel is the solution to the king’s concerns. The verb translated “distinguishing himself” (*netsach*) only appears here in the entire Old Testament. The form of this verb refers to *continually* distinguishing himself.⁸ Daniel is able to distinguish himself because he possessed an “extraordinary spirit” (cf. 5:12, 14). This spirit is divine in origin⁹ and also probably refers to a combination of his extraordinary attitude, skills, and wisdom.¹⁰ Daniel distinguishes himself as an extraordinary employee. Consequently, he is on the verge of becoming the next prime minister. What kind of attitude do you display on the job? Are you easy and enjoyable to work with? Do you manifest a willingness to learn? Or is your attitude toward your employer and fellow employees scarred by personal grudges, feelings of resentment, and envious thoughts?¹¹ Nothing is more discrediting to your Christian witness and mine than mediocrity in our work. The first thing the men and women around us will notice is the quality of our work. If they see shoddy or mediocre work, they will fail to respect our faith and will not be able to see beyond what we produce. In essence, our work becomes a giant barrier keeping them from God.¹² May you and I represent Christ by a dependable, responsible worker to the glory of God.

At the same time, we must recognize that when we work hard, refuse to cut corners, submit to our boss, and respect our coworkers, we are not guaranteed raises and promotions. On the contrary, we may get laid off or even fired because we become a threat to those we work with. Let's face it, many bosses and coworkers don't like to work with someone who is too pure and too holy. They will want to bring us down to their level. This is the case with Daniel and leads to a plot against him in 6:4: **“Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him.”**¹³ Why were the commissioners and satraps so jealous? There are probably a number of reasons. First, some of the men were envious of Daniel's imminent promotion to prime minister. Second, these men know that with Daniel in charge, they wouldn't be able to use their positions for personal profit. Third, Daniel is in his eighties. These young guys are getting aced by an old guy. Fourth, Daniel is an exiled Jew. In Daniel's day, conquered races were generally considered inferior by their conquerors. Finally, Daniel refused to worship their gods.

Such issues led the Persian commissioners and satraps to try to “dig up some dirt” on Daniel. They rifled his files, read every single memo he had ever written, and eavesdropped on his conversations. They dogged him throughout the day and bugged his room at night. They even had the Medo-Persian FBI follow every lead. Of course, they discovered he wasn't a womanizer. He didn't have any vested interests in the Persian Savings and Loan. He was not misusing the palace post office, writing hot checks, sexually harassing his female (or male) office staff. There were no bribes, no cover-ups, no scandals, and no skeletons!¹⁴ They couldn't dig up any dirt on Daniel. What is even more astounding is Daniel has maintained this squeaky clean character over the course of nearly seventy years of political service. What politician (ancient or present) can say that? What if your enemies hired private investigators to look into every aspect of your life, public and private? Suppose they checked out your Internet usage, IM and Facebook dialogues, phone calls, video rentals, favorite TV programs, shopping habits, financial records, tax returns, business deals, language at home, and how you treat your spouse and children. What would they uncover?¹⁵ I think we'd all be in trouble. Yet, what if we all lived like Daniel. What an impact the Church would have today.¹⁶ *Courage to face adversity comes through godly character.*

Once the heads of state realized they couldn't take Daniel down, they pulled their beards and shook their heads. They were burning with rage and envy. **“Then these men said, ‘We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find it against him with regard to the law of his God’”** (6:5). The governors broke into applause and congratulated each other on this skillful maneuver. This is what his enemies discovered when they examined his life: He was faithful in his duties. He was faultless in his character. He was fervent in his prayers. But they could use his zealous commitment to God to bust him on a legal technicality. Amazing, huh? What if your boss, coworkers, and neighbors said: “I can't find any dirt on this person? He or she doesn't slander, gossip, lie, or steal. But I know he or she is serious about God. I bet I can get him or her in trouble on this account. What a testimony that would be.

In 6:6–9, the plot unfolds: **“Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows: ‘King Darius, live forever! All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions' den. Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked.’ Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction.”** The commissioners and satraps reveal their deceit in 6:7 when they claim “all” the leaders of the kingdom were in on this injunction—Daniel certainly wasn't. They also use flattery by suggesting to the king that he be an object of worship for an entire month. Before the king knows what's hit him, he is signing on the dotted line. Unknowingly, Darius has put Daniel between a rock and a hard place.

Act 2: The Set-Up and Sentence (6:10–18). In 6:10, we come to one of the most profound verses in the Old Testament. **“Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees¹⁷ three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.”¹⁸** As much as I like “Then this Daniel . . .” (6:3), I like “Now when Daniel . . .” even more! When the law was passed, Daniel entered his house and prayed. The key phrase is “as he had been doing previously.” Daniel was a man of discipline, commitment, and fearlessness. But put yourself in Daniel’s sandals for just a moment. Daniel had some alternatives to consider. He could have rationalized the situation. He could’ve said, “Thirty days is not very long. I’ve been praying all my life. I’ll take a sabbatical from prayer for just thirty days, and then start up again afterward.” Or he could have said, “I don’t have to pray out loud; I will just pray silently in my heart. God can hear me whether I pray out loud or not.” Daniel could have said, “I can pray in the privacy of my bedroom; I don’t need to be in front of my window.” Daniel took none of those options. He went straight to his open window.¹⁹ He was not ashamed of the Lord. A den of lions would not shut him up or scare him.²⁰

There are three questions that need to be answered that will provide further insight into Daniel’s actions. First, why does Daniel bow toward Jerusalem? Was Daniel being superstitious? No! Daniel’s posture was based on the prayer of King Solomon at the dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem (1 Kgs 8:35–36; cf. 2 Chron 6:36–39). Solomon had prayed that when Israel sinned and ended up in captivity that God would hear their prayers of repentance as they faced Jerusalem and would forgive them and restore them (1 Kgs 8:47–49).²¹ Daniel’s gaze was an act of faith on the part of an exiled Jew to pray toward the land from which he had been taken captive. It was a way to say by one’s very posture, “God, I believe Your promise that You will someday return us to our land.”²² At the end of a prayer in Dan 9, God gave Daniel eyes of faith to see the future of Jerusalem when it would be restored and when a Savior would come to that city to save his people from their sins. Daniel opened the windows of prayer out of faithfulness, but it was in faith that Daniel prayed, believing that God would do an incredible work in the future.²³

Second, why did Daniel pray three times a day? This practice is not mandated anywhere in Scripture, but is perhaps suggested by a passage such as Ps 55:17: “Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur, and He will hear my voice.”²⁴ Remember who Daniel is. He’s one of the top three men in the Medo-Persian empire. No doubt he had a plate full of heavy responsibilities. Yet, he still had time to pray three times a day. I’m sure one of the reasons that he prayed that way was because he knew if he didn’t live by a schedule prayer would soon be squeezed out. Prayer was so important to Daniel that he was willing to die rather than give up his right to pray to God.²⁵ He made no excuses. Think of the lame excuses that stop us from a faithful, consistent prayer life. We have to get our work done, we need more sleep, or we are too busy. Let’s face it: “If you are too busy to pray, then you are too busy.”²⁶ There’s a slogan I’ve seen that says, “If you are really having a busy day, skip your devotions. Signed, Satan.”²⁷ I’ve made plenty of excuses to skip out on prayer. I’m sure you have too. I know what my excuses have been. What are your excuses? They had better be good, because one day at the judgment seat you might be standing right next to Daniel.²⁸

Third, why does Daniel include “giving thanks” in his prayers when he’s going to be tossed in a lion’s den?²⁹ Knowing the plot was hatched, knowing they were watching, knowing there was no way anyone could save you him, Daniel gave thanks! Would we be occupied with the goodness of God toward us? Thanksgiving is not only an act of gratitude, but an expression of faith. There are many times when I have to give thanks to God for what he has given the why not experiencing it at the moment. I thank the Lord for His peace and protection when I feel afraid, because I know he has given these things even though I may not feel them or see them at the moment. This is not a matter of pretending, but of acknowledging spiritual reality. So I thank the Lord for strength and endurance when I feel I can go on because He can do exceeding abundantly beyond what I ask or dream. I thank the Lord for the ability to love when I’m been attacked and want to attack in return.³⁰

Daniel was a man of prayer. Prayer was not a last resort for Daniel; it was what he did! Do you meet with God daily, or only during emergencies? Have you made prayer in your relationship to God the number one priority in your life? Are you seeking to know God better and serve Him more faithfully? Because Daniel chose to develop and maintain a consistent walk with the Lord, he did not panic when his faith and life were laid on the line. Rather, he turned to God as he always had and placed his burdens in the Lord's hands. You can experience the peace Daniel must have had if you will put God first in your life.³¹ It's been said that God's Word is the milk, meat, and bread of life. But prayer is its breath. You can live for a long period of time without food, but you can't survive more than a few minutes without breath. That's how important prayer is. We must give prayer that kind of priority in our lives?³² This is the essence of Courageous Living in Chaotic Times." *Courage to face adversity comes through godly character.*

Now back to our account. The satraps and governors have Daniel right where they want him. He is busted! Look at 6:11–15: **“Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God. Then they approached and spoke before the king about the king's injunction, ‘Did you not sign an injunction that any man who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, is to be cast into the lions' den?’ The king replied, ‘The statement is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked.’ Then they answered and spoke before the king, ‘Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the injunction which you signed, but keeps making his petition three times a day.’ Then, as soon as the king heard this statement, he was deeply distressed and set his mind on delivering Daniel; and even until sunset he kept exerting himself to rescue him.’ Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, ‘Recognize, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or statute which the king establishes may be changed.’”** These leaders are dirty! They are gleefully trying to make Daniel into Meow Mix®! They will stop at nothing to deceive the king and bring about Daniel's death. Of course, once the king realizes what these men have done, he begins working overtime to save Daniel. The king likely consulted lawyers to see if there was any way the law could be overturned.³³ Yet, under Babylon the rule was *rex lex* (the king is law). In Persia, it was *lex rex* (the law is king). In the Persian culture, they believed their monarchs were infallible; therefore, they could never make a mistake. The king himself could not change what he had written, because that would be admitting his fallibility, so the law of the Medes and the Persians came to be a law that could never be changed. Darius put the decree in writing, and he was stuck with it.³⁴ He was caught by a plan calculated to cost Daniel his faith or his life. The great irony here is that the guy to whom everyone was supposed to pray couldn't even get his own decree undone.³⁵ The conspirators did their homework well. They were certain they had Daniel neutralized.³⁶

“Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lions' den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, ‘Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you’” (6:16). Why did Darius make this comment? Daniel most likely had been witnessing to his boss and telling him about God's great miracles.³⁷ Are you sharing your faith with your boss when there's an open door? Does your boss know that you are a Christian? If not, this week, let your boss and coworkers know who you believe in where you stand. Then, like Daniel, be willing to accept the consequences of being faithful to God.³⁸ Did I say consequences? Yes, I did! I would love to be able to tell you that God has promised you nothing but happiness and success in this life. But that would be a lie! God never promised you a spouse or a sexually satisfying marriage. He never promised you an especially fulfilling job. He never guaranteed you a lucrative salary. He never promised you that you would own your own home. Many Christians assume that these are “unalienable rights!” But the truth is: Even if you are faithful and obedient as a Christian, these are not guarantees. God wants you and me to be “conformed to the image of His Son” (Rom 8:29). He also wants to be glorified in and through our lives. There are many times when this entails suffering. This means our ability to handle disappointment and trial is directly related to the consistency of our walk with God. Will you ask the Lord for the grace to persevere through your disappointment and trials? Remember, *courage to face adversity comes through godly character.*

The finality of Daniel's fate continues in 6:17–18: **“A stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing would be changed in regard to Daniel. Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting,³⁹ and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him.”**

King Darius is sleepless in Babylon. He cancelled all entertainment for the evening and even went into fasting over the situation with Daniel. Darius fears these lions, and rightly so! He knows all too well that his lions were there for the purpose of torturing prisoners. They were usually starved, mistreated, and then taunted so they would rip a man to pieces. Darius knows that a male lion can grow to over ten feet in length (including his tail), and can weigh over 500 pounds. A grown male can kill a 150-pound gazelle with one swipe of his paw and can jump over a three-foot fence with that gazelle in his mouth. Of all God's creatures, the lion is one of the most beautiful, fearsome, awesome creatures.⁴⁰ So Darius is panicked for his friend and political right-hand man. Yet, Daniel rested better in the lion's den than Darius did in the palace. Daniel may have even used one of the lions for a pillow and slept like cub!

Act 3: The Lord Delivers Daniel and Judges his Enemies (6:19–24). The story now hits its high point. **“Then the king arose at dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lions' den. When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, ‘Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?’ Then Daniel spoke to the king, ‘O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths and they have not harmed me,⁴¹ inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime.’ Then the king was very pleased and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no injury whatever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.”** Darius again emphasizes that Daniel “constantly” served his God (6:20; cf. 6:16). Daniel responds with astounding calmness. The angel may have been the Lord Himself or it may have been Michael who has the job to protect the people of Israel (cf. 12:1). Heb 11:33 tells us that it was Daniel states that “shut the mouths of lions.” Of course, as 11:35–40 indicates, it's not always God's will to deliver His children. In the early church, untold thousands of martyrs were fed to lions and ushered into eternity. Yet, regardless, God is all powerful and always able.

We now come to a verse that we may wish was excluded. In 6:24, Daniel writes: **“The king then gave orders, and they brought those men who had maliciously accused Daniel, and they cast them, their children and their wives into the lions' den; and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.”⁴²** Although the Greek OT (LXX) specifies that only the two overseers, together with their families, were cast into the lions' den, this is still a blood-curdling decree. God gave a merciful law in Deut 24:16: “Fathers shall not be put to death for *their* sons, nor shall sons be put to death for *their* fathers; everyone shall be put to death for his own sin.”⁴³ But this was no the modus operandi in Persia. Herodotus and other ancient writers indicated that Persian rulers executed all of a man's relatives when he committed a crime worthy of death. This was a sure way of preventing assassination attempts upon the life of the king by disgruntled relatives in future years.⁴⁴ Daniel wants us to see that these men were judged by their own treachery. This was their punishment for trying to kill a faithful government official and for tricking the king into doing something that caused him much turmoil. They were the ones who paid no attention to the king and by their own law their lives were forfeited. The fact that blameless wives and children were also killed reminds me clearly that innocent people are often hurt as the revolt of my sin. It is one thing to bear my own judgment. But worst of all is realizing the consequences of my sin spilled over onto innocent people I love.⁴⁵ Finally, when suffering mistreatment trust God for deliverance, wait for God to vindicate, and allow God to retaliate. He may choose to use your life as a testimony of his glory and grace. The fate of the conspirators is a fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham when God declared: “And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse” (Gen 12:3a).

Act 4: The Lord is Praised and Daniel is Blessed (6:25–28). Our narrative concludes with King Darius acknowledging the greatness of Daniel’s God. The praise that he offers up is reminiscent of King Nebuchadnezzar’s praise in Dan 4. Only Darius’ words are even stronger. **“Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations and *men of every language who were living in all the land*: ‘May your peace abound! I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; for He is the living God and enduring forever, and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, and His dominion *will be* forever. He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders In heaven and on earth, Who has *also* delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.’⁴⁶ So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.”⁴⁷** The king wanted all people under his authority to be clear about the God of Daniel. First, this God is a living God, unlike the dead gods and idols that many worshiped. Second, He is eternal and did not have a beginning unlike the many so-called gods in the world. Third, He is sovereign and reigns without interruption, unlike the many gods around them whose fortunes rise and fall for various reasons. Fourth, He is a God who is powerful enough to intervene in the affairs of men and nations and rescue His followers. All those under Darius’ authority are to show respect for Daniel’s God. Darius is, of course, not attempting to start a state religion nor is he necessarily declaring his faith in the Lord God. He is at least declaring that Daniel’s God is the greatest among the gods and must be revered.⁴⁸

My children started taking piano lessons this week so I’ve been thinking some about the piano. It’s been said, “The richest cords require some black keys.”⁴⁹ How true! If we want to hit rich notes in our spiritual lives, we must experience some trying times. Perhaps you’ve heard that the Chinese word for crisis is written by combining the symbol for danger and opportunity.⁵⁰ What a great picture for believers: Every time you and I face a crisis or a trial, there will certainly be danger. Nevertheless, each crisis is an opportunity for you and me to glorify God. *Courage to face adversity comes through godly character.*

Scripture References

Daniel 6:1–28

Psalm 15:1–2; 26:1; 78:70–72

Proverbs 10:9; 11:3; 20:7; 28:6

Ephesians 6:5–6

Colossians 3:17, 22–24

Hebrews 11:32–33

1 Peter 2:13–18; 3:14–15

Study Questions

1. How do my coworkers, neighbors, and classmates see me (Dan 6:1–5)? Would there be enough evidence to convict me of being a Christian? In what area of my life is it most obvious I am a follower of Christ? Horace Greeley had a saying that Harry Truman liked to quote: “Fame is a vapor, popularity an accident, riches take wings, those who cheer today may curse tomorrow, only one thing endures—character.” Am I man or woman of character? Why or why not?
2. When have I experienced a promotion, award, or blessing only to have something “bad” immediately occur (Dan 6:1–18)? How did I respond to these adverse circumstances? In what ways is my life a series of ups and downs? How do I keep my faith in Christ in the midst of these challenges? Who has been an example to me of persevering godliness? Have I expressed my gratitude and appreciation to this brother or sister?
3. How consistent is my prayer life (Dan 6:10–11)? When do I set aside time to pray? What have I learned about prayer that has been particularly helpful to me? What prayer lessons could I pass on to a new Christian? How have I learned to pray in the tough times? Ernest Wadsworth, a champion of effective prayer, said, “Pray for a faith that will not shrink when washed in the waters of affliction.” Read Luke 18:1–8.
4. Why does God let His faithful children suffer (Dan 6:11–17)? When have I been especially obedient only to be hit by a trial? Why is doing right no guarantee everything will go right? How can I refuse to be disappointed with God? Do I genuinely believe that God doesn’t owe me anything? How can I continually remind myself of this truth?
5. When have I seen God judge my enemies (Dan 6:24)? Read Romans 12:17–21. How has God vindicated me in the midst of my trials (Dan 6:25–28)? How do I feel about God when He comes through in my life? Have I shared these testimonies with other believers and even unbelievers? How have people responded? Today, will I commit to consistently sharing God’s goodness to me with others in my life?

Notes

¹ I showed this video when I preached this text. My video technician found a usable copy of this commercial on a Russian web site of all places (<http://videosostav.ru/video/dd1dab27cac59d91e3a81a91a6a493ad/>). It appears that St. Paul Insurance was bought out by or merged with Travelers Insurance. Most of the old St. Paul commercials seem to have been wiped out as a result, so only those saved on other web sites still exist (like this one in Russia).

² Longman writes, “The modern parallels to Daniel 6 in Western democracies take place not in the arena of culture wars, but rather in more local situations. A librarian is fired because she refuses to work on a Sunday morning during worship services. A young teenager is told by his parents that he may not meet with the neighborhood church’s youth group for prayer because they do not want him involved in ‘all that superstition.’ A wife is told that she can be a Christian, but must not act like it around the house. Where we today most often encounter conflict analogous to Daniel 6 is the law of God versus the law of an employer, a parent, a spouse.” Tremper Longman III, *Daniel*. The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 171.

³ “Daniel 6 finds its closest parallel with Daniel 3. Notice, though, a subtle difference that makes Daniel 6 more than a mere repetition. While the story of the three friends of Daniel in the fiery furnace shows how the faithful refuse to participate in idolatrous religious practices, the present chapter shows how they refuse to refrain from proper worship of God. Daniel is told not to pray to Yahweh, but he does so nonetheless. Daniel obeys God’s law, not the immutable law of the Medes and Persians.” Longman, *Daniel*, 159. Sailhamer notes, “There is also a link between the events of ch. 6 and Daniel’s vision in ch. 7. Just as Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of the statue with a golden head (ch. 2) and then made a golden statue (ch. 3), so also in ch. 6 Daniel was thrown into a den of lions and then, in ch. 7, saw a vision of wild beasts, the first of which was a lion. Moreover, Daniel is rescued from the wild beasts, just as the saints of the Most High are to be rescued from the fourth beast (7:21–22).” John Sailhamer, *The NIV Compact Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 402.

⁴ Longman, *Daniel*, 158.

⁵ This is the use of the Aramaic word for “injury,” used metaphorically for political interest (cf. Ezra 4:22; Esther 7:4).

⁶ Paul Benware, *Daniel’s Prophecy of Things to Come* (Clifton, TX: Scofield Ministries, 2007), 115.

⁷ This parallels what Pharaoh did to Joseph in Gen 41:40.

⁸ Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*. The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 178.

⁹ Ernest C. Lucas, *Daniel*. Apollos Old Testament Commentary (Downers Grove: InterVarsity; Leicester: UK: Apollos, 2002), 148.

¹⁰ Miller, *Daniel*, 178.

¹¹ Charles R. Swindoll, *Daniel: God’s Pattern for the Future* (Fullerton, CA: Insight for Living, 1986), 51.

¹² William Carr Peel, *Living in the Lion’s Den without Being Eaten* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1994), 157.

¹³ The same motives that led the Chaldean officials to accuse the three Hebrew youths in Dan 3 are apparently the same motives that caused these officials to try and find accusations against Daniel (cf. 6:13).

¹⁴ Peel, *Living in the Lion’s Den without Being Eaten*, 149.

¹⁵ Most of these examples come from Ray Pritchard, “How to Tame Lions” (Daniel 6):

<http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/2000-01-23-How-to-Tame-Lions/>.

¹⁶ Benware, *Daniel’s Prophecy of Things to Come*, 116.

¹⁷ We do not have to kneel in prayer, but sometimes it helps to humble the position of the body in order to humble the heart. Utley notes, “The normal position of Jewish prayer is standing with the hands and head lifted to heaven with the eyes open (in dialog with God). Sometimes kneeling was done for urgency (1 Kgs 8:54; 2 Chron 6:13; Ezra 9:5; Ps 95:6; Isa 45:23).” Bob Utley, *Daniel and Zechariah*, www.freebiblecommentary.org/pdf/EN/VOL14OT.pdf, 87. We do not have to kneel in prayer, but sometimes it helps to humble the position of the body in order to humble the heart.

¹⁸ When Peter and the apostles were commanded to stop preaching they followed in Daniel’s sandals and said, “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

¹⁹ Lucas, *Daniel*, 150. Daniel does nothing to flaunt his defiance, but he does nothing to hide it either. The windows were permanently opened with no lattice to cover them.

²⁰ John Phillips and Jerry Vines, *Exploring the Book of Daniel: An Expository Commentary* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1990), 87.

²¹ It is also possible that “Daniel prayed according to the daily sacrificial schedule in the Temple. This would seem to be verified by Daniel 9:21 where, on that occasion, Daniel was praying about ‘the time of the evening offering.’ It seems quite possible then that Daniel’s pattern of prayer corresponded with the times of the offerings in the Jerusalem Temple which he would have been familiar with while growing up. These kinds of worship would have

been at sunrise, mid-morning and around 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The temple, of course, at this point in history was non-existent having been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. But years before God had promised King Solomon that he would put His name there forever."

²² David Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel* (Dallas: Word, 1992), 118.

²³ Rodney Stortz, *Daniel: The Triumph of God's Kingdom*. Preaching the Word Commentary Series (Wheaton: Crossway, 2004), 94.

²⁴ Longman, *Daniel*, 161.

²⁵ Pritchard, "How to Tame Lions."

²⁶ Stortz, *Daniel*, 93.

²⁷ Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall*, 120.

²⁸ Stortz, *Daniel*, 94.

²⁹ This gives new meaning to 1 Thess 5:18: "In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

³⁰ Peel, *Living in the Lion's Den without Being Eaten*, 159–60.

³¹ Swindoll, *Daniel*, 53.

³² Crowder, *Daniel*, 31.

³³ Leon J. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 166; Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come*, 122.

³⁴ Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall*, 117.

³⁵ Lucas, *Daniel*, 151.

³⁶ Peel, *Living in the Lion's Den without Being Eaten*, 150.

³⁷ Miller, *Daniel*, 186.

³⁸ We must be willing to accept the consequences for doing the right things. The apostle Peter said, "But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed" (1 Pet 3:14).

³⁹ This was not necessarily religious fasting, but simply the anxious worrying of a man who knew he had been tricked into doing evil to an innocent (cf. Dan 6:22) faithful (and a very effective) servant.

⁴⁰ This is one reason why the Bible uses this symbol to describe the Lord Jesus.

⁴¹ Spurgeon once said that it was a good thing the lions didn't try to eat Daniel. They never would have enjoyed him, because he was 50 percent grit and 50 percent backbone. Quoted in Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall*, 125.

⁴² This is reminiscent of Haman being hanged on his own gallows (Esther 9:25). This removes any doubt about the ferocity of those beasts. They attacked that crowd and devoured them before they hit the ground.

⁴³ In cases such as Korah's rebellion (Num 16:25–33) and Achan's sin (Josh 7), it is likely that the family members were also active, guilty participants with the head of the household.

⁴⁴ Renald E. Showers, *The Most High God: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Bellmawr, NJ: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 1982), 70.

⁴⁵ Peel, *Living in the Lion's Den without Being Eaten*, 155.

⁴⁶ This is very similar to Nebuchadnezzar's words in Dan 2:46–48; 3:28–29 and 4:3, 34–35.

⁴⁷ NET Study Notes: "Or perhaps 'in the reign of Darius, even in the reign of Cyrus.' The identity of this Darius is disputed. Some take the name to be referring to Cyrus, understanding the following *vav* (ו, 'and') in an epexegetical sense ('even'). Others identify Darius with a governor of Babylon known from extra-biblical records as Gubaru, or with Cambyses, son of Cyrus. Many scholars maintain that the reference is historically inaccurate."

⁴⁸ Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come*, 125.

⁴⁹ This is an anonymous quote from Peel, *Living in the Lion's Den without Being Eaten*, 35.

⁵⁰ Peel, *Living in the Lion's Den without Being Eaten*, 34.