

# LION'S DEN

## Daniel 6

**PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.**

It is a worthy goal for any believer to strive to be a great servant of God, but the dedication and work involved to attain such a position is more than most people realize. Daniel became a great servant of God by his dedication to Him and by diligent work. Several kings recognized his greatness and honored him with the highest offices in their kingdoms. What did Daniel do to attain his greatness? He had a great spirit before men, a great testimony for God, a great faith in God and a great prayer life for his people.

### Aim of this Lesson

**Challenge the students to live like Daniel, especially to pray like Daniel.**

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Eph 6:18)

**Outline of the Lesson** (Use the Study Notes to add to this lesson plan as the Spirit leads you.)

### I. Introduction to Daniel's Prayer Life (Daniel 2:17-23; 6:10; 9:3-19; 10:2, 3, 12, 13)

There are four times when Daniel was found praying. The first record of his prayer life takes place when he was a teenager and the last three when he was a man of seventy to eighty years old. Four lessons can be learned from these records of his prayer life: he prayed with others (2:17-23); he prayed by himself (6:10); he prayed for others (9:3-19); and he prayed without giving up (10:2, 3, 12, 13). Daniel's prayer life was disciplined, yet dynamic. It was regular, yet real. It was humble, yet highly esteemed. It was tried, yet triumphant. In Daniel 6 a law was presented to the king and signed by him, which forbid anyone from praying to anyone, but to the king, for thirty days. This law was contrived by wicked men who wanted to make Daniel break the law because they knew he would not cease from praying to God. The punishment for breaking this law was to be cast into the lions' den. Daniel was more than eighty years old, and he had spent more than sixty-five of those years in captivity; nevertheless, he had never before been ordered to stop praying. This was a test of Daniel's spiritual life at a time when many people think that the major tests of life are already past. However, there is no such time, and more so when one is actively serving God as Daniel was.

**We must be determined to keep our prayer life alive and well, even though we may be severely tested for doing so.**

### II. Daniel Prayed Seriously (6:10 - “he went into his house”).

Daniel took his prayer time seriously so he would always go into his house where he would not be disturbed. On this day he had a very important decision to make so he wanted to be alone with God to clear his mind of anything contrary to God's will. The decree had been signed by the king that no one could pray to anyone but to him for 30 days, Daniel had a serious decision to make. If he decided to pray to God, he would lose his life unless God intervened, and he could no longer be a witness for God in the king's court. If he decided not to pray, he would lose his testimony and would no longer be a good witness for God. Either way it seemed that Daniel's testimony would be removed. However, he decided he would leave that problem with God. His decision was to remain faithful to God and pray to Him.

**If we have met with God alone in serious prayer, we will be ready to disable the temptation to compromise. If we are tempted not give thanks to God for a meal eaten in public, we will be ready to pray and thank God for His gift of food. If we are tempted to watch a television program in place of our time to read the Bible, we will be ready to listen to God/s message first.**

### III. Daniel Prayed Scripturally (6:10 - “his windows being open in his ‘chamber toward Jerusalem”).

Praying toward Jerusalem was commanded by God (1 Kings 8:48). Old Testament saints did not have direct access to God as we do through Jesus Christ. They had to approach God through the Levitical priesthood which offered sacrifices in the temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:29, 30, 33, 35, 38 et. al.). Today, the scriptural prayer is directed toward heaven where Jesus Christ, the great high priest, is seated. He invited us to pray in His name (Jn

14:13, 14) and to come boldly to His throne of grace to “obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:14-16). But in Daniel’s day, all prayers were directed toward Jerusalem.

**We must pray to God on the authority of Jesus Christ. We must learn not to end our prayers “in Jesus’ name” as a mere form of habit. As we pray, we need to consciously remember that we are coming to God on the authority of His Son. He is the only way to the Father (Jn 14:6).**

#### **IV. Daniel Prayed Submissively (6:10 - “he kneeled upon his knees.”)**

Kneeling is an outward sign of submission. Prayer can be made in other positions but kneeling is the best way to approach God. It shows respect for His supreme authority. It is the position that best shows humility before Him.

**Whatever position we take in prayer, we must be humble and submit to His will in every matter.**

#### **V. Daniel Prayed Systematically (6:10 - “he kneeled upon his knees three times a day”).**

He probably prayed at the same times that David prayed: evening, morning and at noon (Ps 55:17). The evening and morning prayers were associated with the sacrifices that were offered at those times and also the burning of incense which was symbolic of prayer (Dan 9:21; Acts 3:1; Ex 30:7, 8; Lk 1:10). Noon prayers were added to complete the day. It required great discipline for Daniel to maintain this systematic schedule for prayer. He was a busy man as president in Darius’ government and he had to be prepared to handle his many duties responsibly. However, regular times of prayer were so ingrained as a godly habit in Daniel’s life that he would not miss one time, even when his life was threatened. This shows the value of strong habits which are built upon scriptural principles. They will help a believer redeem the time and give him strength in the time of testing.

**We need to have regular times of submissive prayer before God so we will be able to successfully carry out the daily assignments that He gives to us.**

#### **VI. Daniel Prayed Sincerely (6:10 - “he kneeled . . . and prayed, and gave thanks before His God”).**

The sincerity of Daniel’s prayers can be seen in the verbs used to describe his prayer life: he “kneeled,” “prayed” and “gave thanks.” Daniel’s sincerity in praying likewise is seen when he continued to pray aloud after he heard that praying to God carried the sentence of death. If his prayers had been a mere ritual, he would have stopped praying altogether, or he would have kept them silent, but he boldly prayed aloud as he always had done in the past. Another evidence of the sincerity of his prayers is his ability to thank God in the face of death. Daniel knew that God had control of everything. He learned that as a young man (2:21). Therefore, he could sincerely give God thanks even in the face of great danger to his life.

**We need to have pure motives when we pray so that we can pray sincerely. Giving thanks to God for all things, good or bad, is a good test that our prayers are sincere.**

#### **VII. Daniel Prayed Steadfastly (6:10 - “as he did aforetime”).**

Daniel did not give up his private prayer life because he was too old or too busy. He did not give up his prayer life because it was too dangerous to pray. Why did he keep on praying when it was against the law to pray? He desired fellowship with God. Some people pray only when they are in trouble or have a great need. They do not seek fellowship with God; they simply want things from God. Daniel kept on praying as he had done during his whole life so he could be close to God. He was steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in his prayers to the Lord; because he knew that his labor was not in vain when he prayed to the Lord.”(cf 1 Cor 15:58). Daniel achieved much for God by the revelations and guidance that he got from God through prayer.

**We must strive to be steadfast in our prayer life so we can have fellowship with God and have the mind of God.**

#### **VIII. Daniel was Victorious over His Enemies (6:11-24)**

Daniel was cast into the lion’s den, even though it was against the king’s wishes. The law of the Medes and Persians had to be obeyed, However, God sent an angel to shut the lion’s mouths so Daniel was not hurt. The next day Daniel was released and his enemies were cast into the lion’s den, where they were eaten by the hungry lions. Daniel’s fellowship with God was a powerful testimony to King Darius that may have led him to put his trust in God.

**Whether we live or die, we will be victorious when we remain faithful to God.**

**“PRAY WITHOUT CEASING” (1 Thessalonians 5:17)**