## DANIEL 6

## REVIEW...

- King Belshazzar was the son of Evil-Merodach the grandson of King Nebuchadnezzar...
  - o He made a great feast in the city of Babylon WHILE the Medo-Persians were at the gates...
  - o After Belshazzar got drunk he commanded to bring the gold from the Temple in Jerusalem...
  - o That very hour a hand appeared and a finger wrote on the plaster wall by the King...
  - o When the King saw it his knees knocked and be broke down and began to cry...
  - o He called for all the wise men to come but they could not interpret the writing!
- The Queen came and told Belshazzar not to be troubled or afraid...
  - o She knew of a man in whom dwelt the spirit of the holy god his name was Daniel...
  - o Since Daniel had shown ability to interpret dreams / solve riddles give him a call!
  - o The king offered Daniel riches  $3^{rd}$  ruler in the Kingdom of Babylon to interpret the writing...
  - o Daniel told the king to keep the money and the position because it would not last!
- Belshazzar had seen his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar humbled by the Most High...
  - o Yet rather than humbling himself he instead exalting himself above the Lord of Heaven...
  - o Giving praise to the gods of gold / silver rather than glorifying the God who gave him breath!
  - o Mene God had numbered his kingdom / Tekel weighed him in the balance wanting...
  - o Upharsin divided the kingdom and given over to the Medes and the Persians!
  - o King Cyrus of Medo-Persia entered Babylon that night and he killed Belshazzar!

## Shutting the Lions mouth... (3 things)

- $1^{ST}$  The plot against Daniel... vs. 1-9
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> Dividing the Empire... vs. 1-3
    - Cyrus was the first King of the Medo-Persia Empire he conquered Babylon...
      - King Darius the name means Lord was a ruler in the Medo-Persian Empire...
      - But 'Darius the Mede' was not Darius I who would later be the 4<sup>th</sup> King...
      - He is thought to be the ruler Cyrus set up over the Babylonian empire **Daniel 9:1**
    - Darius made the decision to divide the responsibilities of governing Babylon...
      - He set 120 satraps / or governors over the kingdom to help with the responsibility...
      - Because there are only so many hours in a day so much he could do on his own!
      - I knew a girl who know matter what you asked her to do she would say yes...
      - She meant well but the reality was there was no way she could do it all!
      - Maybe it is because of pride we think we are the only ones who can do the work...
      - Maybe it is trying to please men thinking if we say no they will be upset...
      - Either way when we try to do too much we end up getting into a lot of trouble...
      - We end up burned out tired frustrated likely unable accomplish anything!
      - We end up upsetting others we are spread so thin we end up not getting anything done!
      - We keep others from being able to help out because we do not give them the opportunity!
    - Over those 120 men he set 3 men and Daniel was one of them...
      - And the King thought to put Daniel over them all because he distinguished himself!
      - This was a new Kingdom so his previous accomplishments likely counted for little...
      - The suggestion is that the same 'excellent spirit' Daniel had shown to Nebuchadnezzar...
      - He still had some 50 years later under the reign of a new King / empire!
      - Daniel did not just start well he was a man who was consistent to the end!

- The Christian life is like a race with a beginning and end...
- We began the race the day we believed in Jesus it ends the day we die...
- So often as believers we start off well in our race but we do not finish well...
- We treat it like a sprint but after a while we get tired distracted and give up...
- The Christian life is a not a sprint it is a marathon...
- **Hebrews 12:1** "[So] let us strip off every... sin that so easily hinders our progress. Let us run with endurance the race God has set before us."
- o 2<sup>nd</sup> Looking for accusations... vs. 4-5
  - The other governors looked for something to accuse Daniel of...
    - Likely as not these leaders were jealous of the success / prosperity of Daniel...
    - But there was nothing they could accuse Daniel of because he was faithful (he had faith)!
    - The only thing they could resort to was to accuse him concerning his faith in God!
  - We need to know when we stand up for Jesus we are a target...
    - Luke 22:31 "Simon, Satan has asked to have all of you, to sift you like wheat."
    - I imagine those were VERY unsettling words to hear 'satan knows my name'...
    - But make no mistake if we stand up for Jesus satan knows who we are...
    - And he will come test us try us to see what we are made of...
    - Get people will make false accusation against us try and discourage us!
  - All the more reason to be sure we are faithful in our walk with God...
    - I had a guy once accuse me of being unworthy to be a pastor because of past mistakes...
    - But that gave me the opportunity to share about what Jesus had done in my life!
    - Faithful does not mean we are perfect no one is we will make mistakes...
    - It means we have faith in God trusting in Him / and the hope we have because of Him...
    - Then if anyone wants to make an accusation against us we point them back to Jesus!
    - I Peter 2:12 "Careful to live properly among our unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse us of doing wrong, they will see our honorable behavior, and will give honor to God..."
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> Appealing to pride... vs. 6-9
  - The governors thronged into see the King and began to butter him up 'Live forever'...
    - They suggested the King pass a law signed in writing so it could not be changed...
    - No one could petition either man or god except the King for 30 days...
    - If they did they would immediately be thrown into the Lions den...
    - I am sure this also made a lot of sense to the King he was a new ruler over a foreign land...
    - This was a way of 'encouraging' the conquered Babylonians to fall into line!
    - But King Darius like the idea it suggested he was an equal to god so he signed into Law!
  - These governors did not think much of Darius they were just playing him...
    - They were using flattering words and playing to his pride to get what they wanted!
    - Be careful to place confidence in the flattery of those who want something from you!
    - **Proverbs 27:6** "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."
  - And giving into pride would almost cost Darius a close friend!
    - **Proverbs 16:18** "Pride goes before destruction, an arrogant spirit before a fall."
    - Pride can be tricky it is not always easy to see but it always sets us up for a fall...
    - Pride can be I think I know it all / I am never wrong / I do not need correction...
    - Pride can also be thinking I am nothing / being shy / pride means its all about me...
    - Whether it is arrogance / or 'false' humility if I am the focus it is pride...
    - If I am the focus then I am not looking to Jesus and I am destruction is sure to follow!
- $2^{ND}$  Into the Lions den... vs. 10-17

- o 1st Daniel knowing the law had been signed went home and prayed... vs. 10
  - Because Daniel was going to be obedient to law of God before the laws of men...
    - While are called to be obedient to the government Romans 13:1
    - Some Christians take that to mean we just to accept whatever a government does...
    - But we are not to idly stand by and do nothing when faced with evil leaders...
    - When a government stops listening to and following the Word of God...
    - It is our responsibility as Christians to peacefully stand up to the government!
  - Daniel went to the upper room to seek the Lord his prayer closet Matthew 6:5
    - There is nothing wrong with a public prayer to God...
    - But we need to watch the motive of the heart do not pray to impress others...
    - Prayer should be natural simple conversation with God no matter who is there!
  - Daniel opened up his window he was not afraid to stand up for the Lord…
    - There is always a temptation to want to blend into the crowd to be accepted...
    - But if we are not willing to take a stand for Jesus today Luke 12:8
    - Then He will not stand for us before the 'Judgment seat of God'!
  - Daniel knelt and prayed towards Jerusalem I Kings 8:48...
    - When Solomon dedicated the Temple in his prayer to God he added...
    - When your people an in the land of their enemies who led them away captive...
    - And they pray to You toward Jerusalem and the temple then hear in heaven!
    - Not that there is a special or required position when it comes to pray...
    - God does not listen to a prayer made on your knees any more than praying standing...
    - Or a special place where God listens better than others Jerusalem is a local call...
    - It is all about our heart when we pray we cannot have a bad prayer with the right heart...
    - If you wonder if you are praying the 'right way' you are asking the wrong question...
    - Ask yourself why you are praying if your motive is right your prayer is right on!
  - Daniel prayed 3 times a day as was his custom for his early days Psalm 55:17
    - People often times talk about having quite time with the Lord in the morning...
    - You might ask what is the best time when we should seek the Lord…
    - It is not about when we seek that Lord the key is THAT we consistently seek the Lord!

2<sup>nd</sup> – Be careful what you say... vs. 11-17

- The Governors thronged (same word vs. 6) in to 'find' Daniel praying...
  - They could not wait to make the accusation against him dragging him before the King...
  - They reminded the king of the law he had just signed that could not be altered...
  - Then accused Daniel of not 'honoring' the King because he prayed to God 3 times a day!
  - When the King heard this he was displeased literally his words had a bad odor...
  - And he worked all that day until sunset to try and undo his actions!
- The Governors thronged Darius (same as vs. 11) to make sure Daniel was thrown to the Lions...
  - So the King brought Daniel to the den but before he was tossed in...
  - He told him the God whom you serve continually WILL deliver you!
  - Then the stone was rolled over and the King and Governors put their seal on it...
  - This was to assure the governors the King would not come and rescue Daniel from his fate!
- Too often in life we say something without thinking it through...
  - Then after the fact when things have gone terribly wrong we regret what we said...
  - So since it is easy to say something but almost impossible to take our words back…
  - Better to think first before we speak then face the consequence of our words!
  - **Proverbs 29:20** "Do you see a man hasty in his words? More hope for a fool than for him."
- $3^{RD}$  The living God... vs. 18-28
  - o 1st The Repentance of the King... vs. 18

- Darius knew that Daniel was likely dead because of his mistake...
  - And he regretted having giving into his pride / and hastily signing the law...
  - It caused him to loose his appetite he spent the whole night fasting...
  - He refused to be entertained music (concubines) and did not sleep the whole night...
  - Yet there was nothing he could do but wait to see if God would spare Daniel!
- When we sin it does not just affect our lives it also damages others...
  - When we tell a lie and destroy the trust of those we care the most for...
  - When we lash out in angry words when we are frustrated and bring our love into doubt...
  - The hardest part of dealing with the damage we cause is often there nothing we can do...
  - We are left with guilt that robs us of the joy of life no desire to eat / be entertained...
  - It causes us to have countless sleepless nights all because of foolish choices!
  - The best solution is not to give into pride make hasty foolish choices / words...
  - But if / when we do run quickly to Jesus because He can heal and restore!
- o  $2^{nd}$  Shutting the mouth of the lion... vs. 19-23
  - Darius rose early in the morning and ran to the den...
    - He cried out asking doubtfully (*grieved*) if had God been able to save Daniel...
    - The lions were hungry he knew they wanted nothing more than to devour Daniel!
    - But Daniel answered God had sent an angel to shut their mouths **Hebrews 11:33**
    - So Darius had him lifted out of the pit and there was not a scratch found on him!
    - God had saved Daniel from the Lions because he had faith in God!
  - When we have faith in Jesus the roaring lion cannot touch us I Peter 5:8
    - When the disciples returned to Jesus from being sent out they were amazed...
    - They said even the demons are subject to us through your name Luke 10:17
    - But Jesus did them one better not only were demons subject to Him...
    - He had seen the fall of satan from glory kicked out of heaven Revelation 12:9
    - He fell like a flash of lightning so quick if you had blinked you would have missed it!
    - Satan seeks to devour us Revelation 12:10 wants to see us condemned to hell...
    - He has all the 'evidence' he needs all our sins / our immoral thoughts...
    - But Jesus destroyed the power of satan so that he has nothing to accuse us of...
    - All our sins were paid for in full on the cross we are untouchable in Jesus!
    - With God on our side we have nothing to fear from satan our enemy...
    - **Isaiah 54:17** "No weapon formed against you shall prosper..."
    - I John 4:4 "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> The destruction of the wicked... vs. 24
  - Darius commanded the men who had accused 'sought to devour' Daniel with their words...
    - Be brought with their wives and children and thrown into the lions den...
    - Before they even hit the floor the lions broke every bone and devoured them...
    - Proving the miracle of Daniel surviving it was not because the Lions were not hungry...
  - Also showing when we try to devour others we ourselves are devoured!
    - James 3:3 "The tongue is a small thing, but what enormous damage it can do."
    - When we choose to pass on the latest juicy stories gossip...
    - When we use sarcasm trying to be funny but instead cutting those we love...
    - Time will heal many kinds of wounds but words leave marks that last a lifetime...
    - We need to be careful of our words careful who is listening to what we say...
    - Galatians 5:15 "If you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed..."
- o 4th The God of Daniel... vs. 25-28
  - Then Darius wrote a new decree to all people / nations / and languages on earth...
    - Everyone must tremble and fear the God of Daniel because He is:

- The living God who never changes / His Kingdom will never be destroyed last forever...
- He delivers and rescues with signs and wonders Daniel and the lions being an example!
- I am sure Daniel would rather NOT have been the example...
  - It would have been nice NOT to have to be thrown into a Den of lions for a night...
  - But it was BECAUSE of the lions the whole world got to hear about the Living God!
  - This is a theme we have seen often repeated in the Book of Daniel...
  - **Daniel 3:29** "Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against God..."
  - **Daniel 4:1** "Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth... I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders!"
  - But note that in every instance it was through TRIALS that God was MAGNIFIED!
  - The fiery furnace / the madness of a king / the lions den...
  - God is rarely magnified through our lives when we are blessed...
  - Instead it is in the hardships of live / the trials that people get to see Jesus in us...
  - If we praise God when we are being blessed that is nothing unusual...
  - But if we praise God when life is falling apart then the world takes note!
  - So WHEN we find ourselves in a trial we GET TO rejoice...
  - Because it means God is using us to MAGNIFY Himself to a world that needs to HOPE!
  - **James 1:2** "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations..."