



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## THE GREATEST STATESMAN – DANIEL 6

WYOMING

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2014

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*I would like to briefly examine the life of a man who was quite possibly the greatest statesman that has ever lived. His life is a witness and testimony of a faith which resulted in obedience in spite of hardship, heartache and testing of every kind. His life provides us with an example of one whose faith was characterized by constant faithfulness and obedience from start to finish as James calls us to. We are given the privilege of walking in his footsteps, for his narrative is written on the pages of Scripture.*

### I. DANIELō THE GREATEST STATESMAN! . DANIEL 6

*“And Daniel continued until the first year of Cyrus the king.” Daniel 1:21*

The book of Daniel opens with God judging His people for their continual sin of idolatry and disobedience. Because they would not repent, they are taken captive by the empire of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came down to Jerusalem and took a handful of royal youth back to Babylon with him as captives where he would “Babylonianize” them for three years after which they would serve in his kingdom. These Hebrew boys were mere teenagers as they were removed from their families, exiled in a foreign land. Only a handful made a choice not to compromise their faith in God. Daniel was one who stood head and shoulders above the rest. And by the end of Daniel 1, we are given an overview of his life with these words, *“And Daniel continued until the first year of Cyrus the king.” (Daniel 1:21)* Daniel continued throughout his entire life, faithfully following and obeying God through the hardest of times.

- ❖ In Daniel 1, we find Daniel as a youth, ten times better in wisdom and understanding than all the wise men in the entire kingdom of Babylon, thus entering the king’s personal service!
- ❖ In Daniel 2, with his life on the line, Daniel responds with wisdom and discretion and God uses him to interpret the well known dream of King Nebuchadnezzar which revealed the future of the world, including our future. Daniel was therefore placed in charge over the whole province of Babylon and ruler over all wise men.
- ❖ In Daniel 3, Daniel’s friends remain faithful to God, refusing to worship a golden statue, being willing to go into a blazing furnace of fire instead. And because they stood among their peers without bowing, they could stand before their God without shame. God delivered them revealing to King Nebuchadnezzar and all his rulers who witnessed this event, *“What God is there?”*
- ❖ In Daniel 4, God used Daniel still faithfully ruling in Babylon at 40 or 50 years old, to interpret Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the tree, witness the humbling of this king and the transformation of the king’s life as he came to recognize, *“that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind...” (Daniel 4:17)*
- ❖ In Daniel 5 we find Daniel still in leadership and pushing 85 years old. Here we see the judgment of the Babylonian empire when

Daniel interprets God’s handwriting on the wall for King Belteshazzar whose days are numbered and that night is marked in history for all to see as the Medes and Persian army conquers Babylon by storm, rerouting the Euphrates River and coming under the great walls of Babylon with a surprise attack.

- ❖ Now, in Daniel 6, Babylon has fallen, Daniel has been in captivity for 70 years, most of his life and he is now pushing 90 years old. He has remained a faithful follower of God through the hardest of trials from start to finish. His times of testing are not over, even at 90 and this chapter retraces our last recorded story of Daniel as he is literally tested with being devoured by lions. Let’s view Daniel’s life through the lenses of a statesmen, serving in the leading world empire and remaining faithful in his allegiance to God.

### A. “SERVING WITH EXCELLENCE”. DANIEL 6:1-3

*“Then Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit...” Daniel 6:3*

Here we find there were 120 satraps, rulers, over the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. Daniel was one of the top three commissioners or presidents over the entire kingdom. As a 90 year old, Daniel is preferred above others by the king. Daniel *“distinguishes himself”* so much that the king was going to appoint him over the entire kingdom! Daniel was the finest statesman in the entire Babylonian Empire, and now is distinguishing himself as the finest ruler in the Mede/Persian Empire and possibly that has ever lived. Daniel was constantly distinguishing himself over the others! The question must be asked, what made Daniel stand head and shoulders above the rest?

Daniel 6:3 says, *“he possessed an extraordinary spirit”*. Simply put, Daniel’s excellent spirit set him apart from all the rest. Everything Daniel did was with excellence. From his attitude to his actions, Daniel’s life was characterized with excellence! Think about it, Daniel at 90 had a wealth of experience in ruling, wisdom like no one else, extensive management responsibility and the list goes on. Immediately, Daniel’s abilities were clearly evident and he was a man set apart. Once again, God placed Daniel in a very strategic place of influence. *As a statesman, serving in our country, is your service of leadership continually marked and distinguished by excellence in everything you say and do? Remember, it matters how we live!*

### B. “FAITHFULNESS”. DANIEL 6:4

*“...but they could find no ground of accusation no evidence of corruption inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him.” Daniel 6:4*

So while the king is promoting Daniel, the plot thickens. The leaders were jealous of this old man Daniel and so they vent their feelings by trying to

## BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR, STAFF & SPOUSES: WEDNESDAY, 6:30AM, BREAKFAST SERVED

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find any ground of accusation against Daniel. They were digging for dirt. They wanted to get rid of him and this game is as old as it gets. They tried to dig for dirt in Daniel's life, but what did they find instead? They found "no corruption" which means they couldn't find anything that Daniel did that he shouldn't have done! And "no negligence" which means they couldn't find anything that he didn't do that he should have done. When a man is almost 90 years old and you have all the experts in politics digging around for dirt but they can't come up with anything, that's an honorable man! And believe me, their enraged jealousy motivated them to look under every rock. Actually, they did find something. It stood out unmistakably clear...*Daniel was faithful.* Daniel was a faithful man. He was a faithful, virtuous man. He was trustworthy and could be relied on. They could find no faults after over 70 years of service! *As a statesman, serving in our country, if someone looked for dirt in your life to accuse you of, what would they find? It is never too late to start living a faithful life. Remember, it matters how we live!*

### C. "COMMITMENT". DANIEL 6:5

*"...we shall not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find it against him with regard to the law of his God." Daniel 6:5*

What was the only accusation they could find in regards to Daniel? What was the only thing these men realized they would ever get Daniel on? It is clear they knew about Daniel's commitment to God. It was also evident they believed his commitment was such that he would not compromise, for their devious plan depend on that fact. They realized after digging, that the only thing they could ever get Daniel on was that he was totally committed to his God. What a tribute to Daniel's faith. What a commendation to Daniel's lifelong commitment to God. Daniel was faithful from start to finish, totally committed to God. *As a statesman, serving in our country, what would it take for that to be said of you? Remember, it matters how we live!*

### D. "DEVOTED CONVICTIONS". DANIEL 6:6-11

*"...and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously. Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God." Daniel 6:10-11*

All these rulers in the kingdom, "the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors"(Daniel 6:7) came to the king with flattery requesting that he establish a statue and enforce an injunction (this repetition emphasizes the strong and binding decree they wanted written), that anyone who makes a petition (or prayer) of any god or man besides the king, for 30 days, would be cast into the lion's den. Think about it, all your

governing officials, hundreds of them, come and want this decree made on your behalf. Wow that would have been difficult to refuse! And they urge this king to sign the petition which for the Medes and Persian law, once signed, it could never be revoked or changed, and he does.

Of course, word gets back to Daniel and he knows what is going on. Daniel goes back to his house and what does he do? Daniel does what he did every day. He didn't stop for 30 days until this law was over. He remained committed to his God and did what he had always done, "he continued kneeling as he had been doing previously." (Daniel 6:10) He continued even with certainty of being thrown into the lion's den. Daniel would not compromise what he had faithfully done before and these jealous rulers were counting on that. He did not worry about the consequences but chose "to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29) Trials, testing and temptations will put integrity on display before a watching world who are eager for you to fall and compromise. And what did these enraged leaders do immediately after the decree became law? They came, a large group of them, came to Daniel's house. To their delight, they found Daniel praying to his God. These guys knew they would catch Daniel in their trap, and they did. Daniel was a loyal, faithful public servant as long as it never caused him to violate his convictions. They found Daniel continuing in his commitment to God, in faithfulness, without compromise, serving God and not himself. *As a statesman, serving in our country, will you, in spite of the deepest trials, overwhelming temptations, unfair circumstances, heartache and struggle, will you remain devoted in your commitment faithfully continuing as Daniel throughout your life? Remember, it matters how we live!*

### E. "UNCOMPROMISING TESTIMONY". DANIEL 6:12-18

*"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." Daniel 6:16*

These jealous leaders find Daniel praying and immediately go back to the king reminding him of the law he signed that can't be revoked or changed. And the king was angry. He was angry at himself. It was his own ego, his own pride that trapped him. The attractions of this world will always be there. The king was, "deeply distressed" (Daniel 6:14). After all, he deeply respected Daniel and planned to promote him over his entire kingdom. So the king set out to find some way to deliver Daniel "until sunset". (Daniel 6:14) Judgment would be carried out before sunset according to their custom. But there was no way out. And Daniel never takes up his cause, never goes to the king to plead his case. He was totally dependent, totally confident in his God even though at 90 years old he may be facing the greatest trial of his life. Well, the king has no choice but to give orders to have Daniel cast into

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the lion's den. And this was a common practice in those days. Lions were kept and purposefully starved in order to be used as executioners. This becomes very clear at the end of Daniel 6 when all these leaders who accused Daniel are thrown into the lion's den along with their wives and children and they were overpowered by the lions before they reached the bottom of the den. There were more than a few lions in that den in order for that to happen.

So Daniel, at 90, was thrown into the den of lions and a stone was put over the entrance. And the king parts Daniel by saying, *"Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you."* (Daniel 6:16) And we must stop and ask, where did the king get that? How did this king know to say that? He had only been around Daniel for maybe a year. And yet, clearly, Daniel lived what he believed before the eyes of this king. And that message about Daniel's God was clear as well, that Daniel served Him constantly and He could deliver His servant. *As a statesman, serving in our country, is your life one of uncompromising testimony to God? Would your testimony make unmistakably clear Who God is before a watching world? Remember, it matters how we live!*

### F. "CONSTANTLY TRUSTING". DANIEL 6:19-24

*"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."* Daniel 6:23

Of course, all these men who brought accusation against Daniel, thought they were finally done with him. But God had another plan. The king did not rest that night and at the crack of dawn, he *"went in haste."* (Daniel 6:19) Now this king was 62 years old (Daniel 5:31), and he runs to the den of lions and cries out this question, *"Is your God whom you constantly serve been able to deliver you?"* (Daniel 6:20) And while that question might be a little late to ask, it is the question down through all the ages. *"Is God able?"* And Daniel 6 gives a resounding answer to that question, *"Yes, He is able!"* He is completely trustworthy and able to accomplish His will. And Daniel gives testimony to God's deliverance with a reply that affirms God's character, *"My God sent His angel and shut the lions mouths, and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime."* (Daniel 6:22) God sent one angel to deal with the lions. Daniel defended himself only after God put him through the test, revealing that Daniel was blameless before God and before man. Daniel put his life in God's hands, trusting as he always had. He didn't expect God to deliver him, he knew God would deliver him, one way or another. If Daniel had been torn to shreds by the lions, that angel would have carried Daniel right into the arms of Jesus. Daniel trusted God completely and accepted God's

will for his life in every situation. This was no exception. Daniel believed God and his life continues to give testimony even 2600 years later. *As a statesman like Daniel, serving in America, is your life one of total trust and dependence on God? That means you submit to His will and work in your life without reservation? Can you, will you trust God completely and accept God's will for your life in every situation? Remember, it matters how we live!*

### G. "GOD PROCLAIMED". DANIEL 6:25-28

*"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."* Daniel 6:26-27

The king immediately gives orders for Daniel to be pulled from the lion's den and all who accused Daniel to be cast into it, along with their wives and children and they were crushed before they hit the ground. And then this king wrote a decree, a law that would impact his entire empire forever. All people were to tremble and fear the God of Daniel. The words of Darius in the closing verses stand for all times as a testimony and tribute not just to this nation, but to ours as well. That God lives and endures forever, His kingdom will not be destroyed. His sovereignty and right to rule is forever and His power was visibly demonstrated by the deliverance of Daniel. It was God Who received the glory by Daniel's life being put on display! From start to finish, Daniel was a servant of the Most High God and God was proclaimed and exalted through the life of Daniel. *As a statesman serving in public office, does your life proclaim the hope and glory of God? Do people see you, or do they see Jesus Christ? Is God glorified by your life? Remember, it matters how we live!*

### H. CONCLUSION- DANIEL 6

Ask yourself, what is it that makes a man or woman have an impact on a nation, a state, a community? Daniel, possibly the greatest statesman that ever lived, gives us insight. Daniel was consumed by the kingdom of God. He lived a consistent, uncompromising life from start to finish. His desires were God's desires. If he were condemned, it would be with regards to his God and righteousness. He served faithfully no matter the cost to him personally. He was constantly trusting and believing in the One he had committed his life to, even if that meant a den of lion's as his fate. He was known for integrity, faithfulness and commitment to His God even by his enemies. He lived to bring glory and honor only to God. Daniel was God's man, God's statesman. Will you be as well? May God give us leaders in our country like Daniel!

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