

119

GROUP STUDY GUIDE

The Exiled Prophet, Part 7: The Mouths of Lions (Daniel 6)

TEACHING SUMMARY

After Babylon's fall, Darius organizes the kingdom and recognizes Daniel's excellent spirit. He plans to give Daniel greater authority. Other officials become determined to remove him, but they cannot find misconduct in his faithful public service.

The officials therefore attack Daniel's devotion to God. They persuade the king to prohibit petitions to anyone except himself for thirty days. The teaching explains how an apparently protective measure becomes a tool for punishing an innocent man.

Daniel continues his established practice of praying toward Jerusalem three times daily. His opponents report him, and Darius realizes the harm caused by his decree. Because the law cannot be revoked, the king's efforts to rescue Daniel fail.

Daniel is placed in the lions' den, which is sealed with a stone and royal signets. The king spends a troubled night without food or sleep. At dawn he learns that God sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths, preserving Daniel unharmed.

The accusers receive the punishment they sought for Daniel. The teaching relates this reversal to a Babylonian legal precedent that treated survival of an ordeal as evidence of innocence. Darius then honors Daniel's God as the living God whose kingdom endures forever.

The account parallels the deliverance in Daniel 3. Both teach obedience to God when human commands conflict with faithfulness. The application includes refusing evil and continuing to do good, while trusting that God does not abandon his people in persecution.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Darius values Daniel's excellent spirit and faithful service.
- Envious officials cannot find wrongdoing in Daniel's administration.
- They exploit his loyalty to God to construct an accusation.
- The decree restricts petitions for thirty days.
- Daniel continues praying toward Jerusalem three times daily.
- The king cannot revoke the decree to save Daniel.
- God sends an angel and Daniel remains unharmed among the lions.
- The accusers experience the punishment they intended for Daniel.
- Darius proclaims the enduring rule of Daniel's God.
- Faithfulness includes refusing evil and insisting on doing good.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Basic

1. The ruler who plans to promote Daniel is _____.
2. The officials recognize that Daniel is faithful to the law of his _____.
3. The decree restricts petitions for thirty _____.
4. Daniel prays toward _____.
5. Daniel continues praying _____ times each day.
6. God sends an _____ to shut the lions' mouths.

Challenging

1. Darius sets _____ satraps over the kingdom.
2. Daniel distinguishes himself because he has an excellent _____.
3. The law of the Medes and Persians cannot be _____.
4. The king seals the den with his own _____.
5. The teaching cites a legal precedent from the code of _____.
6. The teaching compares the lions' den with the fiery _____ in Daniel 3.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does the officials' inability to find wrongdoing reveal about Daniel's public service?
2. How do the officials use the king's interests to promote their own corrupt plan?
3. What does Daniel's continued prayer reveal about his response to pressure?
4. How does the teaching explain the reversal of punishment onto Daniel's accusers?
5. How does Daniel 6 complement the lesson about obedience in Daniel 3?
6. What is the difference between refusing to do wrong and continuing to do right under pressure?

ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. Darius
2. God
3. days
4. Jerusalem
5. three
6. angel

Challenging

1. 120
2. spirit
3. revoked
4. signet
5. Hammurabi
6. furnace