



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

Special Study:
THE PERSEVERANCE OF A BELIEVER DURING PERSECUTION
Daniel 6:1-10

Crowns and thrones perish, kingdoms rise and wane, nations rise and fall but God's Kingdom is from generation to generation, His dominion is an everlasting dominion. He reigns on high and He rules uninterrupted in the affairs of men. Change in human government is inevitable but believers continue to trust in God and live for His glory whatever the circumstances around them may be. Change of government and administration, alteration in the economic conditions of nations and of the world will not affect the faith of God's children in His promises. The church of Jesus constant will remain, in conviction and commitment to God's Word.

The Babylonian empire had fallen and the Medo-Persian empire rose in its stead. Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans was slain and Darius the Median took the kingdom. **"And Daniel continued."** Darius appointed an entirely new administration but he still retained Daniel because of his excellent character, integrity, wisdom, self-renouncing devotion and experience. Daniel was now advanced in age - an old man approaching 90 years of age - but he was still active in service. As his days so was his strength. As he grew older so he grew in faith, grew in knowledge, grew in wisdom, grew in leadership skill and ability, grew in courage and steadfastness, grew in spiritual insight and revelation, grew in usefulness to the Kingdom of God. The thought of retiring to a life of ease and idleness was not given any consideration. Faithful and devoted to God, righteous and trustworthy before men, he was being considered for greater responsibility by the new king. Envy led others to plot against his life but he continued quietly in prayerful devotion to God. Neither the favour of the king nor the frown of the presidents and the princes could change his conviction, consecration and commitment to his God.

THE COMMENDATION AND PROMOTION OF A FAITHFUL AND TRUTHFUL BELIEVER

Daniel 6:1-3; Exodus 18:19-23; Daniel 5:12-14; Psalm 101:2-7; Acts 6:3-8; 1 Corinthians 4:1,2; 2 Timothy 2:19-22; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Daniel 2:48; Psalm 75:4-7.

Men who aspire to ascend to positions of greater responsibility and usefulness must be willing to pay the price of purity, integrity, accountability and dependability in times of difficulty. It is always the highway of self-denial, the way of self-forgetfulness in service that leads to success and promotion. Those who intend to wear the crown must be willing to bear the cross. Daniel did not seek recognition or greatness. His only desire was to serve God and man and he saw promotion as another opportunity for doing good and a larger opening for greater usefulness. If we have such attitude as Daniel had, God will put us where we ought to be.

Daniel did not reach this high position by any sudden spring. He moved up gradually through various levels of service and usefulness. His **"excellent spirit"** won for him extraordinary success, his truthfulness won trust, his faithfulness won favour, his integrity won the interest of kings. **"This Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes BECAUSE AN EXCELLENT SPIRIT WAS IN HIM; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm."** Scripturally sound convictions, high and holy principles of living, integrity and transparent righteousness will not go unnoticed. The eyes of the King of heaven are on such people as Daniel to set them over soul-saving ministries so that the Kingdom of God will **"have no damage."** Even earthly leaders seek such Daniels to occupy strategic positions so that **"the king should have no damage."** An excellent spirit of genuine piety, a clear conscience in all actions relating to God and man, made Daniel a man of uncompromising integrity that he was. The spirit, not the flesh; godly behaviour, not goodly beauty, is the principal thing. Daniel's clarity of purpose, commitment to purity, constancy in prayer, courage during persecution, contentment without pretence set him apart as a unique man whose only reason for living is seeking God's glory.

THE CONSPIRACY OF THE PERSECUTORS OF A FAULTLESS, TRANSPARENT BELIEVER

Daniel 6:4-9; Psalm 37:12,13, 32-37; Jeremiah 18:18; 20:10,11; Proverbs 27:4; Isaiah 10:1; 26:11; Titus 2:7,8; 1 Peter 2:9-12; 3:15,16.

The power of God's transforming grace revealed itself in the virtuous character of Daniel. "**He was faithful.**" His faithfulness attracted the favour of God and the commendation of the king. But this same faithfulness was construed as a crime by his envious colleagues. Envy will paint a saint as a sinner or regard the righteous as a rebel. Daniel was faithful to his God and faithful to the king. "**Neither was there any error or fault found in him.**" That was a great testimony to the uprightness of his character. "**Concerning the kingdom**" or "**Concerning the law of his God**" his life and actions were above reproach.

Yet they "**sought to find occasion against Daniel.**" Why? The king was planning to promote him above the presidents. They sought to discredit him and destroy his character so that they would bring him to a state of disgrace and degradation. He who God favours the world frowns at. The promotion of the righteous excites the envy of unrighteous men. Base and envious men always seek the ruin of good and righteous men. The observation of these most determined enemies of Daniel is the highest testimony to his godly character. "**We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.**"

They conceived a plot through which they intended to destroy Daniel. They flattered the king and exalted him to the position of a god for thirty days. For a period of thirty days all requests would be directed to the king. Daniel was not consulted about this decree yet they said, "**all the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes... have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree.**" Flattery blinded the king's eyes. Daniel was not there but the king could not think clearly after hearing that he would be treated like a god for one month.

There is a great deal of evil in the decree. If a child wanted bread he could not ask the parents or he would be cast into the lions' den! "**Whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.**" If anyone needed divine help which could not be rendered by the king, he must not pray to God, otherwise he would be cast into the den of lions. It was an unrighteous law, a satanic statute, a wicked ordinance, a despotic decree. Men in responsible positions should well consider the consequences of a proposed law or edict before they give their consent or assent to it.

COMMITMENT IN PRAYER BY A FEARLESS, TRUSTING BELIEVER

Daniel 6:10; Psalm 55:17; Colossians 4:2-6; 1 Thessalonians 5:17,18; Psalms 112:7,8; 119:51,69,83-87,109,110,112,141,143,157,161; Matthew 10:22; 24:12,13; Acts 20:24; Revelation 2:25,26.

Daniel's life of devotion was marked with conviction, consecration, communion, courage and consistency. Kings rise and fall, persecution arises or peace returns, danger is imminent or deliverance is ascertained, the king thinks favourably toward him or the presidents are furious with him, promotion in the king's palace is awaiting him or violent death in the lions' den is to be his portion, only one thing his choice will be – devotion to God, "**as he did aforesaid.**" "**When Daniel knew that the writing was signed**", he made no change in his habits of communion or worship on account of the decree.

Daniel had a holy contempt for the unrighteous, God-dishonouring decree and he maintained his holy concern for God's glory. He knew his God and his first and constant commitment was to honour and glorify Him, whatever the reaction of the world would be. Daniel's action showed that he would not consent to the wicked decree. Neither because of fear nor desire to please man would he consent to anything contrary to God's glory. When the honour of God is concerned, we ought not to conceal our christian conviction but boldly and faithfully act and live to please God even at the hazard of our lives.

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