

1. Last week I taught Dan 6:13-17 and when time ran out I was about to exegete verses 18 and 19.
2. Before continuing that study I want to give you an expanded translation of Dan 6:1-17.

Dan 6:1 Darius, at the urging of Cyrus, decided to divide the Kingdom into 120 provinces with a troika of Regional Managers.

Dan 6:2 Daniel was a member of the triumvirate. The purpose of the Regional Managers was to make sure the King was not cheated out of that which he considered to be his just "due" i.e. taxes and/or tribute.

Dan 6:3 Daniel so distinguished himself as a loyal and effective administrator that Darius let it be known he planned on promoting his Jewish friend to Vice President of the entire Empire, second only to the King himself.

Dan 6:4 Then the other high ranking appointees, motivated by jealousy sought to destroy Daniel by either finding or conjuring some error in him; they carefully critiqued with a fine tooth comb all of his decisions and associations but could find nothing deserving of criticism. As a loyal man of doctrine he was impeccable consistently displaying expertise far and away ahead of his contemporaries; in fact the reports returning to his peers revealed we can find no fault in him whatsoever.

Dan 6:5 Having carefully scrutinized all of Daniel's activities and decisions, one of the conspirators said, "We have been unable to find anything against this Daniel; there is only one hope and that is to use his religion against him.

Dan 6:6 Then these Regional Managers and governors of the respective provinces came together in an official convocation before the king and they greeted him with the words, "King Darius, live forever."

Dan 6:7 Lying, they said, "All the officers of the kingdom as well as the administrative and military leaders, have consulted together to establish a royal law and make a decree that anyone who shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions as punishment.

Dan 6:8 Now, O King establish the decree and sign the writing so that it cannot be changed; according to the royal law of the Medes and Persians, your decree O King cannot be altered by anyone.

Dan 6:9 Accordingly King Darius, consumed by approbation lust, signed and recorded the royal law.

Dan 6:10 Now when Daniel read the law, he went into his house for privacy; the window of his chamber being opened toward Jerusalem, he knelt upon his knees and prayed three times a day, just as God's Word demanded; he prayed intensively for himself and his people just as he had done for some sixty-eight years.

Dan 6:11 Then the conspiratorial heroes sent several of their servants to Daniel's house in order to spy on him, there they found Daniel praying for deliverance.

Dan 6:12 Armed with this information, the plotters assembled before Darius where they spoke to the king concerning the royal decree: "Have you not signed a decree that every man who shall ask a petition of any God or man shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "This is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, the promulgation had been made and cannot be changed.

Dan 6:13 Then the conspirators and enemies of Daniel answered the king, "Daniel is not a Persian nor is he a Mede, he is a foreigner, a Jew, and he has no regard for you, nor the decree which you just recently signed; he continues to pray three times a day to the God of Israel."

Dan 6:14 When the King heard these words, he was completely disgusted with himself; he realized that he must sentence a person he admired greatly; therefore, he put his mind to work to devise a plan to deliver Daniel; he labored throughout the day to this end.

Dan 6:15 The plotters were persistent and again assembled before the King and said, "Know, O King, that the law of the Medes and the Persians clearly denies modification or retraction of a law promulgated by the King; it cannot be changed by anyone.

Dan 6:16 Sadly, the king gave the order, he had no alternative but to command that Daniel be brought forth and cast into the den of lions. Hoping that Daniel would understand his position in this matter, Darius said to Daniel "Your God whom you serve so well will no doubt deliver you.

Dan 6:17 After Daniel was thrown headlong into the pit, a large stone was placed over the mouth of the den; Darius' secretary brought the legislation under which Daniel had been prosecuted and the King of Persia placed his seal on the document; "there" said the conspirators, "it is done and no one can change what Darius the Great has sealed."

3. Now let's see what we can learn from verses eighteen and nineteen where we find a king in a state of misery."

KJV

Dan 6:18 Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him.

Dan 6:19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

NIV

Dan 6:18 Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep.

Dan 6:19 At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den.

Principles:

1. Many people consider wealth and position to be the road to happiness and the answer to all their problems.
2. The Bible teaches, however, that neither wealth nor position guarantees happiness.

2.1 The person at the top rung of the success ladder, who owns all the details of life, can be just as miserable, and sometimes more miserable, than the person at the bottom who has nothing.

3. Darius was a man who had everything: intelligence, power, fame, costly apparel, magnificent palaces, treasures of every description but he did not have happiness.

4. In his time of crisis, none of these sustained him.

5. On the other hand, while Daniel had been stripped of all accouterments of human success and prosperity, he still had everything, for he had the Lord and Bible doctrine in his soul!

6. Above the rock that sealed Daniel's prison towered the splendid palace (HEKAL meaning, "big house designed for pleasure") in Babylon.

7. Luxuriously appointed with all manner of trappings, the palace was designed to delight a king and to provide him with beauty, comfort and relaxation.

8. Darius "went" (Peal perfect of AZAL, "to depart sadly") from what he feared might become Daniel's torture chamber and returned to his royal chambers.

9. Had he truly believed that Daniel's God would deliver him, the king would have had peace of mind.

10. But Darius's words had only been a hollow and meaningless gesture. Here God permits us a glimpse of a man who was totally despondent and discouraged.

11. He had allowed himself to be duped into consorting with conspirators against Daniel and had deserted his loyal friend; the king was thoroughly disgusted with himself.

12. Too many people eating is a means of sublimating when frustrated or unhappy; but Darius was so miserable he left his evening meal untouched, even though Persian kings are reputed to have been great gourmets.

12.1 "Fasting" is the noun TEWATH and means "to refrain from food"; however, this fasting had no spiritual connotation.

13. Darius was not aware that at this time under that rock the lions were also fasting, though for a different reason.

14. Had Darius known this, he might have summoned his "instruments of music."

14.1 This phrase, DACHAWA, "often translated "entertainment" is a euphemism derived from a musical instrument which was played by highly trained women to arouse sexual passions.

14.2 In the KJV above you can see it is translated "music".

15. It should have been translated correctly as "without his stable or harem of concubines being brought to him."

15.1 It was customary among ancient rulers (and even some modern ones) to follow a good meal with "wine, women and song.

15.2 The concubines were usually brought in after the evening meal that a king might choose his companion for the evening.

16. Darius, however, was so depressed, he not only turned down an excellent meal, but he refused to select from the most beautiful women in the empire. It was a dismal night at the palace!

17. Physically and mentally perturbed, the king was overtaken with remorse, guilt and sorrow.

17.1 As if this were not punishment enough, Darius tossed restlessly on his bed; sleep "went" (Peal perfect of NEDADH) or "fled" from him.

18. Insomnia compounded the king's self-induced misery (God can give or withhold sleep; Psa. 127:1-2 compare Psa. 77:4-7).

Psa 127:1 Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain.

Psa 127:2 In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat--for he grants sleep to those he loves.

Psa 77:4 You kept my eyes from closing; I was too troubled to speak.

Psa 77:5 I thought about the former days, the years of long ago;

Psa 77:6 I remembered my songs in the night. My heart mused and my spirit inquired:

Psa 77:7 "Will the Lord reject forever? Will he never show his favor again?"

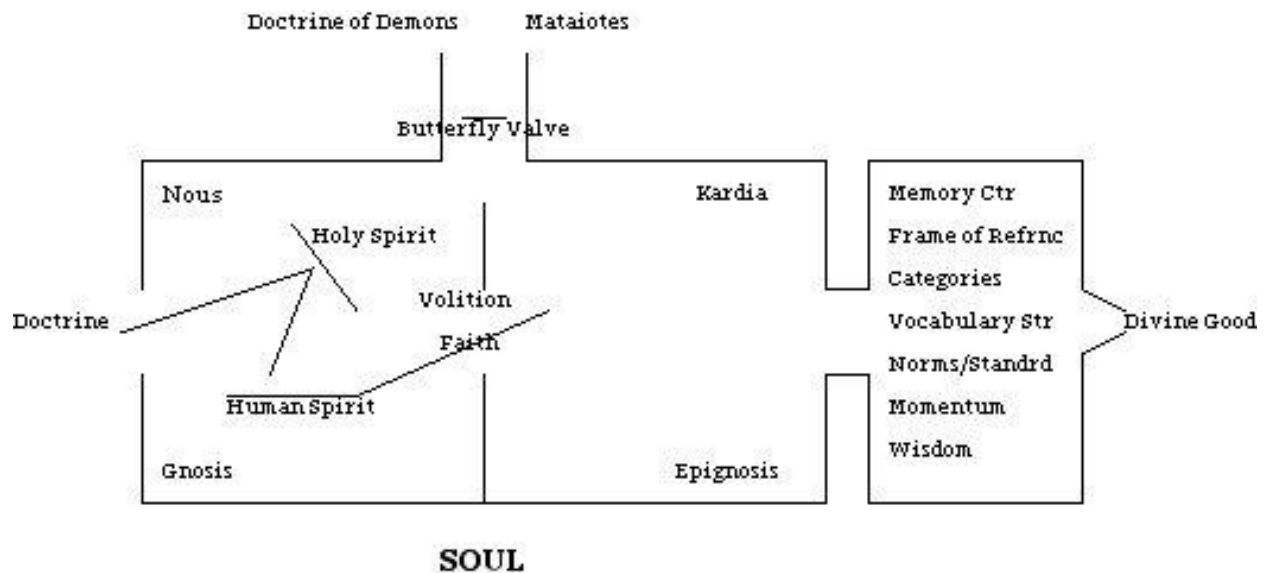
19. What a contrast between these two great men! Above the rock, Darius was wretched in spite of all the pleasures in the palace; yet below the rock, Daniel, deprived of food, comfort and entertainment, was perfectly content.

20. Surrounded by his feline companions, Daniel had a good night's sleep.

21. Every believer must determine whether he wants to be in the "palace" of misery or the "den" of happiness.

22. If it is your ambition to acquire the details of life at the expense of Bible doctrine, misery will be your constant companion!

23. True and lasting happiness is a potential gift from God; it is realized when a maximum amount of doctrine is stored in the left lobe and cycled by faith to the right lobe for application and production of divine good.



24. Daniel was in desperate circumstances; but regardless of this, he possessed great happiness, for he had an "edification complex" in his soul.

25. By contrast, Darius was in abject misery of soul despite his high station in life.

25.1 Remember this lesson well, and perhaps it will save you some sleepless nights: pleasant and successful circumstances do not guarantee happiness; only doctrine in the soul can accomplish that!

26. The night must have seemed endless to Darius; he had reproached himself and was torn between worry and hope. If only, he thought, morning would come.

27. The king got out of bed at daybreak and "went in haste to the den of lions." The Ithpael infinitive of BEHAL ("haste" or "hurry") indicates that Darius hurried to the den of lions as fast as his royal dignity allowed.

28. There is a subtle lesson to be learned from Daniel 6:19; even great men will beat a path to the door of a believer who is faithful to the Lord and to His Word!

Now let me give you an expanded translation of Dan 6:18-19:

Dan 6:18 Darius returned to the palace and spent a miserable night without eating; he even refused the usual beauty pageant when he customarily selected his lady of the night. He got into his bed but he could not sleep.

Dan 6:19 At the break of dawn, the king put on his royal robe and hurried down the stairs to the lions' den.

And now for God's Deliverance - Daniel's Testimony

KJV

Dan 6:20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

NIV

Dan 6:20 When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?"

1. Darius had reached the den; "he cried with a lamentable or miserable voice." Mistranslated "cried," the Peal perfect of ZEEQ means he "screamed out."
2. "The unhappy king presented a pathetic figure; the potentate expected the worst; yet hoped for the best. For the second time he manifested positive volition toward the Lord when he called Daniel the "servant of the LIVING GOD."
3. Daniel's continual service to God was not motivated by a desire to "buy" divine favors, but by a deep love for the Lord, whom he served in prosperity as well as in adversity.
4. Unbelievers find this difficult to understand because most people spend their lives working to please someone.
5. Even Satan thought that Job was "perfect and upright" only because of the dividends of God's grace benefits (Job 1:6-12).

Job 1:6 One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them.

Job 1:7 The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it."

Job 1:8 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil."

Job 1:9 "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied.

Job 1:10 "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land.

Job 1:11 But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."

Job 1:12 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

6. Be it Job or Daniel, or you, no believer ever loses by casting his problems on the Lord. Psalm 31 (in the case of David who was being disciplined) should help us when we find ourselves in the lion's den.

Psa 31:1 In you, O LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.

Psa 31:2 Turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me.

Psa 31:3 Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me.

Psa 31:4 Free me from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge.

Psa 31:5 Into your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth.

Psa 31:6 I hate those who cling to worthless idols; I trust in the LORD.

Psa 31:7 I will be glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul.

Psa 31:8 You have not handed me over to the enemy but have set my feet in a spacious place.

Psa 31:9 Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow, my soul and my body with grief.

Psa 31:10 My life is consumed by anguish and my years by groaning; my strength fails because of my affliction, and my bones grow weak.

Psa 31:11 Because of all my enemies, I am the utter contempt of my neighbors; I am a dread to my friends--those who see me on the street flee from me.

Psa 31:12 I am forgotten by them as though I were dead; I have become like broken pottery.

Psa 31:13 For I hear the slander of many; there is terror on every side; they conspire against me and plot to take my life.

Psa 31:14 But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, "You are my God."

Psa 31:15 My times are in your hands; deliver me from my enemies and from those who pursue me.

Psa 31:16 Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your unfailing love.

Psa 31:17 Let me not be put to shame, O LORD, for I have cried out to you; but let the wicked be put to shame and lie silent in the grave.

Psa 31:18 Let their lying lips be silenced, for with pride and contempt they speak arrogantly against the righteous.

Psa 31:19 How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you.

Psa 31:20 In the shelter of your presence you hide them from the intrigues of men; in your dwelling you keep them safe from accusing tongues.

Psa 31:21 Praise be to the LORD, for he showed his wonderful love to me when I was in a besieged city.

Psa 31:22 In my alarm I said, "I am cut off from your sight!" Yet you heard my cry for mercy when I called to you for help.

Psa 31:23 Love the LORD, all his saints! The LORD preserves the faithful, but the proud he pays back in full.

Psa 31:24 Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD.

7. While God's plan of salvation is so simple that a little child can enter into a personal and eternal relationship with the sovereign of the universe, it often takes catastrophe and heartache to awaken some people to a realization of their own helplessness.

8. Only when they come to an end of self, do they look to God.

9. Darius was deeply impressed with Daniel's devotion to God and wondered whether God had indeed been "able to deliver" (Peal infinitive of SHEZAB) his faithful servant.

10. Notice the inconsistency and instability of Darius: the previous evening he had assured Daniel of divine deliverance; the next morning he questioned God's ability to rescue him.

11. Divine omnipotence is never the issue in deliverance! Rather, deliverance is a question of God's sovereignty.

12. If deliverance is in God's perfect plan, a believer will be rescued; if not, God has another purpose for the life of that believer.

13. Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, recognized this truth (Dan 3:17; compared with Dan 6:10) and so should we!

Dan 3:17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

Dan 6:10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.



14. There is no crisis in the believer's life from which there is no deliverance.

14.1 Since deliverance can come through life or death, release from earthly suffering would have constituted as much a deliverance for Daniel as did Daniel's rescue from the mouth of the lions.

15. In the case of Daniel, it pleased God to affect a physical deliverance, whereas martyrdom was God's plan for the lives of thousands of Christians whom Nero fed to the lions.

16. Only God in his infinite wisdom knows whether we can glorify Him better in life or in death.

16.1 A believer with doctrine in his soul knows that no circumstance, person or angel can remove him from life until God calls him home.

17. Accordingly, a believer can remain cool, calm and collected, even under the greatest of pressures.

18. Before moving to a study of Daniel 6:21 and 22 let me give you an expanded translation of verse twenty:

Dan 6:20 When Darius and his entourage arrived in the basement of the Palace just above the den of lions, with a miserable voice he screamed out to Daniel: "O Daniel, servant of the living God whom you have faithfully served continually, was your God able to deliver you from the lions?"

And now for Daniel's exclamation of praise:

KJV

Dan 6:21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live forever.

Dan 6:22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocence was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

NIV

Dan 6:21 Daniel answered, "O king, live forever!

Dan 6:22 My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king."

Principles:

1. Darius stood over the gaping hole and waited expectantly. He had tried to prepare himself for the dreadful silence of death; this after all was to be expected.

2. He might have hoped for a groan that would indicate Daniel was hurt but still alive; better yet, for a sleepy voice, should a miracle have occurred!

3. When we as believers win a spiritual victory, this is when we are most vulnerable to what some might call "fat headedness".

3.1 This is when the fat headed believer often starts to gloat.

3.2 How easily Daniel could have gloated over his deliverance; after all, God had personally intervened on his behalf!

4. He could have rebuked the king in anger and exasperation or demanded instant punishment for all who had plotted against him!

4.1 Daniel, however, was not the vindictive type. From early on he had learned in the palace of Josiah to leave vengeance with the Lord.

5. Even in the lions' den he maintained poise and observed court protocol in the customary address: "O king, live forever."

End Lesson Taught 12-9-2001