

God is able...

To Protect You in the Lion's Den!

Daniel 6:20

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Introduction:

- I. When the Roman Emperor came to the city of Thyana he found the city's gates locked to keep him from entering. He swore that he would make such a slaughter of the city that no dog would be left alive. Heracleon, fearing that he would die, betrayed the city into Aurelian's hands. Aurelian commanded that every dog in the city be killed but pardoned all citizens except Heracleon. He commanded that the traitor be executed because he could never trust his security to one who had betrayed his own people! This historical fact underscores a truth of life – what we often place our greatest security in often betrays us! One of life's greatest tragedies is realizing that your security is inadequate to prevent loss.
 1. You can securely lock your home but even then thieves will break in and you will understand just how insufficient locks and alarms are to provide genuine security.
 2. Security is very important but we often discover that it is impossible.

- II. Modern man seeks a refuge where total security is possible. We all desire that this refuge provide protection from the ordeals of life. The story of Daniel in the lion's den tells us how we can find security in our insecure world. *The lesson for us: God is able to keep us safe in the trials of life!*

- III. Background material to this story.
 1. Daniel was captured by the Babylonians when he was a teenager. He was taken to Babylon where he distinguished himself in government service (Da 6:3).
 2. His success prompted some to become jealous (Da 6:4). The only grounds they had for accusation was Daniel's faith in God (Da 6:5).
 3. These jealous men reveal the evil of being controlled by jealousy – they manipulated the King to sign a law that was unfair (Da 6:6-9).
 4. Daniel refused to follow the King's law and was reported. The King realized that he had been wrong but his pride refused to let him admit it (Da 6:10-15).
 5. Daniel was thrown into the lion's den. All night the King fretted and in the early morning ran to the lion's den (Da 6:16-19).
 6. Upon his arrival the King called for Daniel and Daniel confidently answered (Da 6:20-22).
 7. The wonderful lesson concludes with the words of Da 6:23 – TRUST provides man's only security!
 8. The same God who protected Daniel is able to protect today! (Da 6:28).

Body:

I. Consider the POWER that was in the lion's den.

As the story is studied, two things that become evident about the power that delivered Daniel from the lions.

A. It was a DIVINE POWER.

1. The King understood that divine power was the only possible way for Daniel to be secure (6:20).
2. Daniel's security was not because of his physical strength or his intellectual power.
3. Only God's power could protect Daniel!
4. There are some things that only God is able to do for us.
 - a. Some trust intelligence or military force for protection (Jer 17:5). But brute force is unable to offer genuine security.
 - b. What good is intellectual achievement or nuclear warheads when your heart is broken by tragic death, or when you are facing death by an incurable disease?
 - c. God gives us a power that is able to bring satisfaction and peace (Ps 23:4; Philip 4:7)

B. It was a DELIVERING PEACE

1. When we hear that God “delivered” Daniel from the lions we imagine a miraculous escape. But there was no escape found for Daniel.
2. “Deliverance” indicates that Daniel was helped by God's power to endure, NOT ESCAPE! (Da 3:28).
3. Many want God to provide an escape and fail to realize that God is providing them the power to endure (1 Pt 5:8-10).
4. God rescued Daniel by enabling him to cope with the situation he thought was intolerable. This same escape is offered to us (2 Co 4:8, 16-18).
5. If you are struggling with a great problem in life, are you looking for God to give you an escape from it or endurance through it?

II. Consider the PARALLELS of the lion's den today.

Although we will not be thrown into the lion's den, we will face enemies just as deadly.

A. SATAN

1. We are constantly assaulted by Satan (1 Pt 5:8).
2. God enables us to gain the power necessary to win this battle (Mt 6:13; Jn 17:15).
3. Satan will try to destroy all hope, but trust in God will bring us safely through it.

B. SIN

1. Too many fail to take temptation as a serious threat. Sin that is left without correction will eventually bind us so that we will be destroyed (Jas 1:14-16).

2. Some fail to see the sin in anger, alcoholic drinks, lust, or profane speech. They carelessly use these and too late discover that they have been bound and are dying.
3. Daniel's attitude is needed today—We are not helpless victims! We can pray and ask for God's power to help us.
4. Many discover sin in their lives and surrender; give up! They should pray as Daniel did!

C. **SICKNESS**

1. Often illness can lead us to defeat in faith. When our physical bodies become weak, we should exercise our spiritual strength.
2. Some sickness is fatal. Some diseases cannot be cured. But even then, faithful praying will help us overcome! (2 Co 12:8-10).

D. **SUFFERING**

1. Christian living will bring suffering (Ac 5:41; 2 Ti 1:12; 3:12).
2. Suffering may come from various things:
 - a. A non-Christian husband scorns his wife's faith.
 - b. A Christian loses friends because s/he cannot join them in evil practices.
 - c. A wife and child are abused by an alcoholic.
3. Many find themselves in the lion's den of suffering and some are devoured because suffering has caused them to turn away from God.
4. Someone has said that when Christians struggle with trials, they out to compare themselves to an eagle flying in a storm. The eagle sets his wings in such a way that air currents cause him to rise above the storm! (cf. Is 40:29-31).

III. **Consider some PRINCIPLES** from the lion's den.

We highlight four points of advice for believers today.

A. **Be confident** in Christ!

1. The King was skeptical (Da 6:20), but not Daniel (Hb 11:33).
2. Learn to trust God's power—if you are skeptical of God's power, you will never find this confidence (Ro 8:37-39).

B. **Be courageous** with Christ!

1. Daniel was not afraid to obey God (Da 6:10).
2. We should not seek to be martyrs, but we should not compromise God's will.

C. **Be capable** through Christ!

1. Daniel knew he was not responsible. He was alive because of God's power.
2. When you face terrible times, realize that you can overcome *through* God (2 Ti 4:17; Philip 4:13).

D. Be committed to Christ!

1. Look at Da 6:16,20 – “constantly serve.” This was a wonderful compliment.
2. When faced with life’s trials, Daniel’s heart would allow no compromise. This made a lasting impression upon the King.
3. Daniel was committed – He did not know if God would deliver him alive or if death was to be his fate. He did know that he must obey God and leave the consequences to the King.

Conclusion:

- I. It is always a curious spectacle to look at sheer faced cliffs and notice how trees and shrubs grow out of the rocks. They hang over fearful precipices, roaring cataracts, and deep running rivers, but they remain secure. It is their hold to the rock that offers them security. Without the rock they would fall and be dashed to pieces. Such is like believers today. Often we are exposed to horrible dangers but as long as we hold to the “Rock” we find perfect security.
- II. What lion’s den has Satan thrown you into because of your faith? Is it illness? Betrayal by friends? Pressure to compromise God’s commands? Drugs? Money?
- III. Remember that Daniel shows us the only way to find deliverance from the lion’s den in daily life –
 1. Be confident in God’s power!
 2. Be courageous in resisting compromise!
 3. Be capable of overcoming your struggle by trusting God!
 4. Be committed to Christ and never give up!