

The Good, the Bad, and the Faithful

May 27, 2018 ~ Daniel 6.1-28

Daniel 6 as Play in 6 Scenes

- ❖ **III: Wicked** ~ Two acts with 31 scenes (nearly 3 hours long)
 - ✧ Already saw Daniel 6 as a play but this reinforced it
 - ✧ Maybe not as entertaining / but hopefully interesting enough

Act 1 – Scene 1 – Governors and Satraps Plot Against Daniel (5.31 – 6.5)

King Darius' Plan for Government (5.31 – 6.2)

- ❖ King Darius is 62 years old (experienced leader)
 - ✧ He's (re)structured his government – 120 satraps / 3 governors
 - ✧ **Purpose: "so that the king would suffer no loss"**
 - ✧ He's dealing with a problem – "loss" / He's being stolen from
 - ✧ All kings (*regardless of how corrupt*) need faithful, capable leaders under them
- ❖ He sets up 123 men to assist him in running his kingdom
 - ✧ Daniel appointed one of only 3 governors / reputation preceded him

King Darius' Plan for Daniel (6.3)

- ❖ **"Daniel distinguished himself .. because an excellent spirit was in him"**
 - ✧ Daniel wrote this under inspiration of Holy Spirit / as Moses did **Nbr 12.3**
 - ✧ Daniel quickly built upon his reputation
- ❖ King Darius notices Daniel manages much better than others
 - ✧ **"king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm"**

Governors & Satraps Plot (6.4-5)

- ❖ Notice the king is only thinking this
 - ✧ But governors & satraps learn of king's thoughts
 - ✧ **Read Ecc 10.20 ~ "Do not .. tell the matter"**
 - ✧ Secrets especially hard to keep when reputations & careers involved
- ❖ **"but they could find no charge or fault .. because he was faithful"**
 - ✧ The faithfulness noted is toward the king – not God
 - ✧ Daniel not like them / They looked for dirt on him and found none
- ❖ But they were shrewd / They quickly found another angle to exploit
 - ✧ The very faithfulness Daniel exhibited would be his downfall

Xition: Scene 1 fades with evil smiles of plotters against Daniel . . .

Act 1 – Scene 2 – Governors and Satraps Set Trap for Daniel (6.6-9)

Governors & Satraps Set Trap for Daniel (6.6-7a)

- ❖ "Governors and satraps thronged before the king"
 - ✧ They wanted to overwhelm the king with this excited mob
- ❖ "All governors – administrators – satraps – counselors – advisors"
 - ✧ Started with bald faced lie – "All governors" / Daniel is with them on this

The Trap (6.7b-9)

- ❖ "whoever petitions any god or man for 30 days except you . . ."
- ❖ Darius is no fool / Yet he is played a fool and he falls for it / "**Why?**"
 - ✧ Evil men know their king – his plans / his fears / his faults (Lk 16.8)
 - ✧ They play to all of these and they succeed
 - ✧ Perhaps he trusts his counselors / And it's only 30 days
- ❖ They've set the trap for Daniel / Now they just need to spring it
 - ✧ Scene fades again with joyful plotters leaving king

Act 1 – Scene 3 – Governors and Satraps Spring Trap on Daniel (6.10-13)

Daniel Remains Faithful to God (6.10)

- ❖ Thus far, we've only interacted with Daniel vicariously, through reputation
 - ✧ But now we get to see the real Daniel / "**What will he do?**"
- ❖ Daniel not surprised by what's happened
 - ✧ It's taken time for the trap to develop and be set up / Daniel knows
 - ✧ Daniel chose not to lobby the king / He went about his business
 - ❖ **Read Ecc 10.4 ~ "If the spirit of the ruler rises against you, do not leave your post; for conciliation pacifies great offenses."**
 - Daniel exhibited this behavior well with Nebuchadnezzar

Prayer is at the Heart of our Story

- ❖ This entire chapter is about testing character
- ❖ Christians in our culture face this same choice / same test / same traps
 - ✧ Will a Christian baker make a cake that violates their beliefs?
 - ✧ Will a military chaplain refuse to close a prayer in the name of Jesus?
 - ✧ Will we bow our heads in public and say grace in public restaurants?
- ❖ Daniel "**knelt down on his knees 3 times that day .. as was his custom**"
 - ✧ We must first have customs to stay true to them when tested . . .

Xition: Governors and satraps are so excited . . .

Governors & Satraps Spring Trap (6.11-13)

- ❖ "these men assembled and found Daniel praying"
 - ✧ Imagine their elation / Window open / Daniel's a fool / **III**: Snidely Whiplash
- ❖ They innocently ask king about the law they'd had him sign
 - ✧ King agrees it's the law of the land / So they spring the trap
- ❖ "That Daniel . . ." / You can practically hear the disdain in their voice
 - ✧ How could this captive from Judah ever have arisen to the position he's in?
- ❖ They make it personal – that's how they succeeded in getting the law after all
 - ✧ "Daniel .. does not show due regard for you, O king"
 - ✧ "Daniel .. makes his petition three times a day"
- ❖ Light fades on King Darius' shocked face

Act 1 – Scene 4 – Dismayed King Darius Entombs Daniel with Lions (6.14-17)

King Darius Dismayed / Seeks Escape for Daniel (6.14)

- ❖ "the king .. was greatly displeased with himself"
 - ✧ "Daniel doesn't get wisdom from a cereal box like other men"
 - ✧ He actually prays to the only God of all the world . . . Won't stop due to law
- ❖ With whom was the king was displeased . . . "**himself**"
 - ✧ This is wisdom / He's taking responsibility even when lied to and fooled
- ❖ Darius "**set his heart on Daniel to deliver him**"
 - ✧ "**he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him**"
 - ✧ History doesn't know who Darius was / But he was a "**good man**"
 - ✧ His labor for Daniel wasn't just for selfish gain / It was for justice

Governors & Satraps Confront King Darius (6.15)

- ❖ Governors and satraps are so bold as to rub king's nose in it
 - ✧ Even had Daniel died later perhaps this would have also had them killed

Daniel Entombed with Lions (6.16-17)

- ❖ We don't know if Daniel said anything before entering the lion's den
- ❖ We do know what Darius said, "**Your God .. will deliver you**"
 - ✧ Before entering the furnace S, M and A said similar / Here Darius says it
- ❖ King Darius does it right / Perhaps sensitive to accusation of bypassing law
 - ✧ First time we hear of another office – that of "**lords**"
- ❖ Act 1 ends with Daniel entombed w/lions and King Darius showing spark of faith

Xition: Act 2 opens with very concerned King Darius . . .

Act 2 – Scene 1 – Fretful King Darius Finds Daniel Alive (6.18-23)

King Darius Frets all Night & Returns Early (6.18)

- ❖ The character of King Darius is further revealed
 - ✧ "spent the night fasting .. no musicians .. sleep went from him"
 - ✧ "arose early in the morning .. went in haste .. cried with lamenting voice"
- ❖ He'd spoken with bravado the day before / But perhaps only for Daniel's sake
 - ✧ Darius himself had little hope Daniel was alive
 - ✧ He's 62 / He's sent a lot of men to their deaths by now
 - ✧ Perhaps never with greater regret than Daniel
- ❖ King Darius had little hope / But he did have some hope

King Darius Finds Daniel Alive! (6.20)

- ❖ King Darius had called out, "**Daniel .. had your God .. been able to deliver you?**"
 - ✧ He may have thought himself a fool for calling out like this
 - ✧ But he didn't care . . . He needed to know . . .
- ❖ Twice now Darius has said, "**your God, whom you serve continually**"
 - ✧ He's repeating to Daniel (and himself) that this is Daniel's character
 - ✧ "**How had he ever been deceived into thinking this a small thing?**"
- ❖ *Imagine this...! King calls out – Silence for a moment – But then . . .*
- ❖ Daniel calls out: "**O king, live forever!**"
 - ✧ *If a musical dancing would occur – Bob the Tomato / Larry the Cucumber*
 - ✧ King Darius must have been shocked / amazed / overjoyed
 - ✧ Daniel now presses his case:
 - ◇ God ~ "**I was found innocent before Him**"
 - ◇ King ~ "**and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you**"
- ❖ *Scene ends with King embracing Daniel and plotters in distance aghast*

Act 2 – Scene 2 – Evil Judged / God Honored / Faithful Prosper (6.24-28)

King Darius Executes Governors & Satraps (6.24)

- ❖ King Darius immediately executes all those that had lied to him
 - ✧ Lions prove Daniel's preservation miraculous by eating them immediately
- ❖ King at desk writing decree while plotters & families are shoveled into lions den

Xition: Light fades on lions and narration of King's words builds in volume . . .

King Darius Commands Entire Kingdom to Honor God (6.25-27)

- ❖ v26 ~ “in every dominion ... power of the lions”
- ❖ King Darius was "good" in that he sought justice for Daniel
- ❖ King Darius was "great" in commanding that God be honored

Daniel Prospers Due to Faithfulness (6.28)

- ❖ Some of the best Bible stories end with a "happily ever after" phrase
- ❖ Read v28 ~ “So this Daniel .. Cyrus the Persian”

Good – King Darius / Those that honor God’s commands unwittingly

Bad – All those that plot against God and His servants

Faithful – Those who walk in obedience despite threats and fears

1. Those whose personal habits and behavior reflects a love & respect for God

Refrain from “Dare to be a Daniel”

1. Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone!
2. Dare to have a purpose firm! Dare to make it known

May we all examine and adjust our customs to become more like Daniel

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,

And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

To God our Savior, who alone is wise,

Be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.

Amen *pause* Go in peace . . .

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May 27, 2018 ~ Daniel 6.1-28 ~ Handout

Act 1 – Scene 1	Dan 5.31-6.5	Governors & Satraps Plot Against Daniel
Act 1 – Scene 2	Dan 6.6-9	Governors & Satraps Set Trap for Daniel
Act 1 – Scene 3	Dan 6.10-13	Governors & Satraps Spring Trap on Daniel
Act 1 – Scene 4	Dan 6.14-17	Dismayed King Darius Entombs Daniel with Lions
Act 2 – Scene 1	Dan 6.18-23	Fretful King Darius Finds Daniel Alive
Act 2 – Scene 2	Dan 6.24-28	Evil Judged / God Honored / Faithful Prosper

1. Who is **good** in our story? _____ Is it okay to call anyone good since Jesus rebuked the rich young ruler's use of that word in Matthew 19.17? _____ If you're unsure look up what Paul wrote in Romans 5.6-8 _____

2. Who is **bad** in our story? _____ In what way were they bad? _____

3. Who was **faithful** in our story? _____ In what ways were they faithful in earthly character? _____

In what ways were they faithful in spiritual character? _____

4. What is at the heart of this story of Daniel today? _____

5. What are visible aspects of your character that reflect the presence of God on your life? _____

6. What do you most admire about Daniel? _____
_____ About Darius? _____