

# Daniel

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[ 0 : 00 ] Just back, it was December 17 when my wife and I were sharing a devotional from a book that Mr. Stamm had written several years ago called Two Minutes with the Bible.

By the way, these will happen to be available Sunday if anybody's interested. It's an extraordinary devotional and it's written from a dispensational standpoint. And I was so impressed with this column here that I'm going to share it with you now because it really ties in also with the subject we'll be dealing with this morning, which is very familiar to most people, certainly to all Christians, and that is Daniel in the lion's den.

And we are in Daniel chapter 7. But here's the devotional that Mr. Stamm, who is now with the Lord, offered on December 17. By the truth, and you sell it not.

A verse from the proverb. Every true Christian should understand that the truth costs. If you don't think so, make it your own.

Value it. Defend it. Stand for it. And see if it doesn't cost. Before you were through, it may cost you far more than you had thought.

[ 1 : 16 ] Hours of ease and pleasure. Friends and money. Yes, the truth costs. Salvation is gloriously free. But the truth costs.

That is, if you want it for yourself. Many who know the truth won't buy it. They won't pay what it costs to say, This is what I believe.

This is my conviction. The truth isn't worth that much to them. They've seen it. They've heard it. They know it. But they don't buy it.

They're not willing to pay for it. But in Proverbs 23.23, God's word urges us, Buy the truth. Not buy it if you can get it at a bargain. If the price is not too great.

No. Buy the truth. Buy it at any price. It is worth far more than anything you can give in exchange for it.

[ 2 : 19 ] And when you have bought it, sell it not. How many, alas, have bought the truth only to sell out again?

For a while they valued and defended some God-given light from his word, but presently they sold it again for something that seemed more valuable.

Perhaps it was peace with others, or position, or popularity, or some other temporal gain. They still gave mental assent to it, but it formed no part of them.

It was no longer a conviction. Such should read again the Spirit's counsel. Buy the truth and sell it not. He does not say, don't sell it unless you can get a very good price for it.

He says, sell it not. Sell it not at any price. Buy it no matter what it costs. And when it is yours, do not sell it for any price or under any consideration.

[ 3 : 28 ] It is because the truth is so little valued in this indifferent age that many of God's people have become so spiritually powerless.

They hold opinions instead of convictions because they have given the infallible, unchangeable word of God little place in their lives.

Because God blesses and uses those who buy the truth and sell it not. And when you buy the truth, you may find yourself engaged in some kind of a contest or conflict.

And of course, we enter into those things armed with the truth with the intention of winning. But we are not responsible for winning.

We are responsible for fighting good fighting. So win or lose, you contend for what you believe to be the truth. After all, the truth, the truth is the planet's most priceless possession.

[ 4 : 38 ] And truth being truth, that in and of itself makes it worthy of proclamation. And that's why we preach the word, be instant in season and out of season.

And if you will, let's go to Daniel chapter 7. Actually, chapter 6.

I'm sorry, I got ahead of myself. I was reading in chapter 7 this morning. Fascinating passage. And I think kids begin learning about Daniel in Sunday school.

About that little song about dare to be a Daniel. It's great content. It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom.

These are like provincial governors. That they should be in charge of the whole kingdom. And over them, three commissioners. Of whom Daniel was one. That these satraps or governors might be accountable to them.

[ 5 : 40 ] And that the king might not suffer loss. In other words, the idea is to protect the assets of the monarch. Because this is a monarchy. And the king is just the absolute final word.

We cannot begin to appreciate the power and authority that was vested in the king. It was held almost to a godlike status.

In fact, some of them were even regarded as gods in some of the cultures. And we read in verse 3. This Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit.

And that right away tells us and reinforces what we already knew about Daniel. He had an unusual kind of attitude.

He had a special kind of demeanor about him that just caused him to stand out in the midst of others. And whenever he offered a word, everybody stopped to hear what he had to say.

[ 6 : 51 ] Because this guy was keyed in to something that very few of them could appreciate. And of course, we know that he had a real relationship with the God of Israel.

And even a lot of the people of Israel didn't have that. But Daniel was a standout. And let me just inject something here that I think is important.

Because even though Daniel was a standout, as far as God was concerned, Daniel, his attitude, demeanor, position, convictions, and everything else was intended to be the norm.

But in so many instances, it was not the norm among the people of God. And we could say the same thing today when Paul addressed the Galatians and said, If you walk by the Spirit, you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh.

He didn't say, If you're a Christian, you don't have any desires of the flesh. Oh no, we all know better than that. You do have. But if you walk in the Spirit, you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh. And as he addresses the Galatians, he makes it quite clear, That is supposed to be the norm for Christians.

[ 8 : 04 ] That's the normal Christian life, is walking in the Spirit. Controlled by the Spirit of God as opposed to alcohol and other things that would control us. And so often that is not the norm, that is the exception.

And back to the principle with Daniel that's been that way for thousands of years. So God's norm is not natural. God's norm is supernatural.

And that's what we're called upon to be because we are indwelt by the Spirit of God. Supernatural being. So he had this extraordinary spirit that really made him stand out. And the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom.

Now you've got to remember, this Daniel is the same one that had developed an amazing reputation under a former ruler. That was the Babylonians.

But the Babylonians have since been overthrown and displaced by the Medes and the Persians. And they are in control now. And Daniel is actually, he was originally a captive of the Babylonians.

[ 9 : 12 ] And then the Babylonians were defeated by the Medes and the Persians. So now he's a captive of captives. And yet, he still has that dynamic about him that brought him to the surface and caused those who were in positions of authority and power to recognize the unique talents of this man.

And to be sure, Daniel must have been one of the most remarkable people in all the Bible. And you know, Joseph, one of the sons of Jacob, Joseph and Daniel are the only two people that I can think of in the Scriptures in leadership capacity that God had nothing negative to say about.

Joseph and Daniel. And these two guys were cut from the same bowl of cloth. And both of them were really extraordinary individuals. Do you think they were sinners? Sinners? Sinners?

Sinners. With Jesus, we know, was sinless. Yeah. It almost seems like Daniel and Joseph were sinners. Oh, I'm sure that they were not, you know, simply because they were human. But they lived the kinds of lives that the Spirit of God just focused on the positive things to say about them, had nothing negative to say.

And this, of course, as Joseph pointed out, this doesn't mean they were sinless. Of course not. But it means that the positive contributions that they made and attitude and actions just stood so far, head and shoulders above everybody else that they just stood out.

[ 10 : 43 ] Nobody could deny that. And that tends to evoke a kind of rivalry and jealousy in others who were there because somebody like that can make you look bad.

And that's exactly what happened in Daniel's case. Let's read on. He possessed an extraordinary spirit. The king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom.

Of course, he would be under the authority of the king. And then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs.

But they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption. And that must have frustrated them to no end. No doubt they probably had somebody assigned to him to keep a close watch on him.

I mean, this guy, he puts his pants on like everybody else. He's got to have a little bit of larceny in his soul. When he leaves the office, go count the pencils and see if he didn't take something.

[ 11 : 54 ] Steal something from the company, you know. I mean, this guy, he's got to have a chink in his armor somewhere. And we're going to find it. No evidence of corruption inasmuch as he was faithful.

No negligence or corruption was to be found in him. Then these men said, We shall not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find it against him with regard to the law of his God.

Hey, this guy is a Hebrew, isn't he? Now, there ought to be something there in connection with the God of the Hebrews that would be incompatible with our king and our beliefs.

Let's find it. These commissioners, satraps, came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows. Now, here they're going to set the king up.

They've got a plan in mind. And they're going to blindside the king through manipulating him because they obviously have his trust also, at least to some degree.

[ 13 : 18 ] These are the advisors, the close ones to the king. And they conjure up this plan. They've conspired together, mapped this whole thing out, and they're going to go and present it to the king.

And they do. And as they approach him, they give the usual greeting, King Darius, live forever. And that was a customary greeting when you came into the presence of royalty.

You just said that. And all the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects, the satraps, the high officials, the governors, have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for 30 days shall be cast into the lion's den.

Now, this is designed, of course, to appeal to the human ego. And it does. Joe? Yeah, they told a lie right then and there. They did not consult with everybody and all officials in their opinion because Daniel was the top official.

They didn't consult with Daniel. Yeah, there's no record that Daniel was in the lion. He lied right off the bat. Yeah. So, but what they're trying to do is make as formidable a case as they can and they tell the king, we've gotten together and everybody agreed on this.

[ 14 : 48 ] Everybody agreed on this. And I can see the ego of old king Darius puffing up and he's saying, oh, sounds perfectly logical to me. Seeing is who I am and how I am and all the rest of it.

This is, this is the kind of buttering up that often goes on. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Now, okay, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it may not be changed according to the law of the Medes and the Persians which may not be revoked.

Now, that's a strange thing right there. But it was ordinary for that day. And the thinking behind this was that the king was established in a virtual godlike position.

Absolute, total supremacy. And the thinking was any edict or any decree that the king made was inviolable because he was behind it.

And if it could be revoked or changed, that was a negative reflection upon the king and his authority and his wisdom in issuing that edict.

[ 16 : 06 ] And should that occur, he would have demonstrated himself unworthy of the position. and that meant they were obligated to do what?

To dispose of him. If a king issues an edict and then he changes it, he just painted, it would be hard to do this, maybe he didn't paint a bullseye on his back, he painted a bullseye on his chest because he marked himself for destruction.

And we can't identify with something like that because our government and our situation is entirely different. But, fellas, we have no appreciation, well, I can't say no appreciation, but we don't have much appreciation of the kind of brutality and violence that existed in these regimes.

I mean, an off with your head was nothing. That was standard fare. And the closest we see coming to this today is among some of the extremists who delight in the cult of death and they say, you Christians exalt life, we exalt death.

And that's one of the mantras of radical Islam. And they make no bones about cutting off people's heads and whatnot and they are convinced that this is pleasing to their God, to Allah.

[ 17 : 33 ] So, we've seen some indication of this kind of brutality. And there's a verse in the Psalms, a verse in the Psalms that's very striking, it says, the habitations of darkness are filled with cruelty.

The habitations of darkness. And it's not talking about darkness the kind of lack of sunshine. sunshine. It's talking about darkness where there is not the light of truth, where the light of God does not shine through.

And there are some very, very dark corners of our world where truth is not at all respected, where brutality and violence is common and people live that way.

And life is very cheap in a lot of places in the world. And boy, we could go down a list of them. And it has always been that way in the Mideast.

And you know, it was for that very reason, it was for that very reason that the Lord did away with the first civilization. In Genesis 6 when the Lord looked upon the earth and behold, the whole earth was filled with violence.

[ 18 : 54 ] Violence. Dog eat dog world. And we know that God brought it to a halt. And we just marveled that this new creation from Genesis 9 onward has survived as long as it has because we too are a world that is in many places and ways filled with brutality and violence.

And we just see this, it's just amazing. And it comes from the natural heart of fallen man. So, it came in verse 9, signed the document.

That is the injunction. Now, when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house. Now, in his roof chamber, he had windows open toward Jerusalem.

And this was customary for Jews when they prayed. You prayed facing Jerusalem. Just like Muslims today when they pray, they pray facing Mecca. And Jews pray facing Jerusalem.

And he continued, Daniel continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God as he had been doing previously.

[ 20 : 17 ] And that's interesting in that Daniel isn't trying to stir up something new. All he's doing is following his usual routine. Yes, and it's important here to say that he knew the sign before he went in to pray there.

Daniel could have got out of this whole thing very easily. All he had to do was not pray. He could have got out of it these ways, but that shows his character. He didn't take the easy way out.

And he could have lived to fight another day. That's right. He could have got out of this thing easily. He could have, and here is the question of civil obedience or disobedience.

is Daniel going to obey his God, or is he going to obey this earthly king and the monarch? He's got a decision to make.

And he is not going to alter his lifestyle or his fidelity to his God, because an order has been issued from a lesser being. And this is the principle we find in Acts chapter 5 that Peter expresses when the apostles are put under severe persecution and they are threatened with all kinds of things.

[ 21 : 25 ] And Peter says, whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you or unto God, that's something you're going to have to decide. We've already made up our minds. We cannot help but speak that which we know, which we have experienced.

We just can't be silent about it. If it's going to get us in trouble and if it's going to get us punished, then no, we don't look forward to the punishment. We're not going to relish that, but we'll do whatever it takes to be faithful to our God.

That we just have to do. Roger? I don't know to what degree the king was that familiar with Daniel's actual lifestyle.

I don't know that we have any reason to understand or to believe that. Oh, yes, Mark, he had his window open and he said, everybody out there could hear him when he prayed because he opened it on purpose.

And I'm sure later on when Darius gave him all the goods and stuff to rebuild the temple and stuff back in Jerusalem, Daniel prayed for the king and he prayed for his sons.

[ 22 : 34 ] And the king knew that Daniel was using his God to pray for him. So he really had that in with the Darius because of his prayer and his openness to him.

Well, the only thing I'm saying is I'm not sure how familiar, how plugged in Darius was to Daniel's routine. He knew that, of course, he knew that he was a believer, a Hebrew, and a believer in the God of the Hebrews.

But we don't know that he knew his routine or that he's thinking now, gee, if I do this and anybody prays it, this could get my friend Daniel in a whole lot of trouble. No, there's no indication that he knew that.

Yeah. Back up just a little bit, you saw that Psalm 74 20, have respect under the covenant for the dark places of the earth are full of the heavens.

Yeah. Psalm 74? Psalm 74 20. Thank you. Modern technology, you can just bring this.

[ 23 : 36 ] I have to go home and thumb through my concordance. That's disgusting, Scott. Okay. So Daniel's not going to change his routine at all because his faithfulness to his God transcends everything.

Then these men came, look at this, by agreement, by agreement. They knew, enough of them knew, maybe the king didn't know, but enough of these guys knew, hey, I know, I was walking by his window one, and I know what he's doing, and I know when he's doing it.

We can nail him there. And they got together, and the text says that they were by agreement, they found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God.

then they approached and spoke before the king about the king's injunction. Your majesty, did you not sign an injunction that any man who makes a petition to any God or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, we're going to make you absolute potentate for a month.

Can you imagine that? And this guy's got an ego that buys into it, and I tell you something, fellas. If you haven't already come to appreciate it, I hope you will, and that is, you are your own worst enemy.

[ 25 : 11 ] We all are. We all have this insatiable thing inside us that is called an ego, and we will preserve it and stroke it and protect it and do whatever we can to make sure that it is not injured or diminished in any way, and that is the downfall of many, and has been.

So, king is no different than anybody else. He's got an ego. King answered and said, yes, the statement is true according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked.

Cannot change it. Then they answered and spoke before the king. Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, you know Daniel, oh yes, yes, I know Daniel.

He pays no attention to you, oh king. Now isn't that a neat way of putting it? It's just an extra kind of a slap.

It's an effort to intensify the offense by saying, he doesn't respect you at all. It's designed to drive the knife in a little bit deeper.

[ 26 : 33 ] Pays no attention to you, oh king, or to the injunction which you signed. In other words, he just dismisses you as nothing. It's a slap in the face to your royalty.

he keeps making his petition three times a day. Not only does he insult you, your majesty, he does it three times a day.

And the implication, of course, is, are you going to let him get away with that? And as soon as the king heard the statement, he was deeply distressed.

I wonder, I get the impression that he was distressed. He started to put all of this together now. And I think he is realizing from the get-go, hey, I've been set up in this thing.

And so has Daniel. I have been manipulated into a position that I never would have entered into had I known what was really going on here.

[ 27 : 35 ] And, of course, that's going to infuriate him, but that still cannot undo the fact that he signed a stupid thing. And it's gone forth. And he's got to abide by it, because, as I've said, if he doesn't, then he's touched.

And Daniel too. You know, Daniel wouldn't survive this. So the king is really on tender hooks here. He is between a rock and a hard place. He is deeply distressed.

And set his mind on delivering Daniel, and even until sunset, he kept exerting himself to rescue him.

Now, we do not know to what length he went, but I think the text requires that he is devoting, at the very least, a whole lot of mental energy trying to come up with some kind of an escape hatch for Daniel.

and he doesn't want this thing to go forth. We do not know, it doesn't say, I don't think, that he is consulted with anyone else, but he's mulling this over in his mind.

[ 28 : 47 ] And you wonder if he isn't thumbing through the archives of the place trying to find some loophole, some way that he can avoid this situation because he has been put in a corner by these people.

And I think he recognizes that the whole thing is a setup, but he's still locked into it. What's he going to do? Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, recognize, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians, that no injunction or statute which the king establishes may be changed.

Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lion's den, and king spoke and said to Daniel, your God whom you constantly serve will himself deliver you.

Now this is a remarkable statement on behalf of this king, because he didn't know that. How did he know that? And the impression I get, and the text doesn't say as much, but I think we can kind of read in the white spaces here, that Daniel was put in this lion's den, and it was probably some kind of a depression in the area, and Daniel has dropped down into this thing so that you can't climb out, you know.

But the lions aren't there. They're going to be there. They haven't been released yet. They're probably behind the gate there, and probably hungry as well. Daniel is dropped down in there, minus the lions, and the king talks to him and says, your God whom you constantly serve will himself deliver you.

[ 30 : 38 ] That's quite a statement on his behalf. And a stone was brought, and laid over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring.

That gives an officiality to it. That's a kind of, you know, Pilate gave a Roman seal at the tomb of Christ, and he put a seal upon it.

And it doesn't mean that they mortared or cemented the stone in. It just meant that the official signet of Rome was placed upon that stone, and the idea was this thing is under the jurisdiction and lock and key of Rome, and woe be unto anybody that disturbs it, because you will answer to Rome if you do.

And that was a similar kind of thing here. So the stone was brought, laid over the mouth of the den, the king sealed it with his own signet ring, which was standard procedure, and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing might be changed in regard to Daniel.

There is no possibility of reversing this thing. And then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting. This king, his brain wasn't functioning all that well, but his heart was in the right place.

[ 31 : 59 ] You know? He couldn't come up with some kind of a device to save him, but he obviously had a real heart for Daniel and he wanted this man to be spared. And no entertainment was brought before him and his sleep fled from him.

He just couldn't sleep. And God put that in there, had those men seal that so that when he was saved by the lions, there was no question that no human had any involvement in protecting or saving them.

It was God that did, I did this, and that's for our benefit. That's to make us believers and know that this case, he was saved by God, not these men saving him.

It's for our benefit for believing. Right. Absolutely. Absolutely. And it's a matter of the record. Then the king arose with the dawn at the break of day and went in haste to the lion's den.

And when he had come near, come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. Now, that's interesting. A troubled voice. And that indicates to me that even though he said, your God will deliver you, he really didn't know whether he had or not.

[ 33 : 14 ] And he still really agitated over this, upset, obviously emotionally disturbed over the whole thing. And he cried out with a troubled voice.

And the king spoke and said to Daniel, Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you constantly serve been able to deliver you from the lions?

eyes. I think he probably said that before he even walked over to the edge and looked in. Because what was he going to see when he looked in? Predictable, what he would see would be a badly mangled body, but the life gone out of it and broken bones and everything else, that would be a predictable kind of scene.

Derek, Dana. I think the king believed Daniel was God. If he didn't believe Daniel was God, he would have even attempted to ask if Daniel was in there.

He would have known that he wanted. He was God. At the same time, yeah, here is a perfect example, and it's coming this time from a pagan, of how all of us exercise what I call an imperfect faith.

[ 34 : 36 ] And none of us has a perfect faith. And one reason that we do not is because of the absence of incontrovertible evidence.

Faith, faith and the dynamic of faith is only possible where there is room for doubt. If there is no room for doubt, faith is unnecessary.

Understand that? This is why when Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he said, and there remains faith, hope, and love.

The greatest of these is love. And I think the implication there is that faith and hope are both going to be put out of business. When faith is realized by way of fulfillment, and hope is realized by way of fulfillment, what does a man hope for if he's already received?

There's no need for those. That's why in heaven, those two are going to be absent. There won't be any faith, there won't be any hope in heaven. But there will be love because love is God's coin of the realm. And it doesn't make any difference where you are or what the occasion.

[ 35 : 53 ] Love is always there. But faith, this is why justification for faith is a reality. God has instituted faith as the principal vehicle through which salvation gets to us.



We hear the gospel, we receive the message, and we return or we respond to the gospel with belief. And that belief or trust is what justifies us.

That's what justifies Abraham. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. In place of what? In place of the righteousness that he didn't have.

And God as much said to Abraham, Abraham, I will take your confidence and your trust in me in place of the righteousness that you don't have.

Because God can only accept a righteousness which is full and complete and perfect. But we don't have that kind of righteousness to offer to God.

[ 37 : 02 ] That's why we have to get it from Jesus Christ. And he imputes his righteousness to us when we believe on him. And that's what gives us a perfect standing before the almighty.

We stand before him in the righteousness righteousness of Christ. And we receive that righteousness simply by believing. That's why it's called justification by believing.

We are justified or we are declared righteous before God simply on the basis of our belief. And we all believe with an imperfect faith. Abraham had an imperfect faith.

Moses had an imperfect faith. faith. We know Thomas had an imperfect faith. John the Baptist had an imperfect faith. Peter had an imperfect faith. But that's the only kind of faith that we can offer God is an imperfect faith.

And someone asked, I just don't know if my faith is great enough. Well, the thing that saves us is not the amount of our faith, but the object of our faith.

[ 38 : 13 ] And when you put your faith in Jesus Christ, a grain of mustard seed will do just fine. And then you begin growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

You begin growing in your faith. Abraham is a classic example of that. But I've gotten astray here and the food is all good. So anyway, we know what's going to happen and the king is going to be absolutely delighted when he finds out that Daniel has been spared.

And the thing that I would leave you with is that this truth thing is so valuable and so important to buy the truth and sell it not. And Daniel, Daniel was a purveyor of that.

And he was one who was not willing to sacrifice what he knew was right for anything, even if it cost him his life. and fellas, as I mentioned earlier, we are not responsible for winning the battle.

We are responsible for engaging in a good fight and fight the fight of faith and leave the results with the Lord. We do the right thing and leave the results with the Lord.

[ 39 : 28 ] And sometimes, sometimes there is a heavy price to pay for doing the right thing. Now, we know there is supposed to be a price to pay for doing the wrong thing.

But when you do the right thing, it is supposed to come out good. And ultimately, it does. But only in the economy of God. And in the short term, it might look to us like it is a disaster.

But if it is faithfulness that God considers faithful, that is all that matters. Joe? There is a good point. Jim is here to represent the government we have. And what Daniel did, he was a captive in a foreign government.

that was counter to God's ways at all. This guy chopped off heads and he was a bad guy. He was like a dictator. But yet, Daniel gave his allegiance to him because he knew that God had put him there in that position to be what he was then.

He was a bad guy. God ordained that he would be in that position. So whoever put him in his presence, like President Truman, or not President Trump, but President Trump, we are to respect him and honor him.

[ 40 : 31 ] He is our president. done. You know, and God had him put there and said, we have to take that attitude like Daniel did towards there and towards Trump, our president.

So,