

The Night With The Lions

Daniel 6

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I first want to read Daniel 6:16-18 to get us started. "So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, 'Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.' Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed. Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him."

What little child growing up in Sunday school as I did doesn't know the story of Daniel in the lions' den. What a great story this is. I think of Daniel as spending the night in this "lion Lazy Boy." He was just kicking back onto the lions as they purred that night. God was with him in the den and protected him through that night with the lions. So it is a story beloved by children and adults.

One of the best things about this story is that it is true. Daniel literally was thrown into a dens of lions and spent the night with them. We're going to see that God sent His angel and delivered Daniel. What a glorious story of God's miraculous power!

This is going to be an incredible journey as we go through these verses. There are seven sections as this scene unfolds. Verses 1-3 cover the promotion of Daniel. "It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps..."—or "princes"—"...to be over the whole kingdom; and over these, three governors..."—or "presidents"—"...of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm."

What is happening at the beginning of this story, in chapter 6, is that according to Daniel's prophecy of the image Nebuchadnezzar saw, the head of gold, which was Babylon, has now been replaced by the breast and arms of silver, which is the Medo-Persian Empire. We find that at the end of chapter 5. Belshazzar was having his great feast, and then the Medo-Persian army took over the Babylonian kingdom and is now reigning. Now Daniel has reigned successfully in Babylon through successive kings and would continue to do that for other kings for many more years.

Darius is now reigning over Babylon, in verse 1, and he starts to organize his kingdom. He takes 120 satraps, which are leaders over the whole kingdom. Then over them, there are three governors, verse 2. And Daniel was over these governors. So you had Darius, then Daniel, then the other governors and then the 120 satraps. It was a flow chart of the government.

Because Daniel was promoted and exalted to this prominent position, the other leaders became

jealous and envious of Daniel. So they began to conspire against Daniel. At this time, Daniel is in his 80s or could even be in his 90s; no one knows conclusively. But the point is that he's getting up in years.

This encourages me; God is never without a witness. He's using this 80- to 90-year-old man to be His witness in the city of Babylon. God has raised Daniel up in his old years.

Now one of the reasons that Daniel is in such a place of prominence and influence is because he started very young, in chapter 1. "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies," Daniel 1:8. Secondly, Daniel was a man of prayer. We'll see that in chapter 6. Daniel made it a habit to pray to God every day. So God used him.

No matter how dark the world around us gets, we know that God always uses a witness, and here He is using Daniel in his later years. You're never too old to be used by God.

I had a godly grandmother on the Miller side of the family, Ada Miller, who lived in Yucaipa. She was involved in her church. When she was older and became a shut-in and couldn't travel, she asked her pastor for a list of names of other shut-ins. She got up every day and called each one to pray with them, read Scripture to them and encouraged them in the Lord. So you're never beyond being able to pray and be a blessing to others.

Now we move to the second section, verses 4-9, which is the plot of the governors and satraps. "So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom." So they were trying to find some flaw in Daniel. They were trying to get some mud on Daniel, so they could accuse him before the king.

Verse 4, "But they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him. Then these men said, 'We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God.'" So if they were going to catch Daniel in some error, it would be in his devotion and commitment to God. They knew Daniel loved God and was committed to Him.

Verse 6, "So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: 'King Darius, live forever! All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.' Therefore King Darius signed the written decree." That is very sad. So what happened to Daniel is that his promotion to the prominent position right below the king, and above the governors and satraps, caused these other leaders to be jealous and envious.

I want you to note Daniel's character, described in verse 4. "He was faithful," which carries the idea of trustworthiness or dependability. God wants us to be faithful, trustworthy and

dependable. And Daniel was also without fault.

These are great qualities. I note in the New Testament that one of the qualities or characteristics necessary for a pastor to have—also called a “bishop” or “elder”—or a deacon, which is also a servant in the church, is that they are to be above reproach. What that doesn’t mean is that they must be perfect; no one is perfect. But what it means is that they live their lives above board, so that if anyone accuses them, the accusation doesn’t stick. They pay their bills and they’re honest. You could examine their lives, as they did Daniel’s, and you would find they are above reproach in that sense. So we, as believers, are also to be lights in a crooked and perverse nation and living lives that are above reproach.

Jealousy was motivating these other leaders. I think about the sins of jealousy and envy. It’s something we really need to watch out for. Jealousy is wanting what other people have, and envy, its twin sister, is desiring that others don’t have what they have. So not only does one want what you have, but they don’t want you to have it.

I think of Joseph, who was sold by his brothers as a slave because they were jealous of him. I think of Jesus and the religious leaders, who were moved with jealousy and envy of Him. Two of the works of the flesh in Galatians 5 include “envy” and “jealousies.” So it’s a sin to be envious and jealous. Sometimes marriages are destroyed because of envy and jealousy. Sometimes people have murdered, stolen money and destroyed lives because of envy and jealousy.

Maybe you are reading this and are jealous of someone. Maybe in the workplace; they got promoted and you didn’t, so you always have something nasty to say about them in conversation. Not only do you want what they have, but you don’t want them to have what they have, so you are filled with envy and jealousy. Be careful; this is a sin that is destructive for sure.

Some are confused because the Bible says that God is jealous. Whatever God is, He is holy and righteous. The number one attribute that God wants to be known by in the Bible is His holiness. God is holy. Oprah Winfrey says she’s a Christian but says, “I can’t believe in a God who is a jealous God,” so she creates her own God. She’s upset with the idea He is a jealous God.

God is holy and righteous, so whatever is meant by Him being “jealous” is not a sinful jealousy. It means that God is jealous for us, not because of us. God’s jealousy is for our good and for our care. Part of that jealousy is that He knows if we put anything above Him in our lives, it’s detrimental to us. So it is a jealous love that is a holy and righteous love that is certainly different than any sinful envy and jealousy that we, as human beings, might partake of.

Now, verse 7, these other leaders came to the king with falsehood and flattery. They said, “All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree.” The truth was that they lied; Daniel wasn’t included. Daniel wasn’t with them when they went to the king for

him to grant this decree. If the king were smart, he would have said, "Wait a minute. Let me ask Daniel what he thinks about this." That would have blown this all out of the water. He didn't even think, Where's Daniel? Why isn't he here? I want to know what Daniel's got to say. So their jealousy led them to lie.

Then in verse 7 they used flattery. They presented the petition or decree to the king, saying, "Whoever petitions..."—or "prays to"—"...any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions." It was no big deal, just a 30-day decree. For a month the king gets to be a god. The king thought this was a pretty good deal. It was so silly—to be a god for 30 days. What's with that?! Why not for 60 days? For 10 years? Why not permanently?

So this king is proud and he wants to be deified. The Bible says, "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." It's a dangerous thing to be proud. But the king says, "That sounds pretty great," so he signed the petition. They appealed to the king's pride. That's something we need to be concerned about.

The third section of this story is the prayer of Daniel, and this is where it gets exciting. So Daniel is promoted, the other leaders are plotting and we'll see that the king is powerless, but Daniel is prayerful.

Whenever we face a difficulty, a temptation or a trial, we need to face it on our knees. Verses 10-11 say, "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days. Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God."

We don't know if these men were watching with binoculars or they put a bug in his room or what they did to spy on him, but it kind of reminds me of the politicians in America today. They spy on one another to get dirt against their opponent.

So they watched Daniel, and they knew Daniel was a man of prayer. They knew that he lived in such commitment to God that this was going to be where they would trip him up. Daniel was a Hebrew, a child of the captivity, he was going to pray and when he did, they'd get him, because the king had signed the petition.

Daniel was facing a temptation, a dilemma. What will he do? Daniel was in his 80s or 90s, and you never get too old to be tempted. The temptations just get more subtle and sneaky. The decree was not that they had to pray to the king; the decree was that if they prayed, it had to be only to the king. So Daniel could have committed the sin of omission—he just wouldn't pray for 30 days. Many times we say, "Well, I'm too busy to pray. I don't need to pray." So Daniel could have rationalized or compromised by saying, "God knows my heart. I'm better alive than dead. If I get fed to the lions, I'm no good to God and this kingdom. I'll just keep my prayers to myself for 30 days, or I just won't pray for 30 days. And at the end of 30 days, I'll go back to my usual

prayer routine.” But Daniel would not compromise one inch. So there is a danger of getting older and being tempted.

The epistle of John says that in the world there is “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.” They are “not of the Father” but “of the world.” Someone broke that down into age groups. “The lust of the flesh” is the sins of youth, “the lust of the eyes” is the sins of middle age when you want to acquire things. “The pride of life” is the sin of the senior years. But the sins of all of these groups carry over into your older years; they don’t go away. So if you think getting old will relieve you from temptation, think again.

But if you start young, purpose in your heart, commit yourself to prayer, as Daniel did, and study the Bible and consecrate yourself to God, you’ll be able to weather the things of life that come your way to tempt you to compromise.

Daniel would not disobey God. The Bible actually commands us to pray. Prayer is not an option. In Luke 18:1, Jesus said, “Men always ought to pray and not lose heart” or “faint.” That is God commanding us to pray. What we do is we don’t pray, so we faint. If we prayed, we wouldn’t faint. What gave Daniel the strength to go courageously into the lions’ den was because Daniel spent time on his knees. Someone said, “His public strength was in his private prayer.” What made Daniel the man who was faithful and faultless was the time he spent on his knees.

The important part of a tree is its root system—how deep and strong its roots are. The important part of a believer is how deep your roots go in prayer and in God’s Word.

I want you to note five things about the prayer of Daniel, in verse 10. First, he had a place to pray. “He went home” to his “upper room, with his windows open.” He didn’t open the windows on purpose to pray in antagonism to the king; they were already open. Daniel had no animosity in his heart toward the king. Daniel wasn’t going to shut his windows in order to hide.

Now you can pray anywhere. Jonah prayed in the belly of a fish. But it is good to find a place to pray—a nook in your home, a private place in your house. Jesus said, “Enter into thy closet.” I know He wasn’t talking literally, but why not? To do that, maybe you have to clean your closet. Horror of horrors! But find a place where you can “shut the door,” as Jesus said, and be alone with God.

Susanna Wesley, the mother of John and Charles Wesley, had about 18 children and lived in a small, one-room house, so she’d sit in a rocking chair in a corner of the room and would throw her apron over her head. And all her children knew that when she was in her rocker with the apron over her head, it was like Mr. Sinai—don’t draw nigh and touch the mountain. God would strike them with lightning. John and Charles looked back on that as the source of their mother’s godly influence that she had on their lives. So find a place to pray.

Secondly, he had a purpose in prayer. It says he prayed “toward Jerusalem.” What does that mean? In 1 Kings 8, when Solomon was dedicating the temple, Solomon said, “God, if you

people are taken away captive,” which Daniel was, “and they pray, let them pray toward this holy place. Let them look back toward Jerusalem.” Some theorize it’s because that’s where the sacrifices were made; we can’t approach God without the blood of the lamb being shed. It’s also because of the Cross that we have access to God.

Daniel was praying in obedience to the promises of God or we might say pleading the promises of God; he was praying according to God’s will as found in God’s Word.

Thirdly, notice his posture in prayer. Verse 10 says, “He knelt down on his knees.” Obviously, it’s not necessary to kneel down when we pray. It could be that as you get older, you can’t get down on your knees. I kick back in my Lazy Boy. But it’s dangerous to get too comfortable when you pray; you might fall asleep during your prayer. Maybe you should walk and pray or drive and pray.

I used to love just getting in my car and driving somewhere for an hour or so. I wouldn’t take my phone. Just be alone with God. But you have to pray with your eyes open and your hands on the wheel.

Yet there is something marvelous about the outward posture of praying on your knees. It speaks of humility and dependency on God. So if you can do it, if it’s a reflection of your heart, pray on your knees. Jesus knelt in prayer. Paul knelt and prayed in Acts 20, where the pastors from the churches in the Ephesus area knelt on the beach and prayed and wept with Paul as he was leaving them. Peter knelt and prayed. So all through the Bible we have references to people kneeling when they prayed. But God looks at the heart when we pray.

Fourthly, he gave thanks in his prayer. And verse 11 says he was “making supplication before his God.” Some think—and it’s possible—that Daniel was even praying for King Darius, that he was praying that God would bless him, keep him and protect him. So Daniel was supplicating, interceding and thanking. Don’t forget praise and thanksgiving. The Bible says, “In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Fifthly, in verse 10, he had a habit of prayer. It says, “as was his custom since early days.” I like that. From the time he was a teenager, even though he was taken away as a captive to a strange land, Daniel got down on his knees three times a day, faced Jerusalem, prayed, gave thanks and made his supplication before God.

So Daniel’s devotion and dedication to prayer brought him into conflict with the culture. Yet he would not compromise. And our commitment to God, our devotion to God, our prayer life to God might bring us into conflict with the culture around us, but we can’t compromise our prayer life or our commitment to God. In the New Testament, it says, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” When men say we can’t sing, we’re going to sing, because the Bible says, “Sing to the Lord.” When men say we can’t pray, we’re going to pray. If the culture says not to preach, we’re going to preach. If the Bible says we’re to gather together, but the culture says you can’t gather as Christians, we’re going to gather together. We’re going to worship God. We’re not

going to compromise with the edicts of man.

Now we move to the fourth section of the story, verses 12-15, to the powerless king. "And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: 'Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?' The king answered and said, 'The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.'"

The reason the law of the Medes and Persians couldn't be altered was because they believed the king could make no mistakes. So they believed that if the king made a decree and signed it and then changed it, it would be contrary to the belief that the king was faultless or couldn't make any mistakes.

Verse 13, "So they answered and said before the king, 'That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah...' This is what really upset them. Daniel was a Hebrew and one of the children of captivity. He "'does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.' And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him."

In the Medo-Persian kingdom, if you were convicted of a crime and were sentenced, that sentence would be carried out that very same day. They wouldn't leave you on death row for 10 years; you would be executed that very same day. That's why that evening Daniel was thrown into the den and spent the night with the lions. So the king "labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him."

Verse 15, "Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, 'Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed.'" So now the king himself is powerless. And you think, Why doesn't he just know he was tricked, lied to and deceived and reverse the decree? But even the king was bound by the law of the Medes and Persians.

My point is that God had every purpose, plan and intention to do the delivering of Daniel. The king labored and tried to free Daniel, but he couldn't. God's going to do it. God wanted to display His miraculous power. How wonderful that the king "was greatly displeased with himself." That's the one thing commendable about this foolish king: he realized he only had himself to blame. He was displeased with himself. "Why did I let myself be deceived?"

Then the fifth section of the story, in verses 16-23, is the powerful God. This is the section in which God delivers Daniel. It is the night of deliverance. "So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, 'Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.'" When I read that I think, That's easy for you to say, King!

He threw Daniel into the pit of lions and said, "Don't worry, Daniel. God's got you covered."

“Yah, right! Why don’t you come with me?”

Verse 17, “Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed. Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him.” So the king had one of those sleepless nights. I always thought there was an interesting contrast between the king, pacing the floor, ringing his hands, distraught and distressed in his beautiful palace, and Daniel, who is in the lions’ den kicking back and having a good night’s sleep with the lions. I know the Scriptures don’t say this, but I kind of see this lion Lazy Boy kind of thing. He’s got his head back, laying against the lion and they’re keeping him close for warmth.

This looks like Peter when he was in prison. He was to be executed the next morning but he went to sleep the night before. An angel had to awaken him to take him out of the prison that night. God brought deliverance, as He did with Daniel.

So what a marvelous thing to see the contrast between the man of the world, the king, and his distraught situation and God’s servant, Daniel, who no doubt had a good night’s sleep, trusting in the Lord.

Verse 19, “Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, ‘Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?’ Then Daniel said to the king, ‘O king, live forever!’” As soon as the king heard Daniel say that, his heart settled. “Oh, he’s still alive!”

Now if I were Daniel—this is more imaginative preaching—I would have waited a few minutes to answer the king to make him freak out a little. A few hours ago the king told Daniel his God would deliver him; now he asks if his God did deliver him. Then he hears Daniel say, “O king, live forever,” which means “O king, live a long and prosperous life!”

Daniel then said, ““My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths...”—how beautiful that is —“...so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you.”” God had sent His angel because Daniel was right with God and hadn’t opposed the king.

Verse 23, “Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.” So Daniel wasn’t harmed because he was right before God and the king and because he trusted in the Lord.

Hebrews 11 has that great hall of heroes, who through faith did great conquests. Hebrews 11:33 says, “...who through faith...stopped the mouths of lions.” It doesn’t name Daniel specifically, but who else could it be? In the Psalms, David quite often prayed, “Save me from the lion’s mouth.” Here in Daniel 6, God does just that.

Daniel goes into the pit surrounded by these lions, and he said, "My God sent His angel." Angels were created by God to do His will and to protect His people. God uses angels. I believe in angels. There really are angels. God sends them to help us and to protect us in our hour of need. So what a marvelous truth that is that He sent this angel to protect Daniel.

I believe that this is a miracle of God. But there are criticisms that come against this story. Some say it didn't happen. Some say the lions weren't hungry, but we'll see that they were. Some say Daniel hid in a crack in the wall. All these crazy ideas are concocted to say that God couldn't do this. If God can create the heavens and the earth by the word of His power, speak them into existence, God certainly can tame the lions to save His servant.

"Is anything too hard for the Lord?" No. So this story is not a matter of whether or not God is able. God is able. I like all the verses in the Bible that say "God is able." God is "able to save." God is "able to keep you." God is "able to present you faultless before the presence of His glory." So never question the ability of God.

Remember Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, in Daniel 3, facing a fiery furnace? Interestingly, the Medo-Persian Empire worshipped fire. So their form of execution was the lions' den. The Babylonian Empire did not worship fire, so their form of execution was a fiery furnace. So that indicates the historical accuracy of the book of Daniel. It's one of the many reasons why I believe the Bible is historical fact.

The three Hebrews told King Nebuchadnezzar that they wouldn't bow down and worship his image. They said "Our God...is able to deliver us," from the fiery furnace, "but if not," they would not "worship the gold image which you have set up."

But the fact that God delivered Daniel from the lions' den is not a pattern or a promise that He will deliver everyone who will ever face lions. Christians have been thrown to the lions and have been killed. Paul the Apostle was beheaded by Nero for his faith. God didn't spare him. James was killed by the authorities in the book of Acts. So it's not a promise; it's a principle that He does deliver.

Now God did not deliver Daniel from the lions' den; He delivered him in the lions' den. And God may not choose to deliver us. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego said, "Let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up." They only worshipped God.

So don't read this that nothing bad can ever happen to you, that you'll never die. But God will be with you in the fire, He can deliver you, but we need to trust Him. It takes even greater faith to trust God if He doesn't deliver us from the lions.

Jesus said, "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Hebrews 11:37 says there were others who were not spared or delivered. "They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented." God doesn't always deliver His servants.

But we can always count on God being with us in the fire or with us in the lions' den. Yet God will deliver us in His way and in His time according to His will. So we can't predict the outcome, but we can always trust God with the outcome. You can't predict what God will do, but you know that God will do what is best for us and for His glory.

Someone said, "A living faith in the living God will give courage and strength for every emergency of life." So if you are facing lions today, jealous or envious people who are lying about you or attacking you, stand faithful and uncompromising before your God.

The sixth section of the story is in verse 24, where the evildoers are punished. The critics who claim that the lions were not hungry should read this verse. Sometimes the difficulties are resolved if you just read the next verse. "And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den."

This is radical. What a reversal! Daniel, the innocent, is released out of the lions' den, and the guilty conspirators are thrown into the den of lions.

Some people are bothered by this, but this is in the Bible. Why did the king throw their wives and their children into the lions' den with them? They didn't do anything wrong. We don't know that. Also, in that culture at that time, it was customary to take out the whole family if you had someone oppose you politically. That way the family couldn't come against you later. And all God is doing here is recording history, just as it happened; He's not promoting it, He's not commanding it and He didn't tell the king to throw the other family members into the pit.

But it's interesting that in Proverbs 26:27, it says, "Whoever digs a pit will fall into it." So they dug this pit for Daniel, but they themselves fell into it. I think all of Psalm 37 should be read with Daniel 6. It talks about the enemies coming against us. They shall stumble and fall, but "the meek shall inherit the earth." It is a parallel psalm to this chapter of Daniel.

And lastly, section seven of this story is in verses 25-28, where we see the Lord's power proclaimed. All that took place in this chapter brought glory to God by having His power proclaimed. "Then King Darius wrote: 'To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. I make a decree...'—or "a proclamation"—"...that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, and steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall endure to the end. He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.' So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

What are some of the takeaways that we can grab from the life of Daniel? Number one, Daniel was a man who "purposed in his heart." Daniel was so successful in this pagan culture in which he lived because he purposed. He purposed in his heart as a very young man, in chapter 1.

He said he would not be defiled with the king's meat.

So we need to dare to be a Daniel. We need to have a firm purpose. He decided as a young person he wouldn't be defiled with sexual immorality. "I'm going to save myself for marriage." Then you'll be blessed in a marvelous way. "I won't be defiled by the world's 'lust of the flesh' or 'the lust of the eyes' or 'the pride of life.'" It all starts with a purpose, before the temptation comes. Purpose in your heart that you will not yield but rather obey God.

Number two, Daniel was a man of prayer. He prayed habitually from the time he was young. He prayed privately. He praised and gave thanks in his prayers. Daniel had a pattern of prayer in his life. It sealed him and strengthened him against temptation.

Number three, Daniel presented his body as a living sacrifice, Romans 12. He determined what God's will was for him.

So Daniel purposed, Daniel prayed and Daniel presented his body as a living sacrifice. May God give us more Daniels in this dark culture in which we live today.