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REMAINING FIRM IN FAITH
Daniel 6:1-28

Introduction

Hebrews 11:1 defines faith as “*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*” Because the English word “*hope*” is often used as a synonym for “*wish*,” this definition is commonly misunderstood into thinking of faith as a wishful optimistic blind leap off a cliff. That is not so. Faith is a conviction of truth that brings about an assurance of eventual outcome. It is not a wish or blind leap in any sense but is solidly founded in the evidence of the character and ability of God to keep his promises. Faith is stepping forward in obedience to God with full assurance that the outcome is in His hands and that He will do what is eternally best for you and His glory.

There are many things that will occur in life that will test your faith. That should neither surprise nor frighten us. James 1:2-4 even tells us that we should “*count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have [its] perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.*” As various situations arise in your life, your belief and trust in God will be challenged. That is the test of faith. Will you will walk in obedience to His directions believing He knows what is best and trusting that He is able to keep His promises and do what is best? As your faith is tested and you walk in trust of God, you will become a more mature believer with an even greater and more solid faith in Him.

This morning we are going to be examining the example of solid faith exhibited in the life of Daniel. While it is doubtful that your faith will be tested here in the United States at this time to the extreme experienced by Daniel, the reality is that such extreme testing does occur to our brothers and sisters in Christ in other countries and such persecution could occur here in the future. It is also true that your faith will be tested here in a similar manner though with less extreme consequences. If you cannot stand firm in faith in the midst of relatively light affliction, what will you do when persecution becomes more extreme? Learn from Daniel’s example this morning and apply its lesson to your own life that you may be mature and firm in your faith.

Darius the Mede - Daniel 5:31

Before we begin our study of Daniel 6 we must identify Darius who is mentioned in the first verse. He was introduced in Daniel 5:31 after the Medo-Persian army captures Babylon and slew king Belshazzar the very night that Daniel interpreted the hand writing on the wall. That verse states, “*Darius the Mede received the kingdom, [being] about sixty-two years old.*” Daniel 9:1 further identifies Darius as “*the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans.*”

The specific identity of this man is somewhat uncertain. The ancient records are lacking and those that have survived are at times confusing. Various names and terms are at times interchanged without clarity of who is being referenced and our understanding of the ancient languages can also be uncertain. Because of this uncertainty and that our only existing use of the term “*Darius the Mede*” in the ancient literature is here in Daniel, liberal scholars scoff and claim Daniel was in error and this is evidence that the book of Daniel was written by an imposter in the second century B.C. with the writer making a mistaken historical reference to Darius Hystaspes (Darius I) who was not born until 522 B.C., which is seventeen years after the fall of Babylon. However, there are several reasonable possibilities of the identification of Darius the Mede, and Darius Hystaspes is not one of them since he had a different

father, a different ethnic descent and lived at a different time period. Frankly, identify him as Darius Hystaspes should be a stretch even for those holding to a later date of writing since it is very unlikely an imposter would have made such a grave historical error, and the Jews of the Maccabean period would have known both Babylonian and Persian history well enough to reject such a writing from the canon of scripture.

The first possibility is that Darius the Mede is King Cyrus. In favor of this understanding is that some translations of Daniel and the reference in Bel & The Dragon refer to this man as Cyrus, and Daniel 6:28 could be translated as “even” instead of “and” so that the verse refers to one person instead of two. However, the difficulty of this view is that Cyrus was of Persian descent and the son of Cambyses I and Darius was of Median descent and the son of Ahaseurus.

A more reasonable identity for Darius the Mede is that he is a man called Gubaru in the Nabonidus Chronicles who was made governor over the Babylonian province under Cyrus. There is some confusion because those Chronicles also mention a man named Ugbaru who became governor of Gutium. In an earlier translation both Gubaru and Ugbaru are referred to as Gobryas. In favor of this view is 1) the fact that Darius “*received the kingdom*” which means his position came from a higher authority. 2) Daniel 9:1 states that he “*was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans*” which limits the area under his authority to the Babylonian province. 3) As we have already seen in Daniel 5, the term king was used for a lesser authority over a province of the greater empire.

Daniel Distinguishes Himself - Daniel 6:1-3

Let us begin our study. *Daniel 6:1–3 (LSB), ¹ It seemed good to Darius that he set 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom,² and over them three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one), that these satraps might be accountable to them, and that the king might not suffer loss. ³ Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because an extraordinary spirit was in him, and the king planned to set him over the entire kingdom.*

We are not told how long after the fall of Babylon this occurred, but it would not have been very long. It was not uncommon for a conquering nation to appoint from among the officials of the conquered nation those who would serve them in the government of the new kingdom. As long as there was some assurance of loyalty to the new king, the working knowledge of the people and land would be invaluable to the new king. Daniel would certainly fit those qualifications especially since his rebuke and prophecy against Belshazzar would have been made known, and he had already served in high positions in the Babylonian empire for over sixty years.

Darius is the authority over the province of Babylon and under him he appoints 120 satraps, also translated as “princes,” over various regions and affairs of the province. Over them he appointed three commissioners or chiefs to oversee them. As Darius became more familiar with the men he appointed to these positions he became aware of Daniel’s “*excellent spirit.*” It was obvious that Daniel was far superior to the other officials so Darius considered setting him over the whole realm and was planning to do so. That would be good for the Darius and the kingdom, but it resulted in a jealous reaction by the other officials.

The Plot of Jealous Men - Daniel 6:4-5

⁴ Then the commissioners and satraps began seeking to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to matters of the kingdom; but they were not able to find any ground of accusation or evidence of corruption, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him. ⁵ Then these men said, “We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find it against him with regard to the law of his God.”

First, they formed a conspiracy to find a way to get rid of Daniel. They did not want him in authority over them. There are a multitude of possible reasons for that ranging from just simple jealousy to racial

prejudice against him because he was a Jew to wanting to be able to hide their own corruption. Whatever their reasons, they began by examining all the details of his work. If they could find fault in something he did, then they could accuse him and cause him to be removed or at least fall out of the king's favor. However, Daniel was completely faithful and they could not find any negligence or any corruption in him.

Since there was no wrongdoing of any kind in Daniel they came up with another plan. They would have to find something in regard to his faithfulness in keeping the law of God they could turn against him. There was no direct conflict between their own law and the law of God, so they plotted to change their own law in order to create one.

The Manipulation of the King - Daniel 6:6-9

Daniel 6:6-9 (LSB), ⁶ Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and said thus to him: "King Darius, live forever!" ⁷ "All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have counseled together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who seeks to make a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions' den." ⁸ "Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the written document so that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked." ⁹ Therefore King Darius signed the written document, that is, the injunction.

They set out to manipulate the king into instituting a law that would get Daniel in trouble and they were successful. Darius was easily swayed by their fawning over him. While the greeting of "King Darius, live forever!" was a common court greeting, the rest of it was designed to use Darius' pride to manipulate him. Proverbs 29:5 warns, "A man who flatters his neighbor Spreads a net for his feet." They ensnared King Darius.

First, they came in a large group with the claim that everyone in the government from governors down to the captains had all agreed on what was going to be requested. That was a lie since Daniel had not been consulted, and it is highly doubtful all the others had either, but truth is of little concern to those who plot to do evil.

Second, they manipulated Darius' by inflating his ego. It was not that unusual for the Persian kings to be thought of as having attributes of deity so this played on his pride to be thought of in the same terms. The restriction of giving petitions to Darius alone is not so much considering him to be a god that could answer prayer himself, but more as a human representative of the god or gods. He would have the supreme authority to mediate between man and the gods for thirty days. Their prayers would have to be made in Darius' name. This would also be seen as a supreme act of loyalty to Darius.

Darius gave into his sinful pride and took the bait signing the decree and making it the law of his realm. The text emphasizes the fact that such a law of the Medes and Persians could not be changed once it was enacted. The penalty for making a petition to any god or any man other than Darius would result in execution by being thrown into a den of lions.

Envy and jealousy are common sinful ailments of mankind. So are ethnic prejudice and the desire to keep one's own corruption hidden. These lead to all sorts of sin including trying to find an accusation against the righteous. This is nothing new. It was old then and continues today. Jesus even warned us that such evil people will even make up things and lie and say all manner of evil against the righteous (Matthew 5:10-11). In this case they crafted a law to make it illegal to do what is righteous. Evil people continue the same today.

The elite in our own society - government, education, entertainment, media, big business - have become well known for calling what is evil good and what is good evil and working hard to change society to comply with their degenerate sense of ethics. There are of course the many perverted laws designed to promote evil and punish righteousness. The last legal protections of marriage were removed

decades ago as no-fault divorce laws were enacted in every state enabling lawyers to get rich while adulterers and exploiters cast huge financial liabilities on the innocent spouse and cause their children to suffer. New York changing its legal definition of marriage to include homosexuals back in 2011 seems tame compared to trans-gender laws that punish therapists who seek to help those with gender dysphoria accept and become comfortable with their biological sex and laws that force the abominable philosophy on school children and punish teachers who believe parents have a right to know what their children are doing at school. New York continues to push abortion with laws that allow it at any time through birth and having tax-payers pay for it even for people to come here from out of state to get their abortion while placing more restrictions on pro-life groups and failing to investigate and prosecute those who vandalize pro-life centers.

Those who stand up for righteousness and stand against the immorality of political correctness can expect to be chided, harassed, censured, lose business contracts and perhaps their job. Some of that will be due to government related actions, but even more will be related to independent and private businesses, school and individuals. This is the “cancel culture” aspect of political correctness which seeks to punish those that will not kowtow to it. Media will not run your advertisements. Banks will cancel their services with you. Search engines will purposefully avoid your website and social media or give false warnings about it. Follow actual science and abide by the Nuremberg laws so that you refuse to be coerced into mandated medical product experiments and you may find yourself under travel restrictions, refused access to businesses and lose your job.

None of these are as serious as the threat of being thrown into a den of lions for refusing to abide by an immoral law, but whatever threat you do face for following freedom of religion and conscience in striving to live in righteousness is serious to you. How will you respond when the next test of faith comes upon you? Daniel gives us a good model to follow.

A Firm Faith - Daniel 6:10-11

Daniel 6:10–11 (LSB), ¹⁰Now when Daniel knew that the written document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously. ¹¹Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel seeking to make a petition and making supplication before his God.

Daniel knew what was in the law and that it had been signed. He also knew the possible consequences of his actions, but he did not vary anything. He could have tried to comply by not praying at all during the thirty days. He could have tried to hide what he was doing by changing his prayer practices. He could have switched to praying only early in the morning or late at night when no one would notice, or he could have at least closed the windows. Instead, Daniel chose to remain faithful to the practices he had always followed. Among the many instructions given in Jeremiah 29 by the prophet were the commands for those in captivity to call upon the Lord and pray to Him with the promise that He would listen. Daniel was simply following those instructions, and we know Daniel had those instructions because it was reading that very section of Jeremiah that prompted his prayer in Daniel 9.

The custom of praying toward Jerusalem was following the custom adopted at the dedication of Solomon’s temple (2 Chronicles 6:34-39). Praying at morning, evening and at noon was the example David set and wrote about in Psalm 55. Though Daniel would have been very busy with the many governmental duties entrusted to him, he consistently took the time to pray at those times. Regular communication with God was central to Daniel’s life and his success. His position of kneeling was simply an act of his own humility before God and in keeping with the example given in Psalm 95:6.

Daniel’s actions described here are not done in being obstinate or seeking martyrdom. That would be true if he had changed his normal routine to make his prayers more obvious. Daniel is simply being firm in his faith to continue his normal righteous conduct.

That is the example all of us should follow. Daniel established himself in living righteously and so should we. He did not waver from his practice of righteousness regardless of the law that was passed and neither should we. Learn to walk with the Lord in holiness and then do not change from that regardless of what sinful things are practiced by those around you or within our society, perverse laws that make it more difficult to walk in holiness, or persecution that arises because of it.

These evil men were already aware of Daniel's routine and as soon as the law was passed they set out watchers to catch Daniel violating the new edict. They did not have to wait long before their plan had achieved their desired goal. Daniel broke the king's new command and they finally had a basis for accusing him.

The Trap is Sprung - Daniel 6:12-15

Daniel 6:12–15 (LSB), ¹² Then they came near and said before the king concerning the king's injunction, "Did you not sign an injunction that any man who seeks to make a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, is to be cast into the lions' den?" The king answered and said, "The word is certain, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked." ¹³ Then they answered and said before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the injunction which you signed, but keeps seeking to make his petition three times a day." ¹⁴ Then, as soon as the king heard this word, he was greatly distressed within himself and set his mind on saving Daniel; and even until sunset he kept exerting himself to deliver him. ¹⁵ Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or statute which the king establishes may be changed."

The "they" in verse 12 refers to the two commissioners along with some of the Satraps who had come to Darius to inquire about the law he signed. This would not be all the government leaders claimed to have been consulted back in verse 7. Most of them would not have known the reason for this law if they knew about it at all. When Darius confirmed the law, they accused Daniel of ignoring it. They make no reference to Daniel's important government position, but they do specifically point out Daniel's ethnic heritage as a Jewish exile as an effort to be derogatory toward him.

Darius immediately recognizes that he has fallen into a trap and signed a very foolish law. For the rest of the day the king tried to find a way to rescue Daniel from the penalty of the new law, but to no avail. At evening, the conspirators returned to remind the king that the law could not be changed and the penalty for its violation had to be carried out. Darius had no other option.

Daniel in the Lion's Den - Daniel 6:16-17

¹⁶ Then the king said the word, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lions' den. The king answered and said to Daniel, "Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself save you." ¹⁷ And a stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles so that nothing would be changed in regard to Daniel.

Darius' reaction to all of this is fascinating when it is remembered that he would not have known Daniel very long and yet he had already developed such a deep loyalty to him. Even more remarkable was his understanding of Daniel's faith and Daniel's god. He gave the order to have Daniel cast into the lion's den, yet also expressed his own confidence that the God that Daniel served would deliver him. While Darius did not believe the God of Daniel to be the supreme and only God, he did understand that Daniel was a pious and faithful man and therefore believed that Daniel's God would rescue him from the lions.

While we do not know the exact physical layout of this lion's den, if it is like others that have been found, it would have been a large pit in the ground with a partition wall and a gate in it. This would enable the lion keepers to move the lions from side to side so they could carry out their duties. Surrounding the pit would be a four to five foot wall to restrict access and keep people from stumbling

into it. There would be an opening in the wall that would allow lions and lion keepers to enter and exit with a large stone to block the opening. The mouth of the den was blocked by the stone, and both the king and the nobles sealed the opening with their signet rings. This involved making impressions with their rings on a wax seal that would be broken if the stone was removed. The king did not trust the nobles who might enter to make sure Daniel was dead, and they did not trust the king who might enter to rescue Daniel. The king's concern for Daniel was expressed by his activities for the rest of the night.

Darius' Lament - Daniel 6:18-20

Daniel 6:18 (LSB), ¹⁸ Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him.

Entertainment and eating would have been a normal part of the king's life, but this night he would have none of it. Instead, Darius spent the night fasting and without sleep. This again stresses how important Daniel was to him.

¹⁹ Then the king arose at dawn, at the break of day, and hurriedly went to the lions' den. ²⁰ When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king answered and said to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to save you from the lions?"

As soon as it was light the king hurried to the lion's den to find out what had happened. The stone did not have to be removed for Daniel to hear him if he were alive, so the king called out to him. He calls out in a troubled or lamentable voice because he was uncertain of the outcome. While he had been optimistic Daniel's God would save him, the king was not certain. The king's question places the emphasis on the God that Daniel served and whether He had preserved Daniel. Darius even recognizes Him as the "living God" which expresses a greater understanding of Him than might be expected. It can be safely assumed that Daniel had talked to King Darius about God and how He differed from the pagan gods. The king's desire was to know if God had delivered Daniel from the lions.

Daniel's Deliverance - Daniel 6:21-23

Daniel 6:21-23 (LSB), ²¹ Then Daniel spoke to the king, "O king, live forever! ²² "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have done no harm." ²³ Then the king was greatly pleased and said for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no harm whatsoever was found on him because he had believed in his God.

I am sure that Daniel's voice was pleasant to the king's ears. Daniel gave Darius the customary salutation and then explained God's intervention. The Lord had sent an angel that shut the mouths of the lions. They had caused him no harm for Daniel was innocent. Notice as well that Daniel adds that he has committed no crime against the king. His accusers had directly said the Daniel was not paying attention to the king or his decree and that he had disobeyed the new law, but Daniel had committed no crime. Why? A society can make up whatever laws it wants and use police power to enforce those laws, but all laws must eventually be judged by God's standard and any law of man that contradicts God's law is void. There is no crime except that of the society using its police power to punish the righteous.

At the king's command, Daniel was taken up out of the lion's den and examined, and indeed, there was no injury to him at all. Daniel had remained firm in his faith in all circumstances. Darius now had plans for Daniel's accusers.

Darius' Justice - Daniel 6:24

²⁴ The king then said the word, and they brought those men who had brought charges against Daniel, and they cast them, their children, and their wives into the lions' den; and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

Darius knew that he could not trust officials such as these and he carried out a just retribution. Deuteronomy 19:16-21 speaks about the just punishment for those who accuse others and it is to have the punishment they sought to be carried out on themselves. In this case, it was to be cast into the den of lions. While it seems harsh to our western sensitivities to have their families cast in with them, such was the common practice in the ancient world. It removed the possibility of a relative later carrying out retribution against the king. There has also been times when God has carried out such punishment such as in Korah's rebellion recorded in Numbers 16.

This would not have been all the officials claimed to have been consulted when the charges were brought to the king in verse 7, but the ringleaders that had made the accusations. The fact that those cast in were overpowered by the lions before they reached the bottom of the den proved the miracle of God in preserving Daniel in the midst of very hungry and ferocious lions. These were not tamed circus lions.

Darius' Decree - Daniel 6:25-27

Daniel 6:25–27 (LSB), ²⁵ Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations, and men of every tongue who were inhabiting all the land: “May your peace abound! ²⁶ “I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom, men are to fear and be in dread before the God of Daniel; For He is the living God and enduring forever, And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, And His dominion will be unto the end. ²⁷ “He saves and delivers and does signs and wonders In heaven and on earth, Who has also saved Daniel from the power of the lions.”

Darius makes a decree similar to the one that Nebuchadnezzar had given at the end of Daniel 4. It is written to everyone as a proclamation of what God had done in rescuing Daniel from the lions, but it also included a command to those who were under his authority in his realm. They were to give reverence - fear and trembling - to the God of Daniel because of His attributes and activities. Darius recognizes that the God of Daniel is distinguished from the pantheon of their gods for He is the living God who is eternal and has an eternal kingdom that cannot be destroyed. He also intervenes into the affairs of men to deliver, rescue and perform signs and wonders even as demonstrated in rescuing Daniel from the lions.

Daniel's Success - Daniel 6:28

The chapter concludes with a short note about what happened to Daniel afterward. ²⁸ *So this Daniel enjoyed success in the kingdom of Darius and in the kingdom of Cyrus the Persian.*

For the remainder of Daniel's life he continued to successfully serve the kings of the Medo-Persian Empire that had conquered Babylon.

Conclusions

The ability to be firm in faith is not something that suddenly arises in the moment of testing. It arises from faithfulness in walking with God in daily life. Those that consistently strive to live in holiness and practice righteousness will simply continue to do so on a higher level when they face serve trials. Those that yield to temptation and the pressures of the world when tested in minor things will more than likely also yield when the severity of the trials increase.

Will you be able to stand firm in your faith like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah? You will if you are striving to stand firm now in the relatively minor challenges to your belief and trust in God. If you are struggling with that now, then you need to improve and that is one of the purpose of the church. Get involved with one of our men's or ladies' Bible studies or talk with Ed Colon or Diane Harris about personal discipleship. You can dare to be a Daniel because you can learn to stand firm in your faith. It is a matter of knowing God better and learning to trust Him in all things.

Sermon Notes - 8/27/2023
REMAINING FIRM IN FAITH - Daniel 6:1-28

Introduction

Hebrews 11:1

Faith is a conviction of truth that brings about an _____ of the eventual outcome

Faith is solidly founded in the evidence of the character and ability of _____ to keep his promises

James 1:2-4

_____ is a great example of how to stand firm in faith in daily life and under extreme testing

Darius the Mede - Daniel 5:31

Uncertainty about his precise identity has lead liberal scholars to _____ and claim Daniel was in error

Darius the Mede is not Darius _____ who lived later, had a different father and ethnic origin

Some evidence leans to this being another title for _____

It is most likely he is the man called _____ in the Nabonidus Chronicles

Daniel Distinguishes Himself - Daniel 6:1-3

It was not uncommon for officials in one kingdom to become officials in the _____ kingdom

Daniel was one of three chiefs overseeing 120 satraps in the _____ of Babylon.

Darius was considering setting Daniel over his _____ realm

The Plot of Jealous Men - Daniel 6:4-5

They formed a conspiracy to find a way to _____ Daniel from power

They examined Daniel's work but could find _____ in him of any kind

They could not find a direct conflict, so they plotted to change the law to _____ a religious conflict

The Manipulation of the King - Daniel 6:6-9

They were successful in manipulating the king to institute a law that would get Daniel into _____

They came as a group under the _____ they spoke for all the officials

They inflated the king's _____ attributing to him a god-like position and their loyalty

Evil people still produce schemes to allow them to practice their evil while punishing the _____

A Firm Faith - Daniel 6:10-11

Daniel was aware of the new law and its consequences, but he continued in his _____ actions anyway

Praying to the Lord - Jeremiah _____. Praying toward Jerusalem - 2 Chronicles _____.

Praying at morning, evening and noon - Psalm _____. Kneeling while praying - Psalm _____

Daniel was not _____ or seeking martyrdom - he was simply continuing his normal righteous practices

Learn to walk in holiness with the Lord and then do not _____ regardless of changes in society or law

The Trap is Sprung - Daniel 6:12-15

The conspiracy leaders accuse Daniel of _____ the new law

The king tries to find a way to _____ Daniel from the penalty of the new law

The conspirators press the issue and the king is _____ to follow the law

Daniel in the Lion's Den - Daniel 6:16-17

Darius demonstrates a deep _____ to Daniel and some understanding of Daniel's God.

The king and the nobles both seal the entrance because they do not _____ each other.

Darius' Lament - Daniel 6:18-20

Darius abstains from food, entertainment and _____ that night

The king goes to the lion's den at _____ and calls out to see if Daniel's God had delivered him

Daniel's Deliverance - Daniel 6:21-23

Daniel gives the customary salutation and assures Darius that God sent an angel to _____ the lion's mouths

Daniel is taken up and examined and there is _____ found on him

Darius' Justice - Daniel 6:24

Deuteronomy 19:16-21 - the _____ punishment for accusations is to receive the same punishment sought

The destruction of the entire _____ was common in the ancient world

The ferociousness of the lions in overpowering them proves the _____ of Daniel's deliverance

Darius' Decree - Daniel 6:25-27

Darius makes a decree similar to Nebuchadnezzar's in declaring _____ attributes and actions

Daniel's Success - Daniel 6:28

Conclusions

The ability to be firm in faith arises from faithfulness in walking with God in _____

Stand firm now in the relatively _____ testings and you will stand firm in severe testing

Get involved in discipleship with other believers and learn to stand _____ in your faith

KIDS CORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help. **Young Children** - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Count how many times Darius is mentioned. Discuss with your parents how he was tricked and what he came to believe about God.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. Define faith? Why is Biblical faith not a "leap in the dark"? How is faith tested and what should be the results of that testing? Why do liberal scholars scoff at Darius the Mede and claim Daniel was wrong concerning him? What is known about him from the book of Daniel? Who are the reasonable possibilities in identifying Darius the Mede? How did Daniel distinguish himself and what position did Darius want to give to him? What are some of the reasons the other commissioners and the satraps formed a conspiracy against Daniel? Since they could not find any wrong doing in Daniel, what did they plan to do in order to accuse him? How were they able to manipulate the king to agree to their proposed new law? In what ways are you aware of evil men changing laws in our society in order to promote what is evil and punish those who walk in righteousness? What was Daniel's response to the new law? Why did Daniel respond that way? How can / should Daniel's example be followed in your own life? Why did Darius try to find a way to deliver Daniel after being told Daniel had ignored the law? Why couldn't he deliver Daniel? What is the significance of Darius' words to Daniel before he was cast into the den of lions? What did Darius do that night? What did he do the next morning? How did God deliver Daniel from the lions? What did Darius do to the conspirators? How was this just? What is the significance of Darius' decree? What did Darius come to believe about Daniel's God? How can you be sure that you will be firm in your faith when it is tested?