

Life Group Notes

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**Speaker:** Scott Taylor

**Title:** Into the Lion's Den

**Passage:** Daniel 6

As we looked at this familiar story on Sunday, we saw how it was a shadowing of the story of Jesus. V 1-3 - The cast of the story of this story is similar to that of Jesus' – for Darius read Pontius Pilate – for satraps read religious ruling elite – for presidents read Herod and the high priest and of course Daniel is our Jesus figure.

V 4-5 – In these verses we see the characters start to conspire against him out of jealousy and envy. This old foreigner has surpassed them and it doesn't sit well with them. Jealousy is horrible, it does turn to envy which eventually turns to hate. It's not of God and is sinful. Jesus faced this – like Daniel, they could find no fault in Him, and like Daniel it was envy fuelled as pointed out by Pontius Pilate.

V 6-9 – The presidents and satraps manipulate the king with flattery. They appeal to his ego and he signs a declaration that is kingdom wide but is intended to just catch one man out. They abuse their power and manipulate the king. Manipulation is not of God, it is sin and we need to repent of it. Jesus faces a plot to catch him out in blasphemy and Pilate is manipulated to agree to crucifixion by an atmosphere of social unrest being stirred up.

V10-13 – Here we see Daniels's devotion to his God. Yes, he may face death but he will not cease to worship his God three times a day. Even when Jesus knew they were plotting against him, he didn't hold back on his mission. What else would he do? Daniel and Jesus will not compromise their faith because it might be hard – will we, as we live in exile in Reading?

V14-15 – Darius does all he can to get Daniel off the charges, but ultimately has to agree to execution, because he has to by law. Pilate is the same, he comes up with alternative punishments, but to avoid riot he has to execute Jesus.

V16-18 – Here is the execution moment. Death by lions. Daniel is in his 80's, worked with integrity all his life whilst serving the Lord his God through different regime changes. The place of his death was also to be his tomb, assuming lions will devour him and leave nothing left, so a stone is rolled across the mouth to mark it as a tomb. In all of it Daniel does not try to vindicate himself. Even when he knew about the plot. There is no mention of him giving his account, instead he seems to trust God to vindicate Him. Either this side of death or the other. Jesus faces the cross, the one in whom they could find no fault, the exile, the foreigner. His execution was one of finality and he is then moved to a tomb, where the stone is rolled across the mouth! Jesus also doesn't try to vindicate himself. He trusts God to vindicate Him, will we?

V19-24 – here we have the resurrection moment, at break of day! Darius goes and finds Daniel alive – it also at the break of day that the Marys go and find Jesus living amongst the dead. Hallelujah. This is a story of death and resurrection, of vindication and also rescue. Darius is so clear, it is only God who can deliver Daniel from the lions. Only God can rescue us from the lions of death, dissatisfaction, the devil himself as he prowls like a lion. We need him to send his angels and to shut the mouths of these lions.

- 1) What did you hear that was new to you or a good reminder from Sundays sermon?
- 2) How have things like jealousy and manipulation affected you?
- 3) Where can we be tempted to what to vindicate ourselves?
- 4) Where or what do we turn to to rescue us?
- 5) Read the declaration together in verses 26 and 27