

## Daniel's Prayer Life

Daniel 6:10 (New American Standard Bible)

*Now when Daniel learned that the document was signed, he entered his house (and in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and offering praise before his God, just as he had been doing previously.*

### Introduction

How would you survive as a free person in a totally strange land where the people, the language, culture, religion, and even food are different? Not just a day or two, but for your entire life. How would you survive as a slave who has no freedom with virtually no hope to go back to your family and homeland? How would you survive in such a tough situation? Can you even thrive? You can do that, right? With God's help, of course.

This morning, I am going to talk about such a man. As a teenager, he was taken a captive into the Babylonian Kingdom, which thoroughly destroyed his homeland. As slave, he was forced to be trained in the king's court learning a foreign language. He was forced to eat something he never liked nor approved. He had to serve four kings, one of whom forbade him from worshiping the LORD.

His name was Daniel. The literal meaning of his name: God is my judge. This morning's sermon is about him, in particular, about his prayer life. I pray that at the end of the message everyone would imitate Daniel in prayer life.

### Content

I am going to break today's text into five parts and expound them sentence by sentence for you.

#### ***Now when Daniel learned that the document was signed,***

Here's the background of this sentence. Daniel was one of the top three commissioners in the Persian Kingdom at that time (by this time, the Babylonian Kingdom was gone taken over by the Persian Kingdom). When he learned that *the document was signed*, that means, it became a law—king's decree. Back then, disobedience to king's order was the end of your life. They could execute you with no proper trial.

Now, you may want to know what the document was all about, right? To find it out, we need to go back to the few verses before today's text in Daniel chapter 6:1-9.

*It pleased Darius (kc. king of Persia) to appoint 120 satraps (kc. modern day provincial governors) over the kingdom, to be in charge of the whole kingdom, <sup>2</sup> and over them, three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one), so that these satraps would be accountable to them, and that the king would not suffer loss. <sup>3</sup> Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king intended to appoint him over the entire kingdom. <sup>4</sup> Then the commissioners (kc. the other two) and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel regarding government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption, because he was trustworthy, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him. <sup>5</sup> Then these men said, "We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find it against him regarding the law of his God."*

<sup>6</sup> Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows: "King Darius, live forever! <sup>7</sup> All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors, have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that **anyone who offers a prayer to any god or person besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be thrown into the lions' den.** <sup>8</sup> Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it will not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked."<sup>9</sup> Thereupon, King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction.

So, we know now what Daniel was up against. By king's injunction, he was forbidden from praying to the LORD his God. That was the law signed. Let's go to the second sentence.

**he entered his house (and in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem);**

He entered his house and into his roof chamber, the attic, that had windows open toward Jerusalem. Think about it. Daniel had his windows opened toward Jerusalem. Why Jerusalem? Because that was his hometown. Because that was where he was born. Because that was where the temple of God was located and destroyed. And because he wanted to pray facing God's temple. He wasn't alone who did that. Prophet Jonah did the same. Listen. Jonah 2:7: *When my life was ebbing away (kc. he was in the belly of the big fish), I remembered You, Lord. My prayer rose to You and to Your holy temple.* I do the same thing. When I pray in my house, even though my windows are closed due to cold weather, I always face our church. I recommend you doing the same thing when you pray. Face our church, God's house, the house of prayer, and pray. Next sentence.

***and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day,***

Daniel continued kneeling on his knees and prayed three times a day. Pay attention to the phrase “to **continue** kneeling.” It means an ongoing habitual behavior. Every day. Indeed, he kept praying. How often? Three times a day. Prayer to him was a daily routine and discipline like eating three times a day. *No matter what.* Even after he knew what he was doing was against the king’s edict. Although the Bible doesn’t specify the hours of Daniel’s prayer, very likely, his prayer hours were evenly spread throughout the day. Perhaps, one early in the morning before work, one in the afternoon, and one at night.

As far as the prayer hour goes, one thing I noticed in the Scripture is the afternoon prayer, 3 p.m. to be exact. E.g. In Jerusalem, Peter and John would pray in the Temple at the 9<sup>th</sup> hour (Acts 3:1). That’s 3 p.m. in today’s time. That was the designated hour of prayer for God’s people at the Temple. Cornelius the Roman centurion did the same. He also prayed at 3 p.m. (Acts 10:3). Perhaps, so did Daniel. Anyway, three times a day. We can benchmark Daniel’s prayer hours.

Another thing is about the prayer posture. There’s no required posture in prayer. We can pray in any ways we want. However, it is consistent in the Bible what posture people took in prayer. Kneeling. Why kneeling? It shows our humility to the Heavenly God and prepares our heart ready to implore before the Almighty God. Kneeling is physically hard for some of us, but when you do, you are praying in the right way. Jesus did (Luke 22:41), Paul did (Acts 20:36), Peter did (Acts 9:40), and many others did. Try it. The earlier we learn to pray on our knees, the better for our prayer life.

***praying and offering praise before his God,***

This one reveals the content of Daniel’s prayer. Praying and offering praise. I am sure he prayed for his timely needs, such as protection, guidance, and courage to stand for his faith in the LORD. He also offered his praise before His God. Normally, praise is fit for good times. Once again, consider the times he was in. It was a very treacherous time. The king forbade any prayers or worship to Jehovah God. If you do, you will be thrown into the lions’ den. Daniel was fully aware of that. Yet, he still offered his praise to **his God**.

I wonder if we can do the same. In the throes of adversity, can we offer our praise to our God? Daniel’s example reminds us that our praise and thanks ought not to rely on prosperity only. They must transcend our circumstances. Daniel offered his praise every day, three times a day, even after he was forbidden from doing so by the king’s edict, not based on his feelings or circumstances, but based on God’s righteousness and faithfulness that guided him through all those difficult years in a foreign land. We can learn from him to offer our praise and thanks to our Heavenly Father solely based on God’s nature and character not on our circumstances or feelings. That’s how we learn to trust in our God.

***just as he had been doing previously.***

Note here: “*just as he had been doing previously.*” That means no change. Stay the course. Continue what he had been doing. Praying, praising, and worshiping the LORD. It doesn’t matter whether the human king forbids him now. Daniel keeps doing it. After all, he is worshiping the true King of kings and Lord of lords.

It is interesting that (v. 11-13) his enemies spied on Daniel and reported at once to the king accusing him of disobeying the king’s decree punishable by death. Still, it didn’t matter to Daniel. I am sure Daniel could’ve compromised with God saying, *Lord, please forgive me for not praying to You this month. After thirty days, I will come back to you.* He didn’t do that. He just kept praying on. By this point, I believe, he was more determined than ever that he was going to die for his faith in the LORD. No compromise. Just keep doing what he had been doing.

## **Conclusion**

It is a happy ending story. Daniel was thrown into the lions’ den, but the Lord protected him from harm. He was delivered by God’s miracle. The king, instead, threw Daniel’s enemies into the den, who were instantly crushed by the lions’ fangs.

Quick points: God didn’t exempt Daniel from the enemy’s trap or life’s hardship. Yet, Daniel wouldn’t compromise or give in to any threat to give up his faith in the Almighty God. Time will come to all of us testing our faith in Jesus Christ. What would you do if you’re forced to deny Jesus Christ your Lord? Would you keep your faith in Him, no matter what? Are you willing and ready to be thrown into jail or even worse losing your own life? Remember Daniel. He kept on going and experienced God’s miracle. May the Lord help us to be like Daniel. He will protect us.

Amen.