



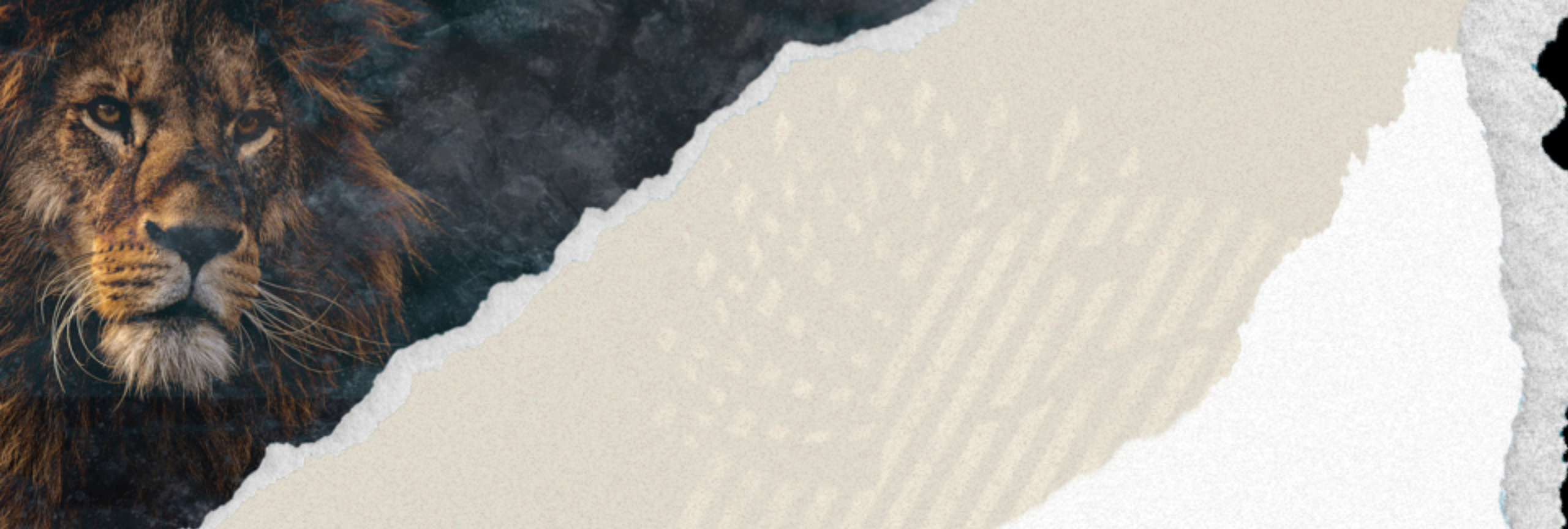
THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Tamed Lions

Chapter 6

Goal Of Chapter 6

The goal of this chapter is to help us see how God sovereignly rules over all of creation, including shutting the mouths of hungry lions. We will also see how Daniel remains faithful to God well into his 80's. This should do two things in us: 1) Help us to see that God can use us even past our so-called prime, and 2) Help us to see that our faith is to be practiced throughout the rest of our time on this earth.



King Darius The Mede

Once again we are introduced to a new King. King Darius the Mede is ruler of Babylon. Darius the Mede might have been in charge of Babylon, but he was not the ruler of the entire Persian empire. King Darius ruled for only two years (538–536 BC) but is significant in Chapter 6 for the role he played in casting Daniel into the lions' den, (much against his better judgment). There are three different references to rulers named Darius in the Bible. Here in Daniel 6, Ezra mentions another king named Darius, who was referred to as Darius the Great. A final reference to a ruler named Darius occurs in Nehemiah 12:22, which refers to the "reign of Darius the Persian" likely between (336–331 BC). The Darius mentioned in Daniel 6 is Darius The Mede.

Daniel's Prayer Life

In Verse 10 Daniel continues to pray despite King Darius banning prayer for thirty days. Prayer was a habit for Daniel and a tool in which he used to talk with his God. Daniel has prayed three times daily now for at least 70 years. He has given us an example in Chapter 2 when the king threatened to kill all the wise men because no one could interpret his dream. Whenever Daniel had been in trouble or whenever Daniel felt threatened, he'd turned to God in prayer. Prayer was as natural to Daniel as breathing. Daniel provides us with a great model of making sure prayer is built into the normal rhythms of our day.

Daniel's Character

Once again we need to focus on Daniels's character, and we should focus on how several kings loved Daniel. Verse 4 says that Daniel's accusers could not find any error or fault with Daniel. These are the high officials of Babylon and if there was something in Daniel's past, they would have brought it to the light. However, the fact that nothing was able to be brought against him means his character was impeccable and consistent. It's also important to mention that several Kings loved Daniel. We saw in Chapter 4 that King Nebuchadnezzar loved Daniel (and Daniel loved him) and here in Chapter 6 we see Darius The Mede crying out in anguish for Daniel. He was a loved man not just by his Hebrew people but by all who encountered him.

The Lions' Den

After it was ordered that Daniel be thrown into the Lions' den in Verse 16, lions would have been placed in a large pit which was then sealed with a rock according to Verse 17. These several lions undoubtedly would've had infrequent meals, making them extra hungry and making this a particularly brutal form of execution. This den would have been reserved for traitors or the king's enemies, yet Darius is forced to put his friend in with the lions. However, while inside Daniel says God sent an angel to shut the mouth of the lions, showing God's complete control over all creation. Although the lions didn't get their fill from Daniel's flesh, they did get to enjoy a meal from Daniel's accusers. God always looks out for His children, even when wicked plans are schemed against us.

Questions:

- 1) Daniel's prayer life is on full display in this passage - he prays consistently, every single day. How have you been doing with faithfulness in prayer? What does your prayer life look like?
- 2) Although Daniel is sometimes depicted as a young man, he would have been more than eighty years old during this time, and yet God uses him and promotes him. Have you ever felt that you were too old to be used by God, or maybe felt you were past your prime?
- 3) God exemplifies His sovereign control over wild beasts by shutting their mouths and allowing Daniel to escape. How does knowing that God is sovereign over all things change your confidence, courage, and boldness?