



## WEEKLY STUDY

### WEEK 4

This week we looked at another familiar story from the Book of Daniel – Daniel in the Lion’s Den. Through this passage from chapter 6, we learned that Daniel displayed faithfulness, character, and a longing for his eternal home. If we too are living in exile in this world, how can we point to God and the bigger thing that he is doing?

Peace of Christ,  
Pastor Mark

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit [prov.church/smallgroups](http://prov.church/smallgroups).

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

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### DAILY STUDY

#### MONDAY: DANIEL 6:3-4a,5, 7b-10

*At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel.*

*Finally these men said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.”*

*The king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions’ den.<sup>8</sup> Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”<sup>9</sup> So King Darius put the decree in writing.*

*When Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.*

- The other leaders who were jealous of Daniel's status devised a plan to bring him down. Daniel's response? He did what he had always done...he prayed. Daniel's prayers included a prayer of thanksgiving (vs 10) and then a prayer for help (vs 11). The men knew how to track him down and catch him in the act because they knew his customary time and place for prayer. **Is there anyone who would know when to find you praying (not that you advertised it, but because you are very consistent in prayer)? Have you ever experienced a person or group of people who seemed determined to bring you down? How did you respond to this threat?**
- *God, may I develop a faithful pattern of prayer that bleeds into every part of my life. I want to turn to you in every season. Amen.*

## TUESDAY: DANIEL 6.19-23

*At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. <sup>20</sup> When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?"*

<sup>21</sup> *Daniel answered, "May the king live forever! <sup>22</sup> My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty."*

<sup>23</sup> *The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.*

- The language in verse 20 echoes that of verse 16. The king identifies Daniel's God as the one whom he serves continually. The king had noticed all of the great gifts Daniel had for leadership, and over time, he also noticed his dedication to his God. He was overjoyed that Daniel was saved by his God. It meant that he could keep this key leader in his kingdom and yet he had still done his part to carry out the decree. **What do you make of the king's reaction to Daniel's salvation? Have you ever seen God move someone to words or actions even though they didn't believe in him?**
- *Jesus, I believe that you can shut the mouths of the "lions" that threaten me from time to time....even when I'm not aware that you are doing it. Thank you for rescuing me. Amen.*

## WEDNESDAY: 1 CORINTHIANS 4.2-5

*Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. <sup>3</sup> I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. <sup>4</sup> My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. <sup>5</sup> Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.*

- Daniel prioritized faithfulness over his own freedom. The story of Daniel doesn't show him struggling about whether or not to remain faithful to God. Like these words from the Apostle Paul, he had clearly been given a trust. His high positions held in a land of captivity are above anything one would anticipate. Paul says, it is required of those who receive a trust to also prove faithful. **In what sense do you think you may have been given a trust – a position or influence beyond what you deserve? How does that spark or hinder your faithfulness?**
- *God, I know that you see me as I truly am, but you also see the person you have created me to be. I am your child, may I respond with faithfulness in each moment. Amen.*

## THURSDAY: PROVERBS 10.9, 11.3

*Whoever walks in integrity walks securely,  
but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.*

*The integrity of the upright guides them,  
but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.*

- Daniel chose character over contentment. He could have taken his high positions and worked them to his own advantage, padding his pockets and building up a false security. Many men would have done that very thing if in his position. We wonder why Daniel seemed to live such a blessed life. It seems that the statements from Proverbs show us the key. He was a man of integrity. He lived the same life in his room as he did in the king's court. Because of that, he walked securely on straight paths. **You probably know of some modern day examples of someone who took advantage of their power to pursue their own security? What would it have looked like if they had walked with integrity and demonstrated character like Daniel?**
- *God, I want to walk the straight paths before you. Forgive me of my divided heart that sometimes pursues a false security in this world over faithfulness to you. Amen.*

## FRIDAY: REVELATION 21.1-5

*Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. <sup>2</sup>I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup>'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

- Daniel prayed out of his window facing his home in Jerusalem. Although he would have visions of his own, the vision given to John and recorded in Revelation 21 had not yet been given. While Daniel was looking and longing for the home he had been taken from, Jesus revealed that a new heaven and a new earth – a new Jerusalem would one day come down from heaven. All things would be made new. **In a sense we are invited to position ourselves in the direction of the coming kingdom of God. As you pray today, picture lifting your sights to your eternal home and pray for Jesus to bring it here.**
- *Come Lord Jesus, usher in your new kingdom where every tear is wiped from every eye. Make us whole in the new city. Amen.*

## SATURDAY: HEBREWS 13.14-16

*For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.*

<sup>15</sup> *Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. <sup>16</sup>And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.*

- Other translations of this passage read: *For this world is not our home*. We are designed for a world where there is not death and destruction, no mental illness, no war or disease. But there is a “city” coming that will meet the description here and in Revelation 21. We don’t wait in vain or with no work to do. Our work (in all the things we do) is to offer our lives and praise to God—to profess the name of Jesus. **What can you do this week to “continually offer sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name”?**
- *God, I look forward to the coming city, the whole world made new. As I wait for you, I will praise you. Amen.*

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Mark shared these teachings learned from Daniel 6. Consider how each could be true in your life.

1. Daniel prioritized faithfulness over freedom
  - When in your daily life do you have to make a conscious decision to choose faithfulness?
  - Have you ever felt that your freedom was at risk? Describe.
  - How does Daniel’s story of faithfulness inspire you to live differently?
2. Daniel chose character over contentment
  - On a scale of 1-10, how driven would you say you are by the pursuit of contentment? How do you define what it means to be content?
  - Daniel displayed a high level of character. His consistency was impeccable. What does a life of character look like in our world today?
3. Daniel chose his eternal home over his home in exile
  - Daniel lived most of his life as an exile in a land that was not his home. Do you ever feel like you are not completely at home walking around this world? Have you found favor in your land of exile?
  - What practices help you to remain focused on your eternal home with God?