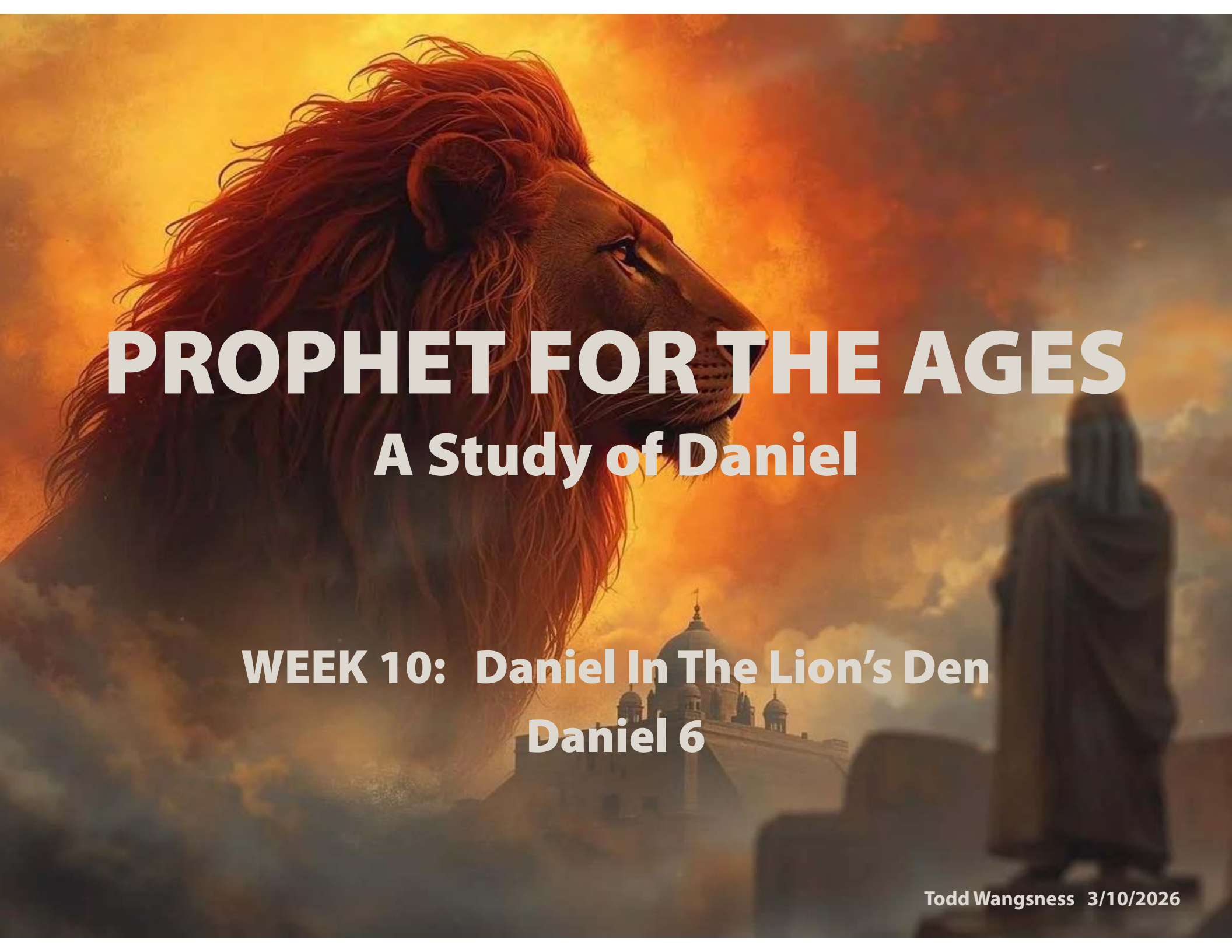




PROPHET FOR THE AGES

A Study of Daniel

WEEK 10: Daniel In The Lion's Den
Daniel 6

Prophet for the Ages: Daniel In The Lion's Den

Daniel 6 Major Themes

Unwavering faithfulness and integrity in service to God

- Daniel's consistent character and refusal to compromise his devotion to God, even under threat of death, provide a powerful example and witness to us

The priority of obedience to God over human authority

- Daniel shows that devotion to the Most High God far supersedes any other authority, even at great personal cost

The power of consistent prayer and devotion

- Daniel's open, habitual prayer life is central to the plot. It becomes the very point his enemies exploit, yet it also demonstrates his complete trust in and reliance upon God.

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Daniel 6 Major Themes (cont.)

God's sovereignty, protection, and deliverance

- God supernaturally intervenes by sending an angel to shut the lions' mouths. This miracle proves God's power over nature, kings, and empires. God preserves the faithful and His kingdom endures forever.

Jealousy, persecution, and the consequences of evil schemes

- Daniel's excellence provokes envy among his colleagues, who manipulate the king into issuing an unchangeable decree. Their plot backfires dramatically — the conspirators and their families are destroyed in the lions' den — illustrating divine justice and the self-destructive nature of wickedness.

The impact of faithful witness on others

- Daniel's steadfastness leads King Darius to recognize the true God as Living, Eternal, and All-Powerful!

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Notable Quote About Daniel 6

"Courage in the lions' den comes from consistency in the prayer closet. Daniel didn't summon up courage the moment he was thrown in the lion's den. His courage was the result of years and years of small, faithful obedience. Daniel had pre-decided to follow Jesus, and that was demonstrated by consistent, daily times of prayer and obedience in the small things. If you wait until the hour of trial to decide what you will do, you will fail. Do you want to know what you're going to do when you're pressured to give up your faith? Or what you're going to do when everybody around you is doing the wrong thing? Look at what you're doing now. Courage to do the right thing is not conjured up in a moment like a magic spell. But if you establish small consistent patterns of obedience — like a daily time to meet with God — then when the hour of trial is upon you, you will do the right thing. So thank God for examples like Daniel, but worship Jesus, who went to the Lion's Den in your place and promises to keep and preserve you from any lions you face today. With him, you can have the courage to face anything."

-- J.D. Greear

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Daniel's Position

Dan 6:1-3 *It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; 2 and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. 3 Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm.*

- The Darius in both chapters 5 and 6 is not Darius the Great, who became emperor of the Medo-Persian empire in 522 BC
 - This Darius is also known as General Gubaru, who invaded and defeated the Babylonian empire
 - This Darius is known in bible as Darius the Mede
 - He was appointed kingship over the province of Babylon by Cyrus the Great
- There were 120 Satraps over the affairs of the Babylonian province
 - Some of the Satraps governed geographical territories, while others had administrative duties

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Daniel's Position (cont.)

- Darius appointed three regents, called **Governors**, that supervised the 120 Satraps
- Daniel was one of these **Governors ... co-equal with the other two**
- Due to Daniel's great success in his administrative role and *"because an excellent spirit was in him"*, Darius intended to elevate Daniel to Prime Minister over the entire province of Babylon
- This would make Daniel #3 in rulership over the Babylonian province
 - Cyrus → Darius → Daniel
- Daniel would have been in his mid 80's at the time of this event

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The Plot Against Daniel

Dan 6:4-5 *So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him. 5 Then these men said, "We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God."*

- It is clear from the context that the other two governors and several of the satraps were involved in the plot against Daniel
- Realizing they could not defame Daniel regarding his character and professional conduct, they hatched another scheme
- They concluded the only way to compromise Daniel was to use his faithfulness to his God as a means to drive a wedge between Darius and Daniel

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The Plot Against Daniel (cont.)

Dan 6:6-9 *So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: "King Darius, live forever! 7 All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. 8 Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter." 9 Therefore King Darius signed the written decree.*

- The method they devised was to arrange a situation where Daniel would be forced to either compromise his faith — or disobey the law of the land
 - They knew Daniel well enough to suspect that he would put his God above the law of the land
- "Consulted together": The Aramaic means "being in tumult", which emphasized eagerness and working in unison – in this case – for nefarious intent to marginalize Daniel and cause him to be executed

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The Plot Against Daniel (cont.)

- Why did Darius agree to such a strange decree?
 - Darius likely believed that Daniel had also agreed to this ostensibly unanimous petition
 - The petition as presented by the governors and satraps was actually a lie – not “all” of them were consulted and in agreement – specifically not Daniel
 - Darius was also probably motivated by vanity – for 30 days, no one would be allowed to pray to anyone, divine or human – except for Darius
- Irrespective of the motivation, Darius signed the decree
- The law of the Medo-Persian empire was such that – once a decree was signed – it could not be rescinded
 - Darius would be powerless to contravene the decree that he executed
- We see this same inability to rescind a Medo-Persian decree in the book of Esther, where Artaxerxes was unable to rescind the decree that authorized the annihilation of the Jews ([Est 3:8-14](#))
 - All he could do was to sign another decree that said the Jews were authorized to defend themselves ([Est 8:11-14](#))

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Daniel's Faithfulness During the Test

Dan 6:10-11 *Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days. 11 Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.*

- Daniel's actions represent a conscious decision – he was aware of the decree but refused to alter his daily routine
 - He could have closed his windows ... or prayed while walking
 - God would have still heard his prayers
 - *"This was not an act of a person courting martyrdom, but the continuation of a faithful ministry in prayer that had characterized his long life." --Walvoord*

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The Conspiracy Against Daniel

Dan 6:12-13 *And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: "Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter." 13 So they answered and said before the king, "That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."*

- The conspirators spied on Daniel – knowing he was unlikely to change his normal devotions to his God
 - They “assembled”, which as described earlier, ‘*thronged together with eagerness*’ to catch Daniel in the act of worshiping his God
- So, they tattletaled on Daniel to the king, by saying that:
 - Daniel disregarded the king
 - Daniel disregarded the king's decree

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The Conspiracy Against Daniel (cont.)

Dan 6:14-15 *And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. 15 Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed."*

- Darius realized that he had been tricked by these evil governors and satraps
 - He finally understood that the whole idea of the decree was a conspiracy against his favorite chief administrator, Daniel
- He earnestly labored that day to discover a means of delivering Daniel from this evil conspiracy
- At sundown – they again approached the king and reminded him that no decree or statute issued by the king could be revoked

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Daniel Sentenced

Dan 6:16-17 *So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you." 17 Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.*

- Darius had no recourse but to sentence Daniel according to the terms of the decree
 - Daniel was to be thrown into the den of ravenous lions
- He expressed a simple hope that the God whom Daniel served would deliver Daniel from being devoured by these vicious beasts
- Daniel was cast into the pit sealed with a stone
- Only God could save him now

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Daniel's Deliverance

Dan 6:18-20 *Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him. 19 Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. 20 And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"*

- The king was obviously very concerned about Daniel
 - He fasted ... refused any entertainment and had a sleepless night
- He arose at the crack of dawn and personally went *in haste to the den of lions*
- He cried out with *lamenting* (Aramaic: 'grieving') voice to Daniel
 - He hoped against hope that God had delivered Daniel from the lions

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Daniel's Deliverance (cont.)

Dan 6:21-23 *Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! 22 My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you." 23 Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.*

- Daniel responded to the king, *"O king, live forever!"*
 - That Daniel addressed the king in this manner shows that Daniel harbored no bitterness against Darius
- Darius was *exceedingly glad* and commanded that Daniel be released from the den
- Daniel was not injured in any way *because he believed (trusted) in his God!*

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Punishment of the Conspirators

Dan 6:24 *And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.*

- Darius finally realized that the conspirators' plot was directed as much against himself as it was against Daniel
- The king only punished those that had accused Daniel of wrong-doing
 - Also included in the punishment, were the families of the conspirators
 - Under Mosaic Law, punishing the families would have never occurred
 - Persian law demanded that if a man committed a capital offense, his entire family would be executed
- The vivid description of the horrific manner in which the lions attacked these people puts to rest the idea that Daniel wasn't eaten because the lions just weren't that hungry
 - The lions were indeed ravenous and consumed the individuals even before they reached the bottom of the pit

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Darius's Decree

Dan 6:25-27 *Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. 26 I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, And steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, And His dominion shall endure to the end. 27 He delivers and rescues, And He works signs and wonders In heaven and on earth, Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.*

- **Darius issued a decree to the Babylonian province (the only region in which he had authority to make a decree binding)**
 - *Men were to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel*
 - *Daniel's God is the Living God and steadfast forever*
 - *His Kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed*
 - *His dominion shall endure to the end*
 - *He delivers and rescues*
 - *He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth*

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The Conclusion of the Matter

Dan 6:28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

- So, Daniel prospered (i.e., politically successful)
 - He was now the 3rd ruler in the province of Babylon
 - Darius the Mede was the 2nd ruler as king over the province
 - Cyrus the Great was king over the entire region of the Medo-Persian empire and ruled from Susa (central Iran today)

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Questions To Ponder

- **How does Daniel's role as an administrator reflect his faithfulness to God, and what can we learn from his example about serving in secular environments?**
- **What parallels can we draw between Daniel's rise to power and Joseph's account in Genesis, and how do these accounts encourage us in our personal and professional lives?**
- **How does the account of Daniel encourage us to trust in God's timing and favor, even when we face opposition?**
- **How can we prepare ourselves for the opportunities and promotions that God may have in store for us, as Daniel did?**
- **Reflect on a time when you faced false accusations or opposition. How can Daniel's response guide you in handling similar situations in the future?**