

## Strength for Today

“Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him. Then the king arose with the dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lions’ den. And when he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, ‘Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?’ Then Daniel spoke to the king, ‘O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths, and they have not harmed me’” (Daniel 6:18-22a).

*When circumstances seem darkest, we can see God's hand most clearly.*

It is obvious that King Darius cared deeply for Daniel and that he had some degree of faith in Daniel’s God. Although he believed that God could deliver Daniel (v. 16), he spent a distressing and sleepless night anxiously awaiting dawn, so he could see if his belief was true. At the crack of dawn he hurried to the lions’ den and called out to Daniel. Imagine his relief to hear Daniel’s voice and to learn about how the angel had shut the lions’ mouths.

Why did Darius think God would deliver Daniel? I’m sure he learned of God from Daniel himself. Surely Daniel talked about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego’s deliverance from the fiery furnace and about other marvelous things God had done for His people. The king’s response shows that Daniel’s testimony was effective and that his integrity had lent credibility to his witness.

But suppose God hadn’t delivered Daniel from the lions. Would He have failed? No. Isaiah also believed God, but he was sawn in half. Stephen believed God but was stoned to death. Paul believed God but was beheaded. Trusting God means accepting His will, whether for life or death. And for Christians, “to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21).

## ***Suggestions for Prayer***

Pray for those Christian leaders today who influence kings and presidents throughout the world. Ask the Lord to give them boldness and blameless integrity.

## ***For Further Study***

How does God view the death of His children (see Ps. 116:15 and John 21:18-19)?

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