
Story Five: Forty Days of Summer 2025

THE TEETH THAT DIDN'T BITE

Tuesday 12 August - Friday 15 August



Storyteller: Chris Walker

Daniel 6:1-22 and Matthew 6:33-7:5

St Barnabas - 24 August

You can watch video resources by going to saintwulstans.online and looking for the post called **The Teeth That Didn't Bite**



TAKE FIVE DEEP BREATHS. CHECK-IN WITH HOW YOU ARE FEELING – IN BODY, IN MIND, IN SPIRIT. TAKE FIVE MORE DEEP BREATHS AND ASK GOD TO ABIDE WITH YOU IN THIS MOMENT. NOW READ THE PASSAGE.

Verses from Daniel 6

It pleased Darius to appoint a hundred and twenty satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.

At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent.

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." So these administrators and satraps went as a group to the king and said: "May King Darius live forever! The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that 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. 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put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." So King Darius put the decree in writing.

Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went

home to his upstairs room where the windows opened towards Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions’ den?”

The king answered, “The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”

Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.” When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him. And then the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!”

A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel’s situation might not be changed. Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without

eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep.



At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions’ den. 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?”

Daniel answered, “May the king live forever! 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.”

r e f l e c t i o n s

One | Describe in your imagination the conspirators going as group and finding Daniel at prayer. Think about all the body language you can see.

Two | The lions’ teeth might not have bitten Daniel, but there were plenty of other teeth that did. Describe the pressures that he was living with.

Three | In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says:

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

Matthew 6:33–7:5

How might these words shape the way we understand Daniel's actions — and the motivations of those who accused him?



Four | Reread the front page for a reminder about how 'face' works. How do

Daniel's quiet prayers, the satraps' manipulative plotting, and Darius's reluctant decree each reveal different pressures to save face? Who risks face — and who protects it — and at what cost?

Five | How might our own attempts to save face — to appear right, respected, or in control — lead us to judge or manipulate others?

What would it mean to risk face instead of managing it?

Six | Try to express your key thought from today as a short phrase that you can carry with you into the rest of your day and week, for example, "into your hands O Lord". Turn to the back page.



May our Gracious God, who knows our pressure to conform and our longing to stay true, reshape our stories with the faithfulness of Christ who stood firm in love. Amen.