

Spiritual Warfare: Part 3  
*Facing Difficult Seasons*

<sup>10</sup> But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God. <sup>11</sup> Then the officials went together to Daniel's house and found him praying and asking for God's help. <sup>12</sup> So they went straight to the king and reminded him about his law. "Did you not sign a law that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions?"

"Yes," the king replied, "that decision stands; it is an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked."

<sup>13</sup> Then they told the king, "That man Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is ignoring you and your law. He still prays to his God three times a day."

<sup>14</sup> Hearing this, the king was deeply troubled, and he tried to think of a way to save Daniel. He spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of this predicament.

<sup>15</sup> In the evening the men went together to the king and said, "Your Majesty, you know that according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, no law that the king signs can be changed."

<sup>16</sup> So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, "May your God, whom you serve so faithfully, rescue you."

<sup>17</sup> A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den. The king sealed the stone with his own royal seal and the seals of his nobles, so that no one could rescue Daniel. <sup>18</sup> Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He refused his usual entertainment and couldn't sleep at all that night.

<sup>19</sup> Very early the next morning, the king got up and hurried out to the lions' den. <sup>20</sup> When he got there, he called out in anguish, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you serve so faithfully, able to rescue you from the lions?"

<sup>21</sup> Daniel answered, "Long live the king! <sup>22</sup> My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty."

<sup>23</sup> The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him, for he had trusted in his God.<sup>1</sup>

— **Daniel 6:10-23**

**THE TAKEAWAY:** The devil will use difficult seasons as opportunities to break your spirit, your faith, and your hope; God can use those same seasons to draw you closer to him and your purpose.

**OUTLINE:**

- I. Fear can create in us a desire to avoid God's pathway for us.
- II. There is a great temptation to take the easy path, the simple road.

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<sup>1</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Da 6:10–23). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

- A. On life's highway sometimes, you might see a sign on the shoulder that says "Bypass Life's Challenges" - is often a sign the devil wants us to believe, but we must remember that it isn't necessarily the path of least resistance that God wants for us.
- B. It is the path where we grow closest to Him that is most important.
- C. Have you ever wondered-
- i. Why didn't God just kill Goliath and shout from Heaven that David was the knew king? It would have been a lot less stressful on David.
  - ii. Why didn't God just appear to Pharaoh and demand his people's freedom? It would have been a lot easier on Moses.
  - iii. Why didn't God just expose the wicked officials to King Darius? I bet Daniel would have appreciated not going to face the lion's den?
- D. There is a very important answer to those questions: **God is growing you, developing you, and preparing you to stand against evil.**
- E. **Illustration:** There was a man once who entered a horse race. The man did not practice. The man did not discipline his horse. The man did not even go look at the track he would race on. On race day, he got left in the dust. It was a terrible loss, and at the end of the race he was interviewed. The man summarized his loss by saying, "I don't really care about racing. I just wanted the prize money for winning."
- F. **POI:** There are many people who want to become spiritual warriors, but they don't really care about fighting. They don't want to face hardship, but they will say they are ready to face the enemy.
- III. The devil is the accuser.
- a. He is bringing charges against you, and that is his way of trying to disable you from doing the work of God.
  - b. **Notice Daniel 6:13**
    - i. The devil will use wickedness in man to accuse and destroy.
    - ii. These wicked officials accuse Daniel.
  - c. **It is important to recognize this because this is how the devil will bring you down today.**
    - i. He will remind you of your failures
    - ii. He will make you regret (which is not conviction)
    - iii. His accusations are designed to stick with you through life, bogging you down from every opportunity of God.
    - iv. **Remember this:** <sup>20</sup>"for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." <sup>2</sup> — 1 Corinthians 6:20
- IV. The devil uses fear.
- a. Illustration: "Black Bart was a professional thief whose very name struck fear as he terrorized the Wells Fargo stage line. From San Francisco to New York, his name became synonymous with the danger of the frontier. Between 1875 and 1883 he robbed 29 different stagecoach crews. Amazingly, Bart did it all without firing a shot. Because a hood hid his face, no victim ever saw his face. He never took a hostage and was never trailed by a sheriff. Instead, Black Bart used fear to paralyze his victims. His sinister presence was enough to overwhelm the toughest stagecoach guard."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2016). (1 Co 6:20). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/f/fear.htm>

- b. The devil is powerless against Almighty God, but he can make situations seem so terrifying that he paralyzes us to do God's work.
- V. God is a master at using the enemy's weapon against him.
  - a. The lion's den will always appear like a bad thing.
  - b. GOD TRANSFORMS
    - i. He transforms bad situations if you let him lead.
    - ii. It doesn't mean it will not be difficult, scary, or discouraging.
  - c. The lion's den will become one of the greatest parts of Daniel's testimony.
    - i. It will show Daniel's faithfulness
    - ii. It will show God's faithfulness
    - iii. It will show Daniel's surrender
    - iv. It will show God's power
- VI. **The best way to fight fear**
  - a. <sup>28</sup>And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose<sup>4</sup> — Romans 8:28
  - b. **The best way to fight fear is to recognize that if I am walking in God's path for my life. It is designed for the best outcome.**
  - c. God is doing two things at once:
    - i. He is preparing a promise for you
    - ii. He is preparing you for a promise
- VII. CONCLUSION:

“We'll read Scripture hoping to find the shortcut to spiritual growth while missing the true but non-shortcut answer—the key is not in the Bible; it is the Bible.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2016). (Ro 8:28). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/no-shortcuts-growth>