

Intro: A father who was shot point-blank in the face by Boko Haram recounted how the militants asked whether he was “prepared to die as a Christian” and then left for dead. Habila Adamu, 40, was so badly wounded in the attack that he said goodbye to his wife as blood poured from a gaping wound. The father-of-one said the April 15 capture by Boko Haram of more than 200 girls from a boarding school brought back painful memories of the night he was shot and beaten in his home. “When I heard about those girls I started to pray,” Adamu told NBC News on Tuesday. “Boko Haram have no mercy. All they want to do is drive the Christian community out of northern Nigeria and they won’t stop until they do it.”

Many of the minority Christians in Yobe province were fearful of Boko Haram because the militants had attacked homes and businesses in the region, according to Adamu. “They asked whether I was prepared to die as a Christian … My wife was crying but I could not deny Christ” The businessman initially thought they were soldiers on patrol near his home one night in November 2012. “But when I saw their robes and AK-47 rifles I knew they were not from the army,” he said. “They told me they were there to do the work of Allah.” With his wife Vivian and son David, now aged seven, looking on, four men forced their way indoors and asked whether he was a member of the police force or army. He told them he was not. “Then they asked me whether I would convert to Islam and when I refused they asked whether I was prepared to die as a Christian. My wife was crying but I could not deny Christ. I felt powerful, unafraid, I don’t know why.” Before he could refuse a second time, a bullet pierced his neck. “I fell on the ground,” Adamu said. “They thought I was dead because they stomped on me twice and shouted ‘Allahu Akbar’ or ‘God is great.’” Adamu mustered the strength to talk to his wife before slipping out of consciousness. “She was crying so many tears,” he said. “Neither of us thought I would survive so I told her that to live in this world was to live for Christ. I told her to look after our son and herself.”

“A doctor told my wife there was no point in treating me” Recovering her composure, Vivian ran to find help from fellow members of the Christian community – only to find that militants had killed 12 others. Too scared to leave the house, she tended to her husband for eight hours. At first light, she was able to arrange transport to a nearby medical center. “When they saw the wound, a doctor told my wife there was no point in treating me,” Adamu said. “I had lost so much blood.” However, they gave him painkillers and transferred him to the Jos University Hospital, hundreds of miles further south, where doctors funded by the non-profit organization Voice of Martyrs were able to treat him. Adamu’s condition gradually stabilized and he was discharged about two weeks later.

This is a sad but glorious story thanks to God’s servants and God’s power stepping in. Atheism and Radical Islam are great tools of the Satan and will continue to be. However, a great fear of death is also a powerful tool of Satan.

Q – Do you think you could stand for Christ knowing you will be killed in front of your family? (It is critical for all Christians to realize that everyone is going to die that is not alive at Jesus’ return. It is a 100% certainty. A death while rejecting Jesus as Lord and Savior, who claims Islam in order to live will bring about eternal judgment when the day of your death arrived, even if they choose to let you live. They are not God. A death that refuses to denounce Jesus as Lord is glorious because that day we will be with our Lord in Paradise like the thief on the cross who recognizes Jesus is Lord.)

READ DANIEL 6:1-5

1. **Babylon fell and we read that Darius the Mede too over. Babylon is now the Empire of the Medes and Persians. What does Darius do to keep order over the newly acquired empire?** (*He appoints 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom and 3 administrators over them, one of which was Daniel. Satrap was a Persian term for officers of the government who had civil and military jurisdiction over smaller provinces, each with its own government. Simply a Persian term for one who was over many satraps to keep them in line.*)
2. **How well did Daniel do his job for this new King he is serving?** (*So exceptional that he rose far above the others and the King planned to make Daniel the sole administrator over all the kingdom rather than 1/3 of it as he had been. There is an old saying, "Bloom where you are planted." Here he was captured years ago by King Nebuchadnezzar, then under King Belshazzar and possibly under King Nabonidus for a while and now he is serving King Darius. Daniel accepts life and just deals with it for God's glory!*)

Q – What lesson could Daniel teach us from his example? (*As employees we are slaves for the amount of hours we sold our time for and to the person or company we sold it to. We need to rise to the top by our wisdom, excellence, attitude, and character before the one who bought our time.*)

3. **How do the other 2 administrators and the 120 satraps respond to the king's idea to promote Daniel?** (*Not happy! They try to find grounds for charges against Daniel's conduct of government affairs. He was squeaky clean and they could find nothing. The only thing to do is set him up with a plan B to use his religion against him.*)

READ DANIEL 6:6-9

4. **What plot do they come up with and how do they know this is going to work to stop Daniel's promotion and even get him killed and out of the way?** (*The know Daniel will not forsake his God and worship anyone or anything but his God. So, they get every political leaders involved and go to the king. They tell the king that everyone is in agreement. The king should issue a edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man except to King Darius during the next 30 days shall be thrown into the lion's den. My guess is that the King was momentarily moved by this because kings often wanted to be seen as gods, the ones worth praying to as the savior of the people. So, the perfect trap is set that cannot fail.*)
5. **Once the king issued the decree, what kept him from changing his mind; He is the king?** (*The Law of the Medes and Persians could not be repealed once issued. Even the king could lose his people's support if he were to break the law that ruled their people.*)

READ DANIEL 6:10-15

6. **Once the edict is declared what does Daniel do?** (*He defies it. He does not go pray in secret. He goes home, goes upstairs and to the open window facing Jerusalem, gets down on his knees and prays not once, but 3 times a day. He prays giving thanks to God and asking for His help. How do you thank God for what is about to get you killed? The Jewish custom was to pray 3 times a day. Since the Jewish day began at sunset, that was the first prayer, The morning prayer, usually very early in the morning, would have been the second prayer, and the afternoon prayer would have been the third prayer.*)

Q – If you were in Daniel’s situation would you literally claim Jesus’ words and go into your closet where only God could see you and secretly pray? (That would probably a good idea and there would be nothing with that. We are not to make a spectacle out of our prayer life that draws attention to us rather than communicating with God.)

Q - Why do you think Daniel refused to hide and instead followed his normal routine for prayer that seemed to be a common Jewish practice? (Because it would have appeared that Daniel was selling out and accepting the decree if he hid. Everyone would have known Daniel’s prayer habits. It was these habits that probably gave this group a solid idea that would get Daniel killed and out of their way.)

7. Did King Darius want to kill Daniel? (No. When the rulers came running to squeal on Daniel the king was greatly distressed. He was determined to find some way to rescue Daniel and kept trying until sundown to save him. Yet, these conniving men push the fact that even the king cannot change an edict once he issues it. That is the law of the Medes and Persians. There would have been a war against the king, probably an assassination in those days when arrows and poisons were very helpful for change!)

READ DANIEL 6:16-18

8. What were the king’s words to Daniel as he was thrown into the lion’s den? (My God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!” Notice that the king is not mad at Daniel and hopes Daniel’s God will deliver him. He has been tricked into this situation he cannot get out of. He does not want Daniel dead.)

9. How was Daniel’s fate certain in the eyes of the kingdom? (Not only is he thrown into the lion’s den, but they roll a stone over the entrance and the king and all the nobles sealed it with their signet rings. There is no way he can be helped out without breaking these seals. He will definitely be gone when the door is opened but it will not be outside help, it will be hungry lions devouring his body.)

10. How does the king spend the night? (He is actually morning for Daniel. There is no feasting, no food, no entertainment, only sadness. He cannot sleep. The king knows this was not right, but can do nothing, not even as king to save Daniel at this point.)

READ DANIEL 6:19-22

11. How does the morning after the horrible event show the king’s respect and affection for Daniel? (At daybreak he gets up and hurried to the lion’s den. It seems the king actually had some hope that Daniel’s God was miraculously going to come through. He calls out and even asks if Daniel’s God has been able to rescue him for all the lions in their den. That just did not happen!)

12. What does the king hear? (He greets the king with the affectionate and loyal words, “O 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, O king.”)

Q – What significance and witness do you see in Daniel’s response? (God is given glory and then respect is given to the one who sentenced him to death with his edict. Rather the king was regretful or not, he still sealed him in to be eaten alive by lions. That is not a great idea of friendship and respect!)

READ DANIEL 6:23-28

13. It is an amazing witness that not even a single scratch is found on Daniel! What did the king do with the men who set up Daniel to die and set up the king to make it happen? (The king orders them all thrown into the lion's den along with their wives and children? Before they hit the floor they were overpowered by the lions who crushed all their bones. Never doubt what the Almighty God can do to rescue His people who are faithful.)

14. What new decree is issued by the king? (Everyone in the kingdom MUST fear and reverence the God of Daniel! The king gives all the glory to the miracles of this living God who performs wonders in the heavens and on earth. God is given all the glory for Daniel's life. So, Daniel prospers during the reign of Darius and of Cyrus the Persian.)

Q – What is unique in introducing Cyrus the Persian? What great thing did King Cyrus do? (He is the one who issued a decree allowing all slaves to return to their home and rebuild their temples. The Jews return to Jerusalem to rebuild and the story is found in Nehemiah and Ezra. The Cyrus cylinder that tells the story can be seen in the British Museum in London. You can Google it on the internet and see it as well. It is an archaeological blessing from God for us to see the historical accuracy of the Bible.)

Q – What are some of the lessons you and I can learn from this chapter?