

Church of God Sunday School

DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS

Daniel 6:1-28



Darius the Mede was the new ruler of Babylon. The previous king, Belshazzar, was killed when Cyrus and his army changed the course of the great Euphrates river and entered the city by walking on the nearly dry riverbed. (Commentators believe that Cyrus the Great then appointed Darius the Mede to be the ruler of Babylon.)

When Darius became the new king of Babylon, he set up his own government. He appointed 120 princes to rule over the kingdom. Over these 120 princes, Darius set three men as presidents. One of those three presidents was Daniel. Darius made Daniel the first president (he was over the other two presidents) "because an excellent spirit was in him." King Darius even thought about making Daniel the chief ruler over the whole kingdom! (Daniel is thought to have been almost ninety years old at the time of this story.)

The other presidents and princes became jealous of Daniel. They tried to find fault with Daniel so that they could accuse him before King Darius. But Daniel was faithful to his king and to his God! No "error or fault [was] found in him." The men decided that the only way they could trap Daniel would be to find fault with his worship to God.

The men met and came up with a plan. They were going to trick King Darius into signing a law that would trap Daniel. So, they gathered and went to the

king. The men told King Darius they thought a new law should be passed. It would state that if anybody asked anything of any god or man for thirty days instead of asking the king, then that person would be thrown into the den of lions!

The presidents and princes advised the king to make this decree "according to the law of the Medes and Persians," to write it down and seal it with the king's seal. This made the decree so binding that no one could change it, not even the king himself! King Darius took the advice of his presidents and princes and agreed to this law.

Before this law was signed, Daniel had made it a habit to pray three times every day with his windows wide open. Daniel's enemies knew this. So, they watched to see what Daniel would do now.

The king's decree did not change Daniel's routine. Daniel trusted God to take care of him. Not only did Daniel continue to pray, but he did not hide by closing his windows. As he had many times before, Daniel "went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God."

The men who had wanted the evil law passed were watching and waiting for Daniel to pray! Immediately, they went and told the king about Daniel! They said,



"That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day."



Only then did King Darius understand what the men had planned all along. He was very displeased with himself for being deceived by their trick. He knew he had signed the law and that it could not be changed. The king worked and worked, trying to find a

way to save Daniel, but he could not. When it was evening, the men came and reminded King Darius that the law could not be changed. He had to cast Daniel into the den of lions! (Customs of that time required the punishment be carried out in the evening of that day.)

When Daniel was brought before King Darius, the king told Daniel, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." After Daniel was thrown into the den, a stone was laid over the mouth of the den. King Darius put his own seal upon the stone, signifying that nothing could be changed concerning Daniel. Then, King Darius went back to the palace. He wanted no music and nothing to eat. All night long he could not sleep.

Very early the next morning, King Darius got ready and hurried down to the den of lions! He called out, hopefully, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?"

As King Darius listened, he heard Daniel say: "O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt." Because of Daniel's faithfulness, God protected him and "stopped the mouths of lions" (Hebrews 11:33).

King Darius was very happy that Daniel was alive! He ordered men to bring Daniel up out of the den. Daniel was brought out, and everyone there could see that he had not been harmed in any way. There was not one little scratch!

King Darius commanded that the men who had accused Daniel to be brought before him. The men's wives and children were to be punished too! (Although the Law of Moses forbade this, it was a custom under the Persian law.) When the men and their families were

brought and thrown into the den of lions, God did not send an angel to protect them! Before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions attacked them "and brake all their bones in pieces." How awful!

Then King Darius made a decree. He sent letters to all parts of his kingdom, telling the people to tremble and fear Daniel's God. This decree said: "For he is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

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**MEMORY VERSE:**

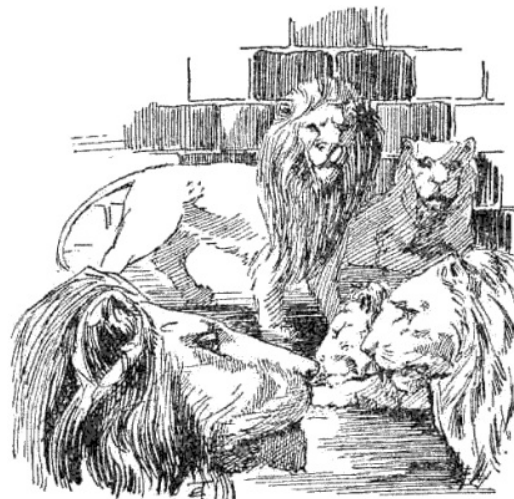
*"My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me."*

—Daniel 6:22

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Finish the Bible Verse

Look up Daniel 6:22

"My God hath sent his _____, and hath _____ the lions' _____, that they have not _____ me: forasmuch as before _____ innocency was found in _____; and also before thee, O king, have I done no _____."



Daniel in the Den of Lions

Find a Way Out of the Den of Lions

