

SERVING GOD, SAVING THE KING

Daniel 6:10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he 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, as he did aforetime.

Daniel had been promoted. No one was more powerful than him in the Kingdom of Babylon except King Darius. Promotion and blessing brings envy also. The other Babylonian princes were not just happy to bring dishonor to Daniel, they wanted to destroy him completely. The reason is twofold: Daniel was appointed over them not just in position, but to ensure everyone paid their taxes and dispensed of their responsibilities. “And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage” (Daniel 6:2). Despite his exalted stature, and old age (he was over 80 years old), he would kneel down three times a day to pray to the God. Kneeling down is the posture of a beggar. It was begging God that always blessed and delivered Daniel from the capricious heathen Kings of Babylon. The scripture states that the “writing was signed”. In other words, praying to the God of Israel was now a state crime punishable by death. What can give a person the courage to accept the death sentence? Why will a man who was President of Babylon throw away everything to become lion food? The answer is found in the following scripture, which Daniel received from his fathers: “Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name” (Daniel 10:20). We must confess Christ in times of trials and stress, as Daniel did.

Matthew 10:32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

Matthew 10:33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

Notice that Daniel’s enemies stressed the fact that he was a foreigner, an enemy and that he was a captive. “Then answered they and said before the king, 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” (Daniel 6:12). He is of Judah, not Babylon! He is a contemptible foreigner, in other words. How dare he worship the God of Israel and not you Darius, the god of Babylon! They seduced the king with their language to kindle his jealousy. Make no mistake: the enemy of our souls is provoked each time we declare that Jesus is the only God and worship him alone. He looks for a way to destroy us, but he never

succeeds. As long as the children of Israel worshipped the God of Israel alone, they were invincible; their problems began when they forsook God. There are some parallels between Daniel's judgment and deliverance and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Daniel 6:14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

John 19:6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

Like the Lord Jesus, Daniel was innocent – he was sentenced to death for declaring that God alone must be worshipped. The Lord Jesus was sentenced to death for declaring that he was God himself and would come in power in the clouds to judge the world. “Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Matthew 26:64). Pilate and Darius both knew the Lord and Daniel were innocent, but they were powerless to save them. There comes a time when the most powerful of friends and earthly power is useless – then we must stand back and see the salvation of the Lord. Daniel's life teaches us a powerful lesson for all time. Our holy duty in this world is to bear faithful witness to the truth of salvation in the name of Jesus Christ. Daniel did so for over eighty years. He was never ashamed of his God and heritage – he would open the window towards Jerusalem three times a day. We may be stuck physically in Babylon, but we can open the windows of our souls towards New Jerusalem, the city of our Lord Jesus Christ, every day. Daniel was supposed to be a captive from Jerusalem – the truth is that his heart was captive to the God of Jerusalem. May our hearts be the captives of the God of Jerusalem.

Psalms 48:2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

Matthew 5:35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

That night King Darius could not eat or sleep. “Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of musick brought before him: and his sleep went from him” (Daniel 6:18). Such was the effect of Daniel's life and testimony on him. May we live in such a manner that the individual's will lose their appetite for pleasure until they see the power of the Lord Jesus working in us! Do we want our children to stop hearing ungodly music and abstain from unholy engagements? Pray that we may live like Daniel.

There is incredible power in example of holy lives. Daniel did not speak much about his faith to the Babylonians - he just lived it. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). He served God and saved the King.

Daniel 6:20 *And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?*

Why did the King fast, abstain from music and stay awake the entire night? Clearly, he entertained a hope, however dim, that Daniel may "rise up from the dead", so to speak, like our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the difference between Pilate and Darius. Even the apostles, who were with the Lord for three years, had no faith or hope in his resurrection from the dead. Darius had some hope, some expectation of a miracle to occur because he knew Daniel was righteous and he had heard about earlier miraculous signs and wonders done by the God of Daniel. God honored the faith of Darius; he was saved by the Daniel's day-by-day holy example. We find no evidence to suggest that Pilate loved the Lord, was distressed and stayed awake to rush to the tomb. There is a great blessing for those who cry for the righteous and wish to see them succeed.

Proverbs 2:20 *That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous.*

Titus 1:8 *But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;*

Our serving God continually is a powerful witness – people pay attention and begin to believe, as Darius did. They begin to believe that perhaps we may actually rise from the dead. Hallelujah! Daniel said that God had sent his angel to the den and shut the lions' mouth. 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"(Daniel 6:22). God may not remove lions around us, but he can send a mighty angel whose presence makes us forget the lions. The prison became a paradise. Daniel did not have an angel visit him in the palace, but in the lion's den. Sometimes our greatest blessings are in prison, as Paul and Silas experienced at Philippi. On the other hand, the enemies of Daniel had no angel with them; the lions devoured them immediately. May our continuous and faithful service to the Lord Jesus Christ save Kings!