**He’s Alive!**

**Daniel 6:14-28**

***6:14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him. 15 Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed."***

**Vs 14 –** The king, as soon as he heard it ***was much distressed***, the NKJV reads, ***greatly displeased with himself.***

**Vs 14 –** And then we read he ***set his mind to deliver Daniel*** and ***he labored till the sun went down to rescue him.***

This pagan king had both **admiration** and **respect** for Daniel. He was upset with himself that he had let these other men trap him like this. But this trap has also captured the man in the entire kingdom he respected the most!

We can guess that he spent whatever was left of that day, with his lawyers and judges, trying to determine if there was a legal way to overturn what he had done.

**Vs 15 -** They want Daniel’s head on a pole and they have both Daniel and Darius right were their plan intended to take them.

We must admit this is a masterful play, at least from a worldly sense.

One would have to wonder, what they think is going to happen once Daniel is gone. Maybe the king will overlook their brazen powerplay!

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***16 Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" 17 And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. 18 ¶ Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.***

**Vs 16a –** Being caught in his own sin, ***the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions.***

The language seems to imply that he was thrown or lowered into a shallow pit. The Aramaic word translated den **גב** (gobe), is from the root word which means to dig.

W should picture a cave or pit, with an area where they can roll a stone in front of an and opening to the cave, it seems it may have an area where it drops down.

We should also recognize that there are a number of lions here, (this will become obvious at the end of the chapter) and that the lions are only fed occasionally, to keep them on the edge of starvation and ready to consume anything that is dropped into the den. (again this will become obvious later in the chapter).

We know that big casts were used by the rich and powerful and so we are not surprised by what is occurring.

**Vs 16b –** What happens next, or more specifically what Darius says next, is a little surprising. The king ***declared to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!"***

This is the most powerful man in the nation, if those who believe this is Cyrus (are correct), this is the most powerful man on the planet. **This was a man elevated by God to rule over the largest kingdom the world has seen up to his day.**

A few things about what the king says:

1. When we read the word “may” it seems to imply the possibility, like “I hope” or “hopefully” or “maybe” your God will deliver you.

Let me provide this to you from a few different translations:

*“Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.” (Da 6:16b NKJV)*

*“Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.” (Da 6:16b ASV)*

*“Your God, to whom you are so loyal, is going to get you out of this.” (Da 6:16b Message)*

Darius, was clearly, at least hoping, and possibly even praying, that Daniel’s God was going to deliver him.

What we cannot hear is his voice inflections, we cannot see his facial expressions, but based on all that occurs in the following verses, he is hoping that Daniel’s God can deliver him!

1. Notice how Darius saw Daniel’s service to God, ***“continually”****.*By the way, this will come back around.

**As we consider this story, we are challenged about my service to God.**

Also, as I consider this story, I am reminded and encouraged that this is a picture, a portrait, of Jesus who served the Father, perfectly, consistently, with his whole heart, and he did it on my behalf (by faith).

Now I suspect his voice was ladened with fear, hope, and maybe even prayer, for this follower of Yahweh who he had such a tremendous respect for.

**Vs 17 - *And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.***

WOW! The stone being sealed with a signet ring seems familiar…

Earlier in the week I posted this note on Daniel 6:17:

**That takes care of that!**

You can imagine this cabal, that could have comprised possibly over 100 people was certain that this was the end of Daniel. Dropped into a den of a large number of hungry lions, one would suspect his life expectancy was minutes (at best). So the tomb was sealed with the signet of the king as well as the signet of the lords. As the king went back to the palace for a night of fasting and sleeplessness, we can imagine this cabal went out on the town for a night of celebration. Afterall, that takes care of that!

We cannot help but remember another group, around 470 years from now (Mat 27:66). Like this group, they sealed the tomb of a dead man, and they were certain “that takes care of that!” That was until three days later when the one who they sealed in the tomb, stepped out of the grave alive!

**Vs 18** - The king goes back to the palace. He spends the night fasting, no music, no entertainment, no distractions are brought to him tonight. He could not sleep.

The man who ignorantly signed the decree is in turmoil, the men who tricked Darius spent the day in a lather running back and forth and probably up all night partying.

Daniel, the man in the lion’s den. **What about him?**

**It has been said that God sometimes calms the storm**

**and sometimes he lets the storm rage and calms his child.**

I submit the storm is raging and Daniel is calm and trusting in His God:

*“6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Php 4:6-7 ESV)*

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***19 Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. 20 As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, "******O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" 21 Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! 22 My God sent his angel and shut the lions’ mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm." 23 Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. 24 And the king commanded, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions —  they, their children, and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.***

**Vs 19 –** So the king rises early and heads for the lions’ den.

Let’s pause for a moment. Daniel has been thrown into a den of hungry lions. He has been there all night. Why is the king rising early? Why is he proceeding with haste to the lions’ den?

**He has, at least to some small degree, has embraced the possibility that the God of Daniel has delivered this man of faith.**

What an amazing testimony of Daniel’s faith. But what an even more amazing testimony of the mercy of our God who has been revealing himself to this pagan king though the life of Daniel!

**Vs 20 –** When Darius got to the pit, he ***cried out,* in a tone of anguish. "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"**

The doubt and fear mingled with hope and faith are unmistakable! We do not know if he was leaning towards Daniel being alive or dead. But it seems both were in play and you can see the most powerful man on the planet, at the time, crying out to this follower of God.

Three quick observations about what Darius said when he called out to Daniel:

1. He recognized that Daniel was a ***“servant.”*** He was more than a follower, a fan, a friend, a bold advocate, a trusted ambassador, or even a valued and useful mouthpiece. He was a servant! The Aramaic word means slave.
2. We see this point again, Daniel did not just serve God, but he served him… **Continually!** The idea of this Aramiac word **תדירא** (ted-ee-raw’) is constantly.
3. He was a servant of the **“living God.”** Isn’t this rather surprising to hear flowing from the lips of this pagan king. Daniel, who serves the “Living God.”

Surely, he got this idea from Daniel as Daniel had shared with him Yahweh. Surely Darius is not far from the kingdom of God!

At this point, it was within the realm of possibilities that this “living God” who Daniel served continually, might be able to deliver him!

**Vs 21 –** ***Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever!*** For Darius these words brought, **joy and relief.** To hear the voice of his trusted overseer and I would indeed say **friend**. The morning dawned afresh that day when he heard Daniel’s voice!

**By the way this is the only time in this chapter where the words of Daniel are recorded!**

**Vs 22 –** The Daniel went on to explain how God had sent an angel, who stopped the mouths of the lions. Can you imagine what that looked like?

Once again, we see in the book of Daniel, God had showed up and showed out in the life of his servant Daniel.

**But never forget the greater message here is the greater Daniel, the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Vs 23 -** The king is exceedingly glad and commands Daniel to be lifted out of the den.

**Vs 23 -** No “kind of injury” injury was found on him. Can we say there was not even so much as a scrath on him. This reminds of us Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (chapter 3), not even the smell of smoke was on them.

**Vs 23 -** BECAUSE he believed in his God.

**Vs 24 - *And the king commanded, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions —  they, their children, and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.***

The king gives a new command. All the accusers are to be brought to the lion’s den, with their children, with their wives and all are to be cast into the lion’s den.

The lions ***“overpowered them”*** and ***“broke all their bones”*** even before they fully hit the ground. This should answer the questions about how many lions and were they really hungry!

There are a couple of lessons worthy of catching here:

1. The historian Herodotus informs us that such punishment of entire families was meted out according to Persian Law.

It is a terrible end. But reminds us there is only one God who is able to deliver and to save!

1. **There is a dark side to Daniel’s deliverance**.

The dark side of Daniel’s deliverance is the judgment that falls alongside those who sought to destroy the kingdom of God.

But this truth is not isolated to Daniel, it is a reality that is taught throughout the scriptures. God delivers His people, but final judgment befalls those who are not His people:

Noah’s flood

Sodom and Gomorrah

Israel out of Egypt

Israel out of Babylonian Captivity

God’s people from the final judgment

*“28 “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 “and come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.” (Joh 5:28-29 NKJV)*

This is why getting the gospel out, around the world is so critical. What awaits those who remain in their sins on judgment day is MUCH WORSE, than this picture of final judgment here in Daniel!

Can we be honest and just mention something? As graphic and as horrific as this picture is! It is nothing compared to what it is serving as a picture of.

**Eternal separation from God, where the worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched!**

*“****47*** *And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell,* ***48*** *’where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’” (Mr 9:47-48 ESV)*

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***25 ¶ Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: "Peace be multiplied to you. 26 I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, enduring forever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end. 27 He delivers and rescues; he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions." 28 So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.”***

**Vs 25 -** Darius now writes**: to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: "Peace be multiplied to you. 26 I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel,**

This should seem familiar, this is what Nebuchadnezzar did in chapter 4 following the seven periods of insanity!

Notice Darius declares **seven** things about Yahweh in Vs 26:

1. **He is the living God.** I have already mentioned this, but this is a shocking revelation from a man surrounded by dead gods.
2. **He is enduring forever.** Nothing in our life experience endures forever, there is no life form that lives forever. NOTHING. Darius said of Yahweh, He is the one who endures forever!
3. **His Kingdom cannot be destroyed** (kingdom of the stone) (chapter 2). Darius not only believes that God has a kingdom, but it is one that cannot be destroyed?
4. **His dominion shall endure until the end!** His dominion, sovereignty, his authority over his kingdom, will endure forever.
5. **He delivers and rescues.** Graphically pictured in Daniel, more vividly pictured in Christ. If God did not spare His Son, we can be sure that with Him he will freely give us all things!
6. **He works sings and wonders in both heaven and earth.** He is not just the everlasting God, he is the miracle working God. He is the God who is able and capable of delivering his servants.
7. He is the One who delivered Daniel from the power of the lions

**Vs 27 -** This sovereign God delivered Daniel from the lions (notice the name through this whole chapter): **DANIEL = God is my Judge!**

But most importantly, God delivered his son from the lions (Ps 57:1-11) and (in Christ) God has delivered us from the power of the lions!

*“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” (Joh 3:36 ESV)*

The conclusion of this story: ***Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.”***

This now 87ish year old man, is still prospering in the Kingdom.

**Portraits of Jesus or the gospel in Daniel Chapter 6:**

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**Faith Lessons from Daniel Chapter 6:**

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