

Title: Christ Shut the Lions Mouth

Text: Daniel 6: 1-28

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Everyone here has probably heard the story of Daniel and the Lion's Den. Usually you hear sermons about: Daniels' faithfulness—dare to be a Daniel or about Daniel's morality—he was innocent in his dealing with men. But the way that God grows our inward man in faithfulness is through the gospel of Christ and him crucified. So I want to show you a picture of Christ in Daniel.

Now, understand there is no type in the scriptures which is perfect. Sometimes we have to look at the opposite of what men do in a text to see the truth of God in it. But there is a good picture here of Christ in Daniel and we see the necessity of the work of Christ declared here.

I. FIRST, GOD'S CHOICE ABOVE ALL IS CHRIST—Daniel 6: 1: It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; 2: 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. 3: Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

God the Father prefers Christ above all. Christ is First before God and Christ is first above all men.

Matthew 17:5: While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

There is an excellent spirit in Christ Jesus our Lord—he is the GodMan—full of grace and truth.

Isaiah 42: 1: Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

God thought to set Christ over the whole realm—and has.

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Ephesians 1: 20:...he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21: Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

II. SECONDLY, BUT CHRIST IS DESPISED AND REJECTED OF MEN—Daniel 6: 4: Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom;

These men are like all sinners left in our sin-nature: all men by nature think of themselves too highly.

Luke 19: 14...We will not have this man to reign over us.

Isaiah 53: 3: He is despised and rejected of men;...

Sinners are still doing today what men did in the day Christ walked this earth, the same as they did to Daniel, trying to find fault with him, trying to find a reason to justify themselves for not bowing and believing on Christ.

III. THIRDLY, THERE IS NO REASON WHY YOU SHOULD NOT BELIEVE ON CHRIST. CHRIST IS THE RIGHTEOUS AND HOLY AND FAITHFUL SON OF GOD!—Daniel 6: 4...but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

Sinner you will find none occasion nor fault in Christ. Christ was and is faithful. There is no error or fault found in Christ.

Hebrews 7:26: For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

He had to be spotless in order to be the fit substitute for his people. Christ Jesus is the spotless Lamb of God typified in all the old testament sacrifices.

IV. FOURTHLY, GOD IS JUST AND HIS LAW CANNOT BE ALTERED—Daniel 6: 5: Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God. 6: Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever. 7: All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. 8: Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. 9: Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.

These men did this simply to entangle Daniel. But be sure to get the spiritual lesson. The law of God cannot be changed. Like the law of the Medes and Persians, “it altereth not.”

Unlike Darius’ law, which was a foolish one, God’s law is holy and just and good (Romans 7:12). It is a revelation of the holiness and righteousness of our God.

But God’s law is spiritual and requires more than mere outward obedience. God’s law requires inward perfection as well as outward perfection.

Romans 7:14: For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

Matthew 5: 21: Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. 23: Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24: Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. 25: Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

There are no loopholes; and there can be no compromise.

Galatians 3: 10: Cursed is everyone that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them!

Yet, we have broken God’s holy law. The law of King Darius was a wicked law and should have been disregarded by a true believer; but the law of the Lord is perfect. God’s commandments are pure. God’s law should be kept by all; all would profit greatly by keeping it.

But we have not, do not and cannot obey the law of God. Sin is the transgression of God's law; and we are all transgressors, sinners and workers of iniquity.

Romans 3:10: As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12: They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13: Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15: Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16: Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17: And the way of peace have they not known: 18: There is no fear of God before their eyes. 19: Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

How then can a man be just with God? How can God remain just and yet justify a sinner who has broken God's holy law? That became Darius' dilemma.

V. THE ONLY WAY IS THROUGH THE FAITHFULNESS OF CHRIST JESUS WHO TOOK THE PLACE OF HIS PEOPLE AND PUT AWAY OUR SINS—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. 11: Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. 12 Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a *petition* of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing *is* true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. 13 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. 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. 15: Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians *is*, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed. 16: Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast *him* into the den of lions. *Now* the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. 17: And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel. 18: 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. 19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. 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? 21: Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. 22 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.

Darius' dilemma was how could he save the one he loved and yet remain just. How could he show mercy without it being at the expense of his justice? You and I could labor all our lives, like as Darius labored all night, nevertheless we cannot establish a righteousness, we cannot appease a holy God, and we cannot escape the just condemnation of the law for our sins. God must carry out the sentence and judgment of his holy law against the sins of those he loves.

Ezekiel 18:20: The soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Exodus 34:7: Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty will by no means clear the guilty

But how can God be just and show his people mercy? The answer is in the verses we just read. Darius said, “Thy God...will deliver thee.” Darius could not find a way to deliver Daniel from his law. But our God found a way to honor his law, to satisfy his justice, without compromising his holiness, a way whereby he could be just and the justifier of sinners. God sent his only begotten Son—God our Savior delivered his people by going into “the den of lions” for us. “My God hath sent his Angel!” (Daniel 6: 22)

In Daniel, we a shadow of Christ, the spotless one, who willingly became guilty in place of his people in order that he might remain faithful unto God. Read this verse carefully. **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...and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.**

Daniel knew he would become guilty, knew he would be thrown to the lions. But he became guilty in order to remain faithful to his God. Likewise, Christ knew he would become guilty before God and knew he would bear the justice of God. But he willingly took the sin of his people that he might remain faithful to God, to declare God just and justify his people from our sins.

2 Corinthians 5:21: For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Because God’s law could not be altered, with the sin of his people upon him, God delivered Christ to the teeth of justice like Darius delivered Daniel into the den of the lions and God separated himself from our Substitute like as Darius left Daniel in the den of lions. But by his faithfulness to God, by bearing the wrath of God’s justice in the room and stead of his people, Christ “hath shut the lions’ mouths...forasmuch as before [God] innocency was found in Christ.” (Daniel 6: 22)

Now God’s justice is satisfied toward his people and God proved it by raising Christ from the dead. We are reminded of it in this verse—**Daniel 6: 23: Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.**

Christ came not come to destroy his law but to fulfill it, not to find a way around justice but to meet it head on. Bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, he satisfied the law; he magnified the law and made it honorable. Now, in Christ, the Lord our God calls sinners to himself as “a just God and a Savior.”

Now robed in Christ’s righteousness, every elect child of God, born of his Spirit and brought to believe on Christ—can say with Daniel, “before [God] innocency was found in me.” And like as Daniel was “taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God” so every believer is delivered from the pit of corruption, raised in Christ, awaiting to be raised forevermore because he believes in his God, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

But all who reject Christ—who meet God outside of the Substitute—shall be delivered to justice—**Daniel 6: 24: And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.**

So why did God deliver his Son to the den of lions?

Romans 3; 26: To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

This is the true and living God. That is what Darius wrote in the following verses:

Daniel 6: 25: Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. 26: I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. 27 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. 28: So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

So Christ obtained eternal redemption for his people and now reigns! Believe on Christ today and you shall be saved!

Amen!