**Three Sins That Condemned Daniel**

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 Daniel, the prophet of God, was an outstanding character of the Old Testament. Most of his life was spent in captivity: first under Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians, then under Darius the Mede, and Cyrus, king of Persia (Dan. 1, 6, 10). In spite of his being away from family and loved ones, he knew about God and worshipped Him faithfully. His faithfulness so impressed God that God said Daniel was one of only three men who “should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness” while the rest of the land would be laid waste by God because of the people’s sin (Ezek. 14:12-20).

 Yet, on one occasion, Daniel was condemned. Daniel was condemned to die, not by God, but by men, because he prayed to God after a decree had been made that no one could pray to anyone or any “thing” except to the king. Daniel’s condemnation came because three sins were committed. Not his sins, but because certain others committed sin. If we are not careful, we may also be guilty of these same sins. Let us study Daniel chapter 6, and see what three sins condemned Daniel to death.

 The first sin to condemn Daniel was envy. Daniel had risen to a position of leadership, not unlike Joseph in Egypt. During the reign of Darius, Daniel was placed over several governors. These men didn’t like this, and in their envy, they devised a way to trap Daniel (Dan. 6:1-4). In Daniel they found “no error or fault.” Therefore, they decided, “We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God” (Dan. 6:5). The only thing they could find “wrong” with him was his loyalty to God, and that he would put God above all else. (Wouldn’t this be a good problem for all of us to have?)

 The second sin that condemned Daniel was lying. Based on their decision to trap Daniel by forcing him to choose between the laws of the land and the laws of God; they met with the king, saying: “All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions” (Dan. 6:7). This was a lie, for “all” were not “agreed”! Daniel would not support this legislation. They had conspired and lied against Daniel, the very one who was over them (Dan. 6:2-3).

 The third sin condemning Daniel was pride. Friend, think about it. Why then did this edict pass (Dan. 6:9)? It is because of the King’s pride! He could have refused the legislation, but he, like Nebuchadnezzar, was proud and wanted to be worshipped. Why else would one sign such a decree? In the end, though, he was humbled when he realized what his signature and seal had done to Daniel (Dan. 6:14-15, 18-19). The sins of these men condemned Daniel to the lion’s den. Why? Because when Daniel “knew that the document was signed, he ... gave thanks before His God, as he had done previously” (Dan. 6:10). He did not alter his prayers, nor hide in the corner from anyone.

 The sad thing is that these sins are still with us today, and it is possible for us to be guilty of envy, lying, and pride if we are not careful. (In fact, these sins nailed Christ to the cross!) We know the outcome of Daniel and of his accusers (Dan. 6:23-24). What about us? Are we the kind of people that have such conviction and dedication that, no matter what, we will be faithful to God? Remember, Daniel didn’t know he would be rescued when he made his stand! In like manner, we don’t know the end of things when we stand for the Lord. However, we know Who holds the future! If you were put on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

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