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### How to be Miserable in the Master Beldroom in the Palace and How to be Happy in the Lion's Den

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"HOW TO BE MISERABLE IN THE MASTER BEDROOM IN THE PALACE  
AND HOW TO BE HAPPY IN THE LION'S DEN"

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL  
NUMBER 16  
DANIEL 6:14-20

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In this study we are going to see a contrast of how two men spent a night. One spent the night down in the cellar of the palace where the king kept his pets, the lions; and the other spent the night up on the third floor of the palace of Babylon in the master bedroom. The one up in that master bedroom was the ruler of the Babylonian Empire as it had been taken over by the Persians. The one down in the cellar with the lions was the deposed third ruler of the land, the head of the presidents and the ruler of the satraps over the new system recently set up by Darius and General Gobrias. Daniel spent the night in the lion's den, and Darius spent the night in his palace in the master bedroom and he was miserable, while Daniel was happy and contented.

Now there are very few people who have ever made pets out of lions. The only way you can do it is to start with the lion when he is a small cub. Even then you can't always be sure what a lion may do. I have made quite a study of lions and I have found that over all, the lion is probably the most powerful of all animals. The psychologist comes along with some goofy test and says, "Now what kind of an animal would you like to be? An elephant? A kangaroo? A water buffalo? Or a lion?" And then they are supposed to figure out what sort of person you are by the animal you select. Now if there are any psychologists here this afternoon, I would tell them that I would like to be the lion. They can run the hundred yard dash in five seconds flat. And I have always wanted to do that. They are so strong they have been seen to take a dead calf and with one flip of the neck they can throw it over a thorn fence ten feet tall. Now that's strength. The lion combines speed and strength. A lion does not make a good pet because of its fierceness and few people ever want to get hooked up with a lion. Obviously, when lions have been made pets, they don't remain pets too long. If a lion happens to run his sandpaper tongue over your hand and you have a slight cut on your finger and they get even the suggestion of the taste of blood, they will have you for dinner and that right quick.

Now these lions with which Daniel spent the night were not only untamed, but they were real hungry. The fact that they were hungry will be shown in our next study when we see them have a big meal. Daniel is the only person on record in the history of the world who spent a very pleasant night in a den of lions. They were fierce and hungry, but because of something that happened they purred like pussy cats and Daniel spent one of the best nights of his life, while up in the master bedroom of the palace, Darius was walking up and down with misery.

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." Here we have a man smart enough to know that he had made a mistake. Now some people make mistakes and are too dumb to realize it. He was sore displeased with himself. Now what do you do when you are sore displeased with yourself? Well, I have found the best thing to do is to shut your

mouth, get alone and use 1 John 1:9 and rebound, kick yourself in the pants and get up and move on. Now Darius didn't have time to go through a process like this. The reason why he couldn't follow that process is that he had been stupid enough to sign a law of the Medes and the Persians which was perfectly ridiculous. But he had fallen into a trap and had signed the ridiculous law, and the law of the Medes and the Persians could not be changed. Now when you recall that this was a fantastic empire that would soon include 75 million people and cover a space of 20 thousand square miles of territory, and that for 30 days in that vast amount of space no one could make a request of anyone except of Darius, then you have the picture of how very ridiculous this law really was.

Darius was displeased with himself, and now his ego lust was paying miserable dividends. The reason he signed it was it was a unique legislation. He hadn't received any attention for quite a long time and he had been living under the shadow of his son-in-law and nephew, Cyrus the Great. He had suddenly been thrust into a place of unusual power, so he fell for their trap and signed the legislation. Now we are often blinded to the consequences of our own action until we see their results. But this is the kind of trick the old sin nature will play on us and it often happens so quickly we are not aware of it. This is approbation lust at the maximum.

Now Darius made up his mind that he was going to deliver Daniel and he spent the entire day trying to find a way to do it. But at the end of the day, he had to give up because the law of the Medes and the Persians was binding on him as well as on the common citizens. So Darius could find no way to get Daniel off the hook and he had to learn the hard way that the consequences of human folly have no human solution. The matter was out of his hands, and if the problem is solved at all, it will have to be solved by God. Now at the time of this incident, Darius was not a believer. But as a result of this thing, he will become a believer. So because of his folly, he will be the one to suffer and Daniel will be the one who is happy. The real point here is that Darius brought his own unhappiness upon himself and it was all uncalled for. He became temporarily drunk on power lust and couldn't see the forest for the trees.

DANIEL 6:15 "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." Here we see that the evil plot was carried out. The law could not be changed. They didn't have any regard for the welfare of the whole empire, all they wanted to do was to destroy one man. Now the ruler of the entire empire was Cyrus the Great. Next in line to him was Darius and next in line was Daniel, the third in the empire and the one over the presidents and over 120 governors or satraps. Now this was the status of the empire. All those leaders have demonstrated one thing; they have no business ruling an empire, for they put their own selfish desires above the welfare of all the people. They didn't care what happened to the people just so they could get Daniel. They were unusually jealous of Daniel and blind jealousy led them to conceive this plot. A leader cannot fulfill his place of leadership when he is



filled with mental attitude sins. These men were responsible for ruling an empire but prejudice and jealousy had made it impossible for them to rule fairly and wisely. A ruler must be objective and never allow jealousy and prejudice to poison him. Quite often you have observed that the best leaders do not get emotionally involved but make decisions on the basis of facts. But before this chapter closes, they will be removed from the place of leadership and will even lose their lives.

DANIEL 6:16 "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." The den of lions was down in the basement. They had an opening over which they rolled a great stone and they sealed it closed.

Let us notice what Darius said as he threw Daniel into the den of lions. "Thy God" and this is a reference to Jesus Christ. "Whom thou servest continually" and that was indeed a great compliment to Daniel. "He will deliver thee" and this meant that Darius knew that Daniel had an amazing relationship with the Living God. Darius found that his power was limited by the laws of the Medes and the Persians. Now as a principle, it is quite good to have laws that limit us. But here we see a good principle used in the wrong way. In principle, the king was subject to the law, and that is a good principle. In Greece, Pericles, a statesman of about 425 B.C. made laws and then left the country because he didn't want to live under those laws himself. Here in our story we see that the law of the Medes and the Persians stood the test, even though the king lost one of his greatest men in the process.

Darius referred to the fact that Daniel served his God faithfully. In Acts 4 Peter and John refused to bow down to the laws of a heathen state because those laws were in conflict with a higher law under which they lived. Even though the supreme court of their land was against them, Peter and John reminded them that they lived under higher laws. So here in this statement Darius demonstrated that he believed there was a higher power than the power of their laws, and that power was none other than the almighty power of God. This lets us know that he was an enlightened man and that he had been impressed by Daniel. It also lets us know that he was on positive volition and that in one more night this positive volition would lead him to be a believer. So in essence he said this--"Look Daniel, there is a higher court. You are in the hands of God and he will deliver you." He recognized the power of the laws of the Medes and Persians, but he recognized the existence of still higher laws.

DANIEL 6:17 "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." Darius punched the wax with the signature of his ring. Please notice, he made the presidents and governors sign their signatures also. They heard Darius say, "There is a higher court--thy God will deliver thee." I don't suppose that they realized that they were signing their own death warrant. I somehow believe they had an uneasy feeling about what they did. Every man, except Darius, who put his signature on that wax would the next day be thrown in that den of lions and would be crushed and devoured by those hungry beasts. The law they thought would

destroy Daniel, destroyed them. If you try to destroy others with jealousy and bitterness and vindictiveness, you only destroy yourself. Here was self-induced misery. They got rid of Daniel for one night, but they destroyed themselves for eternity. Daniel turned it over to the Lord as per Psalm 55:22. He operated on the principle of Romans 12:19. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay sayeth the Lord." He didn't turn bitter and get angry at these men. When people try to strike at you, if you try to get back at them, you have lowered yourself to their level and nothing can be worse than this. Daniel did not lower himself to the level of his accusers. It is easy to lower yourself to the level of the people you associate with. Boys or girls who go out with creeps and date creeps, then they become like those they date. Illustration--Now if the first time you go out with a girl and she begins talking about marriage and what she wants in her living room, and she starts telling you what she has in her hope chest, and how many children she would like to have, you get in the car and get her home as fast as you can and don't even take time to shake hands at the door. You get out of there real fast and never go back. Though Daniel was down in that Lion's den, he was far better than the men who threw him in.

The first miracle was that Daniel had a marvelous night. The second miracle was that those lions also had a restful night, even though lions usually prowl at night. Those lions slept all night because they didn't want to disturb Daniel. I think Daniel used one of the big fat lions for a pillow and another of them to prop his feet on for a footstool and he kept warm all night. A believer can have perfect peace anywhere. Daniel had one of the best nights of his life. Daniel and the lions were all relaxed and Daniel had better company with those lions than if he had been with those hypocrites up in the palace. Now the lions didn't try to fake Daniel out and grin and say, "God has pulled our teeth for tonight and we can't chew on you." No, the real party that night was there in that lion's den and they purred like kittens and Daniel slept the whole night through.

DANIEL 6:18 "Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him." Now how did the king fare up in the master bedroom? The king who had everything was to spend a most miserable night. But quite often it is darkest just before the dawn and before the next day is over Darius will be a believer. In the palace that night there was fasting. He refused food. Now people enjoy food most when they are happy and relaxed. Sleep went from him and he suffered all night from insomnia. This language says here that no instruments of music were brought to him, but the Chaldean language says that he refused the dancing girls.

When the real test comes, evil men find out that drink and women and the fruits of sin don't satisfy their needs. I can imagine in that palace that night some of his servants said something like this--  
 "O King, can we bring you some oysters on the half shell, or some shrimp?" And the king said, "Forget it." Then another one said, "We have some terrific steaks tonight. Would you like to have one?" And he said, "Forget it." Then another one said, "We have special ox tongue fixed just the way you like it best." And he said, "Please get out of here!" Then someone probably said, "O King, what about some

tortillas or chili or enchiladas?" And he said, "Forget it, I don't want anything to eat." And no doubt one of his servants said, "And which dancing girl do you want, the blonde, or the brunette, or the redhead?" And Darius said, "Get out of my presence and leave me alone." You see, Darius was miserable and was reaping the result of his own self-induced misery. Daniel was his dear friend and loved him and Daniel was in the den of lions right that minute because Darius was stupid. You can be in a palace of misery or you can be in a den of happiness, it all depends on you. Darius had pleasant physical surroundings but was miserable. Daniel had horrible surroundings but was supremely happy.

DANIEL 6:19 "Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions." So all that night Darius didn't sleep and please notice what he did the moment daylight came. He ran all the way down to the lion's den. Daniel and the lions were still asleep. Please notice--Darius ran to Daniel. When a believer uses the Word of God in the right way, the unbeliever will run to him. We think of that line "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." Daniel had perfect peace.

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?" Please notice that the king had a crying voice, a lamentable voice. He cried out so loud it woke Daniel up. The most amazing question any person can ever ask is the question Darius asked here--"Daniel, is thy God able..." The God of Daniel had made those lions and of course he was able to shut their mouths and protect his servant.

In our next study we will see how it all turns out.