



Thriving in Babylon / Book of Daniel
Wk. 8 "Conspiracy Theories Unmasked"
By Pastor Jody May

Daniel 6:1-28 ESV

Daniel and the Lions' Den

6 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; **2** and over them three high officials, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. **3** Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. **4** Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. **5** Then these men said, "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God."

6 Then these high officials and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever! **7** All the high officials 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. **8** Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked." **9** Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction.

10 When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. **11** Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. **12** Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, "O king! Did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." **13** Then they answered and said before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or the injunction you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

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."

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.



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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.

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.

One more time what are we learning in Daniel?

God's Wisdom and Power is what Supervises all of History.

Introduction:

Today we are going to drive this point home with what we will be learning with this famous story from Daniel, *Daniel and the Lion's Den*. The title of our sermon today is "**Conspiracy Theories Unmasked**" so let's answer the question today what is a conspiracy because that is a popular word in our vocabulary today? **A conspiracy is a secret plan by a group to do something unlawful or harmful. (take a moment to explain what was happening in the text)**



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Conspiracies are everywhere and it seems like we are all involved some way – UFOs! – Racism – US Government – Weaponization of the IRS and the JD – Big Tech Censure – Local Schoolboards administrating CRT – Foreign Computer High Jacking – Development of Antisemitism again - Brett Kavanaugh – Firings without Due process in our institutions – jailing of preachers - It seems that there is no lack of conspiracies to go around.

Yes, there are conspiracies all around us, and while we have to accept that you should know that is not the way God works, God is a God of Truth He doesn't use lies or beguile ([John 14:6](#)). But interestingly enough God does allow conspiracy to happen against His own people, because He is wise and He has reasons for it.

Proposal:

So, today I want to discuss with you all that even when conspiracy is aimed at us, I want us to be able to take that in stride for God is the one that controls the will of conspirators:

Main thought: While the world conspires to silence God's elect, God uses the conspiracies to accomplish His will.

Today we are going to build on this point looking at three different ways Conspiracy is actually used against us:

1. Conspiracy seeks to silence opposition. (vs.1-9)

Make no mistake the World is looking to damage the followers of God by engaging in the act of conspiracy. I just want to point out briefly three ways from our text that the world conspires against us to **silence** us.

The *world* looks to **Dishonor** our **Identity** by attacking our **Character**.

⁴Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for



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complaint or any fault, because he was **faithful**, and **no error** or **fault** was found in him. ⁵ Then these men said, "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in **connection** with the **law** of his God."

Since Daniel had great character, *faithful with no faults*; he has been shown to put the interest of the Kingdom first above his own personal gains, they had to go another route. They took that which was best in him, and they were going to use that against him. Since he was such a stout believer, they were going to use his **loyalty to his God** against him. Family, I know it's sad to believe this but when the world wants you quiet and out of the way, **it doesn't matter what you do well for them**, it doesn't matter how much you strive for peace, justice, and equality, **devotion to God threatens the world's control over the lost**. We have seen our **last three installed supreme court justices** dragged through the mud because we witnessed a world that is not above nasty conspiracy practices to silence anyone that even remotely resembles a God follower.

If you are going to be a person that makes it known that you are a disciple of Christ, you are drawing a bullseye on your chest. To thrive in our own Babylon, we must be prepared and expect that our **personal religious beliefs will not go unchallenged**. It won't be just the baker who refuses to make a sexually indecent wedding cake that will get challenged, but in your workplace as our culture turns a little more secular/hedonistic, expect some challenges as well. Will you stand because your character reflects Christ, or will you fall because your character is like the world's – that is you are ready to flip-flop your opinions on a dime.

The world looks to **Discredit** our **Beliefs** by attacking our **Doctrines**.

⁷ All the high officials 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.

The world is all about turning up the heat by trying to increase your dependency on it for your safety and welfare. Part of the warnings of the



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antichrist in the book of Revelation ([Rev. 13:16-17](#)) is that only those with a mark of the world on them will be able to conduct their affairs. What that is exactly, I don't know, probably a vaccine passport or crypto coin, who knows? But for Daniel in his day the thought was to establish a way of life by which if you did not bow knee to the world powers your life would be forfeited. They knew this would be a death sentence for Daniel, **what about you?**

Family, I wish I could tell you in the future that the world will leave you alone but that's not the case. The world **demands your loyalty**. Every day the church is being pushed more and more in the area of doctrinal beliefs by the practice of open hostility, being accepted by the world, unless you see the Bible like they do. If we let the world dictate how we practice our faith and prescribe for us what to believe, then not only have we condemned ourselves, but we have forfeited the lost. No one gets to heaven by the softening of the message of the Bible, but people come alive when the **HS shows the need of a savior illuminating all of scripture to show man's sin/fallenness and God's law/justice**.

And if you don't succumb by pressure then all that is left is actually to get the law changed to force you to comply:

*The world looks to **Destroy** our **Positions** by attacking our **Laws**.*

⁸Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked."

As you can see manipulation by the courts and law practitioners has been an everlasting practice since civilized man. They (satraps) went to the courts to pass an **executive order** which has time limitations. The world knows the law and they know the appeal of the law to get leaders and rulers to actively work against God's elect, especially even when you are doing a good job in society for your community.

The world specializes in attacking its' people with law because that's what makes a great conspirator. Please, don't think you can fare any better than Darius did against the collective enemies of God. The enemy knew exactly



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how to play Darius by the way in which they set up the stipulation ⁷ ...
whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. Look at the brilliance of this subterfuge:

- It was short enough that it wouldn't cause Darius to scrutinize the decision too much.
- Secondly, the injunction seeks to make a mixed group of people unified. It was a good outcome/goal, what every good leader would want.
- Thirdly, it was binding, because Persian decrees were laws that were meant not to be broken, even by the royalty.

Conspiracy is no joke because we are always overmatched and under gun, not to mention that to uphold our Christian values and testimony **retaliation by any of the same means discredits Christ**. That brings us to our second point today, because once this happens to you and I, we have some decisions to make.

2. Conspiracy forces us to make decisions. (vs.10-18).

It is time for Daniel to make some decisions, that's what you do when you find yourself at the end of a conspiracy theory, by the time you discover you are in one, you got to roll with the punches and get through to the other side. As far as I can tell Daniel has five options, let's point them out:

- He can obey the king but petition him and tell him what happened, what is the conspiracy. (Causes fights among the people)
- He can try to get the new law appealed; get the king to revoke the legislation. (Lessens the king's authority)
- He can cease praying all together; convert to foreign God worship.
- He can simply limit his worship for 30 days and then resume afterwards.
- He can pray privately; he can hide it.

You know when we look at this, I bet we go to what seems the easiest of all choices, pray privately and hide our practices. But Daniel doesn't do this:



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¹⁰ When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.

So, we have to ask the question **WHY?** Maybe **to answer that question first we need to understand why we would pick any other option - perhaps like option 5; hide it. It's because it is the option that causes us the least amount of trouble.** Meaning that Daniel is not interested in this option, and perhaps **if the Bible teaches us something other than taking the easy road then we may want to perk up and pay attention.** I say that because our likely inclinations as human beings are to take the easy road.

Now, why didn't Daniel take this path? First off Daniel remembers the covenant of God with His people that was from the beginning, it is built into their DNA:

Genesis 12:1-3 ESV

12 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a **great nation**, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a **blessing**. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will **curse**, and in you **all the families** of the earth shall be **blessed**."

Now that the time of Jerusalem as a kingdom is over, it does not negate the very first promise to the Jewish people, the **Abrahamic Covenant**. There is still a promise of God to make the Jewish people great, they will have land again, all people should be blessed, and for those that come against you God will come against them.

Secondly, King Solomon foresaw the fall of the earthly kingdom centuries earlier and had asked God to remember the prayers of repentive Jews:

1 Kings 8:47-50 ESV (temple dedication prayer)

⁴⁷ yet if they turn their heart in the land to which they have been carried captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their captors, saying, 'We have sinned and have acted perversely and wickedly,' ⁴⁸ if they repent with all



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their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who carried them captive, and pray to you **toward their land**, which you gave to their fathers, the **city** that you have chosen, and the **house** that I have built for your **name**,⁴⁹ then hear in heaven your dwelling place their prayer and their plea, and maintain their cause⁵⁰ and forgive your people who have sinned against you, and all their transgressions that they have committed against you, and **grant them compassion** in the sight of those who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them.

Lastly, on many occasions, from his hometown pastor Jeremiah, he remembers the reason they are there, which were their acts of idolatry and lack of loyalty to God (7:13-17; 11:1-14; 14:11; 29:4-7)

So, Daniel's decision, in light of persecution, is to continue to pray towards Jerusalem, openly and publically, because God's Word says it's the best option! Folks I want to tell you as long as you live the Bible is not the place to find the easy path, Jesus knew that He taught that the path of Salvation is a narrow road, we need to remember that, but that is **ALWAYS the best OPTION!** This now means the king now must decide as well.

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."

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!"

The King was in great turmoil, he was about to lose his best ally, the man that was not out for his own good, BUT the man that understood how the God of the world worked. Darius is bound by the law and he can't change it, if he tries he gives them all the reason to try and overthrow him, and they could because no one would support a king that could not be held accountable to the law. The king does the only thing a God-fearing person can do, He **surrenders his heart** to God and **puts the situation** into **God's hand**.



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Family this text has been taught so many times as a testimony to the faith of Daniel, and it is, but the king is talked about much more than Daniel is. I believe that what you are seeing here is what must happen for every person that calls themselves a follower of God. **When you find yourself in the clutches of the world like Daniel you first off do not compromise on the truths of scripture that you already know, and second, we must place all of our lives in the hands of the only person that can deliver us, God.**

That is scary and rightly so, because God's choice is not always what you want which is to supply an immediate worldly salvation, but thank Him for that because He is more concerned about your eternal soul than you are. If you will but trust then witness what can be yours.

3. Conspiracy delivers the Judgement/Blessings of God. (vs. 19-28)

²¹Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! ²²My 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." ²³Then 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. ²⁴And 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.

While we may be delivered over to this world's judgement no matter what happens to us, the one thing we may be sure of, God will deliver Justice for His people. Daniel is not only delivered but he is protected from any further attacks by these local officials. Through the deliverance of Daniel, the King rejoices, his eyes are open to the true God, and in **return God receives due recognition:**

²⁶I 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,



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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."

God wins, and the hand of the enemy has now been turned into the hand of a worshipper of God, and it came through Daniel trusting in God's promises, as he learned:

While the world conspires to silence God's elect God uses the conspiracies to accomplish His will.

As we close out this small sermon series on "*Thriving in Babylon*" **here are some things to keep in mind:**

If you are going to live for God, you are going to be persecuted most likely at some point AND you are not the one that gets to decide to what extent, that is for God to decide – **but that's the best seat in the house!**

If you are going to live for God, there is a possibility you may be delivered over for some type of worldly penalization but know for certain you will be avenged. – **the enemies will learn God's name.**

If you are going to live for God, you have got to learn how to be spiritually disciplined. If you are determined to be a spiritually reactive person you will fail, but if you become proactive to the threat of worldly conspiracy you will develop the Christian disciplines that will help you to withstand trials.

Now perhaps you're teetering on making the decision not to thrive in Babylon but to hide, let me encourage you with what Daniel really points at:



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GOSPEL:

Family, **our Lord**, like Daniel went into the ground sealed in by a stone, because we were held by the law, that was broken by the eating of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. That penalty was death. Jesus doesn't ask His Father to recuse us, He doesn't try to change the law to make God look less, instead He takes our place, He goes into the grave, He trusts His Father with His life, He rises again, He praises God, and now because He has gotten out of the maw of death, we now can know too the freedom that only comes in Jesus. And like Darius, the revelation of Jesus resurrected knowing we have Him forever should cause us to praise God to proclaim His name overall and that His dominion will last forever!

Today let me challenge you with this:

You may have been faced with some tough decisions whether to stand for what you know to be true according to scripture, I challenge you put your trust in God and stand, because Jesus is worth it.

You may be tempted to hide your Christian heritage especially considering pride month, BUT never put your light under the basket let it shine so it may drive the darkness of the devil's conspiracies away from people, because Jesus is worth it.

You may be tempted to disengage from culture because you don't want to be tempted with compromise, but facing the world is the only way to know if your faith is real. Push into relationships outside this room, get to know people, and challenge them with new thoughts about our God, because Jesus is worth it!

While the world conspires to silence God's elect, God uses the conspiracies to accomplish His will. God's will **IS** that we would thrive in Babylon, blessing **ALL** peoples of this world, that **ALL** will bow a knee one day to King of King and the Lord of Lords, and they will **ALL** come to know that God has orchestrated **ALL** of history to unite **ALL** things in His son Jesus the Christ.



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PRAYER

COMMUNION

BENEDICTION

Go in the name of the Father, that knows every act of conspiracy before it's ever hatched and will use it to demonstrate His greatness.

Go in the name of the Son, that used the conspiracy of Jewish rulers against Him to save us, to glorify His Father, and to keep us from knowing an eternal death.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that opens our eyes to what the world wants to do to us and empowers us to help others see how God wants to rescue them as well.