

Daniel 6:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

The accusers remind the king of his decree before mentioning Daniel: '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.' They secure the king's reaffirmation of the law before revealing Daniel's violation. This tactical sequence traps the king—having confirmed the law's irrevocability, he cannot now make exception. The phrase 'altereth not' will haunt Darius throughout the chapter.

Historical Context

Persian legal tradition's emphasis on unchangeable law served governmental stability—citizens could trust laws wouldn't be arbitrarily modified. Yet this rigidity created problems when laws were unjust or circumstances changed. The lion's den as punishment method was documented in ancient Near East. Lions were sometimes kept for royal hunts or as symbols of power. Archaeological evidence from Persian sites shows lion motifs prominently featured in royal iconography.

The conspiracy's sophistication shows court officials' understanding of legal and psychological manipulation.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the conspirators' tactical sequence warn about manipulation techniques that secure commitment before revealing full implications?
2. What does the unchangeable law's trap teach about how rigid legal systems can create injustice when good laws are manipulated for evil purposes?

Interlinear Text

כִּי אָדֹנָי	קָרַב בּוֹ	וְאָמַר	קִדְמָה	מֶלֶךְ אֵל	עַל	אֶסֶר
Then	they came near	and said	before	The king	concerning	a decree
H116	H7127	H560	H6925	H4430	H5922	H633
מֶלֶךְ אֵל	לֹא אֵל	אֶסֶר	רָשׁ מִתְּ	דִּי	כָּל	וְאִנִּי שׁ
The king	Hast thou not	a decree	signed	H1768	any	man
H4430	H3809	H633	H7560		H3606	H606
יִבְעֹא	מִנִּי	כָּל	שׁ אֵלֵּהּ	וְאִנִּי שׁ	עַד	יּוֹמֵי יָן
that shall ask	a petition of	any	God	man	within	days
H1156	H4481	H3606	H426	H606	H5705	H3118
לְהִי	מִנִּי	מֶלֶךְ אֵל	יִתְּרֵהּ	לֵג וּבֵ	אֲרִיֹתֶיהָ	עָנָה
save	a petition of	The king	shall be cast	into the den	of lions	answered
H3861	H4481	H4430	H7412	H1358	H744	H6032
מֶלֶךְ אֵל	וְאָמַר	יִצִּיבֵהּ	מִלֵּתֶיהָ	כְּדֹתֶיהָ	מִדֵּי	
The king	and said	is true	The thing	according to the law	of the Medes	
H4430	H560	H3330	H4406	H1882	H4076	
וּפְרִיִּם	דִּי	לֹא	תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶהָ:			
and Persians	H1768	Hast thou not	which altereth			
H6540		H3809	H5709			

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 6:8 (Kingdom): 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.

Esther 1:19 (Kingdom): If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered, That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she.

Acts 16:19 (Parallel theme): And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org