

A Tribute to a Life of Faith

Daniel 6:1-28

"Then the king was very please and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no injury whatever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God" (Daniel 6:23)

Introducing a New Character and a New Kingdom (Daniel 6:1)

1. "It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom" (Daniel 6:1)
2. First – let's look at the new kingdom that Daniel introduces
 - The kingdom that Daniel is referring to is the **Medo-Persian** kingdom which invaded and took control of the Babylonian Empire in 539 B.C. (Dan. 5:30-31)
 - This kingdom/empire (The Medo-Persian Empire) is that same Empire that is described in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2:32 and Daniel 2:39.
 - The Medo-Persian Empire:
 - 1) It began as a **dual** or **divided** empire of the Medes and Persians
 - 2) It was **Cyrus** the Great who gained complete control of the Empire in about 546 B.C. and united under one rule and thus it historically became known as just the **Persian** Empire.
 - 3) The Persians under Cyrus conquered the three great powerful nations of **Egypt, Babylon and Lydia** and went on to control a large land mass from Turkey to Ethiopia to parts of India and it was divided into **120+/-** provinces.

3. Second – let's look at the new **character** that Daniel introduces

- There is some dispute as to who **Darius the Mede** actually is since there is no historical evidence for his reign outside of what is recorded here in this chapter. (Daniel 6)

- Here are 3 possibilities as to who this **Darius** is:

1) **Darius** is simply another name for Cyrus and we know that Cyrus was the most prolific leader of the Persian Empire.

2) **Darius** (possibly another name for **Ugbara** – Daniel 5:31) was appointed by Cyrus to rule over Babylon.

3) Another possible suggestion is that **Darius** the Mede should actually be identified as Cambyses who was the son of Cyrus.

4. Now that the Babylonian Empire was conquered - one of the first orders of business for this new leader **Darius** was to organize the government of the Persian Empire.

- He will appoint a total of 120 satraps (governors) to rule throughout the empire
- He will also appoint 3 commissioners to oversee these 120 governors and the provinces they were in charge of.
- Appointing regional leaders throughout the kingdom was a common method of governing for the Persian Empire and it may have been the reason why the Persian rule lasted as long as it did.

1) Although the kingdom was still ruled by one person (the king), the fact that the authority was spread around made insurrections and overthrows of the government less likely.

2) In addition, the people had a little more say so in their government

- Daniel will be appointed as one of the 3 designated commissioners

Identifying a Trusted Leader (Daniel 6:2-3)

1. “It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom, **and over them three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one), that these satraps might be accountable to them, and that the king might not suffer loss**” (Daniel 6:1-2)
 - Since Babylon was now a “**conquered**” empire there was a need to ensure some sort of peaceful coexistence or “friendly relationship” between all of its subjects.
 - The goal in appointing these governors was to help protect the king’s assets
 - A sign of a good leader is to recognize a trustworthy person to oversee or manage their business affairs of which Daniel was found worthy.
 - It is highly probable that Darius was aware of Daniel’s past accomplishments and character traits since he served under King Nebuchadnezzar for about 39 year and this no doubt factored into Darius showing favor to Daniel.
2. “Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom” (Daniel 6:3)
 - We are told that Daniel began to distinguish himself from the other two commissioners/administrators in that he possessed an extraordinary spirit.
 - 1) Extraordinary is defined by Webster as going beyond what is **usual, regular or customary**.
 - 2) The reputation of Daniel was well known throughout Babylon and those whom he served with clearly knew his character, beliefs and behavior patterns which are why they will later exploit that character in an attempt to have him removed from office evidencing their own jealousy and envy toward Daniel.
 - The fact that the king planned to appoint him to a position over the entire kingdom would seem to indicate that this was a promotion above the other administrators giving Daniel even more authority within the Persian Empire.

Instigating a plot Against Daniel (Daniel 6:4-9)

1. “Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him” (Daniel 6:4)
 - We are not told why they felt the need to discredit Daniel but here are the two most prominent opinions:
 - 1) They were jealous of his position
 - 2) They despised him because he was a Judean or a Jew
 - Whatever their reasons were they were not successful in achieving the desired results because Daniel discharged his duties with the utmost integrity and honesty which would have been consistent with his character.
 - 1) There was no evidence of corruption in regard to Daniel’s record
 - 2) Daniel was not negligent in his duties meaning he was careful to discharge his duties as directed.
 - 3) Daniel was faithful – to the Lord first and then to his duties
2. “Then these men said, we will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find it against him with regard to the law of his God” (Daniel 6:5)
 - Once this group of officials (other commissioners and satraps) realized they could not find any fault with Daniel as to his administrative duties they concluded that their only course was to find some sort of fault with his religious practices.
 - There is no doubt that they had been observing Daniel and how he faithfully prayed to the Lord and faithfully worshipped Him so that became the path which they chose to trap Daniel into a conflict with the king.
 - I think that finding fault in regard to praying and worshipping God is a good thing

3. “Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows; King Darius, live forever. All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man beside you O, king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions den.” (Daniel 6:6-7)
- The deck was stacked against Daniel (**122 to 1**) so it becomes real obvious from the get go that the king was about to be railroaded into making a decision that would put Daniel at risk.
 - These commissioners and satraps will use the typical respectful phrase; “**King Darius, live forever**” which was a means of attempting to stroke the ego of the king and hopefully achieve a favorable response.
 - These officials make a petition to the king:
 - 1) Establish a law (statute) that *prohibits* anyone within the kingdom from worshipping any god or man besides the king.
 - 2) This law was to be in effect for **30** days
 - 3) Anyone who *violates* this new law was to be thrown into the lions den
 - These officials knew the *pattern* of Daniel’s worship to the Lord and they knew they only needed 30 days to have him violate this new law.
4. “Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians which may not be revoked. Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction” (Vs:8-9)
- Any law signed by the king became official and could not be revoked or changed not even by the king himself.
 - At this point the king probably did not know that Daniel would become the victim of this conspiracy for had he have known (since he favored Daniel - see Daniel 6:3, 14) he probably would not have signed this new law.

The Prayer of Daniel (Daniel 6:10-11)

1. “Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks to God, as he had been doing previously” (Daniel 6:10)

- There are several things worth noting here:

- 1) Daniel was aware of the decree
- 2) Daniel was not consulted on this decree and apparently did not advise the king, otherwise Daniel would have made his position clear.
- 3) Daniel’s prayer life was no secret to his enemies and his pattern of worship was also well known to his enemies.
- 4) Neither this decree nor anything else disrupted Daniel’s prayer life or his dedication to God and His ways. (Daniel 1:8, 2:17-18, 3:8-12, 16-18)

- Why did Daniel pray in this manner?

- 1) It was a customary practice for Jews/Israelites (I Kings 8:44, II Chronicles 6:21, 29, 34, 38, Psalm 5:7)
- 2) His room/upper room was a quiet place not intended to draw attention but not intended to hide either.
- 3) He prayed on his knees even 3 times a day because that was customary for a follower of God like Daniel. (Psalm 55:17, Daniel 9:21, Acts 3:1)

2. “Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making supplication before his God” (Daniel 6:11)

- Clearly these men had an agenda to bring accusations against Daniel
- It wasn’t too hard for them to find Daniel worshipping the Lord

The Prosecution of Daniel (Daniel 6:12-18)

1. Daniel would have been about 80 years old about this time (approx. 539 B.C.)
 - Daniel by this time had established himself as one who was devoted to and dependent upon the Lord for guidance, direction, and supply.
 - Even though there was a requirement to worship only the king – Daniel was not about to look to Darius for what he knew only the Lord could provide
 - Daniel’s decision to not defile himself by worshipping anyone or anything other than the Lord remained his continued mark of faith in the Lord.
2. “Then they approached and spoke before the king about the king’s injunction, did you not sign an injunction that any man who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, is to be cast into the lion’s den? The king replied, the statement is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked” (Daniel 6:12)
 - The government officials (commissioners and satraps) reminded the king that he was bound by the decree that he signed:
 - 1) Anyone who prays or worships any god or person besides the king was to be thrown into the lion’s den.
 - 2) This law was in place for 30 days
 - The king (unlike Nebuchadnezzar who was a dictator and above the law) of the Medo Persian Empire was **bound** by the law and unable to change it.
3. “Then they answered and spoke before the king, Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the injunction which you signed, but keeps making his petition three times a day” (Daniel 6:13)
 - The officials claim that Daniel (an exile from Judah) **ignored** the king and the law
 - They also point out that he **continually** violated the law – praying daily **3** times!

4. “Then as soon as the king heard this statement, he was deeply distressed, and set his mind on delivering Daniel; and even until sunset he kept exerting himself to rescue him. Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, recognize, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and the Persians that no injunction or statute which the king establishes can be changed” (Daniel 6:14-15)

- It was clear that Darius was in a conundrum:

- 1) He clearly *avored* Daniel and did not want to have him killed which is evidenced by the fact he was “deeply distressed”.
- 2) The decree, which he signed into law, did not allow him to *intervene* on Daniel’s behalf, although he pondered doing something.

- Just in case the king thought about a rescue attempt – the other officials (satraps and commissioners) reminded him that he flat out did not have the authority to *overturn* the decree and save Daniel’s life.

5. “Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lion’s den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you. A stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and the signet ring of his nobles, so that nothing would be changed in regard to Daniel. Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him” (Daniel 6:16-18)

- **There was no trial, no Miranda rights, and no get of the lion’s den free card!**

- King Darius, who was no doubt impressed with Daniel, and doing everything he could to save him, tells Daniel that; “your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you”.

- 1) The king *seals* the opening to the lion’s den, then *retires* to his palace (visibly upset) and has a very *restless* night.
- 2) Short of someone lowering a rope for Daniel to escape (which didn’t happen based on the scriptural account) he was about to face some very hungry lions!

The Preservation of Daniel (Daniel 6:19-24)

1. “Then the king arose at dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lion’s den. When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, Daniel servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lion’s” (Daniel 6:19-20)
 - The king rises early in the morning, goes to the lion’s den and based on his call (*with a troubled voice*) out to Daniel he probably expected to find him eaten alive.
 - There appears to be a sense of hope (or wishful thinking) in the king’s voice that perhaps the God of Daniel may have intervened and delivered Daniel.
2. “Then Daniel spoke to the king, O king, live forever! My God sent His angels to shut the lions’ mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime” (Dan. 6:21-22)
 - Daniel initial response to the king (*O king, live forever!*) may have had the intent to show him that he held nothing against him.
 - The next thing that Daniel does is to give credit for his being alive to the One who deserved the praise. It is the Lord Himself who sent his angel to shut the lion’s mouths and Daniel was spared harm.
 - Daniel was declared to be innocent before God and the king and his being spared from the lion’s is evidence that he had done no wrong!
3. “Then the king was very pleased and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no injury whatever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God” (Daniel 6:23)
 - The reference to Daniel being “*taken out*” or “*lifted*” from the den probably means he was lifted out with ropes as opposed to removing the stone.
 - The real focus is on the fact that no harm came to Daniel because he had trusted in the Lord. The king and anyone else who witnessed that Daniel was alive recognized this to be a miracle from the Lord.

4. “The king then gave orders, and they brought those men who had maliciously accused Daniel, and they cast them, their children, and their wives into the lion’s den; and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones” (Daniel 6:24)
 - Although it is possible that all 120 plus officials could have been tossed to the lions; it is more probable that it was the primary or principle accusers (the other two commissioners) and their families that were cast to the lions.
 - The king had the authority to issue this death sentence on the men who desired to bring harm against Daniel but his overall actions against the women and children were an extreme over reaction in my opinion.

The Proclamation of the King (Daniel 6:25-28)

1. “Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language who were living in all the land: may your peace abound! I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; for He is the living God and enduring forever, and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, and His dominion will be forever. He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has also delivered Daniel from the power of the lions” (Daniel 6:25-27)
 - What is so amazing about this is Darius calls God the Living God!
 - He further admits that God intervenes for and delivers those who trust Him.
 - Darius makes a decree that all people should fear and tremble before the Lord
2. “So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian” (Daniel 6:28)
 - Even though the opposition by the other satraps and government officials may have continued – Daniel remained in high regard during the reign of Darius and even throughout the reign of Cyrus the Persian.
 - This entire chapter is a wonderful tribute to Daniel and his life of faith