

## Daniel - Chapter six

### Vs.1,2.. Daniel's position in the Medo-Persian Kingdom

- King Belshazzar had been slain, Babylonian Empire had fallen, and Darius the Mede was king of the new world power, that of the Medes and Persians.

Note: In Nebuchadnezzar's dream of chapter 2 (that of the 'great image'), the 'head of gold' represented Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon. Then 2:39 says, 'And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee', which was represented by the silver breast and arms of the 'image'. Now, after having conquered Babylon, the Medo-Persian Empire begins to rule as the new world power, which was the 'second', according to the interpretation of the dream.

- When Darius structured his government, he made Daniel (he who had held a high position among the wise men of the previous kingdom) prime-minister of state. Amazing!

V.3. Daniel was chosen to assist King Darius in ruling the empire 'because an excellent spirit was in him'. Amen! It pays to live right.

Vs.4-9. Leaders (presidents and princes) in the kingdom scheme against Daniel. I'm sure they had several reasons for doing such. (1) They were jealous, no doubt, because he had been elevated to such a prestigious position in the kingdom. (2) He was not one of them, but an aged Jewish captive from Judah. (3) The 'excellent spirit' which he possessed was altogether different than that which they possessed.

- Because of all that, they tried to find occasion against him concerning the kingdom. (In reality, it was nothing more than 'ancient politics'.) 'But they could find none occasion nor fault'. He had been faithful to all the king had asked of him, carrying out his duties as 'unto the Lord'. (They could accuse him of no wrongdoing because he was trustworthy.)

- 'Neither was there any error or fault found in him'. (When enemies cannot find any fault at all in a man, he must be perfect.) Note: That's what God expects and requires of us as His children (Matt.5:48).

- Since they could find no fault concerning Daniel's actions having to do with the kingdom, they turned their attention toward him concerning his God and his worship. But, even there, they could not spot his life. What a testimony!

- Presidents and princes, knowing that Daniel was a praying man who prayed three times a day, met with the king (Daniel, a president, excluded) requesting that he make a 'decree' that they knew Daniel would not obey: 'that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions'.

- King Darius, not knowing this was a scheme against Daniel, signed the decree, which was irrevocable under any circumstances according to the law of the Medes and Persians.

V.10. When Daniel learned that the decree had been officially signed and issued, he went to his house with the windows of his chamber opened toward Jerusalem (the holy city; the place which God had chosen to put his name there), knelt, and prayed three times a day as before.

- He was determined that the king's decree would not alter his commitment and dedication to God. He would continue to pray as always. In fact, the decree was a challenge to his religion and his God.

Note: It's the same with us as Christians in these 'latter days'. We must not allow anything to cause us to neglect our times of daily prayer and devotion to our God.

Vs.11-13. 'These men' came together to visit Daniel, possibly under the pretence of business, at the very time which they knew to be his usual hour of prayer and devotion. And just as they had expected, they found Daniel on his knees praying. Note: If they had found him not praying, they would no doubt have ridiculed him for his faint-heartedness and lack of faith in his God.

- They reported their findings to the king.

Vs.14,15. When the king realized what had taken place he was deeply vexed. He was displeased with himself for having been tricked into making such a law. Therefore, he determined in his heart to do what he could to free Daniel from the decree. In fact, he spent all day trying to somehow get around the law so that Daniel would be spared the lion's den. But the leaders would not allow such.

V.16. Since the decree was a document the king had signed, it was now a binding law that could not be reversed. So the king commanded that Daniel be cast into the den of lions. He wasn't pleased with the situation, but it had to be done. The law was the law.

- But notice the last part of the verse: before his being thrown into the lion's den, the king, in essence, said: Daniel, you've been faithful to your God during all these years of captivity. Now, even when facing death, you haven't compromised your loyalty and commitment to Him. Surely, 'Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee'. Amen! Whether that was 'faith', or maybe just 'great hope', either way it was tremendous! a pagan king believing that Daniel's God could come to his rescue, even in the den of lions. Note: It brings to mind the centurion, of whom Jesus spoke, saying, 'Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel' (Matt.8:5-10).

V.17. The 'den' was underground, with an opening at the top. A large flat 'stone' was laid over the opening, and the king's seal, along with the signets of the lords, meant that it could not be opened without the king's authorization.

Vs.18-24. Daniel delivered

- Daniel had been a real asset in the kingdom, both loved and respected by the king.

- Because of that, and the fact that Daniel had been thrown to the lions, the king spent a sleepless night, not only fasting, but possibly breathing a prayer to Daniel's God, as well.

- Early the next morning the king hurried to the lion's den (for he could not be satisfied by sending a servant) and cried out with a sorrowful voice (expressing grief and respect), 'O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?'. Note: Of that which he doubted, we, as Christians, are assured. As servants of the living God, we know we have a Master who is well able to take care in time of trouble and difficulty.

- 'Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever'. Good news! God's angel had shut the lions' mouths, and Daniel was taken up out of the den, alive and well.

- Afterwards, by order of the king, the men who had accused Daniel were cast into the den of lions, along with their wives and children. They had the same punishment inflicted upon them which they had designed for Daniel. Note: 'No law can be more just than that which adjudges the devisers of barbarity to perish by it' (Matthew Henry).

- The Lords and their families were torn to pieces by the lions before they reached the floor of the den.

Vs.25-28. Daniel's miraculous deliverance prompted King Darius to testify to the power of a God who is greater than the power of lions. Note: Daniel's name, meaning 'God is my judge', was shown to be true. He was vindicated by the Lord, and judged to be right, because of his faithfulness in service, prayer, and worship unto his God.