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3.6.1 - Daniel 6:1



This chapter marks the revelation of unfulfilled prophecies of the episode of “Daniel in the Lions’ Den” (539 B.C).³ Daniel was depicted by [Rube](#)

We cannot be certain of the accuracy of Gabriel’s answer of the vision. It may have influenced Daniel’s prayer toward Jerusalem. See commentary on [Daniel 6:10](#). See [Chronology of Daniel](#).

Daniel 6:1 (NASB)



¹ It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom,² 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. [More...](#)

remaining chapters concern prophetic visions of this chapter include the well-known story of the reign of *Darius the Mede* (539→537 B.C.), a detail many artists overlook (e.g.,

Daniel’s intercession for Israel and the vision (Dan. 9). The information from Gabriel may have influenced Daniel’s prayer toward Jerusalem. See commentary on [Daniel 6:10](#). See [Chronology of Daniel](#).

The events recorded in this chapter provide additional evidence the book was composed in the sixth-century B.C. rather than the Maccabean era conjectured by skeptics.⁴

The advocates of the genuineness of Daniel have conclusively shown that the prohibition referred to, v. 8, corresponds altogether to the religious views the Medo-Persians, while on the other hand it is out and out in contradiction to the circumstances of the times of the Maccabees. . . . The religious restraint which was thus laid upon the Jews for a month is very different from the continual rage of Antiochus Epiphanes against the Jewish worship of God. . . . this narrative is destitute of every characteristic mark of the Seleucidan-Maccabean era.⁵

The portrayal of Darius as well-disposed toward Daniel (Dan. 6:3, 14) and even toward Daniel’s God (Dan. 6:16) cannot be reconciled with the actions of Antiochus.⁶

See [Date](#).

When consulting study resources referring to the Aramaic text, keep in mind that Daniel 5:31 in the English text appears as Daniel 6:1 in the Aramaic text, such that verse numbers in the Aramaic text for this chapter are one greater than their English counterpart.⁷

It pleased Darius

Darius the Mede began his rule over [Babylon](#) as recorded at the end of [chapter 5](#). See commentary on [Daniel 5:31](#) and [Darius the Mede](#). This chapter records events associated with the second kingdom in the [Sequence of Kingdoms](#)—previously revealed in [Nebuchadnezzar's](#) dream (Daniel 2►) and Daniel's vision (Daniel 7►).⁸ This is the [Medo-Persian Empire](#), represented by the ram with two horns in [Daniel 8](#).

With time, the Medo-Persian empire would grow to occupy a vast region:

When the Medo-Persian alliance overthrew the Neo-Babylonian Empire, it acquired much geographic territory that it proceeded to incorporate into its kingdom. The Persian Empire became the largest that the world had yet seen, eventually encompassing modern Turkey, Egypt, and parts of India and North Africa as well as Babylonia.⁹

one hundred and twenty satraps

“There are a number of important Median loan-words in Old Persian, for example, *xšāyathya* ‘king’ and *xšathra-pāvē*, which through Greek *satrapēs* became the English word *satrap*.”¹⁰ “‘Satrap’ is a word that means ‘protector of the kingdom’; Xenophon and other Greek historians applied it to lower officials.”¹¹ See commentary on [Daniel 3:2](#) concerning *satraps*.

In the book of Esther, King Ahasuerus is said to rule “over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, from India to Ethiopia” (Est. 1:1 cf. 8:9). Critics assume the region ruled by Darius after Babylon's overthrow is considerably smaller than that of King Ahasuerus and conclude the number of satrapies given by Daniel must be an historical inaccuracy. But this assumes too much.

Daniel records that the king *appointed* 120 satraps. Perhaps the total number of satrapies differed.¹² The region of rule might have extended beyond newly-acquired Babylonia, adding to his pre-existing realm such that the combined area approached that of King Ahasuerus' later rule.¹³ On the other hand, the satrapies in Daniel may have been much smaller in size,¹⁴ only encompassing newly-acquired Babylonia.¹⁵ Historical records provide evidence the number of satrapies under a ruler can vary significantly with time and political fortune.¹⁶

Since Darius' rule over Babylon was relatively short-lived, this governmental reorganization occurred soon after the fall of Babylon to Medo-Persia. If so, the Babylonian government could have been in a state of disarray following the absentee rule of [Nabopolassar](#) and his profligate son, [Belshazzar](#).¹⁷

the king

Darius the Mede held the office of *king*, a factor to consider when establishing his identity. See [Darius the Mede](#).

3.6.2 - Daniel 6:2



three governors

Perhaps [Darius](#) adopted a tripartite division of authority patterned after the rule of the previous administration under [Nabopolassar](#), [Belshazzar](#), and Daniel.¹⁸

Daniel in the Lions Den (Notre-Dame de Fourvière)



1

“The word for ‘president’ [‘governor’ in the NKJV] (*sarak*), found only in this chapter, is unknown as to etymology, but from other considerations it clearly means ‘head’ or ‘chief.’ ”¹⁹

of whom Daniel was one

Darius probably knew of Daniel’s previous service in the government of *Nebuchadnezzar* as well as his role on the night of *Babylon’s* fall.²⁰ Instead of being killed or deposed by the new administration, God granted Daniel favor so the Jews would retain an advocate in high-level government.²¹ Daniel’s humility and unwillingness to compromise to gain a promotion in chapter 5 now results in an unsought promotion by divine favor.²²

suffer no loss

An important function of government was the collection and administration of taxes within the king’s realm (see *Ezra 4:13*).²³ This provided ample occasion for graft and embezzlement as monies funnelled through levels of government.

It appears the king suspected officials were participating in graft and bribery and the revenue stream was compromised. Convinced of Daniel’s integrity, he sought to use him to stem the financial loss. If true, this would fuel opposition by Daniel’s peers who feared exposure.²⁴

3.6.3 - Daniel 6:3

Daniel distinguished himself . . . because an excellent spirit was in him²⁵

Excellent spirit is רִנָּה יַתִּירָא [*rûah yattîrâ*]: an “exceptional, outstanding, extraordinary, pre-eminent”²⁶ spirit.

Daniel’s “excellent spirit” was manifested by the quality of his work and provided a natural testimony that was evident to others. “Do you see a man *who* excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men” (Pr. 22:29).

When one considers his unusual gifts, which are described in chapter one, his training under such an eminent ruler as Nebuchadnezzar, his experience extending over a period of perhaps sixty years, and the fact that all these advantages were seasoned and balanced by a ripe and strong faith in the Lord, there is hardly any ground for surprise.²⁷

Managing upper-level government required considerable skill and gifting:

It was an office of great difficulty and responsibility to manage the affairs of the empire in a proper manner, and required the talents of an accomplished statesman, and, at the same time, as it was an office where confidence was reposed by the sovereign, it demanded integrity.²⁸

With patience and impartiality he inquired into all complaints, determined all causes and redressed all wrongs. He dispensed his patronage with justice and equality. His counsels to his sovereign were so wise that only prosperity came from them to the crown. His policy always proved itself sound and good. His management of the revenues was unimpeachable, his accounts correct, his receipts and disbursements transparently honest.²⁹

Daniel understood his position within the pagan government was by God’s sovereign design. He served under pagan kings with the same diligence as if serving God.

Believers make their maximum testimony in organizations by showing their spiritual stability; doing a good job, yes, but the one thing that should characterize a believer is that he is reliable, that when given a job to do he does the best that he can do with what he’s got. He may not have as much skill as the man next door; he may not be as high IQ as the next person, you don’t have to worry about that, God doesn’t expect you to do

something with things that you don't have but God does expect you to do everything you can with what you've got. And the result is an impact for Jesus Christ. You do your job as unto the Lord; Colossians 3 gives some New Testament counterpart instructions on this; do your job as unto the Lord, not as unto man [Col. 3:23].³⁰

This "Protestant Work Ethic" should characterize all believers in every age:

There used to be a day in this country where we believed in something called the Protestant work ethic, where a Christian's life was obvious just based on how they conducted themselves in their craft, in their business, in their dealings. Christians stood out; Christians were different! And I've had the same bad experience as you've had, where you hire a Christian to do a job for you, perhaps plumbing or something like that, or around the house, and the standard of the Christians many times is just like that of the world, sometimes it's below the world. So I quit using the Christian yellow pages because I was discouraged; I thought Christians would be different. And many times they're not; many times they're very lethargic, lackadaisical, lazy, cutting corners, just like anybody else. . . . why have a Protestant work ethic? Because **your job is your pulpit**. [emphasis mine]³¹

Here is something that you'll see time and time again, that the one thing that attracts business organizations to believers is their moral reliability.³²

The promotion of a man like Daniel says much for the administration of **Darius**' as king. It is a rare thing and a blessing when a king or other high-level leader recognizes and advances truly-qualified individuals, not promoting them in return for bribery or political favors.³³

See commentary on [Daniel 4:8](#).

setting him over the whole realm

The king undoubtedly noticed a marked difference in the efficiency of government and size of tax revenues under Daniel's control in comparison with the other two governors—under whose jurisdiction graft and bribery may have flourished. By placing Daniel over the entire government, the losses under the other governors would be curtailed.³⁴

This all looked good for Daniel. But the enemy frequently mounts an unexpected attack when things appear to be going well—and such was the case for Daniel.

But watch out, the time to be on your guard is not during a time of adversity because during times of adversity we have a tendency to depend upon God. The time to be on your guard is when things start going well . . .³⁵

3.6.4 - Daniel 6:4

the governors and satraps sought

Collusion often arises when the ungodly are exposed by the people of God. Daniel had no intention of competing with or discrediting the other officials, but such is the inevitable result of his superior performance. It is impossible to shine for the kingdom of light without exposing the kingdom of darkness. Much like Herod and Pilate at the crucifixion of Jesus, competing leaders temporarily bury their differences to attack a mutual enemy.

Perhaps they were simply jealous of Daniel's God-given gifts, experience, and performance.

One thing is for sure: When you find yourself the number one man in any position—whether it be in church, in politics, in school, or even in the home—you are the one who will be watched by those who have a jealous spirit.³⁶

More likely, their jealousy was amplified by a dislike for righteous behavior³⁷ and a view that Daniel was an inappropriate candidate (a foreigner, old) for such an important role in the newly-established government.³⁸

some charge

Charge is from עֲלָה [illā], “pretext, grounds or basis for legal charges,”³⁹ “a pretext (as arising artificially).”⁴⁰

It isn't by accident the Greek title for the Devil is διάβολος [*diabolos*]: from δια [*dia*] (“against”) + βολος [*bolos*] (“to throw”). He is the “accuser of *the* brethren” (Rev. 20:10) and those in his kingdom are eager to follow in his footsteps. Being loath to admit deficiency, they must slander the righteous in an attempt to level the playing field.

It is the nature of the devil to be the accuser of the good and of those who are favored for their worth ; and all his children have the same family trait.⁴¹

they could find no charge or fault

Daniel was not sinless, but *by man's standards and in regard to his governmental duties*, his behavior was beyond reproach, similar to Job (Job 1:1). Scripture testifies of Daniel's righteous behavior by including him, along with Noah and Job, as a righteous triumvirate God responds to with favor.⁴²

“Son of man, when a land sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it; I will cut off its supply of bread, send famine on it, and cut off man and beast from it. Even *if* these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver *only* themselves by their righteousness,” says the Lord GOD. (Eze. 14:13-14)

“Or *if* I send a pestilence into that land and pour out My fury on it in blood, and cut off from it man and beast, even *though* Noah, Daniel, and Job *were* in it, *as* I live,” says the Lord GOD, “they would deliver neither son nor daughter; they would deliver *only* themselves by their righteousness.” (Eze. 14:19-20)

A person might assume that a faultless individual would be favored or even emulated by others. But such a view would be naive—out-of-touch with the Biblical reality of sin.

Plato was of [the] opinion that if perfect truth and virtue were to come from heaven and manifest their real glory among men, all would at once bow down and worship them. But he did not understand the depths of human depravity. Perfect truth and virtue did come from heaven in the person of Jesus Christ, and stood before the eyes of men for years and years in untainted beauty and glory; but the children of this world, rulers and mobs, cried, “Away with Him!” and crucified Him.⁴³

3.6.5 - Daniel 6:5**We shall not find any charge against this Daniel**

Daniel's opponents colluded to find supporting evidence of his wrong-doing. They assumed he was like them, participating in some form of graft. To their surprise, his record was as clean as his reputation.

Initially they figured that Daniel was like many men in high places (and probably like themselves) in that he skimmed a little money off the top for himself, falsified a few records here and there, took a few bribes and made some careless mistakes.⁴⁴

unless we find *it* against him concerning the law of His God

Society-at-large benefits from the righteous behavior of God's people in its midst (Mat. 5:13; Luke 14:34; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 4:28; 1Th. 4:11; 1Ti. 5:8). Still, non-believers seek ways to oppose righteousness because righteous behavior exposes their lawlessness (light exposes darkness, John 1:5, 2Cor. 6:14). Being under the sway of the wicked one (1Jn. 5:19), they contrive to manipulate the laws of the land to entrap the faithful by declaring

righteous behavior as unlawful and unlawful behavior as commendable (Pr. 28:4; Ps. 12:8; Isa. 5:20; Mic. 3:2; Mal. 2:17; Rom. 1:32; 1Pe. 3:15-16).

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (Isa. 5:20)

This age-old technique forces the godly to choose between allegiance to God and allegiance to government.⁴⁵ Secular materialism, being atheistic in belief, has no higher authority than man-made institutions and ultimately throws in its lot with the government. Believers, answering to a higher authority, are forced to choose God over government whenever the government mandates they act in direct violation of God's law.

In some cases, the believer is required to *abstain from* government-mandated behavior (as in the refusal of Daniel's companions to bow before the idol in **chapter 3**). In other cases, as here, the believer must *continue* behavior declared unlawful by the government (continue in prayer and worship of God).⁴⁶ These are the mandates of **higher law**.

A common situation develops at this point: jealousy leads men to attack a colleague who is more competent than themselves. In this case the ordinary feelings are sharpened by another factor that is noticed frequently in this book of Daniel. Because a man is of the kingdom of God, therefore the kingdom of this world drives its members to display a bitterness in their assault that surpasses anything that might have been in evidence had the issues been between men outside of God's kingdom. Speaking more plainly, the devil stirs the fires of natural hatred to a fiercer heat as soon as God's children are involved. . . . in no case can a man of God live a consistent life in the world without making apparent the fact that his life is separate from what the world does and countenances. And whenever the world becomes aware of this difference she resents it and finds her animosities stirred.⁴⁷

Daniel had a natural testimony: his faith was known by those acquainted with his manner of life.⁴⁸ They knew Daniel was monotheistic and committed to following his God. By arranging for his godly commitments to be declared "illegal activities," they were certain they would trap Daniel in behavior contrary to the state. Instead of conforming our behavior under pressure, Scripture instructs the believer to stand firm knowing that good conduct will ultimately prevail in the final judgment.

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, **that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.** (1Pe. 3:15-16) [emphasis mine]

You cannot keep people from talking about you, but you can so live as to make them liars when they do talk about you.⁴⁹

3.6.6 - Daniel 6:6



thronged before the king

Thronged is from רָגַשׁ [rēgāś], "throng as a mob, i.e., linear movement with the focus on the bustle of a crowd moving together, implying collusion."⁵⁰ "After a lengthy discussion of the term . . . Montgomery probably rightly concludes that in this context it signifies '“they acted in concert, harmony,” here practically, “in conspiracy”' (similar to the NIV's 'went as a group')."⁵¹

3.6.7 - Daniel 6:7



All . . . have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree

Here is additional evidence of the corruption among the ringleaders: they lied to the king concerning the consensus of the group.⁵²

The claim that all these leaders were agreed regarding the decree was a lie. Daniel certainly was not, and it is about as sure that satraps scattered far from Babylon were not either, and possibly not even all those near the capital.⁵³

Several factors should have tipped the king off that something underhanded was afoot: 1) Daniel was not present among the governors;⁵⁴ 2) The petition was championed by those in the government who were evidently responsible for financial losses—whom the king was planning to place under Daniel. The king seems to have overlooked these factors, perhaps due to the blinding influence of pride.

Some among the colluding group knew a royal statute was irrevocable. See commentary on *Daniel 6:8*.

whoever petitions any god or man . . . except you, O king

“Petitions *to* god” refers to prayer. But what should we make of “petitions *to* man”?

“Prays to any god” is clear enough, but what is the meaning of “prays to any . . . man”? . . . it seems to allude to the priests through whom petitions were mediated to the gods. Thus Darius was to be the only priestly mediator during this period. . . . Darius was not proclaiming himself to be a god but during this thirty-day period was acting as mediator for the gods of all the nations subject to him.⁵⁵

The petitions were prayers, not day-to-day governmental requests—which would have placed an unworkable bottleneck in the function of government, if even only for a short time.⁵⁶ Prayers occupied an important place in Persian worship.⁵⁷

During the period in question, prayers were to be exclusively to the king as the divinely appointed representative of god.⁵⁸

Wilson sums up available evidence under this head by saying: “The kings of Egypt were worshipped as such from immemorial times.” Such attitudes naturally passed from one nation to another. He adds: “That kings should be called gods is witnessed by Pharaohs, Ptolemies, Seleucids, Herods, and Cæsars.” What did the ancients mean when they raised what seems to us to be so entirely impossible a claim? In the first place, they had a rather inferior conception of what a god was. Consequently they could conceive of mortals as being sons of the deity, for according to old legends in many a case a god, or at least a demigod appearing as a mortal, had been about on the earth, consorting with the daughters of men.⁵⁹

It is the characteristic feature of every one of these world empires. Nebuchadnezzar and Darius took the lead. In the one which followed, the Graeco-Macedonian, we find Antiochus Epiphanes, who took the same place. In the Roman Empire we have emperors and others, like Herodes, claiming divine honors; in papal Rome the popes claim infallibility. And in apostate Protestantism the deification of man appears likewise.⁶⁰

The state’s usurpation of the place of divinity is an attribute of the kingdom of man characterizing numerous periods of history. It is prevalent in systems of government promoting atheism (e.g., humanism and secular materialism—as in our own country today).

The kingdom of man has a system of conquest or expansion and we can always spot the kingdom of man in history in such movements as communism, socialism and so on, because the kingdom of man always wants to glorify the state. The attraction must always be to the state, to what man has made, to man’s programs, to man’s legislation. So the state receives the glorification.⁶¹

This is analogous to *Nebuchadnezzar’s* decree to *fall down and worship the gold image* in Daniel 3:5. In both cases, enemies of God’s people required behavior contravening allegiance to God. They attempted to force believers to violate a fundamental commandment: to place an image or person in the position of God (Ex. 20:3-5).

You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness *of anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth; **you shall not bow down to them nor serve them.** For I, the LORD your God, *am a jealous God*, . . . (Ex. 20:3-5a) [emphasis mine]

This decree is typologically related to the coming worship of **Antichrist** (Rev. 13:8, 15).⁶²

Darius practically put himself into the place that the man of sin, the lawless one, [who] will occupy in the last days. He became a type of the Antichrist, who shall “sit in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” And right here, it is of moment to remark that there may be a vast difference between what a man is in himself and the place he occupies in scripture typology. Darius, as a man, was doubtless a very different character to the coming false Messiah. He was kindly and amiable, and as we know, was afterwards deeply repentant for having permitted himself to act so foolishly. But as the king, making himself an object of worship, and denying the liberty of any to offer prayers or adoration to any other God save himself, he fittingly pictures the Antichrist.⁶³

To forbid prayer to God, and to demand that the prayer that was offered to God should be offered to himself if at all, only for a certain space of time, was nothing more nor less than the type of him who would take this place in a far more literal and gross and daring way. We have clearly a New Testament proof that these days, spoken of in Daniel and typified then, are yet to come;⁶⁴

The decree goes further than that of Nebuchadnezzar in **chapter 3** demanding worship of an image, yet did not prohibit worship to other idols or gods. This decree prohibited prayer to *any* except the king as divine representative.⁶⁵

Kelly recognizes the **typological** similarity between the fall of Neo-Babylonia followed by the claim of divine role by **Darius** and the final fall of **Babylon**, yet future, prior to the rise and worship of Antichrist.

The hour will have come for man to have the supreme place in the world. When this is achieved, “These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them.” That this follows the destruction of Babylon is plain. For it says afterwards, “The ten horns which thou sawest, and the beast” (so it ought to be read), “these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked.” This is exactly what answers to the type of Darius, who comes in when Babylon is destroyed, and takes the kingdom immediately; and the next thing is, he is led on by his courtiers to take the place of God Himself. . . . These two types [the destruction of Neo-Babylonia and Darius occupying the place of God] are highly instructive, as closing the general history of the Gentiles. They show, not what had characterized them from the beginning and during their progress, but the main features of evil at the close. There will be destruction falling upon Babylon because of its profaneness in the religious profession of men, and then the height of blasphemous pride to which the head of empire will rise by assuming the honor and glory due only to God Himself. I was anxious to connect the two things together, because we cannot otherwise get the true force of them so well.⁶⁶

The king was baited appropriately: “except you, O king”—blatant flattery designed to appeal to the king’s vanity. This should have served as an important clue to the king concerning the duplicity of this counsel (Ps. 12:2-3; Pr. 26:23-26), but pride has an insidious ability to blind.⁶⁷

Once signed, the decree would have consequences reaching far beyond Daniel, affecting all the Jews in the realm.

This law aimed directly at Daniel also affected every Jew. If the law had not been nullified, every Jew would have been prevented from praying legally to the God of Israel. Every faithful Jew could have been charged, convicted, and put to death. The potential evil of this law may have gone farther than even its authors ever conceived.⁶⁸

for thirty days

The decree was to be a temporary measure—long enough to trap Daniel—but short enough to minimize possible impact on the general populace.⁶⁹ Perhaps the decree found favor with the king as a temporary expedient to quell

the possibility of revolt at the beginning of Darius' reign over Babylon.⁷⁰

Now arises the temptation of Christian pragmatism.⁷¹ If Daniel would only change his behavior for one month, the threat could be forestalled. Perhaps close his upper windows, and suppress public evidence of his faithfulness in prayer. But Daniel walked by *principle rather than pragmatism*, made possible by his high view of God's sovereignty. Like Daniel, we are called to walk according to God's principles and leave the results to God. See commentary on [Daniel 6:10](#).

shall be cast into the den of lions

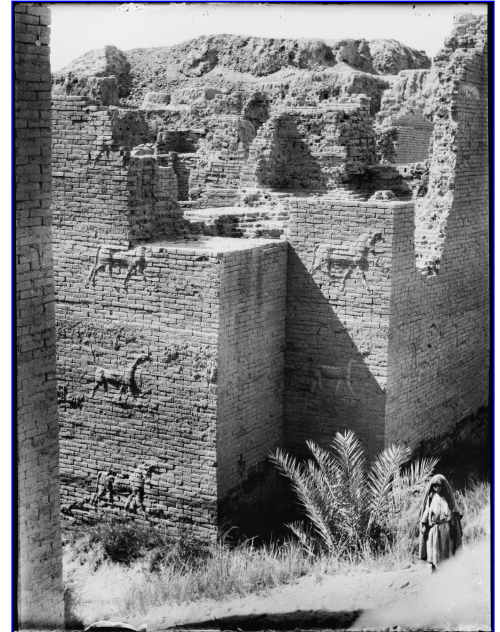
Under Babylonian rule, capital punishment was by fire ([Daniel 3:6](#)). Here, under Medo-Persian rule, criminals are to be devoured by lions.⁷³ This difference may reflect cultural differences regarding beliefs concerning fire.

The state religion of Medo-Persia, namely, Zoroastrianism, involved the worship of Atar the fire-god [A. T. Olmstead, *The History of the Persian Empire* (Chicago: U. Of Chicago, 1948), p. 473]. Thus, for the Medo-Persians to have used a furnace of fire as a means of destroying criminals would have appeared sacrilegious.⁷⁴

[The author] was quite accurate in recording the change from punishment by fire under the Babylonians (Dan. 3:11▶) to punishment by being thrown to lions under the Persian regime (Dan. 6:7▶), since fire was sacred to the Zoroastrians of Persia.⁷⁵

The Persians were also known for other gruesome methods of inflicting punishment, including crucifixion.⁷⁶

Ishtar Gate with Lions (1932)



3.6.8 - Daniel 6:8



the law of the Medes and Persians

72

In the book of Daniel, the Medes are mentioned before the Persians (c.f. Dan. 5:28▶; 6:8▶, 12▶, 15▶; 8:20▶) indicating that the events of this chapter transpired during the early stages of Medo-Persian alliance (539-537 B.C.), when the Medes still retained ascendancy over the Persians. By the time the book of Esther was written (450-331 B.C.⁷⁷), the Persians had attained the more prominent role (as predicted by Dan. 8:3▶; 20) and are mentioned before the Medes (Est. 1:3, 14, 18-19; 10:2).⁷⁸

Darius reigned over Babylon like a conqueror, not observing the laws of the Babylonians, but introducing the immutable laws of the conquering nations, the Medes and Persians (Dan. 6:8▶, 12▶, 15▶). During his reign, the Medes are set before the Persians (Dan. 6:8▶, 12▶, 15▶; 5:28▶; 8:20▶), as the Persians were later set before the Medes in the reign of Cyrus and his successors (Est. 1:3, 14, 18, 19; Dan. 10:1▶, 20▶; 11:2▶). This shows that in the reign of Darius the Medes were prominent.⁷⁹

When Darius the Mede established his administration he was immediately subject to the “law of the Medes and Persians” (Dan. 6:8▶, 12▶, 15▶), which would not have been the case if Media had been an independent kingdom at the time. . . . According to many critical scholars the author of Daniel followed the erroneous precedent of Isaiah (Isa. 13:17; 21:2) and Jeremiah (Jer. 51:11, 28), according to which the Medes were the sole conquerors of Babylon in 539 B.C., as they had been of Nineveh in 612 B.C. How this theory could ever have arisen is somewhat of a mystery, since one of the Isaiah references (Isa. 21:2) speaks explicitly of Elam and Media as the joint-conquerors of Babylon, a point that was conceded by Rawley. Be that as it may, archaeological discoveries have shown that it was quite legitimate for Isaiah and Jeremiah to refer to the Medes as the conquerors of Babylon. . . . While the Medes were prominent in the capture of Babylon, they functioned

as one part of the military forces under the command of Cyrus, and not as an independent entity. It would appear, then, that neither Isaiah, Jeremiah, nor Daniel was confused about the chronology of the Median empire, unlike a good many of their later critics.⁸⁰

which does not alter.

The unchangeable laws of the Medo-Persian Empire is mentioned in the book of Esther:

If it pleases the king, let a royal decree go out from him, and let it be recorded in the laws of the Persians and the Medes, **so that it will not be altered**, that Vashti shall come no more before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she. (Est. 1:19) [emphasis mine]

You yourselves write *a decree* concerning the Jews, as you please, in the king's name, and seal *it* with the king's signet ring; for whatever is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring **no one can revoke**. (Est. 8:8) [emphasis mine]

A stable system of law is beneficial to a society,⁸¹ but where established upon the sole authority of an individual, law is too easily subject to errant judgment, capriciousness, and abuse.⁸²

The permanence of the laws of the Medes and Persians was not out of concern to provide a stable legal system for society. As the divine representative, it was inappropriate for the king to admit to faulty judgment.⁸³

Some have assailed this aspect of Daniel's record as being implausible and unhistorical.⁸⁴ But the unchangeable law can hardly be considered historically implausible in view of the claims of infallibility attributed to the Roman Catholic Pope in our own era.

Nor need we wonder at the enormous wickedness of it when we remember that even in our own day a general council of the highest officials in what claims to be the one only Church of the living God united in solemnly pronouncing a feeble old man in Rome possessed of divine infallibility! And if the pope of Rome is pleased to accept and appropriate such absurd honors in the name of the sublimest truth given for human enlightenment, we need not be surprised that these proposals of Medo-Persia's "presidents, princes, counsellors, and captains" proved acceptable to the vain-glorious heathen monarch who then occupied the Medo-Persian throne.⁸⁵

There is historic evidence documenting the permanent nature of Persian law. Approximately one hundred years after the rule of **Darius**, the book of Esther provides further witness to the unchangeable nature Medo-Persian law (Est. 1:19; 8:8). Barnes cites several additional examples:

Diodorus Siculus (lib. iv.) refers to this custom where he says that Darius, the last king of Persia, would have pardoned Charidemus after he was condemned to death, but could not reverse what the law had passed against him. - Lowth. "When the king of Persia," says Montesquieu (Spirit of Laws, as quoted by Rosenmuller, Morgenland, in loc.), "has condemned any one to death, no one dares speak to him to make intercession for him. Were he even drunk when the crime was committed, or were he insane, the command must nevertheless be executed, for the law cannot be countermanded, and the laws cannot contradict themselves. This sentiment prevails throughout Persia." It may seem singular that such a custom prevailed, and that the king, who was the fountain of law, and whose will was law, could not change a statute at his pleasure.⁸⁶

A remarkable example of this is related by Sir John Malcolm, of Aga Mohammed Khan, the last but one of the Persian kings. After alluding to the present case, and that in Esther, he observes, "The character of the power of the king of Persia has undergone no change. The late king, Aga Mohammed Khan, when encamped near Shiraz, said that he would not move until the snow was off the mountains in the vicinity of his camp. The season proved severe, and the snow remained longer than was expected; the army began to suffer distress and sickness, but the king said while the snow remained upon the mountain, he would not move; and his word was as law, and could not be broken. A multitude of laborers were collected and sent to remove the snow; their efforts, and a few fine days, cleared the mountains, and Aga Mohammed Khan marched." - History of Persia, i. 268, quoted in the Pict. Bible, in loc.⁸⁷

Whereas in [Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon](#) the king reigned supreme, in Medo-Persia the king was subject to previously-established law and could not overturn it. Some commentators see Darius' inability to change the law —the fact that he was *bound* by his own law—as one aspect of the inferiority of the Medo-Persian kingdom (represented by silver, Dan. 2:32, 39) in comparison with the Neo-Babylonian kingdom (represented by gold, Dan. 2:32, 37).⁸⁸

Because the king was viewed as the inerrant divine representative—whose word was faultless—the laws governing the empire assumed a god-like attribute of immutability.

Now you know that wherever the kingdom of man goes you have to have something replace God . . . So the Medes and the Persians took one of God's divine attributes, which was immutability, and they brought it over into civil law. So they actually made an idol out of the state by making their law immutable, that once an administrative decision has been made it was locked down for eternity, until it was carried out. So this way the state was deified, the state picked up some of the divine attributes.⁸⁹

3.6.9 - Daniel 6:9



King Darius signed the decree

Any viable identification of *Darius the Mede* must account for his having the authority to sign such a decree.⁹⁰

According to the book of Esther, the king's decree had to be put into writing and sealed before it was considered immutable:

You yourselves write *a decree* concerning the Jews, as you please, in the king's name, and seal *it* with the king's signet ring; for whatever is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring no one can revoke. (Est. 8:8)

It seems the king was easily convinced to sign the decree. It may have appealed to his [pride](#). Or, since it was early in his reign over [Babylon](#), perhaps the king viewed the decree as a means of asserting his authority over the populace.⁹¹ Young mentions the rashness of the decree as possible evidence in favor of identifying [Darius](#) as [Cyaxares II](#).⁹²

In view of the intimate connection between religious and political loyalty which governed the attitude of the peoples of that ancient culture, it might well have been considered a statesmanlike maneuver to compel all the diverse inhabitants with their heterogeneous tribal and religious loyalties to acknowledge in a very practical way the supremacy of the new Persian empire which had taken over supreme control of their domains. A temporary suspension of worship (at least in the sense of presenting petitions for blessing and aid) was a measure well calculated to convey to the minds of Darius's subjects the reality of the change in control from the overlordship of the Chaldeans to that of the Medes and Persians. In the light of ancient psychology, therefore, it is unwarrantable to rule out of possibility such a remarkable decree or to condemn it as fabulous or unhistorical, as many critics have done.⁹³

Whatever the reason, it seems the king failed to thoughtfully evaluate the situation. "He should have asked himself, 'Why all this sudden show of loyalty to me? Why isn't Daniel among those who propose this law? What would the long-term results of this be? Do the officers who propose it have any ulterior motives?' But flattery was stronger than reflection in this case, and the outrage was committed."⁹⁴

3.6.10 - Daniel 6:10



When Daniel knew that the writing was signed

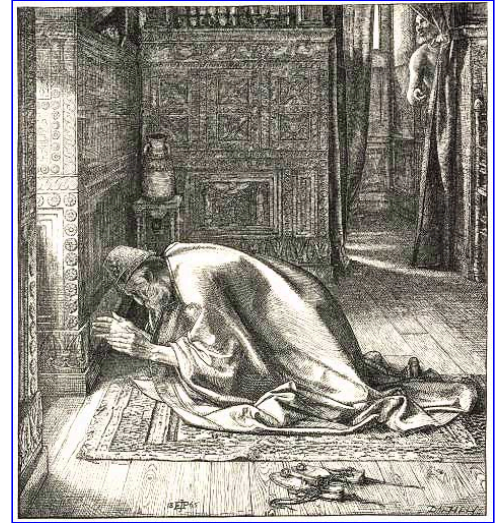
Daniel's response was measured and with full knowledge of the likely consequences. This is equivalent to the testimony of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego facing the **fiery furnace**, "Our God is able to deliver . . . , but if not" (Dan. 3:17-18). See commentary on *Daniel 3:18*.

Daniel's Prayer

During the fiery furnace incident which befell his three companions, **no mention was made of Daniel**. Now the three companions go unmentioned. Perhaps, by this time, they were no longer living.⁹⁶

Whereas the refusal by Daniel's companions to worship the image in **chapter 3** was in obedience to a negative command of God, the refusal by Daniel to leave off praying was in obedience to a positive command.

The contrast between the two chapters is from a negatively worded command (Daniel 3:18: do not worship other gods) to a positively worded one in Daniel 6:10: do worship the true God. . . . this account supplements the message of Daniel 3:18 by reminding readers that not only is it imperative to avoid idolatry even in the face of persecution, but believers also cannot compromise the one true faith by neglecting the worship of God, even when that worship exposes believers to persecution and death. Neglecting to worship God is as much a denial of the true God as bowing down to idols.⁹⁷



95

Numerous avenues were available for Daniel to continue worshiping God while potentially avoiding entrapment by the new decree. He could have simply ceased his routine prayer for the duration of the decree—surely God would have understood!⁹⁸ Or, he could have continued his customary prayers in secret.⁹⁹ These might have been options recommended by many “pragmatic Christians” of our day: “Why alienate the culture unnecessarily? If you really want to reach this culture for Christ, lay low and preserve your ministry during this time so you can continue your evangelistic efforts once the coast is clear! Think of those who will remain unreached if you squander your life by your inflexibility! Don’t forget: it was God who put you in the highly-influential position which could continue to benefit other believers.”

Daniel understood that pragmatism and flexibility are often effective tools of temptation employed by the devil and empowered by our own rationalization. To his credit, Daniel chose principle over pragmatism.

He might have compromised his integrity by ceasing to pray to God during the month the decree was in effect—or by praying privately, perhaps in the night, when no one could see him worshiping at his window. To rationalize such compromises to preserve his role in government would have been easy. But Daniel could not compromise.¹⁰⁰

Any alteration in Daniel's known habitual practice in the worship of God would have testified of his willingness to please men rather than God.

Now, with respect to the profession of piety, it was necessary to testify before men his perseverance in the worship of God. For if he had altered his habits at all, it would have been a partial abjuration; he would not have said that he openly despised God to please Darius; but that very difference in his conduct would have been a proof of perfidious defection.¹⁰¹

Daniel found himself in the position many Christians have faced throughout history: having to distinguish between sin and crime. The culture had now legalized sin and criminalized righteous behavior.

A friend of mine once remarked, “A lot of crimes are not sins, and a lot of sins are not crimes.” Our text indicates he was absolutely right. In the sixth chapter of Daniel, this righteous man is convicted of a crime which is not a sin. Daniel purposefully committed this crime because he did not wish to commit a sin, which was not a crime.¹⁰²

Daniel rightly understood this as an issue of faithfulness to God's higher law and chose to walk the difficult path of **civil disobedience**.

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. . . . Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. (Mat. 10:28-32)

in his upper room

The upper chamber, or attic, receives consideration as being more removed and less liable to be disturbed, hence as being particularly adapted to purposes of devotion; cf. 2S. 19:1; 1K. 17:20; Acts 1:13; 10:9.¹⁰³

with his windows open

Daniel did not open the windows to make a spectacle of his prayer or to aggressively challenge the decree—his windows were customarily open. Nor did he close them to be more clandestine in his worship in an attempt to avoid detection.

toward Jerusalem

Since Daniel's prayer for the Jews and Jerusalem took place in the first year of **Darius** (Dan. 9:1▶), perhaps Gabriel had already given Daniel the famous *Seventy Sevens* prophecy confirming the Jews would soon return to rebuild Jerusalem.¹⁰⁴ See *Chronology of Daniel*. If so, Daniel faced toward Jerusalem as an act of faith: though the city lay in ruins, he believed God's revelation that the Jews would return and the city would be rebuilt (Dan. 9:25▶).¹⁰⁵ The direction of his prayer demonstrated his faith in God's word, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *things* that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,' " (Isa. 46:10).

Regardless of whether Daniel had received Gabriel's message concerning Jerusalem, he would still have prayed toward Jerusalem¹⁰⁶ in response to the prayers of Solomon at the dedication of the temple—now in ruins over one thousand miles away. Solomon's prayer recognized that Israel might descend into apostasy necessitating God's judgement—that the nation might be taken captive in judgment. Prayer toward Jerusalem was intended to demonstrate humility and recognition of the desire for God to respond and restore the Jews to their city. Daniel found himself in just such a situation.

When they sin against You (for *there is* no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them **captive to the land of the enemy, far or near; yet** when they come to themselves in the land where they were carried captive, and repent, and make supplication to You **in the land of those who took them captive**, saying, 'We have sinned and done wrong, we have committed wickedness'; and *when* they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul **in the land of their enemies who led them away captive**, and pray to You **toward their land which You gave to their fathers, the city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built** for Your name: then hear in heaven Your dwelling place their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause (1K. 8:46-49) [emphasis mine]

Jerusalem was the place where God promised to place His name (1K. 8:29; 11:36; 2K. 23:27; 2Chr. 33:4, 7; cf. Dan. 9:19▶), where His shekinah glory dwelt between the cherubim, over the mercy seat of the ark situated within the Holy of Holies in the temple.¹⁰⁷ Praying toward the place where God had chosen to place his name (the temple in Jerusalem) is emphasized by repetition in Solomon's prayer of dedication: 1K. 8:33, 38, 42, 44, 48; 2Chr. 6:38. Later, Daniel begins his magnificent prayer of repentance in **chapter 9**, "Then I set my face toward the Lord God" (Dan. 9:3a▶)—possibly another reference to praying in the direction of Jerusalem.

When the people had been taken captive, the gesture symbolizing the direction of their hearts' desire, was even more significant.¹⁰⁸

Even though this shekinah cloud had forsaken the temple prior to the Fall of Jerusalem in 587 (Eze. 11:23), Daniel knew that the Lord had promised to return there (cf. Eze. 43:2) and to restore Jerusalem (Jer. 29:10, 14)¹⁰⁹

God had established His presence in the temple and it was the regular procedure for every Jew in the dispensation of Israel to pray facing toward the temple because that was the location of God. Now that's not true today, we don't face towards the temple because that is no longer part of the Church Age according to what Jesus said to the woman at the well in John 4.¹¹⁰

Smith summarizes the centrality of Jerusalem to Scripture and history:

To no city on earth have such titles of glory and honor been divinely given; to no city has been such guilt attached as to it—this city which crucified our Lord. Of no city are such prophecies of tragedy and tribulation uttered; toward this city will the armies of the earth march in hatred of God's peace. Toward that same city will nations move, seeking the law of the Lord; from that city will flow blessings to the whole earth. Satan hates this city. Christ wept over it. The Holy Spirit descended upon its believers. The nations will be irresistibly drawn to it for war. Christ will there reign. And Heaven will bring to a glorious and eternal fulfillment all the promises relating to it.¹¹¹

Throughout history, devout Jews outside the land of Israel have longed for their Jewish homeland, as did the Jews of Daniel's day.

It requires no profound theological appraisal to realise that many devout Jews would have reacted against the alien philosophy pervading the culture that surrounded them there. Amid the splendour of the great walled city which they may have helped to rebuild they longed for the reinstatement and revival of Jerusalem as their own national capital. Amid the glamour of the worship of the many bejewelled deities their thoughts would have turned to the One God—for them unrepresentable even as he was then unrepresented in any temple there or back home. Amid the clamour of the multi-racial metropolis the exiles must have watched the kings of many nations bring their tribute to Nebuchadrezzar and have envisaged the long-promised Day when the same would be done not for a man but for their God as king of Kings in his new city.¹¹²

The psalmist expressed this universal Jewish longing:

By the rivers of **Babylon**, There we sat down, yea, we wept When we remembered Zion. . . . How shall we sing the LORD'S song In a foreign land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, Let my right hand forget *its skill*! If I do not remember you, Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth-If I do not exalt Jerusalem Above my chief joy. (Ps. 137:1, 4-6)

knelt down on his knees

Daniel's posture demonstrated his humility as he approached God with his petitions. "Normally the Jews stood when they prayed (cf. 1Chr. 23:30; Neh. 9; Mat. 6:5; Mark 11:25; Luke 18:11, 13), but they kneeled (and prostrated themselves) when they felt a more urgent need (cf. 1K. 8:54; Ezra 9:5; Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60; 9:40; 20:36; 21:5)."¹¹³ "Kneeling is mentioned as the characteristic posture of supplicants in 1K. 8:54; 2Chr. 6:12; Ezra 9:5; Luke 22:41; Acts 7:59; 9:40; 21:5; Eph. 3:14."¹¹⁴

Although Scripture records prayers offered in a variety of positions, the condition of the heart should always be that of humility (Luke 18:13).

Victor Hugo said that the soul is on its knees many times regardless of the position of the body. The posture of the *spirit* of the man is what is important. However, if you want to select a posture for prayer, it is kneeling, and that is set before us here.¹¹⁵

Although kneeling is not required for prayers to be effective, there are several examples of this in Scripture. When Solomon prayed at the time of the temple dedication, he "knelt on his knees in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven" (2Chr. 6:13, NASB). When Jesus prayed at

Gethsemane, “He knelt down and *began* to pray” (Luke 22:41). When Peter healed Tabitha, he knelt down and prayed (Acts 9:40). Following the Apostle Paul’s farewell message to the elders at Ephesus (Acts 20:17-38), we read that “he knelt down and prayed with them all” (v. 36). Also, at his farewell departure with the disciples at Tyre, we are told that they knelt down on the beach and prayed (Acts 21:5). Kneeling reflects a worshipful attitude and one’s humility before the Lord. Ps. 95:6 states, “Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!” (ESV). Of course a person could physically kneel to pray and yet his heart be far from the Lord. So it is important that the one who prays is also “kneeling” in the heart.¹¹⁶

three times that day

Daniel’s customary practice was to pray three times each day. This may have been in response to David’s psalm, “Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, And He shall hear my voice.” (Ps. 55:17). Morning and evening prayers may have been considered an expedient substitute for morning and evening sacrifice—no longer possible while the temple stood in ruins.¹¹⁷ This thrice-daily practice was adopted by some in the Christian church.¹¹⁸

prayed and gave thanks

Daniel remained thankful, though he knew obedience to God could cost him his life. Daniel understood an important aspect of prayer “with thanksgiving”—the primary way we guard our heart and mind with the peace of God, especially in times of crisis (Php. 4:6-7). Daniel had prayed since his youth, but his growing responsibilities within the government of two world-powers would have made prayer all the more important.¹¹⁹ Daniel’s prayers probably included requests to bless his captors—originally Babylon, but now Medo-Persia under King Darius, in accord with the instructions of Jeremiah (Jer. 7:13-17; 11:1-14; 14:11; 29:4-7).¹²⁰

Daniel understood his daily dependence on communion with God.

We don’t fail to go to bed at night, because we know we need to, and our body reminds us by being tired. We don’t fail to eat, because we know we must. But we really do not sense the desperate need to pray. We fail to grasp our daily dependence on God and His provisions.¹²¹

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Php. 4:6-7)

as was his custom

In response to the decree, *Daniel did not change his customary behavior*, neither to provoke confrontation¹²² nor to hide from possible persecution.¹²³

Observe, it is not said that he opened his windows; it is quite the contrary, “His windows being open;”—to shut them now would be cowardice; whereas to have opened them, if he had previously been in the habit of keeping them closed, would have been to court persecution,—a foolhardy thing, which the child of God is never called upon to do.¹²⁴

Daniel *continued* his life-long practice: his prayer was not in response to crisis. His ongoing, customary prayer and study of God’s word bathed his soul with a spiritual perspective that prepared him for anything that might come his way. When this crisis presented itself, *Daniel was already prepared*. His ability to calmly continue his normal worship of God depended upon the cultivation of a life-long prayer habit.¹²⁵

3.6.11 - Daniel 6:11



these men assembled

Daniel's enemies knew exactly what to expect—Daniel would continue to honor God as was his custom. And so it should be with regard to our faithful behavior!

found Daniel praying

This may have been the very day the decree was signed—we cannot know for certain. Either way, Daniel continued with his regular prayer practice, not knowing exactly when he might face retribution.

making supplication

We can only guess Daniel's supplication entailed a request similar to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego when facing the [fiery furnace](#): either to be delivered from the penalty of faithfulness or granted the ability to face martyrdom with grace—convinced of God's sovereignty in the matter (Job [13:15](#); Isa. [43:2-3](#)).

It may not always please God to deliver *from* the trial, but He will always preserve *in* it, and eventually bring His own in peace *out* of it. ¹²⁶

In the “Old Testament hall of faith,” recorded in the 11th chapter of the Book of Hebrews, some of the heroes of the faith were delivered from death, among whom Daniel seems to have been numbered (see Hebrews [11:32-34](#)). Others, however, were delivered through death (see Hebrews [11:35-40](#)). We dare not presume that God will always keep the righteous from persecution and death. We can always be certain that God will deliver us, whether in life or in death. ¹²⁷

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, **though he may die, he shall live**. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John [11:25-26](#)) [emphasis mine]

3.6.12 - Daniel 6:12

Have you not signed a decree . . . ?

The zealous reminder by Daniel's enemies may have revealed their true motivation for recommending the decree and the king began to realize his mistake. Especially if they reported Daniel's violation on the very same day the decree was signed. ¹²⁸

which does not alter

See commentary on [Daniel 6:8](#).

3.6.13 - Daniel 6:13

That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah

They imply Daniel's disregard for the law was to be expected since he was a Jew. ¹²⁹ Not only was Daniel a Jew, but he was from among the *captives*. How dare a lowly slave disregard a royal decree! ¹³⁰

[As if to say] “That old foreigner, that Jew, who is no more than a captive and a slave and who is in a position of prominence because of you, is very ungrateful for the power you gave him and the position to which you promoted him. He certainly does not appreciate the favors you bestowed upon him. . . .” ¹³¹

People who excel are hated; that's one reason why the Jewish people all down through history have been hated. It's simple, they're hard working and they excel. People who excel will be victimized by the equality crowd. It's true of the French Revolution, it's true of the Russian Revolution; it's true of every great movement in history that seeks to equalize “opportunity.” ¹³²

See commentary on [Daniel 2:25](#).

does not show due regard for you

When God's people adhere to God's priorities, it can be misinterpreted as an intentional slight to secular positions of authority. It is not that we disregard others—Jesus commands us to serve others with humility—but that we consider God (the Creator) to be on an entirely different plane than men (mere creatures).

When our lives reflect God's priorities we can expect persecution in response. We will *never* fit in—we are *different*, by God's design.¹³³ This was something Haman despised and emphasized in his complaint concerning the Jews:

Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; **their laws are different** from all other people's, and **they do not keep the king's laws**. Therefore it *is* not fitting for the king to let them remain. (Est. 3:8) [emphasis mine]

Our refusal to endorse the world's ungodly programs and skewed priorities will inevitably be viewed as a threat to secular society.

If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. (John 15:19)

See commentary on [Daniel 3:12](#).

three times a day

The frequency of Daniel's prayer to God is misinterpreted as greater disregard for the king and the law. See commentary on [Daniel 6:10](#).

3.6.14 - Daniel 6:14



the king . . . was greatly displeased with himself

The king evidently realizes his entrapment by now. Regardless of how this turns out for Daniel, the collaborators have unwittingly placed themselves in a precarious position under the king's disfavor.

Here again we are taught how cautiously kings ought to avoid depraved counsels, since they are besieged on every side by perfidious men, whose only object is to gain by their false representations, and to oppress their enemies, and those from whom they hope for booty or who may favor their evil courses. Because so many snares surround kings, they ought to be the more cautious in providing against cunning.¹³⁴

Herod would find himself in a similar position hundreds of years later—regretting his vow to Herodias' daughter compelling him to reluctantly sever the head of John the Baptist (Mark 6:26).

set *his* heart on Daniel to deliver him

The king now realizes Daniel's motive is not disregard for authority, but regard for a higher, ultimate authority: the God of Israel. Since Daniel's abilities and performance surpasses his accusers', the king understands they were motivated by jealousy. At the very least, the king does not want to lose Daniel as an effective resource in his government. He is familiar with Daniel's personal qualities and is motivated by a genuine concern for Daniel as an individual and, possibly, as a friend.

he labored . . . to deliver him¹³⁵

The king consulted his advisors to find a way around the unchangeable nature of the law he had signed.

All that the king did in his endeavor to deliver Daniel is difficult to say. He probably worked with lawyers to see if there were any possibility for setting the decree aside. Perhaps he argued that the king, who had made the law, ought to be able to set it aside; or he may have asked if there were no past cases where similar decrees had been rescinded; or he may have inquired if a man might be pardoned by the king and still satisfy legal requirements.¹³⁶

Ironically, the king issues an immutable decree establishing himself as the recipient of all petitions to god, but now finds himself trapped by the immutability of that same decree and with no recourse except petition to the God of Israel.¹³⁷

till the going down of the sun

The king needed to find a solution before sunset—the customary time to carry out judgment upon criminals.¹³⁸

3.6.15 - Daniel 6:15

Then these men approached the king, and said

The king's frustration grew as the day progressed because Daniel's accusers, having become aware of the reluctance of the king, continued reminding him of his obligation under the law. In this, the accusers unwittingly sealed their own punishment when Daniel emerges unscathed from the lions' den.

Throughout the time that the king was working to rescue Daniel from the decree (from the time the officials spoke in Dan. 6:13▶ until sundown), they kept reminding him that the decree could not be altered. They did not simply crowd around him at the end of the day to state this, but they said it repeatedly, pressing the issue. This would help explain the king's complete annoyance at them that led to their condemnation (Dan. 6:24▶).¹³⁹

no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed

See commentary on [Daniel 6:8](#).

3.6.16 - Daniel 6:16

the king gave the command

Unable to set aside or overrule his immutable decree, the king was forced to enact the prescribed sentence. In this, we see an admirable aspect of the king's character: he recognizes his legal obligation, though it runs counter to his great personal desire. As friend and admirer of Daniel he would release him, but as king of Medo-Persia he must enforce the law.

The execution of the sentence was carried out, according to Oriental custom, on the evening of the day in which the accusation was made; this does not, however, imply that it was on the evening in which, at the ninth hour, he had prayed.¹⁴⁰

den of lions

At this time in history, lions were hunted by royalty of Babylonia and Persia.¹⁴² Lions were captured alive and placed within royal zoos.¹⁴³

Over the years, various artists have depicted Daniel's ordeal in the lions' den. Although inspirational, some suffer from historical inaccuracies: Daniel is depicted as being a young or middle-aged man (he was over [80 years of age](#)),¹⁴⁴ and the conditions in the den are not depicted as dire and offensive as they must have been.¹⁴⁵

There is considerable discussion among commentators regarding the construction and arrangement of the den. Some suggest, like the [fiery furnace](#) of chapter 3,¹⁴⁶ the den had two openings: one at the top where the victim was lowered into the midst of the lions, and another at the side where the animals found entry, were fed, and their premises maintained.

The den likely had both a side and a top opening. The opening covered by this stone was probably at the side. The verse reveals that the stone was placed for reasons of security; and a side entrance, on a level with the inside floor, would have called for this more than one above. This entrance was likely covered normally by some type of grating, with the prepared stone at hand when special security was needed. Ventilation may have been solely through the top opening when the stone was in place.¹⁴⁷

We have no account by the ancients of the construction of lions' dens. Ge. Höst, in his work on *Fez and Morocco*, p. 77, describes the lions' dens as they have been found in Morocco. According to his account, they consist of a large square cavern under the earth, having a partition-wall in the middle of it, which is furnished with a door, which the keeper can open and close from above. By throwing in food they can entice the lions from the one chamber into the other, and then, having shut the door, they enter the vacant space for the purpose of cleaning it. The cavern is open above, its mouth being surrounded by a wall of a yard and a half high, over which one can look down into the den. . . . The mouth (🗑 [pum]) of the den is not its free opening above by which one may look down into it, but an opening made in its side, through which not only the lions were brought into it, but by which also the keepers entered for the purpose of cleansing the den and of attending to the beasts, and could reach the door in the partition-wall (cf. Höst, p. 270).¹⁴⁸

If the den was underground, a side entrance may have provided a means to prevent flooding by rain.¹⁴⁹

The details of the den's construction are not of great importance in relation to the peril posed by the lions and the great miracle attested by Daniel's preservation.

The earlier account of Daniel's companions in the [fiery furnace](#) is intentionally similar to Daniel in the den of lions.¹⁵⁰

The two accounts are clearly parallel in many ways. Both are narratives of faith in the face of persecution and of miraculous deliverance by God's almighty power to save his people. Both narratives present accusations by pagan officials against Judeans who refuse to compromise their faith and worship of Yahweh alone. Both even employ the same Aramaic idiom, "to eat pieces of" someone, signifying malicious accusations, and these are the only two times this expression occurs in Daniel (Dan. 3:8▶; 6:24▶). Both accounts end with a decree of the king to all peoples, nations, and languages in all the earth, proclaiming God's power and commanding respect for the God of the Judeans (Dan. 3:29-30▶; 6:25-27▶).¹⁵¹

the king spoke, saying . . . , "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you."¹⁵²

What the king meant by the phrase, "He will deliver you" is not entirely clear. Did the king assume Daniel's God *must* deliver him—in response to Daniel's faithfulness ("whom you serve continually")? Or had the king come to understand, in God's providence, even if Daniel were to perish, "not a hair of *his* head" would be lost since "by *his* patience" his soul would be preserved (Luke 21:18-19)? I find myself in agreement with Miller and [Jerome](#) who find evidence in the king's statement of a budding faith in Daniel's God.

Daniel in the Lion's Den (Rubens)



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Nor does he use the language of doubt, so as to say, “If He be able to deliver thee”; but rather he speaks with boldness and confidence and says, “The God whom thou dost ever serve shall Himself deliver thee.” He had heard, of course, that three youths who were of a lower rank than Daniel himself had triumphed over the flames of Babylon.¹⁵³

The KJV and NASB construe this statement as a prediction that God “will rescue” Daniel, whereas the NIV and NRSV consider the declaration to be a wish on Darius’s part that God “may . . . rescue” him. The verb (an imperfect form of *šēzib*) may be translated in either manner. Since Darius was an unbeliever, the king would not have had sufficient faith in Yahweh to affirm that Daniel would certainly be delivered, and v. 20 indicates that the king was not positive Daniel would be saved. The words express the king’s hope.¹⁵⁴

Having reached the end of his own resources, the king has nowhere to turn but to appeal to Daniel’s God.

Now the beautiful thing about this is Darius is forced into the position of having to trust the Lord. See how effective and efficient God works; the whole situation looks like it’s messed up; everything is falling apart, and what happens? In the end Darius has to trust the Lord; a tremendously efficient teaching system.¹⁵⁵

Daniel’s life provided testimony of an unwavering and lengthy service of God. This was not a contrived or “flash-in-a-pan performance” designed to gain attention and prove his dedication, but the fruit a life well-lived in accord with God’s principles and priorities.

3.6.17 - Daniel 6:17

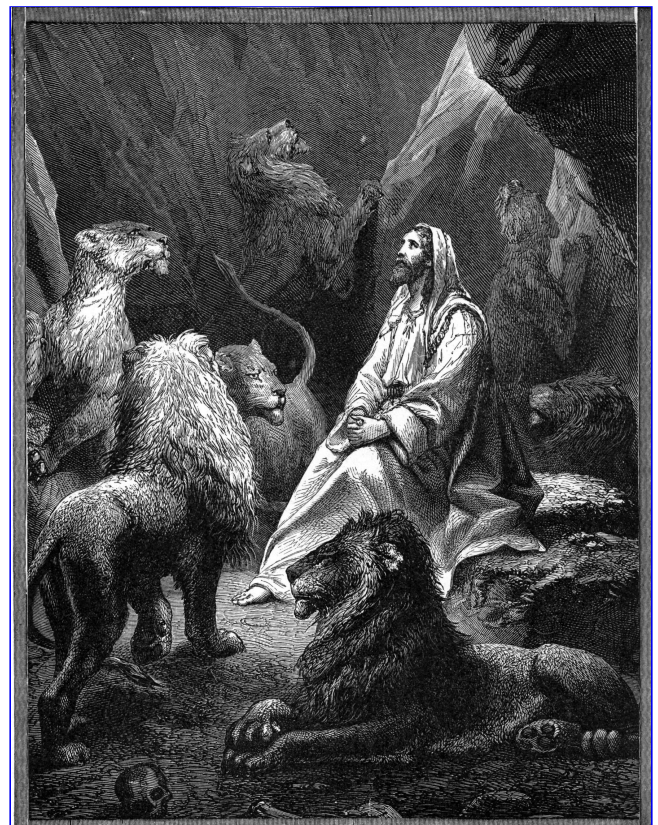


a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring . . . that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed

With many other commentators, we recognize the parallels between the assumed finality of Daniel’s destiny in the *den* (from **גֹּב** [*gōb*], “pit, excavated hole, den”¹⁵⁷) and that of Jesus in the tomb.¹⁵⁸ Like Pilate, hundreds of years later (Mat. 27:65-66), a stone was laid over the entrance and the king officially authorized the securing of the chamber so interlopers could not affect the seemingly certain outcome: neither Daniel or Jesus would ever be seen again. Daniel’s night in the den and his raising from peril serve as an analogy, or *type* for the death and resurrection of Jesus.

[The king’s] law demands that Daniel be cast before the lions, his heart filled with love towards Daniel demands that he be saved. . . . Well may we think here of another Law and another Love.¹⁵⁹

Daniel in the Lion’s Den (Foster)



Similarities Between Daniel and Jesus¹⁶⁰

Daniel	Jesus
Found innocent before God and man (Dan. 6:5▶, 22▶)	Found innocent before God and man (Isa. 53:9; Mat. 27:23)
Prayed regularly (Dan. 6:10▶)	Prayed regularly (Luke 5:16)
Trusted in God (Dan. 6:23▶)	Trusted in God (Mat. 27:43)
Malicious accusers (Dan. 6:5▶)	Malicious accusers (Mat. 4:6-10; 22:15-46).
Must accuse by the Law of his God (Dan. 6:5▶)	Must accuse by the Law of God (John 8:46; Mat. 5:17-19)
Darius manipulated by his officials (Dan. 6:6-7▶, 12-13▶, 15▶)	Pilate manipulated by the Jews (Mat. 27:20-26)
Darius seeks to save Daniel (Dan. 6:14-16▶)	Pilate seeks to save Jesus (Mat. 27:18-26)
Darius powerless to save Daniel (Dan. 6:14▶)	Pilate powerless to save Jesus (Mat. 27:24)
Faithful in his practice (Dan. 6:3▶, 23▶)	Faithful in the Father's plan (John 4:34) ¹⁶¹
Cast into the Lions' den (Dan. 6:16▶)	Nailed to the cross (Mat. 27:35)
The den is sealed by a stone (Dan. 6:17▶)	The grave is sealed by a stone (Mat. 27:66)
Another hurries to the den early next morning (Dan. 6:19▶)	Others hurry to the tomb early next morning (Mat. 28:1; Mark 16:2)
Victory over death by divine intervention (Dan. 6:22▶)	Victory over death by divine intervention (resurrection, John 2:19) ¹⁶²
Paid the penalty for the breaking of Medo-Persian law (Dan. 6:16▶)	Paid the penalty for the breaking of God's law (Isa. 53:8; Rom. 5:12-15; Gal. 4:4-5; Php. 3:9; 1Pe. 3:18)
Committed no crime (Dan. 6:22▶)	Committed no sin (Isa. 53:9; John 8:46) ¹⁶³
Taken up out of the pit (Dan. 6:23▶)	Taken up out of the grave (Mark 16:6)
King acknowledges God (Dan. 6:25-27▶)	Kings acknowledge God (Ps. 72:11; Isa. 49:7; 52:15)
Servant of the Living God (Dan. 6:20▶)	Servant of the Living God (Mat. 12:28)

Miller explains how a large, heavy stone was sealed by signet rings.

Soft clay was attached to the chains draped over the stone, and the king and his nobles made their personal marks (seals) by pressing their rings into the clay. After the clay hardened, the chains could not be removed without breaking the seals.¹⁶⁴

In the sovereignty of God, the stone was sealed to vouch the miraculous nature of Daniel's preservation.¹⁶⁵

There is no doubt that God's counsel provided that the nobles should seal the stone with their own rings, and thus close the mouth of the cave, and render the miracle more illustrious. For when the king approached on the morrow, the rings were all entire, and the seals all unbroken. Thus the preservation of this servant of God was manifestly by the aid of heaven and not by the art of men.¹⁶⁶

3.6.18 - Daniel 6:18



the king . . . spent the night fasting

There are two schools of thought as to why the king refused food and entertainment that night.

Those who believe [Darius](#) remained an unbeliever throughout the events in this chapter take his refusal of food and entertainment as the side effects of the stress and embarrassment he felt over having been duped by his governors, the poor decision he made, and his concern over losing Daniel as a valuable aid in his government.¹⁶⁷ In their view, instead of choosing to fast, Darius lost his appetite due to stress.¹⁶⁸

Those, like us, who believe Daniel's earlier friendship and testimony were being used by God to draw Darius to faith, see the king's motivations differently. Perhaps the king was engaged in all-night intercession on behalf of Daniel, in whatever incomplete and imperfect form it may have taken due to his fledgling faith? Here we find a principle the Apostle would later declare: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose" (Rom. [8:28](#)). It is our belief that both Daniel *and the king* were among God's elect—called according to His purpose. Daniel, already saved, was being matured—undergoing the ultimate test of faithfulness—potential Christian martyrdom (Mat. [10:28](#); Luke [21:10](#); Rev. [2:10](#)▶; [12:11](#)▶). The king, on the path to salvation, was learning valuable lessons concerning the trustworthiness, interpersonal nature, and faithfulness of Daniel's God.

no musicians were brought before him

Musicians is from [דָּחָוָה](#) [*dāḥāwā*], "entertainment (NIV, NASB, NAB), diversions (RSV), music (ASV, KJV, NKJV) food (NRSV) women (NEB, REB, NJB), . . . The NIV [entertainment] and RSV [diversions] may be the best general contextual rendering."¹⁶⁹ "The Aramaic term . . . *dachavah*, is a hapax legomenon [only written once]. So far, its exact meaning has not been determined. Besides 'instruments of music' (e.g., ASV, KJV) the following translations have been suggested: 'entertainment' (e.g., NIV, NLT, NASB, Berean Standard Bible), 'musicians' (NKJV), 'food' (e.g., Aramaic Bible in Plain English, Brenton Septuagint Translation), 'dancing girl' (BDB), 'concubines' (Smith's Literal Translation, BDB), and 'diversions' (e.g., JPS Tanakh 1917, ESV, CSB, Holman). Rashi suggested the meaning of 'table.' This rendering would work well with the statement that the king fasted."¹⁷⁰

Also his sleep went from him

It is our belief the king spent a sleepless night harassed by the "hounds of heaven." Without any resources to save Daniel, the king was put in a hard place—forcing him to turn to the only remaining resource: Daniel's God. No one knows exactly what the king was thinking during the long evening and night while Daniel was in peril, but we believe he offered up prayers and petitions to God—imperfect and ill-informed as they may have been. But isn't this how God deals with many of us on the path to salvation? God brings us to a place where we reach out to trust in whatever we know of God and He, in turn, promises to respond to seeking hearts and provide greater revelation.¹⁷¹ Genuineness of need and heart—rather than theological depth and accuracy—are the characteristics of early faith.

And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, **so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him**, though He is not far from each one of us. (Acts [17:26-27](#))
[emphasis mine]

The king found himself in a "divine squeeze" with only one place to turn.

Why does God bother people? Why does God agitate people? Because He loves people, He wants people, men and women, to enter into a right relationship with Him. And if a person is not in a right relationship with Him He sics what we would call the hounds of heaven on that person and just keeps annoying them over and over and over again until they reach a point where they trust in what Jesus has done for them and they become saved at that point. Aren't you glad that God loves us enough to bother us?¹⁷²

The contrast between the night experienced by the most powerful man in the land and Daniel, as a condemned criminal, could not have been greater.

Now verse 18 is the most beautiful illustration of two men, two different situations, one with the Word, one without the Word. Over here you have Darius; here you have Daniel. Darius is in a palace, Darius in his environment has wealth, power, Darius has all the means for human enjoyment. Darius has everything that most people could want. Daniel is in a dirty den, a den of lions, full of manure, full of dead bodies that have been thrown down there, the flies are eating the skin off the people that had been thrown down there before, I just want you to get the picture of it, and it's not just the sweet little den that you see in your Sunday School material. Sunday School artists never did read the Word too carefully and when they come to these scenes they don't present them in all their gore. Now the Holy Spirit, when He writes Scripture He lets it all hang out so you'll get the point.¹⁷³

He [Daniel] may even have enjoyed a better night's rest than the king.¹⁷⁴

3.6.19 - Daniel 6:19



arose very early in the morning

בְּשַׁרְפָּרָא יְקוּם בְּנִיחָא [bišparpārā yēqûm bēnāḡēhā], “in the morning, at the earliest sign of daylight.”¹⁷⁵

The whole action of the king demonstrates faith, however deficient. Had Darius no thought of the possibility of Daniel's deliverance, he never would have made a trip to the lions' den, especially not “very early,” probably before dawn.¹⁷⁶

3.6.20 - Daniel 6:20



he cried out . . . to Daniel

The language suggests that he did not take time for the stone to be removed from the side entrance, which means that his voice was heard by Daniel through the top opening.¹⁷⁷

with a lamenting voice

Lamenting is from “grieving, sorrowfully . . . with a possible implication of regret.”¹⁷⁸ “The king cried in a troubled voice from the safety of the perimeter of the pit; Daniel responded in a calm voice from the very center of danger (vv.20-21)!”¹⁷⁹

On the one hand, the king's actions during the night betray a belief in the possibility, against all odds, that God would intervene to preserve Daniel. Why else would the king rise early to see if Daniel were alive. This is the germination of the king's faith. On the other hand, it was possible that the natural course of events would take place such that Daniel, like all others previously cast into the den of lions, would be no more. If so, the king would have played a direct and very regrettable part in the demise of his esteemed and valued servant. No doubt, the lament in the king's voice betrayed all these thoughts swirling in the king's mind as he rushed to the den.

servant of the living God

It is our conviction this is the moment when the king comes fully to faith in the God of Daniel, the God of the Jews (Ru. 1:16), the Holy one of Israel.¹⁸⁰

The king had probably heard Daniel previously refer to God as “the living God.”¹⁸¹ This title contrasts the One True God with the lifeless idols of the nations—which are not god.¹⁸² Unlike the idols (and the god of Deism),

our God is intimately involved in the everyday matters of life. He numbers the hairs on our head (Mat. 10:30; Luke 12:7; Luke 21:18), knows when seemingly insignificant creatures perish (Mat. 10:29; Luke 12:6), and hears those who call out to Him.¹⁸³ He is both living and active in the affairs of this world, *His world*. By preserving Daniel all night amidst the lions, God had demonstrated His active intervention, preventing the mauling and death of Daniel. Daniel's miraculous preservation in the midst of voracious beasts provided undeniable evidence that the God of Israel is indeed the *living* God!

Daniel's preservation among the beasts foreshadows the preservation of believers and the Jewish nation during the [Great Tribulation](#), when the beasts revealed to the Apostle John in the book of Revelation hold sway over the world (Rev. 13:1►, 11►). See [Foreshadowing the Great Tribulation](#) and [Preservation of Israel](#).

whom you serve continually

See commentary on [Daniel 6:16](#).

been able to deliver you from the lions?

The king's question concerned God's *sovereignty* not merely his *ability*.¹⁸⁴

3.6.21 - Daniel 6:21



Then Daniel said

The word for “spoke” (*mêlal*) has not been used in the book before, but always the less expressive “say” (*âmar*). The significance seems to be to emphasize that Daniel actually voiced words to the king; that is, that he was really able to do so [because he was still alive].¹⁸⁶

O King, live forever!¹⁸⁷

A standard way of addressing royalty. See commentary on [Daniel 2:4](#).

3.6.22 - Daniel 6:22



My God sent His angel

As was the case with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, God sent an angel to safeguard Daniel. Perhaps it was the same angel, the “angel of YHWH.”¹⁸⁸

A teacher once asked a Sunday school class if they thought Daniel was afraid, and one little girl answered, “I don't think he was scared, 'cause one of the lions was the Lion of the tribe of Judah who was in there with him.” That child knew her Bible.¹⁸⁹

See commentary on [Daniel 3:25](#).

On two separate occasions, Peter was rescued from prison by an angel (Acts 5:19; 12:7-10). An angel was sent to minister to Paul on a ship in the midst of a storm in response to his intercessory prayer on behalf of the crew (Acts 27:23).

because I was found innocent before Him

Daniel's Answer to the King



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Daniel is not claiming to be without sin, but that he consistently lived according to God's principles. God sent His angel *because* Daniel's prayers were heard and Daniel's prayers were heard *because* he was living righteously. God's ear is attentive to the prayers of the righteous.¹⁹⁰

He delivered me because He delighted in me. The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; According to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me. . . . I was also blameless before Him, And I kept myself from my iniquity. Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness, According to the cleanness of my hands in His sight. (Ps. 18:19b-24)

Conversely, iniquity inhibits God's response to prayer.¹⁹¹

If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear. (Ps. 66:18)

See commentary on [Daniel 6:4](#).

O king, I have done no wrong before you

Daniel had transgressed the king's decree, yet he had done no wrong because the decree transgressed God's *Higher Law*. See commentary on [Daniel 6:10](#) and [Civil Disobedience and the Christian](#).

shut the lions' mouths¹⁹²

Daniel's miraculous deliverance from the lions demonstrated God's power over fallen nature and ability to restore the peaceful relationship originally prevailing between man and animal, and in the age to come.¹⁹³

Not only were the lions' mouths shut by the Lord, but their very natures may have been subdued, as during the Flood in Noah's ark and during the coming Kingdom age, when "the lion will eat straw like the ox" (Isa. 11:7; 65:25; cf. Eze. 34:25; Hos. 2:18).¹⁹⁴

This miracle takes its position among that series of marvellous events in Old and New Testament history in which the life and work of isolated distinguished messengers of revelation appear, by virtue of Divine grace, to have restored the paradisaical dominion of man over nature, so that the beasts of the desert yield him a ready obedience as their rightful lord. We class here, prior to the time of Daniel, the ravens of Elijah (1 Kings 17:4) and the bears of Elisha (2 Kings 2:24); and in N. T. times, the sojourning of the Saviour with the beasts of the desert, immediately subsequent to his temptation (Mark 1:13), Paul's escape from injury by the viper on the island of Malta (Acts 28:5; cf. Mark 16:18),¹⁹⁵

The miracles in Daniel, as elsewhere, are not merely 'contrary to nature' or 'above nature'. They are primarily 'contrary to evil' and the powers of darkness. They are expressions of 'the powers of the coming age' when all evil will be vanquished.¹⁹⁶

In the same way the preservation of Daniel and his companions demonstrated God's faithfulness to Israel under Babylonian rule, so too He demonstrates His faithfulness to them under Medo-Persian rule.¹⁹⁷ His preservation of Israel will outlast all the kingdoms of history:

Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for a light by day, The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, And its waves roar (The LORD of hosts *is* His name): "If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the LORD, *Then* the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever." (Jer. 31:35-36)

The preservation of Daniel amidst the lions (beasts) **typifies** the preservation of Israel during the reign of the beast during the tribulation (Dan. 7:7►; Rev. 13:1-8►).¹⁹⁸ See [Foreshadowing the Great Tribulation](#) and [Preservation of Israel](#).

Spurgeon once said that it was a good thing the lions didn't try to eat Daniel. They never would have enjoyed him, because he was 50 percent grit and 50 percent backbone.¹⁹⁹

3.6.23 - Daniel 6:23**take Daniel up out of the den**

Probably because the king does not wish to wait to have the stone removed, he has Daniel lifted up through the entrance in the roof of the den.²⁰⁰

no injury whatever was found on him

As with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego within the **fiery furnace**, God's miraculous intervention was completely effective, "the fire had no power . . . the smell of fire was not on them." See commentary on *Daniel 3:27*.

because he believed in his God

Daniel's faith is held up as an example in the book of Hebrews:

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who **through faith** subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, **stopped the mouths of lions**, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. (Heb. 11:32-34) [emphasis mine]

"Faith looks away from earthly circumstance to an omnipotent Lord."²⁰¹

But the salvation **of the righteous** is from the LORD; *He is* their strength in the time of trouble. And the LORD shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, And save them, **Because they trust in Him**. (Ps. 37:39-40) [emphasis mine]

3.6.24 - Daniel 6:24**And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast *them* into the den of lions²⁰³**

Accused is from an Aramiac word meaning, " 'had eaten the pieces of.' The Aramaic expression is ironic, in that the accusers who had figuratively 'eaten the pieces of Daniel' are themselves literally devoured by the lions."²⁰⁴

Here we meet with another aspect of the chapter critics claim as unhistorical: that all 120 satraps and their families were cast into the den—a number too big to commit to the den.²⁰⁵ But this is an assumption on their part—the text doesn't state how many families were executed.²⁰⁶ It seems likely only a subset of Daniel's peers were executed.²⁰⁷

As we've already noted, it is certain that not all governmental leaders mentioned in the chapter were party to the plot—some, like Daniel, were likely absent.²⁰⁸ Among those who were present in the city, there were only a few ringleaders responsible for pushing through the decree, watching Daniel's house, and turning him in.²⁰⁹

They were killed for intentionally manipulating and misleading the king with false intentions, not to mention attempted manslaughter.²¹⁰ Kings like **Nebuchadnezzar** and **Darius** were sovereign in imposing the death penalty (Dan. 5:19▶). Daniel's accusers now reaped what they had sown (Ps. 7:15; 9:15-16).²¹¹

When accusing Daniel before the king, his accusers had singled out his nationality as a Jew (Dan. 6:13▶). Now, like Haman in Esther's time, they find themselves on the receiving end of God's solemn promise to the Jews, beginning with Abraham (Gen. 12:3) and extending through Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 27:29; Isa. 49:26), not only to

“bless those who bless you,” but to “curse those who curse you.”²¹² As with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the **fiery furnace**, Daniel’s preservation is evidence of God’s ongoing promise to **preserve Israel**.

Daniel’s Accuser in the Lions’ Den

them, their children, and their wives

Children is **בְּנֵיהֶן** [*bēnêhôn*], “their sons.” “‘Children’ literally is ‘sons’ and may indicate that only the sons were executed, although the term often includes daughters as well (e.g., ‘sons of Israel’).”²¹³ Since the wives were killed, it seems the daughters were included. Otherwise, the issue arises of caring for the orphaned daughters.

Young suggests the harshness of punishment as evidence in favor of identifying Darius as **Cyaxares II**.

When Daniel survived his night in the lions’ den, another aspect of Darius’s character—his temper—worked to the doom of the plotters. Here it would seem sufficient that only the men who promoted the plot against Daniel would be sacrificed to the lions, but Darius exceeded this by having their children and wives included, and the lions “overpowered them and crushed all their bodies”²⁸ (Dan 6:24▶ [6:25▶ MT], author’s translation). The disproportionate anger exhibited by Daniel’s Darius has its counterpart in the “violent and unreasonable” nature of Xenophon’s Cyaxares.²¹⁴



Exacting judgment against an entire family appears to have been a practice of ancient Persia. “Although cruel, executing wives and children with the guilty man was the practice according to Persian custom, a policy that must have been carried out in part to prohibit retaliation from family members.”²¹⁵ “It is said expressly by Ammianus Marcellinus (23, 6, 81), to have been a custom among the Persians: ‘The laws among them (the Persians) are formidable; among which those which are enacted against the ungrateful and deserters, and similar abominable crimes, surpass others in cruelty, by which, on account of the guilt of one, all the kindred perish’ . . .”²¹⁶ **Herodotus** describes the case of another Persian king who executed family members of the guilty man.²¹⁷

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Some see this as an overly-harsh response on the part of Darius—the natural result of a culture uninformed by the Law of Moses: “Fathers shall not be put to death for *their* children, nor shall the children be put to death for *their* fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin” (Deu. 24:16).²¹⁸

Ancient pagan despots had no regard for the provision in the Mosaic law (Deu. 24:16): “Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sin.” (Even in Israel this humanitarian rule had been flouted, as when Abimelech ben Gideon had nearly all his father’s sons massacred [Jdg. 9:5], or when Queen Athaliah nearly exterminated the Davidic royal line [2K. 11:1] and **Jehu had all Ahab’s sons decapitated** [1K. 19:17; 2Chr. 22:7-8].) [emphasis mine]²¹⁹

We can agree that ancient despots did not follow the Mosaic Law,²²⁰ but there’s more to this issue than ignorance of Deuteronomy 24:16—as can be seen from the last example Archer has given above: Jehu exacted judgment upon the sons of Ahab *in accord with God’s will* (1K. 19:16-17; 2K. 9:2-10). The Bible records numerous examples of judgment involving families or entire cultures:

- At the time of Noah’s flood, all families, with the exception of those of Noah and his sons, were killed.
- When Abimelech took Abraham’s wife Sarah, God told Abimelech that if she were not restored to Abraham that “you shall *surely* die, you and all who are yours” (Gen. 20:7).
- When Achan violated God’s command, his entire family was taken in judgment (Jos. 7:24-25).

- When Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled against Moses, their families were taken in judgment (Num. 16:27-33).
- When the children of Israel refused to enter the Promised Land, their children suffered, “Your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness” (Num. 14:33).
- When Haman was killed for plotting against Esther and her fellow Jews, the ten sons of Haman were killed (Est. 9:10-14).²²¹
- The children of the son’s of Anathoth who threatened Jeremiah lost their lives due to famine when God’s judgment fell upon their fathers (Jer. 11:22).
- When Israel entered the promised land, there were numerous cases where God commanded the destruction of women and children (Num. 31:17; Deu. 2:34; 3:6; 7:16; 20:16; Jos. 6:21; 8:25; 10:28-40; 11:8-14; 1S. 15:3; 22:19; 27:9; Eze. 9:6).

How could God give instructions upholding individual responsibility (Deuteronomy 24:16; Ezekiel 18) while sanctioning judgment of entire families and people groups? The answer is found in God’s *omniscience*.

The instructions given by God through Moses in Deuteronomy 24:16 pertain to judicial action by human representatives enforcing the Law of Moses. They place limits upon who bears responsibility for lawless deeds: namely, *the individual*. In other situations, like those listed above, it is *God* who directly initiates judgment. His omniscience provides a divine perspective we lack. His judgment may seem harsh—even unjust from our perspective—especially where women and children are involved. But God knows the heart of each individual and their destiny. Unlike us, *He knows what children will grow up to be*.

Though Darius was not instructed by God to destroy the families along with the men, the situation may have been similar to the Canaanites whom God instructed Israel to purge from the Promised Land.

What kind of parents do we have here displayed in Persia? Manipulators, liars, murderers, unchecked and unhinged; do you know what those kids would have become? Manipulators, liars, murderers because as the saying goes, “the apple does not fall far from the tree.” You think the wives are innocent? Show me the woman behind the man and I’ll show you the man. Wives have far more influence over their husbands, for good or bad, than they could possibly fathom. And this is why God saw, I believe, this whole picture, these people were gone. I mean, there was no opportunity for a change of life, they were just as guilty as their husbands, they were just as guilty as their parents and so the whole crowd there is thrown into the lions’ den, because the apple does not fall far from the tree.²²²

Was that the case here? Only God knows. But it does help us reconcile the seemingly mixed-message within Scripture concerning judgment of individuals vs. families and people groups. Judgment of families and people groups does not violate the principle of individual responsibility *if their judgment is sanctioned by God*. In such cases, God’s divine foreknowledge concerning the destiny of individuals within the group necessitates and justifies their judgment: He remains a just and perfect God.

the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den

The contrast between the fate of Daniel and of his accusers illustrates the miraculous nature of God’s intervention on Daniel’s behalf. The voraciousness of the lions undercuts natural explanations for Daniel’s survival in their midst.

Critics have suggested that the reason the lions did not devour Daniel was because the king had previously filled their den with choice meats and they were so gorged that they were not hungry when Daniel was cast in among them; . . .²²³

Now when his enemies saw that Daniel had suffered nothing which was terrible, they would not own that he was preserved by God, and by his providence; but they said, that the lions had been filled full with food, and on

that account it was, as they supposed, that the lions would not touch Daniel, nor come to him; and this they alleged to the king; but the king, out of an abhorrence of their wickedness, gave order that they should throw in a great deal of flesh to the lions; and when they had filled themselves, he gave farther order that Daniel's enemies should be cast into the den that he might learn whether the lions, now they were full, would touch them or not; and it appeared plain to Darius, after the princes had been cast to the wild beasts, that it was God who preserved Daniel, for the lions spared none of them, but tore them all to pieces, as if they had been very hungry and wanted food.²²⁴

3.6.25 - Daniel 6:25



To all peoples, nations, and languages

The phrase encompasses all within the influence of the regime and was also employed within Nebuchadnezzar's edicts (Dan. 3:4▶, 7▶, 29▶; 4:1▶; 5:19▶). See commentary on [Daniel 4:1](#).

all the earth

Earth is from אֶרֶץ [’āṛā], “nation, land of a socio-political group (Dan. 6:26▶).”²²⁵

It should be pointed out that the Aramaic word *’ar’ā* (like its Hebrew cognate *’ereṣ*) may signify only “land or country,” rather than having the wider significance. So construed, the term presents no difficulty at all. Yet it should also be pointed out that part of the ancient titulary of the king of Babylon ever since the time of Hammurabi was the phrase *šar kiššati* or “king of the universe” (“king of all”). In his decree, therefore, Darius the Mede may simply have been following ancient custom in using terminology which implied a theoretical claim to universal dominion.²²⁶

Having thus shown that when the author of Daniel says in chapter 6:25, that Darius made a decree for “all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the *’arṣ*” he may have meant merely for that part of the Persian empire over which he ruled, we shall rest our case, and advise our readers to do the same, until those who assert that the whole empire of Persia is meant shall produce some evidence to support their claim.²²⁷

3.6.26 - Daniel 6:26



tremble and fear before the God of Israel

Scripture instructs us to “Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling” (Ps. 2:11). Not only is the fear of the Lord an essential foundation for knowledge and wisdom (Job 28:28; Ps. 111:10; Pr. 1:7; 9:10; 15:33), but a disincentive to sin.²²⁸

Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw *it*, **they trembled and stood afar off**. Then they said to Moses, “You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” And Moses said to the people, “Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and **that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin.**” (Ex. 20:18-20) [emphasis mine]

He is the living God

“Daniel’s God is alive and shows that he lives by the way he acts in history, responding, like a real person, to the requirements of justice and the needs of his people”²²⁹ “He calls him ‘the living God,’ not only because he has life in himself, but out of himself, and is also the origin and fountain of life. This epithet ought to be taken actively, for God not only lives but has life in himself; and he is also the source of life, since there is no life independent of him.”²³⁰ See commentary on [Daniel 6:20](#).

How familiar was **Darius** with “the living God” of Israel?

Some see this statement merely as evidence Daniel helped compose the decree—believing the phrase too Scriptural to be found in the mouth of the king.²³¹ For them, the testimony of Daniel’s life, along with his miraculous preservation amidst the lions, was insufficient to turn the heart of the king in faith.

Expositors have pointed out that the king did not disown the gods of Babylon in the decree, nor speak of himself as rendering worship to Daniel’s God. This is true, and accordingly it is not likely that Darius experienced personal conversion, something which may have been true . . . with respect to Nebuchadnezzar.²³²

Both of these kings, it is true, raised the God of Judea above all other gods, and praised the everlasting duration of His dominion (see Dan. 3:29▶, 32 [4:2▶]f., and Dan. 4:31▶ [28]ff., 6:27▶ [26f.]), but they did not confess Him as the one only God.²³³

This passage does not prove, as some allege, the real conversion of King Darius, and his sincere adoption of true piety; for he always worshipped his own idols, but thought it sufficient if he raised the God of Israel to the highest rank. . . . We observe, that Darius was never truly converted, and never distinctly acknowledged the true and only God, but was seized with a blind fear, which, whether he would or not, compelled him to attribute the supreme honor to Israel’s God. . . . this passage by no means proves any true and serious piety in King Darius; but it implies simply his being deeply moved by the miracle, and his celebrating through all the regions subject to him the name and glory of the God of Israel.²³⁴

We disagree. It is our conviction that the king now makes public what he had **previously confessed** after having come to faith when finding Daniel alive amidst the lions.

I am convinced this king had every hope that Daniel was divinely delivered. . . . I cannot imagine these words coming from anyone other than a true believer in the God of the Jews.²³⁵

Would Darius, this pagan king, a good king that wanted to do right, a king that I believe just like Nebuchadnezzar we will see one day in heaven, would Darius himself have ever come to faith in Christ for God or Yahweh had he not seen God tangibly demonstrated through a very weakened and infirm Daniel. I doubt Darius would have come to saving faith.²³⁶

Daniel 6:25▶ we read, “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!’ ” Now Darius hasn’t learned the principle that you can’t force a conversion but he’s going to try to force a conversion. He was probably saved at this point and like some people, they want to go out and make everybody else trust the gospel.²³⁷

We find ourselves in agreement with the late J. Dwight Pentecost: “It wouldn’t surprise me to find these men [Nebuchadnezzar, Darius] in heaven. It wouldn’t surprise me, but I can’t say.”²³⁸

steadfast forever

Steadfast is from **קָיָם** [*qayyām*], “enduring, abiding; pertaining to exist and so remain in a (sure) state.”²³⁹

God is not capricious, “For I *am* the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob” (Mal. 3:6).

His kingdom *is the one* which shall not be destroyed, And His dominion *shall endure* to the end.

The phrase, *is the one*, is supplied by the translators and not in the original, but the concept is clearly in the passage. God’s kingdom is the *one-and-only one* that will last—all other kingdoms will pass away, “be destroyed.”

The **enduring nature of God's kingdom** is one of the main themes in the book of Daniel (Dan. 2:44►; 4:3►; 7:14►, 18►, 24►) in contrast with the impermanent **kingdoms of man**. The “kingdoms of this world” rise, rule for a period, and then fall, in a recurring cycle throughout history. But this dismal record will one day end when the **kingdom of God** eclipses all other kingdoms.

Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him. (Dan. 7:27►)

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” (Rev. 11:15►)

And so we continue to pray, “Your kingdom come. Your will be done **on earth** as *it is* in heaven” [emphasis mine] (Mat. 6:10).

Darius' proclamation joins the chorus of other Old Testament passages which find non-Jews extolling Israel's God: Rahab (Canaanite, Jos. 2:11), Ruth (Moabitess, Ru. 1:16) the Queen of Sheba (1K. 10:9; 2Chr. 9:8), Naaman (Syrian, 2K. 5:15), Hiram (of Tyre, 2Chr. 2:12), and **Nebuchadnezzar** (Babylonian, Dan. 2:47►; 3:28-29►; 4:2-3►, 37►).

3.6.27 - Daniel 6:27

He delivers and rescues

Up to this point in the book of Daniel, God has rescued:

- Daniel and his companions from the possible disfavor of the steward of the chief of the eunuchs (Dan. 1:9-16►)
- Daniel, his companions, and the wise men from destruction at the hands of **Nebuchadnezzar** (Dan. 2:19-23►)
- Daniel's companions from the **fiery furnace** (Dan. 3:23-27►)
- Nebuchadnezzar from madness (Dan. 4:36-37►)
- Daniel through a change of regimes from **Babylon** to Persia (Dan. 5:31►)²⁴⁰
- Daniel from the lions' den (Dan. 6:20-22►)

He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth

Among His signs and wonders found on earth in Daniel's lifetime, we find the miraculous preservation of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego amidst the fiery furnace and Daniel amidst the lions.

Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions

From the power of the lions is מִן־יַד אֲרִיּוֹתָא [min-yad 'ārēyāwātāh], *from the hand of the lion*. David used the equivalent Hebrew phrase in his testimony to Saul concerning how God had delivered him from the *paw of the lion* when defending his sheep (1S. 17:37).

Paul appears to allude to this chapter in his letter to young Timothy: “But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear. And **I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion**” [emphasis mine] (2Ti. 4:17).

3.6.28 - Daniel 6:28

Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian

“Daniel ‘prospered’ apparently means that he was elevated to the second highest position in the land under Darius, received great honor among the people, and was blessed in material ways.”²⁴¹

Few courtiers have had so long a reign, served so many masters without flattering any, been more successful in their management of public affairs, been so useful to the states where they were in office, or have been more owned of God, or have left such an example to posterity. Where shall we find ministers like Samuel and Daniel? None so wise, so holy, so disinterested, so useful, have ever since appeared in the nations of the earth.²⁴²

Daniel lived beyond the rule of [Darius](#), at least until the third year of [Cyrus](#) (Dan. 10:1) in 534 A.D. See [Chronology of Daniel](#).

Most likely, God used Daniel as a significant influence in the life of Cyrus, leading to the [Decree of Cyrus](#) in 536 B.C., ending the captivity of Jews in [Babylon](#) and allowing them to return to Jerusalem. See commentary on [Daniel 10:1](#) and [Deportations](#).

As for Daniel, the record says, he prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian. How much his influence had to do with the issuing of the decree later on, permitting the Jews to return to Jerusalem, we know not, but there can be little doubt that his voice would be heard by Cyrus in the matter.²⁴³

Wiseman proposed that “and” in the phrase “in the reign of Darius *and* in the reign of Cyrus” could be translated “even” such that, “Daniel 6:28 be translated, ‘Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius *even* the reign of Cyrus the Persian,’ i.e., taking the former name as a throne name. [Wiseman et al., *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, pp. 12-16].”²⁴⁴ Using this alternate translation, Wiseman attempted to equate Cyrus with Darius. But, if the translation “and”—preferred by the overwhelming number of translators—is allowed to stand, this verse indicates the opposite: Darius (the Mede) and Cyrus (the Persian) are two different individuals, and the [reign of Darius](#) preceded the [reign of Cyrus](#). We find Wiseman’s identification of Cyrus as Darius unconvincing. See [Darius is Cyrus?](#)

Chapter 1 closed with the observation, “Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus” (Dan. 1:21). Daniel’s consistent living, in accord with God’s principles, gave him favor. It preserved his life through multiple [regime changes during the Babylonian empire](#) and during the reigns of both Darius and Cyrus during the Medo-Persian empire. This is all-the-more exceptional given his role as a high-ranking advisor to several rulers. See commentary on [Daniel 1:21](#).

3.6.29 - Lessons from Chapter 6

The sixth chapter of Daniel contains numerous lessons we can apply in our own lives.

- **Timeless Principles for Living** - The chapter closes with the observation, “Daniel prospered in the reign of [Darius](#) and in the reign of [Cyrus](#) the Persian” (Dan. 6:28). Daniel had previously prospered within the Babylonian empire (Dan. 1:9, 19-20; 5:29). During his lifetime, numerous kings came and went—yet he remained alive, even obtaining favor with each new ruler.²⁴⁶ As God’s children, we can rest knowing if we live according to God’s principles, He will show Himself faithful to guide and provide for us. This will not always be according to our expectations, but we needn’t get caught up in rearranging our priorities or way of life to appease the powers that come and go during the times in which God has placed us. This is part of what it means to build one’s house upon the rock (Mat. 7:24-25; Luke 6:48). This way of life requires a high view of (and trust in) God’s sovereignty, but the rewards are great: including stability and the peace of God (John 14:27; Php. 4:7). “The book of Daniel is a book of wisdom, is a book that is designed to equip us with principles for living in the kingdom of man. The

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kingdom of man is the structure that sinful men try to erect in society. There are certain things to recall about the kingdom of man. First of all, that it promises men the opposite of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is promising men an eternal destiny in God's presence forever. The kingdom of man is promising man independence from God; that man can be free, free of God's laws, free of God's judgment."²⁴⁷ "We shall find no better defense against the envious and the slanderous than to conduct ourselves righteously and innocently."²⁴⁸ "From early youth Daniel gave himself to God, and was very strict not to defile himself with anything questionable or contrary to God's law. Here was the first and grand planting for a true and successful life. There is nothing like an early rooting and grounding in the truth and in the fear and love of God. This was the spring of Daniel's greatness. This was his shield and buckler in the midst of his adverse surroundings. This steadied him for one of the sublimest careers that ever was run by mortal man. Nor can a young man or woman possibly do a better or a wiser thing for the successful running of the race of life, wherever or whatever it may be, than to give the heart to God, to live and die cleaving always and above all to His Word and laws."²⁴⁹

- **Favor with God and Man** - "Daniel distinguished himself . . . because an excellent spirit *was* in him" (Dan. 6:3▶). Daniel obtained favor from others while faithfully serving God. He did not strive to distinguish Himself, but obtained favor by his godly character and God's design. Those who follow Christ's example will naturally be recognized as model citizens and productive employees. Daniel focused on following God's principles and obtained favor as a result. We can too.
- **A Natural Testimony** - In convincing the king to establish the new law, the government officials knew exactly how to entrap Daniel. Afterward, they knew what they would find: Daniel continuing to pray "as was his custom since early days" (Dan. 6:10▶). Daniel did not compromise, but neither did he change his behavior to provoke his critics. Daniel was neither a "closet" nor "in-your-face" Christian. Instead, his consistent faithfulness provided a natural testimony. And so it should be with us!
- **Faithfulness will be Attacked** - The uncompromising faithfulness of believers to God becomes the one "fault" God's enemies can reliably leverage against them—once society-at-large accepts the skewed morality of God's critics. "We are taught, also, by this example, how snares are prepared for the sons of God, however circumspectly they act, and however soberly they conduct themselves."²⁵⁰ "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2Ti. 3:12).
- **Pragmatism vs. Principle** - As Christians, we are frequently faced with temptation to compromise. An appeal to pragmatism is a common strategy of our adversary. We can learn from how Daniel responded to similar pressure. The law prohibiting prayer to any god or man except Darius was enacted for a limited time period—30 days (Dan. 6:7▶, 12▶). How easy it would have been for Daniel to change his customary behavior and avoid publicly transgressing the law, perhaps by shuttering his upper windows during his times of prayer. Daniel's high view of God's sovereignty allowed him to walk by principle over pragmatism, resulting in an effective witness before a pagan king and culture. This was only possible because Daniel placed his ultimate destiny entirely in God's hands. Like Daniel, believers are to walk according to God's principles and leave the results to God. "It's the Word of God first, promotion second. This is where a lot of men in business make a big mistake, and you get yourselves promoted into a situation and because you compromised to get the promotion now you're really in a mess because now you're in a situation where you've got to compromise more to keep your position. . . . When somebody offers you an advance or a promotion and it's conditioned, you cut it off right there; that is part of your testimony and you goof if you don't make your stand at that point. The more and the longer you compromise the worse it gets to dig yourself out from the mess that you get yourself into. So make it clear, put your cards on the table at the very beginning or just part company."²⁵¹ "We are to ascertain what is right and proper; and then we are modestly and firmly to do it, no matter what may be the consequences."²⁵² "Daniel's life serves as a textbook example of consecration to God first and foremost while trusting in Him to resolve the remaining issues."²⁵³
- **Importance of Prayer** - "[Daniel] found himself from dawn to dusk busy with the affairs of administrating the largest kingdom the world had ever seen. Remember how big the Medo-Persian Empire was, stretching all the way to Thrace in the West, all the way to the Indus River in the east, all the way south to the border of Egypt; can you imagine the administrative task; imagine the trade alone, millions of dollars in trade.

Imagine the deployment of military soldiers; imagine all the logistics needed; imagine the patrols that had to be sent out to make sure that things were okay in all the thousands and thousands of miles of frontier. Think of all that, and that was what preoccupied Daniel, yet in spite of all the preoccupations of his job, Daniel demonstrated something else: he was never too busy for the Word, and he had no place to go to learn the Word unless he learned it from Ezekiel, he had to pick it up on his own, he didn't use the excuse a lot of men do, oh, you don't know my job, my job is so demanding, I just don't have time for anything. Daniel gives a pretty good argument; Daniel would say, "You think you're busy, you ought to have been in my job" . . . Remember Psalm 55 isn't just written by any believer, it was written by one of the busiest believers in the Old Testament. David had to administer his kingdom . . . and yet these 'busy' men do find time daily, every 8 hours, to take a break and get in the Word."²⁵⁴

- **Life-long Service to God** - "One principle . . . is that there is really no such thing as retirement for the believer; not in terms of your spiritual life. There may be a time to step back and to change your responsibilities and to change your role in relationship to whatever energy, talents and abilities you have as you get older but in Daniel's case God clearly brought him out of retirement and God promoted him. . . . Daniel has been out of the public eye for over 20 years; when Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 Daniel probably retired at that point. Whenever a new administration comes in they would bring in new people, and Daniel is out of the public eye from 562 until 539. So for a period of 23 years Daniel has been in semi-retirement. We don't know what he did, he's been silent, we know there were a few times in there when God gave him a special revelation regarding the flow of human history, but he's out of the picture, he's in retirement and all of a sudden God is going to come along and bring this 80 year old man out of retirement and put him back in an incredible position."²⁵⁵ "As long as there is breath in your lungs and your heart is beating, it doesn't matter what your age is, God has something He wants to do in and through your life. You never disqualify yourself from usability by God simply because of age. You might retire from a job but all that does is free your time and resources up to be used elsewhere. So there is no such thing as retirement in God . . ."²⁵⁶ "The way to deal with the crises of life is to establish godly disciplines in the routine times of life, and then to refuse to depart from them in times of crisis. We know little of the godly discipline evident in the life of Daniel. . . . Some believe men do extraordinary things at times of crises. There may be some truth in this perspective, but I suggest times of crisis are those times when great men continue to persist in the good things they have practiced all along . . ."²⁵⁷
- **Christian Balance** - "Daniel didn't just pray, pray, pray, pray, pray but he served. You know some people are like that; they have this mindset it's just me and God, I'm in prayer, all I need is God and my Bible and I'll sit under a tree and I'll just cut myself off from the body of Christ. That's not the life of Daniel. Daniel was a prayer warrior, no doubt, but he was a servant. Other people are like this: they serve to the point of exhaustion, and yet they never get into communion with God where they need their batteries recharged. If you're not getting into communion with God through prayer, getting your batteries recharged, you will exhaust yourself serving the Lord—the balance in the Christian life. Daniel was a man of intimacy with God but not just that, he vigorously served God."²⁵⁸

For a list of New Testament passages containing references, allusions, and themes found in this chapter, see [Daniel 6 in the New Testament](#).


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Notes

¹"Stained-glass windows of Basilique Notre-Dame de Fourvière." Image courtesy of [Vassil](#). Image is in the public domain.

²"We now reach the sixth and final episode reported in Daniel's historical division."—Monty S. Mills, *Daniel: A Study Guide to the Book of Daniel* (Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries. 1988, 1999), Dan. 6:1.

³"It is significant to see that this chapter and other parts of Daniel that either unveil or illustrate great prophetic truths concerning the Gentiles, particularly as they affect the Jews and God's program for the earth in time and even intimations of eternity, are purposely couched in terms to cause unbelief to founder in a quagmire of confusion (as a survey of modern higher criticism shows)."—Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG

Publishers. 2002), 1639. Sadly, Daniel's skeptics include those who claim to follow Christ: "The chapter does not present itself to the hearer as actual history . . ."—John E. Goldingay, "Daniel," vol. 30 in Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, and Glenn W. Barker, eds., *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas, TX: Word Books), 124. "In summary, then, the first problem with the idea that Darius was prohibiting prayer to any deity is that prayer was an important aspect of all of the religious practices of the time. It would risk the wrath of the neglected gods to make such a decree, it would be unenforceable, and it was contrary to Persian policies."—John H. Walton, "The Four Kingdoms of Daniel (Part 2)," in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, vol. 31 no. 3 (Evangelical Theological Society. September 1988), 282. See *Attacks on the book of Daniel*.

⁴"The story contains no specific pointers toward the Maccabean period; neither the motivation and aims of Daniel's enemies, nor the harshness of Darius's edict, nor his concern for Daniel suggest it."—Goldingay, *Daniel*, 126.

⁵Carl Friedrich Keil, "Daniel," in Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson. 2002), 9:624.

⁶Andrew E Steinmann, *Daniel* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House. 2008), 319.

⁷"The first verse to mention Darius the Mede is numbered as 6:1 in the MT and Vulgate, but 5:31 in English translations. This verse was assigned to the beginning of Daniel 6 when the Vulgate (the Latin translation produced by Jerome ca. AD 400) was divided into chapters. The Vulgate chapter divisions were introduced in the Middle Ages, and they are attributed to Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, in the thirteenth century. This chapter division kept all of the references to Darius in the same chapter. When the Hebrew text was divided into chapters, the Vulgate chapter divisions were used. However, in Luther's German translation of the Bible and in subsequent English translations, the verse was assigned to the end of Daniel 5 in order to demonstrate the complete fulfillment of the message of the handwriting on the wall. . . . Throughout Daniel 6, verse numbers are one number higher in printed Hebrew texts than in English Bibles. Starting with 7:1, the Hebrew and English chapter divisions and verse numbering again align with each other and continue that way throughout the remainder of the book."—Ibid., 304.

⁸Daniel's vision in chapter 7 occurs before the events recorded in chapter 6. See *Chronology of Daniel*.

⁹Thomas Constable, *Notes on Daniel* (Garland, TX: Sonic Light. 2009), 65.

¹⁰Edwin E. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. 1996), 32.

¹¹Stephen R. Miller, "Daniel," in E. Ray Clendenen, Kenneth A. Mathews, and David S. Dockery, eds., *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman. 1994), 177.

¹²"Yet Daniel does not say that Darius divided the empire into 120 satrapies but merely declares that the king appointed 120 'satraps.'"—Ibid.

¹³"A chief or satrap over every province which belonged to the Medo-Persian empire. Afterwards we find it enlarged to one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, by the victories of Cambyses and Darius Hystaspes. See Est. 1:1."—Adam Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible - Daniel* (Broken Arrow, OK: StudyLamp Software. 1832), Dan. 6:1. "From the book of Esther it cannot certainly be proved that so many satraps were placed over the 127 provinces into which Xerxes divided the kingdom, but only that these provinces were ruled by satraps and *pechas*. But the division of the whole kingdom into 127 provinces nevertheless shows that the kingdom might have been previously divided under Darius the Mede into 120 provinces."—Keil, *Daniel*, 9:626.

¹⁴"These governors may very well have had responsibility for and jurisdiction over districts which were smaller than those commonly designated as satrapies."—Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers. 1949, 1998), Dan. 6:2.

¹⁵"Comparison has been made between this number and the number 127 of Esther 1:1 (cf. Est. 8:9), designating Persian provinces. Since Darius' kingdom was not the whole Medo-Persian empire, however, but only the much smaller area approximating that of the former Babylonian empire . . . there is no intention to say that the two numbers have reference to the same land divisions."—Leon J. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers. 1998), Dan. 6:1-2. "It states that 120 'satraps' were set over the kingdom, namely, 'the kingdom of the Chaldeans (Dan. 9:1)'. . . the statement of Daniel 6:1 has nothing whatsoever to do with the division of the Medo-Persian empire into satrapies or provinces that took place during the later administrations of Darius I and Xerxes."—John C. Whitcomb, *Daniel* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press. 1985), Dan 6:1.

¹⁶"Herodotus reported that the Persian Empire was divided into twenty satrapies. The fifth satrapy included Phoenicia, Palestine, and Cyprus. Yet the Behistun Inscription of Darius I sets the number of satrapies at twenty-three, and a tomb inscription reads twenty-nine. Thus in ancient records the exact number of Persian satrapies varies."—Miller, *Daniel*, 177.

¹⁷"The Babylonian Empire had been in growing chaos due to the weak and ineffective rule of Belshazzar and his father . . ."—Mills, *Daniel: A Study Guide to the Book of Daniel*, Dan. 5:31.

- ¹⁸“There is no known parallel to this arrangement of the three presidents. Probably it was an expedient adopted to meet the needs of the existing situation, after the pattern of that which had been used in the days of Belshazzar (Dan. 5:7).” — Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 6:3. “This triumvirate, or higher authority of three, was also no new institution by Darius, but according to Dan. 5:7, already existed in the Chaldean kingdom under Belshazzar, and was only continued by Darius; and the satraps or the district rulers of the several provinces of the kingdom were subordinated to them. Daniel was one of the triumvirate.” — Keil, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:2-3.
- ¹⁹Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:1-2.
- ²⁰“Very probably Darius was informed of the previous predictions of Daniel; how the hand appeared upon the wall, how he interpreted the writing, and became a heaven-sent messenger to denounce destruction on king Belshazzar. For unless this rumor held reached Darius, Daniel would never have obtained so much authority under him.” — John Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software. 1998, 1561), Dan. 6:1-2.
- ²¹“God wished to stretch forth his hand to the Jews by means of Daniel. And we may deservedly call him God’s hand in sustaining the Jews.” — Ibid.
- ²²“Whereas [Daniel] rejects man’s promotion in chapter 5, what immediately happens in Daniel 6? He gets promoted. Now that’s what comes by trusting the Lord. Daniel gets his promotion . . .” — Charles Clough, *Lessons on Daniel* (Spokane, WA: Ellen Kelso, [transcriber]. 2006), 20.266.
- ²³“the administrators watched over the satraps so that all tax moneys were properly collected and so that none of these lesser officials could steal from the king.” — Miller, *Daniel*, 178. “It was not for the purpose of effecting a more adequate administration of justice but rather that the overgrown royal establishments might be amply supplied with revenues. But not to scale our evaluation of the arrangement too low, efficient governmental administration is always to a large extent closely tied up with a sufficiency of revenues.” — H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House. 1949, 1969), Dan. 6:1-3.
- ²⁴“Perhaps they wanted to remove Daniel because he made it impossible for them to rob the government. . . . When Darius planned to place Daniel over the whole kingdom, the other commissioners and officials realized that they would not be able to continue their practices of stealing from the government.” — Thomas A Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist’s Den* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock. 2008), Dan 6:3. “Perhaps his integrity made it difficult for them to get away with graft and political corruption.” — Constable, *Notes on Daniel*, 66.
- ²⁵The OG describes Daniel’s spirit as ἅγιον [*hagion*], *holy*. [Anonymous, “Daniel (Old Greek Version),” in Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta: With Morphology* (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. 1996, c1979.), Dan. 6:3]
- ²⁶James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems. 1997), #10339.
- ²⁷Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 6:1-3.
- ²⁸Albert Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament* (New York, NY: Lewis Colby. 1847), Dan. 6:3.
- ²⁹Joseph Augustus Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet* (Philadelphia, PA: Porter & Coates. 1879), 167.
- ³⁰Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 20.271.
- ³¹Andy Woods, *Daniel* (Camano Island, WA: SpiritAndTruth.org. 2016, accessed 2025-05-06), Dan. 6:1-11.
- ³²Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 20.267.
- ³³Calvin remarks on the sad record of kings in his day: “It does not always happen that those who are remarkable for prudence or other endowments obtain greater authority and rank. In the palaces of kings we often see men of brutal dispositions holding high rank, and we need not go back to history for this. In these days kings are often gross and infatuated, and more like horses and asses than men!” — Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:3-5. “If any one could enter into the hearts of kings, he would find scarcely one in a hundred who does not despise everything divine.” — Ibid., Dan. 6:6-7.
- ³⁴“He began to think of abolishing his triumvirate of presidents, and making Daniel his viceroy over the whole empire, . . .” — John Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments* (Broken Arrow, OK: StudyLamp Software. 1746-1763), Dan. 6:4.
- ³⁵Woods, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:1-11.
- ³⁶J. Vernon McGee, *Thru The Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. 1997, c1981), Dan. 6:4.
- ³⁷“With respect to the envy felt by the nobles, we see this vice rampant in all ages, since the aspirants to any greatness can never bear the presence of virtue. For, being guilty of evil themselves, they are necessarily bitter against the virtue of others.” — Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:3-5.

- ³⁸“Daniel was old and of the Babylonian regime, whereas they probably were much younger and Persians, and thought themselves, accordingly, more properly candidates for all high offices.”—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:4. “Undoubtedly the great majority of his enemies were race-conscious Medes or Persians, and they did not take kindly to the elevation of one of the Jewish captives.”—Gleason Leonard Archer, “Daniel,” vol. 7 in Frank E. Gaebelein, ed., *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 1985), Dan. 6:1-9.
- ³⁹Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10544.
- ⁴⁰James Strong, *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and the Hebrew Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software. 2009), 2:88.
- ⁴¹Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet*, 164.
- ⁴²The righteousness of Noah is emphasized: “Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God” (Gen. 6:9b).
- ⁴³Ibid., 169.
- ⁴⁴Paul Benware, *Daniel’s Prophecy of Things to Come* (Clifton, TX: Scofield Ministries. 2007), Dan 6:4-5.
- ⁴⁵“The only way to get at Daniel was to place him in a position where he had to choose between obedience to his God and obedience to the government.”—Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:1-9.
- ⁴⁶“As Driver observes, ‘It is not, as with his three companions in ch. 3, a question of a positive sin which he will not commit, but of a positive duty which he will not omit.’ ”—Miller, *Daniel*, 182.
- ⁴⁷Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 6:4-9.
- ⁴⁸“The old prophet was not a secret disciple but a man who was not ashamed to let others know that his allegiance was to the God of Israel.”—Miller, *Daniel*, 179. “He had not hidden his faith in order to keep his office.”—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:5.
- ⁴⁹McGee, *Thru The Bible Commentary*, Dan. 6:4.
- ⁵⁰Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10656.
- ⁵¹Miller, *Daniel*, 180.
- ⁵²“Evidently to convince the king that their proposal had overwhelming support, the ‘royal administrators’ and ‘satraps’ (cf. vv. 4, 6) who stood before Darius falsely claimed that the ‘prefects,’ ‘advisers’ (*haddābērayyā*), and ‘governors’ were party to their proposal. Of course, this was a great exaggeration. Probably the large majority of these rulers were not even in the city of Babylon but were in the outlying areas and would have been totally unaware of the scheme.”—Ibid.
- ⁵³Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:6-7.
- ⁵⁴“Their statement was false upon the face of it, for one at least of the presidents there was, and he the chief of all, who had not been consulted in the matter; but it was he whose destruction they desired.”—H. A. Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 2nd ed (New York, NY: Loizeaux Brothers. 1953), 100.
- ⁵⁵Miller, *Daniel*, 180-181.
- ⁵⁶“The law would be senseless only if the prohibition had related to every petition in common life in the intercourse of civil society. But it only referred to the religious sphere of prayer, as an evidence of worshipping God; and if the king was venerated as an incarnation of the deity, then it was altogether reasonable in its character.”—Keil, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:10.
- ⁵⁷“*Haevernicks* remarks on the subject of the place of prayer in the Persian religion throws an interesting sidelight on the whole situation. Prayer was the chief factor in worship; a great part of the holy writings (the Zend-Avesta, etc.) contains only formulas of prayer and a certain type of litanies.”—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 6:4-9.
- ⁵⁸“The general idea that the king is a manifestation or representative of deity and a key mediator with deity appears in Persian writings, . . .”—Goldingay, *Daniel*, 128.
- ⁵⁹Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 6:4-9.
- ⁶⁰Arno Clemens Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel*, 2nd (New York, NY: Our Hope. 1911), 65-66.
- ⁶¹Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 22.283.
- ⁶²“But all points to the end, when the man of sin, the Son of perdition will appear, the final Anti-Christ ‘who opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or worshipped; so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God’ (2Th. 2:4).” —Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel*, 66.
- ⁶³Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 100-101.
- ⁶⁴William Kelly, *Lectures on the Book of Daniel (3rd. ed.)* (Richardson, TX: Galaxie Software. 1881, 2004), 111.

- ⁶⁵“When Nebuchadnezzar commanded his subjects to worship his image, he did not forbid them to worship any other gods; he himself worshiped many gods. But Darius the Mede went far beyond that. He forbade on pain of death petition to the living God; all prayer was to be directed to him! This demanded that the inalienable and inviolable rights of God be given to a lowly man.”—Charles Lee Feinberg, *A Commentary on Daniel: The Kingdom of the Lord* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books. 1981), Dan. 6:1.
- ⁶⁶Kelly, *Lectures on the Book of Daniel* (3rd. ed.), 115-116.
- ⁶⁷“The rivals of Daniel made a very dexterous move to trap the king in his own pride and so to bring a man whom they envied down from his high dignity.”—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 6:4-9. “Xerxes did things more foolish than what is here attributed to Darius. Instances of this are not wanting.”—Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, Dan. 6:7.
- ⁶⁸Bob Deffinbaugh, *Daniel: Relating Prophecy to Piety* (Richardson, TX: Bible.org. 2006), Dan. 6:10-15.
- ⁶⁹“The reason for having the decree remain in force only thirty days was that this would be long enough to trap Daniel, and these men probably did not wish to be restricted longer themselves.”—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:6-7.
- ⁷⁰“It may have been urged that there was danger of a revolt, and that it would be an effectual way of preventing it to order that whoever should solicit any favor of anyone but the king should be punished, for this would bring all matters at once before him, and secure order.”—Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, Dan. 6:7. Josephus attributes the decree to providing a period during which the populace was to refrain from prayer. “So they came to Darius, and told him, that ‘the princes and governors had thought proper to allow the multitude a relaxation for thirty days, that no one might offer a petition or prayer either to himself, or to the gods, but that he who shall transgress this decree shall be cast into a den of lions, and there perish.’ . . . Accordingly, all the [people] took care not to transgress those injunctions, and rested in quiet . . .” —Flavius Josephus, “The Antiquities of the Jews,” in Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus : Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson. 1996, c1987), 10.253, 255.
- ⁷¹In view of the teachings of Scripture, “Christian pragmatism” should be considered an oxymoron.
- ⁷²“Ishtar Gate, Babylon, Iraq, 1932.” Image courtesy of [Library of Congress](#). Image is in the public domain. “On the walls of the Processional Way leading up to the Ishtar Gate, lions are depicted in enameled brick relief along with bulls and dragons. They are also the only beast depicted in the same way on the outer wall of the audience hall of the palace.”—William H. Shea, “Daniel and the Lion of Babylon,” in *The Bible And Spade*, vol. 4 no. 3 (Landisville, PA: Associates for Biblical Research. Summer 1991), 71.
- ⁷³“The frieze that surrounds the Palace of Darius I, dating from about 510 BC, is composed of images of lions.”—Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den*, Dan. 6:1-28.
- ⁷⁴Whitcomb, *Daniel*, Dan 6:7.
- ⁷⁵Roland K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press. 1969, 1999), 1120-21.
- ⁷⁶“Such a gruesome death accurately reflects conditions during this period, for as J. M. Cook relates, the Persians employed many forms of execution, some of them ‘almost exquisitely horrible.’” —Miller, *Daniel*, 181. “A number of references are given in the Greek historian Herodotus regarding the practice of crucifixion by the Persians. For instance, the following indicates a strong propensity toward the practice via a massive display in an honored city: *Thus was Babylon taken for the second time. Darius having become master of the place, destroyed the wall, and tore down all the gates; for Cyrus had done neither the one nor the other when he took Babylon. He then chose out near three thousand of the leading citizens, and caused them to be crucified, while he allowed the remainder still to inhabit the city.* [Herodotus 4.43 in R.B. Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Histories*, trans. A.L. Pervis (New York: Pantheon, 2007), 99.]” —Michael J. Caba, “Crucifixion: History and Practice,” in *Bible and Spade*, vol. 27 no. 3 (Landisville, PA: Associates for Biblical Research. Summer 2014), 61.
- ⁷⁷John MacArthur, ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing. 1997), 681.
- ⁷⁸The prophecies of Isaiah (Isa. 13:17; 21:2) and Jeremiah (Jer. 51:11, 28) give first place to the Medes in the destruction of Babylon. However, these predictions are more difficult to interpret since they were given in the time of Daniel, but aspects which they reveal concerning the destruction of Babylon were not fulfilled in Daniel’s day—and await [future fulfillment](#). “The statement I will stir up against them the Medes (Isa. 13:17) has caused much discussion among Bible students. Many interpreters, because of the mention of the fall of Babylon (Isa. 13:19), assume that Isaiah was (in Isa. 13:17-18) prophesying Babylon’s fall in 539 (cf. Dan. 5:30-31) to the Medes and Persians. However, that view has some difficulties. In the Medo-Persian takeover in 539 there was very little change in the city; it was not destroyed so it continued on much as it had been. But Isaiah 13:19-22 speaks of the destruction of Babylon. Also the word ‘them,’ against whom the Medes were stirred up (v. 17), were the Assyrians (referred to in Isa. 13:14-16), not the Babylonians. It seems better, then, to understand this section as dealing with events pertaining to the Assyrians’ sack of Babylon in December 689 B.C.” —John A. Martin, “Isaiah,” in John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: SP Publications. 1983), 1:1060. “Jeremiah described the preparations of the armies poised to attack Babylon. This time he identified the

attackers V 1, p 1202 as the kings of the Medes (cf. v. 28). This could allude to the fall of Babylon in 539 B.C. to the Medo-Persians (cf. Dan. 5:31) or, more probably, it could indicate that one of the future kings who will invade Babylon will come from the area controlled by the Medes (i.e., what is today northern Iran).”—Charles H. Dyer, “Jeremiah,” in John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: SP Publications. 1983), Jer. 51:11-14.

⁷⁹ Isaac Newton, Larry Pierce, and Marion Pierce, eds., *Newton's Revised History of Ancient Kingdoms* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books. 1728, 2009), 111.

⁸⁰ Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1128-1129.

⁸¹ “When laws are variable, many are necessarily injured, and no private interest is stable unless the law be without variation; besides, when there is a liberty of changing laws, license succeeds in place of justice. For those who possess the supreme power, if corrupted by gifts, promulgate first one edict and then another. Thus justice cannot flourish where change in the laws allows of so much license.”—Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:8-9.

⁸² “I get a chuckle out of these commentators, they say there’s too much gridlock in Washington, nothing’s getting done in Washington and I say to myself every time I hear that, ‘praise the Lord’ and thank God because our Founding Fathers wisely gave us a system where things couldn’t get done fast, it’s called the separation of powers, it’s called Federalism, it’s called checks and balances. Things are supposed to happen in America slowly after vigorous debate. You say well I want more efficiency. Okay, if you want more efficiency move to Iran. Once the hierarchy in Iran want’s something done there isn’t any discussion, there isn’t any debate, it just happens. I don’t want efficiency, I want things to move slow, particularly when it comes to legal subjects.”—Woods, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:12-17.

⁸³ “This remains unchangeable and irrevocable, because the king was regarded and honoured as the incarnation of deity, who is unerring and cannot change.”—Keil, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:9. “The immutability of royal commands, unique to the Medes and Persians, was due to their considering the king as the infallible representative of [the God] Ormuzd.”—Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1636. “The reasons seems to have been that, to change a decree once given, was to admit that it had been faulty, which was considered improper in reference to the high monarch.”—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:8-9.

⁸⁴ “The interdict is historically implausible. No king of this period who claimed divine status forbade the worship of other gods.”—Marc Berlin and Brettler, eds., *The Jewish Study Bible* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 1985, 2004), Dan. 6:8. “Far more improbable than this material marvel is the alleged edict demanding that no request be made of god or man but of the king for a whole month, an improbability all the greater under the devout Darius.”—James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark. 1927, 1959), 268.

⁸⁵ Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet*, 171.

⁸⁶ Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, Dan. 6:8.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ “Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian was above law, whereas Darius the Mede was bound by law. This was intimated in the contrast between the gold and the silver in the image in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream (Dan. 2:32, 39).”—J. Dwight Pentecost, “Daniel,” in John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: SP Publications. 1983), Dan. 6:12. “Not even the king in Medo-Persia had the power to change a royal decree, and this could sometimes create great frustration, as depicted in the book of Esther (Est. 8:8). That is the main reason the Medo-Persian form of government was ‘inferior’ to that of Nebuchadnezzar, the absolute dictator over Neo-Babylonia, whose slightest word was law. The head of gold had thus given way to arms of silver (Dan. 2:38-39).”—Whitcomb, *Daniel*, Dan 6:8.

⁸⁹ Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 20,271.

⁹⁰ “Daniel’s Darius must have been the highest authority in the empire, because no one of a lesser status would have had the authority to issue a command against praying to any king or god for thirty days except him (Dan. 6:7, 12). This level of authority rules out any governor such as Gobryas being Darius the Mede. Darius himself could not issue such an edict if he were under the jurisdiction of Cyrus or any other king. The one scenario that allows this kind of presumption on the part of Darius is that which is offered by the *Cyropaedia*: Cyaxares/Darius was, until his death, still the overlord of Cyrus and of all the Medes and Persians.”—Rodger C. Young, “Xenophon’s Cyaxares: Uncle of Cyrus, Friend of Daniel,” in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, vol. 64 no. 2 (Evangelical Theological Society. April-June 2021), 277.

⁹¹ “Darius may have thought that he could demonstrate that he is the new king and that the populace of Babylon would have to resign themselves to the presence of a new authority. . . Darius may have looked upon this as an opportunity to get a handle on the religious activities in this new kingdom.”—Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den*, Dan 6:8-9.

⁹² “The mood swings of Cyaxares characterize what is called in modern terms a bipolar behavioral disorder.”—Young, *Xenophon's Cyaxares: Uncle of Cyrus, Friend of Daniel*, 274. “The idiosyncrasies of Xenophon’s Cyaxares—his apparent bipolar disorder and need for adoration by his subjects—explain why the Darius of Daniel 6 could be persuaded to issue a

self-glorifying edict that could only have negative consequences.”—Ibid., 285. Cyaxares had a “‘reputation for being violent and unreasonable’ (Cyr. 4.5.9) . . . [and] vainglorious. Cyrus could change his course of action if offered something that would bring him greater praise and wealth (Cyr. 4.5.51–53; 5.5.1–2, 38–40; 8.5.17).”—Ibid., 284.

⁹³ Gleason Leonard Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press. 1998, c1994), 430.

⁹⁴ Feinberg, *A Commentary on Daniel: The Kingdom of the Lord*, Dan. 6:5.

⁹⁵ “Daniel’s Prayer” (1865) by Sir Edward Poynter, from illustrations for Dalziel’s Bible Gallery (eventually published in 1881) in the Tate. Image courtesy of Sir Edward Poynter (1836-1919). Image is in the public domain.

⁹⁶ “As there was a question as to the whereabouts of Daniel in chapter 3, there is also a question as to the whereabouts of the three Hebrew children here in chapter 6. Surely they would have followed Daniel in his obedience to God. Perhaps, since there has been a lapse of time, they are no longer living.”—McGee, *Thru The Bible Commentary*, Dan. 5:31.

⁹⁷ Steinmann, *Daniel*, 299-300.

⁹⁸ “Would he be wiser to cease for the thirty days, and so ‘outwit’ them? Would it not be better to make sure of keeping his life for prayer and testimony later on than to continue praying now and risk losing it? Such thoughts must have moved through his mind . . .”—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:10.

⁹⁹ “If he should pray elsewhere, those knowing him and his habits, including especially his hostile colleagues, would think that he had ceased, and this would spoil his testimony before them.”—Ibid. “But was there no way to pray to his God in secret? Could he not enter into some secret chamber in his own home and lock the door, and stuff the keyhole, and close the shutters, and pray inaudibly, so his enemies would have no evidence against him?”—Clarence Larkin, *The Book of Daniel* (Glenside, PA: Clarence Larkin Estate. 1929), Dan. 6:10.

¹⁰⁰ Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:10-17.

¹⁰¹ Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:10.

¹⁰² Deffinbaugh, *Daniel: Relating Prophecy to Piety*, Dan. 6:1.

¹⁰³ Otto Zöckler, “The Book of the Prophet Daniel,” in John Peter Lange, ed., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons. 1880), Dan. 6:11-12.

¹⁰⁴ “Chapter 9 tells us how earnestly Daniel was concerned about the return of the Jewish captives to Jerusalem and their land; Dan. 9:2▶ refers to his diligent study of the prophecies of Jeremiah concerning the seventy-year limit to the Exile—a study he undertook ‘in the first year of Darius son of Xerxes [Heb., “Ahasuerus”]’ (Dan. 9:1▶). This concern for the captives’ return may have been on his prayer list as he knelt at his window.”—Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:10-17.

¹⁰⁵ “It was an act of faith on the part of an exiled Jew to pray toward the land from which he had been taken captive. It was a way to say by one’s very posture, “God, I believe Your promise that You will someday return us to our land.””—David Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel* (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing. 1992), 118. “The temple had been toppled, and the fact that Daniel was willing to face Jerusalem as he prayed showed faith that God was not finished with Jerusalem. From the human point it looked like God was finished with Jerusalem but not from the prophetic point of view.”—Woods, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:1-11.

¹⁰⁶ The text implies this had been his practice for a long time.

¹⁰⁷ Concerning God’s shekinah dwelling over the mercy seat with the Holy of Holies: Ex. 25:22; Lev. 16:2; Num. 7:89; 1S. 4:4; 2S. 6:2; 1K. 7:29; 2K. 19:15; 1Chr. 13:6; 2Chr. 5:7; 6:41; Ps. 26:8; 74:2; 80:1; 99:1; Isa. 37:16; Eze. 41:18; John 20:12.

¹⁰⁸ Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:10.

¹⁰⁹ Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:10-17.

¹¹⁰ Robert Dean, *Lessons on Daniel* (Spokane, WA: Ellen Kelso [transcriber]. 2006), 25.300.

¹¹¹ Wilbur M. Smith, *Israeli/Arab Conflict and the Bible* (Glendale, CA: G/L Publications. 1967), 163.

¹¹² Donald J. Wiseman, *Nebuchadrezzar and Babylon* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 1985, 2004), 115.

¹¹³ Constable, *Notes on Daniel*, 67-68.

¹¹⁴ Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:11-12.

¹¹⁵ McGee, *Thru The Bible Commentary*, Dan. 6:10.

¹¹⁶ J. Paul Tanner, *Daniel: Evangelical Exegetical Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press. 2020), 385-386.

¹¹⁷ “The desire to find a regular substitute for the morning and evening sacrifices, which were now interrupted, doubtless contributed towards originating the custom, . . .”—Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:11-12.

¹¹⁸ “Furthermore, there are three times in the day when we should bow our knees unto God, and the tradition of the Church understands them to be the third hour, the sixth hour, and the ninth hour [i.e., 9:00 A.M., 12:00 M., and 3:00 P.M.]. Lastly, it was at the third hour that the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles (Acts 3) [misprint for Acts 2:15]. It was at the sixth

- hour that Peter, purposing to eat, ascended to the upper room for prayer (Acts 10). It was at the ninth hour that Peter and John were on their way to the Temple (Acts 3).”—Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel* (Translated by Gleason L. Archer Jr.) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House. 407, 1958, accessed 2027-05-06), Dan. 6:10.
- “Pray thus thrice a day.”—Roberts Donaldson Coxe, “The Lord's Teaching through the Twelve Apostles to the Nations,” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers: Fathers of the Third and Fourth Centuries: Lactantius, Venantius, Asterius, Victorinus, Dionysius, Apostolic Teaching and Constitutions, Homily, and Liturgies*, vol. 7 (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company. 1886), 8.2.
- ¹¹⁹ “The higher the task to which God calls a man, the more does he feel the need of prayer.”—Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 6:11.
- ¹²⁰ “Ironically, we can confidently assume that many of those prayers of petition were for the blessing of the king and kingdom of Babylon (see Jeremiah 7:13-17; 11:1-14; 14:11; 29:4-7).”—Deffinbaugh, *Daniel: Relating Prophecy to Piety*, Dan. 6:10-15.
- ¹²¹ Ibid., Dan. 6:28.
- ¹²² As some Christians do in order to trigger a response so as to claim persecution.
- ¹²³ “He acts very promptly, not with a desire to court danger, or to tempt God, or to express his contempt of his foes, or to make a boast of his religion.”—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 6:9-15.
- ¹²⁴ Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 102.
- ¹²⁵ “The Scriptures make very clear that Daniel did not wait until a crisis came to begin praying to his God.”—Whitcomb, *Daniel*, Dan 6:10.
- ¹²⁶ Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 105-106.
- ¹²⁷ Deffinbaugh, *Daniel: Relating Prophecy to Piety*, Dan. 6:28.
- ¹²⁸ “That they [reminded the king] may well have triggered his recognition of the plot which they were carrying out. Pieces of the overall picture may then have fallen into place.”—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:15.
- ¹²⁹ “They did not refer to him in his high official position in the kingdom, but ignominiously called him one of the . . . ‘sons of the Exile’ . . . showing their anti-Semitic bias, . . .”—Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1637.
- ¹³⁰ “He is but a captive and a stranger, a mere slave, and yet he rebels against thee!”—Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:13.
- ¹³¹ Oliver B. Greene, *Daniel* (Greenville, SC: The Gospel Hour. 1964, 1974), Dan 6:10-15.
- ¹³² Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 20.272.
- ¹³³ So long as the world remained under the sway of the wicked one (1Jn. 5:19), neither Israel (Eze. 20:32) nor the Church (John 15:19) would ever “fit in.”
- ¹³⁴ Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:14-15.
- ¹³⁵ The OG adds the phrase “ἀπὸ τῶν χειρῶν τῶν σατραπῶν [*apo tōn cheirōn tōn satrapōn*], from the hands of the satraps.”—Anonymous, *Daniel (Old Greek Version)*, Dan. 6:15.
- ¹³⁶ Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:14.
- ¹³⁷ “The king finds himself bound by laws, apparently instituted to guard his subjects from his caprices, under color of attributing the character of immutability to his will and to his wisdom—a character that belongs to God alone.”—John Nelson Darby, *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible: Ezra to Malachi* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software. 2008), 474. “Lucas points out, ‘There is irony in the fact that the king who sought to portray himself as the one through whom everyone's petitions could be answered finds that he cannot bring about the one thing he wants to happen.’ [Lucas, *Daniel*, 151.]”—Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den*, Dan 6:17.
- ¹³⁸ “It was their custom to execute sentence upon a criminal on the same day it was pronounced.”—Feinberg, *A Commentary on Daniel: The Kingdom of the Lord*, Dan. 6:16.
- ¹³⁹ Steinmann, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:16.
- ¹⁴⁰ Keil, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:16.
- ¹⁴¹ “Daniel in the Lion's Den.” Daniel is too young in this depiction as he was over 80 years of age when cast into the lions' den. Image courtesy of Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640). Image is in the public domain.
- ¹⁴² “The . . . committal of Daniel himself to a den of lions is not an improbable one in that lions from cages were hunted, as a trial of royal prowess, in the . . . royal parklands from the days of Tilgathpileser I onwards. The lion at Babylon was a major symbol of the god Marduk . . .”—Wiseman, *Nebuchadrezzar and Babylon*, 112.
- ¹⁴³ “Even though the specific location of the lions' den has not been found, it is evident that various rulers of the ancient Near East did have zoos. For example, there are eight different cuneiform texts which refer to the feeding of lions kept by a king

of Ur named Shu-Sin who reigned just before 2000 BC.”—Shea, *Daniel and the Lion of Babylon*, 70.

¹⁴⁴“Daniel is about 83 years old when these events happen. Now that in and of itself is going to wreck a lot of Christian artistry because all of the pictures I see of Daniel in the lions’ den make it look like he’s Arnold Schwarzenegger with muscles popping out all over the place, ready to take on these lions. And the reality is nothing could be further from the truth; Daniel was not at his prime of life.”—Woods, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:12-17.

¹⁴⁵“This den was a cesspool is what it was; you had decaying human flesh in this place; it was the execution chamber and that is where Daniel spent his evening.”—Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 22.287.

¹⁴⁶“Its construction may therefore have been similar to that of the fiery furnace, upon the whole (see on chap. 3:6)—an opinion which seems to derive additional support from the manner in which Darius was enabled to converse with Daniel while in the den, even before the stone was removed from its opening (v. 21 et seq.).”—Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 144.

¹⁴⁷Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:17.

¹⁴⁸Keil, *Daniel*, 9:633.

¹⁴⁹The word for “den” can denote a well—perhaps the den was a repurposed cistern. “It may also have had a side entrance or drain since if it did not, rain could have filled the den and drowned the lions.”—Constable, *Notes on Daniel*, 70. Some commentators reject the need of a side entrance: “the mouth, or entrance, may have been on a lower level, as in the case of bear-pits in our zoological gardens. Why, then, a stone and not the regular gate, and why was Dan. hauled up, (Dan. 6:24)?”—Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 276. “There is no need to suppose that the pit would have a door in the side, like the furnace of chap. 3.”—Goldingay, *Daniel*, 128.

¹⁵⁰Purposeful, not by literary license or technique by the author, but by God’s design in history which saw to it that these two real historical events exhibited remarkable and intentional similarities.

¹⁵¹Steinmann, *Daniel*, 299.

¹⁵²The OG adds “ἕως πρωὶ θάρρει [ēōs prōi tharrei], until early morning, take courage!”—Anonymous, *Daniel (Old Greek Version)*, Dan. 6:17.

¹⁵³Hieronymus, *Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel (Translated by Gleason L. Archer Jr.)*, Dan. 6:16.

¹⁵⁴Miller, *Daniel*, 185.

¹⁵⁵Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 21.280.

¹⁵⁶“Daniel in the Den of Lions,” Charles Foster (1897). The den is portrayed as a cave. Daniel is too young in this depiction—he was over 80 years of age when cast into the lions’ den. Image courtesy of Dr. Jorgen. Image is in the public domain.

¹⁵⁷Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10129.

¹⁵⁸“Like all OT miracles, this one is a foretaste of the great miracle of the resurrection of Christ (cf. Dan. 6:17 with Mat. 27:60-66).”—Sinclair B. Ferguson, “Daniel,” in D. A. Carson, ed., *New Bible Commentary (4th ed.)* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press. 1994, 1970), Dan. 6:18-28. “Daniel is cast into the lions’ den as our blessed Lord was given to the lion (Psalm 22:21), and a stone is laid upon the mouth of the den and it is sealed with the King’s signet. He is so to speak in a grave, as good as dead in the eyes of the world, for who has ever heard of hungry lions not devouring a man. And all this brings before us that other place, the tomb in the garden, where He was laid and the stone before it, which bore the seal of the Roman world power. But as Daniel could not be hurt by the lions, so He who went into the jaws of death could not be holden by death. The tomb is empty and He is victor over death and the grave. All this is blessedly fore-shadowed in this experience of God’s prophet.”—Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel*, 64. “There is a beautiful spiritual lesson in Daniel’s deliverance. The ‘Den of Lions’ prefigures the ‘Tomb of Joseph of Arimathea’ in which our Lord was laid, and before which a stone was rolled, and sealed, and marked with the King’s signet. But as the lions could not harm Daniel, so Jesus, who went into the ‘jaws of Death,’ could not be ‘holden of Death,’ and was delivered, like Daniel, by resurrection from his prison house. When Daniel was liberated from the ‘Lions’ Den,’ he could not be thrown in again, he was free from that ‘Law,’ for he had paid its penalty. So when we accept Jesus as our personal Saviour we are free from the Law of ‘Sin and Death,’ because Jesus our Saviour paid its penalty on the Cross, and His deliverance from the ‘Tomb’ by resurrection shows that He had fulfilled His sentence of three days, and the ‘Tomb’ could no longer hold Him, any more than the criminal who has served his term can any longer be kept behind prison bars.”—Larkin, *The Book of Daniel*, Dan. 6:23. “The Christian reader of Daniel 6 may notice a number of parallels between Daniel and the life of Jesus Christ. Both prayed regularly (Dan. 6:10; Luke 5:16). Malicious accusers sought to entrap each by means of his worship practice and fidelity to God’s Word (Dan. 6:5; Mt 4:6-10; 22:15-46). An unruly crowd brings him to a pagan ruler and accuses him of violating the law (Dan. 6:11-13; Mat. 26:47-50; 27:1-2, 11-14; John 18:1-19:15). The ruler, deeming him innocent, seeks to set him free, but eventually gives in to the crowd’s desire and condemns him to death (Dan.

6:14-16►; Mat. 27:18-26; John 19:8-16). Both Daniel and Jesus are said to have ‘trusted in (his) God’ (Dan. 6:23►; Mat. 27:43). A rock is placed over the opening of the pit or tomb and sealed with a royal seal (Dan. 6:17►; Mat. 27:66). At dawn the king hurries to the pit (Dan. 6:19►), as the women did to the tomb on Easter dawn (Mat. 28:1). Both emerge alive: Daniel, who served ‘the living God’ (Dan. 6:20►, 26►]; cf. Mat 26:63), and the risen Jesus, who is himself ‘the living one’ (Luke 24:5).”—Steinmann, *Daniel*, 301.

¹⁵⁹Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel*, 63-64.

¹⁶⁰Based on [Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den*, Dan. 6:25-28] with additional insights.

¹⁶¹Jesus does the will of the Father: Ps. 40:7; Mat. 4:3; 6:10; 26:39; Luke 4:3; 11:2; 22:42; John 4:34; 5:19, 30; 6:38; 8:28; 10:18; 12:49-50; Heb. 10:7-9

¹⁶²Jesus divinely raised: John 2:19; 10:17-18; Acts 2:24; 4:10; 13:30; Rom. 4:24; 6:4; 8:11; 1Cor. 15:15; Heb. 13:20; 1Pe. 3:18

¹⁶³Jesus committed no sin: Isa. 53:9; John 8:46; 2Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26; 1Pe. 2:22; 1Jn. 3:5

¹⁶⁴Miller, *Daniel*, 185-186.

¹⁶⁵“There could be no trick or collusion here: if Daniel be preserved, it must be by the power of Jehovah the God of Israel.”—Jerome Smith, *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers. 1992), Dan. 6:17.

¹⁶⁶Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:17.

¹⁶⁷“He probably also was ashamed at having been tricked so easily through flattery.”—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:18.

¹⁶⁸“19.a. Not ‘fasting’ in a religious sense, for which the word is צוֹם [šwm] not סוֹת [swt].”—Goldingay, *Daniel*, 121.

¹⁶⁹Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10155.

¹⁷⁰Arnold G Fruchtenbaum, *The Book of Daniel* (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries. 2023), Dan. 6:18-23.

¹⁷¹God responds to those who seek Him: Deu. 4:29; 1Chr. 28:9; 2Chr. 15:2; Ps. 9:10; 24:6; Pr. 28:5; Isa. 51:1; 45:19; 55:6; 64:4-5; 66:10; Jer. 29:13; John 14:26; 15:15; Acts 10:2-4; 17:27; Heb. 11:1, 6; Jas. 4:8

¹⁷²Woods, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:12-17.

¹⁷³Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 22.287.

¹⁷⁴Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:21-22.

¹⁷⁵*New English Translation : NET Bible*, 1st ed (Dallas, TX: Biblical Studies Press. 1998, 2006), Dan. 6:19.

¹⁷⁶Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1638.

¹⁷⁷Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:19-20.

¹⁷⁸Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10565.

¹⁷⁹Mills, *Daniel: A Study Guide to the Book of Daniel*, Dan. 6:16.

¹⁸⁰Concerning God as the Holy One of Israel: 2K. 19:22; Ps. 71:22; 78:41; 89:18; Isa. 1:4; 5:19, 24; 10:20; 12:6; 17:7; 29:19; 30:11-12, 15; 31:1; 37:23; 41:14, 16, 20; 43:3, 14; 45:11; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 54:5; 55:5; 60:9, 14; Jer. 50:29; 51:5; Acts 13:35

¹⁸¹Concerning God's title as “the living God.” Deu. 5:26; Jos. 3:10; 1S. 17:26, 36; 2K. 19:4, 16; Ps. 42:2; 84:2; Isa. 37:4, 17; Jer. 10:10; 23:36; Dan. 6:20►, 26►; Hos. 1:10; Mat. 16:16; 26:63; John 6:69; Acts 14:15; Rom. 9:26; 2Cor. 3:3; 6:16; 1Ti. 3:15; 4:10; 6:17; Heb. 3:12; 9:14; 10:31; 12:22; Rev. 7:2►.

¹⁸²Concerning lifeless idols: Deu. 4:28; 32:38; 1K. 18:29; 2K. 19:18; Ps. 115:4-8; 135:15-17; Isa. 37:19; 41:25; 44:9; 45:20; 46:7; Jer. 2:28; 10:5, 8, 15; 16:20; 51:17; Dan. 5:23►; Hab. 2:18-19; Acts 19:26; Rev. 9:20►; 13:15►.

¹⁸³Concerning God hearing prayer: Gen. 18:21; Ex. 3:7; Deu. 15:9; Jdg. 6:7; 1S. 7:9; Job 22:27; 34:15, 17, 28; Ps. 4:3; 6:8-9; 65:2; 77:1; 102:17; 138:3; 116:1-2; Pr. 15:29; Acts 9:11; Acts 10:4, 31; 1Pe. 3:12

¹⁸⁴Although the peal form of יָכַל [y^hkēl] appears here with the meaning “able” in most translations, a secondary meaning of the root is “overpower, overwhelm, subdue (Dan. 7:21►)” —Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10321.. Perhaps the king's question could be construed as asking whether God *overpowered* to deliver—whether He chose to intervene.

¹⁸⁵“Daniel's Answer to the King.” Image courtesy of Briton Rivière (1840-1920). Image is in the public domain.

¹⁸⁶Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:21-22.

¹⁸⁷The OG has, “ἐτι εἰμὶ ζῶν [eti eimi zōn], *still I am alive.*”—Anonymous, *Daniel (Old Greek Version)*, Dan. 6:22.

¹⁸⁸“This may have been the same angel, or the Angel of the Lord, who had visited Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the fiery furnace (3:28).”—Constable, *Notes on Daniel*, 70. “Either one of the ministering spirits about him, or the Angel of the covenant, the same with him, said to be like the Son of God, that was seen in the fiery furnace, even the Messiah in human form . . .”—Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 6:22. “‘His angel’ was evidently the same One Nebuchadnezzar had seen in the fiery furnace—the pre-incarnate Christ Himself.”—McGee, *Thru The Bible Commentary*, Dan. 6:22. “Perhaps this Angel, like the One in the fiery furnace with the three young men (Dan. 3:25), was the preincarnate Christ.”—Pentecost, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:19-22. “Perhaps this heavenly messenger was the Angel of Jehovah, the preincarnate Christ, who had delivered Daniel’s three friends from the fiery furnace many years before.”—Renald E. Showers, *The Most High God: Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Bellmawr, NJ: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry. 1982), Dan. 6:19-23. “It is possible that the ‘angel’ here in (Dan. 6:22) might be the preincarnate Christ, who sometimes appears in the OT as ‘the Angel of Yahweh/the Lord.’”—Steinmann, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:20-24. “This expression, ‘His angel’ (מַלְאָכִי, *mal’ākēh*), is the same form as occurred in Dan. 3:28, suggesting that the same one who protected the three youths in the furnace was the one who protected Daniel in the lions’ den (see comments on Dan. 3:25). The words of Ps. 34:7 are appropriate at this point: ‘The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, and rescues them.’”—Tanner, *Daniel: Evangelical Exegetical Commentary*, 389.

¹⁸⁹Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel*, 126.

¹⁹⁰God hears and responds to the righteous: Job 22:23-27; Ps. 18:19-24; 34:17; 66:18-19; Pr. 15:29; 1Pe. 3:12

¹⁹¹Concerning prayer inhibited due to unrighteous behavior: Deu. 1:45; 31:18; 1S. 8:18; 28:6, 15; 2S. 12:16; 2Chr. 7:13; Ps. 18:41; 66:18; 80:4; Pr. 1:28; 15:29; 21:13; Isa. 1:15; 58:3-9; 59:2; Jer. 7:16; 11:11, 14; 14:11-13; Lam. 3:8, 44; Eze. 8:18; 14:3-5, 14-20; 20:3, 31; Hos. 5:6-7; 11:7; Zec. 7:13; Mal. 2:14; John 9:31; 1Pe. 3:7, 12.

¹⁹²“Note, for example, the reference to Daniel 6:23 in Hebrews 11:33. Although the author of Hebrews is otherwise heavily dependent on the ‘Septuagint’ or the Old Greek, this passage reflects Theodotion’s rendering ‘[God] shut the mouths of the lions’ (*enephraxe ta stomata tōn leontōn*), rather than the Old Greek, which says, ‘God saved me from the lions’ (*sesōke me ho theos apo tōn leontōn*). This phenomenon led to speculation about the existence of a ‘Proto-Theodotion,’ and recent discoveries have confirmed the view that, for at least parts of the Hebrew Bible, a translation very similar to Theodotion’s was already in use in the first century B.C.E.”—Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. 2005), 42. “It may also be noted that in v. 22, where the statement is made that the angel ‘shut’ the lions’ mouth, the Aramaic verb for shut is *segghar*. It was this fact that gave a name to an angel found in the letter of *Hermas*, namely ‘Segri.’”—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 6:19-23.

¹⁹³“You wonder how Daniel could have had such courage in this time. You know how he did it? He wasn’t thinking about the lions; he was thinking about the God who made the lions.”—Woods, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:18-28.

¹⁹⁴Whitcomb, *Daniel*, Dan 6:22.

¹⁹⁵Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 146.

¹⁹⁶Ferguson, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:18-28.

¹⁹⁷“They communicate God’s faithfulness to His covenant through the preservation of a remnant is still applicable under the Medo-Persian government just as it was in effect during the preceding Babylonian government.”—Andy Woods, *Introduction to the Book of Daniel*, 29.

¹⁹⁸“Here is a picture of the preservation of Israel through the lions’ den of the tribulation-period under the reign of Antichrist . . .”—Greene, *Daniel*, Dan 6:21-23. “Like the previous events it also has a typical character, setting forth the peculiarly trying position in which the faithful remnant of Judah will find themselves in the days of the Antichrist.”—Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 98. “Daniel’s experience—although a literal portrayal of an actual event—is also—like the experience of the three Hebrews and the fiery furnace of chapter 3—parabolic, in that it is a prophetic foreshadowing of the ultimate deliverance of the Jewish remnant in the Great Tribulation consummating the time of the Gentiles, when the last Gentile world ruler will fearfully persecute Israel (Rev. 12:6-13:18).”—Unger, *Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1639.

¹⁹⁹Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel*, 125.

²⁰⁰Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 6:24.

²⁰¹Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel*, 63.

²⁰²“Daniel’s Accuser in the Lions’ Den,” early 12th-century, Grande-Sauve Abbey. Image courtesy of Ophelia2. Use of this image is subject to Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.

²⁰³“The Septuagint [OG] . . . makes the victims only the two men who were presidents with Daniel, and, therefore, his principal accusers.”—John F. Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago, IL: Moody Bible Institute.

1971), 143. “The two fellow-commissioners and their families were cast to the hungry lions who devoured them before they ever reached the floor of the lion pit.”—Mills, *Daniel: A Study Guide to the Book of Daniel*, Dan. 6:16.

²⁰⁴ *New English Translation : NET Bible*, Dan. 6:24.

²⁰⁵ “It is difficult to envisage a pit big enough to contain the five hundred or more people apparently envisaged by Dan. 6:25.”—Goldingay, *Daniel*, 124.

²⁰⁶ “That the entire body of 120 satraps was cast into the den is a purely gratuitous assumption. The accusers were only a small group of special enemies of Dan.”—Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 6:25.

²⁰⁷ “The Septuagint, apparently anticipating modern critical charges of absurdity . . . , translates the passage so that only the two other men who were overseers or presidents with Daniel, and thus his principal and basically responsible accusers, were the victims.”—Unger, *Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1638-1639.

²⁰⁸ “Since they lied about the full support of the commissioners ‘it is highly probable that many if not most of the 120 satraps were likewise ignorant of this cunning plot.’ [Whitcomb, *Daniel*, 82].”—Benware, *Daniel’s Prophecy of Things to Come*, Dan 6:6-9.

²⁰⁹ “Not all the hundred and twenty princes, and the two presidents; but the chief of them, who were most busy in getting the decree signed; watched Daniel’s house, and what he did there; brought the charge against him to the king . . .”—Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 6:24. “By the accusers we are not (with Hitzig) to think of the 120 satraps together with the two chief presidents, but only of a small number of the special enemies of Daniel who had concerned themselves with the matter.”—Keil, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:25. “No one who interprets the account reasonably would venture to assert that all the 120 satraps plus their wives and their children are to be thought of as having perished so miserably. Perhaps the active agents numbered only a handful, and they were recognized as the prime movers of the assault upon Daniel.”—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 6:24-28.

²¹⁰ “From the standpoint of plain justice it can hardly be denied that the death penalty is in many cases just retribution for those who are guilty of attempted manslaughter.”—Ibid.

²¹¹ “The same principle appears in Psalm 7:15, ‘He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made.’”—James O. Combs, *Mysteries of the Book of Daniel* (Springfield, IL: Tribune Publishers. 1994), Dan. 6:16-24. “ ‘The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made; in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. Jehovah is known by the judgment which He executeth; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands’ (Ps. 9:15, 16).”—Kelly, *Lectures on the Book of Daniel* (3rd. ed.), 110.

²¹² “Illustration of God’s faithfulness to the basic Abrahamic Covenant where God promised to bless them who blessed Abraham’s seed and to curse him who curseth them (Gen 12:3).”—Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, 143. “The incident is one of many in Scripture that illustrates God’s fidelity to the Abrahamic Covenant, where blessing is promised those who bless Abraham’s posterity, with cursing for those who mistreat them (Gen. 12:3).”—Unger, *Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1639. Concerning God’s promise to “bless those who bless” and “curse those who curse” the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: Gen. 12:3; 27:29; Ex. 23:22; Num. 22:12; 23:8; 24:9; Est. 9:5, 10-14, 16; Isa. 41:11-12; 49:25-26; 51:22-23; 54:15-17; Jer. 2:3; 30:16; 51:5, 24, 49; Eze. 25:3-8; 35:5, 12-13, 15; 36:5-7, 16; Joel 3:1-2, 7; Ob. 1:10-14; Mat. 25:40-41, 45.

²¹³ Miller, *Daniel*, 188.

²¹⁴ Young, *Xenophon’s Cyaxares: Uncle of Cyrus, Friend of Daniel*, 278.

²¹⁵ Miller, *Daniel*, 188.

²¹⁶ Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, Dan. 6:24.

²¹⁷ “[Darius] seized Intaphrenes with his sons and all his household—for he strongly suspected that the man was plotting a rebellion with his kinsmen—and imprisoned them with the intention of putting them to death. Then Intaphrenes’ wife began coming to the palace gates, weeping and lamenting; and by continuing to do this same thing she persuaded Darius to pity her . . . for her sake he released the one for whom she had asked, and the eldest of her sons as well; he put to death all the rest. . . .”—A. D. Herodotus and Godley, ed., *The Histories (English)* (Medford, MA: Harvard University Press. 1920), 3.119.1-7.

²¹⁸ “This savage act accorded with the customs of those times; contrary to the Divine law which enacted that ‘the fathers should not be put to death for the children, nor the children for the fathers’ (Deu. 24:16).”—Smith, *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, Dan. 9:24.

²¹⁹ Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:18-24.

²²⁰ Most ancient kings would have no knowledge of the Law of Moses.

²²¹ In the case of Haman’s sons, they may be guilty of planning or participating in the plot of their father.

- ²²² Woods, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:18-28.
- ²²³ Greene, *Daniel*, Dan 6:24-28.
- ²²⁴ Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, 10.260-262.
- ²²⁵ Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10075.
- ²²⁶ Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 428.
- ²²⁷ Robert Dick Wilson, *Studies in the Book of Daniel* (New York, NY: G. P. Putnam's & Sons, The Knickerbocker Press. 1971), 199.
- ²²⁸ Concerning the fear of God: Gen. 31:42, 53; Ex. 1:17; 15:11; 20:20; Deu. 5:5; Deu. 8:6; 31:12-13; Jos. 4:24; 2S. 23:3; 1K. 18:3; 1Chr. 13:12; 2Chr. 19:7, 9; Ne. 5:15; Job 1:1; 9:34; 23:15-16; 25:1; 28:28; Ps. 5:7; 25:12-14; 33:18; 34:7-9; 72:5; 76:11; 89:7; 115:13; 119:38; 111:10; 119:120; 128:4; 145:19; 147:11; Pr. 1:7; 2:5; 3:7; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 14:26; 15:16, 33; 16:6; 19:23; 22:4; 23:17; 24:21; 31:30; Ecc. 5:7; 8:12; 12:13; Isa. 8:13; 11:3; 33:5; 50:10; 57:11; 59:19; Jer. 5:22-24; Hab. 3:16; Luke 12:5; Acts 9:31; 10:2, 35; 2Cor. 5:13; 1Pe. 3:15; Rev. 19:5▶.
- ²²⁹ Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:25-28.
- ²³⁰ Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:25-27.
- ²³¹ “If the tone of this heathen king’s decree appears to be too nearly Scriptural, we need merely think of it in the terms of *Ellicott* who says: ‘The language is remarkably Scriptural. This is due, no doubt, to the share which Daniel had in the composition of it.’ ” —Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 6:24-28.
- ²³² Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 6:25-27.
- ²³³ Keil, *Daniel*, 9:635.
- ²³⁴ Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:19-20, 25-27.
- ²³⁵ Deffinbaugh, *Daniel: Relating Prophecy to Piety*, Dan. 6:19-24, 25-27.
- ²³⁶ Woods, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:18-28.
- ²³⁷ Dean, *Lessons on Daniel*, 25.304.
- ²³⁸ J. Dwight Pentecost, *Class Notes on Daniel*, *Dallas Theological Seminary* (Spokane, WA: Ellen Kelso [transcriber]. 2006), 6.38.
- ²³⁹ Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10629.
- ²⁴⁰ It was commonplace for high-ranking officials of a former regime to be deposed along with the ruler.
- ²⁴¹ Miller, *Daniel*, 189.
- ²⁴² Clarke, *Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible - Daniel*, Dan. 6:28.
- ²⁴³ Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 106-107.
- ²⁴⁴ Edwin M. Yamauchi, “Archaeological Backgrounds of the Exilic and Postexilic Era, Part I: The Archaeological Background of Daniel,” in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. 137 no. 545 (Dallas, TX: Dallas Theological Seminary. January-March 1968), 8.
- ²⁴⁵ This image was produced by www.spiritandtruth.org and is hereby placed in the public domain.
- ²⁴⁶ Daniel prospered living under 7 successive rulers: Nebuchadnezzar, Amēl-Marduk (Evil-Merodach), Neriglissar, Labashi-Marduk, Nabonidus, Darius the Mede, and Cyrus.
- ²⁴⁷ Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 22.282.
- ²⁴⁸ Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:6-7.
- ²⁴⁹ Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet*, 179-180.
- ²⁵⁰ Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 6:11.
- ²⁵¹ Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 20.266.
- ²⁵² Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, Dan. 6:28.
- ²⁵³ Woods, *Introduction to the Book of Daniel*, 29.
- ²⁵⁴ Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 21.276-277.
- ²⁵⁵ Dean, *Lessons on Daniel*, 24.2876.
- ²⁵⁶ Woods, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:12-17.
- ²⁵⁷ Deffinbaugh, *Daniel: Relating Prophecy to Piety*, Dan. 6:28.
- ²⁵⁸ Woods, *Daniel*, Dan. 6:12-17.



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