

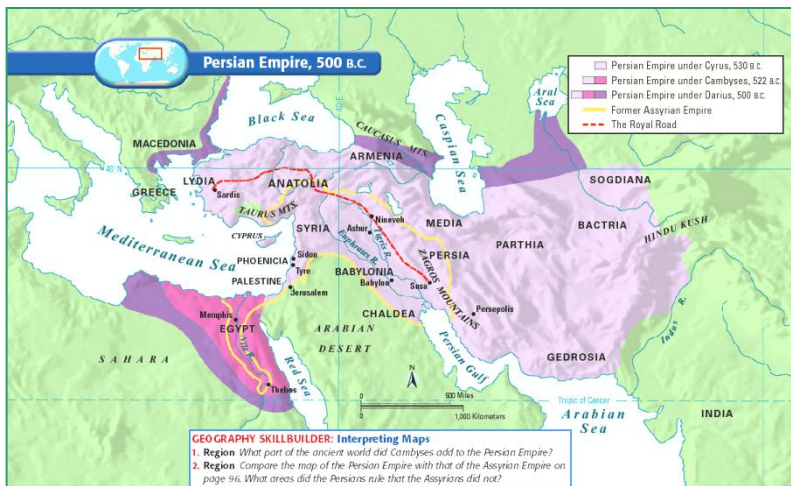
Daniel Chapter 6

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LAWYERS AND LIONS

(6:1.) Darius the Mede decided to divide the kingdom into 120 provinces, and he appointed a high officer to rule over each province. (2.) The king also chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the high officers and protect the king's interests.

- The **kingdom** was defined at the end of the previous chapter. Historians call it the Medo-Persian Empire.



- The new **kingdom** had retained some political types from the fallen Babylonian empire. **Daniel** was the distinguished **administrator** in this triumvirate according to some translations.
- Daniel's God-related name had been restored.

(3.) Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and high officers. Because of Daniel's great

ability, the king made plans to place him over the entire empire (4.) Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling government affairs, but they couldn't find anything to criticize or condemn. He was faithful, always responsible, and completely trustworthy.

- **Daniel** was a top-rate diplomat (vs. 3).
- Daniel's colleagues did not want this Hebrew promoted to be over them, so they looked for a **fault** to charge against this near-perfect man (vs. 4). The thinking: "He's wrong. We just have to find out how." It is a real compliment when ones enemies can't find anything about which to accuse.
- **Paul Butler** describes Daniel:
 Daniel's irreproachable integrity is little short of incredible in view of his circumstances! He had come to this land against his will as a prisoner of war; he was requested by a pagan despot to study pagan literature and science and be trained to serve in a pagan court surrounded by luxury, sensuality, lust, self-seeking, idolatry, and ruthless cruelty. In the middle of all this there grew up this fair flower of a character, pure, true, holy, and stainless, by the acknowledgement of enemies, and in which not even accusers could find a fault!

(5.) So they concluded, "Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the rules of his religion."

- The accuser's only hope was to bring a religion-based charge. They were removing Daniel's freedom of religion.

(6.) So the administrators and high officers went to the king and said, "Long live King Darius! (7.) We are all in agreement -- we administrators, officials, high officers, advisers, and governors -- that the king should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days any person who prays to

anyone, divine or human -- except to you, Your Majesty -- will be thrown into the den of lions. (8.) And now, Your Majesty, issue and sign this law so it cannot be changed, an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked." (9.) So King Darius signed the law.

- Since Daniel had not broken any existing law, these wise guys would make one that he would break because they knew his priorities. The gang slipped in on the egotistical side of **Darius** (vs. 7). He would not have allowed such a law if he had seen how it could be applied. This plan was crafty and was the highest tribute that could be paid to Daniel.
- The control clowns made sure that **Darius** understood that the new law could not be revoked. In actuality, they were being tenderized for the lion's breakfast.

DANIEL PRAYED NORMALLY

(10.) But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God.

- The new **law** was published, but **Daniel** did not adjust to the decree which forbade the free exercise of religion.
- For **Daniel**, this was not an act of defiance, but his regular practice. A lesser man would have put off prayer for the 30 days of the interdict.
- Praying **towards Jerusalem** was an ancient practice.

If they turn to You with their whole heart and soul in the land of their enemies and pray toward the land You gave to their ancestors -- toward this city You have chosen, and toward this Temple I have built to honor Your name -- then hear their prayers and their petition from heaven where You live, and uphold their cause. (1 Kings 8:48-49 NLT)

Jonah had the same practice:

Then I said, 'O LORD, You have driven me from Your presence. Yet I will look once more toward Your holy Temple.' (Jonah 2:4 NLT)

Jerusalem was, in a sense, the earthy location of God. The Holy of Holies was there.

In *Islam*, the direction of prayer is towards the sacred Kaaba in Mecca.

- This man, near the top in a great empire, had time to pray **three times a day**. Hear King David:

Morning, noon, and night I cry out in my distress, and the LORD hears my voice. (Psalms 55:17 NLT)

Are we busier than Daniel?

- At least a portion of Daniel's prayer time was consumed with **giving thanks**.

THE CHARGES ARE LEVELED

(11.) Then the officials went together to Daniel's house and found him praying and asking for God's help. (12.) So they went straight to the king and reminded him about his law. "Did you not sign a law that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human -- except to you, Your Majesty -- will be thrown into the den of lions?" "Yes," the king replied, "that decision stands; it is an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked."

- Now these **Daniel** detractors had a federal case against him. They had passed a law they knew that **Daniel** would break, similar to entrapment.

(13.) Then they told the king, "That man Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is ignoring you and your law. He still prays to his God three times a day."

- It is clear that **Daniel's** national heritage made a difference here. They didn't want a Hebrew supervising them.
- The accusers failed to mention that **Daniel** had achieved a top role in the empire, but called him **one of the captives from Judah**. To say that Daniel **is ignoring you and your law** was a lie.
- The *Wycliffe Bible Commentary* says:
Darius found himself bound and gagged by his own law. In this manner he showed that his authority was quite inferior in nature to that of Nebuchadnezzar, whose person was above the law. The government of Darius came nearer to the democratic ideal, but it was less absolute than that of the Chaldeans. In that sense it was inferior, and so fulfilled what had been predicted of it by the silver portion of the image prophecy of chapter 2." (from *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1962 by Moody Press)

(14.) Hearing this, the king was deeply troubled, and he tried to think of a way to save Daniel. He spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of this predicament.

- The text says the king **tried to think of a way to save Daniel**. He may have tried to find legal ways around destroying his most trusted adviser. But he could not.
- **The king** is on **Daniel's** side. These men are humiliating the **king**, but he cannot avoid having **Daniel** put into the lion's den. He will look for a way to punish those who have tricked him.
- **Burton Coffman** writes:
Any man, trapped and frustrated by his own words and deeds, is to be pitied; and Darius spent an agonizing night, no doubt realizing just what a fool his unscrupulous lords had made of him. On the other hand, they must have enjoyed a banquet of feasting and rejoicing. However, there

was to be a sequel to this event which none of them could have foreseen.

DANIEL IS ARRESTED

(15.) In the evening the men went together to the king and said, "Your Majesty, you know that according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, no law that the king signs can be changed."

(16.) So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, "May your God, whom you serve so faithfully, rescue you."

- While Nebuchadnezzar had cremated his opposition, this Persian government fed its law-breakers to the **lions**.
- Notice that Darius was gaining faith in Daniel's **God**. He thought that Daniel would be delivered (vs. 16).

(17.) A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den. The king sealed the stone with his own royal seal and the seals of his nobles, so that no one could rescue Daniel. (18.) Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He refused his usual entertainment and couldn't sleep at all that night.

- **Daniel** was locked away behind a number of **seals**. There could be no tricks played here to save **Daniel**.
- The accusers were there to exert pressure on **the king** and **seal** the mouth of the lion's **den** with their own signet rings (vs. 17).
- **The king** was extremely upset over this event. No food, no sleep and no music for the night. This is another case of royal insomnia. Compare 2:1
- **Daniel** probably slept as well as one could without a bed.
- Darius is sixty-two or sixty-three years of age. He trusted **Daniel** far more than the clowns who had forced him to punish **Daniel**.

(19.) Very early the next morning, the king got up and hurried out to the lions' den. (20.) When he got there, he called out in

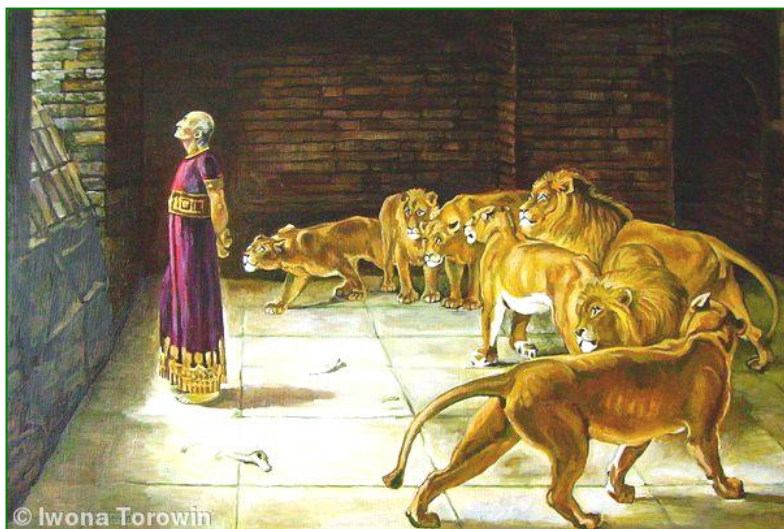
anguish, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you serve so faithfully, able to rescue you from the lions?"

- He couldn't sleep. Might as well go check out the **lion's den**. But the lions had been fasting just like **the king**.
- Darius was so overwrought about having to put **Daniel** in the **den** that his voice was affected (vs. 20). **The king** spoke language of doubt, yet hope (vs. 20).

THE LORD INTERVENED

(21.) Daniel answered, "Long live the king! (22.) My God sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in His sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty."

- **Daniel's** respect toward **the king** is absolutely amazing.
- Some wit said, "The lions could not eat Daniel because he was all backbone." Actually, they didn't even try. They had lion lockjaw. Specifically, **God sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths**.



(23.) The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him, for he had trusted in his God.

- The top adviser for Darius was still alive and available for work!
- It took others to get aged Daniel out of the lion's den. He could not leave on his own.
- The writer of Hebrews mentions this historical event:

By faith these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them. They shut the mouths of lions, quenched the flames of fire, and escaped death by the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight. (Hebrews 11:33-34 NLT)

THE LIONS LEAPED ON THE LAWYERS

(24.) Then the king gave orders to arrest the men who had maliciously accused Daniel. He had them thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. The lions leaped on them and tore them apart before they even hit the floor of the den.

- Children having fun sing out “Turn-about’s fair play.” It’s pay-back time for humiliating **the king**. The new law had been allowed to take its natural course.
- There were changes in government as the accusers went to become breakfast for the lions.
- Several commentators suggest that the inner group of conspirators were sent for breakfast, not the entire 120 officials.
- **Albert Barnes** writes:

It would seem probable that the king had been aware of their wicked designs against Daniel, and had been satisfied that the whole was the result of a conspiracy, but he felt himself under a necessity of allowing the law to take its course on him whom he believed to be really innocent. That had been done.

All that the law could be construed as requiring had been accomplished. It could not be pretended that the law required that any other punishment should be inflicted on Daniel, and the way was now clear to deal with the authors of the malicious plot as they deserved. No one can reasonably doubt the probability of what is here said in regard to the conspirators against Daniel. The king had arbitrary power. He was convinced of their guilt. His wrath had been with difficulty restrained when he understood the nature of the plot against Daniel. Nothing, therefore, was more natural than that he should subject the guilty to the same punishment which they had sought to bring upon the innocent; nothing more natural than that a proud despot, who saw that, by the force of a law which he could not control, he had been made a tool in subjecting the highest officer of the realm, and the best man in it, to peril of death, should, without any delay, wreak his vengeance on those who had thus made use of him to gratify their own malignant passions.

- The death of the wives and children is reported, not condoned. This punishment was common among Persians according to *Keil and Delitzsch* commentary. (Herodotus, iii. 119, Amm. Marcell. xxiii. 6. 81). However, it was forbidden to Jews by the Law of Moses in Deuteronomy.

"Parents must not be put to death for the sins of their children, nor children for the sins of their parents. Those deserving to die must be put to death for their own crimes. (Deuteronomy 24:16 NLT)

- The lions were in good form and hungry. These seasoned, lying lawyers tasted lusciously good to the lions.

(25.) Then King Darius sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world: "Peace and

prosperity to you! (26.) "I decree that everyone throughout my kingdom should tremble with fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, and He will endure forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed, and His rule will never end. (27.) He rescues and saves His people; He performs miraculous signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions."

- **Darius** wants to make some amends both to **God** and **Daniel**, so he issued a world-wide proclamation (vs. 25). The decree declared that Daniel's God was **a living God** and he could be trusted in all situations (vs. 26).
- **Darius** acknowledged that God's kingdom was above his and was permanent. The God of Daniel would reign forever.
- This is just the opposite outcome compared to the goals of the 120 satraps, but they were history anyway.
- **Darius** was deeply impressed with the signs that God had done for **Daniel** (vs. 27). They seemed impossible to him (and they were) so he spoke highly of **God** and his power to save **Daniel**.

(28.) So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

- After one scary night at the zoo, **Daniel** was honored even more than before. He lived in **the reign of Darius** and the years of **Cyrus**.

This chapter ends the narrative portion of Daniel.

Chapter 1, God worked (vs. 9) with determined Daniel to elevate him and his three companions to places of influence in the government of Nebuchadnezzar, their conqueror. To Daniel God gave the ability to understand dreams (vs. 17).

Chapter 2, Daniel used his ability to understand dreams to inform Nebuchadnezzar about his dream and what it meant (vs. 28). This made the king so grateful that he promoted God's men to top-level places in the empire (vs. 48-49).

Chapter 3, the atheists wanted to get rid of Daniel's three friends, but the outcome was the Lord directly saved them while in the fiery furnace and they prospered (vs.30).

Chapter 4, Nebuchadnezzar was living high and mighty because he was the greatest on earth. When the Lord got through with him, he acknowledged the superiority of the God of Heaven and wrote a letter about it to his empire (vs.1).

Chapter 5, Belshazzar, the king of the city of Babylon was celebrating his greatness when he saw a vision. Daniel warned him that this was his final day on the job. The city fell and the next empire took over (vs. 31).

Chapter 6, the atheists had Daniel put in the lion's den, but the Lord directly intervened and he was elevated even higher in the Persian government (vs.28) and the Persian king wrote a letter honoring the Lord to his entire kingdom.

MUSIC BOX

Come, let us sing to the LORD! (Psalms 95:1 NLT)

Verse	Link:
10	<i>Daniel Was a Man of Prayer</i> shorturl.at/jvVYZ
22	<i>Dare to Be a Daniel</i> shorturl.at/mAIMS
23	<i>Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?</i> shorturl.at/eitTZ
23	<i>I Came Here to Stay</i> http://bitly.ws/orbf