



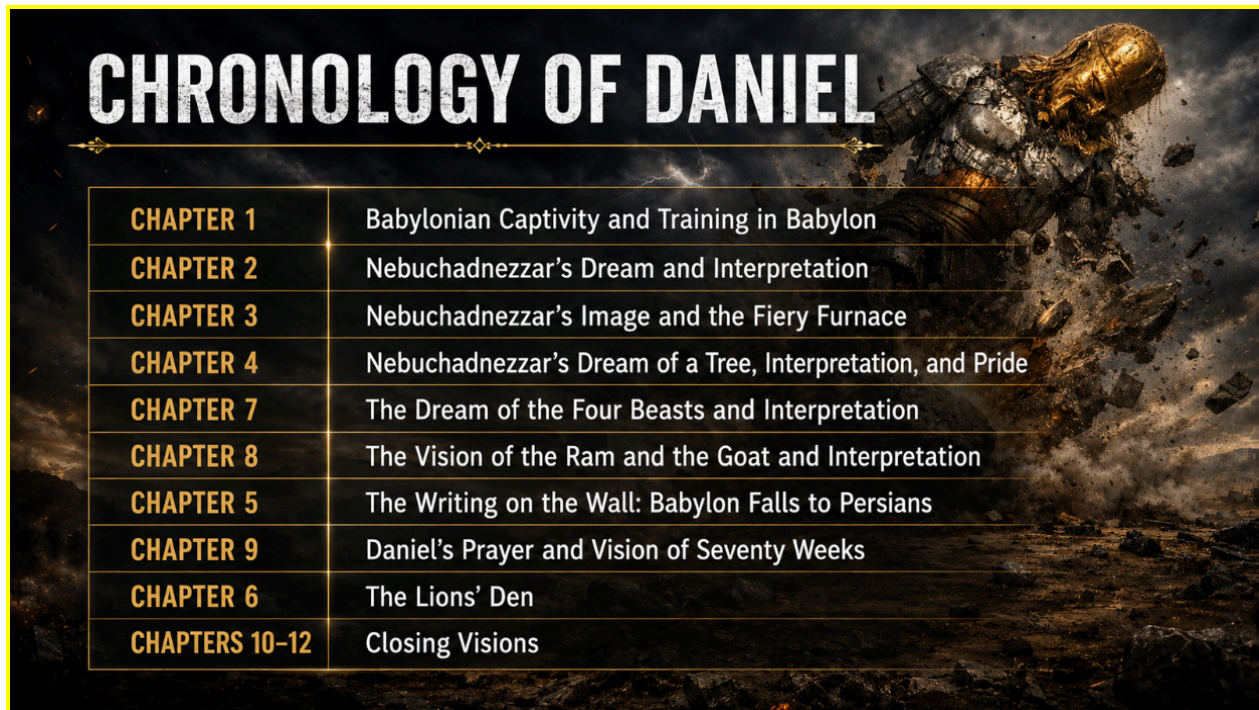
Opening — (Review Intro)

Good Evening Arising Church,

We are on our seventh lesson in the book of Daniel! This means we are halfway through our series! We have covered many themes and lessons that have directed our strength to live faithfully in any cultural context or circumstance. That being said, we are going to begin with a brief mid-book review before we study one of the most popularized stories in all of the Bible—Daniel in the lion's den.

We began with four young Jewish men — not one hero — who were taken captive into Babylon around 605 BC. The fact that Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah are a team is not coincidental. The book is called Daniel—yes, and he is the central figure. But, it is about the greatness of the God of Daniel—the God of Israel, who is still able to produce righteousness and perseverance in all of his people, even in the middle of judgment and exile.

(Do Not Read)



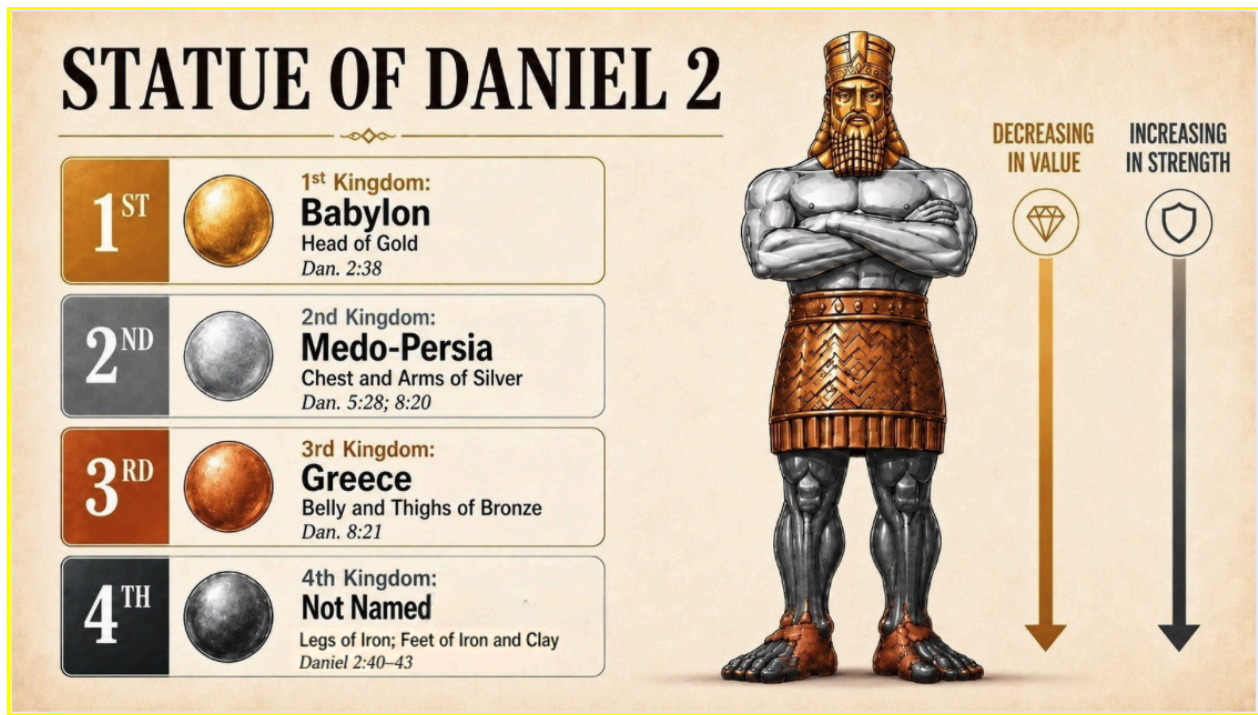
CHRONOLOGY OF DANIEL

CHAPTER 1	Babylonian Captivity and Training in Babylon
CHAPTER 2	Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and Interpretation
CHAPTER 3	Nebuchadnezzar's Image and the Fiery Furnace
CHAPTER 4	Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Tree, Interpretation, and Pride
CHAPTER 7	The Dream of the Four Beasts and Interpretation
CHAPTER 8	The Vision of the Ram and the Goat and Interpretation
CHAPTER 5	The Writing on the Wall: Babylon Falls to Persians
CHAPTER 9	Daniel's Prayer and Vision of Seventy Weeks
CHAPTER 6	The Lions' Den
CHAPTERS 10-12	Closing Visions

From the opening chapter, we established something that shapes everything that follows: **Daniel is arranged thematically, not chronologically.** The visions of chapters 7 and 8 actually occur during the reign of Belshazzar — the king we meet in chapter 5. Whose reign precedes Darius—the King in chapter 6. Further Chapter 9 happens in the 1st year of king Darius, which is likely before our chapter tonight. This means that in tonight's chapter, Daniel had not only interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream about the four kingdoms, he also had received personal revelation in chapter 7 and 8 where Medo-Persia and Greece are identified by name. This also means that Daniel was recently given his prophecy in Daniel 9 about the coming messiah and restoration of Jerusalem! It is also remarkable to consider that this chapter likely takes place after Cyrus made the edict to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem!

On another note, understanding the intentional ordering of these chapters prevents a cascade of interpretive errors and reveals that the strictly prophetic sections of Daniel (chapters 7–12) are meant to be read as a unified whole, not as isolated predictions.

(Do Not Read)



In chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar received a dream that no Gentile king before or after him was given — an expansive view of Gentile world history from Babylon to the end of the age. Four successive empires are named or described, decreasing in divine value while increasing in earthly strength, until a rock not cut by human hands destroys the statue and fills the whole earth. Three of those kingdoms are named in the broader text of Daniel: Babylon (Daniel 2), Medo-Persia (Daniel 5 & 8), and Greece (Daniel 8). The fourth is deliberately unnamed — and that detail alone is deeply significant.

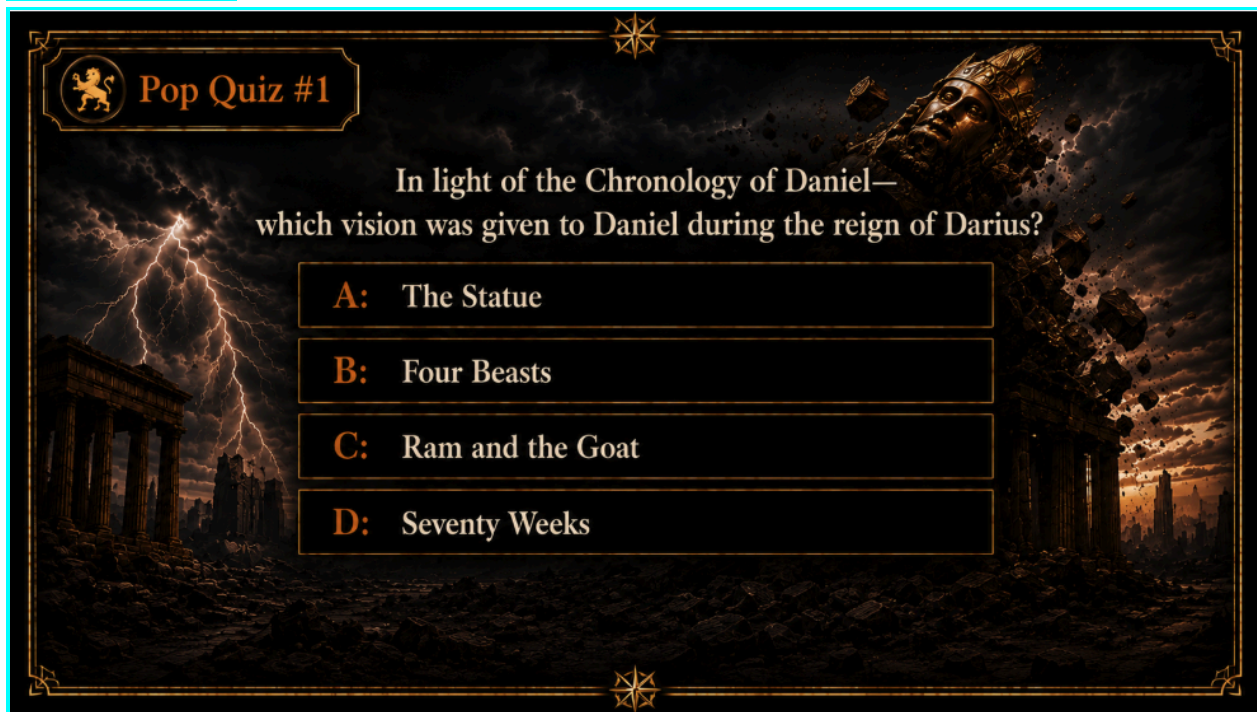
Chapters 3 and 6 introduced us to a recurring pattern: faithful Jews face death rather than compromise, supernatural deliverance follows, and the Gentiles present must reckon with the greatness of Adonai. The pattern repeats itself in Daniel—and throughout history. Daniel and his comrades are an archetype of the Nation of Israel and their continual role throughout world history.

Chapter 4 gave us the most miraculous event in all of Daniel: a transformed Gentile king evangelizing to the whole world! Nebuchadnezzar's seven-year tribulation, his restoration, and his worldwide testimony constitute one of the most authenticated conversion stories in history and, it is co-witnessed by the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Chapter 5 brought us to the end of the Babylonian empire, with Belshazzar's feast, the handwriting on the wall, and the transition to Medo-Persia — all prophesied by Isaiah 150 years before it happened.

What emerges across these six chapters is not only a collection of inspiring stories. It is not merely a prophetic road-map for Biblical and world history—it is a survival manual for all faithful followers of Torah and the integrity required to live faithfully among the nations.

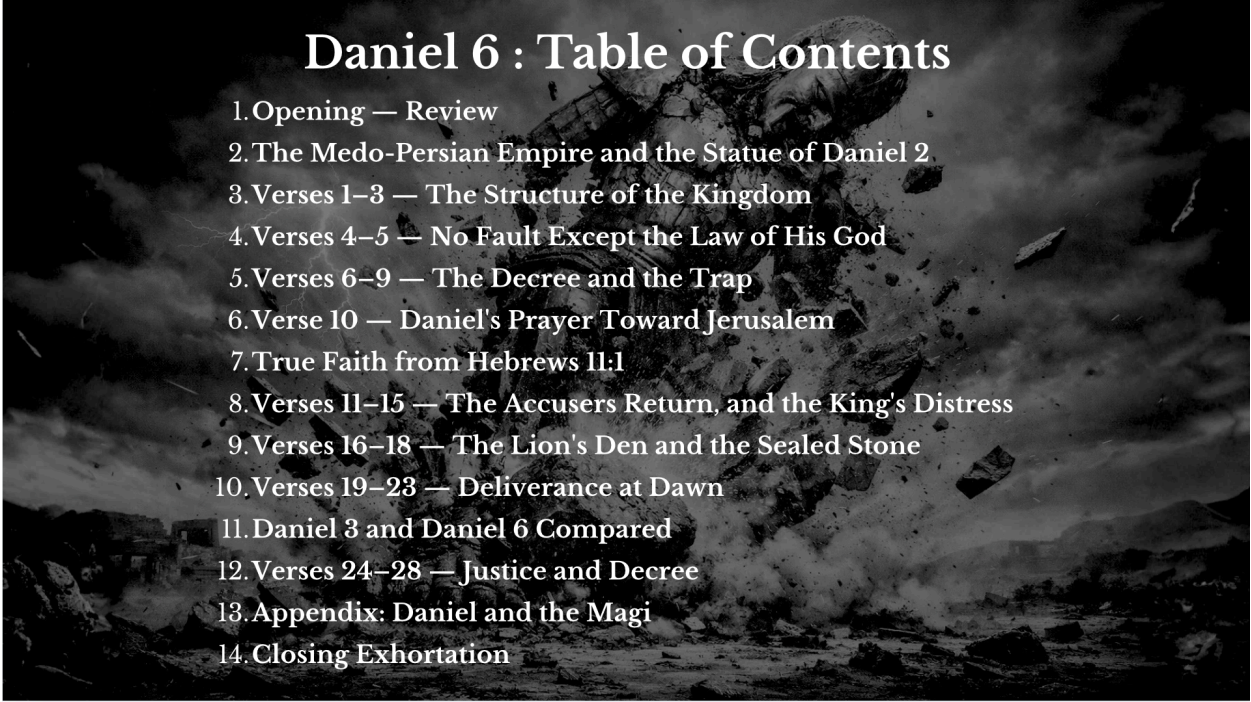
POP QUIZ #1



Pop Quiz #1

In light of the Chronology of Daniel—
which vision was given to Daniel during the reign of Darius?

- A:** The Statue
- B:** Four Beasts
- C:** Ram and the Goat
- D:** Seventy Weeks



Daniel 6 : Table of Contents

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13. Appendix: Daniel and the Magi
14. Closing Exhortation

The Medo-Persian Empire and the Statue of Daniel 2

Tonight we are in the Medo-Persian section of the statue of Daniel 2. The metals remain valuable but are decreasing in value — we move from the head of gold (Nebuchadnezzar) to the chest and arms of silver.

Much controversy surrounds the monarch of tonight's text, so we want to familiarize you with the reign of the Persian kings who were the predominant force in the Medo-Persian alliance.

(DO NOT READ)

KINGS OF PERSIA		
 PERSIAN KING	 DATES (BC)	 BIBLICAL CONNECTIONS
 Cyrus II <i>(The Great)</i>	559–530	Permitted return of the Jews from exile; facilitated rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem (Ezr 1:1–4; 6:3–5); "his anointed" (Is 45:1)
 Cambyses II	530–522	Not mentioned in the Bible
 Darius I Hystaspes	522–486	Haggai and Zechariah preached during the second year of Darius I (~520 BC); temple rebuilt and dedicated (~515 BC; cp. Ezr 6:1–15)
 Xerxes I	486–465	Possibly Ahasuerus of the book of Esther
 Artaxerxes I Longimanus	485–425	Nehemiah, cupbearer to Artaxerxes; came to Judah (~444 BC; cp. Neh 2:1); traditional date of Ezra's mission in the seventh year of his reign (~458 BC; cp. Ezr 7:7)
 Xerxes II	~423	Not mentioned in the Bible
 Darius II Nothus	423–404	Not mentioned in the Bible; Jews in Egypt appealed to Samaria and Jerusalem for help in rebuilding their temple (~about 407 BC.
 Artaxerxes II Mnemon	404–359/8	Some scholars place Ezra's mission in the seventh year of Artaxerxes II, ~about 398 BC.
 Artaxerxes III Ochus	359/8–338/7	Not mentioned in the Bible
 Arses	338/7–336	Not mentioned in the Bible
 Darius III Codomannus	336–330	Alexander subdues the Levant; Tyre and Gaza besieged, ~332 BC; conquest of Egypt by Alexander, ~332 BC.

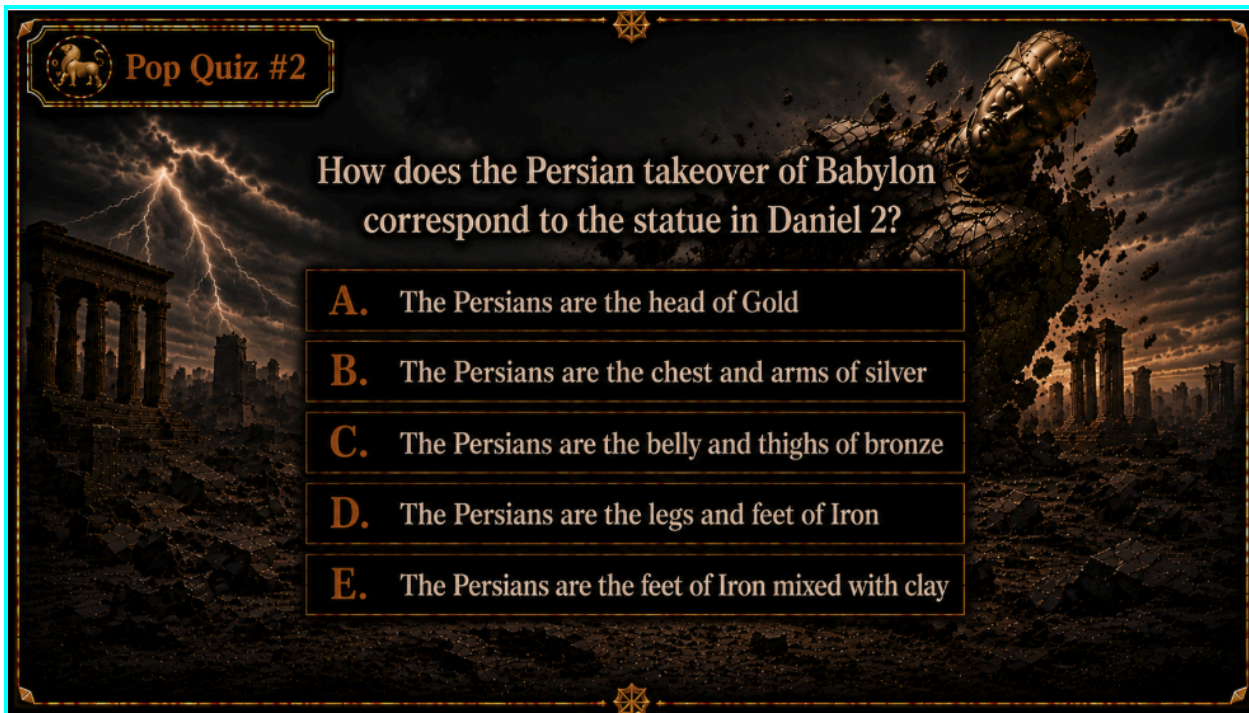
Carl R. Anderson, "Ezra," in CSB Study Bible: Notes, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 699.

This slide starts with Cyrus the Great, his son Cambyses, Darius Hystaspes, Xerxes (called Ahasuerus in the King James), Artaxerxes Longimanus, Xerxes II, Darius II, Artaxerxes II, Artaxerxes III, and Darius III. Out of these eleven Persian kings, only three are clearly named in Scripture. This leads to significant debate, even among competent scholars, over which king was in power during any given biblical event. This fact is compounded by the possibility that a particular ruler may also not yet be known to secular historians and archeologists. The most competent biblical scholars acknowledge that "Darius the Mede" is not readily identifiable with any known figure in secular history.

Simply put, who do you not see on this slide?
Darius the Mede.

That being said, there is some work to do to identify who or where Darius the Mede is on this slide.

Pop Quiz #2



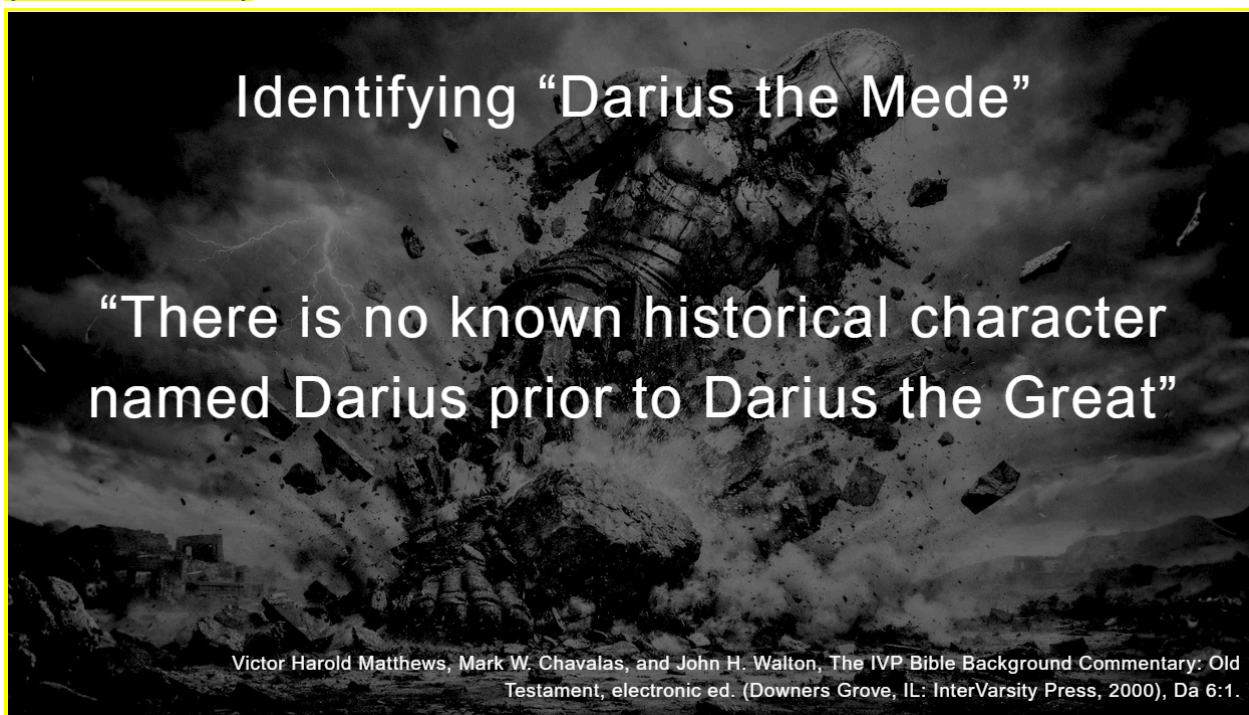
Pop Quiz #2

How does the Persian takeover of Babylon correspond to the statue in Daniel 2?

- A.** The Persians are the head of Gold
- B.** The Persians are the chest and arms of silver
- C.** The Persians are the belly and thighs of bronze
- D.** The Persians are the legs and feet of Iron
- E.** The Persians are the feet of Iron mixed with clay

Identifying Darius the Mede

(Do Not Read)



Identifying “Darius the Mede”

“There is no known historical character named Darius prior to Darius the Great”

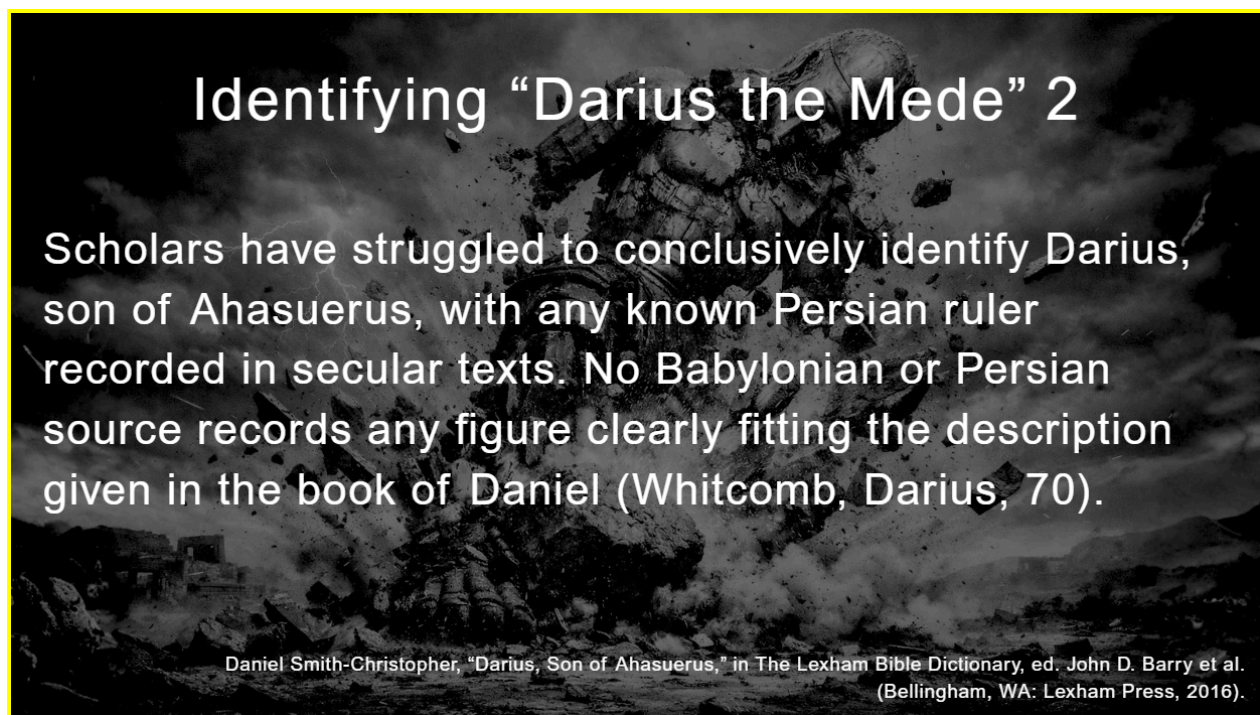
Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Da 6:1.

The *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, commenting on Daniel 6:1, notes that there is no known historical figure named Darius prior to Darius the Great — who comes too late in history to fit Daniel 6's timeline.

This is typical of biblical commentators and usually prompts them to produce theories that attempt an association with a known figure. They don't know who Darius the Mede is, so they try to say that he must be one of the guys that we already know about through secular historical evidences.

Here is another sample of the claims that are out there:

(DO NOT READ)



Identifying "Darius the Mede" 2

Scholars have struggled to conclusively identify Darius, son of Ahasuerus, with any known Persian ruler recorded in secular texts. No Babylonian or Persian source records any figure clearly fitting the description given in the book of Daniel (Whitcomb, Darius, 70).

Daniel Smith-Christopher, "Darius, Son of Ahasuerus," in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, ed. John D. Barry et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

"Scholars have struggled to conclusively identify Darius, son of Ahasuerus, with any known Persian ruler recorded in secular texts. No Babylonian or Persian source records any figure clearly fitting the description given in the book of Daniel."

Volumes of scholarly works exist attempting to justify various hypotheses that attempt to reconcile secular history with "Darius the Mede". All such

theories can be compelling, but all are ultimately undermined by contradictory evidence or unlikely scenarios.

For instance, one proposal identifies Darius the Mede with Gubaru, the general who took the city for Cyrus. But history records that Gubaru died twenty-five days later, which would require an implausible number of events in Daniel (including Daniel's rise to the top of the kingdom as one of three governors) to have occurred within those twenty-five days. It does not work, no matter how confidently proposed.

So rather than spend time evaluating the various hypotheses of men, which ultimately are proven wrong time and time again, it is better to focus on what is discernible from the biblical text itself!

Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe summarize our position quite well:

(DO NOT READ)

Identifying “Darius the Mede”

"Like the historical record of Belshazzar, which modern scholars questioned until archaeological evidence vindicated Daniel's accuracy, Daniel has again recorded the existence of a man that other ancient historical documents omit. Some modern scholars claim that the author of Daniel mistakenly thought that the Medes conquered Babylon instead of the Persians. They claim that this author then confused Darius I, king of Persia (521-486 B.C.) with the conqueror of Babylon and identified this figure as Darius the Mede. However, there is no reason to assume that the Book of Daniel is in error. Darius the Mede is a different person from Darius I of Persia. Darius the Mede was a subordinate to Cyrus the Great... The tendency to deny the historical accuracy of Daniel simply because there is currently no corroborating historical information stems from the anti-supernatural bias of modern scholarship. Daniel's historical record has proven to be a reliable source of information."

(from The Big Book of Bible Difficulties, © 1992 by Norman L. Geisler and Thomas A. Howe. All rights reserved.)

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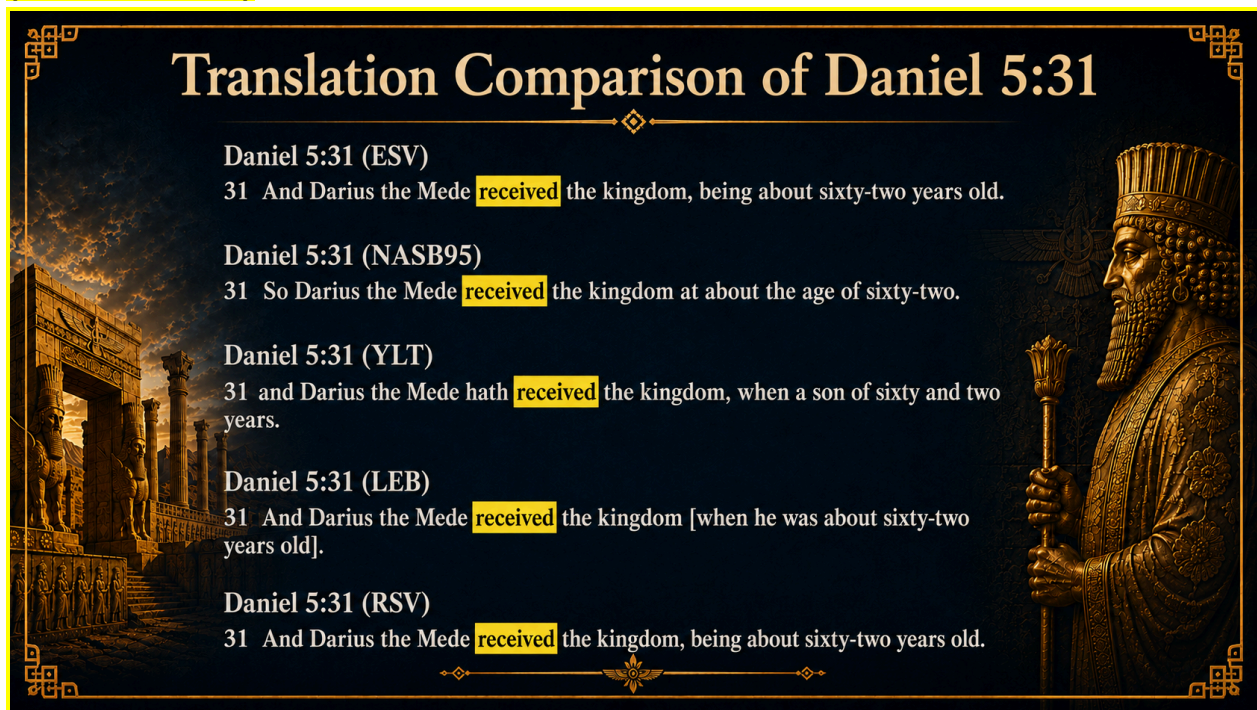
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Daniel's historical record has proven to be a reliable source of information."

Daniel's historical record has repeatedly proven reliable; we are simply waiting for secular historians to catch up to that fact.

(Do Not Read)



Translation Comparison of Daniel 5:31

Daniel 5:31 (ESV)
31 And Darius the Mede **received** the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

Daniel 5:31 (NASB95)
31 So Darius the Mede **received** the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two.

Daniel 5:31 (YLT)
31 and Darius the Mede hath **received** the kingdom, when a son of sixty and two years.

Daniel 5:31 (LEB)
31 And Darius the Mede **received** the kingdom [when he was about sixty-two years old].

Daniel 5:31 (RSV)
31 And Darius the Mede **received** the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

The NIV's dynamic translation is misleading in Daniel 5:31, using the words "took over," which implies conquest by force. The ESV, NASB, Young's Literal Translation, LEB, and RSV all agree instead on the word *received*:

- **Daniel 5:31 (ESV)** "And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old."

Perhaps, in some sense, Darius the Mede received the kingdom from God — but it seems more natural to read this as receiving it from another monarch. This monarch was surely not Belshazzar, since Belshazzar did not give the kingdom; it was taken from him. He died the very night Babylon was overrun — assassinated. It is unlikely his last act was a gift to Darius the Mede.

The next occurrence:

- **Daniel 6:28 (NIV, Anglicised)** "So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian reigned at the same time. Since history records Cyrus as the Persian king who conquered Babylon, it is natural to conclude that Cyrus gave the kingdom of Babylon to Darius the Mede, who is said to have "received" it.

(Read Slide)



This fits the historical pattern of the Persians promoting Medes to positions of power to solidify their joint rule and alliance.

The Medes and Persians were related but distinct Iranian peoples. The Medes became powerful first. Cyrus the Persian then defeated the Median king Astyages around 550 BC—but he did not destroy or discard the Medes. He incorporated their nobles, officials, soldiers, institutions, and territory into his new empire. Persia became first; Media remained second. So it was not exactly an equal merger of two kingdoms, but neither was Media treated like an ordinary conquered nation. It became a Persian-led empire with a powerful Median element.

The next occurrence:

- **Daniel 9:1 (NIV, Anglicised)** "In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom—"

This verse is explicit: Darius the Mede was *made ruler* of Babylon. The best way to view him is as a subordinate of Cyrus the Persian. "Darius" could be an honorific title rather than a proper name, much as "Caesar" became a title for many Roman emperors after originating as one man's name — there are in fact four or five Persian kings referred to as Darius — but it is unnecessary to try to corroborate this particular Darius with some other known figure. Whoever he was: he was made ruler of Babylon, he was a subordinate of Cyrus, and he was a Mede by descent, not a Persian. Just as with the controversy once surrounding Belshazzar, archaeology will undoubtedly catch up to the inspired Word. There will be ammunition in the future to correct the scholarship of our time when an archaeologist digs up a reference to what Daniel has already told us. It shouldn't trouble us that no such record has yet surfaced — for centuries people denied the existence of Belshazzar too, until inscriptions bearing his name were found. We should avoid forcing square pegs into round holes; doing so ruins theology, and it has certainly ruined people's eschatology. Perhaps we could simply show a little more faith in the written Word.

Pop Quiz #3



Pop Quiz #3

What is the likely identity of Darius the Mede?

- A.** The king who reigned before Cyrus
- B.** The king who reigned after Cyrus
- C.** A regional king who reigned under Cyrus
- D.** A national king who reigned over Cyrus

Before we begin our exposition, the question could be asked—can anything *new* be learned from this story? After all, most people, whether in the faith or not, know of this story and it has been retold hundreds of times in different formats. The Talmud gives us the answer:

(Do Not Read)

“

One who repeats what they have learned one hundred times cannot be compared to one who repeats it a hundred and one times.

BABYLONIAN TALMUD

Chagigah 9b

Arising Church · Foundations: The Book of Daniel

"One who repeats what they have learned one hundred times cannot be compared to one who repeats it a hundred and one times."

The Word of God is living and active and each reading has the opportunity to radically transform any man or woman more into the image of Christ!

Pray and Read

(Do Not Read)

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Let's begin with section 4.

Verses 1-3: The Structure of the Kingdom

1 It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, **2** with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. **3** Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.

Let's begin by breaking down the government structure these verses lay out.

(Do Not Read)

DANIEL 6:1–3

The Chain of Command

1

Cyrus the Persian

Emperor of the Persian Empire

2

Darius the Mede

Appointed king over Babylon

3

Three Administrators

One of whom was Daniel

4

120 Satraps

Set over the whole kingdom

Arising Church · Foundations: The Book of Daniel

The Medo-Persian government's structure is straightforward: Cyrus the Persian at the top, Darius the Mede reigning under him, three administrators beneath Darius (Daniel among them), and 120 satraps beneath the administrators. This is the arrangement Scripture describes for the Medo-Persian dominion over Babylon.

One of the most admirable things about Daniel is that he cannot be placed into a position in which he is at a disadvantage — he never views himself as a victim and thus unable to be of service. Despite the change of kingdoms, he is not victimized by it. Daniel represents the best of Israel — the kind of Israel Adonai has always intended in His creation of the nation. Daniel, Mishael, Azariah, and Hananiah cling to the Law of God and rise to His purposes in any and every situation. This pattern — the rise of faithful Jews in the midst of judgment and difficulty — permeates Scripture in figures like Joseph, David, Esther and Mordecai, and ultimately Yeshua Himself.

- **Genesis 41:41–45 (NIV)**

"So Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.' Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck... 'I am Pharaoh, but without your word no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt.'"

In the *Torah* (Law), Joseph's story begins in betrayal and slavery, yet at every turn his obedience to the God of Israel becomes the very thing that elevates him. No scheme against him — not his brothers' jealousy, not Potiphar's wife, not years spent forgotten in prison — succeeds in holding him down. His life anticipates both the Messiah and the nation of Israel as a whole.

- **2 Samuel 7:8–11 (NIV, Anglicised)**

"Now then, tell my servant David, "This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel..."

In the *Nevi'im* (Prophets), David faces scorn from his own brothers and open hostility from Gentile enemies, yet the throne finds him regardless. Goliath, Saul's jealousy, betrayal, exile — none of it is able to derail what God has already determined for him.

- **Esther 8:1–2 (NIV, Anglicised)**

"That same day King Xerxes gave Queen Esther the estate of Haman, the enemy of the Jews... The king took off his signet ring, which he had reclaimed from Haman, and presented it to Mordecai. And Esther appointed him over Haman's estate."

In the *Ketuvim* (Writings), Esther and Mordecai experience slander, danger, and outright plots against their lives, and still the story ends with them elevated to the very seats of power once held by their accusers. Haman's own gallows becomes the clearest picture of how his plans against them fall on his own head (or neck).

- **Matthew 21:42–44 (NIV)**

"Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures: "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes"? Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.'"

Jesus is Savior of the world, yet that title never erases the fact that He is also a faithful man of Israel. The stone imagery cuts both ways — whether someone falls on Him in rejection or He falls on someone in judgment, the outcome is the same: the enemies of God are shattered, precisely as Daniel 2 foretold for the Gentile kingdoms. Jesus is Messiah, but He is equally King of Israel, the one who will secure His people's destiny — inheriting God's Kingdom on earth and displacing every Gentile power that stood against it.

- **Revelation 12:10 (NIV, Anglicised)**

"Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: 'Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.'"

Israel has faced hostility from both earthly and spiritual powers from the moment Adonai set them apart as His own, and still they are destined to rise under His hand — a pattern tied directly to obedience to Torah. That destiny belongs to Israel and to everyone grafted into their calling, and no measure of Gentile resistance can overturn it. Daniel makes the point as clearly as any book in Scripture: it made no difference whether the ruler was Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, or Darius the Mede — obedient Jews kept rising, because they were carrying out the purposes of God.

- **Philippians 2:5–11 (NIV)**

"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

These promises belong to Israel first and to the Gentiles who are later grafted in. Paul calls both to adopt the same posture as Christ — a posture already modeled by Joseph, David, Esther, and Mordecai. The passage centers on Jesus and His exaltation, but it equally describes Israel's own trajectory as they follow Messiah's footsteps. No circumstance can permanently hold Israel down when they walk in obedience to Torah — and that rise into the Kingdom of God is exactly the inheritance Gentile believers have been welcomed into.

Pop Quiz #4



Pop Quiz #4

Put these four different leaders
in in their proper order of authority:
Darius, Satrap, Cyrus, Administrator

A. Darius, Satrap, Cyrus, Administrator

B. Cyrus, Administrator, Satrap, Darius

C. Darius, Cyrus, Satrap, Administrator

D. Cyrus, Darius, Administrator, Satrap

Verses 4–5 — No Fault Except the Law of His God

4 At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. **5** Finally these men said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.”

We want to focus in on the fact that the only place that these men could find to attack Daniel was the fact that he lived as an Israelite, faithful to the Law of God—this caused him to be distinct in his behavior. Gentiles can be adopted into the family without the cultural marker of circumcision or following Kosher laws, but not without the distinctness that the Word of God brings to all who are trying to live a faithful life unto God.

This is a lesson from Daniel we would be wise to take hold of as a conviction in our hearts. If there must be a basis for being attacked, let it be

because of how faithfully you serve the God of Israel. Not corruption, negligence, or because you were a fool. Daniel's distinction was more than simply ethnic; it was rooted in his obedience to the Law of God as a part of the Family of Israel.

With that in mind let's move to Psalm 119 as we begin to unpack this.

- **Psalm 119:92 (CJB)**

92

If your *Torah* had not been my delight,
I would have perished in my distress.

The Law of God is the only real hope for deliverance. Political maneuvering, weapons, or any other means of man's strength, are not the hope of true believers. The Law of God is where our hope of deliverance is. If you hold onto the Law, you are able to make it through any trouble or difficulty that comes your way.

- **Psalm 119:143–144 (NIV1984)**

143 Trouble and distress have come upon me,
but your commands are my delight.

144 Your statutes are forever right;
give me understanding that I may live.

Trouble and distress are the immediate destiny for all faithful men, but the Law is what gives us understanding and life — first for the Jew, and second for us grafted-in Gentiles.

Look at Proverbs 6:20

- **Proverbs 6:20–23 (NIV1984)**

20 My son, keep your father's commands
and do not forsake your mother's teaching.

21 Bind them upon your heart forever;
fasten them around your neck.

22 When you walk, they will guide you;
when you sleep, they will watch over you;
when you awake, they will speak to you.
23 For these commands are a lamp,
this teaching is a light,
and the corrections of discipline
are the way to life,

These are Jewish fathers and mothers speaking to their Jewish children — the same encouragement Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah's own families would likely have impressed on them. These men surely knew what it was to experience the scripture speaking to them, acting as a lamp to guide them as they walked in a gentile nation.

The primary lesson learned from the Jewish people, including Daniel, is that the Law itself is the way to life and is what makes you stand, even in the midst of persecution.

Consider what the Apostle Paul states in Romans 15:

- **Romans 15:3–4 (NIV1984)**

3 For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: “**The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.**” 4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

When the Law of God causes trouble and hardship, people are treating you as they would treat God if they could. If following the Law is your only real vulnerability, you can be confident of divine intervention. One hundred and twenty rivals could find no fault in Daniel except in regard with how well he kept the Law of God.

A challenge for you all, when you are asked if you are a Christian—a better response might be to ask that person *"That's a better question for you to answer about me, because the answer is based on the behavior that you see demonstrated in my actions!"*

Check out what the Apostle Peter has to say about this very topic:

- **1 Peter 4:12–16 (NIV1984)**

12 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.

13 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. **14** If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. **15** If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. **16** However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

It's clear that Peter understood exactly this principle Daniel embodies in our studies — we can be thankful for him as an older Jewish brother, teaching us how to inherit the destiny of Israel, the Kingdom of God on earth.

The point of all those scriptures we just walked you through as it relates to our chapter tonight is this: The Law of God is the pathway to life, it is the answer to the hardship.

Verses 6–9 — The Decree and the Trap.

6 So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said: “O King Darius, live forever! **7** The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you,

O king, shall be thrown into the lions' den. 8 Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” 9 So King Darius put the decree in writing.

We love the inerrancy of Scripture: it can record a lie while exposing it for what it is. What these men said was clearly false — Daniel was an administrator, one-third of the highest-ranking tier of government, and he certainly did not agree. This is a pit of lies, deceiving the king by presenting a false unity. Daniel will be fine, but it is worth imagining what might have happened had these accusers actually gathered their two or three witnesses properly before presenting their case.

- **Proverbs 26:26–27 (ESV)**

26 though his hatred be covered with deception,
his wickedness will be exposed in the assembly.

27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it,
and a stone will come back on him who starts it rolling.

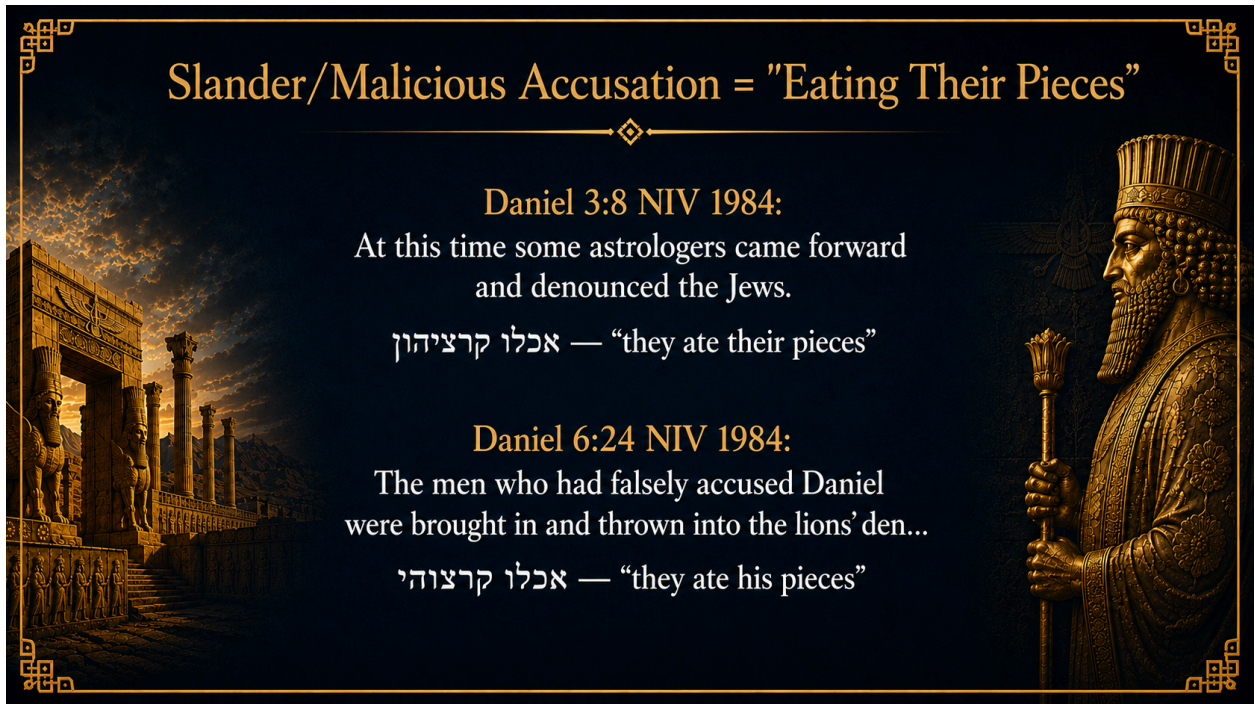
A pit dug for the faithful ends up being a trap for those who dug it. The only real refuge a man has is to live in faithful obedience to the Law of God — when this is your position, a pit dug for you becomes a trap for your adversary. These men concealed their motives from the king, but in the end they will fall into the very pit dug for Daniel.

Leveraging the king carries consequences — true of earthly kings, and how much more true of the King of kings. We must be careful of our motives when we come before the True King, and even more careful in how we use His Word toward one another. The Word is not a tool to leverage a desired outcome; it is a sword meant to pierce our own hearts and drive out the dung within. This is the lesson of Hebrews 4, in its reference to Ehud and Eglon (Judges) and it definitely was true for King Belshazar in Daniel 5.

- **Proverbs 24:21–22 (NIV)**

21 Fear the LORD and the king, my son,
and do not join with rebellious officials,
22 for those two will send sudden destruction on them,
and who knows what calamities they can bring?

It is offensive to ignore the king's word — and God's Word. But the only thing more offensive than ignoring the Word is misusing it: twisting it to serve personal motives, wants, or needs. That will get you eaten by a lion — literally, in Daniel 6, and metaphorically in life. Charismatic believers especially should beware of using God's Word as a lever to justify what they already want.



Slander/Malicious Accusation = "Eating Their Pieces"

Daniel 3:8 NIV 1984:
At this time some astrologers came forward
and denounced the Jews.
אכלו קרציהון — "they ate their pieces"

Daniel 6:24 NIV 1984:
The men who had falsely accused Daniel
were brought in and thrown into the lions' den...
אכלו קרצוהי — "they ate his pieces"

The Aramaic expression for malicious accusation or slander literally means "to eat someone's pieces." These men used their words like teeth. They tried to tear Daniel apart through accusation, manipulation and the misuse of the king's law. But the men who tried to devour Daniel with their mouths will receive in themselves the fate they sought for him.

Be careful how you use the Word. The devil does not always tempt people to ignore authority; sometimes he tempts them to weaponize and misuse authority. These officials quoted the law accurately, but they used these words maliciously. You can quote the right words with the wrong heart. You can use Scripture, prophecy or spiritual authority—not to reveal God’s will, but to justify what you already want. In Daniel’s language, that is using your words to eat someone alive.

- **Proverbs 22:11 (NIV)**

11 One who loves a pure heart and who speaks with grace
will have the king for a friend.

A heart purified by the Word of God can speak with grace, and this produces friendship with the King. On a practical and historical note regarding "the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed" — a king's authority is diminished whenever he must change his mind. To alter a written law means the king got it wrong the first time, or is getting it wrong the second time; either way, his authority suffers. Our God never has to repeal a law. He sees the end from the beginning and calls it with complete accuracy.

- **Psalms 2:1–12 (NIV)**

1 Why do the nations conspire
and the peoples plot in vain?
2 The kings of the earth rise up
and the rulers band together
against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,
3 “Let us break their chains
and throw off their shackles.”

4 The One enthroned in heaven laughs;
the Lord scoffs at them.
5 He rebukes them in his anger
and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,

6 “I have installed my king
on Zion, my holy mountain.”

7 I will proclaim the LORD’s **decree**:

He said to me, “You are my son;
today I have become your father.

8 Ask me,
and I will make the nations your inheritance,
the ends of the earth your possession.

9 You will break them with a rod of iron;
you will dash them to pieces like pottery.”

10 Therefore, you kings, be wise;
be warned, you rulers of the earth.

11 Serve the LORD with fear
and celebrate his rule with trembling.

12 Kiss his son, or he will be angry
and your way will lead to your destruction,
for his wrath can flare up in a moment.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Adonai has written the decree that a Jewish King will rule the world. Conspiring Gentile kings cannot change His mind and cannot prevent it — it has been written, and it will not be repealed. Daniel serves as an excellent example of a faithful Jew whom no amount of conspiracy could stop from rising to a position of power.

- **Psalm 4:1–8 (NIV)**

1 Answer me when I call to you,
my righteous God.
Give me relief from my distress;
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

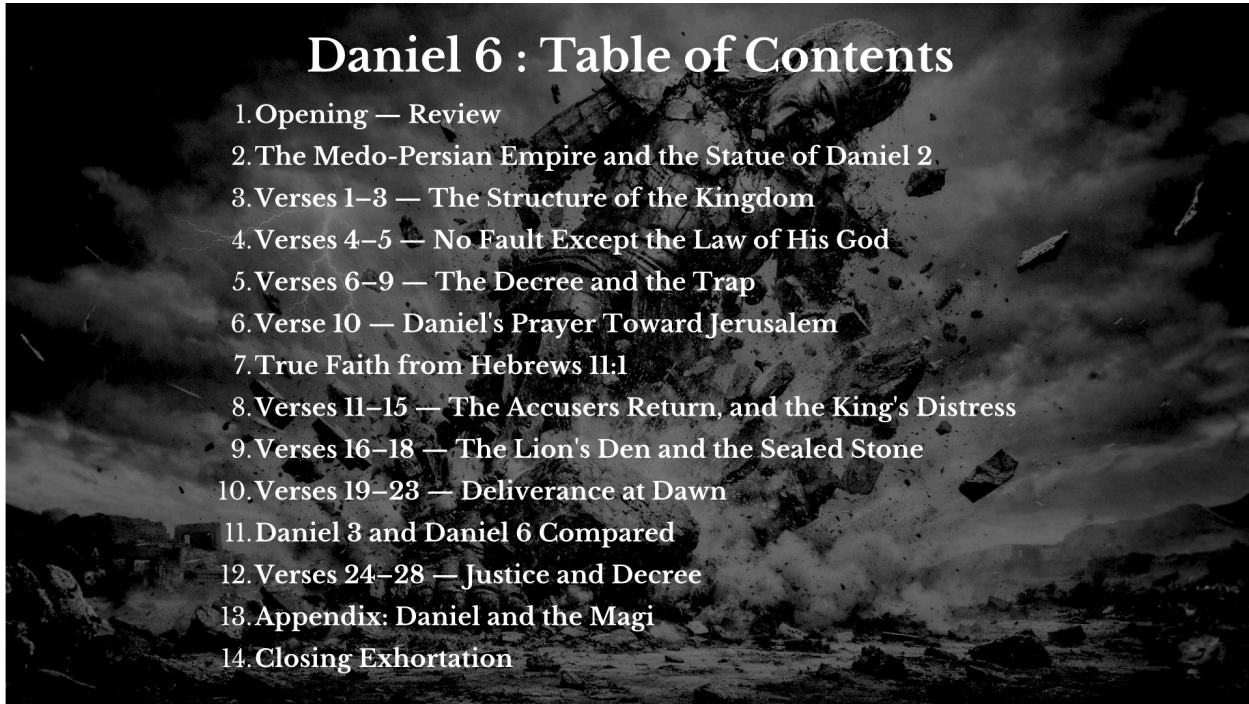
- 2 How long will you people turn my glory into shame?
How long will you love delusions and seek false gods?
- 3 Know that the LORD has set apart his faithful servant for himself;
the LORD hears when I call to him.
- 4 Tremble and do not sin;
when you are on your beds,
search your hearts and be silent.
- 5 Offer the sacrifices of the righteous
and trust in the LORD.
- 6 Many, LORD, are asking, "Who will bring us prosperity?"
Let the light of your face shine on us.
- 7 Fill my heart with joy
when their grain and new wine abound.
- 8 In peace I will lie down and sleep,
for you alone, LORD,
make me dwell in safety.

As a church, we will learn to make right sacrifices, displace despair, and be filled with shalom even when facing our own "lions' dens."

- **Proverbs 4:25–27 (NIV)**

- 25 Let your eyes look straight ahead;
fix your gaze directly before you.
- 26 Give careful thought to the paths for your feet
and be steadfast in all your ways.
- 27 Do not turn to the right or the left;
keep your foot from evil.

Vacillating believers are not believers at all. We press into the maturity displayed in the life of a faithful Jew named Daniel — knowing what God requires and never renegotiating it.



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Now let's move on to section seven.

Verse 10 — Daniel's Prayer Toward Jerusalem

"Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before."

Daniel's immediate reaction to the decree is to go before the Lord in prayer. Notice too that Daniel's windows were already, intentionally, facing Jerusalem — a city that at this time is already destroyed. As the third-highest-ranking man in the land, he likely could have chosen any residence; he chose this one. These convictions were set as Daniel's practice *before* this particular difficulty ever arose. This practice of praying towards Jerusalem is not exclusive to him. Let's go to the prophets.

- 1 Kings 8:27–30 (NIV)

"But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built! Yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day. May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, "My Name shall be there," so that you will hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place. Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive."

This is Solomon's dedicatory prayer. It opens with the question "Will God really dwell on earth?" and answer is "Yes!" — prayer for a millennia has been directed toward the one geographical place on earth where God's Name dwelt, not merely toward the heavens or at your feet. Surveying this chapter, this language of praying "toward" occurs at least six times. Verse 48 extends it further:

- **1 Kings 8:48 (NIV)**

"...and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their enemies who took them captive, and pray to you toward the land you gave their fathers, toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name..."

The nation of Israel was instructed to pray toward the land, toward the city, and toward the temple bearing God's Name — three times a day . This is exactly what Daniel is doing, generations after Solomon first interceded for it. Daniel exercised believing faith in the realities the Word of God declared, even though at this moment the land was under occupation, the city destroyed, and the temple a pile of rubble. None of these circumstances affected Daniel's trust in what the Word had already declared true. The good news for us Gentiles reading this in another cultural setting is found in verse 41.

- **1 Kings 8:41–43a (NIV)**

⁴¹ “As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your name—⁴² for they will hear of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm—when they come and pray toward this temple, ⁴³ then hear from heaven, your dwelling place.

Even Gentiles born thousands of years later across the globe are able to pray towards Jerusalem and hear from heaven. Before we move on, we want to read a commentary on this practice that gives even more historical insight:

(Do Not Read)

DANIEL 6:11 · COMMENTARY

Three Times of Prayer

Personal prayers could be offered at any time, but the need for regular congregational worship led to the development of three specific times for prayer—morning and afternoon, to correspond with the sacrificial services, and then in the evening. Although not official Jewish law until the rabbinic period, this practice had biblical antecedents. The Psalmist wrote, "As for me, I call to God, and the Lord will deliver me. Evening, morning, and noon I complain and moan, and He hears my voice" (Ps. 55:17–18); and of Daniel it is written, "And three times a day he knelt down, prayed, and made confession to his God" (Dan. 6:11). This same verse indicates that Daniel prayed facing Jerusalem. Even though one could pray anywhere, holy places were preferred. When the Temple was built, it became the central site of Jewish worship; those who could not be present there turned toward Jerusalem while praying. The centrality of the Temple was eventually supplanted by the synagogue, which developed during the Babylonian exile as a place of assembly but later became the site of prayer and study. Nevertheless, synagogues are still built so that the worshiper faces Jerusalem. Congregational prayer in a minyan (a quorum of 10) was strongly encouraged, though private prayer was never eliminated.

Ronald L. Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions* (2004), 351–352
Arising Church · Foundations: The Book of Daniel

"Personal prayers could be offered at any time, but the need for regular congregational worship led to the development of three specific times for prayer—morning and afternoon, to correspond with the sacrificial services, and then in the evening. Although not official Jewish law until

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It's a powerful example of faithfulness to hear that Synagogue's today are arranged so prayers are offered towards Jerusalem. That is faithfulness over time. Most Christians have a hard time praying consistently or at all—our older brother sets an example to follow.

POP QUIZ #5

Question: If you wanted to pray facing Jerusalem in our location, which direction would you orient yourself?

1. West
2. East
3. South
4. North
5. Up - facing the heavens, the eternal dwelling of God, his angels and grandma.

ANSWER: B

True Faith from Hebrews 11:1

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In light of the incredible amount of spiritual courage it took for Daniel to open his windows towards Jerusalem—it is appropriate to go to a Writings of the Newer Testament for a moment to discuss a well known passage that will illuminate this story even more.

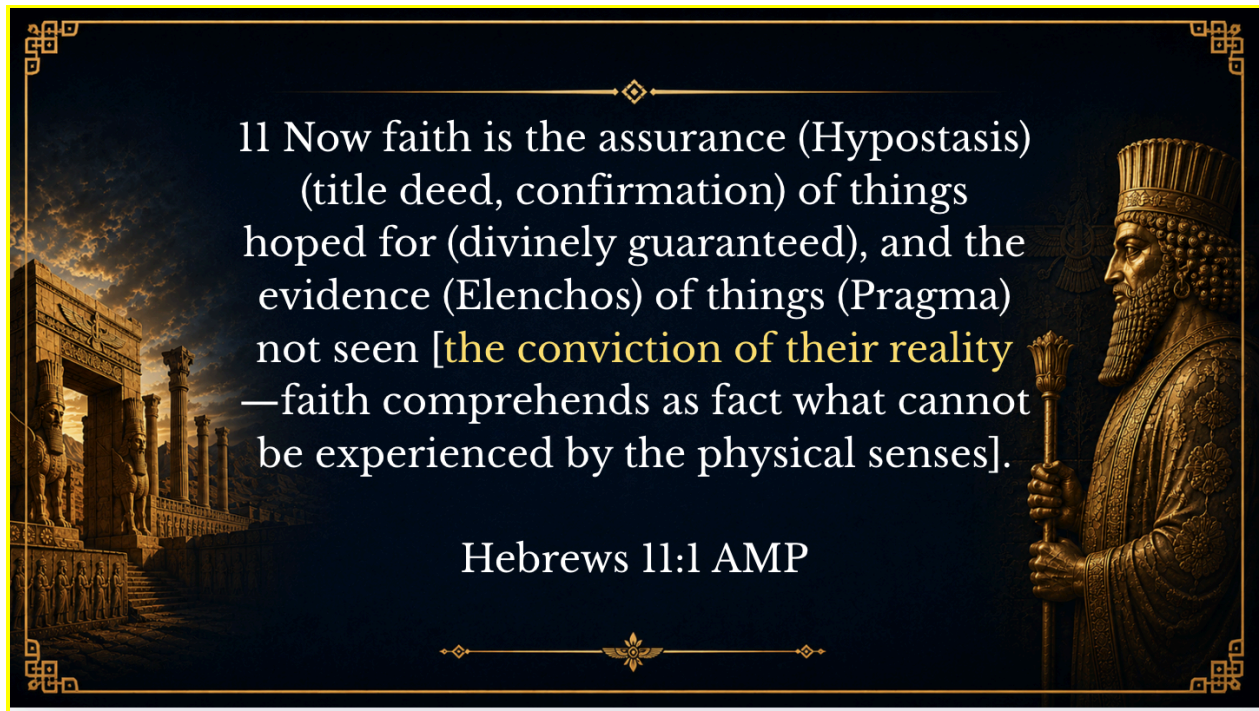
- **Hebrews 11:1–3 (ESV)**

11 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² For by it the people of old received their commendation. ³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

The Writer of Hebrews begins with a definition of faith, and then goes on to list a plethora of faithful men and women who lived *by faith*, such as Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Sarah and many more. Christians everywhere know Hebrews 11:1, and when asked what faith is they most certainly quote it. Nevertheless, when asked to simply explain this passage, most might have

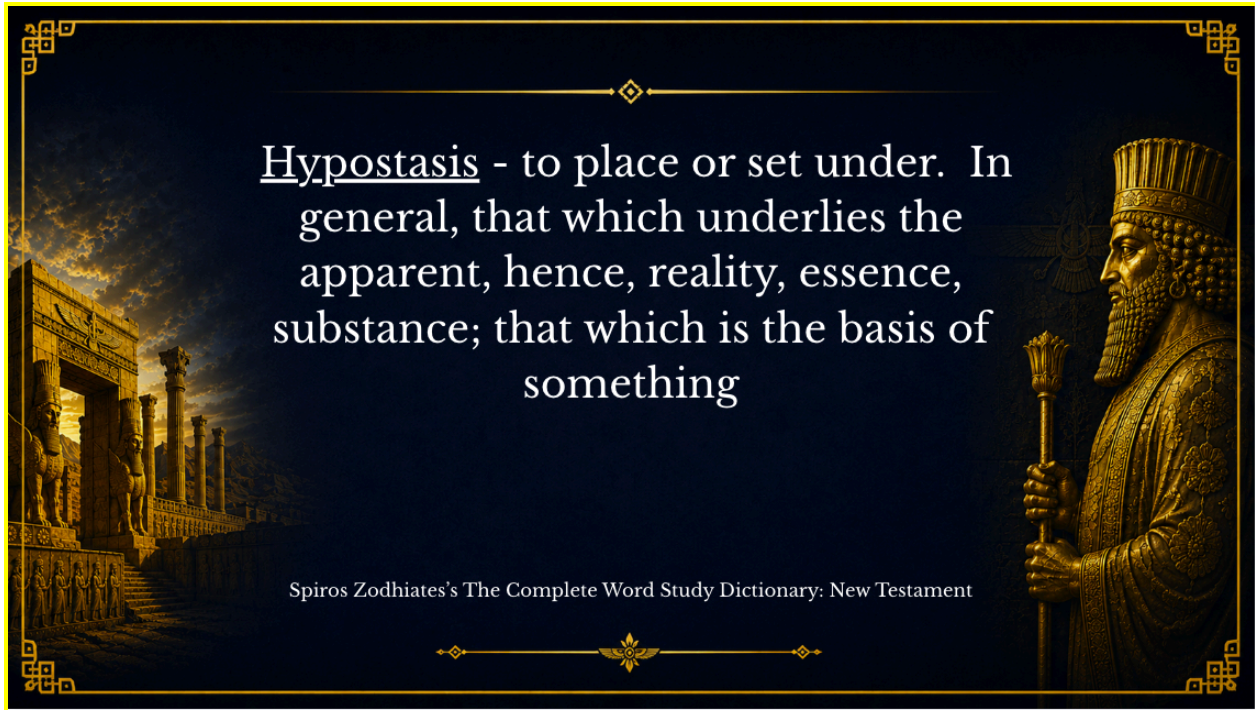
a difficult time! We are going to consult the Amplified Bible and some study resources to help us—because this verse is certainly what Daniel is walking out in this chapter.

READ SLIDE



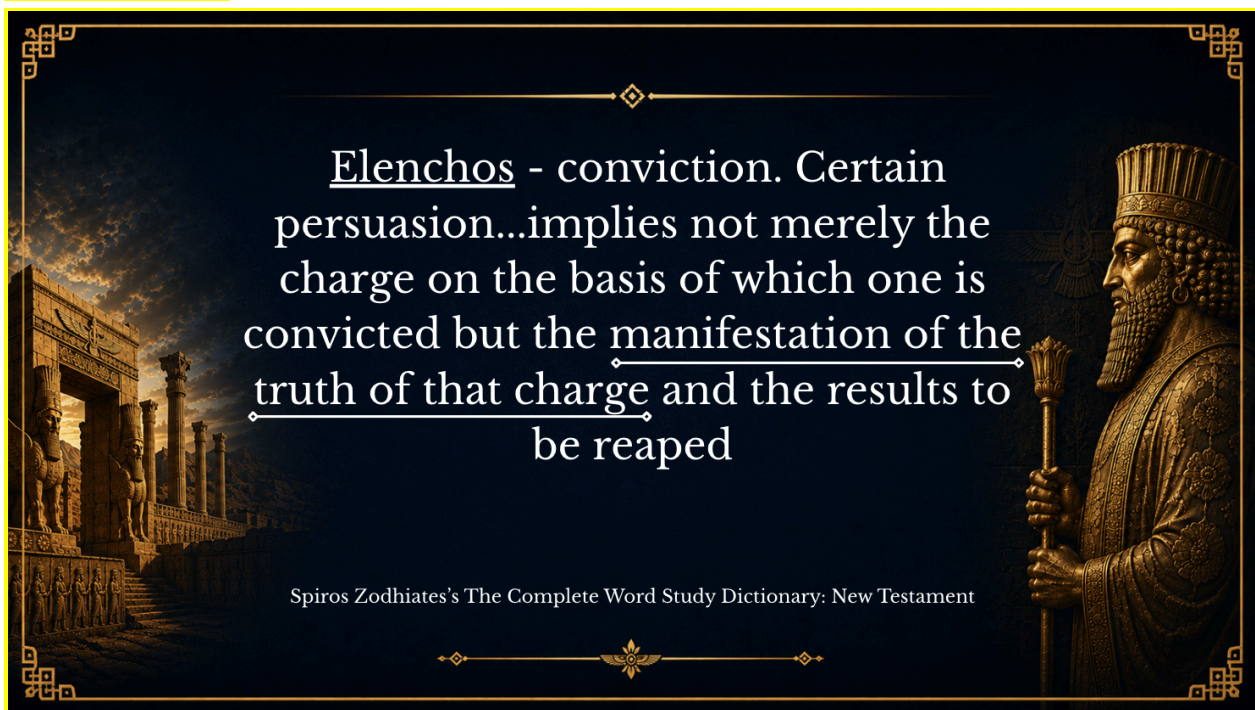
What we just read was the Amplified translation with the Greek words and their definitions inserted into the text. It sounds like a lot so we are going to walk through each word to properly grasp the meanings. Let's start with *hypostasis*, the word usually translated assurance.

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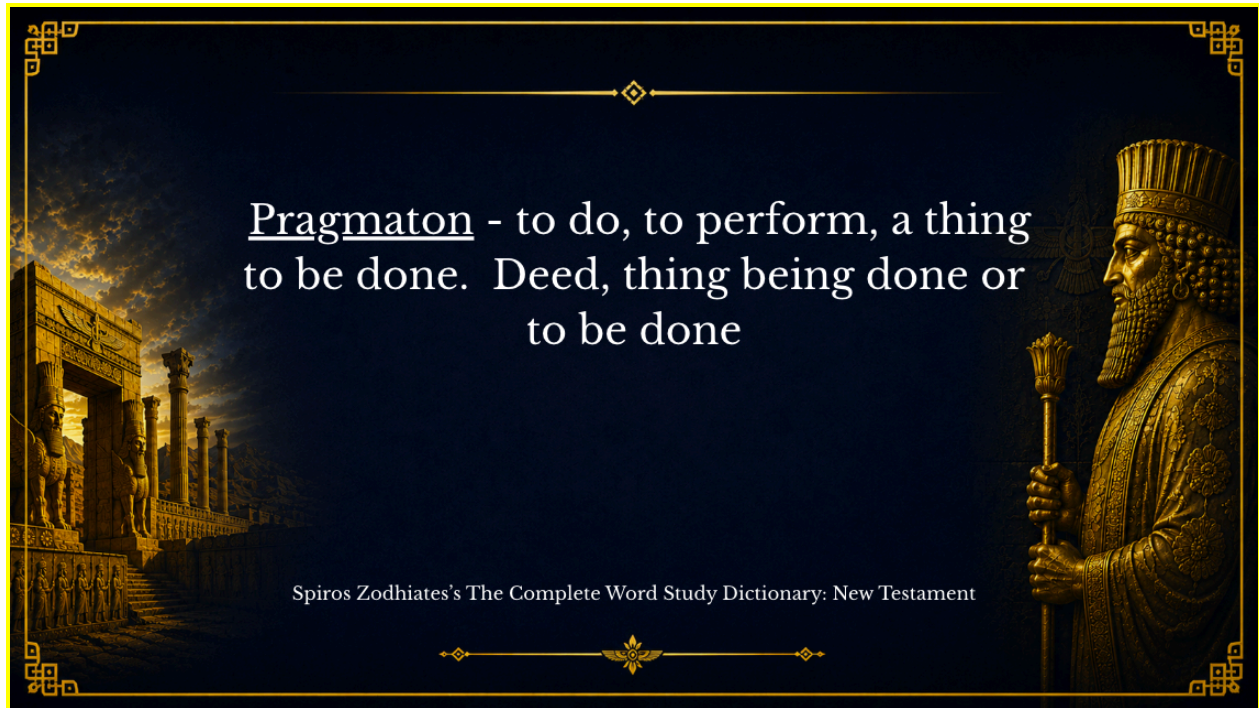
Next, lets move to *elenchos*, the word translated evidence or conviction.

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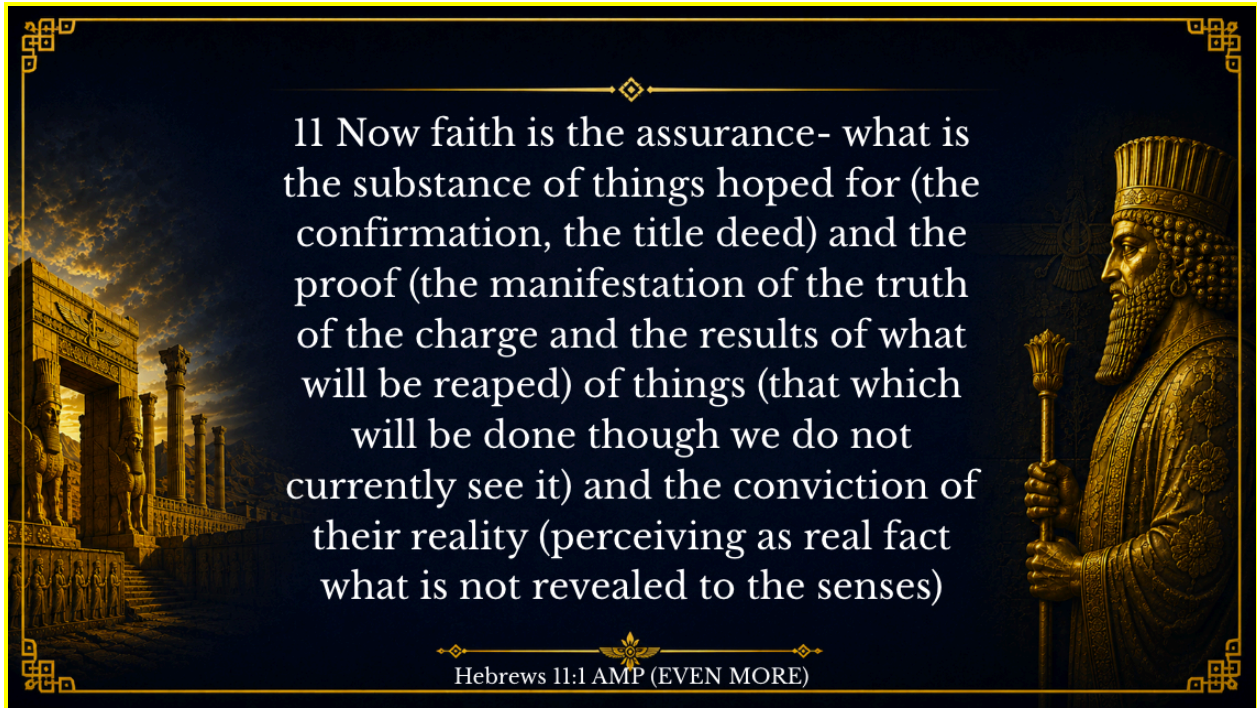
Next, let's do *pragmaton*, which is translated things.

READ SLIDE



With those definitions in mind, let's try and clearly put them back into Hebrews 11 in an attempt to convey the full meaning the Writer of Hebrews intended.

READ SLIDE



This verse is not saying, “The proof that something exists is simply that I believe it exists.” That would be circular reasoning. The presence of faith or trust alone does not create reality, or to put it another way, strong belief does not make a false claim true. Hebrews is describing the settled confidence of a person who has received reliable testimony from God and now lives in response to it.

The Greek word *hypostasis* carries the sense of assurance, confidence that is based on substance. *Elenchos* refers to conviction or persuasive certainty concerning what is not visible.

Pragmatōn means “things,” “matters,” or “realities”

The image of a title deed is therefore useful, not because faith itself becomes legal proof that an invisible thing exists, but because God gives a person something definite to return to when appearances argue against his Word.

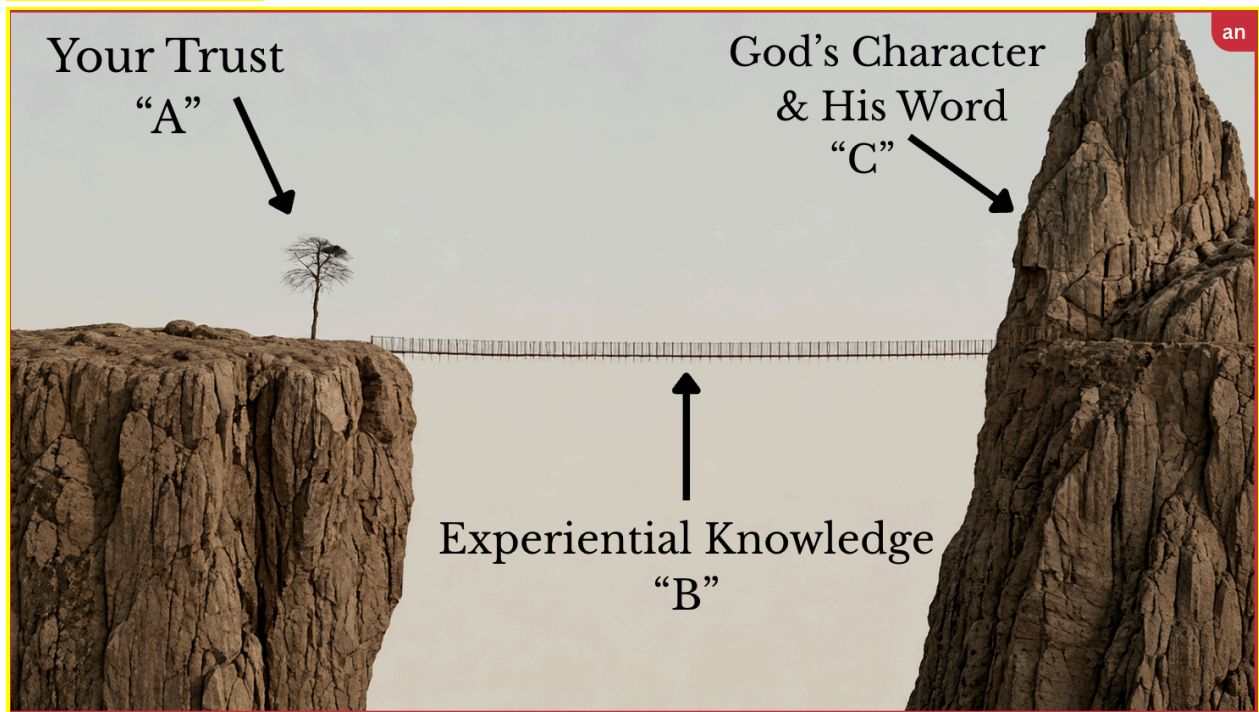
Imagine sitting in a room with the most trustworthy attorney and judge in the world. They tell you that a particular house in Crystal Lake now belongs

to you and will remain in your family for generations. Their character gives you a meaningful level of confidence. Yet if there is no paperwork, no title search, no survey, no deed, and no public record, you have nothing concrete to refer back to when another person disputes the claim.

Now imagine that you have seen a clear title search showing that there are no competing claims. You have examined the survey and confirmed the boundaries. You have signed the deed and know that it has been recorded. Your confidence is no longer merely, “I trust the people who spoke to me.” You can return to something established.

The deed does not create the property, and your confidence does not create ownership. The deed bears witness to a reality that exists independently of your feelings. That is the heart of biblical faith.

INSERT SLIDE



If **A** is you simply trusting, and **C** is the objective trustworthiness of God's character and Word, then **B** is the bridge between them: God's self-revelation, his acts in history, and more specifically your life, his spoken

promises, His fulfilled words, Scripture that you have experienced to be true, and trustworthy testimony about what he has done. B does not make C true. God is trustworthy whether anyone believes him or not. But B is how a person comes to know, personally, that God is trustworthy. Faith is therefore not blind optimism. It is a response to what God has made known.

Abraham is the clearest example. He did not merely decide to become a hopeful person. God addressed him, promised him an heir, showed him the stars, and entered covenant with him.

- **Genesis 15:5–6 (ESV)**

“And he brought him outside and said, ‘Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be.’ And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.”

That encounter became a title-deed moment for Abraham, the experiential knowledge. Because God had spoken so clearly, Abraham could live in tents in a land owned by others and still believe that the land would belong to his descendants. These were the actions that flowed from that title deed confidence and experiential knowledge. He could own only a burial field at Hebron and still refuse to conclude that God’s promise had failed. Visible possession was small, but the covenant word was firm.

The promise of a son was not a vague religious feeling. God said:

- **Genesis 17:19 ESV**

“Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac.”

Moses had a similar title-deed moment. He did not confront Pharaoh merely because he had leadership ability or unusual courage. God encountered him at the burning bush, identified himself, commissioned him, and promised his presence.

- **Exodus 3:10, ESV**

“Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.”

The mission remained difficult, but Moses now possessed something concrete to return to: God had spoken, God had sent him, and God had promised to be with him.

Israel also received public evidence at Sinai. God told Moses:

- **Exodus 19:9 (ESV)**

“Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever.”

Their trust was not expected to rest forever on Moses’ unsupported private claim. God acted and spoke in a way the nation could hear and witness.

Noah likewise acted because God warned him about something not yet seen:

- **Hebrews 11:7 (ESV)**

“By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark.”

The warning did not become true because Noah believed it. Noah believed because God warned him. That word became the basis for years of costly obedience.

God personally renewed Abraham’s promises to Isaac and Jacob. To Isaac he said:

- **Genesis 26:3 (ESV)**

“Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you.”

To Jacob he said:

- **Genesis 28:13 (ESV)**

“The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring.”

The next generation was not left with Abraham’s experience alone. God made the inherited promise personally known to them.

But this does not mean that every believer must receive a new supernatural encounter before believing anything God says. Once God’s character has been made known, we should not demand that He prove himself from the beginning in every new circumstance. A homeowner does not need a new deed every time someone questions him or asks where he lives, he lives with confidence because he was there when the papers were signed.

That is where Daniel becomes so important. We are picking up in the story when Daniel is approximately 83 years old. He lived in Jerusalem. He had encountered God's Spirit and God's saving power. He already had title deed experiences with the Word of God. He did not continually question whether the Word was true, but relied on the words of the prophets and the examples of the men in Scripture.

- **Daniel 9:2 (ESV)**

“I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.”

Jeremiah had written:

- **Jeremiah 29:10 (ESV)**

“When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place.”

Daniel's title deed experiences with the Word of God gave him confidence as he read these words. The city was ruined, the temple was demolished, and the people were scattered, but God had placed an appointed limit on the exile. Daniel's confidence did not come from pretending the destruction was unreal. It came from treating God's Word as more authoritative than the appearance of the present moment. His prayer life was the repeated action that flowed from that confidence. Solomon had prayed that if Israel were exiled and turned back toward the land, Jerusalem, and the temple, God would hear:

- **1 Kings 8:46–49 (NIV)**

46 “When they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you become angry with them and give them over to their enemies, who take them captive to their own lands, far away or near; **47** and if they have a change of heart in the land where they are held captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their captors and say, ‘We have sinned, we have done wrong, we have acted wickedly’; **48** and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their enemies who took them captive, and pray to you toward the land you gave their ancestors, toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name; **49** then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause.

And before King Solomon ever prayed that prayer King David, his father had modeled a regular rhythm of prayer:

- **Psalms 55:17 (ESV)**

“Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan,
and he hears my
voice.”

Daniel joined these biblical patterns:

- **Daniel 6:10 (NIV)**

“Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.”

The crisis did not create Daniel's faith; it revealed the faith he had already practiced. The prayer schedule was not his title deed. God's revealed Word was the title deed. Prayer was how Daniel repeatedly aligned his life with what God had established in His Word.

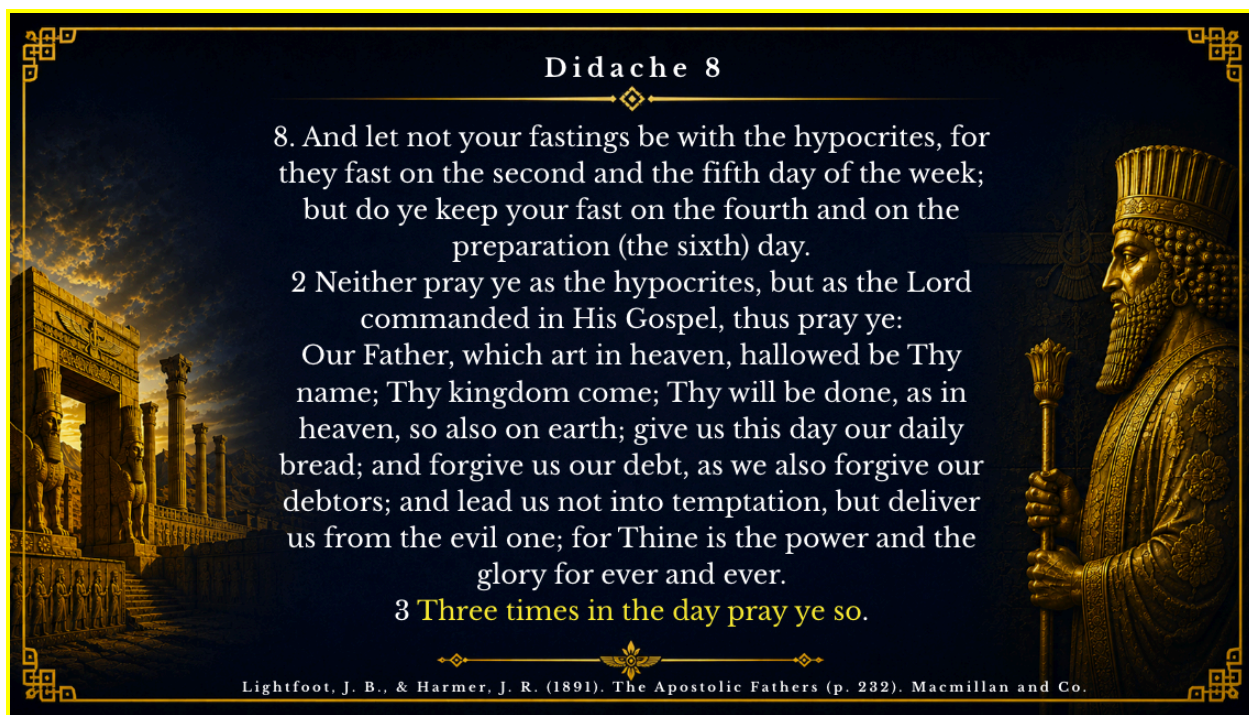
Later Jewish tradition named the three daily prayer services *Shacharit* in the morning, *Mincha* in the afternoon, and *Ma'ariv* in the evening. Rabbinic discussion connected these times both with the patriarchs:

- Genesis 19:27 has Abraham standing before God in the morning,
- Genesis 24:63 has Isaac meditating or praying toward evening,
- Genesis 28:11 has Jacob encountering God's place after sunset.

And later with corresponding to the 3 daily sacrifices after the temple was destroyed. Those traditions cannot tell us the exact words Daniel prayed, but Daniel 6 proves that three-times-daily prayer was already an established practice in his life during the exile.

The Didache, which serves as a sort of early church manual, later instructed believers to pray the Lord's Prayer.

(Read Slide)



Experience must never replace Scripture. Feelings can be misread, and private impressions can be mistaken. A powerful experience cannot become an unquestionable title deed merely because it felt profound. Every experience must be judged by God's revealed character and Word.

But neither should faith be reduced to inherited slogans. Children may initially trust because their parents trust; church members may initially rely on mature leaders. That can be appropriate. Yet inherited confidence should mature into personally owned conviction. We must come to know God's character, recognize the authority of his Word, and learn through obedient experience that he is faithful.

Faith is not believing something merely because we want it to be true. Faith is acting upon what God has made known because his character and Word have been shown trustworthy.

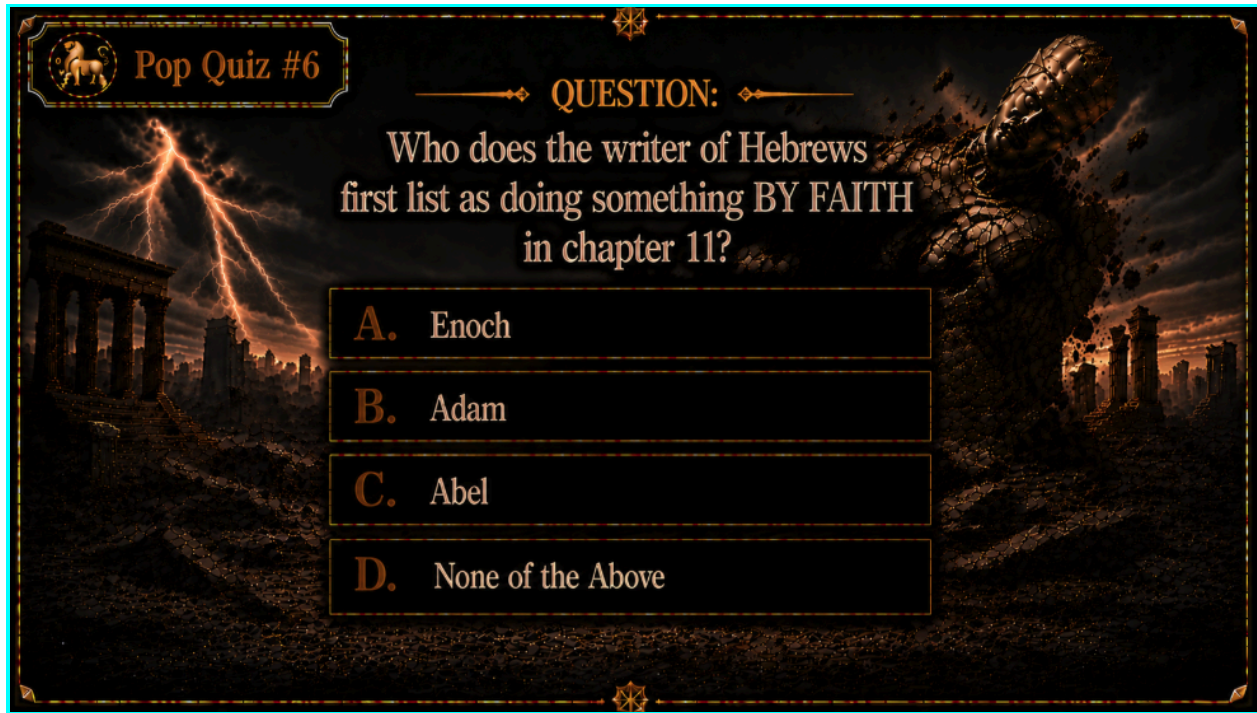
Daniel did not need a new title deed every morning. He returned to the one God had already given him.

The result was not passive belief but repeated obedience.

Noah built. Abraham went. Moses returned to Egypt. Israel listened. Daniel prayed.

Faith receives what God has established, returns to it continually, and orders its actions according to it—even while appearances still argue against it.

Pop Quiz #6



Pop Quiz #6

QUESTION:

Who does the writer of Hebrews first list as doing something **BY FAITH** in chapter 11?

- A.** Enoch
- B.** Adam
- C.** Abel
- D.** None of the Above

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Verses 11–16 — The Accusers Return, and the King's Distress

11 Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help.

How are you found in your hour of trial? If you find yourself running to everything besides prayer when trouble hits your life, what does that actually say about what your faith is in? In this church, our highest goal is to be found in a genuine expression of faith as Daniel was. This takes convictions established before the matter arises.

12 So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or man except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lions’ den?”

The king answered, “The decree stands—in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”

However you view Darius, the text clearly says "the Medes and Persians" — a collective association bound by shared law. This is the lopsided bear of Daniel 7's vision, a conglomerate kingdom, not a single unified monarchy.

13 Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.”

Daniel is in his eighties, has held public office for 66 years in these gentile nations, and is still easily identified as one of the exiles from Judah. Daniel's life was so distinct that he was unmistakably Jewish through his observance of the Law of his God. No amount of pressure was able to get him to throw off his God given, Jewish identity.

When real biblical faith takes root — when the underlying reality of God's kingdom is in the heart alongside evidentiary confidence in what will happen — a person no longer needs to reinvent themselves with every shift in circumstance.

This is a needed lesson for believers living in a nation destined for decline and judgment — we should learn from our older Jewish brother about the unyielding, uncompromising, undying biblical faith every believer must possess.

14 When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.

This speaks to Daniel's character. His integrity was so evident that even a Gentile king recognized it and worked, through back-channel diplomacy, to save him.

15 Then the men went as a group to the king and said to him, “Remember, O king, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed.”
16 So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!”

More testimony about Daniel's character. **May your God whom you serve continually**, how often? Continually! He noticed it wasn't just half of the time or a quarter of the time — he continually served. Daniel could not be put in a position that he was not in the service of Yahweh. How convicting is that thought to a people that tend to view our service to God as occurring in just specific places or specific times. These areas are tested precisely when things don't seem to be going as you expected them. If you're continually in service to God, it doesn't matter what the circumstances are.

Darius wants to go back on his word. Daniel will not go back on his. The question worth asking: **Which man are you tonight?**

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Verses 17–18 — The Lion's Den and the Sealed Stone

"So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, 'May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!' A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation might not be changed. Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep."

Biblical faith is continual service, not part-time devotion — and it is tested precisely when circumstances seem to work against it.

The personal distress of the king is obvious: no food, no entertainment, no sleep. Daniel very likely slept better that night in the den than Darius did in his palace — always a fruit of sincere biblical faith. How much genuine faith can be present if it's mixed with overwhelming anxiety or lashing out at others?

There is an interesting parallel between the sealing of this pit and the sealing of Jesus' tomb:

(DO NOT READ SLIDE)

MATTHEW 27:58-61 • NIV

The Burial of Jesus

Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. ⁵⁹ Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰ and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. ⁶¹ Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb.

New International Version

(DO NOT READ SLIDE)

MATTHEW 27:62-66 • NIV

The Guard at the Tomb

⁶² The nextday, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. ⁶³ "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first." ⁶⁵ "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

New International Version

- Matthew 27:58–66 (NIV)

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⁶² The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. ⁶³ "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first."

⁶⁵ "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

Both events are marked by a stone and a seal placed over the opening to prevent outside tampering. In both cases, the same power of God rescued the faithful from what was thought to be certain death. There is nothing in the world that can restrain the resurrecting power of God from bringing life where He has called for obedience. Whether the opposition is a rock rolled over a tomb, flames, lions, Romans, or any other people, when the Law is upheld, the faithful become the hand of God on earth and cannot be prevented from His service by Gentile — or any — opposition.

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Verses 19–23 — Deliverance at Dawn

19 At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. **20** When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?"

Notice the descriptors surrounding Darius: no sleep, distressed, an anguished voice, first light of dawn, hurrying. Clearly, a lifetime of Daniel's faith had moved the king's heart. Daniel took his stand on the Law of his God continually, and was found blameless in every area of his life — the kind of witness worth displaying to the world. Those confronted with this kind of powerful witness only have two options: they can wash their hands of you, as Pilate did with Jesus, or wring their hands in distress and anguish, as Darius did. Either way, the testimony of a faithful life is producing exactly what the Word says it will:

- **Philippians 1:27–30 (ESV)**

27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you

that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. 29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, 30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Daniel's witness was not about what he said, it was about standing firm on his convictions in full faith that God will do what he has promised. Daniel not being frightened by his opponents became a clear sign of God's sovereign judgments to all!

21 Daniel answered, “O king, live forever! 22 My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king.”

Daniel's faith in the trials became a witness not just to those in immediate proximity to him, but to the entire believing community for thousands of years. Consider the language the Early Church Fathers use concerning those who stand in faith:

- **Hebrews 11:33 (ESV)**

33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

Daniel has been an inspiration toward biblical faith in every century since. This is the kind of legacy worth leaving — not a physical inheritance, but a legacy of faith that inspires the generations ahead. When standing in this kind of faith, angelic intervention is the expectation, but complete peace remains even if it does not occur.

- **2 Timothy 4:17 (ESV)**

17 But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth.

Paul was ready to give his life, yet was also blessed with heavenly intervention so that his work might be completed — the same attitude this Foundations series aims to instill.

One more detail worth noting: "They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king." Notice the order of Daniel's own self-examination — innocent before God *first*, then innocent before men. This mirrors the teaching of 1 John: if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another. It's also illustrated negatively in Genesis 3–4: the break between God and man in chapter 3 leads to man killing man in chapter 4. Self-examination should never begin with relationships to others — it begins with one's position before God, and only then moves outward. This also gives us insight inversely, if your relationship with believers is hindered it is an indication of something wrong between you and the Lord.

23 The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

Daniel experienced what many faithful Jews before him experienced. David expressed it this way:

- **Psalm 40:1–4 (ESV)**

1 I waited patiently for the LORD;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.

2 He drew me up from the pit of destruction,
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.

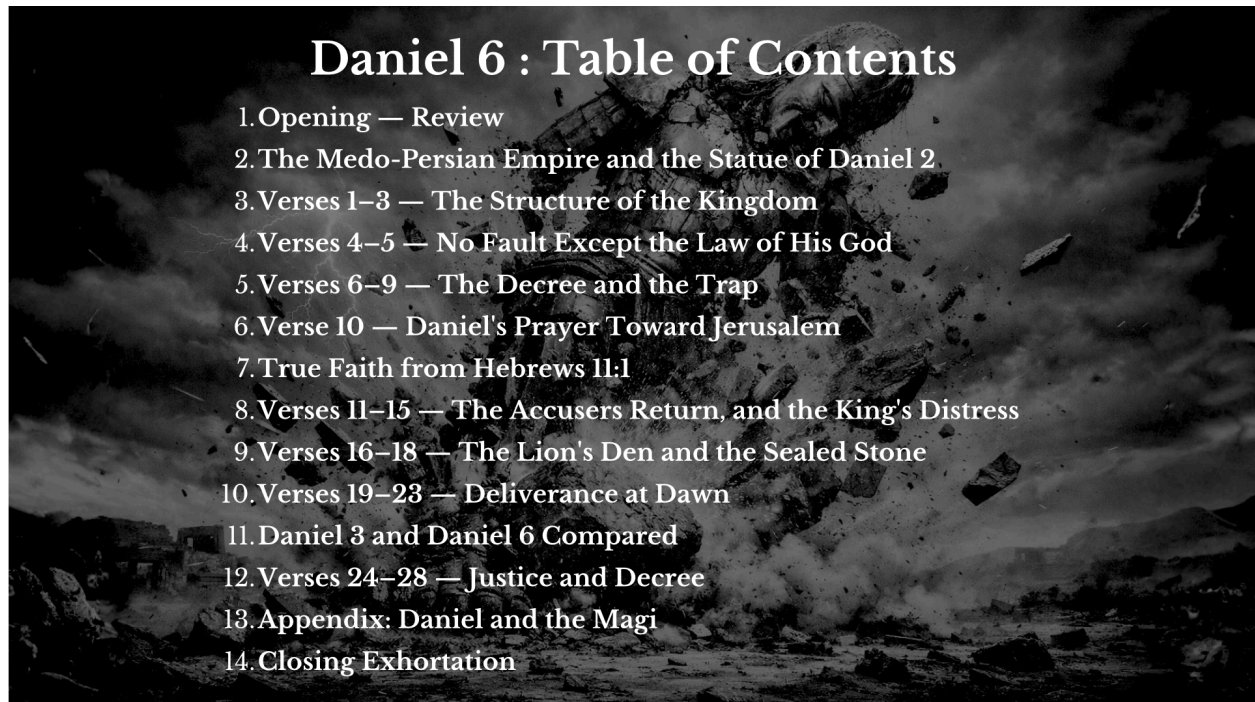
3 He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.

 Many will see and fear,
and put their trust in the LORD.

4 Blessed is the man who makes
the LORD his trust,

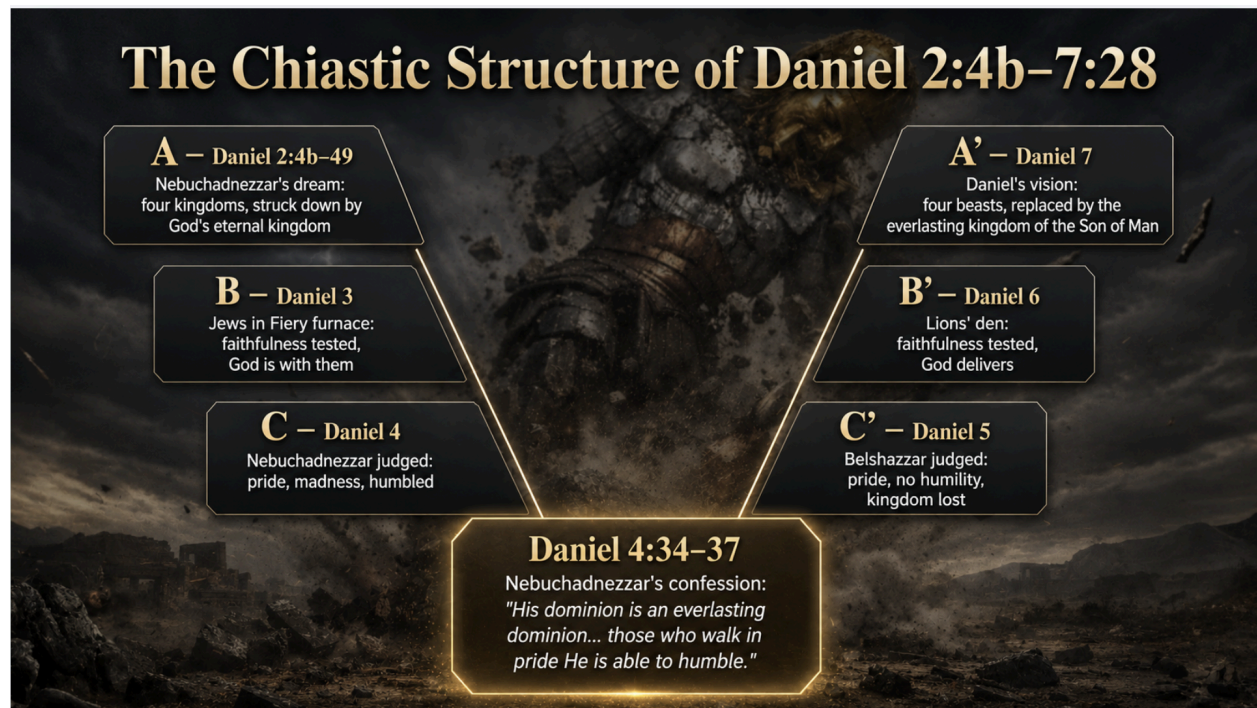
 who does not turn to the proud,
to those who go astray after a lie!

Waiting for the LORD to rescue you out of darkness and then seeing him come through has always been the state of the people of Israel and every true believer who follows the God of Israel. Daniel's experience in the chapter tonight is a precedent for all who wish to serve the LORD with faithfulness.



Daniel 3 and Daniel 6 Compared

The response of Darius in this chapter reveals part of a repeating pattern within the book of Daniel we have mentioned before.



Daniel 3 places three Hebrew men in a dire situation, and they are delivered. This chapter reiterates the pattern, but with important points of difference. This is the B and B' is our chiasm. We are not the only ones who picked up on these connections. Let's read a commentary from CL Seow that also notices these patterns.

(DO NOT READ SLIDE)

Differences in Daniel

The stories are not merely duplicates of one another, however, for important elements distinguish them. To begin with, the first story concerns Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (with the noticeable absence of Daniel), whereas the second concerns Daniel alone. The stories also take place in two different eras—the first in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar of the Chaldean empire and the second in the reign of Darius of the Persian. In the first story, the imperial edict explicitly requires the Jews to bow down to an emblem of imperial power, but the friends of Daniel refused to do it. In the second story, people are forbidden to petition anyone other than the king, but Daniel does petition God. In the first case, civil disobedience takes place in public; in the second, it takes place in Daniel's own home.

C. L. Seow, Daniel, ed. Patrick D. Miller and David L. Bartlett, Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 87.

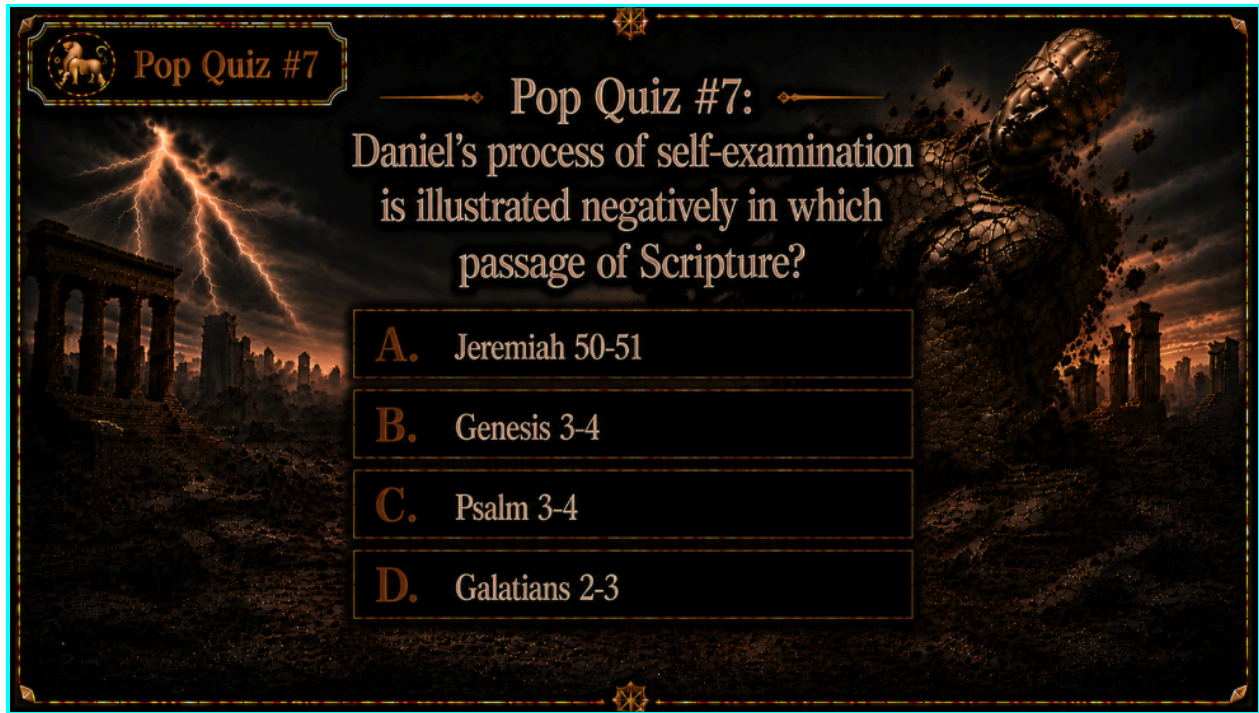
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To bring it to one last comparison we can look at Darius' response. After Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah are delivered, Nebuchadnezzar praised Adonai. In chapter six, when Daniel is delivered, Darius also rejoices.

Remember at the beginning of our study in Daniel we taught you to *connect* Daniel and not *dissect* Daniel? Here is the perfect example. Connecting these two stories highlights the true purpose of this Writings within the

Biblical Canon. Whether required to do what God forbids, or forbidden from doing what God requires, the point is the same: Adonai alone is to be obeyed. In Daniel 3, the civil disobedience is public; in Daniel 6, the trigger takes place in Daniel's own home, in private. Whether in public or private, a demonstrable life of faith in Adonai is all that matters.

Pop Quiz #7



Pop Quiz #7:

Daniel's process of self-examination is illustrated negatively in which passage of Scripture?

- A. Jeremiah 50-51
- B. Genesis 3-4
- C. Psalm 3-4
- D. Galatians 2-3

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Verses 24–28 — Justice and Decree

24 At the king's command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

The irony of the chapters end is incredible. The very sentence the satraps conjured up for Daniel now is thrust upon them. Earlier in the chapter it mentioned *all* the satraps conspiring together. Now it says "*the men who had falsely accused Daniel*" were thrown into the den. The number is not specified, thus it is not of great importance but admittedly it is shocking to imagine so many men being thrown into the den. If it truly was all 120 satraps and their wives and children—that would be upwards of 500 people being thrown into the den.

Take a look at this:

DO NOT READ SLIDE



You know how the men who accused Daniel are thrown into the lions den but you need to grasp how sovereign our God is in the midst of the enemies schemes.

We mentioned earlier how Daniel 3 and 6 are connected in the Aramaic chiasm that exists in the book of Daniel but look at this phrase that appears in both places.

When the astrologers came forward in Daniel 3 to denounce the Jews, an idiom appears in the original text.

וְאָכְלוּ קִרְצִיָּהוֹן

vah-ah-khah-LOO kahr-TSAY-hone

Literally meaning: "They ate their pieces".

It is dynamically translated to "denounced". This means that the original wording in this passage says that these men who were looking to destroy the Jews through false accusations at their pieces.

This phrase again appears in Daniel 6 when men came to falsely accuse Daniel and

אָכלוּ קרצוהי

ah-khah-LOO kahr-tsoh-HEE

"They ate his pieces"

False accusation of the righteous, slander, seeking to denounce or destroy in this text is compared with eating their pieces. And now, these enemies who sought the destruction of these Jewish men are having their pieces literally eaten by lions. False accusation can be very difficult to endure, but it is vindication from the one who judges justly that we must put our hope in.

Just think about the rich line of examples we have to draw from:

- **Daniel 3:22 (NIV 1984)**

“The king’s command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.”

The flames intended for the righteous actually burned up the soldiers.

- **Exodus 1:22 (NIV 1984)**

“Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: ‘Every boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live.’”

- **Exodus 14:28 (NIV 1984)**

“The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen—the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived.”

Pharoah originally sought to destroy the Israelite babies in the waters of Egypt to save himself, but it was his murderous heart that brought about his own destruction in the waters of the Red Sea.

- **1 Samuel 17:51 (NIV 1984)**

“David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine’s sword and drew it from the scabbard. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran.”

The sword Goliath intended to kill David with, was used to cut off his own head.

Finally, consider these Psalms:

- **Psalm 9:15–16 (NIV 1984)**

“The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug; their feet are caught in the net they have hidden.

The LORD is known by his justice; the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands. Higgsion. Selah.”

- **Psalm 141:10 (NIV 1984)**

“Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while I pass by in safety.”

- **Psalm 64:8 (NIV 1984)**

“He will turn their own tongues against them and bring them to ruin; all who see them will shake their heads in scorn.”

These details are not the point of the text clearly, but imagining the horrors of their punishment should convey something to us: God takes seriously false accusations against His chosen people.

In our world today—Jews everywhere are being cast into a proverbial Lions den of false accusations concerning their character, motives, and position

before Adonai. This kind of passage should make any Christian think twice about the implications of his theology.

Before we end our exposition, this picture also forecasts and eschatological reality we are still anticipating.

- **Revelation 20:10 (NIVUK)**

10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

One day, all accusers of our brothers will be *thrown down* once and for all. As for the faithful, they overcame in the same way Daniel did—they loved not their lives even unto death. For Daniel his heart was set—righteousness or die trying.

**25 Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language throughout the land:
“May you prosper greatly!**

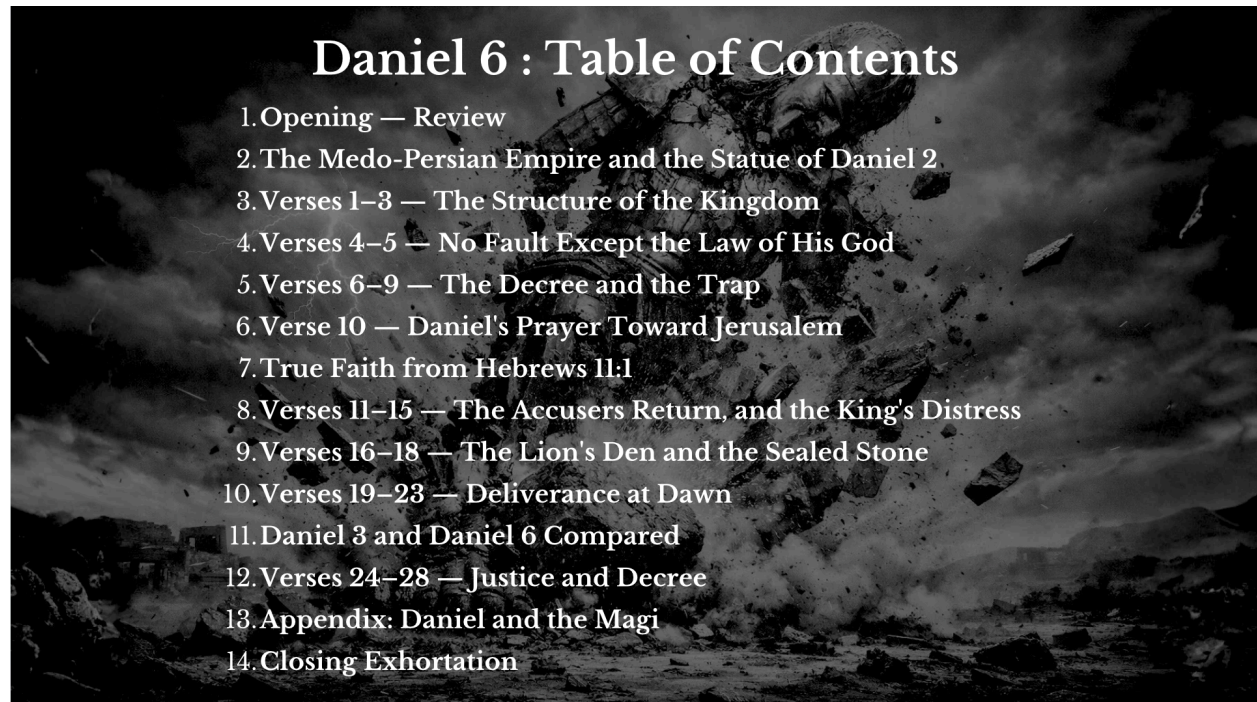
26 “I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel.

**“For he is the living God
and he endures forever;
his kingdom will not be destroyed,
his dominion will never end.**

**27 He rescues and he saves;
he performs signs and wonders
in the heavens and on the earth.
He has rescued Daniel
from the power of the lions.”**

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

Daniel prospered every day of his life because he was obedient to what God had shown him, and his actions demonstrated it. The lesson of the book of Daniel, again and again, is that circumstances do not ultimately matter — only faithfulness to what God has revealed.



Let's move on to the appendix.

Appendix: Daniel and the Magi

Time did not permit a full treatment, but we have referenced this before and the connection is simply too good not to revisit with some scholarly support.

The word *magi* is a Latinized form of a Persian word describing the priesthood of Persia. Scripture itself identifies Daniel — at least twice, arguably three times — as chief of these magi, a term also used by Jeremiah.

The magi's actual gift was not, as commonly assumed, reading the stars, but the interpretation of dreams and future events; this is consistently borne

out in their own writings — and even confirmed from outside their tradition, generations before Daniel ever arrived in Babylon, here is a secular source referncing them:

(Do Not Read)

FROM THE SOURCES



They appear in Herodotus' history of Astyages as interpreters of dreams.

— Herodotus, *Histories* i.120

William Smith, *Smith's Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986), s.v. "Magi."

"They appear in Herodotus' history of Astyages as interpreters of dreams, i. 120.

Dream interpretation was already their trade — which is exactly the skill set Daniel outperformed them at. It would have been difficult for a hereditary Persian priesthood to see a Jewish man raised above them all — yet that is the destiny of Israel in the world.

Politically, the magi functioned as a caste of "king-makers" across the region. During the era of Alexander, both the Jewish and Persian peoples experienced revolts (the Maccabean revolt among the Jews, a comparable Persian uprising), each securing a measure of standing within the wider empire.

This history bears on the events surrounding Jesus' birth. Herod received the title "King of the Jews" from Rome, in Rome, without being in Jerusalem — his authority resting entirely on Roman dominance over the rival Parthian Empire, an empire that repeatedly gave Rome serious trouble. It is worth considering that a delegation of Parthian magi — plausibly heirs to a tradition instructed centuries earlier by Daniel, who had already received the revelations of Daniel 2, 7, and 9 concerning the kingdom and the restoration of Israel — arrived proclaiming that a king had been born. Consider another excerpt from Smith:

(Do Not Read)

FROM THE SOURCES

A King Was Expected

These wise men from Persia were the most like the Jews, in religion, of all nations in the world. They believed in one God, they had no idols, they worshipped light as the best symbol of God...

"The Magi," says Ellicott, "express the feeling which the Roman historians Tacitus and Suetonius tell us sixty or seventy years later had been for a long time very widely diffused. Everywhere throughout the East men were looking for the advent of a great king who was to rise from among the Jews. It had fermented in the minds of men, heathen as well as Jews, and would have led them to welcome Jesus as the Christ had he come in accordance with their expectation." Virgil, who lived a little before this, owns that a child from heaven was looked for, who should restore the golden age and take away sin.

William Smith, Smith's Bible Dictionary (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986), s.v. "Magi" (Ellicott quoted therein).

"These wise men from Persia were the most like the Jews, in religion, of all nations in the world. They believed in one God, they had no idols, they worshipped light as the best symbol of God. (2) The general expectation of such a king. "The Magi," says Ellicott, "express the feeling which the Roman historians Tacitus and Suetonius tell us sixty or seventy years later had been for a long time very widely diffused. Everywhere throughout the East men were looking for the advent of a great king who was to rise from among the Jews. It had fermented in the minds of men, heathen as well as

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William Smith, [*Smith's Bible Dictionary*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986).

This co-witness is incredible! Even the pagan poet Virgil, writing before Jesus was born, *"owns that a child from heaven was looked for, who should restore the golden age and take away sin."* The magi weren't guessing. They were the priestly class entrusted for centuries with reading exactly this kind of sign — and Daniel had given them the material to read.

They went to Jerusalem first, not Bethlehem, precisely because Jerusalem was where the reigning king of the Jews resided, and they intended to make a point: another King had been born. The influence of Daniel's life extended for centuries beyond his death, evidently including the men who first proclaimed among the Gentiles that Jesus is Messiah.

For more TAC content on this connection see the sermon "Give us a King Pt. 7" from 12/24/17.

Closing Exhortation

The reach of faithfulness cannot be measured. Daniel, now more than eighty years old, had spent nearly his entire life in Babylon. He watched his fellow Jews endure exile, hardship, and uncertainty while he himself served in the courts of pagan kings. He likely never imagined that his life would influence people thousands of years later.

Daniel was not looking for extraordinary opportunities to prove himself. He simply sought to be radically faithful—day after day, year after year, decade after decade.

He remained faithful in prayer while facing a destroyed Temple in an occupied land. He refused to compromise his convictions, no matter the cost. His life reminds us that God often changes history not through

spectacular moments, but through ordinary faithfulness sustained over a lifetime.

This is the kind of faith that impacts thousands of generations.

- **Ephesians 4:13–14 (ESV)**

13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

Daniel was a man who reached mature manhood, and so must we. As you go tonight, be inspired by Daniel's example of radical faith over dozens of years!