



Daniel

Key to Bible Prophecy

Chapter 6



Introduction to Chapter 6

The sixth chapter of Daniel is another target for critics. The main point of attack is the person mentioned in the very first verse, Darius the Mede. The fact of Cyrus became king over Babylon is well documented in the Bible and outside of the Bible. The person of Darius the Mede, mentioned in Daniel chapters 5, 6, 9 and 11 is not found outside of the Bible. Critics of the Bible and Daniel in particular have used this lack of secular confirmation as an opportunity to attack the credibility of the book.

Daniel chapter 6, follows chapter 5 chronologically. In chapter 5 after the fall of Babylon we are introduced to Darius the Mede. In understanding the relationship between the Persian and Median kingdoms, we need to understand Cyrus was half Persian and half Median. His mother was the daughter of the king of the Medes, who ruled over the Persians. Cyrus became ruler when he rallied the Persians in rebellion against his grandfather, the Median king, Astyages. According to Herodotus, Cyrus' mother was Mandane daughter of Astyages who was married to Cambyses, Cyrus' father, and vassal of Media.

Cyrus became head of Persia and rebelled against his grandfather. Median generals sided with Cyrus allowing him to overthrow his grandfather in 550 B.C., eleven years prior to Chapter 6 of Daniel. The problem with Daniel and recorded history outside the bible is the lack of historical confirmation about Darius the Mede. According to the *Nabonidus Chronicle*, as itemized by D.J. Wiseman, the following events occurred.

Babylon was conquered by Ugbaru, the governor of Gutium, who led the army of Cyrus and entered the city of Babylon on the night of Belshazzar's feast. Nabonidus, who was Belshazzar's father, had fled Babylon the day before only to be captured and later die in exile. When Babylon fell to Ugbaru on October 11, 539 B.C., Cyrus himself had remained with other troops at Opis, and not until eighteen day later, October 29, 539 B.C., did he actually arrive in Babylon. A man by the name of Gubaru was appointed by Cyrus to rule in Babylon. Eight days after the arrival of Cyrus, Ugbaru died.¹

According to Daniel chapter 5, the following occurred at the fall of Babylon in 539 B.C.

30 That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. 31 And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

Daniel 5:30-31

There are two main explanations for this lack of secular confirmation as put forth by John Walvoord in his book.

One of these explanations...Whitcomb hold that Ugbaru, identified previously as the governor of Gutium in the *Nabonidus Chronical*, led the army of Cyrus into Babylon and died less than a month later. Gubaru, however, identified by Whitcomb as Darius the Mede, a king of Babylon under the authority of Cyrus....The third view, held by the conservative scholar, D.J. Wiseman, has simplicity in its favor. It claims Darius the Mede is another name of Cyrus the Persian. This is based on the translation of Daniel 6:28 which the Aramaic permits to read, "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, even the reign

¹ Daniel the Key to Prophetic Revelation, Walvoord, Pg. 132-133

of Cyrus the Persian. The fact that monarchs had more than one name is common in ancient literature.²

Cyrus was both Persian and Median, making both explanations very plausible to explain the lack of secular confirmation. Many people who are from an ethnic background, have both an ethnic name and a common name. The ethnic name identifies with the ethnic group, so Cyrus who was both Median and Persian could have had both a Persian and Median name.

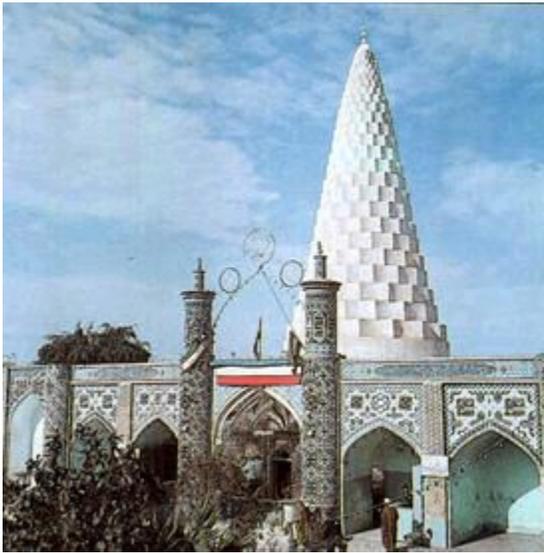
Daniel exalted by Darius

Daniel 6

1 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom;

2 and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss.

3 Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. **Daniel 6:1-3**



Tomb of Daniel in present day Iran, in the city of Susa, Iran

Darius: With Darius, we have a couple of options based to identify him. First, he could be Cyrus with the name Darius, as put forth by D.J. Wiseman in Daniel 6:28. The other option, which has greater weight identifies him as a Median general installed by Cyrus as king of the newly conquered Babylonian territory. Daniel 9:1 clearly identifies Darius the son of Ahasuerus as being “made king over the realm of the Chaldeans”

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans- Daniel 9:1

One hundred and twenty: The conquest of Babylon for the most part was bloodless, few died in order for the city to be conquered. The administration of the new province Babylonian province, would be administered by capable Babylonians. Either, the Babylonian province or the entire Persian/Median kingdom was up into 120 satraps or provinces.

Three governors: These 120 provinces were divided and organized under three administrators or overseers. The provincial governors or satraps were answerable to these three administrators. This division of the Persian Empire is confirmed in the book of Esther 1:1, here the number of provinces is stated at 127, though this is at least 50 years after Daniel 6.

Daniel: Daniel would have come to immediate attention to any new Persian government. Daniel had just proclaimed the fall of Babylon when the hand appeared and wrote on the wall. In addition, Daniel would have been known for his work under Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Therefore it would be logical for any new government to seek out the assistance of well-respected officials to help govern their new province. This is exactly what Persia did.

Distinguished himself: Daniel's behavior distinguished himself above all the other rulers. Daniel was beyond corruption, with any new government and new positions, corruption and bribe taking would be in the offing. Daniel more than likely would not play the game, his uprightness and righteousness would cause problems bent on reaping huge profits in a new government.

Plot against Daniel

² Daniel the Key to Prophetic Revelation, Walvoord, pg. 133-134,

4 So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him.

5 Then these men said, "We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God." **Daniel 6:4-5**

Governors and satraps: The 2 governors and 120 rulers looked for a way to take Daniel out of the picture. Daniel set an example for the faithful, who are challenged by the world system. The world wants those who trust in God to fall. When the faithful fall, the world feels justified in their unjust actions.

Jesus talks about this contrast between the world and those who represent God in the world.

20 "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

21 "But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God." **John 3:20-21**

Daniel had no reason to fear his deeds coming to light because he lived a righteous life. This became a problem for the rulers of the world. Later we see how Darius follows Daniel's example and fasts for him.

Law of his God: The last resort was to try to show Daniel disloyal by contrasting his obedience to the laws of the land verses God's command. Daniel answered an important question for the believer. Are we to obey the law of the land or the law of God? Daniel models a faithful life, at odds with the laws of the world. We are to obey the laws of the land, but when they come into conflict with the laws of God, obedience to God's law is primary, even to the point of death. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego illustrated this in Daniel chapter 3. How important is following the commands of God in our life?

Through our obedience God can use us in this world that He may be gloried.

A ban on prayer

6 So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: "King Darius, live forever!

7 "All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.

8 "Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter."

9 Therefore King Darius signed the written decree. **Daniel 6:6-9**

Royal Statute: Daniel again sets the example for all to follow. The question in generations to come, how are the faithful to act when laws are passed against them? This ban on prayer, was passed for Daniel's sake.

Laws are passed today to stop the faithful in worship, should the believer obey laws that against God law. Daniel says no, he continued to pray despite the law of the land. Daniel first call was obedience to God. God used Daniel as example for all the faithful. Those in and out of persecuted lands.

Any god: This law was established with a specific target in mind Daniel. Daniel was faithful to the Lord, which made him a target of the world. Daniel faith was not about religion, but about a relationship he had with God. At this point Daniel is in his eighties, he had faithfully demonstrated his life before the world. He relationship with the Lord became a target, because he was faithful.

Law of the Medes and Persians: The government was a unified government of Medes and Persians. These laws were the laws of men, many times laws are enacted by men to challenge the laws of God. For example how would you react if you were faced with new laws which declared: No praying in public, No reading of the Bible, No gatherings to worship God.

Daniel's faithfulness

10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

11 Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his

God. **Daniel 6:10-11**

Daniel: Daniel did not change a thing about his personal life despite the law passed by authority. Daniel did not challenge the law to challenge the law; he continued to do what he had done in the past despite the law. Daniel was so faithful and consistent in his prayer life, even his enemies knew where to find him at what hour of the day.

Knew the writing was signed: Daniel knew full well what was at stake, he was prepared to die the violent death of this new law. Daniel's vision was toward eternity not his earthly position. He was going to put his relationship with the Lord first. He did not try to find away around the Law, he merely put the situation in the hands of God. He had an attitude every believer should have, he moved forward in the face of opposition, not know what the outcome would be.

Daniel had the same attitude of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego had in Daniel 3. These men knew God could deliver, they also knew God may choose not to deliver them.

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter.

17 "If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king.

18 "But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up." Daniel 3:16-18

If God choose not to deliver them it was not the end, but only the beginning of their eternity. The purpose of these events in chapters 3 and 6 are to establish a template for the believer. How are we to respond at work, home and country when our faith is opposed by those in power?

Was his custom: Daniel established a pattern in his life, he prayed three-times a day, along the line of Psalm 55, evening, morning and noon.

16 As for me, I will call upon God, And the Lord shall save me.

17 Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, And He shall hear my voice.

18 He has redeemed my soul in peace from the battle that was against me, For there were many against me. Psalm 55:16-18

The rulers knew where they could find Daniel at a specific time of the day, he had a custom. Do we have a custom in our life? Do we set aside specific times of the day to come before the Lord, to pray and read His Word? Daniel did not live a haphazard spiritual existence, he had established order to his life.

Early days: The key to Daniel's success in his walk is built on his early ears, going back to Jerusalem as a youth; he was prepared for the trials of Babylon. In Jerusalem he could have very well have been a disciple of Jeremiah or Ezekiel before he was taken to Babylon. We know his prayer life was established at an early age, he had a personal plan of daily living. We are well served to use Daniel as an example of instilling spiritual patterns in our children.

Daniel accused

12 And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: "Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter."

13 So they answered and said before the king, "That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

14 And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

15 Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed."

Daniel 6:12-15

Decree: The decree of Darius pitted the law of man verses the law of God. Daniel was God's champion, and our example. In an *end-time* application, Daniel models for Israel how to respond to the laws of the world's final kingdom, the Beast of Daniel 7, will oppose Israel in the last days.

Using Daniel as a model, Israel will choose God, and like Daniel go through a tribulation period, unlike any before. They will be delivered out of the pit as the world stands in awe.

Before the king: The king here is a type of Antichrist in the end times who will replace God, in the world. Those who do not know God will obey the law of the Beast in Daniel 7, who will exalt himself above all.

Daniel is given the option, to turn away from God and toward the king and live, or turn to God and die a terrible death? This will be the same option faced by those in the last days, but in Daniel and Revelation, we are told of coming persecution on those who trust in the Lord.

6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Revelation 13:6-8

Daniel cast into the lions' den

16 So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you."

17 Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed. **Daniel 6:16-17**

Cast him: Like Daniel, in the end times Israel will be cast in den of lions, the lions prefigure the nations who will surround Israel. The nations will rage against Israel, and believers in the last-days before the return of Christ.

Lets put ourselves in the place of Daniel, by all logical circumstances Daniel was going to a violent death, how would we have fared? Again we can learn from Daniel's example, how we can be faithful even in the prospect of certain doom.

The king spoke: Daniel faith must have made quite an impression on the king. From the context, it seems Darius and Daniel must have had many conversations about the nature of God. The king calls Daniel's God, "The Living God", as opposed to the gods who do not live. Also notice the king said, "Whom you serve continually", Daniel's devotion of the Lord was well known. He had a reputation of being a faithful follower of the Lord, even in pagan lands. Through Daniel witness, King Nebuchadnezzar came to know the Lord. Now Darius ends up proclaiming knowledge of Daniel's God from Daniel's example.

The king's lament

18 Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him.

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions.

20 And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" **Daniel 6:18-20**

King went: When we choose to serve the Lord and seek to live a righteous life, Even those who would hate us are made peaceable.

When a man's ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

Proverbs 16:7

God was able to use Daniel because he was a faithful example, he was useable to God. Darius had just come to power, and he knows from the beginning about Daniel and his God. The same night Belshazzar was having his feast and saw the writing on the wall, could have been the same day Daniel met Darius the Mede. When the kingdom was established Daniel was on the short list to administer the Babylonian province of the Persian Kingdom.

Spent the night fasting: Fasting was not the common practice of these pagan kings, Daniel life had made quite an impression on Darius. The was forced to reluctantly obey his own laws.

Daniel's deliverance

21 Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever!
 22 "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."
 23 Then the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God. **Daniel 6:21-23**

O King: Through his whom experience of betrayal and attacks Daniel, never allows his emotions or anger to overwhelm him. After spending the night in a pit with lions, Daniel is the epitome of politeness to the King.

His Angel: This very well could be the angel that communicates with Daniel his final vision, since the angel informs us in Daniel 11:1, that he strengthened Darius' hand in his first year. The same year the Seventy weeks of Daniel was revealed. Daniel 9:1

Because: We are told the reason Daniel was saved, "Because he believed his God". This is the same message for all those who struggle.

Daniel's enemies destroyed

24 And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions-them, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den. **Daniel 6:24**

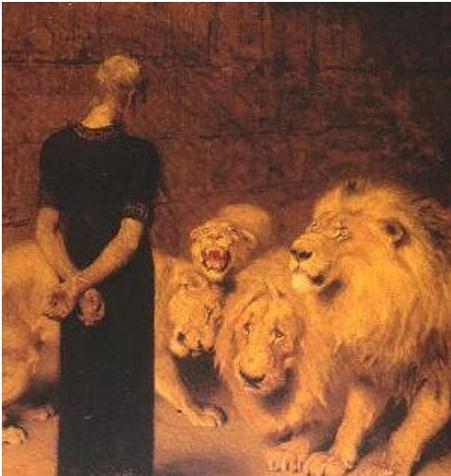
King: Darius realizes he had been tricked into this law for the sole purpose of destroying Daniel. Life was little value in these kingdoms, the leaders, children and wives of these ringleaders suffered the fate they had planned for Daniel.

The Decree of Darius

25 Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you.
 26 I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, And steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, And His dominion shall endure to the end.
 27 He delivers and rescues, And He works signs and wonders In heaven and on earth, Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.
 28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.
Daniel 6:25-28

King Darius: Like King Nebuchadnezzar, Darius testifies of God through his world. Darius decree is universal for his whole kingdom. This decree is an Aramaic, the common language of Persians, Babylonians and Medes.

God of Daniel: God identity is linked with His people. For example the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob identifies the God of Israel as opposed to the gods of Moab, or the god of the Philistines. People come to know God through our example.



The Living God: As opposed to the non-living God. Darius saw God in action, he knew he was a living God from Daniel example and the events he witnessed.

Reign of Darius...Cyrus the Persian: Daniel was fully aware of Cyrus, this verse should silence the critics who think Daniel made a historical mistake regarding Darius and Cyrus. The kingdom was a joint kingdom of the Persians and the Medes. Today the Kurds and the Iranians are the descendents of these two groups. At one time the Persians were under Median rule until Cyrus. Therefore there are couple of solutions to the Cyrus-Darius problem.

1. Darius could be the Median name for Cyrus.
2. Darius was "Given" authority to rule, the Babylonian province.
3. Discoveries are yet to be made to uncover the link between Cyrus and Darius.