

**Daniel 6**  
**December 13, 2015**

**Open with Prayer**

**HOOK:**

Q: Has anyone ever tried to frame you or speak falsely of you to try to bring you down or ruin your reputation? Maybe they spread a false rumor to cast you in a negative light?

Q: Since we're not up against "flesh and blood," who is behind falsehoods and rumors? [Satan. He wants nothing more than to destroy God's children.]

Daniel is no exception. As you know, Daniel has been around a good while. He is now in his 80s, and the one thing he never compromised was his faith in God. As we've been studying the book of Daniel, God has honored Daniel for his faithfulness, and now he was practically the second ruler in the land, though that wasn't official. The satraps and prefects were not too happy about Daniel's success. For one thing, he was an alien and a Jew. Satan has always hated the Jews and done his utmost to persecute them and eliminate them. The wicked always hate the just.

**Transition:** As we get ready to read chapter 6, we will see 124 persons involved in the leadership of the land: Darius the king, the three presidents (with Daniel as #1), and 120 princes or satraps. We see that Darius was so impressed with Daniel that he was planning to make him the official second ruler. The promotions of Daniel in Babylon are proof that a believer does not have to compromise to succeed (Matt. 6:33).

As we read this chapter, I want to propose that *all of us can endure the most trying of circumstances by trusting the truths about God seen in this chapter*. What are the TRUTHS about God that we need to latch onto to know that He truly has our back in threatening circumstances? Let's find them.

**BOOK (NIV 1984): [Read Dan 6:1-9]**

V.1:

- It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom,

V.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.

V.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.

V.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.

V.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."

V.6:

- So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said: “O King Darius, live forever!”

V.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.

V.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.”

V.9:

- So King Darius put the decree in writing.

**Process Observations/Questions:** [Let’s get the facts of the story nailed down.]

Q v.1-2: What role does Daniel currently have under King Darius? [He’s one of three administrators who oversee 120 satraps.]

Q v.3: How does Daniel compare to the other satraps and administrators? [His “exceptional qualities” so distinguished him that King Darius planned to set him over the whole kingdom.]

Q v.4: How excited were the satraps over the King’s decision to put Daniel over the whole kingdom? [Not at all.]

Q v.4: What plan did the satraps execute to no avail? [Tried to find charges against Daniel in his government affairs and could not find any corruption or negligence. In fact, they found him trustworthy.]

Q v.5: These men still want to frame him, so what area of Daniel’s life do they think they can trip him up? [Come up with a scheme that has to do with the law of God.]

Q v.7-9: So what decree did the satraps convince King Darius to enact? [Anyone who prays to any god or man during the next 30 days, except to King Darius, shall be thrown into the lions’ den. Moreover, this decree cannot be repealed.]

Q v.7: What was the lie told by the administrators who approached the king with a new decree? [They told King Darius that the “royal administrators, prefects...**all agreed** that the kind should issue this decree. Obviously, Daniel was NOT consulted!]

**[Read Dan 6:10-28]**

V.10:

- 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.

V.11:

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

V.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.”

V.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.”

V.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.

V.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.”

V.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!”

V.17:

- 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.

V.18:

- 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.

V.19:

- At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions’ den.

V.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?”

V.21:

- Daniel answered, “O king, live forever!”

V.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.”

V.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.

V.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.

V.25:

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

V.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.”

V.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.”

V.28:

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

### **Process Observations/Questions:**

Q: v.10: When Daniel learned of the new decree, what was the first thing he did? [he went home to his upstairs room where he prayed. “Go to the throne, not the phone!”]

Q v.10: How often did Daniel pray? [Daniel prayed three times a day in a special “prayer chamber” atop his house with windows facing Jerusalem.]

Q: Based on all the stories we’ve read so far about Daniel, how would you describe his prayer life? [Prayer was not an incidental thing in Daniel’s life; it was the most essential thing. He had a special place for prayer and special times for prayer, and you can be sure that he talked to the Lord all day long.]

Q: Where are the satraps/administrators at this point? [They are “johnny on the spot” watching as Daniel went to his prayer chamber where the windows were always open. They could see him kneel and lift up his hands toward Jerusalem.]

Observation: As we process this storyline and appreciate who God is, we need to also keep in mind that Daniel’s part was to walk closely with the Lord, which he did daily and faithfully. It wouldn’t hurt us to evaluate the strength of our prayer life as we go along! It is important to start the day with the Lord. Abraham had this habit (Gen. 19:27); so did David (Ps. 5:3) and our Lord Jesus Christ (Mark 1:35).

Q v.14: The satraps couldn’t wait to go tell King Darius about Daniel’s infraction related to the new decree. How did Darius feel once he heard the news? [He was greatly distressed. He was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.]

Q v.16: After the group of satraps reminds the king that he can’t go back on his decree, what does Darius tell Daniel? [“May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!”]

Q: How does Darius feel about Daniel? [He respects Daniel and his walk with his God. He hates that he has to administer the consequences of his decree, but also desperately hopes that God will save Daniel.]

Q v.18: What is the next eight hours like for King Darius? [He couldn't eat or sleep. He had no interest in being entertained to distract him from the grief he's feeling over Daniel.]

Q v.19: What is the first thing Darius does when the light of dawn arrives? [He "hurried" to the lion's den and called out to Daniel to see if the "living God was able to rescue him from the lions."]

Q v.21-22: How did Daniel respond? ["God sent His angel to shut the mouths of the lions because I was found innocent in His sight." And oh by the way, "I have never done any wrong before you, O King."]

Q v.23-28: What we read to the end of the chapter is such a "feel good" outcome. In the remainder of these verses, Darius reveals to us the TRUTHS we need to remember about God when we're faced with the most threatening of circumstances. Let's tag them:

- God is a "living" God (v.20)
- God sends His angels to protect us. (v.21)
- God doesn't let one scratch touch us when we fully trust Him. (v.23)
- God endures forever (v.26)
- God's Kingdom will not be destroyed (v.26)
- God's dominion will never end. (v.26)
- God rescues and He saves. (v.27)
- God performs signs and wonders in the heavens and the earth. (v.27)

God did not want Darius to deliver Daniel; that was a privilege He was reserving for Himself. Daniel was not depending on the king either. He had learned long ago to trust the living God. God did not want to save Daniel *from* the lions' den; He wanted to deliver him *out of* it.

### **LOOK:**

We just identified the TRUTHS about God. Is there a particular truth that strikes you as more meaningful given what is going on your life these days? If so, maybe the Lord is trying to encourage you to focus on it because He knows what your spiritual needs are as we processed this lesson. In the meantime, I encourage each of us to praise God by celebrating the TRUTHS that were revealed about Him in today's passage.

Close with X-REF: **Ps 146:1-6**

**Close in Prayer**

### **Commentaries for Today's Lesson:**

**Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament* (Da 6). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

In this chapter we spend a day in the life of the prime minister of the Medo-Persian Empire—Daniel the beloved. Remember, now, that Daniel is not a teenager in this chapter; he is a man in his eighties. This just proves that age is no barrier to serving Christ, nor is it any protection against temptation and testing. Because Daniel started young as a man of faith and prayer, he was faithful to the Lord even in his old age.

#### **I. A Dawn of Devotion**

How did the prime minister begin each day? He prayed to the Lord. In 6:10 we are told that Daniel prayed three times a day in a special “prayer chamber” atop his house. “Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray,” says Ps. 55:17. So, Daniel started his day with the Lord—and it’s a good thing that he did. The enemy was afoot and Daniel was going to face one of the greatest tests of his life. “Watch and pray!” was our Lord’s warning. Prayer was not an incidental thing in Daniel’s life; it was the most essential thing. He had a special place for prayer and special times for prayer, and you can be sure that he talked to the Lord all day long. No wonder God called him “greatly beloved” (9:23; 10:11, 19), language that in the NT the Lord reserves for His own Son. It was Daniel’s faithful walk and consistent prayer life that made him one of God’s “beloved sons” (read John 14:21–23 carefully). How important it is to start the day with the Lord. Abraham had this habit (Gen. 19:27); so did David (Ps. 5:3) and our Lord Jesus Christ (Mark 1:35).

#### **II. A Morning of Deception (6:1–9)**

God had honored Daniel for his faithfulness, so that he was practically the second ruler in the land. There were actually 124 persons involved in the leadership of the land: Darius the king, the three presidents (with Daniel as #1), and 120 princes. We see that Darius was so impressed with Daniel that he was planning to make him the official second ruler. The promotions of Daniel in Babylon are proof that a believer does not have to compromise to succeed (Matt. 6:33).

The other 122 leaders were not too happy about Daniel’s success. For one thing, he was an alien and a Jew. Satan has always hated the Jews and done his utmost to persecute them and eliminate them. The wicked always hate the just. Certainly godly Daniel was honest and kept careful watch over the affairs of state; the other leaders were stealing from the king and covering up their thefts with false accounts. This is why Darius had reorganized the government, so that he “should have no damage” (loss). The wicked lied about God’s people; they told Darius that all the presidents agreed on the plan (v. 7), when Daniel had never been consulted. How foolish Darius was to sign the decree without first consulting with his best president. But history shows that Darius was easily influenced by flattery.

#### **III. A Noon of Decision (6:10–13)**

Daniel was one of the first ones to hear of the new decree, and he had to decide what to do. Of course, his godly character and spiritual walk had already decided for him: he would serve the

Lord and pray to Jehovah just as he had always done. He could have made excuses and compromised. “Everybody was doing it.” And he was an old man who had served the Lord faithfully all his life. One little compromise at the end of his life could not do too much damage. Could he not be more useful to the Lord alive than dead? No. Daniel refused to compromise. He chose rather to be eaten by lions than to miss one prayer meeting.

His enemies watched as Daniel went to his prayer chamber where the windows were always open (“Pray without ceasing”), and they could see him kneel and lift up his hands toward Jerusalem. Now they had him. But Daniel had peace in his heart. He was praying, giving thanks, and making supplication, and this is the formula for peace (Phil. 4:6–7). This was not a “crisis prayer meeting”; Daniel was used to praying and had been since he was a teenager. It is wise to start building spiritual habits when you are young.

#### **IV. A Sundown of Disappointment (6:14–17)**

The king realized what a fool he had been, but even his power and wealth could not alter the law of the Medes and Persians. God did not want Darius to deliver Daniel; that was a privilege He was reserving for Himself. Daniel was not depending on the king either (Ps. 146:1–6). He had learned long ago to trust the living God. God did not want to save Daniel *from* the lions’ den; He wanted to deliver him *out of* it.

#### **V. A Night of Deliverance (6:18–23)**

What a contrast between Darius in his palace and Daniel in the lions’ den. Darius had no peace, yet Daniel was perfectly at peace with himself, the Lord, and the lions. Daniel was in a place of perfect safety, for God was there. Darius could have been slain by some enemy right in his bedroom. Darius had labored all the previous day to save Daniel from judgment, yet he could not break his own laws. Daniel simply talked to the God of the universe and received all the power he needed. In every way, Daniel was reigning as king while Darius was a slave.

It was Daniel’s faith in God that delivered him (6:23; Heb. 11:33). It is amazing that he had any faith at all, after living in that idolatrous heathen land for so many years. His daily fellowship with the Lord was the secret: he had faith, and he was faithful. See Ps. 18:17–24.

Christians today face many temptations to compromise, and it often appears that the “safest” course is to go with the crowd. But this is the most dangerous course. The only really safe place is in the will of God. Daniel knew that it was wrong to worship the king and pray to him, because Daniel knew God’s Word. He would rather die obeying God’s Word than live outside of God’s will. Satan comes as a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8–9) and uses our enemies to try to devour us (2 Tim. 4:17), but God can deliver us if it is for His glory. It is not always God’s will to deliver His children from danger; many Christians have given their lives in the place of duty. But what a reward they receive! Read Rev. 2:10 carefully.

#### **VI. A Morning of Destruction (6:24–28)**

Our souls revolt at the thought of whole families, including children, being thrown to hungry lions. But this was the law of the land, the same law that these wicked men had tried to use against Daniel. How tragic that their innocent children had to suffer; however, such are the awful penalties of sin. We believe that the children under the age of accountability went to be with the Lord. God always vindicates His own. “The righteous is delivered from trouble, and it comes to

the wicked instead” (Prov. 11:8, NKJV). If you are going through persecution and you wonder if God cares, read Ps. 37:1–15—and trust Him the way Daniel did.

Now we see why God permitted Daniel to go through this experience (vv. 25–27). It brought great glory to His name. Peter may have had Daniel in mind when the Spirit led him to write 1 Peter 3:10–17. When Christians overcome temptation, they always glorify the Lord, even if only the angels and demons are watching. May we, like Paul, desire that Christ might be magnified in our bodies, “whether by life or by death” (Phil. 1:20).

**Pentecost, J. D. (1985). Daniel. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 1, pp. 1347–1349). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

### *E. The edict of Darius (chap. 6)*

#### 1. THE PROMINENCE OF DANIEL (6:1–3)

6:1a. Critics have long questioned the historicity of Daniel. They challenge Daniel’s reference to the accession of **Darius** (vv. 1, 28; 9:1; called Darius the Mede in 5:31) because there is no historical evidence outside the Bible for his reign. However, several explanations are possible: (1) Darius may have been another name for Cyrus. Daniel 6:28 may be translated, “So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius, even the reign of Cyrus the Persian.” It was common for ancient rulers to use different names in various parts of their realms. Thus Darius may have been a localized name for Cyrus. (This is the view of D. J. Wiseman, “Some Historical Problems in the Book of Daniel,” in *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, pp. 12–14.)

(2) A second explanation is that Darius was appointed by Cyrus to rule over Babylon, a comparatively small portion of the vast Medo-Persian Empire. According to Daniel 9:1 Darius “was *made* ruler over the Babylonian Kingdom.” This suggests that he ruled by appointment, rather than by conquest and thus would have been subordinate to Cyrus, who appointed him. The historical situation leading to this appointment, based on the Nabonidus Chronicle, was that Babylon was conquered by Ugbaru, governor of Gutium, who entered the city of Babylon the night of Belshazzar’s feast. After Ugbaru conquered Babylon on October 12, 539 B.C., Cyrus entered the conquered city on October 29 of that same year. Ugbaru was then appointed by Cyrus to rule on his behalf in Babylon. Eight days after Cyrus’ arrival (Nov. 6) Ugbaru died. If Darius the Mede is another name for Ugbaru, as is entirely possible, the problem is solved. Since Darius was 62 years old when he took over Babylon (5:31), his death a few weeks later would not be unusual. According to this view (presented by William H. Shea, “Darius the Mede: An Update,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 20. Autumn 1982, pp. 229–47), Gubaru is another spelling for Ugbaru, with the name Gobryas being a Greek form of the same name and appearing in Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* 4. 6. 1–9; 7. 5. 7–34.

(3) A third explanation is that Ugbaru, governor of Gutium, conquered Babylon, and that Gubaru, alias Darius, was the man Cyrus appointed to rule over Babylon. (This is the view of John C. Whitcomb, Jr., *Darius the Mede*. Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1974.)

(4) Still others suggest Darius the Mede should be identified with Cambyses, Cyrus’ son, who ruled Persia 530–522 B.C. (This view is held by Charles Boutflower, *In and Around the Book of Daniel*. Reprint. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publishing Co., 1977, pp. 142–55.) Any of these four views may be correct, but perhaps the second one is preferable.



6:1b–3. One of Darius' first responsibilities was to reorganize the newly conquered kingdom of Babylon. He appointed **120 satraps** (cf. 3:2) **to rule over the kingdom** of Babylon, and put them under **three administrators ... one of whom was Daniel**. **The satraps were** responsible to the three administrators (perhaps 40 satraps to each administrator) **so that the king** was greatly aided in his administrative responsibilities. Daniel was an exceptional administrator, partly because of his extensive experience under Nebuchadnezzar (2:48) for about 39 years. So **the king planned to** make Daniel responsible for the administration of **the entire kingdom**. This of course created friction between Daniel and the other administrators and 120 satraps.

## 2. THE PLOT OF THE LEADERS (6:4–9)

6:4–5. The two **administrators** and 120 **satraps** sought some basis on which to accuse **Daniel in his** administrative work. They were probably jealous of his position and resented him because he was a Judean (cf. comments on 3:12). But they found that Daniel was not **corrupt**; he was **trustworthy** and diligent in discharging his responsibilities. They decided that they would have to find some **basis** for accusation in his religious practices, which obviously were well known to them.

6:6–9. So the 122 leaders devised a plot. (Daniel was certainly outnumbered!) They suggested to **King Darius** that he, **the king**, be made the sole object of worship for **30 days**. Either the 122 got others to agree to the plan (including **prefects ... advisers, and governors**) or the 122 merely *said* the others agreed. Saying that they **all agreed** (v. 7) was wrong for they certainly had not discussed this with Daniel. All prayer was to be addressed to the **king** in recognition of his power in the religious realm. The penalty for rebelling against his religious authority was to be death by being **thrown into a den** of lions. **Darius**, no doubt flattered by the adulation he would receive, consented to the plot and signed it into law, which according to Medo-Persian custom was irrevocable.

## 3. THE PRAYER OF DANIEL (6:10–11)

6:10–11. **The decree** signed into law by Darius became public knowledge. But **Daniel**, knowing of the decree, followed his customary practice (**just as he had done before**) of going **to his own upstairs room three times each day** to pray to ... **God** (cf. Ps. 55:17). He prayed **toward Jerusalem** (cf. Ps. 5:7; 2 Chron. 6:21, 34, 38).

Daniel's prayer was first a prayer of thanksgiving (Dan. 6:10) as he acknowledged God's goodnesses to him. His prayer was also a prayer for guidance and **help** (v. 11). Doubtless the responsibility of high office rested heavily on **Daniel** and he sought God's wisdom in the decisions he had to make. Daniel was more than 80 years old at this time (539 B.C.); he was about 16 when he was taken captive 66 years earlier (605 B.C.). So because of his years he may have also sought **God** for physical strength to carry on his heavy duties. Daniel made no attempt to hide his devotion to or his dependence on God, even though it now meant disobeying a governmental decree (cf. Acts 5:29). Daniel would not and could not look to Darius for the guidance and strength he knew God alone could supply. Apparently his opponents knew where and when he prayed, so they **went** (lit., rushed) to his room at the time and, as expected, **found him praying**.

## 4. THE PROSECUTION OF DANIEL (6:12–18)

6:12. Accusation was soon made against Daniel by his opponents before Darius who had issued the **decree**. Darius found himself bound by his own law; he said, **the decree stands**. Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian was above law, whereas Darius the Mede was bound by law. This was intimated in the contrast between the gold and the silver in the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (2:32, 39).

6:13–16. Hearing their accusation against **Daniel**, whom they derisively belittled as **one of the exiles from Judah** (as Arioch and Belshazzar had done; cf. 2:25; 5:13), Darius **was greatly distressed**. Interestingly three kings in the Book of Daniel were distressed (cf. 2:1; 3:13; 5:6, 9).

Though Darius knew he was bound by the law he had made, he sought some way **to rescue Daniel** from the penalty the law incurred. But finding it impossible to do so, he **gave the order** that **Daniel** be thrown **into the lions' den**.

As he was thrown in—to what seemed to be certain death—the **king said ... May your God, whom you serve continually** (cf. 6:20; 3:17), **rescue you**. Whether Darius knew about God's deliverance of Daniel's three friends from the fiery furnace in Nebuchadnezzar's day is not known. Yet Darius' statement expressed a desire that **Daniel** be spared. He certainly *wanted* him spared, for he obviously appreciated his administrative abilities (cf. 6:2–3). Perhaps he had been impressed with Daniel's confidence in God.

6:17–18. So that Daniel could not escape from the lions' den, **a stone was ... placed over the mouth of the den**, which was then **sealed** with a royal seal. Besides the side opening to the den (perhaps an underground cave) there may have been an opening at the top (cf. vv. 23–24). The seal, an impression made in clay by an image on a **ring**, would inform others that the stone was not to be tampered with in an effort to free Daniel. Reluctantly **the king** confined Daniel to the den.

**The king** was deeply agitated that he had been tricked by his administrators and satraps and that he was subject to his own laws. So he spent a sleepless **night** (cf. Xerxes' sleepless night, Es. 6:1).

## 5. THE PRESERVATION OF DANIEL (6:19–24)

6:19–22. At **dawn the king**, after a sleepless night (v. 18), **hurried to the lions' den**. In anguish over probably finding **Daniel** consumed, Darius hoped against hope (cf. v. 16) that the elderly statesman might have been rescued by **God, whom** he served (cf. 3:17; 6:16).

**Daniel** replied that **God** had in fact kept him unharmed because of his flawless life (v. 22) and **because he ... trusted in ... God** (v. 23). God's **Angel**, Daniel said, had kept the lions' **mouths** shut. Perhaps this Angel, like the One in the fiery furnace with the three young men (3:25), was the preincarnate Christ.

6:23. Discovering that **Daniel** was still alive, Darius **was overjoyed** and had him **lifted from the den** (cf. comments on v. 17). This experience illustrated for Darius the validity of faith in God and His power to control circumstances and deliver those who trust in Him. For 30 days Darius was addressed as God by the people in his realm (cf. v. 7). But **Daniel** served the true God, who did what Darius could never do: shut the mouths of lions to protect one who depended on Him.

6:24. Then the king ordered that Daniel's accusers and their families be **thrown into the ... den**. The attempt by false accusation to exterminate this Jewish captive-turned-executive boomeranged (cf. Haman's similar fate, Es. 7:9–10). The accusers had persuaded Darius to put in effect a decree that was intended to eliminate **Daniel**, but ironically they could not dissuade **the king** from eliminating them!

## 6. THE PRONOUNCEMENT OF THE KING (6:25–28)

6:25–28. The one who by his **decree** was being revered for a month as god (v. 7) now made a proclamation that all subjects of his nation (**all the peoples, nations, and men of every language**; cf. 3:4, 7; 4:1; 5:19; 7:14) **must fear and reverence Daniel’s God**. This was an amazing turnaround on Darius’ part! The reason for this, **Darius wrote**, is that Daniel’s God lives (**He is the living God**; cf. 6:20) whereas the gods of the Medes and Persians were dead idols. This God is eternal, **His kingdom** is indestructible (cf. 7:14), and He intervenes in people’s affairs and delivers those who trust Him. He works by miraculous power (**signs and wonders**; cf. 4:2–3) to perform His will, including the miraculous delivery of **Daniel**. Such a God is truly to be revered and worshiped. In spite of the opposition of the satraps and administrators, **Daniel** was honored and lived **during the reigns of Darius and Cyrus**.

**Cabal, T., Brand, C. O., Clendenen, E. R., Copan, P., Moreland, J. P., & Powell, D. (2007). The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith (p. 1280). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.**

**6:1** Critical scholars judge Darius the Mede (see 5:31) to be literary fiction, pointing out that no such name has been discovered in ancient texts. They claim the Jewish author conflated details about Cyrus (559–530 B.C.) and Darius I (522–486 B.C.) into his imaginary monarch. Such arguments from silence are notoriously precarious. Skeptics once confidently declared Belshazzar to be a fictional character as well. Scholars who accept the historicity of Daniel’s account usually identify Darius the Mede as a governor of Babylon (Gubaru=Gobryas) or as Cyrus himself. Lesser rulers were often spoken of as kings in ancient times, and dual names for kings were common. Either explanation is historically feasible.

Ancient records vary in the exact number of Persian satrapies. “Satrap” means “protector of the kingdom”; Xenophon and other Greek historians applied the term to lower officials. Daniel apparently used it in similar fashion.

**6:7** “Petitions any god or man” signifies religious petitions to the gods or their earthly representatives, the priests. Darius did not proclaim himself to be a god and forbid the worship of other gods. Rather, during this 30-day period, he intended to act as mediator for the gods of all the nations subject to him.

**6:8** Critics have challenged Daniel’s statement that “a law of the Medes and Persians” was “irrevocable” and could not “be changed” (see Est 1:19; 8:8), but Diodorus Siculus (17.30) reported that Darius III (336–330 B.C.) executed an innocent man because he could not change what had been decreed by royal authority. The phrase “a law of the Medes and Persians” (Dn 6:8, 12, 15; see Est 1:19; 8:8), shows that Daniel knew the Medo-Persian Empire existed jointly, and not as a separate Median Empire followed by a Persian Empire as some critics allege (see Dn 2:31–43).