

Daniel 6:1-9. *Believers do well; unbelievers turn shades of green*. When Darius became king, he decided to appoint 120 satraps¹⁵ to rule each of the 120 provinces. There were three administrators over these 120 governors—one of which was Daniel (aka Belteshazzar). It was the satraps' responsibility to keep what was belonged to Darius, to Darius. As per God's influence, Daniel did a great job as a "super-governor." So great that Darius planned to make him head of it all. The other two administrators and satraps searched for skeletons in Daniel's closet.¹⁶ None were found—only trustworthiness, honesty, and diligence were discovered.

So, they decided to create a political trap. Recognizing his faithfulness to the "law of his God," they sought out the king and said:

May you O King Darius live forever!
All the royal administrators have agreed the king should issue orders that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next month, except to you, of course, shall be thrown into the pit of lions. Please, king, issue a decree. Put it in writing according to the laws of the Medes & Persians, which makes it not able to be repealed.

So that's what he did—Darius put the decree in writing.

Q Why would Darius need so many administrators? Bureaucracy gone amuck?

Q Why were the other royal administrators jealous of Daniel? What was Daniel's "Achilles heel?"

Q About what part of their rationale to Darius was a lie?

DANIEL 6:1-9

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.

³Now 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.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. ⁵Finally 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."

⁶So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said:

"O King Darius, live forever! ⁷The 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. ⁸Now, 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."

⁹So King Darius put the decree in writing.

¹⁵"The official title of the viceroy who in the Persian Empire ruled several small provinces combined as one government. Each province had its own governor. Where NIV has 'satrap,' KJV consistently has 'princes' for the Aramaic term (nine verses) and 'lieutenants' for the Hebrew term (four verses)," as per Compton's Interactive NIV Commentary, 1996.

¹⁶Just like today, people do not tolerate the super competent nor incompetent.

Daniel 6:10-18. Daniel asks for clarification about the dining habits of *panthero leo*. When Daniel heard about the decree, he went home to pray. His windows upstairs opened toward the south and west, toward Jerusalem. Three times a day¹⁷ he prayed, on his knees, and gave thanks to God, just as was his custom.¹⁸

A group of his enemies came to spy and sure enough found Daniel praying, asking the Lord God for help. They had their “evidence” of non fealty. Reporting to the king, they asked rhetorically, did you not decree—in writing—that for 30 days no one was to pray to any god or man except you? What about the lions’ pit?

The king responded: What’s been written has been written—it stands. According to the law of the Medes & Persians, it can not be repealed.

Then the other shoe dropped... Oh by the way, Mr. Bigshot Daniel, one of the exiles from Judah, ignores your order, *the one you put in writing*. He still prays three times a day.

Darius was freaked—he liked Daniel and was determined to find a technicality to avoid sundown’s penalty—*panthero leo* food.

Again the co-conspirators reminded Darius that the law can not be changed, and so the king ordered Daniel to be thrown in their den. The king entreated Daniel, “May your God Who you serve continually, rescue you.”

To ensure Daniel could not escape, a stone was placed over the pit and signet seals were affixed, both of the king’s and the nobles. The king returned to his palace, without eating and “entertainment.” He could not sleep.

Q Why didn’t Daniel go to the king? Why did he go instead to the King?

Q What problem would not have been solved with the ingestion of Daniel by the *panthero leo*?

Q What sealed the deal? So what?

Q Why was Darius upset? Why couldn’t he sleep? Eat? Be “entertained?”

¹⁷See Psalm 55:15-17, especially, “...evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and He hears my voice.

¹⁸See 2 Chronicles 6:34-40 regarding how we are to approach being accused of not being loyal to our earthly authorities. See page 26.

DANIEL 6:10-18

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. ¹¹Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. ¹²So 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."

¹³Then 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." ¹⁴When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.

¹⁵Then 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."

¹⁶So 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!"

¹⁷A 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. ¹⁸Then 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.

Daniel 6:19-28. *They weren't hungry*. For some reason, the king got up early with the dawn. He went to the lion's den and called out to Daniel—"Daniel, servant of the liv- ing God, has your God, who you serve continually, rescued you from the lions?"

Daniel was McQueen cool. "O king live forever. My God has sent His messenger, and he shut the lions' mouths. They haven't hurt me for I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done anything wrong before you, o king."

Darius was overjoyed, and ordered Daniel to be brought out of the lion pit. Daniel had no wounds; he didn't even smell like lion-breath. No wounds because he had trusted in his God.

Oh oh. The co-conspirators who'd "falsely" accused Daniel were now introduced to panther oleo, and also, according to Persian custom—their families. Even before they reached the bottom of the pit, the lions had overpowered them and crushed their bones. Yikes.

Darius then sent a missive to all throughout the kingdom...

"May you live long and prosper. I decree that throughout the kingdom that all my people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. Here's why...

He is the living God. He endures forever. His kingdom will not be destroyed, his influence will be eternal.

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

So Daniel prospered during Darius' reign and on into the reign of Cyrus, the Persian, as well.

- Q What prompted Darius to get up and see about the condition of Daniel? Why did he expect to hear from Daniel?
- Q Who found Daniel innocent of wrong doing? Proof?
- Q Why haven't we written a praise chorus using Darian lyrics? Or, have we? To what extent was this praise to the Lord God [of Daniel] acceptable to Him?
- Q Was Darius a believer in the Lord God? Will he be found in heaven? Or, put more plainly, is deviance from monotheism a belief not tolerated by the Lord God Yahweh?

DANIEL 6:19-28

At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. ²⁰When 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?"

²¹Daniel answered, "O king, live forever! ²²My 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."

²³The 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.

²⁴At 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.

²⁵Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language throughout the land:

May you prosper greatly!

²⁶I 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.

²⁷He 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."

²⁸So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus [or *Darius, that is, the reign of Cyrus*] the Persian.

Daniel 6:10 “*toward Jerusalem.*” Note: 2 Chronicles 6:34-40—

³⁴“When your people go to war against their enemies, wherever you send them, and when they pray to you toward this city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name, ³⁵ then hear from heaven their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause.

³⁶When they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you become angry with them and give them over to the enemy, who takes them captive to a land far away or near; ³⁷ 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 captivity and say, ‘We have sinned, we have done wrong and acted wickedly’;

³⁸ and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity where they were taken, and pray toward the land you gave their fathers, toward the city you have chosen and toward the temple I have built for your Name; ³⁹ then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their pleas, and uphold their cause. And forgive your people, who have sinned against you.

⁴⁰Now, my God, may your eyes be open and your ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.”