

DANIEL – The Key to Revelation

Week 5– “Daniel and the Lions”

10/18/26 – PM

TEXT: Daniel 6

This chapter introduces us to the “Second World Empire” of the times of the Gentiles, the Medo-Persian Empire. The head of gold (Babylon) lasted for sixty-seven years, and now the “arms and chest of silver” of Nebuchadnezzar’s vision appear. The fall of Babylon took place in 538 B.C., and Darius immediately took the throne, dying in 536 B.C. This event in chapter 6 must have taken place within those two years.

I. The “Silver” Kingdom (vs. 1-9)

- a. The new king – Darius was a Mede (Daniel 5:31), and the uncle of Cyrus, the Persian. It is probably that because Media was the oldest (but weaker) of the two-nation kingdom, Darius was assigned the rule over Babylon and its old realms as an act of protocol.
- b. The new form of government
 - i. The absolute monarchy of Babylon (Daniel 5:19) was now replaced with the Medo-Persian oligarchy, which was sort of a “democratic monarchy”. This was a weaker form of government, symbolized by silver, which is inferior to gold.
- c. The new position for Daniel (vs. 2-3)
 - i. He is made “first president” – highest of the princes of Persia
 - ii. Daniel was between 85-90 years old at this time.
 - iii. He never retired or quit serving.
 - iv. His testimony never wavered – “an excellent spirit was in him”
- d. The new threat to Daniel
 - i. Daniel’s position was a threat to the other rulers who sought to take advantage and corruption of their power. He was in their

way, and the only way for them to remove him was to plot against him.

- ii. They conspired to destroy Daniel by lying to the king. (vs. 5-9)
 - 1. They imply that “all” the counselors were in agreement about this law – but Daniel (the chief president) had not been consulted or involved. They also knew that if they had singled out “the God of the Hebrews”, Darius would have caught on to their scheme. So instead, they make the decree about praying to “any God”.
 - a. The decree was for only 30 days – a time period in which they were sure Daniel would break the law.
 - 2. This is another example of Satan’s attempts to destroy God’s people. Hatred of the Jews, and lying about the people of Israel will not end until Jesus comes again!
 - 3. In their flattery of the king, they seemingly force him into a hasty decision. We see that he didn’t ask for Daniel or his counsel, and made a speedy political decision based on pride.

II. The “Seasoned” Counselor (vs. 10-11)

- a. Daniel knew the decree had been signed, and he knew that to break it would result in his demise.
- b. He chose loyalty to his God, over loyalty to the king.
 - i. He prayed three times a day
 - ii. “as he did aforetime” – the new law didn’t change his old faith
 - iii. Quote by Robert Sargent – “Today, there are three prayer activities a Christian should be engaged in: Personal prayer (Matthew 6:6), Partnership prayer (Matthew 18:19-20 / Acts 3:1), and Public prayer (Acts 4:24-31 / Ephesians 5:19-20).”

III. The Severe Consequence (vs. 12-17)

- a. The Babylonian form of capital punishment was death by fire (chapter 3). The Medes and Persians worshiped fire, so they used the den of lions as their capital punishment.
 - i. The famed archeologist Dieulafoy once fell into a well, which actually turned out to be a pit which was used as an open cage for wild animals. Upon the wall was found the inscription, “the place of execution where men who angered the king died by wild beasts.” Furthermore, excavation of the palace of Shushan revealed an ancient record giving a list of 484 men of high degree who thus died in a den of lions. Daniel’s name was not listed, which might be accepted as collateral evidence that Daniel escaped that execution. (Cited by R.P. Myers – The Book of Daniel – Covina, California, 1979 – pg. 44).
- b. His accusers counted on him to stay true to his God. (Acts 5:29)
- c. The king was very sorrowful of heart, and upset with himself for being duped into this execution of his friend.
 - i. The law of the Medes and Persians could not be altered (vs. 12)
 - ii. He tried “to the going down of the sun” to figure a way out of the mess he created.
- iii. The king expressed great faith in Daniel’s God (vs. 16-17)
 - 1. Question to consider - *Does the world have more faith in your God than you do?*
- iv. The pit was closed and sealed with the king’s own signet.
 - 1. There is some symbolism here to Christ’s tomb – where a stone was rolled, and sealed, and marked with the king’s signet. Jesus came out alive, just as Daniel would come out alive. The “law” died when Jesus resurrected. The “law” that judged Daniel died when he came out of the pit – it had no more power on him!

IV. The Supernatural Conclusion (vs. 18-28)

- a. Darius spent the night awake and fasting (vs. 18)
 - i. He goes very early in the morning “in haste” to the den of lions
 - ii. He seemed to know that Daniel would be protected (vs. 20)
- b. Daniel’s testimony (vs.21-22)
 - i. Of praise – “my God hath sent his angel”
 - 1. Shut the lion’s mouths.
 - 2. No hurt came upon Daniel
 - ii. Of innocence
 - 1. God knew Daniel was righteous before him
 - 2. Daniel was righteous before the king.
 - iii. Of faith (vs. 23)
 - 1. “because he believed in his God” (Hebrews 11:32-33)
- c. The king’s retribution (vs. 24)
 - i. The false accusers are killed for their conspiracy against Daniel, and their treachery before the king. Their family also suffered the king’s wrath.
 - 1. The Persian custom was that a man’s family would share in his punishment.

V. The Sovereign Claim (vs. 25-27)

- a. While this decree may not have incorporated the worship of Jehovah into the religion of the empire – it did proclaim religious toleration – and removed all danger for the Jewish captives in the kingdom to worship God.

VI. The Saint Continues (vs. 28)

- a. Daniel’s deliverance allowed him to be the chief adviser of the first two monarchs of the “Silver” Kingdom, Darius, representing the Medes, and Cyrus, the Persian.
- b. He “prospered” in both of their reigns.

Study references and commentaries used in this lesson:

“The Book of Daniel” – Rev. Clarence Larkin, 1929, published by the Clarence Larkin Estate, Glenside, PA 19038

“Daniel the Prophet” – Robert J. Sargent, 1987, published by Bible Baptist Church Publications, Oak Harbor, WA 98277