

DANIEL 6

STUDY GUIDE



Amazing
Discoveries

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Daniel 6 opens with a new kingdom ruling and a new king on the throne.

“At the taking of Babylon in 538 BC, Cyrus, as an act of courtesy, assigned the first place in the kingdom to his uncle, Darius. But, two years afterward, 536 BC, Darius died; and in the same year also died Cambyses, king of Persia, Cyrus’s father. By these events, Cyrus was left sole monarch of the whole empire.” (1)

This chapter had to have happened in between the dates of 536 and 538 BC – within the first two years of Darius’ reign. Daniel would have been an old man in his 80s at the time.

Please note: The entire chapter is provided here below, but because the study refers frequently to specific verses, it will be easier to complete it using a Bible opened to the chapter we are studying. This will prevent having to flip back to the pages at the beginning of the lesson as you progress through the lesson. You may also want to add notes or mark passages directly in your Bible.

These studies use the King James Version. Please keep in mind that if you use a different version, Bible verse fill-in-the-blank questions will not be a perfect fit and will not yield results that match the answers given in the answer key.

Daniel 6, KJV

1It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom;

2And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage.

3Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

4Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

5Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.

6Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever.

7All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

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

9Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.

10Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

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

12Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, 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 altereth not.

13Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

14Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

15Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

16Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

17And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

18Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of musick brought before him: and his sleep went from him.

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

20And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

21Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

22My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

23Then was the king 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 manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

24And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

25Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

26I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end.

27He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

28So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Daniel 6:1-5



1) Though Darius is said to have “preferred” Daniel and therefore promoted him to be prime minister, who was ultimately behind Daniel’s political rise to power?

Look up [Psalm 75:6-7](#).

A: _____

Because Daniel’s first loyalty was to God and he was God’s representative in the king’s court, God arranged matters for Daniel to be promoted.

The Medo-Persian empire was, at the time they conquered Babylon, divided into 120 provinces. Over each of these a governor was placed, and over all of these 120 governors, three presidents were placed. Out of these three, Daniel was the primary one. Preference was given to Daniel because in him was an “excellent spirit.”

Because of his status in Babylon during Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Daniel might have been considered an enemy by the Medo-Persian king, but instead, Darius discerned that in this man was a faithful spirit. And in fact, there was no one else as true to principle as Daniel.

2) What does the plot to overthrow Daniel reveal about the character of the king's cabinet?

A: _____



"The king,... was in danger; not in danger of losing his life, but these officials were scheming politicians who were robbing the government in every possible way. If they had taxes to gather, they turned a large percent to their own account. There was bribery, cheating, wire pulling, and burying of positions in the Babylonian government, as there is in the world today. Dishonesty was found everywhere." (2)

“Daniel’s position was not an enviable one. He stood at the head of a dishonest, prevaricating, godless cabinet, whose members watched him with keen, jealous eyes, to find some flaw in his conduct. They kept spies on his track, to see if they could not in this way find something against him. Satan suggested to these men a plan whereby they might get rid of Daniel. Use his religion as a means of condemning him, the enemy said.” (3)

The princes and governors were jealous of Daniel’s immediate rise to such heights of power and they looked for something that they could use against him in his dealings with Medo-Persian business, but they could find nothing.

Then they started to look at his personal life, and there, too, nothing was to be found.

No “error or fault” could be found in him. Here is where Daniel can be called a type of Christ. The same thing was said of Jesus in John 14:30: “the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.”



“The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.

“But such a character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature—the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man.”(4)

“The sixth chapter of Daniel is left on record to show how a man of God, when elevated to such a position, can remain uncontaminated. It shows that attitude which any man of God must assume towards popular vice and corruption, and more than that, it shows what treatment a man who is true to principle must expect to receive from the hands of those who are corrupt.” (5)

The princes and governors realized that this man Daniel was exemplary, and if they were going to get him for anything it would have to be about his faithfulness to his God.

Daniel 6:6-9

3) What strategy did the deceitful ministers use against the king?

A: _____

The cabinet ministers gathered before the king and began to flatter him and appeal to his vanity, telling him what an amazing king he was and how they only wanted everyone in the realm to honor him as a god.

“Mark the course these persons took to accomplish their nefarious purposes. They came together to the king, – came tumultuously, says the margin. They came as though some urgent matter had suddenly come up, and they had come unanimously to present it before him. They claimed that all were agreed. This was false; for Daniel, the chief of them all, was not, of course, consulted in the matter. The decree they fixed upon was one which would flatter the king’s vanity and thus the more readily gain his assent. It would be a position before unheard of, for a man to be the only dispenser of favors and granter of petitions for thirty days. Hence the king, not fathoming their evil designs, signed the decree, and it took its place on the statute-book as one of the unalterable laws of the Medes and Persians.” (6)

They knew that a decree made under the law of the Medes and Persians could not be altered (vs 8) and so they flattered Darius to sign the decree as if to say this is an infallible truth.

Daniel 6:10-11

4) Why didn't Daniel change his prayer habit when he knew it was likely to get him into trouble?

A: _____

Daniel would not alter his appointments with God because he understood that his physical and spiritual life depended upon his connection to God.

The men who were planning Daniel's demise must have known Daniel's character and that he would not change his activities. They were waiting to catch him at his prayers. It did not take long.

Verse 10 is one of the most profound verses in this chapter: "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, ... as he did aforetime."

Here was a death decree facing Daniel just like the one his three friends faced previously. Again, worship was the issue. Would he obey the king's law or would he be loyal to the God of heaven?

Many times in his personal life and career, Daniel had to choose between obeying God and man, at the risk of his life. Yet each time, he had put God first. Now an old man, Daniel had no intention to stop honoring the God who had sustained him throughout his years as a leader and servant in the courts of kings. His firm adherence to principle which he had cultivated since his youth did not fail him now.

He foresaw the conspiracy going on against him, but did not take any action to thwart it. He simply committed himself to God. He did not leave the empire on some pretended business, or close the windows, doing his devotions in secret, but just as he had always done, he kneeled at the open window with his face towards Jerusalem three times a day, praying, not silently, but aloud.

“Daniel had a special meeting place, and an appointed hour when he met the Lord, and these appointments were kept.... To sever the intercourse with God would be as painful to Daniel as to deprive him of natural life; and as Christ withdrew to the mountains after days of soul-harrowing labor to be refilled with that life which He constantly imparted to the hungering multitudes, so Daniel sought God in prayer. It was only by these frequent times of spirit filling, as it were, that he had strength to meet the nervous strain of his official duties. When the outward pressure was greatest, then he had the greatest need of being filled, that the equilibrium might be maintained... He who balances the clouds will so balance outward pressure with inward power, if we but let Him, that we never need be disturbed. If trials are great, open the soul to Heaven, and equalize the pressure by being filled from above.” (7)



Daniel 6:12-15



5) What false accusation did Daniel's enemies make against him based on his uninterrupted habit of prayer?

A: _____

As soon as they had their evidence, the wicked ministers rushed to the king and immediately accused Daniel. "Didn't you make this decree, O King?"

"I certainly did!" the king replied.

"Well, that Daniel that you made over all the governors, he doesn't respect you, O king, or your decree. He is praying to his God three times a day."

They wrongly concluded that Daniel's faithfulness to God meant that he had no regard for the king or the law of the land. They painted Daniel as a law-breaking rebel, making it seem as though his religion set him against the government.

6) Why do you think Darius went through with the sentence and cast Daniel into the den of lions?

A: _____

If his ministers were bold enough to attack his prime minister, the king knew they had little regard for him. King Darius must have feared for his own safety. He was bound to preserve the law, though he himself had made it.

Suddenly it all came clear to King Darius - the trap that had been laid by these men for both the king and Daniel. And there was nothing the king could do because the law was unalterable.

He was angry with himself for not seeing through their devious plans, and he tried all day to find a loophole that would allow him to change the law, but alas, it was not to be. "Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed," they smiled smugly at any argument the king brought forth to try to change the law.

And so, he had to send Daniel to the lions' den, much to his shame and self-deprecation. But when men's hands are tied, this is where God's opportunity begins. While Daniel's heart was in harmony with heaven, there was no power on earth that could force him to lose his life if God wanted him to live. There was no man more fitted to go inside the den than Daniel.



Daniel 6:16-23

7) What do Darius' parting words to Daniel reveal about his attitude toward Daniel's God?

A: _____

Before Daniel went in, King Darius said: "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee," showing that He was already acquainted with Daniel's God and believed He had the power to do what seemed impossible.

Just as with Jesus many years later, when the Son of God was placed in the sepulcher, a stone was brought and sealed with the king's own signet. "But there was no more power to hold Daniel in the den of lions than to keep Christ in the grave." (8)



An angel came and communed with Daniel and shut the lions' mouths. What a night that must have been for Daniel!—to be able to speak face to face with an angel, and be comforted by him, and to pet those big cats, and perhaps be licked by them or to even sleep curled up next to their warm bodies. Daniel had nothing to fear.

“There was a time when the lion and the lamb played together, and man was given dominion over the beasts of the earth. It was only after sin entered, and man took the life of the beasts, that they in turn sought to destroy man. Harmony with God will finally restore man to his God-given place as king over the beasts. Daniel’s heart was beating with the heart of God, and when he entered the den, the beasts were at peace with him.” (9)

8) What does Daniel give as the reason that God protected him from the lions? ([vs. 22](#))

A: _____

The king spent the night fasting and worrying about his friend Daniel. He did not play music to soothe himself, and he could not sleep. What thoughts he must have had as he considered how he had been tricked into sending his most faithful, upright and faultless servant to a sentence meant for the vilest of criminals. Perhaps the king even prayed a prayer to Daniel’s God.

In the morning, very early, the king hastened to the den of lions, and anxiously cried, “O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?”

He acknowledges Daniel’s consistency in obeying and serving his God.

To the king's joy, he heard the respectful response. "O king live forever." Daniel continued, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt."

"He is not here, but risen.' 'Why seek ye the living among the dead?' said the angel, as the women came to the sepulchre of Christ. So no manner of hurt was found upon Daniel, the representative of Christ, 'because he believed in his God;' because innocency was found in him." (10)

The king was overjoyed and immediately had Daniel removed from the lions' den. They surely must have embraced each other as the king checked to make sure Daniel was all in one piece.

Daniel 6:24-28

9) How can we be sure that news of Daniel's miraculous deliverance went through the entire empire?

A: _____

A major change of cabinet, Daniel's escape from harm, and the death of the deceivers' whole households would have given everyone everywhere much to talk about. In this way, the whole realm would have learned about the God of salvation.

After bringing Daniel out of the lions' den, the king immediately called all the men that had accused Daniel. His accusers could not believe that Daniel was still alive. Perhaps the lions had not been hungry, they may have surmised.

As retribution, and to show this was not the case, the king had them, their children, and their wives all thrown into the lions' den. The lions attacked them and tore them to pieces before they could even hit the bottom of the den, showing that the lions had truly had their mouths shut by supernatural means.

"The result of Daniel's deliverance was that another proclamation went out through the empire in favor of the true God, the God of Israel." (11) Darius wrote a decree to all in his realm that they should "tremble and fear the God of Daniel, and that He was the living God and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Again God used the events in Daniel's life to arrange for a king to testify of God's power and authority.

"In this case, and in the case of the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace, the seal of God is set in favor of two great lines of duty: 1. As in the case of the three in the fiery furnace, not to yield to any known sin; and 2. As in the present case, not to omit any known duty." (12)

Daniel willingly faced death with unswerving fidelity to his heavenly Father, and God chose to deliver him.

In the end time, God's faithful people will also face a death decree and God will also interpose in their behalf as He did with Daniel.

This is the last we read of Daniel's illustrious life. Daniel continued to prosper during the short reign of King Darius and then the reign of Cyrus the Great.

The rest of the book of Daniel consists of dreams and visions he received from God that expanded on the dream given to King Nebuchadnezzar.

“In Daniel’s life, the desire to glorify God was the most powerful of all motives. He realized that when standing in the presence of men of influence, a failure to acknowledge God as the source of his wisdom would have made him an unfaithful steward. And his constant recognition of the God of heaven before kings, princes, and statesmen, detracted not one iota from his influence.” (13)

“While Daniel clung to God with unwavering trust, the spirit of prophetic power came upon him. While honored by men with the responsibilities of the court and the secrets of the kingdom, he was honored by God as His ambassador, and taught to read the mysteries of ages to come. Heathen monarchs, through association with Heaven’s representative, were constrained to acknowledge the God of Daniel. ‘Of a truth it is,’ declared Nebuchadnezzar, ‘that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets.’ And Darius, in his proclamation ‘unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth,’ exalted the ‘God of Daniel’ as ‘the living God, and steadfast forever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed;’ who ‘delivereth and rescueth, and ... worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth.’” (14)

“Those who have moral courage to stand in opposition to the vices and errors of their fellow-men—it may be of those whom the world honor—will receive hatred, insult, and abusive falsehood. They may be thrust down from their high position, because they would not be bought or sold, because they could not be induced by bribes or threats to stain their hands with iniquity. Everything on earth may seem to conspire against them; but God has set his seal upon his own work.

They may be regarded by their fellow-men as weak, unmanly, unfit to hold office; but how differently does the Most High regard them. Those who despise them are the really ignorant.

While the storms of calumny and reviling may pursue the man of integrity through life, and beat upon his grave, God has the 'well done' prepared for him.

Folly and iniquity will at best yield only a life of unrest and discontent, and at its close a thorny dying pillow. And how many, as they view their course of action and its results, are led to end with their own hands their disgraceful career. And beyond all this waits the Judgment..." (15)



History tells stories of countless men and women who were faithful despite persecution. Pictured is the "Reformation Wall" from Switzerland, depicting Calvin, Farel, Beze, and Knox, men who stood firm for the truth. May we learn from the examples of those who have gone before us.

Personal Reflection

Think about the times in your life when you bent to pressure and sacrificed integrity. What do you need to do to ensure that your heart is undivided toward God?

Prayer

Loving Father in heaven, forgive me for the times that I have betrayed Your trust and not been a faithful witness for You. Help me not to sway from my allegiance to You, come what may.

Answer Key

1. God was behind Daniel's rise to power. "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another." Ps 75:6,7
2. The ministers of the king's cabinet were corrupt.
3. The king's ministers deceived him by flattery.
4. Daniel put his relationship with God first and would not be frightened into changing his devotional habits.
5. Because he continued to pray to God despite the law forbidding it, they accused him of having no regard for the king or the law of the kingdom.
6. Answers will vary. He had to honor the law, even if he had made it.
7. Darius knew something about God and believed that He could rescue Daniel.
8. Daniel said he was innocent of any wrongdoing toward God or the king.
9. The word of Daniel's deliverance by his all-powerful God would have spread like wildfire by word of mouth. In addition, King Darius published an official decree.

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3. Youth's Instructor, Nov 1, 1900.
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