

The Book of Daniel

Daniel, Darius, and the Den of Lions

Daniel 6

1. **The Identity of Darius** (Dan. 5:31-6:1)
The only known ancient document identifying Darius as king in Babylon at this time is the book of Daniel. The historical record very certainly identifies Cyrus as the ruler of the Medo-Persian empire when Babylon was overthrown. Scholars believing that Daniel is not a forgery believe either that Darius was another name for a man named Gubaru (Gobryas) who was given the rule of Babylon under Cyrus or that Darius is another name (or title) for Cyrus himself (v.28).
2. **The Character of Daniel** (Dan. 6:1-5)
Within a very short amount of time Daniel had so impressed Darius that he is made one of only three primary officials over the entire kingdom, and is soon to be the only one. His public and professional testimony was such that he neither failed to do what he should do or did what he should not have. His faithfulness to God was well established (Dan. 1:8; 2:17, 48) and would have been well known by the powerful in Babylon and even by those not in the city (cf. Ezek. 14:14).
3. **The Plot Against Daniel** (Dan. 6:6-9)
Pairing the law (v.8) together with lies and flattery (v.7), the conspirators appealed to Darius' vanity in order to specifically target Daniel.
4. **The Resolve of Daniel** (Dan. 6:10)
Many people may make a grand gesture of protest against an unjust law. Daniel's actions are not in response to this law, but rather they were the cause of it (vs. 5, 13). He had apparently patterned his own habits of personal devotion upon what he had learned from Scripture (2 Ch 6:34-39; Ps. 55:16-17).
5. **The Distress of Darius** (Dan. 6:12-18)
With the revelation that Darius was not a god, but gullible, he was preoccupied with attempting to find a way out of his blunder. The trap was set so as to make the law so binding that it would be impossible for even the king himself to intervene on Daniel's behalf (cf. Est.1:19; 8:8). Darius ultimately acknowledges that God will have to deliver Daniel Himself (v.16).
6. **The Deliverance of Daniel** (Dan. 6:19-23)
The only detail given for Daniel's night with the lions is that God had sent His angel to shut their mouths (Dan. 3:25, 28; cf. Isa. 37:36). God again has shown His sovereignty over the designs of men and over the world that He created (cf. Gen. 50:20; Acts 2:22-24; 4:27-28).

7. **The Destruction of the Conspirators** (Dan. 6.24)
Darius inflicts the same sentence on Daniel's accusers as they had upon Daniel (cf. Deut. 19:16-21).
8. **The Decree of Darius** (Dan. 6:25-28)
During the short relationship, Daniel had made quite an impression about God upon Darius (cf. vs.14, 16). Darius properly describes Him as the living God with an everlasting kingdom (Isa. 9:6-7; Jer. 10:10).

Seeing the Sovereignty of God in the Narratives of Daniel

1. The Sovereignty of God Over the Natural World
 - A. God is Sovereign Over Food (Dan. 1)
 - B. God is Sovereign Over Fire (Dan. 3)
 - C. God is Sovereign Over Felines (Dan. 6)
2. The Sovereignty of God Over Man
 - A. God is Sovereign Over Man's Dreams (Dan. 2)
 - B. God is Sovereign Over Man's Dignity (Dan. 4)
 - C. God is Sovereign Over Man's Dynasties (Dan. 5)