

Daniel 6

When Darius became king, he appointed an official over each of his 120 provinces. He then selected three administrators to supervise the 120 officials so that the king would suffer no loss. Daniel was one of the three administrators and he distinguished himself above all the others because an excellent spirit was in him, and the king planned to appoint him over the whole kingdom. So, the other officials tried to find grounds for complaint against Daniel but they could find no grounds or any corruption. They said, “We shall not find anything to use against Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God.”

So, these men plotted and came to the king and said to him, “O King Darius, live forever! We have all agreed on a way to honor you. With your permission, we want everyone to worship you for 30 days. We will craft a law that says that anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human, for those 30 days shall be thrown into a den of lions. Sign this as a law of the Medes and Persians so that it cannot be changed or revoked. And King Darius signed the document.

Although Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he continued to go to his house, which had windows in its upper room open toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he would get down on his knees and pray to his God and praise him, just as he had always done. The conspirators came forward and found Daniel praying and seeking mercy before his God. They approached the king and said, “O king, did you not sign a law saying that anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human other than you, within these thirty days, shall be thrown into a den of lions?”

The king answered, “Yes, and it stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, and it cannot be revoked.”

Then they responded, “Daniel, one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, but he prays to his God three times a day.”

When the king heard this charge, he was most distressed. He was determined to save Daniel, and until the sun went down, he made every effort to rescue him.

The conspirators came to the king and said, “Know that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no ordinance that the king establishes can be changed.”

Then the king gave the command that Daniel be thrown into the den of lions. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you faithfully serve, deliver you!”

A stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet so that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no food was brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

At the break of day, the king arose and hurried to the den of lions. When he came near the den, he cried out anxiously, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you faithfully serve been able to deliver you from the lions?”

Daniel replied, “O king, live forever! My God sent his angel and shut the lions’ mouths so that they would not hurt me, because I was found blameless before him, and also before you. O king, I have done nothing wrong.”

The king was exceedingly glad and ordered that Daniel be brought up from the lions’ den. No kind of harm had been done to Daniel because he had trusted in his God. The king then gave a command that those who had accused Daniel be brought into the den along with their children and wives. Before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones to pieces.

Then King Darius wrote to all peoples and nations of every language throughout the whole world, “May you have abundant prosperity. I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel.

For he is the living God, enduring forever.

His kingdom shall never be destroyed,

And his dominion has no end.

He delivers and rescues,

He works signs and wonders

In heaven and on earth;

For he has saved Daniel

From the power of the lions.”

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