**Lesson 6 Daniel 6:1-28**

**Daniel 6:1-28 (NASB)**
1  It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom,
2  and over them three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one), that these satraps might be accountable to them, and that the king might not suffer loss.
3  Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom.
4  Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or *evidence of* corruption, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was *to be* found in him.
5  Then these men said, "We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find *it* against him with regard to the law of his God."
6  Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows: "King Darius, live forever!
7  "All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions' den.
8  "Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked."
9  Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction.
10  Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.
11  Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God.
12  Then they approached and spoke before the king about the king's injunction, "Did you not sign an injunction that any man who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, is to be cast into the lions' den?" The king replied, "The statement is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked."
13  Then they answered and spoke before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the injunction which you signed, but keeps making his petition three times a day."
14  Then, as soon as the king heard this statement, he was deeply distressed and set *his* mind on delivering Daniel; and even until sunset he kept exerting himself to rescue him.
15  Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, "Recognize, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or statute which the king establishes may be changed."
16  Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lions' den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you."
17  A stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing would be changed in regard to Daniel.

**Stop Here**


18  Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him.
19  Then the king arose at dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lions' den.
20  When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?"
21  Then Daniel spoke to the king, "O king, live forever!
22  "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime."
23  Then the king was very pleased and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no injury whatever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.
24  The king then gave orders, and they brought those men who had maliciously accused Daniel, and they cast them, their children and their wives into the lions' den; and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.
25  Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language who were living in all the land: "May your peace abound!
26  "I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; For He is the living God and enduring forever, And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, And His dominion *will be* forever.
27  "He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders In heaven and on earth, Who has *also* delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."
28  So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

**1. The Prominence of Daniel (**[**6:1-3**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A1-3)**)**

[6:1a](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A1). Critics have long questioned the historicity of Daniel. They challenge Daniel's reference to the accession of **Darius** ([vv. 1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A1), [28](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A28); [9:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+9%3A1); called Darius the Mede in [5:31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A31)) because there is no historical evidence outside the Bible for his reign. However, several explanations are possible: (1) Darius may have been another name for Cyrus. [Daniel 6:28](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A28) may be translated, "So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius, even the reign of Cyrus the Persian." It was common for ancient rulers to use different names in various parts of their realms. Thus Darius may have been a localized name for Cyrus. (This is the view of D.J. Wiseman, "Some Historical Problems in the Book of Daniel," in *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, pp. 12-14.)

(2) A second explanation is that Darius was appointed by Cyrus to rule over Babylon, a comparatively small portion of the vast Medo-Persian Empire. According to [Daniel 9:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+9%3A1) Darius "was *made* ruler over the Babylonian Kingdom." This suggests that he ruled by appointment, rather than by conquest and thus would have been subordinate to Cyrus, who appointed him. The historical situation leading to this appointment, based on the Nabonidus Chronicle, was that Babylon was conquered by Ugbaru, governor of Gutium, who entered the city of Babylon the night of Belshazzar's feast. After Ugbaru conquered Babylon on October 12, 539 b.c., Cyrus entered the conquered city on October 29 of that same year. Ugbaru was then appointed by Cyrus to rule on his behalf in Babylon. Eight days after Cyrus' arrival (Nov. 6) Ugbaru died. If Darius the Mede is another name for Ugbaru, as is entirely possible, the problem is solved. Since Darius was 62 years old when he took over Babylon ([5:31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A31)), his death a few weeks later would not be unusual. According to this view (presented by William H. Shea, "Darius the Mede: An Update," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 20. Autumn 1982, pp. 229-47), Gubaru is another spelling for Ugbaru, with the name Gobryas being a Greek form of the same name and appearing in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* 4. 6. 1-9; 7. 5. 7-34.

(3) A third explanation is that Ugbaru, governor of Gutium, conquered Babylon, and that Gubaru, alias Darius, was the man Cyrus appointed to rule over Babylon. (This is the view of John C. Whitcomb, Jr., *Darius the Mede.* Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1974.)

(4) Still others suggest Darius the Mede should be identified with Cambyses, Cyrus' son, who ruled Persia 530-522 b.c. (This view is held by Charles Boutflower, *In and Around the Book of Daniel.* Reprint. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publishing Co., 1977, pp. 142-55.) Any of these four views may be correct, but perhaps the second one is preferable.

[6:1b-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A1-3). One of Darius' first responsibilities was to reorganize the newly conquered kingdom of Babylon. He appointed **120 satraps** (cf. [3:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A2)) **to rule** over **the kingdom** of Babylon, and put them under **three administrators... one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were** responsible to the three administrators (perhaps 40 satraps to each administrator) **so that the king** was greatly aided in his administrative responsibilities. Daniel was an exceptional administrator, partly because of his extensive experience under Nebuchadnezzar ([2:48](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A48)) for about 39 years. So **the king planned to** make Daniel responsible for the administration of **the** entire **kingdom.** This of course created friction between Daniel and the other administrators and 120 satraps.

**2. The Plot of the Leaders (**[**6:4-9**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A4-9)**)**

[6:4-5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A4-5). The two **administrators** and 120 **satraps** sought some basis on which to accuse **Daniel in his** administrative work. They were probably jealous of his position and resented him because he was a Judean (cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031786#links2170) on [3:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A12)). But they found that Daniel was not **corrupt**; he was **trustworthy** and diligent in discharging his responsibilities. They decided that they would have to find some **basis** for accusation in his religious practices, which obviously were well known to them.

[6:6-9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A6-9). So the 122 leaders devised a plot. (Daniel was certainly outnumbered!) They suggested to **King Darius** that he, **the king,** be made the sole object of worship for **30 days.** Either the 122 got others to agree to the plan (including **prefects... advisers, and governors**) or the 122 merely *said* the others agreed. Saying that they **all agreed** ([v. 7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A7)) was wrong for they certainly had not discussed this with Daniel. All prayer was to be addressed to the **king** in recognition of his power in the religious realm. The penalty for rebelling against his religious authority was to be death by being **thrown into** a **den** of lions. **Darius,** no doubt flattered by the adulation he would receive, consented to the plot and signed it into law, which according to Medo-Persian custom was irrevocable.

**3. The Prayer of Daniel (**[**6:10-11**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A10-11)**)**

[6:10-11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A10-11). **The decree** signed into law by Darius became public knowledge. But **Daniel,** knowing of the decree, followed his customary practice (**just as he had done before**) of going **to his** own **upstairs room.... three times** each **day** to pray **to... God** (cf. [Ps. 55:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+55%3A17)). He prayed **toward Jerusalem** (cf. [Ps. 5:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+5%3A7); [2 Chron. 6:21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Ch+6%3A21), [34](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Ch+6%3A34), [38](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Ch+6%3A38)).

Daniel's prayer was first a prayer of thanksgiving ([Dan. 6:10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A10)) as he acknowledged God's goodnesses to him. His prayer was also a prayer for guidance and **help** ([v. 11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A11)). Doubtless the responsibility of high office rested heavily on **Daniel** and he sought God's wisdom in the decisions he had to make. Daniel was more than 80 years old at this time (539 b.c.); he was about 16 when he was taken captive 66 years earlier (605 b.c.). So because of his years he may have also sought **God** for physical strength to carry on his heavy duties. Daniel made no attempt to hide his devotion to or his dependence on God, even though it now meant disobeying a governmental decree (cf. [Acts 5:29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ac+5%3A29)). Daniel would not and could not look to Darius for the guidance and strength he knew God alone could supply. Apparently his opponents knew where and when he prayed, so they **went** (lit., rushed) to his room at the time and, as expected, **found** him **praying.**

**4. The Prosecution of Daniel (**[**6:12-18**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A12-18)**)**

[6:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A12). Accusation was soon made against Daniel by his opponents before Darius who had issued the **decree.** Darius found himself bound by his own law; he said, **the decree stands.** Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian was above law, whereas Darius the Mede was bound by law. This was intimated in the contrast between the gold and the silver in the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream ([2:32](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A32), [39](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A39)).

[6:13-16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A13-16). Hearing their accusation against **Daniel,** whom they derisively belittled as **one of the exiles from Judah** (as Arioch and Belshazzar had done; cf. [2:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A25); [5:13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A13)), Darius **was greatly distressed.** Interestingly three kings in the Book of Daniel were distressed (cf. [2:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A1); [3:13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A13); [5:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A6), [9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A9)).

Though Darius knew he was bound by the law he had made, he sought some way **to rescue Daniel** from the penalty the law incurred. But finding it impossible to do so, he **gave the order** that **Daniel** be thrown **into the lions' den.**

As he was thrown in—to what seemed to be certain death—**the king said... May your God, whom you serve continually** (cf. [6:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A20); [3:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A17)), **rescue you.** Whether Darius knew about God's deliverance of Daniel's three friends from the fiery furnace in Nebuchadnezzar's day is not known. Yet Darius' statement expressed a desire that **Daniel** be spared. He certainly *wanted* him spared, for he obviously appreciated his administrative abilities (cf. [6:2-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A2-3)). Perhaps he had been impressed with Daniel's confidence in God.

[6:17-18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A17-18). So that Daniel could not escape from the lions' den, **a stone was... placed over the mouth of the den,** which was then **sealed** with a royal seal. Besides the side opening to the den (perhaps an underground cave) there may have been an opening at the top (cf. [vv. 23-24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A23-24)). The seal, an impression made in clay by an image on a **ring,** would inform others that the stone was not to be tampered with in an effort to free Daniel. Reluctantly **the king** confined Daniel to the den.

**The king** was deeply agitated that he had been tricked by his administrators and satraps and that he was subject to his own laws. So he spent a sleepless **night** (cf. Xerxes' sleepless night, Es. [6:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A1)).

 **Stop Here**

**5. The Preservation of Daniel (**[**6:19-24**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A19-24)**)**

[6:19-22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A19-22). At **dawn the king,** after a sleepless night ([v. 18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A18)), **hurried to the lions' den.** In anguish over probably finding **Daniel** consumed, Darius hoped against hope (cf. [v. 16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A16)) that the elderly statesman might have been rescued by **God, whom** he served (cf. [3:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A17); [6:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A16)).

**Daniel** replied that **God** had in fact kept him unharmed because of his flawless life ([v. 22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A22)) and **because he... trusted in... God** ([v. 23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A23)). God's **Angel,** Daniel said, had kept the lions' **mouths** shut. Perhaps this Angel, like the One in the fiery furnace with the three young men ([3:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A25)), was the preincarnate Christ.

[6:23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A23). Discovering that **Daniel** was still alive, Darius **was overjoyed** and had him **lifted from the den** (cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031990#links2174) on [v. 17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A17)). This experience illustrated for Darius the validity of faith in God and His power to control circumstances and deliver those who trust in Him. For 30 days Darius was addressed as God by the people in his realm (cf. [v. 7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A7)). But **Daniel** served the true God, who did what Darius could never do: shut the mouths of lions to protect one who depended on Him.

[6:24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A24). Then the king ordered that Daniel's accusers and their families be **thrown into the... den.** The attempt by false accusation to exterminate this Jewish captive-turned-executive boomeranged (cf. Haman's similar fate, Es. [7:9-10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A9-10)). The accusers had persuaded Darius to put in effect a decree that was intended to eliminate **Daniel,** but ironically they could not dissuade **the king** from eliminating them!

**6. The Pronouncement of the King (**[**6:25-28**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A25-28)**)**

[6:25-28](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A25-28). The one who by his **decree** was being revered for a month as god ([v. 7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A7)) now made a proclamation that all subjects of his nation (**all the peoples, nations, and men of every language**; cf. [3:4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A4), [7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A7); [4:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A1); [5:19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A19); [7:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A14)) **must fear and reverence** Daniel's **God.** This was an amazing turnaround on Darius' part! The reason for this, **Darius wrote,** is that Daniel's God lives (**He is the living God**; cf. [6:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A20)) whereas the gods of the Medes and Persians were dead idols. This God is eternal, **His kingdom** is indestructible (cf. [7:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A14)), and He intervenes in people's affairs and delivers those who trust Him. He works by miraculous power (**signs and wonders**; cf. [4:2-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A2-3)) to perform His will, including the miraculous delivery of **Daniel.** Such a God is truly to be reverenced and worshiped. In spite of the opposition of the satraps and administrators, **Daniel** was honored and lived **during** the reigns **of Darius** and **Cyrus.**

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

**Open it**

1. Under what conditions would you consider stepping into a lion’s cage?
 **Only after much prayer, for God and family**

3. What would you do if your right to pray in any public setting was legally taken away?
 **Be in jail**

**Explore it**

4. How did Darius rule his kingdom? ([6:1-2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A1-2))
 **By appointing Satraps, or governors, to rule under the commissioners**

5. Why did Daniel’s colleagues plot against him? ([6:3-4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A3-4))
 **Jealousy, they did not want an outsider in charge**

6. How did the administrators and satraps plan to discredit Daniel? ([6:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A5))
 **by trickery**

8. How did Daniel respond to the king’s decree? ([6:9-10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A9-10))
 **By continuing to pray to God on his roof as he had been doing**

9. Who found Daniel praying to God? ([6:11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A11))
 **The men who had the King enact the law against praying to anyone but him**

10. Why was Daniel prosecuted? ([6:12-15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A12-15))
 **Because the King had signed the decree, he could not change it for 30 days according to their laws**

11. What was the king’s hope for Daniel? ([6:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A16))
 **That Daniels God would save him**

12. How was Daniel punished? ([6:16-17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A16-17))
 **By being locked into the lions den all night**

**Stop Here**

13. What happened during the night? ([6:19-22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A19-22))
 **The King slept poorly and hasten to the lions’ den to check on Daniel and make sure he was OK**

14. What did Daniel say to the king? ([6:21-22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A21-22))
 **God sent his angel and shut the lions’ mouth and they had not harmed him in any way**

15. Why did God protect Daniel? ([6:23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A23))
 **Daniel had trusted in God and God had shut the mouths of the lions’**

16. What happened to Daniel’s accusers and their families? ([6:24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A24))
 **The were thrown into the same lions’ den and were devoured**

17. What was the king’s pronouncement? ([6:25-28](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A25-28))
 **The King wrote a decree that all men were to worship the God of Daniel. His kingdom is eternal**

**Get it**

18. If you were attending a public event at which you felt that your Christian values were being compromised, what would you do?
 **Leave**

21. What qualities in Daniel do you most admire?
 **Absolute trust in God**

**Apply it**

26. What steps can you take to trust God to resolve whatever difficult circumstances you face?
 **Pray for his guidance and try to let him take over**

27. How do you need God’s wisdom and help in forgiving someone who has betrayed you?
 **I am still angry with my brother for what he did to my mom and how it ended up for my Mom**