

Daniel 6 Kingdoms in Conflict: The Victorious Life with God in the Dens of Prejudice, Politics and Lions

Introduction

There is much talk about the kingdoms of men.

v 1 – “It pleased Darius (Darius = a title = “holder of the scepter” = GOBARU”) to set over the kingdom... over the whole kingdom...”

v 4 – “Then the presidents and the princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom...”

v 7 – “All the presidents of the kingdom...”

(And so there is much talk about this kingdom in which men rule and contest for power with pride, prejudice and politics.)

“But there is another kingdom involved in this issue.

-- v 25-26 “Then King Darius wrote unto all people, Nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

v 26 – “I 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 steadfast for ever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end.”

Where there is more than one kingdom there will be conflict.

All Christians live between at least two kingdoms.

We live in an earthly kingdom. We are surrounded by the dens of prejudice, politics and lions.

Humanly there is danger all around – and danger within.

Chapter 6 is designed to show us

THE VICTORIOUS LIFE WITH GOD IN THE DENS OF PREJUDICE, POLITICS AND LIONS.

In chapter 6 we will study eight (8) elements of the Conflict and Victory of God's people as the kings of evil battle the Kingdom of God.

I. THE PROMINENCE OF GOD'S PROPHET

-- 6:1-2

1. Prominence as Seen in the King's System

-- READ and explain 6:1-2a

2. Prominence as Seen in the King's Choice

-- 6:2b "Daniel was first."

3. Prominence as Seen in the King's Concern

-- 6:2b "That the princes might give accounts to them, and the king should have no damage."

-- (Two Major Concerns)

a. Accountability

b. Accuracy

CHARACTER MATTERS

-- And that leads logically into the next lesson:

II. THE PURITY OF GOD'S PROPHET

-- 6:3-4

1. Purity as Seen in the Absence of Self-Seeking

- 6:3 “Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and the princes...and the king thought to him over the whole realm.”
- The absence of this form of purity has been the ruin of many would-be Christian servants.
 - The desire to rule, or even “lead” – to be prominent, first, biggest, best has been the curse of many.
 - Daniel refused to
 - make decisions
 - take steps
 - fashion procedures
 - develop friendships
 - or any such thing for the purpose of self-promotion.
 - Daniel’s preference by the king is a remarkable testimony to the power of Purity in
 - CONVICTION
 - COURAGE
 - COURTESY
 - CONSISTENCY
 - Prov 25:27
 - KJV “It is not good to each much honey: so for me to search their own glory is not glory.”
 - ASV “...for men to search out their own glory is grievous.”
 - NAB (New American Bible) “To each much honey is not good; nor to seek honor after honor.”

- Christ had a strong and severe word for self-seekers: Mt 20:21 – A mother came to Christ and said, “Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on your right hand, and the other on the left, in your kingdom.” Christ replied, “You do not know what you are asking.”
- 2 Cor 4:5 – continues to rebuke us today with reference to self-seeking in the kingdom.

“We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake.”

- Christianity is always at a dangerous point when its professed believers are more concerned about their prominence than about our Lord’s pre-eminence.
- Daniel is a model of Purity, and of Purity’s Power, in his preference by the king instead of his promotion of him self.
- But not only is Daniel’s Purity seen
 1. In the Absence of Self-Seeking, it is also seen

2. In the Possession of an Excellent Spirit

- 6:3 “This Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, BECAUSE AN EXCELLENT SPIRIT WAS IN HIM;...”
- By this time, Daniel was a man of around 80 years of age.

He had been captive for around 60 years of life –

YET – THERE WAS AN EXCELLENT SPIRIT
WITHIN HIM

- How Could This Be?

- The Bible presents at least three answers to that question.
 - (1) There is the man whose spirit is made excellent **because his pilgrimage in life is with God.**
 - God is his companion and he is God's.
 - The two walk together.
 - This is what the Jews would sing about in Ps 84.
 - v 6 "Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well."
 - And that is why, when they came to the valley of Baca (weeping) they, instead of being defeated, whimpering, complaining, and accusing, **THEY MADE IT A WELL.** (A place of refreshing and provision.)
 - This is what they would sing in Ps 23 –
 - "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear NO evil. **FOR YOU ARE WITH ME.**"
 - Daniel never doubted that his pilgrimage was a pilgrimage with God, even in a strange, hostile, pagan land."
 - But there is a second thing that explains this excellent spirit –
 - (2) There is the man whose spirit is made excellent **because his provision in life is from God.**
 - This was Daniel's case.

- In chapter 1 where he depended on God for physical nurture, in chapter 2 where he depended on God to reveal both the dream of the king and its meaning.
- The pagans had seen this excellent provision of Daniel's God.

And the Daniel was the alien Jew in a Gentile kingdom; his provision from God greatly exceeded the provision of the gods of the pagans.

- Now there is a third thing that explains this excellent spirit.

(3) There is the man whose spirit is made excellent because **his purpose in life is to honor God.**

- And it was through Daniel's life that the Lord was being honored in pagan territory.
- And with that Daniel had an attitude and spirit that reflected the excellence of Heaven.

Such an "excellent spirit" had to force these crude, cruel, selfish, mistaken people to notice the difference in Daniel's devotion and theirs.

Daniel was DEVOTED to the honor of his God.

-- HE HAD A BANNER OF WORTH
UNDER WHICH TO LIVE,
A CAUSE FOR WHICH TO DIE.

A LIFE OF OBEDIENCE NOW TO
GIVE
A GOD TO GLORIFY.

For such is given an EXCELLENT
SPIRIT

For such comes an Excellent Spirit.

-- But not only is Daniel's Purity seen:

- (1) In the absence of self-seeking (6:3) and
- (2) In the Possession of an Excellent spirit (6:3)

It is also seen

(3) In the Integrity of His Ways

-- 6:4 "Then 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."

-- He was inspected and found clean –

- no deceit
- No thievery
- no fault
- no error

- Such was, and such must be, the purity of God's prophet

WE NOW MOVE TO THE THIRD MAJOR LESSON OF DANIEL 6. AND OF OUR STUDY OF KINGDOMS IN CONFLICT.

III. THE PREJUDICE OF THE KING'S PRESIDENTS

-- 6:4-9

-- This prejudice will always be present in the conflict of kingdoms.

-- Here are 6 lessons from the practice of pagan prejudice.

-- Pagan Prejudice always operates:

1. With purposeful destruction

-- 6:5 The purpose of the presidents was not to destroy evil. It was to destroy Daniel.

-- prejudice drives us to pre-meditated evil.

2. Through continued evil

-- 6:5 "We cannot find any occasion against this Daniel except we find it against him concerning the law of his God."

-- They were going to make God illegal.

-- The seeds and the first fruit of such prejudice are rampant in America today.

-- Absolute identification with God.

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

To find anything wrong with Daniel we must find something wrong with his god. (which is what they tried to do by making Daniel’s God illegal for 30 days.)

(If God was not up to it, Daniel was not in to it.

These critics knew that Daniel did not live, work or think outside of the arena of God.

Daniel had all of his marbles in one jar. He did not risk ruining his reputation at the wrong party.

If it was not God’s party, Daniel did not attend it.

He could not be ambushed because he never walked where God was not walking.

3. With cowardly crowds

- 6:6 “Then these presidents and princes assembled together (ASV= “came tumultuously”)

4. With lying lips –

- v 6-7 “Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, king Darius, live for ever. Al the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counselors and the captains, have consulted together...”
(THAT WAS A LIE!)
- Prejudice forfeits personal honesty and integrity.

5. Toward Extreme Consequences.

- READ v 7
 - No Petition of
 - Any God
 - any Man –
 - or lion’s den.
- Pagan Prejudice loses reason and the sanity of personal and political law.
 - Compare the foolish things done in America today

Pagan Prejudice loses reason

6. With Demanding Haste

- v 8 “Now, 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.
- Prejudice will abandon reason for the sake of haste.

-- Now the issue of the victorious life is seen next in

IV. The PRAYING PRIORITY OF GOD'S PROPHET.

Prayer is not in a popular position in our country today. Not until we have massive tragedy.

What happened in Daniel 6 was that God had been outlawed. These three things summarize what had happened:

- 1) People prejudiced against sanity and godliness obtained position and influence with the king. v 6
- 2) The king yielded to the pressure of perverted people. v 9
- 3) The prophet was placed under peer and political pressure to abandon his godly life v 7

-- 6:10 "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being opened 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."

-- **THREE THINGS MARK THE PRIORITY THE PROPHET GAVE TO PRAYER:**

1. His prayer was not DELAYED.

-- v 10 When Daniel knew that the writing was signed – HE WENT TO PRAY.

-- No delay to get counsel

-- to explore an alternative

-- to get a sense of the seriousness of his "crime"

-- to see if anyone else would pray.

2. His prayer was not HIDDEN.

- v 10 “He went into his house, and his windows being open...”
- There was no instruction from God that praying had to take place before an open window.

Daniel could have easily closed the window.

- But with Daniel, the issue was NOT the preservation of his life, but the preservation of his testimony.

Daniel chose conviction over comfort.

He chose to honor God rather than protect himself.

- He chose to see what God would do through his obedience rather than to see what he could do through compromise.
- It was not only important for Daniel to pray, it was now important for others to know he was praying.
- But not only was Daniel’s praying:
 1. Not Delayed and
 2. Not Hidden, it was also

3. His Prayer was not AMMENDED

- v 10 (last phrase) he “gave thanks before his God AS HE DID AFORETIME.”

- (1) He did not change his PLACE of prayer.
- (2) He did not change his POSITION in prayer.

- v 10 – “He kneeled upon his knees.”

- (3) He did not change his PATTERN of praying

-- v 10 – “three times a day.”

(4) He did not change his PARTICULAR PRAYER.

-- v 10 – “he gave thanks before his God.”

-- It was an unusual time to give thanks – Why should one give thanks to God at the time when through his faithfulness to God, he was going to be thrown to the lions? But giving thanks is always appropriate.

It is important to note what is not mentioned about Daniel’s prayer:

i. NO COMPLAINTS

-- Nothing like: “God, I serve you and this is what I get?”

ii. NO CONCERNS:

-- Nothing like: “God I am in a tight spot, in deep trouble. Send help immediately.”

iii. NO COUNSEL:

-- Daniel did not seek to give God advice.

Have we ever played that bit?

-- “Why didn’t God do this instead of that.”

“God should not have let that happen.”

“If I were God, this is what I would have done.”

- Daniel's priority in prayer was to give God glory and thanks, not to give him complaints, concerns and counsel.

Now this KINGDOM CONFLICT moves from

IV. The Praying Priority of God's prophet to

V. THE PREDICAMENT OF THE KING'S POLITICS:

-- 6:11-18

- Accent v 14 – “Then the king, when he heard those words, were so displeased with himself.”
- Here is a view of a kingdom of despair and defeat. You may notice similarities between this kingdom and our present national despair – or maybe similarities between this kingdom and the kingdom of your life.

-- BAD POLITICS, LIKE BAD RELIGION:

1. **Gives Rise to the Congregation of the Cowardly – v 11**
2. **Gives Rise to the Abolition of Personal Responsibility**

-- v 12 – The cowardly crowd came to the king and said: “Have You not signed a decree...”

- And the king answered and said, “The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, ...” (He begins to see his predicament and lays the groundwork for blaming “the Medes and Persians” for the problems he sees coming.)

3. **Gives Rise to the Public Scorn of the Good and the Godly**

-- READ v 13

-- Now it becomes evident that the cowardly crowd set the trap for a specific person.

4. Digs Pits of Despair from which Escape is Very difficult

-- The king had produced a pit of despair from which only a miracle of God could extract him. This is so often the case when the politics of paganism have access to the throne.

5. Advance The Pressure And Power Of The Cruel, The Cowardly, And The Corrupt

-- READ v 15

6. Nullifies the Power of Reason and Right

-- READ v 16-17

-- Perversion had assembled in the halls of Prejudice and Prevailed in the Palace. The Power of Reason and Right is bound in the jailhouse of Nullification.

-- Can a nation, a family – get so far removed from reason and right that before it is aware of what it is doing, it destroys the foundations of its greatness?

7. Eradicates The Peace Of A Pure Conscience

-- READ v 18

This particular sermon departs from the style of our previous studies in Daniel.

I call this study “A POSTSCRIPT TO PRESSURE.” I insert it here immediately following our study of THE PREDICAMENT OF THE KINGS POLITICS and immediately before our study of THE PROTECTION OF GOD’S PROPHET.

This study shall consist of a collection of lessons I have learned through Bible study and observed in life about the nature of living victoriously in the Lion’s Den.

Therefore what I say today will be a collection of truth from through the Bible. It will not be line-by-line or phrase-by-phrase from Daniel.

But I am prompted to share these things based on our studies in Daniel.

From Daniel 1 through Daniel 6 we have seen some phenomenal pressure oriented experiences –

- From Daniel 1 when we studied the fact that
 - Jerusalem, the city of God had been besieged,
 - The Temple, the house of God, had been pillaged,
 - The Israelites, the people of God, had been enslaved,
 - Revival, the work of God, had been rejected, and
 - Prophecy, the revelation of God, had been affirmed.

- To Daniel 2 when Daniel was threatened with death because the kings “wise men” could not tell the king what he had dreamed and the interpretation of it.

- To Daniel 3 where Daniel’s friends were thrown into a furnace of fire because they refused to worship at the altar of paganism.

- To Daniel 4-5 where Daniel was under the pressure of delivering Bad News to Evil Kings

- And then in Daniel 6 where Daniel faced the evil Prejudice of Politicians who plotted his death in the Jaws of lions.

From all of that, through all of that, we raise the question – How Do We live victoriously in such situations?

I. WE AFFIRM OUR AUTHORITY!

- We will all choose an AUTHORITY IN LIFE –
 - Those who jump from one authority to another we call confused.
 - Those who choose bad authorities – we call defeated
 - those who choose proper authority – and remain obedient – we call victorious and triumphant.
- Some authorities that offer themselves today
 - The Greed of Gain
 - The Desire of Popularity
 - The Appetite of Pleasure
 - The Scripture of Truth

II. WE QUESTION EVERYTHING

- Our knowledge of our Authority will determine how long it takes us to get an answer.
- For example: If we choose scripture as our authority it does not take us long to determine that we should “AVOID EVERY APPEARANCE OF EVIL.”

III. WE JUDGE EVERYTHING BY OUR AUTHORITY –

- We do not judge by another:

- For example: If the appetite for sensuality is my authority – then I immediately reject the authority of those who say that I should not watch most movies, listen to sensual jokes, view pornography, visit prostitutes, engage in any form of physical pleasure I may desire.
- Judgment must be made by my authority.
- AND OF COURSE – IF SCRIPTURE IS OUR AUTHORITY – WE JUDGE BY SCRIPTURE – AND BY NOTHING ELSE.

IV. BE UNDAUNTED BY EVERYTHING EXCEPT OUR AUTHORITY

- Example –
 - Shadrach and Friends were undaunted by the furnace of fire.
 - Daniel was undaunted by the den of lions.
- Here are **Three Things About Pressure We Should All Know** –
 1. We all live under pressure.
 2. To a large degree – but not totally – we may choose the pressure under which we live.
 3. To a total degree – we will choose the pressure to which we yield.

V. DETERMINE IN ADVANCE NOT TO FAIL IN OUR COMMITMENT.

- This was done by Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and Daniel
- It was done by Christ
- It was done by Paul
 - 2 Cor 4 “I faint not.”

CONCLUSION: This is living victoriously in the Dens of Prejudice,
Politics and Lions – Sensuality, Greed, Popularism,
Heathenism, Paganism, and Peers.

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(Gathered from studies over a number of years. Put in this form for this study in Daniel in June-July, 2000 by RLA)
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VI. THE PROTECTION OF GOD'S PROPHET

-- v 19-24

-- v 20 – “Is your God whom you serve continually, able to deliver you?”

-- v 22 – “My God hath sent His angel and has shut the lion’s mouths...”

-- There Are **Three Major Characteristics Of Life’s Encounters, Which Are Accented In This Protection Of God’s Prophet**

1. The Concerns of an Abused Conscience – v 19-20

-- This king Darius had really messed up – and he knew it.

-- There are two things about this abused conscience

(1) The Consequences are Difficult to Reverse

-- v 14 – When Darius saw his mess, the Bible says –

-- that “he was sore displeased with himself.”

-- that “he set his heart on Daniel to deliver him.”

-- that “he labored until the going down of the sun to deliver him.”

-- It is like marrying the wrong person – or divorcing the right one.

-- It is like polluting the mind with pornography.

- It is like an act of adultery, which cannot be undone.
- It is like a lie, which cannot be recalled – or drugs, which cannot be extracted, or a crime, which cannot be uncommitted.
- But not only are the consequences of an abused conscience.

(1) Difficult to Reverse, they are also

(2) Difficult to Await

- Read v 18
- v 19-20 “Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel...”
- As in any serious action there is a consequence to await.

The wait is always painful when we know the action was wrong.

- Judgment hangs in the balance and we do not know which sunrise will reveal it. Neither do we know what it will be.
- The Consequences of an Abused Conscience
 - are difficult to reverse
 - and difficult to await

-- No wonder did Paul tell us: Acts 24:16 –
“Herein do I exercise myself, to have always
a conscience void of offense toward God
and men.”

-- Now in the Matter of THE PROTECTION OF GOD’S
PROPHET - there is not only –

1. The Concern of an Abused Conscience, there is also

2. The Consistency of a Faithful Servant

-- v 20 “Is your God, whom you serve continually, able to
deliver you from the lions?”

-- Three things mark Daniel’s Consistency

(1) Daniel knew Relationship

-- v 20 – “Is Your God...”

(2) Daniel knew Responsibility

-- v 20 – “whom you serve continually...”

(3) Daniel knew Reliability

-- v 20 – “Is your God whom you serve continually,
ABLE TO DELIVER YOU?”

3. The Care of a Sovereign God – v 20-22

-- v 22 – “My God hath sent His angel, and has shut the lions’
mouths.”

-- At least two things are accented in this care of a Sovereign
God.

(1) It Prompts the Inquiry of a Searching Mind

-- v 20b – “And the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is your God, whom you serve continually, able to deliver you from the lions?”

(2) It Affirms the Integrity of a Faithful Heart –

v 22 – “My God has sent His angel, and has shut the lions’ mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before Him innocency was found in me; and also before you, O king, have I done no hurt.”

Now in the Matter of the PROTECTION OF GOD’S PROPHET, there is not only

1. The Concern of an Abused Conscience – v 19-20 and
2. The Consistency of a Faithful Servant – v 20
3. The Care of a Sovereign God – v 20-22

4. The Condemnation of a Deceiving Heart – v 23-24

-- v 24 “...they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions...”

-- The Bible says, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap” (Gal 6:7)

-- In this case:

(1) Judgment Came Quickly

v 24 – “And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions...”

(2) Judgment Came Extensively

v 24 “...and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives...”

-- It is the very nature of sin that the sins of the fathers afflict the children.

-- Deut 5:9 – “I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.”

-- the prophet Jeremiah cried about the matter when he said

-- Lamentations 5:7 “Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have born their iniquities.”

-- Such judgment may not always be the decree of God – BUT WHAT FATHER IN HIS RIGHT MIND WOULD JEOPARDIZE HIS CHILDREN WITH SUCH WAYWARD LIVING?

-- But not only does Judgment

(1) Come quickly and

(2) Extensively, it also comes –

(3) Completely

-- v 24 – “and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces before they came to the bottom of the den.”

CONCLUSION:

This protection of God's prophet is seen in its greatest beauty in the Protection we have against our "adversary the devil" – who one day himself shall be cast unto "the lake of fire and brimstone." (Rev 20:10)

Daniel 6:25-27 THE PRAISE OF THE PROPHET'S GOD

There are some who know how to properly respond to the unquestionable evidences of God's presence and dominion.

Darius – this pagan king - was one.

The evidence of God's personal availability to men was an overwhelming evidence.

The Prejudicial Politics of envy had made fools of those who became its participants.

The Bible says

“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” (Prov 16:25)

Once a man learns that, that he has been lied to , cheated, defrauded, and fooled – he would be a wise man to turn to truth.

Darius saw that opportunity. He knew that the pagan ways of prejudice, deceit, and personal promotion had had their day in his court – and had lost their case.

He turns then to the God who had proven Himself.

And in response to what he now knew, here is how he now responds:
(This is how real praise takes place, and Darius at this time is a good teacher.)

1. He Extends His Testimony To The Limits Of His Influence

- v 25 – “then King Darius wrote unto all people, Nations and languages that dwell in all the earth...”
- Here is a clear example of the “ALL NATIONS’ message of the Bible. And this by a gentile who had encountered God through the faithfulness of a Jew.
- No Christian has a right to do less.
- No Christian has a right to delay.
- The Apostle Paul said, “I believed and therefore have I spoken...” (2 Cor 4:13)
- John put it this way: “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you...”
- Paul again, “I strive to preach the gospel of Christ where people have not heard the gospel of Christ.” (Rom 15:20-21 RLA paraphrase)
- True praise is seen clearly when testimony is presented to the arena of darkness.
- Darius did not merely go to the Jewish believers and say to them – “I now believe in your God.”

Rather he went to the non-believer and said, “You know this Daniel – It is his God in whom I now believe.”

His praise of the God of Heaven goes into the Non-comfort zone.

- But not only is Darius’ praise of Daniel’s God seen in the fact that
 1. He extends his testimony to the limits of his influence. It is also seen in the fact that –

2. He Turns His Desire To The Blessing Of Others

- v 25 – “Peace be multiplied unto you.”
- The self-seeker now seeks on behalf of others.
- True praise turns the heart of the privilege seekers into the heart of a privilege provider.
- True praise is when we have a spiritual appetite to be a blessing to others.
- True Praise is when we have spiritual appetites for others.
- True Praise is when I am at least equally concerned that you are as blessed of God as am I.
- Darius now became a man who had a desire of peace for others.

This man who held the scepter, commanded the armies, defeated the enemies – now sees that there is a personal, attentive God whose nature and ways are better.

- But not only is Darius’ praise of Daniel’s God seen in the fact that
 1. He extends his testimony to the limits of his influence and that
 2. He turns his desire to the blessings of others,

It is also seen in the fact that

3. He Initiates A Specific Challenge To Those Under His Control.

- v 26 “I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel...”
- Here is a testimony of powerful wisdom –
 - It is a decree based upon the reality of experience, the revelation of God and the logic of sanity:

-- “That men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel.”

-- The Politics of Prejudice had sought to see Daniel tremble and fear before their cheap political stunts.

Daniel neither trembled before nor feared their gods.

They now have every human reason to tremble before and fear the God of Daniel.

In every generation where the God of Heaven has been challenged, victory has come through the stalwarts of faith who feared not the decrees and pressures of paganism BUT who instead and in turn stood with the God of Heaven.

-- The Bible says that “the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord.” (Prov 9:10)

-- But not only did Darius turn his praise to God

1. By extending his testimony to the limits of his influence, and
2. By turning his desire to the blessing of others, and
3. By initiating a specific challenge to those under his control.

He goes further:

4. He Affirms A Personal Awareness Of The Person And Nature Of God.

-- v 26 – “...for he is the living God, and steadfast forever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end.”

v 27 – “He delivereth and rescueth, He worketh signs and wonders in Heaven and in Earth, He has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.”

- (1) He is the Living God
- (2) He is the steadfast God – He does not change.
- (3) He has a kingdom
- (4) His kingdom shall not be destroyed.
- (5) His dominion shall endure.
- (6) He delivers and rescues (He is merciful and compassionate, attentive and able.)
- (7) He works signs and wonders in Heaven and in Earth.
- (8) And He has delivered Daniel –
 - from me,
 - from you –
 - in our presence
 - in undeniable form
 - in unexplained wonder
 - in unmatched power.

-- Darius no longer thought of this Daniel’s God as some strange ethnic idea – a non-personal entity that existed, only in the minds of dreamers.

Darius could no longer consider God merely as a concept of good

Darius was saying what many church members still cannot say –

I KNOW THE NATURE AND PERSON OF THIS GOD

- I know His fingerprints for He touched me.
- I know His footsteps for He leads me.

- I know His mind because He taught me.
- I know His heart because He loved me.
- I know His arms for He embraced me.
- I know His power for He rescued me.
- I know the expanse of His kingdom for I cannot escape His presence.

- I often wonder how many of us who talk and sing of God, who honor Him with our lips – really know His nature.
 - Are there those like the drug-blinded hippy whose best description of God was that He was like a sea of tapioca pudding?
 - Are there those like the modern “New Agers” who even see themselves as God –
 - Or those who see God in everything and yet never really see God?
 - Are there those who see God as an impersonal mass of ideas drifting into and out of the minds of the sane as well as the insane?
 - Are there those who see God only as a cultural concept, which changes with cultures?
 - Are there those who see God as an unknowable concept whom we worship anyway simply because we ought to even when we do not want to?

- Darius is a rebuke to such –
 - Darius turned his devotion to God because the evidence of his person and the magnificence of His nature, had proven

the reality of His presence and the presence of His reality in the conflict of the kingdoms.

VIII. The Prospering of God's Prophet

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

-- This is an amazing statement with which this section of Daniel closes.

-- Consider the events of His Life –

-- As a young lad –

1. His country was invaded by a hostile pagan nation.
2. His city – The City of God – Jerusalem, had been besieged.
3. The Temple – The House of God – had been pillaged.
4. The Jews – the People of God – had been enslaved.
5. Revival – The Work of God – had been rejected.

-- But Daniel Prospered.

-- And as a young lad –

A Pagan king determined to Break him.

-- But Daniel Prospered

-- HE PURPOSED IN HIS HEART NOT TO DEFILE HIMSELF (1:8)

-- So Daniel Prospered –

Even –

1. When he was exalted v 1-3

-- It is not that Daniel prospered “AND WAS EXALTED” BUT that he prospered EVEN WHEN he was exalted. Prosperity is what you have when you do not let exaltation make a fool of you.

2. When he was rejected - v 4-6

3. When he was lied about - v 7

4. When he was framed - v 7-9

5. When he was tested - v 10

6. When he was singled out for destruction - v 11-15

7. When he was sentenced to death - v 16-20

8. When he was delivered from death - v 21-24

9. When his Lord was exalted - v 25-27

-- HE PROSPERED – AND HIS PROSPERITY DID NOT DEPEND UPON HIS CIRCUMSTANCE. REAL PROSPERITY NEVER DOES.

-- THAT IS LIVING WITH VICTORY IN THE DENS OF PREJUDICE, POLITICS AND LIONS.

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