

- *We have again moved ahead historically. The kingdom of Babylon, the head of gold, is gone; it has been removed from the number one spot of world power. Instead of Babylon, we have the Medo-Persian Empire, which was represented by the arms of silver in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar.*
- **Not much time has passed since the end of chapter 5**, as Darius is setting up his government.
- This is one of the **most familiar events in the Bible**. But our feltboard lessons of old don't even begin to touch on how important this chapter is, and exactly what is happening here.
- Keep in mind that Daniel is **at least 80 years old**, most likely between 85 and 90. **NOT a young man!**
- **Amazingly, we have another powerful Gentile king giving glory and honor to the Living God.**
- Lots of speculation about **the identity of "Darius the Mede."** There is a great deal of evidence that he is **the uncle of Cyrus**, and that his "historical" name was **Cyaxares**.
- **Darius must have put great faith in Daniel.** In fact, he was even considering making him ruler over the whole realm – which is exactly what Nebuchadnezzar had done before him. Daniel's standing **was the cause of jealousy** among the other administrators, eventually leading to the plot to destroy him. Daniel openly lived his faith. Whatever concocted charges they came up with would have to be associated with his faith. They could not find any other "dirt" on Daniel.
- **Ezekiel mentioned Daniel in company with both Noah and Job** (Ezekiel 14:12-14). All three were outstanding examples of those who are sold out to God, and live public lives of integrity and faith.
- History shows **Darius was probably a good man.** But like most of us, Darius had a particular vulnerability – **his vanity and ego**. Like most, he was subject to flattery. Here is almost the exact set-up we saw in chapter 3, with the decree to worship Nebuchadnezzar's statue. This time it is a temporary "honor" for Darius, but with the same intention, and the same penalty for failure – death.
- The **"law of the Medes and Persians"** essentially said that the reigning king was a god himself, and as such, anything that came out of his mouth was to be honored and obeyed without question, and could not be retracted, even by the king himself. We see this same law in the story of Esther.
- **Darius caved to his foolish pride.** Many say he was tricked into this decree, but all these guys had to do was devise a clever plan and play to the pride of Darius. It worked. There was no going back.
- Daniel prayed 3X each day, on his knees **facing Jerusalem** because his real life was there, in the city of God, not here in exile among pagans. There is nothing in scripture that says that we must pray this way, but it has become a tradition among orthodox Jews. It is also customary to face east because that is where the sun rises. (see Matt. 24:27, Zech. 14:3-4)
- Daniel serves as a **primer on prayer**. Chapter 2 had the **4P's**: PARTNER, PRAY, PATIENCE and PRAISE. Daniel's predictable prayer life in this chapter: 1) He prayed **regularly**; 2) had a **set time** of prayer; 3) had a **set place** of prayer; 4) had an **attitude of humility**—whatever physical position we take, our **hearts** MUST approach God with a humble heart; 5) **expressed gratitude**; 6) was faithful and **consistent**; 7) **Nothing distracted** him.



- It is a **compliment to Daniel that these bad guys are waiting for him**, and find him disobeying the king's decree. No pardon was allowed according to Persian law. They thought their plan was working perfectly. **They did not count on Daniel's God entering the picture.**
- Darius knew immediately exactly what he had fallen for, and the horrible consequences. He apparently worked very hard all day to try to spare Daniel from this death sentence, but there *was no way*, and their own laws sealed this deed.
- Without further options, Darius gave the command to have Daniel thrown into the den of lions. But **notice what he says to Daniel: "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you."** Darius probably had heard the tales of how God had already delivered Daniel and his friends, numerous times. Perhaps he recognized that the God of Daniel was sovereign and **could deliver him.**
- When the king gave an order and it was sealed with his signet ring, it could not, for any reason – not even the king's own word – be stopped. This was **also used when Jesus was sealed in the tomb** (*a possible "type" here?? Daniel, blameless, was illegally sentenced as was Jesus. He spent a night in a place where he should have been found dead, but instead emerged alive.*)
- The **king was probably more disturbed than Daniel**. He anguished over what he had done, and over Daniel. He wouldn't eat, he didn't want any entertainment, and he couldn't sleep. It was probably a much longer night for Darius than Daniel.
- Darius couldn't help himself and ran down to the pit very early. **He called out to Daniel, hoping he was still alive.** We can imagine the intense relief Darius experienced upon hearing Daniel's voice.
- **"My God sent His angel..."** Was this just an "angel?" Or perhaps the "Angel of the Lord?"
- We **should not assume that Daniel knew he would be saved in this event**. Daniel knew he was serving a mighty God capable of delivering him, but he also knew that God had a will of His own.
- Darius was overjoyed! He went early to the den hoping, but probably never expected to find this healthy and vibrant old man greeting him. Notice we are told **WHY Daniel survived** intact: **"...because he believed in his God."** His faith.
- Daniel had experienced the punishment for disobeying the king's edict, and he survived. The law had been fulfilled. Darius now gave orders that the very men who conspired against Daniel be thrown into the lion's den. **The lion's got their dinner after all.**
- **"...their children, and their wives;..."** Terrible, but this was their way of deterring other traitorous behavior, and considered a practicality so no surviving family members could seek revenge.
- Now comes the **next most important part of this chapter**, in addition to Daniel's rescue and incredible faith. Darius sent out a worldwide decree, similar to the one sent by Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 4. To Nebuchadnezzar, in his edict, **He is the Most High God**. To Darius, **He is the Living God**. Once again, the ultimate result of this miracle is to **inform the entire world and acquaint them with the God of miracles.**
- Daniel has **prospered through two world empires and several kings**. He is most likely in his 90s at the end of this book. He probably did not return to Israel with the rest of the Jewish remnant.
- We are at the half way point, and this chapter **concludes the historical section of the Book of Daniel**. This particular episode in Daniel's life is another illustration of the keeping power of God, and another example of the way in which God will protect the remnant during the Great Tribulation period. This chapter is a counterpart of chapter 3 where God preserved Daniel's three friends in the fiery furnace. **COMMENTARY: ...in my opinion, here we have an illustration of something that is going to happen as we move toward the End of the Age. The righteous will be persecuted by the wicked, but in the final analysis the righteous will triumph and the wicked will be destroyed.**  
(Dave Breese)

