

Chapter 6

“Daniel and the Lion’s Den”

Summary

- An elderly Daniel is now serving in the court of the Persian empire.
- A plot against Daniel succeeds in him thrown to the lions, but not in killing him

Outline

- I. The New Government
 - A. The organization - vs. 1-2
 - B. Daniel’s status - vs. 3
- II. The Plot
 - A. Daniel’s only weakness - vs. 4-5
 - B. The petition before the king - vs. 6-8
 - C. The trap is set - vs. 9
 - D. Daniel caught praying - vs. 10-11
 - E. Accused before the king - vs. 12-15
- III. The Lion’s Den
 - A. Cast to the lions - vs. 16-17
 - B. The troubled king - vs. 18-20
 - C. Daniel is alive - vs. 21-23
- IV. The Fallout
 - A. The fate of Daniel’s enemies - vs. 24
 - B. Darius’ decree - vs. 25-27
 - C. Daniel’s status- vs. 28

Notes

- Daniel is probably in his 80’s in this chapter
- vs. 2-3 - note Daniel’s continued prominence even in a new government
- vs. 7 - the plot is advanced by appealing to the king’s pride and vanity
- vs. 10 - God’s law is greater than man’s law. When they (rarely) contradict, God’s law is to be followed.
- vs. 14 - Darius realized he was tricked and found no way around his predicament
- vs. 16 - Darius is not expressing faith in God, but stating that only a supernatural act can save Daniel
- vs. 20 - I’m not sure Darius was expecting an answer

Damnatio ad bestias

- Form of capital punishment where condemned are killed by animals
- As old as at least 6th century B.C.
- Outlawed in Rome in 681 A.D.
- It appears the “den” in Daniel is some sort of pit or cavern where the lions were kept
- The food or victims were thrown from an opening above the lions

The Persian Empire

- The second great empire prophesied by Daniel - 2:38-39
- Historically known as the Achaemenid Empire - 550-330 B.C.
- Original territory in modern Iran, capitals in Persepolis and Pasargadae
- Began with alliances of various tribes, including the Medes and Persians
- Rises to empire status under Cyrus the Great (ruled 559-530 B.C.)
- Conquers Babylon in 540 B.C. and conquered by Alexander the Great in 330 B.C.
- Is the major power in the end of the Old Testament
- Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi written in this period.



Who is Darius the Mede???

- According to Daniel
 - He reigned over Babylon after its defeat by the Persians - 5:31
 - Son of Ahasuerus, a Mede, ruled over the Chaldeans - 9:1
- Modern Theories
 - He didn't exist. Daniel made him up. The Bible is wrong. - not true
 - "Darius" is another name for Cyrus the Great - unlikely
 - An uncle of Cyrus - unlikely
 - Darius is a general named Gubaru - probable
- My Theory
 - Darius the Mede was a provincial ruler that was given control of Babylon, perhaps the aforementioned Gubaru
 - A provincial ruler is likely to be lost to history and overshadowed by Cyrus
 - After Darius the territory of Babylon was taken over directly by Cyrus