

Daniel Delivered from the Lions' Den

Our study is in Daniel 6, the last chapter in the historical section of the book of Daniel. This is about the prophet Daniel, faith, and the conditions for blessings. Here is Daniel 6:1.

It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom. Daniel 6:1 (NASB)

Relationship of Darius and Cyrus. Verse 1 has two historical items about which I want to talk. First, critics claim there is no historical evidence for the name Darius in verse 1. The verse says, “It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps.” Unfortunately, they are correct. There is no extra biblical historical data with the precise name of Darius at the time of 539 B.C.

Now, somebody might say, “Is that really important?” Yes, it is important, because

if we believe that the book of Daniel was written by God, and Darius did not really exist in 539 B.C., then Daniel has deceived us. That would then reflect on the word of God. The critics say, “There is no such man as Darius in the archaeological data.” Unfortunately they are correct. But there are four responses we should consider.

Critics of the Bible Are Historically Wrong. The first

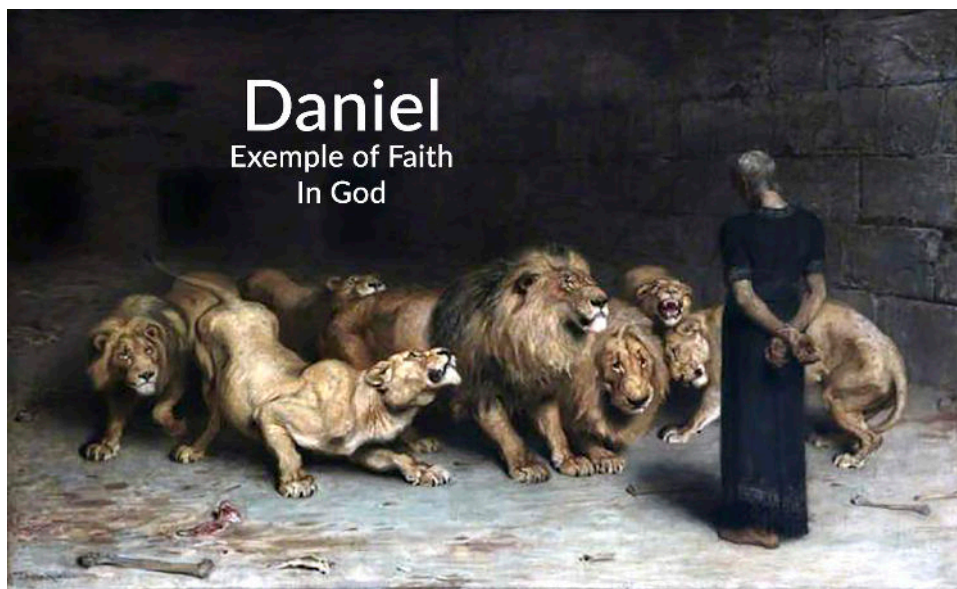
response we have discovered already in the first five chapters of Daniel. Every time the critics have criticized the book of Daniel, archaeology has eventually proven the critics were wrong. Then the critics just bring up another criticism. My point is that there is no evidence yet in the archaeological discoveries, but that does not mean that it does not exist. It just has not yet been found.

The Historical Gubaru Was Darius. The second response is the possibility that maybe we have already found the archaeological evidence. The reason I say that is the Nabonidus Chronicle, a clay table, states that Gubaru was a governor of Babylon in 539 B.C. That is when the Babylonian Empire fell to the Medo-Persian Empire. At that point, Darius would

have begun his reign in Babylon. What we have learned from the Nabonidus Chronicle is that there was a man named Gubaru who became the governor of the city of Babylon in 539 B.C. We have also discovered from historical evi-

dence that Gubaru installed sub-governors. Notice that verse 1 said: “It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps.” What we have discovered is that satraps actually were political officials at any level, a high level or a lower level.

The historical evidence indicates that Gubaru installed 120 satraps just as verse 1 states. Xenophon made the comment that Gubaru was well advanced in age. If you look at



Daniel 5:31 we are told,

[So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two. Daniel 5:31 \(NASB\)](#)

Not thirty-two, not forty-two, not twenty-five, not fifty-five, but sixty-two. In ancient times that was advanced in age. So the historical evidence indicates Gubaru became a governor of Babylon in 539 B.C., and he fits the description of Darius in Daniel 5:31.

Darius Was A Title. A third response is that there is strong evidence Darius and Cyrus were the same person. There are five reasons that suggest this was true. First, Cyrus was the name of the man who was the Persian ruler. Darius, as it turns out, is a title for a particular position or office. It was similar to our referring to the leader of the United States as President. In Daniel 5:31, we read:

[So Darius the Mede received the kingdom. Daniel 5:31 \(NASB\)](#)

The historical data reveals that King Nabonidus called Cyrus the king of the Medes. That is interesting because in our last study we discovered that King Nabonidus was one of the kings of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. He referred to Cyrus as the king of the Medes. So if we connect that with verse 31, “so Darius the Mede,” we see that Cyrus and Darius are interchangeable terms. Cyrus would be the name of the person, and Darius was his title.

Historical data reveals that Cyrus was about the age of seventy when he died. He reigned for nine years in Babylon. So if we subtract nine from seventy, we obtain sixty-one. These dates are approximate. They fit the historical evidence that Cyrus and Darius would be the same individual.

In the last verse of this chapter, we find an interesting comment about Darius and Cyrus. We are told,

[So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian. Daniel 6:28 \(NASB\)](#)

At first it appears that Darius and Cyrus are different, but they are not. The problem is that the Aramaic word translated here as “and” can also mean “even.” So, we can read the last part of verse this way: “So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius, even in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.” In fact, the NET Bible translates the verse with “even.” Sometimes when translating from one language into another, the translator has to make a word choice. Some translators have used “and.” Others have used “even.” The NET Bible has shown us that the other is an acceptable alternative.

Septuagint’s Opinion. The fourth, and last reason why I think Cyrus and Darius are the same person is that in the side margin of the Septuagint next to Daniel 11:1, it states that Darius and Cyrus are the same person. So there is important historical data that indicates Darius and Cyrus are the same. Darius is a title, like our title of president. Cyrus is his name.

The reason I wanted to belabor the point is because of the critics. For those of us who are Christians, we need to understand that the book of Daniel has integrity. We need to understand the book of Daniel is not a mythical book. It is not legend. It is not tradition. It is the word of God. It is the word of truth, and we can trust it.

Structure of the Medo-Persian Empire. The second piece of historical data is 120 satraps. The critics have said, “The Persian Empire was broken up into only twenty or twenty-three satrapies.” They are correct. In fact, one historian said it was twenty, another one says it is twenty-three. It could be there was a difference in time when they wrote. The number could have changed. Therefore the critics say, “Daniel has to be wrong.” The problem is that Xenophon indicates the satraps were not necessarily just the top leader. The word satrap actually referred to all men down through the political structure. Daniel is not talking about geographic areas. That will become very clear. Look at verse 2:

[. . . and over them three commissioners \(of whom Daniel was one\) . . . Daniel 6:2a \(NASB\)](#)

I am sure that the commissioners had territories. Each commissioner had satraps responsible to him. We are told that there are three commissioners,

... 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. Daniel 6:2 (NASB)

The 120 were people who were responsible to three commissioners. That is the point.

So Darius set up 120 satraps and three commissioners—or the term could actually be overseers—and the commissioners reported to Darius. Daniel was one of those commissioners or overseers.

Fallout When God Grants Favor. Verse 3 states.

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. Daniel 6:3 (NASB)

Now this is really beautiful. I love this verse because we are told that Daniel began to distinguish himself. Now who would have noticed him? To whom did he distinguish himself so that he could have been appointed over the whole kingdom? The king! The king was watching the three commissioners. He notices that Daniel is extraordinary. He plans to appoint him over the kingdom “because he possessed an extraordinary spirit.” From where did he get that?

In Daniel 1:1 we were told that God gave Nebuchadnezzar Jerusalem. Then in Daniel 1:9, we were told that God granted or gave Daniel favor so that he could eat the food that he wanted to eat instead of the king’s food. Verse 17 states God gave Daniel knowledge and intellect. I would like to add something that is not in scripture, but I believe is true—an extraordinary spirit. It all came from God.

God gave Daniel incredible abilities causing him to receive credit. Perhaps you have had a job where you did your work really well so your boss said, “I am going to give you a promotion. I am going to increase your pay. I really like what you are doing,” You received all those accolades and went away feeling really good. Do you know what we should do when that happens? We should say, “Thank you, Lord” because God is the one who enabled us. Remember James 1:17 says,

Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights. James 1:17 (NASB)

It all comes from Him. God gave Daniel extraordinary abilities. The king notices. I believe that Daniel thanked God for it. This verse is just a great statement. It shows us that God gives us these abilities, then He helps us so that we can be recognized. He does it for our benefit. He does it for our blessing. It is up to us to then turn around and thank God for what He has done in our life.

Verse 4 says,

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. Daniel 6:4 (NASB)

Now this is rather interesting, because we are not told between verses 3 and 4 how these men found out that Daniel was about to be appointed over the entire kingdom. We are not told in verse 3 that these men were told about it. All we are told in verse 4 is “and then the satraps and commissioners began to try to find ground for accusation against Daniel.” How did they find out? Is it possible that Darius actually had sent an announcement to the kingdom, to the political officials, to who knows who, that he was about to appoint Daniel, or that Daniel had been appointed to this position? Or did Darius confide to just a small group, his inner circle? Then did the inner circle leak it? All we are told in verse 4 is that somehow they found out. Now they are trying to stop the appointment. They do not like Daniel. These men were Persians and Medes, and Daniel was a Jew! Maybe they thought, “You are going to put a Jew over the Medes and Persians?! You have to be kidding!” They did not like this appointment at all.

So what did they do? They held a meeting. This becomes obvious from verse 4. We are told that they are trying to find

a basis for accusation. They agreed that he was faithful. The Aramaic word for “faithful” actually means “trustworthy.” So the idea is that he was trustworthy—to their disappointment. There was no way in which he would be disappointing the king.

Then we are told that he had no negligence. The word for negligence has the idea that he was not lazy. Next, we are told “or corruption.” Corruption is probably best translated as nothing bad was to be found in him.

As I was thinking about this, I realized that Daniel was really an incredible individual. He was trustworthy. He was not lazy or corrupt. Those are all things that, unfortunately, employers have to deal with. An employer tells somebody to do something. When they are a new employee, the employer is not always sure if they will follow through. They are not trustworthy if they do not do the task. But Daniel was trustworthy. The king did not have to worry because Daniel was not lazy.

He also was not corrupt. We can imagine an employer tells you to do something. You respond, “I will do it!” You do what you were asked to do in a timely manner, but you choose to also steal from him by using the Xerox machine for personal business when that is against company policy. That is called corruption. Daniel was trustworthy. He was not lazy, and he was not corrupt. They could not find anything wrong with him. So what was their response? Verse 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.” Daniel 6:5 (NASB)

Daniel was a man who shared his faith. Other people knew that he served his God. We are going to shortly discover how he served his God.

Verse 6 adds,

Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows: “King Darius, alive forever! Daniel 6:6 (NASB)

What we are about to see is they have had other meetings. They came to the king. Verses 7 and 8 tell us their plan,

All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together . . . Daniel 6:7a (NASB)

The verse describes the political offices in the government. They consulted together about their problem with Daniel. This gives us an important principle. When God grants a person favor, the devil will attack. He attacks your character in order to destroy your reputation and undo what God has accomplished. Daniel is a perfect example. So they . . .

. . . 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. Daniel 6:7b (NASB)

Their plan was that no one could pray to or request a petition from any person other than the king. The law would be effective for thirty days. If you violated the law, then you would end up in the lions’ den.

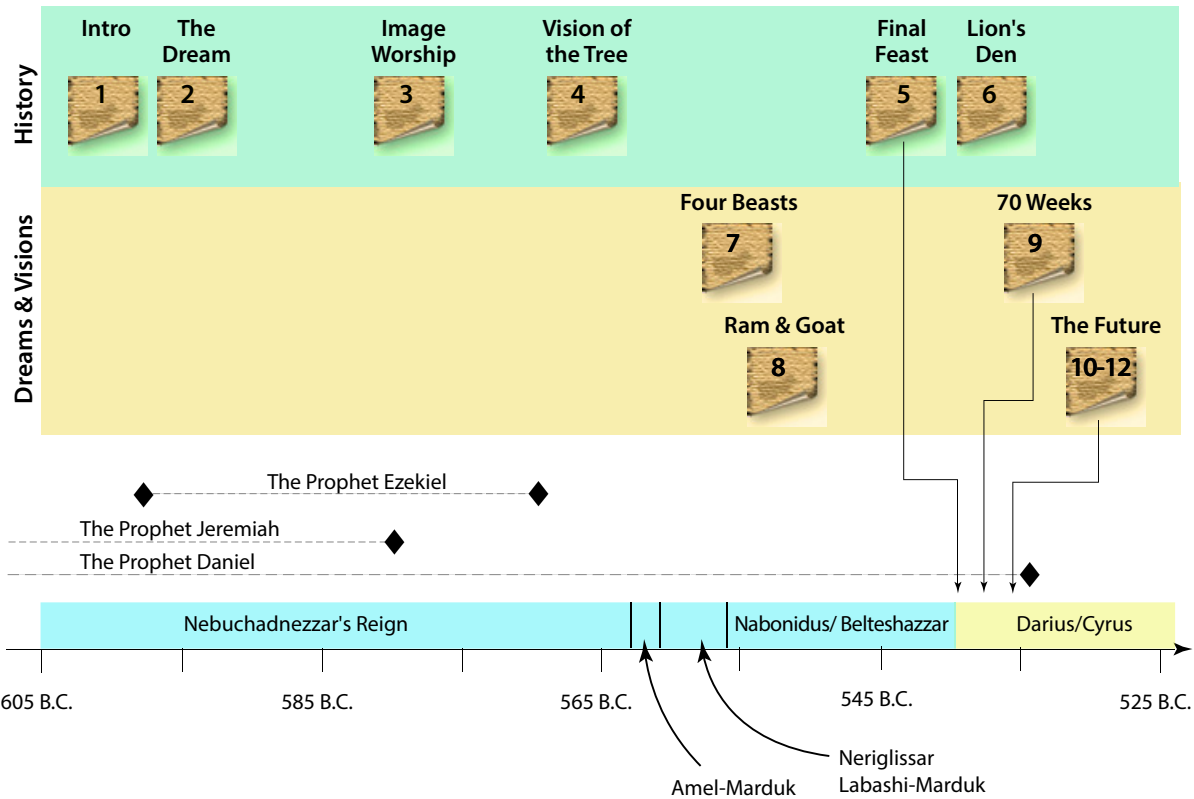
Historical documents tell us that the Persians routinely captured lions and put them in pits. We saw two studies ago that they would also put people into those pits as punishment. Verse 7 gives us historical support of that practice.

“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.” Daniel 6:8 (NASB)

Historical data also indicates that was true. Diodorus [phonetic] of Sicily in his book called The Library of Histories, book 17, section 30 verifies that. You can also check out Esther 1:19. You will find there that the law of the Medes and Persians could not be revoked.

Here is the point: if the king signed the document, he could not retract it later. He could not say, “Oh, I made a

Outline of Daniel



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mistake.” It could not be canceled. The law of the Medes and Persians said once you signed a law, it could not be revoked. What they did was sneaky, and they were not telling the king why they were doing this. In verse 9 we are told,

Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction. Daniel 6:9 (NASB)

These men were successful. They were smart. Notice what else we are told, “the king signed the document, that is, the injunction.” They had already prepared the document. They came prepared. They wanted Daniel out of the way and not holding his high position.

Man of God Remains Faithful. Verse 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. Daniel 6:10 (NASB)

Did Daniel stop to think, “Oh, I have to rethink how I pray. Perhaps I should close the windows and my doors to make sure no one is watching. Maybe I should only pray once a day to minimize the risk of anyone seeing me.” No, he continued just as he had done before. This man was really committed. Some of us would say that Daniel had a lot of courage. This was not simply an act of courage. This was evidence of his commitment to God. To not have continued as he was doing would have been a disappointment to God. God would have been watching and would have known had he not continued.

Daniel would have put God in second place had he stopped. Would God have continued to bless Daniel? Sometimes we get things backward. We think of God as we think of ourselves.

Verse 11:

Then these men came. . . Daniel 6:11a (NASB)

Again, these men know Daniel very well. This means that Daniel was very open about what he believed. Think about this country: we are trying to stop Christians from speaking out. The culture says, “We do not want you praying. We do not want you sharing your faith.” That is exactly what these men were trying to do to Daniel in a sense. They did not want this faithful, pious Jew in a key government position.

Verse 11:

Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God. 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?” Daniel 6:11-12a (NASB)

What they did was to go right back to the king and say, “Remember we made an injunction that you signed? The king replied, “Yes.”

The king replied, “The statement is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked.” Then they answered and spoke before the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah . . . Daniel 6:12b-13a (NASB)

This is a tense moment. They were finally getting to accuse Daniel of violating the injunction and were eager to see Daniel dumped into a lions’ den. Daniel . . .

. . . pays no attention to you, O king . . . Daniel 6:13b (NASB)

In other words, he disrespects you. “Daniel does not respect you, O king” trying to motivate the king to put him in the lions’ den.

. . . or to the injunction. . . Daniel 6:13c (NASB)

That is really the key statement.

. . . which you signed, but keeps making his petition three times a day.” Daniel 6:13d (NASB)

He had continued to pray. “I mean, he is in open, total defiance of you, O King, and of the laws of the Medes and the Persians.”

Verse 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. Daniel 6:14 (NASB)

The king tried to rescue Daniel, but the law of the Medes and Persians could not be modified, could not be changed. Yet the king was trying to figure out if there was some way he could rescue Daniel. I imagine he probably had his attorneys advising him. We are told he kept working on the problem until sunset came. This is a very interesting verse. It tells me that Daniel and the king had more than just a business relationship. There is a personal friendship connection between these two men. The king really wants to save his friend. The king cared about Daniel.

Verse 15:

Then these men came by agreement. . . Daniel 6:15a (NASB)

Apparently they heard that the king was trying to rescue Daniel because we are told they,

. . . 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.” Daniel 6:15b (NASB)

They knew what he was doing. They knew he was trying to rescue Daniel.

Man of God Is Effective. So in verse 16 we are told,

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.” Daniel 6:16 (NASB)

Some people have said, “The king was a believer. He has real confidence in Daniel’s God.” No, I do not think so. I think it is a word of encouragement, as you will see. Later on we will find out he actually is wondering if Daniel made it through the night.

Verse 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. Daniel 6:17 (NASB)

What we have found is the seal of King Ahab, or the signet ring and the rings of the politicians were all used to seal the den. Probably what they did was to take some clay, put it around the stone, and put their signet rings on the clay. And the idea was that you could not break the clay without going through the right process.

Verse 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. Daniel 6:18 (NASB)

He had a sleepless night. He fasted, had no entertainment, and was somber. Who knows if he was praying? We are not told that. He might have been, but we do not know.

Man of God Trusts God. Verse 19:

Then the king arose at dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lions’ den. Daniel 6:19 (NASB)

I suspect he ran—if not ran, he walked really fast to get there. He wanted to find out if Daniel had made it through the night. Verse 20:

When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice . . . Daniel 6:20a (NASB)

The Aramaic actually means “sad voice.”

The king spoke and said to Daniel . . . Daniel 6:20b (NASB)

The implication is that he spoke two times. Apparently the first time he spoke in a sad voice. Maybe Daniel did not recognize him, so the king repeated himself seems to be the implication. And he said,

“Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?” Daniel 6:20c (NASB)

I do not think the king earlier believed God was going to rescue him. That is obvious here when he asked, “Has your God been able to deliver you from the lions?”

Verse 21:

Then Daniel spoke to the king, “O king, live forever! Daniel 6:21 (NASB)

That was the classic response to kings in the book of Daniel.

“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.” Daniel 6:22 (NASB)

Some people have said, “The reason the lions did not eat him is because the lions were old, and they had no energy to chomp on him.” I do not think that is the right answer. I found it interesting that some liberal commentators do not even comment on the verse. That shows a disdain for scripture. Daniel said the reason the lions did not attack him was not because they were old and could not chomp on him. The reason they did not was because Daniel was innocent and had not committed a crime. I thought that was wonderful. Verse 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.
Daniel 6:23 (NASB)

Daniel was rescued because he trusted in God. That is why. If you are interested, the historical data indicates the custom in Persia was if the accused who was sentenced to die made it through the night in the lions’ den and was still alive in the morning, he was then pardoned. That would explain why the king waited until the morning to check on Daniel. He had to wait. The waiting period was to see if Daniel made it through the night. According to Medo-Persian law, Daniel could then be pardoned.

Verse 24:

The king then gave orders, and they brought those men who had maliciously accused Daniel . . . Daniel 6:24a (NASB)

The Aramaic actually means they “ate on him,” they “chewed on him.” That means Daniel’s accusers had been really vicious.

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. Daniel 6:24b (NASB)

This action was according to the laws of the Medes and Persians. If you committed a crime, then you and your family including your children were killed together with you.

Vengeance Is Mine Says The Lord. Verse 25-27 tell us,

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!

“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.

“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.” Daniel 6:25-27 (NASB)

This is a great chapter! Daniel was an example of a godly man of faith!

Conclusion. Now, I want to talk about faith and what God did to Daniel by way of application. Unfortunately, we fall into a trap sometimes where we think if we just have enough faith, or we just do something along a certain line, that somehow we will receive a blessing from God. There is a sense in which we try to manipulate God. You know, God says, “Do not do this.” God says, “If you do this, then I will bless you.” We are not interested in the obedience part as much as the blessing part. Sometimes we are guilty of trying to manipulate God. We read this passage where Daniel had great faith. We were told the reason he was rescued from the lions was because of his great faith. Some might respond, “Oh, I would love to have that kind of faith because then God would rescue me out of my problem and my life would be wonderful.”

Do you remember King Nebuchadnezzar a couple of chapters ago? He was not a believer in God, but God gave

him a great kingdom and incredible wealth. He built one of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. He had a fabulous city. It is unbelievable what God did for him. But Nebuchadnezzar did not have faith. He did not believe in God. He believed in Marduk, who was his God. Yet God chose to bless him, according to the world's standards. The world has its own idea of what blessing is. It is called money. The world considers a large amount of money, a big house, a big bank account as success. Nebuchadnezzar had it. Nebuchadnezzar did not need faith to have "success." And how do many as Christians respond? "Oh, I want to have faith, because I want to have success!" They are thinking like the world. Daniel had faith, and as a result was rescued from the lions. You might think, "Well, is that not proof that if I just do the right thing, God will bless me?" Turn to Hebrews 11. In Hebrews 11:30, we are told by faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. Then in verse 31, we are told about Rahab, who had faith. In verse 32 we are told,

And what more shall I say? Hebrews 11:32a (NASB)

Now the author began to rapid fire a list of people who had faith, and look what God did for them.

... For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises ... Hebrews 11:32b-33a (NASB)

Look at the next set of words.

... shut the mouths of lions. Hebrews 11:33b (NASB)

That is our man, Daniel. He was a man of faith who is in Hebrews 11. Now verse 35 says,

Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured ... Hebrews 11:35a (NASB)

Tortured?! That is a result of faith?! Yes.

... not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others experienced ... Hebrews 11:35b-36a (NASB)

Now look what happened to other people who had faith.

... mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two ... Hebrews 11:36b-37a (NASB)

That verse quotes Isaiah the prophet.

... they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground. And all these, having gained approval through their faith ... Hebrews 11:37b-39a (NASB)

Oh! They gained approval by their faith and all that happened to them?! Yes! Just because you have faith does not necessarily mean that you are going to have the world's definition of success or blessing. Forget the TV preachers, just read the chapter, just read the verses that we have just read. These people are lived examples of faith, Note all that God allowed to happened to them.

Let me tell you what faith does for us. Blessing comes in different ways. Blessing can be that God provides you financial wealth, because we already discovered in 1 Samuel 2:7 that God makes the rich and the poor. Blessing comes in two different ways. One way can be when God stops the devourers from taking our possessions. In the book of Job, Satan came to God and there was a discussion. God decided to let Satan go after Job. God told Satan that He would remove the hedge about Job. When God removed the hedge, Satan went after Job. In Malachi we are told that God tells us that we rob Him when we deny Him tithes. God said if we would start giving to Him as He wants us to give, He would stop the

devourer from eating the crops. The devourer was an insect. pray.

I believe blessing comes in two different ways. One is that God stops the devourer from taking your financial wealth. God stops whatever it is that takes away your happiness, your joy, your blessing. The other kind of blessing is the kind of blessing we hope and long for, the overflowing financial blessing. God is in the business of restraining and He is also in the business of sometimes giving us an overflow.

There is another example. In 2 Thessalonians 2:5-7, God says that He is going to remove the restrainer at the end time, and the evil one can then do what he wants. In Ephesians and in James we are told what we are supposed to do in regards to the devil. We are to stand firm and he will flee from us. God is in the business of restraining on our behalf and to our benefit and to allow us to have material blessing. There are both spiritual and material blessings. I do not want you to walk away today thinking we are talking strictly about financial blessing. God is in the business of restraining so you can have your blessing. But that does not necessarily mean you are going to be wealthy because there are different kinds of blessing, the blessing of protection from evil and harm and the “overflowing” blessings. It is up to God as to what He does. How God responds to your faith is totally His decision.

In Hebrews 10:38, we are told that it is impossible to please God without faith. Faith is the starting point, the minimum requirement to please God. Then we are told that we are to believe Him. In the last part of that verse, it says that He is a rewarder. God is in the business of rewarding us who are faithful. God tells us that when we die and go to heaven some day, there will be rewards. In Matthew 6:33, we are told that if we seek God first and pursue righteousness, He will “add all of these things unto us.” So there are lots of promises that God gives us. But sometimes the promise is one that results in God’s restraining the devourer from taking away His provisions.

Then the other kind of blessing is one of overflow. What God does, and for whom He does it is His choice. Daniel is a great example of a man who put God first in his life constantly. Ezekiel 14:14 tells us that he was also called a righteous man. Clearly he was a man of faith, and was constantly serving God. Daniel is a great example to us today. Let us