

DANIEL: THRIVING IN A GODLESS CULTURE
VIII. God's Sovereignty Over A Changing Government
(Daniel 6:1-28)

I. Introduction

- A. As believers living in a spiritually decaying culture, we need to live affirmatively in victory over sin.
- B. Daniel as a young man was taken captive by godless Babylonians, and he lived through Persia's conquest of Babylon, righteously serving the Lord in a godless culture as a great example for us.
- C. We view Daniel 6:1-28 on God's sovereignty over a changing government for our edification:

II. God's Sovereignty Over A Changing Government, Daniel 6:1-28.

- A. We learned in our last lesson that Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians so that Darius the Mede came to rule Babylon (Daniel 5:1-31). Darius possibly conquered the city of Babylon and was appointed by Cyrus to rule it when Cyrus actually conquered the Babylonian Empire, for Daniel 9:1 claims that Darius was *made* king over the Chaldeans, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1347.
- B. God sustained the 83-year-old Daniel through this shift from empire to empire so that Darius planned to appoint him over his realm as the head of the presidents and 120 satraps who ruled, Daniel 6:1-2.
- C. The satraps and other presidents being Medes or Persians did not want to be subject to the Hebrew captive Daniel, so they sought to discredit him to Darius that he might not promote Daniel, Dan. 6:3-4a.
- D. Nevertheless, Daniel proved to have a perfect track record of government service, and since he devoutly followed his God, they chose a plan to entrap him with regard to his dedication to the Lord, Dan. 6:4b-6.
- E. They flattered Darius, persuading him to make an irreversible decree that whoever petitioned any god or man but Darius for the next thirty days would be thrown into the lion's den, Daniel 6:7-9.
- F. Knowing the decree was made, Daniel practiced civil disobedience, continuing his habit of worshiping God by praying toward Jerusalem, Daniel 6:10. This practice had been directed by Solomon at the dedication of the temple in 1 Kings 8:33 when God's people were in captivity for their sin and needed to pray to God to repent and be restored to the land. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Dan. 6:10)
- G. The satraps and presidents the informed Darius of Daniel's violation of his decree, what left Darius upset for letting himself be manipulated into making the irrevocable decree to Daniel's harm, Dan. 6:11-14a. Though he worked long and hard to deliver Daniel, he could not do so, Daniel 6:14b. [Very significantly, Darius' inability to reverse his own decree, unlike the more sovereign Babylonian kings before him, illustrates the deteriorating nature of human government that is mentioned in Daniel 2:39ff.]
- H. Reminded by the satraps and presidents that his decree was irrevocable, Darius dutifully commanded that Daniel be arrested and thrown into the lion's den, Dan. 6:15-16a. Darius assured Daniel that the God Whom he continually served would deliver him, Daniel 6:16b.
- I. After Daniel cast into the den and a stone was placed over it's opening and sealed, Darius went to his palace and spent a sleepless night without eating and entertainment, Daniel 6:17-18.
- J. Early the next morning, Darius arose, rushed to the den of lions and called out in an anguished voice to ask Daniel if His God Whom he continually served had delivered him from the lions, Daniel 6:19-20.
- K. Daniel replied, claiming that God had sent His Angel to shut the lions' mouths so they had not hurt him, for he was innocent before God and before king Darius himself, Daniel 6:21-22.
- L. An ecstatic Darius then ordered that Daniel be taken up out of the den, and when he emerged, the king and his officials found no injury on the 83-year-old Daniel because he had trusted in God, Daniel 6:23.
- M. Darius then made another decree that could not be revoke, calling for the casting of the men who had accused Daniel into the lion's den along with their families, Daniel 6:24a. God did not deliver these people, but let the lions break all of their bones before they reached the bottom of the den, Dan. 6:24b.
- N. Darius then decreed that all the people in his realm were to revere Daniel's God as the true, eternal God Who delivered His own, Who worked miracles in heaven and earth and rescued Daniel, Dan. 6:25-27.
- O. Daniel then continued to prosper in the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian, Daniel 6:28.

Lesson: *Though facing spiteful political intrigue that came with the great and declining change in empires from Babylon to Persia, God protected, honored and prospered Daniel for faithfully obeying His Word.*

Application: *(1) Even amid ominous changes in the government, may we obey Scripture for blessing. (2) Even if those changes signal a decline in the quality of government, may we like Daniel obey God for blessing!*