

6 [a]Darius decided it would be good to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom. **2** Over these satraps were three officials. Daniel was one of these officials. The satraps were to report to these three officials so that the king wouldn't be cheated.

3 This man, Daniel, distinguished himself among the other officials and satraps because there was an extraordinary spirit in him. The king thought about putting him in charge of the whole kingdom. **4** So the other officials and satraps tried to find something to accuse Daniel of in his duties for the kingdom. But they couldn't find anything wrong because he was trustworthy. No error or fault could be found. **5** These men said, "We won't find anything to accuse this man, Daniel, unless we find it in his religious practices."

6 So these officials and satraps went to the king as a group. They said to him, "May King Darius live forever! **7** All the officials, governors, satraps, advisers, and mayors agree that the king should make a statute and enforce a decree. The decree should state that for the next 30 days whoever asks for anything from any god or person except you, Your Majesty, will be thrown into a lions' den. **8** Your Majesty, issue this decree, and sign it. According to the law of the Medes and Persians no one could change it or repeal it." **9** So Darius signed the written decree.

10 When Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went to his house. An upper room in his house had windows that opened in the direction of Jerusalem. Three times each day he got down on his knees and prayed to his God. He had always praised God this way.

11 One of those times the men came in as a group and found Daniel praying and pleading to his God. **12** Then they went and spoke to the king about his decree. [They asked,] "Didn't you sign a decree which stated that for 30 days whoever asks for anything from any god or person except you, Your Majesty, will be thrown into a lions' den?"

The king answered, "That's true. According to the law of the Medes and Persians the decree can't be repealed."

13 They replied, "Your Majesty, Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, refuses to obey your order or the decree that you signed. He prays three times each day."

14 The king was very displeased when he heard this. He tried every way he could think of to save Daniel. Until sundown he did everything he could to rescue him.

15 Then Daniel's accusers gathered in front of the king. They said to him, "Remember, Your Majesty, the Medes and Persians have a law that no decree or statute the king makes can be changed."

16 So the king gave the order, and Daniel was brought to him and thrown into the lions' den. The king told Daniel, "May your God, whom you always worship, save you!"

17 A stone was brought and placed over the opening of the den. The king put his seal on the stone, using his ring and the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation could not be changed.

18 Then the king went to his palace and spent the night without food or company. He couldn't get to sleep. **19** At dawn, as soon as it was light, the king got up and quickly went to the lions' den. **20** As he came near the den where Daniel was, the king called to Daniel with anguish in his voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was God, whom you always worship, able to save you from the lions?"

21 Daniel said to the king, "Your Majesty, may you live forever! **22** My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths so that they couldn't hurt me. He did this because he considered me innocent. Your Majesty, I haven't committed any crime."

23 The king was overjoyed and had Daniel taken out of the den. When Daniel was taken out of the den, people saw that he was completely unharmed because he trusted his God.

24 The king ordered those men who had brought charges against Daniel to be brought to him. They, their wives, and their children were thrown into the lions' den. Before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions attacked them and crushed all their bones.

25 Then King Darius wrote to the people of every province, nation, and language all over the world:

I wish you peace and prosperity.

26 I decree that in every part of my kingdom people should tremble with terror in front of Daniel's God, the living God who continues forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed. His power lasts to the end of time. **27** He saves, rescues, and does miraculous signs and amazing things in heaven and on earth. He saved Daniel from the lions.

28 This man, Daniel, prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Footnotes

a. **6:1 Daniel 6:1–28** in English Bibles is Daniel 6:2–29 in the Hebrew Bible.