

# CHAPTER 6

## INTRODUCTION TO DANIEL 6

This chapter gives an account of Daniel's being cast into the den of lions, and the causes of it, and the steps leading to it; and also of his wonderful deliverance out of it, and what followed upon that. It first relates how Daniel was made by Darius first president of the princes of the kingdom, which drew their envy upon him, (<sup><2065></sup>Daniel 6:1-4), and that these princes finding they could get no occasion against him, but in religion, proposed to the king to make a law forbidding prayer to any god for thirty days, which they got established, (<sup><2065></sup>Daniel 6:5-9), and Daniel breaking this law, is accused by them to the king; and the penalty, casting into the den of lions, is insisted on to be executed, (<sup><2060></sup>Daniel 6:10-13), which the king laboured to prevent, but in vain; and Daniel is cast to the lions, to the great grief of the king, (<sup><2064></sup>Daniel 6:14-18), who visited the den the next morning, and to his great joy found Daniel alive, (<sup><2069></sup>Daniel 6:19-23), upon which, by the law of retaliation, his accusers, their wives, and children, were cast into it, (<sup><2064></sup>Daniel 6:24), and an edict was published by the king, commanding all in his dominions to fear and reverence the God of Daniel, (<sup><2065></sup>Daniel 6:25-28).

**Ver. 1.** *It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes*, etc.] This is the same Darius mentioned in the latter part of the preceding chapter; who, as soon as he took the kingdom of Babylon, divided it into a hundred and twenty provinces, as Jacchiades observes; as was the manner of the Medes and Persians. So Darius the son of Hystaspes divided the kingdom of Persia into twenty provinces, and set governors over each, according to Herodotus<sup>f234</sup>; to these hundred and twenty provinces seven more were afterwards added, through the victories of Cyrus and Cambyses, and Darius Itystaspes, (<sup><2001></sup>Esther 1:1). Josephus<sup>f235</sup>, through forgetfulness, makes these princes and provinces three hundred and sixty:

*which should be over the whole kingdom*; or, “in the whole kingdom”<sup>f236</sup>; in the several parts of it, and take care of all things relative to the civil

government of it, both for the honour and advantage of the king, and the good of the subjects.

**Ver. 2.** *And over these three presidents,* etc.] To whom the hundred and twenty princes were accountable for their conduct, and to whom the people might apply for redress of grievances, if oppressed; perhaps the whole empire was divided into three greater parts, and each part had forty provinces in it, and over it a president or deputy of the king; to whom the princes of each province gave in the account of what they received for the king, and what use they made of it:

*(of whom Daniel was the first:)* or “one”<sup>f237</sup>, who was now an old man, having been about seventy years in Babylon, and had had a large experience of the affairs of civil government, being advanced in the times of Nebuchadnezzar to high posts; and very probably Darius had heard of the wisdom of Daniel before he came to the kingdom, as well as the king of Tyre, (<sup>338B</sup>Ezekiel 28:3) and might be informed of his prediction of Belshazzar’s death, and the change of the empire: and of Belshazzar’s promise to make him the third ruler in the kingdom; and he might also himself observe in him an uncommon sagacity and fitness for business of this sort. Josephus<sup>f238</sup> says, that Darius took Daniel with him into Media, and made him one of the three presidents; and indeed no mention is made in this history of the nobles of Babylon, but only of the Medes and Persians:

*that the princes might give account unto them, and the king should have no damage:* or loss in his revenues, through the fraud and bad management of the princes of the provinces; since they might be discovered and checked by the presidents, who were to audit their accounts: or, “have no trouble”<sup>f239</sup>; in looking over and passing the accounts of the princes.

**Ver. 3.** *Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes,* etc.] Not only above the princes, but the presidents, being the first of them, as before: or, “he was victorious above them”<sup>f240</sup>; he got more credit and applause than they did, being more exact, diligent, and laborious, faithful, and conscientious:

*because an excellent spirit was in him;* meaning not a spirit of grace, piety, and religion, which the Heathen king was no judge of, nor valued him for it, though it was in him; but a spirit of knowledge of civil affairs, and of

prudence in managing them, and of integrity throughout the whole of his conduct:

*and the king thought to set him over the whole realm*; or, “wherefore the king thought”<sup>f241</sup>, etc.; because there was such a spirit in him, which so qualified him for public business, he began to think of abolishing his triumvirate of presidents, and making Daniel his viceroy over the whole empire, which very probably they had got some knowledge of; and this, as well as being above them, drew the envy of them on him, and put them upon the following scheme.

**Ver. 4.** *Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom*, etc.] Concerning the management of the affairs of the kingdom, he being prime minister of state; the presidents and princes joined together in this inquiry; the princes, because Daniel was so strict and exact in looking into their accounts, that no fraudulent measures were taken to cheat the king of his revenue; and the presidents, because he was preferred above them:

*but they could find none occasion nor fault*; or “corruption”<sup>f242</sup>, that he had been guilty of any mis-administration, or any corrupt practices:

*forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him*; no mistake in his accounts; no blunder in his management of things; nothing done amiss, neither wilfully, nor through ignorance, negligence, or inadvertence; so faithful and upright, so prudent and discreet, so exact and careful, that the most watchful observers of him, and these envious, and his most implacable enemies, could find no fault in him, or anything, or the colour of it, to ground an accusation upon.

**Ver. 5.** *Then said these men*, etc.] To one another:

*we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel*; whom they speak of with great disdain and contempt, calling him this Daniel, this fellow, though in the highest post in the kingdom:

*except we find it against him concerning the law of his God*; about his religion; not that they thought he would be prevailed upon to break the law of his God in any respect; but they knew he was tenacious of the Jewish religion, and of all the laws, rites, and ceremonies of it; if therefore they could get an act passed, and signed by the king, which would any ways affect his religion, or any branch of it, or prohibit the performance of it for

any time, they hoped to get an advantage of him, knowing that he would not on any consideration forsake or neglect that; which being said by his enemies was greatly to his honour.

**Ver. 6.** *Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king,* etc.] Having consulted the matter, and agreed upon and formed a scheme among themselves, and drawn up a bill or decree in form, ready to be signed by the king, whom they hoped to persuade to it; and for that end they got together, and went in a body to him. The word<sup>f243</sup> signifies to assemble in a tumultuous and noisy way; they thought, by their number and noise, their bustle and bluster, to carry their point. Ben Melech compares it with (~~Psalm~~ Psalm 2:2):

*and said thus unto him, O King Darius, live for ever;* this they said as courtiers, professing subjection to him, and affection for him, wishing him health, long life, and happiness.

**Ver. 7.** *All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains,* etc.] There were but three presidents, and Daniel was one of them, so that these “all” were but “two”; they made the most of it they could; and very probably not all and everyone of the other officers mentioned were present; but they were willing to make their request appear as general as they could, in order that it might have the greater weight with the king:

*have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree;* that is, they had met together, and had drawn up a bill that might be passed into a law by having the royal assent, and be made sure and firm by the king’s signing it; which is as follows:

*that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions;* by which law all invocation of their own gods was prohibited for a month, as well as of the living and true God; but this they stuck not at, provided they could gain their point against Daniel; and they were obliged to express it in this general way, to cover their designs; for had they mentioned a particular deity, as the God of the Jews, or the God of Daniel, their views would have been seen into by the king; and not only religious invocation is here forbidden, but all civil requests are prohibited: servants might not ask anything of their masters, nor children of their parents, nor wives of their husbands, nor one neighbour of another; for this seems not to be limited to

asking any thing of a man worshipped as a god; though Saadiah says there were some in Darius's kingdom that believed in, worshipped, and prayed to a man; but all men are excluded, except Darius himself, of whom only anything was to be asked for thirty days; which was not only a deifying him, but exalting him above all gods and men; and suggesting as if it was in his power to answer all the exigencies of his subjects, and supply all their wants, many of which it was impossible for him to do. Josephus{c} mentions this law in a different manner; as if the design of it was to give the people an intermission from devotion for such a time, and that they were neither to pray to Darius, nor any of the gods, during it; whereas the exception is express, "save of thee, O king". The sanction or penalty of it is, casting into the den of lions; the king's den of lions, as Jarchi, where his lions were kept; as it is usual with princes: this very probably was a punishment common in the eastern nations, as casting the Christians to the lions was usual with the Romans.

**Ver. 8.** *Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing,* etc.] For they had not only agreed upon it among themselves what to propose, as to the substance of it; but they had drawn it up in writing, ready to be signed, which they urge to have done immediately:

*that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not;* when once signed by the king: mention being made of both the Medes and Persians, shows that these two nations were now united in one government; that Darius and Cyrus were partners in the empire; and it is easy to account for it why the Medes are mentioned first; because Darius was the Mede, and Cyrus the Persian; the one the uncle, the other the nephew; but afterwards, when a Persian only was on the throne, then the Persian is mentioned first, (~~1019~~ Esther 1:19).

**Ver. 9.** *Wherefore King Darius signed the writing and the decree.*] Moved to it by the number and importunity of his principal men; and chiefly through affectation of deity, which this law gave him; and that he might have an opportunity of ingratiating himself into his new subjects by his munificence and liberality, not being aware of the snare laid for his favourite, Daniel.

**Ver. 10.** *Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed,* etc.] This he knew, either by the relation of others, or by the public proclamation of it through the city; however, he did not know of it till it was signed, or otherwise he might have prevented it by applying to the king, in whom he

had great interest; but, now the thing was done, he did not solicit the abrogation of it, knowing it was in vain; nor did he go to the king with complaints against his enemies, showing the design they had in it; but let things take their own course, he being determined to be found in his duty, be it as it would:

*he went into his house*: he left the court at the proper time of prayer, and went to his own house to perform it; he did not, in defiance of this law, go to prayer in the court, or in the streets, but retired home, as he was used to do:

*and his windows being opened*; not to be seen of men, but that he might have a clear view of the heavens, where his God dwelt, to whom he prayed, and be the more affected with the consideration of his greatness and glory:

*in his chamber toward Jerusalem*; it was not in the lower part of the house, nor on the top of the house, in either of which he might be more easily seen; but in his chamber, where he was wont to retire, the windows of which were opened “towards Jerusalem”; not towards the king’s palace, as if he prayed to him, and so eluded the decree; nor towards the east, as the Heathens did; but towards Jerusalem, which lay to the south of Babylon; and that, either because of his remembrance of that city, his affection to it, and concern for its re-edification; or having some respect to the words of Solomon, (<sup><1033></sup>1 Kings 8:33), etc.; and so, according to the Jewish writers, it was the custom of their people. Ben Gersom, on the above place, says, that though they did not pray within the temple, yet they prayed, turning themselves towards it, as much as possibly they could; and even when it was destroyed, as now, yet they in praying turned to the place where it had stood, as Saadiah, Aben Ezra, and Jarchi observe: and chiefly Daniel did this, because the temple was a type of Christ, through whom the persons and prayers of the saints are acceptable unto God:

*he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed*; kneeling is a prayer gesture, a token of reverence and humility; this was done three times a day, morning, noon, and evening; (see <sup><1357></sup>Psalm 55:17), in the morning, before he went out about the king’s business; at noon, when he returned home to dinner; and at evening, when all his work was done, and he was about to retire to bed; the hours of prayer with the Jews seem to have been the third, sixth, and ninth; that is, at nine in the morning, twelve at noon, and three in the afternoon; (see <sup><401></sup>Acts 2:1,15 3:1 10:9):

*and gave thanks before his God*; for the benefits he daily received from him; or he “confessed before him”<sup>f244</sup>; the sins he had been guilty of, and owned the favours he partook of:

*as he aforetime did*; as it had been his custom from his youth upward, and therefore would not omit it now, on account of this edict.

**Ver. 11.** *Then these men assembled*, etc.] Gathered together, and went in a body to Daniel’s house; knowing his times of prayer, and where, and in what manner, he used to pray, to see if they could find him at it as aforetime; that so they might have to accuse him with it. Saadiah says, they found a girl, and asked her what Daniel was doing? she told him that Daniel was on his knees, praying to his God in his chamber; immediately they went, and found as she had said:

*and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God*; they went into his house, and up into his chamber, the doors not being locked, pretending perhaps business with him, and saw him at his devotions; so that they were able, upon their own knowledge, to bring in an accusation against him for breach of the king’s law, and prove it.

**Ver. 12.** *Then they came near*, etc.] They went immediately from Daniel’s house to the king’s palace, and into the king’s presence; which they could do, either by virtue of their offices, or being admitted by the proper officer in waiting:

*and spake before the king concerning the king’s decree*; at first they said nothing about Daniel, but about the decree, to get it recognized, and afresh ratified and confirmed; lest, under some pretence or another, the king should change it:

*hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any god or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?* they do not say peremptorily that he had signed such a decree, but put the question to him, that they might have it affirmed by himself:

*the king answered and said, the thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not*; it is true that such a decree is made and signed, and it is an unalterable one; such as is every established and signed decree of the Medes and Persians: it is as if he had said, it is

very true what you put me in mind of, and I will never recede from it, or nullify and make it void.

**Ver. 13.** *Then answered they, and spake before the king,* etc.] Having obtained what they desired, a ratification of the decree, they open the whole affair to him they came about:

*that Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king:* they call him “that Daniel”; by way of contempt; and, to make him the more despicable, represent him not only as a foreigner, but a captive, and therefore ought to have been humble and obedient, as Jacchiades observes; and a Jewish captive too, of all people the most odious; and, though he had been raised from a low estate to great honour and dignity, yet such was his ingratitude, that he made no account of the king, nor of his orders, but despised him:

*nor the decree that thou hast signed;* the decree concerning making any petition to God or man for a month, which was signed with the king’s own hand, and was firm and stable; and of which Daniel could not be ignorant, and therefore wilfully, and in a contemptuous manner, acted contrary to it:

*but maketh his petition three times a day;* to whom they say not whether to God or man; but in this general way accuse him which they thought best and safest; they feared, had they mentioned his God, something might have been said in his favour to excuse him; and to aggravate the matter, they observe the frequency of his doing it, three times; so that it was not a single fact he is charged with, but what he had repeated again and again.

**Ver. 14.** *Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself,* etc.] Or “at it”<sup>f245</sup>; or “with him”; with Daniel, not so much for what he had done, but that he had not done it with more caution, or more privately, that it might not have been known: or rather, as we render it, “with himself”, that he should so rashly sign the decree, without considering the consequences of it; for he now found that he was circumvented by his princes, and that their design was not his honour and glory, but the destruction of Daniel: or the sense in general is, that what he heard was very disagreeable, afflictive, and distressing to him:

*and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him;* he resolved, if possible, to do it; he applied his mind to it; he turned his thoughts wholly that way, and contrived all ways and means to effect it: R. Mattathiah, in Saadiah, interprets the phrase of his offering money as a ransom for his life:



*and he laboured till the going down of the sun to save him*; from the will of the princes, and from the jaws of the lions: very probably it was early in the morning these princes found Daniel at prayer, who went immediately to the king with their accusation; so that he was all day labouring with all his might and main to find out ways and means to save his darling favourite; he studied to put such a sense upon his decree, that it might not reach Daniel's case; he strove to make the princes easy, and to persuade them to drop the affair, and not insist on the execution of the decree.

**Ver. 15.** *Then these men assembled to the king*, etc.] Who had left him for a while to consider of the case; or they departed to consult among themselves about the king's proposals to them; or went home to their own houses to dinner, and returned in a body; they came in a tumultuous way, as the word signifies; (see <sup>206</sup>Daniel 6:6), they cluttered about him, and were very rude and noisy, and addressed him in an authoritative and threatening manner:

*and said unto the king, know O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, that no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed*; they perceived that he was desirous of altering or nullifying the decree he had made, which to have done would have been to his reputation; and to this they oppose a fundamental law of the realm, that no decree ratified by the king could be altered; to attempt to do this would be a breach of their constitution, and of dangerous consequence; it would lessen the king's authority, and be a means of his subjects rising up in rebellion against him: for that there was such a law, the king knew as well as they; nor do they say this by way of information, but to urge him to the execution of the decree; and there is no doubt to be made that there was such a fundamental law, though a foolish one, and which afterwards continued, (<sup>1019</sup>Esther 1:19), but the instance which some writers give out of Diodorus Siculus<sup>f246</sup>, concerning Charidemus, a general of the Athenians, whom another Darius king of Persia condemned to die for the freedom of speech he used with him and afterwards repented of it, but in vain; for his royal power, as the historian observes, could not make that undone which was done; this is no proof of the immutability of the laws of the Persians, since the king's repentance was after the general's death, which then was too late.

**Ver. 16.** *Then the king commanded*, etc.] Being overawed by his princes and fearing they would conspire against him, and stir up the people to

rebel; and consulting his own credit lest he should be thought fickle and inconstant; he ordered the decree to be put in execution against Daniel, and delivered his favourite into their hands:

*and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions;* not the princes but proper officers employed by them: according to the additions to this book of Daniel, there were seven lions in this den, in the Apocrypha: “And in the den there were seven lions, and they had given them every day two carcasses, and two sheep: which then were not given to them, to the intent they might devour Daniel.” (Bel 1:32)

but, according to Joseph ben Gorion<sup>f247</sup>, there were ten, who used to devour ten sheep, and as many human bodies every day; but this day they had no food, and ate nothing, that they might be more greedy, and devour Daniel the sooner:

*now the king spake and said unto Daniel;* being brought into his presence, in his palace, before he was cast into the den; or at the mouth of the den whither the king accompanied him:

*thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee;* he calls the Lord Daniel’s God, not his own, as he was not, he served other gods; yet he suggests that Daniel was right in serving him continually, in praying to him daily, the very thing for which he was cast to the lions; and expresses his confidence that his God he served would deliver him from being devoured by them; which he might conclude, from, the innocency, integrity, and faithfulness of Daniel, and from his being such a peculiar favourite of God as to be indulged with the knowledge of future things; and perhaps he might have heard of the deliverance of his three companions from the fiery furnace: though the words may be rendered, as they are by some, as a wish or prayer, “may thy God etc. deliver thee”<sup>f248</sup>; I cannot, I pray he would; it is my hearty desire that so it might be.

**Ver. 17.** *And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den,* etc.] Not a heap of stones, but a single one, a very large one, sufficient to stop up the mouth of the den, that nothing might enter in at it, or be cast into it: this stone was brought by proper persons, and a sufficient number of them, according the order of the king, or his princes, or both; for what Jarchi says, of there being no stones in Babylon, only bricks, and of the angels bringing this stone out of the land of Israel, is all fabulous: but for

what end it should be brought and laid is not easy to say; if it was laid here by the order of the princes, it could not surely be to keep any of his friends from going in to deliver him, for who would venture himself there? nor to keep Daniel in it, since it might be concluded, that, as soon as ever he was cast in, he would be seized upon by the lions and devoured at once; unless it can be thought, that these men saw, that when he was thrown in, the lions did not meddle with him; which they might attribute to their having been lately fed, and therefore, that he might be reserved till they were hungry, they did this: if it was by the order of the king, which is very likely, the reason might be, he believed, or at least hoped, that God would deliver him from the lions; but lest his enemies, seeing this, should throw in stones or arrows, and kill him, the mouth of the den was stopped, so Jarchi and Saadiah: no doubt but this was so ordered by the providence of God, as well as the sealing of it, that the miracle of the deliverance might appear the more manifest:

*and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of the lords;* that none might dare to remove it; so the stone that was laid at the door of Christ's sepulchre was sealed with a seal, (<sup>4276</sup>Matthew 27:66), the reason of sealing it follows,

*that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel:* the view the lords had in it was, that the king might not change the sentence passed on Daniel, or take any methods to deliver him; and the view the king had in it might be, that should he be saved from the lions, as he hoped he would, that no other sentence might pass upon him, or he be delivered to any other kind of death.

**Ver. 18.** *Then the king went to his palace,* etc.] After he had accompanied Daniel to the den, and he was cast into it, the stone was laid to the mouth of it, and that sealed; this was after sunset, for he had laboured till then to serve him, (<sup>2764</sup>Daniel 6:14), perhaps it was late at night:

*and passed the night fasting;* vexed for what he had done, in signing the decree; fretting because he could not save Daniel, and his heart full of grief for him, and so had no stomach to eat; went to bed without his supper, lay all night fasting, and would not eat a bit nor drink a drop of anything:

*neither were instruments of music brought before him;* as used to be after supper, and played upon; his heart was too full, and his mind and thoughts so intent on Daniel's case, that he could not listen to music, or bear the

sound of it. Jarchi interprets it a “table”, to sit down at, and eat, being furnished and well served, as was usual; but this is implied in the preceding clause. Aben Ezra, Saadiah, and Jacchiades, explain by songs and musical instruments, harps and psalter and Saadiah adds, girls to sing and dance. Deuteronomy Dieu, from the use of the word in the Arabic language, thinks that incense is meant, which was used at feasts, and in the palaces of princes.

*And his sleep went from him*; while he was up he could take no pleasure in eating and drinking, and hearing music; and when he was in bed, he could not sleep for thinking what he had done, and what was the case of Daniel.

**Ver. 19.** *Then the king arose very early in the morning*, etc.] Or, “in the morning with light”<sup>f249</sup> as soon as ever light appeared, or the day broke: the word for morning is doubled, and one of the letters in it is larger than usual; and all which denote not only his very great earliness in rising, but his earnestness and solicitude for Daniel, to know whether he was alive or not:

*and went in haste unto the den of lions*; he did not send a servant, but went in person, and with as much expedition as possible, though a king, and an old man; this shows the great love and strong affection he had for Daniel, and his concern for his good and welfare.

**Ver. 20.** *And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel*, etc.] Expressing grief and sorrow his heart was full of; it was rather like howling than speaking; thus he cried before he saw Daniel, or heard him speak:

*when he was near to the den*<sup>f250</sup>, as it may be rendered; and he was between hope and fear about Daniel’s safety; when within sight of the den, and hearing of Daniel, should he be alive to speak: but when he came nearer and saw him, then

*the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God; art thou alive?* this is a plain case, that the God whom thou servest is the living God, since he has saved thee; and that thou art a true and faithful servant of his, seeing he has wrought such deliverance for thee:

*is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?* has he made it to appear that he is able to deliver from them? has he really done the thing? he could scarcely believe for joy, being filled with

amazement; for these words are not to be considered as expressive of any doubt or hesitation he had of the power of God to save him; for he had declared he had before, yea; his confidence that he would deliver him; but of his wonder and admiration at it, the thing being so extraordinary and amazing.

**Ver. 21.** *Then said Daniel unto the king,* etc.] Whose voice he knew, though the tone of it was so much altered:

*O king, live for ever;* he does not reproach him for delivering him into the hands of his enemies, and suffering him to be cast into that place, which he might have prevented, had he had more resolution; he knew it was done with reluctance, though with weakness; which he does not upbraid him with, but freely forgives him, and wishes him health, long life, and prosperity.

**Ver. 22.** *My God hath sent his angel,* etc.] Daniel takes up the king's expression, and confirms it; he asserts God to be his God, of which he had given him a proof in sending his angel to him that night; either one of the ministering spirits about him, or the Angel of the covenant, the same with him, said to be like the Son of God, that was seen in the fiery furnace, even the Messiah in human form:

*and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me;* by taking away hunger from them, or by striking terror into them; so that they had either no inclination to hurt him, or were afraid of him:

*forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me;* either before God, or before his Angel, Daniel appeared to be an innocent and righteous person; therefore the Lord pleaded his cause, and made it to appear that he was just, and his cause good; for this is not to be understood of the merits of his works, and the causality of them to justify and save; for here he is speaking not of the righteousness of his person, but of his cause; and not of eternal, but temporal salvation:

*and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt:* either to his person or government; nothing that was criminal and sinful, but what was just and right, serving daily his God; and this was plain to the king, what he knew and owned; and though he had acted contrary to the decree the lords had craftily obtained, yet it was not out of disrespect to the king, but in obedience to his God; and in doing of which he had done nothing prejudicial to the king's interest.

**Ver. 23.** *Then was the king exceeding glad for him*, etc.] For Daniel, because of his safety, because he was alive, and in health, and unhurt; and the speech he made was very acceptable to him, agreeable to his sentiments, and which he was satisfied was just and true: or “with”, or “for himself”<sup>f251</sup>; being now eased of a guilty and distracted conscience:

*and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den*; that is, he ordered those that were with him, his servants that attended him, either to roll away the stone, and so let him out; or to let down ropes, and draw him out, or ladders by which he might ascend; for one would think it would not have been safe for them to have gone down into it, to take him up: these orders the king gave without the consent of his lords, being animated to it by the miracle wrought:

*so Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him*; no bruise by throwing him into the den, no wound was made by the lions, or his flesh in the least torn by them:

*because he believed in his God*; served and worshipped him; of which service and worship faith is a particular branch, and is put for the whole, and without which it is not pleasing and acceptable to God; he trusted the Lord, he committed himself to his power and providence; he left himself wholly in the hands of the Lord, to dispose of him, whether for life or death, as he pleased; he believed he was able to deliver him, but he was not anxious about it: for this seems not to design any particular act of faith, with respect to this miracle wrought for him, but his general trust and confidence in God; and the apostle seems to have reference to this, when among other things he ascribes to faith the stopping of the mouths of lions, (~~3813~~ Hebrews 11:33).

**Ver. 24.** *And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel*, etc.] Not all the hundred and twenty princes, and the two presidents; but the chief of them, who were most busy in getting the decree signed; watched Daniel’s house, and what he did there; brought the charge against him to the king, and were most solicitous and urgent to have the decree put in execution against him:

*and they cast them into the den of lions*; the servants of the king, who were sent to fetch them, and who brought these by the king’s orders, cast them into the same den of lions that Daniel had been in: thus often the pit

wicked men dig for others, they fall into themselves; so Haman man was hanged on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai:

*them, their children, and their wives*; which might be according to the laws of this monarchy in capital offences, relating to affairs of state, as this was for an accusation of a prime minister of state, to take away his life; though such things were common with arbitrary princes, for the terror of others; so Haman and his sons were hanged up by Ahasuerus: this may seem cruel and inhuman, though it might be that the wives and children of these men advised them to do what they did, and were encouragers and approvers of it. Josephus<sup>f252</sup> relates, that the enemies of Daniel, when they saw no hurt came to him, would not ascribe it to the providence of God, but to the lions being full of food; upon which the king ordered much meat to be given them, and then the men to be cast in to them, to see whether because of their fulness they would come unto them or not:

*and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces, or ever they came at the bottom of the den*; the lions seized them at once; and though they did all they could to defend themselves, fighting with them; yet the lions were too powerful for them, and overcame them, and not only tore off their flesh, but broke their bones in pieces, and that as they were falling, before they came to the bottom, or the lower part of the den; this was a plain proof that it was not through fulness, or want of appetite, that the lions did not fall upon Daniel and devour him: this affair happened in the first year of Darius, which, according to Bishop Usher<sup>f253</sup>, and Dean Prideaux<sup>f254</sup>, and Mr. Whiston<sup>f255</sup>, was in the year of the world 3466 A.M., and 538 B.C.; Mr. Bedford<sup>f256</sup> places it in 537 B.C.

**Ver. 25.** *Then King Darius*, etc.] Being thoroughly convinced of the miracle, and of the powerful interposition of divine Providence in it, and of the omnipotence of God, and of his concern in the government of the world; that all might be acquainted with the same,

*wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth*; he being at the head of the Babylonish monarchy, which included many nations and people of various languages; and which was increased, and still increasing, by the victories of Cyrus, who was partner with him in the empire; (see <sup>204</sup>Daniel 3:4,29):

*peace be multiplied unto you*; an increase of all kind of prosperity; an usual salutation or wish with the eastern people.

**Ver. 26.** *I make a decree, that in every dominion of my kingdom,* etc.] In every province of his large empire; this explains who are meant by all people, nations, etc. before mentioned; namely, such as were within his dominions; for to no other could his decree reach: this decree is very different from that he had made a few days before, forbidding any man to ask anything of any god or man for the space of a month; but now his order is,

*that men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel;* that they would serve with fear and trembling, and reverence and adore the God that Daniel served and worshipped; and who manifestly appeared to be his God, and to be the true God, by his wonderful deliverance of him:

*for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever;* that has life in himself, and is the author and giver of life to others, and ever remains so, without any variation or shadow of turning; he is everlasting and unchangeable, permanent and immutable in his nature; steady and steadfast in his purposes and promises, in his conduct in the government of the world, and in the course of his providence:

*and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end;* unto the end of time; other kingdoms will he destroyed, but his will not; all other rule, dominion and authority will be at an end but his will continue for ever; his kingdom is an everlasting one: this doctrine Darius had learned from Daniel, as Nebuchadnezzar before had done; (see <sup>204</sup>Daniel 2:44 4:3).

**Ver. 27.** *He delivereth and rescueth.* etc.] As he did the three companions of Daniel from the fiery furnace, and now Daniel himself from the lions' den:

*and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth;* which are out of the common course of nature, and not according to the laws of it; such as hindering the natural force of fire from burning, as in the case of the three children; and stopping the mouths of lions from devouring Daniel as follows:

*who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions;* or "from the hand"<sup>257</sup> of them; from their destroying paws, and devouring jaws; which was nothing less than a miracle, and a proof of the divine omnipotence and of his power of doing wonders.



**Ver. 28.** *So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius*, etc.] This Daniel, of whom so much has been said all the preceding chapters, and who had been so lately and so wonderfully delivered from the lions' den, the same flourished throughout the reign of Darius the Mede; continued a favourite with the king; retained his honour and dignity; and kept his posts and places of trust and profit. Darius the Mede reigned two years; though Jarchi says he reigned but one, and was slain in war; for which he refers to Joseph ben Gorion, who has not a word of it.

*And in the reign of Cyrus the Persian*; who, as Jacchiades says, was the son-in-law of Darius, and inherited the kingdom after him; which is true, for he married the daughter of Cyaxares or Darius who was his uncle, and succeeded him as sole monarch of the empire: he reigned with him the two years he had the government of the Babylonish monarchy; and when he died, it solely devolved on him, who reigned seven years after, as Xenophon<sup>f258</sup> relates; but the canon of Ptolemy ascribes nine years to his reign, which includes the two years he was partner with Darius. Daniel was in the same favour with this prince as the former, who in the first year of his reign proclaimed liberty to the Jews to return to their country, and build their temple; whether Daniel lived throughout his reign is not certain; he was alive in the third year of it, as appears from (~~2700~~ Daniel 10:1), some take Darius and Cyrus to be one and the same person, and render this last clause as explanative of the former, "even", or, "that is, in the reign of Cyrus the Persian"<sup>f259</sup>.