

Among the Lions: In and Out of the Den (Part 1)

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[0 : 00] We're ready for Daniel chapter 6 in our study of this very interesting book, a book that is full of stories that we're all familiar with, especially the one that we're going to be looking at.

Or at least start to look at tonight. This is an incredible chapter and a lot of history that I want us to be acquainted with as we kind of understand, try to understand where this kind of fits in with history during these days, how it fits in with the chapter we just completed, the death of Belshazzar and the end of the Babylonian Empire and so forth.

So we want to kind of start with a little bit of that. Actually, before we start, I want to go ahead and just read the entire chapter. I think that would be good to do. I don't always do it that way. We are going to be looking and I'm going to be quoting all of it again as we go through it, but that's okay. Let's get the whole story in our minds.

Again, it's very familiar. So starting with chapter 6, verse 1, it pleased Darius to set over the kingdom. Now, you can't hardly read that without going back a couple of verses because where did Darius come from?

Suddenly, here we have Darius. We've been talking about Nebuchadnezzar. All right, old Neb. We've been talking about him and then Belshazzar. And now suddenly, Darius, where did he come from? Well, you remember the last few verses of chapter 5, how Darius came on the scene.

[1 : 46] All right, so it pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps. 120 satraps to be over the whole kingdom.

That kingdom would be the kingdom of the Medes and Persians or the Persian Empire. And over these, these 120 satraps, three governors, of whom Daniel was one.

That the satraps might give account to them so that the king would suffer no loss. Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps because an excellent spirit was in him.

And the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom.

But they could find no charge or fault because he was faithful. Nor was there any error or fault found in him. Then these men said, We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God.

[2 : 57] So these governors and satraps thronged before the king. Kind of like a mob came before the king. And said thus to him, King Darius, live forever.

All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators, the satraps, the counselors, the advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree that whoever petitions any god or man for 30 days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.

Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing so that it cannot be changed according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.

That is, once you write it down, it can't be changed. Therefore, King Darius signed the written decree. Now, when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home and in his upper room with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. They went before the king and spoke concerning the king's decree.

[4 : 27] Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within 30 days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.

So they answered and said before the king, that Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed that makes his

petition three times a day.

And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him. And he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

Then these men approached the king and said to the king, Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed.

So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, Your God, whom you serve continually, he will deliver you.

[5 : 37] Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.

Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting. No musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him. Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions.

When he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?

Then Daniel said to the king, O king, live forever. My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths so that they have not hurt me because I was found innocent before him.

And also, O king, I have done no wrong before you. Now the king was exceedingly glad for him and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up and out of the den and no injury, whatever, was found on him because he believed in his God.

[6 : 55] The king gave the command and they brought those men who had accused Daniel and they cast them into the den of lions. Them, their children, and their wives and the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.

You know, I was thinking when I was a kid and when our kids were kids and we'd tell this story, we always let that part of it out. You know, talk about that. All right, then King Darius wrote, To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth.

And he could do that because he was the king of a very large empire. Peace be multiplied to you. I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel.

For he is the living God and steadfast forever. His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed and his dominion shall endure to the end.

He delivers and rescues and he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth. Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions? So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

[8 : 13] All right. Now, I said we would start with a little bit of history. And I think that would be the best thing to do so that we can kind of see how this fits in, especially as we're trying to keep in our minds this book of Daniel, which is a book of prophecy.

I mean, it's about Daniel the prophet. And yet there's a lot of historical information given, even some historical kind of prehistory information given by way of prophecy and by way of some of the dreams that Nebuchadnezzar had and other things.

So let's kind of get the historical context. And I went ahead and kind of added this into your notes. So you might have a few blanks to fill in there, perhaps.

So now you're going to remember, and I've already kind of mentioned this, but chapter five concluded with a brief statement concerning the end of the Babylonian Empire.

In fact, I mentioned last week, when you think about it, just in a few words, we have, you know, the end of perhaps one of the wealthiest and greatest empires that has ever existed on this earth.

[9 : 25] And just in a sentence, maybe two sentences, that comes to an end. And so we have the death of Belshazzar, the co-regent, kind of co-king with his father Nabonidus.

His death marked the end of the Babylonian Empire. And we have the beginning, a statement, in regard to the beginning of the Medo-Persian Empire with the reign of Darius the Mede.

Then chapter six appears to just be a continuation of the story, virtually uninterrupted. I mean, I really would think about it, it just kind of goes from the end of chapter five on into chapter six.

And chapter six begins, and Darius the Mede received the kingdom. All right. Being about 62 years old, that's chapter five, verse 31. Then we go into chapter six, verse one.

It pleased Darius, set over the kingdom, 120 satraps to be over the whole kingdom. And it goes on from there. So Ryder kind of makes it sound as if this was perhaps one of the first major official acts of Darius after conquering Babylon.

[10:38] All right. Second, the exact identity of Darius is a big problem with scholars. And it's much debated. I think probably a worthless debate.

But anyway, it has been over the years debated. Primarily because there is no historical evidence of a king by that name ruling in Babylon between the reigns of Belshazzar and Cyrus the Great. Now, there are several Dariuses in the history of the Persian Empire. But at this time, between these kings, you know, the last king of Babylon and Cyrus the Great, there's no Darius mentioned in any historical documents that have been uncovered.

And that's true to this day. And so we don't know who he was. And there are scholars who love to do this kind of thing who debate over that. And they try to find, you know, some evidence inside the Bible as well as evidence outside the Bible in various archaeological finds and documents and so forth to try to prove their case.

And really, even before I give you three possibilities, I have to come to the end of it and say, I don't know who it is. Of course, you know, I'm not one of those scholars that debates over the whole thing.

[12:06] Let me give you those three possibilities. And I add this first one. It's not really a possibility at all in my mind. But the first kind of explanation that scholars put forth is that Darius is a fictitious name.

It's just fictitious. It's added by the author of Daniel. All right? The guy didn't exist. He's just kind of inserted into the story here. Now, that, of course, is the view from liberal scholarship.

All right? And they would say that about a number of Danes in the Bible. And they would say, well, we have no evidence of this person ever existing. And so this is probably either a mistake or just, you know, it's just made up.

And so that's the view from liberal scholarship. That's not a view that I would even entertain at all. And it really is an argument from silence. Just because you can't find any archaeological evidence or any documents or histories or anything like that that mention the name doesn't mean that he didn't exist.

Actually, you know, there is a document that mentions his name. And it's the Bible. All right? But, of course, liberal theologians don't view the Bible that highly.

[13:26] And, you know, convinced that it has many mistakes in it and so forth. And it has some truth in it. And that's good.

And it's valuable for faith and practice. But when it comes down to some of the historical statements and documents, it doesn't necessarily mean that it's true. All right? So it's an argument from silence, right?

Well, by the way, and I may have mentioned this last time, but it was the same argument that used to be used by the liberal theologians concerning Belshazzar.

Because for many years, no documents ever mentioned, nothing in archaeology ever proved the existence of a man by the name of Belshazzar.

Certainly not a ruler in Babylon until fairly recently. when archaeologists discovered the evidence of his existence.

[14:31] Wonder of wonders. Isn't that amazing? And it corroborated the biblical record in Daniel. And so I think the rule of thumb ought to be that you just assume the Bible's true.

All right? Even if you don't have any evidence. And if you just really need evidence, just wait long enough and it'll come. Okay? But even if it doesn't come or we don't find anything in archaeology, it doesn't mean that it's not true.

So Darius was a real person. He was, as Daniel says here, the king. In fact, we can assume the first king, the great conqueror, the first king of the Medo-Persian Empire.

All right. So that leads us to two other possibilities then. And these would, these two would also, would all come, both come, from conservative scholars.

So we can say that, you know, possibility number two and possibility number three are okay. I mean, they're okay to believe. So you can just take your pick.

[15:38] Okay? All right. So the second one is that Darius, the Darius mentioned in Daniel is actually a guy by the name of Gubaru. How would you like to have a name like that?

Gubaru, who was the governor of Babylon under Nabonidus and his son Belshazzar. So, you might remember Nabonidus was really the top king, official king of the Babylonian Empire.

But he didn't rule from Babylon, the kind of the capital city of the empire. He ruled from another place, Haran probably. His son was co-regent with him, co-king of the empire and he ruled. His headquarters was there at the city, a great city of Babylon. But Babylon had a governor. Okay? Because as we see here in chapter six that Darius used a structure of government and every empire did.

And so, the governor of Babylon was this guy by the name of Gubaru. And we know about him not from the Bible. He's not mentioned in the Bible. But we know about him from a document written or was written for King Nabonidus.

[16:59] Alright, so, Nabonidus had a governor. His governor over Babylon was this guy by Gubaru. and so, there appears to be some speculation that Darius would just know the name for this guy.

Gubaru. And, you know, I didn't put this in your notes. I read all this. A lot of it just really boring. All of the reasons why these two guys could be the same guy.

And I just want you to know that this is the possibility. And so, that he became, this Gubaru became the king of Babylon. Alright, but not the king.

The king of Babylon is Cyrus. Cyrus the Great. We'll see him a little bit later mentioned. And he's mentioned in the Bible in a number of places. So, it's Gubaru.

And so, they point to a couple of verses. Chapter 5, verse 31, and Darius the Mede received the kingdom. With the idea being that he received it from some superior.

[18:05] The kingdom being kind of like Belshazzar was kind of co-king or co-ruler or ruling of territory that perhaps he was granted a place of rule there in Babylon and he received it from Cyrus.

The other passages in chapter 9, verse 1, and I've given both of these passages in your notes, where it says in the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans.

Now, that's even more specific. The realm of the Chaldeans would suggest the Babylonians. So, he was made king. Again, the meaning being a superior, some superior, like Cyrus, gave Darius this authority.

Even though we have no archaeological evidence, no documents that have been unearthed to mention this guy's name, but this is one possibility.

The third one is really one that I kind of like, although there's some troubles with this one. The third one is that Darius was just another name, or really more accurately, a title used by Cyrus the Great.

[19:19] So, Darius and Cyrus are one and the same person. Cyrus the Great being the first ruler of the Medo-Persian Empire. And, the point is that Darius, the name Darius, and the name Cyrus, they're both titles.

They're not specifically names. Alright? Cyrus, in the Persian language, means hero, or humiliator of the enemy.

So, you know, it's just a title given to him for his great conquest, you know, and he certainly was a great military leader. Darius means the royal one.

The royal one. So, these are just titles. Alright? Now, that in itself doesn't prove that, you know, these two names or titles really refer to one and the same person.

But, since Cyrus the Great was king over both the Medes and the Persians, he may have had a dual name or dual title that would be appropriate for both realms.

[20:28] And this, scholars say, was a very common thing for rulers. They would have more than one title, more than one name, in a sense. So, Cyrus of the Persians, Darius of the Medes.

See, two groups of two kingdoms that actually the Persians conquered the Medes and it became known as the Medo-Persian Empire.

So, whether this really matters to you, you know, I think you can pick number two or three. So, Darius is just a name for some guy, some governor of Babylon who was appointed king by Cyrus, much in the same capacity as Belshazzar was king under the Babylonian Empire.

Or you can decide that Darius and Cyrus were one and the same person and you'd be okay with that. I mean, it really would be all right. All right, then number three, we'll just continue to talk about the history and this kind of will give you this kind of visual on this, but the Medo-Persian Empire was huge.

It was a vast empire under Cyrus the Great and this kingdom, by the way, is represented, remember, by the chest and arms of silver in Nebuchadnezzar's dream back there in chapter two, that great image.

[21 : 58] They had the head of gold, that was Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian Empire. It was known for gold. The Medo-Persian Empire was the one that came next under Cyrus the Great or Darius and it was of silver and the two arms point to the fact that it was really two kingdoms that had been brought together, the Medes and the Persians.

Millions and millions of square miles of the civilized world, known world of the day and then of course they will be conquered eventually by who? You remember who comes next?

The Greeks. Alright, so let's get to the text and we're going to work our way through some of it tonight. And the first thing I want you to see is what I've called the governor's pitiful deed.

The governor's as in plural, their pitiful deed and we'll see that in verses 1 through 8. So the chapter begins and I've already quoted some of it but it begins with a new empire.

This is a new empire, the Medes and the Persian, the Meadow Persian Empire. So here then is Darius or Cyrus if you will and I kind of think they're one and the same.

[23 : 26] Alright, so here's getting organized. in his kingdom and he's setting up a kind of structure of leadership which by the way was something he had likely been doing even before he conquered Babylon.

So it's a little unclear whether we're talking about him getting the former Babylonian empire organized after he conquered it or whether he is just now doing this for his entire empire.

But he's getting organized and so first we see his priority, the king's priority. Verse 1, it pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps to be over the whole kingdom.

Alright, so satrap. Satrap is a word that means protector, protector of the kingdom. King James uses the word prince, so he organized territories within his kingdom under the rule of 120 princes, or we could call them, I think, the new American standard that uses the word presidents.

It's kind of an interesting word. But the Medo-Persian empire was spread over a very large territory, a vast territory, and be wise to divide it into smaller territories, or satrapies, with princes or satraps to rule over them.

[25 : 03] So this is the king's priority, get this organized. But to further organize his leadership and make it more manageable, you know, 120 lesser officials or princes still would be a lot to keep track of for one man.

So he does something very wise, verse 2, and over these, these 120 satrapies, three governors, three governors of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might have account or give account to them so that the king would suffer no loss or no loss of taxes.

Historians tell us that the Medo-Persian empire, one thing, was very indicative of that empire, was that they were good at collecting taxes. And of course, we might think that every empire has.

But, you know, that's a distinctive of the Medo-Persian. That's why some believe that in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of that image, that Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold, but the Medo-Persian empire was the chest and arms of silver because they literally collected tons and tons of silver and coinage and such.

And so, the kingdom was known for that. All right, so, he's getting organized, make sure he doesn't miss any of the taxes, and all that comes into the kingdom so they can prosper, and so this is the king's priority.

[26 : 42] But then we have the king's preference in verse 3, then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps because an excellent spirit was in him, and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm.

That's a pretty amazing statement. And we've kind of seen this, you know, with Daniel all the way through. You know, just, you know, I guess from a worldly standpoint, people might say he led a charmed life.

You know, just, all these kings want to put him in charge of everything. And so, this was what Darius desired to do.

Now, how he knew Daniel, we don't know. By the way, that does lend itself to that second possibility who Darius was, that he had been prior to that, been governor of Babylon, so he would have known Daniel very well, rather than being Cyrus himself, who was the conqueror, who conquered the city, and possibly would not have known anyone, including Daniel.

But he knew him, knew him well, or at least he had had some time now to be able to observe him, or maybe his counselors and others were able to relate to him, a little bit of the history about Daniel. [28 : 06] Daniel, but it's still a pretty amazing statement. Now, likely Daniel, at this time, in his upper 80s, in fact, some have conjectured that he may have been up in his 90s.

That's pretty old. I mean, that's old for this day. But in the days of Daniel, prior to all the medical technology that we have today, to live to be 90 would be a very rare thing.

And yet, even though he's quite old, he apparently has not lost any of his potency of life. He's still apparently an effective leader and a man of great wisdom.

And so, the phrase, an excellent spirit was in him, is not really talking about his spiritual life. I mean, we've got plenty in the chapter to tell us about that, to testify to that.

But it really probably refers to his wisdom and his strength in leadership skills. All right, so we're talking about, it's probably talking about those personal characteristics by which Daniel distinguished himself.

[29 : 09] And actually, the grammar suggests a constant, kind of constantly distinguishing himself above all these others, distinguishing himself from the other governors and the satraps in the kingdom.

So the king was so impressed with Daniel that he was ready to make him, you know, essentially second in command throughout the entire kingdom.

That's what the Bible says here, setting him over the whole realm. Now, Darius didn't do that. You know, it says here that he gave thought to it, so it's part of his desire.

But as you read on through the chapter, Darius had a tremendous respect for Daniel. And not just respect, but he loved him. And so I think this thought that he had to do it was something he very definitely planned to do, but of course, didn't get an opportunity to do.

All right, so that explains what comes next, really. The text begins then with a new empire, but it quickly moves to an old envy.

[30 : 20] An old envy. There's nothing new about this. The people had a new king to get used to. That would be Darius. People had a new empire to get used to, the Meadow Persian empire.

People had a new kind of structure of rule to get used to, but they still had the same old sinful nature toward envy and jealousy.

And so that's what we have here. Very quickly shows itself in the story. All right, so let's notice, first of all, this jealous lot.

This jealous lot, these governors. Verse 4, so the governors and satraps, remember there were how many governors? Three.

No, the three governors. Daniel was one of them. So, these two governors and then 120 satraps. Now, I don't think we're to imagine that all these guys got together, probably those that were more local there to Babylon.

[31 : 28] Anyway, they sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom. Some charge that would make, you know, kind of get him out of the picture, basically.

But they could find no charge or fault because he was faithful, nor was there any error or fault found in him. Again, which is an amazing statement. Now, obviously they were jealous of Daniel, right? Jealous because of his favor with the king, and perhaps even fearful. They might have been fearful of Daniel. I mean, if he were to be made ruler over all of them, then maybe they were a little bit worried about their position and power and jobs, maybe even life.

And so, they wanted to find something about Daniel that might change the king's opinion of him. Perhaps some flaw in his personality.

In his personality. You know, something in his character. Maybe some flaw in his ability, his ability to lead. So, maybe there's something about this Daniel that, you know, in his personality, his character, that just really is not conducive to be a leader of the empire, and so they'd like to find that, bring that to light to the king.

[32 : 47] Or, something in his ability as a leader, you know, some shortcoming there, maybe just not up to the task. I mean, he is 90 years old. I mean, come on, king, certainly, you don't want, right?

Or, some flaw in his loyalty. And, this, by the way, is the one they finally settle on. But, something in his loyalty to the king, something in his loyalty to the kingdom.

So, we've got to find something here. But, in the end, they had to admit, honestly, verse 5, then these men said, we shall not find any charge against this Daniel. He was perfect in every way. They couldn't find any fault in him. Which, by the way, is quite a challenge for us, I think. Maybe even a lesson for us. That, when it's all said by those who, you know, might be against us because we're believers, that they might disagree with us, but they should never be able to find any fault. You know. All right, so, then we have, second, the treacherous plot. So, this jealous lot devised a treacherous plot against Daniel. And, but first, they had a problem.

[33 : 53] Their problem. They had a problem. Verse 5, then these men said, we shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God.

All right, so, right off their face with the problem, we've got to do something about this Daniel. Can't have him in charge of us all. We don't even like him. I mean, after all, he's a foreigner and, you know, he's one of those Hebrews and so forth and Mr.

Goody Two-Shoes. We've got to get him out of here. So, they've got a real problem. We can't find any fault in it. Unless, and they say, unless we can find something concerning the law of his God. Now, what do they mean by that? Well, don't misunderstand. They're not trying to find something in God's law that Daniel was disobeying. That's not what they're trying.

It may sound like that, but, you know, it sounds like maybe they're, well, let's just find out where he's disobeying God, his God. You know, if we can just find that, then we can get him out of here.

[34 : 55] But the king could care less about that. I mean, really? Think about it. The king could not, I'd rather not have cared less about the God of Daniel or his laws, and certainly he cared nothing about whether or not Daniel was obeying God's law.

So, I mean, if Daniel was breaking all of Yahweh's laws or the Ten Commandments, that wouldn't matter to Darius. So, they're not saying that. But rather, they were referring to something in the law of Daniel's God that would be in direct conflict with the law of the Medes and the Persians.

You know, let's find something in Daniel's God's law that would be in conflict with our laws, all right? And bring that to light, and then maybe we can do something about it. You know, something that would disqualify Daniel from ruling over the kingdom. Possibly even something that would get rid of Daniel altogether, which ultimately is what they desire to do.

All right. Now, it's implied in what comes next, that there was nothing in the law of the Medes and the Persians that was in direct conflict with the law of Daniel's God.

[36 : 11] So, they said this is the problem they have. He's faultless. You know, his character is impeccable, his ability as a leader.

There's no flaw there. His loyalty to the king of the kingdom, no problem there. What are we going to do about this guy? And so, maybe we can find something in his law that would contradict the law of the Medes and the Persians, and then that would cause him to either fall out of favor with Darius, or maybe even have him put in prison, put to death.

But what is it? What could it be? And so, they come up with their plan. And it's really simple. They would attempt to create a conflict.

There's not one there already, so let's make one. create a conflict between God's law, Yahweh's law, and the Persian law. But what would it be? So, you can kind of imagine them talking about this. Let's see. I mean, what do we know about the law of God, or Daniel's God? What do we know about his laws? Well, we don't really know very much about it.

[37 : 21] And they probably didn't know much about it. But, they did know, of course, that Daniel's religion was monotheistic. They knew that Daniel served only one God, that he didn't serve all the other gods of the Babylonians, and the Chaldeans, and all these other gods.

They knew his religion was monotheistic. They didn't know that, which in itself was not against their law. But they did know that about it. And they also knew that he would worship only the one true God.

And if he worshipped any other god, he would violate God's law. They didn't know that. All right?

And so they knew that Daniel would never, ever violate that part of his law, the laws of his God.

So they had a plan. Perfect. And so verse six, so these governors and satraps thronged before the king. I kind of imagined, you know, that they had this big meeting here and they're trying to throw around some ideas about what they could create, what they could do to get some conflict between Daniel and the king.

And suddenly, you know, the forward light comes on and so let's go. So they all run over to the throne room and they kind of mob the king, you know, this throng. In fact, that's really the word that's used there.

[38 : 46] They throng the king before the king. And they said thus to him, King Darius lived forever. All the governors of the kingdom, except Daniel, but they left him out on purpose, of course.

All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators, satraps, the counselors, the advisors, have consulted, gathered to establish royal statutes. And by the way, this is greatly exaggerated. I'm very likely that they had, you know, every single governor and satrap and all of the counselors and all of the advisors and all the consultants that they were all in 100% agreement about this, they're exaggerating here and they're just counting on the fact that Darius isn't going to check that out, you know.

But, you know, we've come together, we all agree there should be a royal statute and a firm decree should be made that whoever petitions any god or man for 30 days except you, O Cain, that is, petitions anybody, that would mean even petitioning through one of the priests, one of their pagan priests.

They couldn't petition, really they couldn't worship even, either. All of it had to be directed toward Darius. This was their idea, you know, bring all petitions for 30 days and if they don't, then they shall be cast into a den of lions.

[40 : 13] All right? So, their plot is hatched and so third, then their push, all right? Their push. They had to push the king to get this done. They had to get the king to act and put this down in writing, not eventually but right then and right there.

Why? I think we can imagine because, you know, kings eventually are going to see through their chicanery and their treachery and kind of check out some things that they had said and so they wanted to do this right now, king.

This is a great idea. And so they say in verse 8, now, king, establish the decree and sign the writing. I think probably they had it all written out for him to begin with.

And do it right now so that it cannot be changed according to the law of the Medes and Persians which does not alter. Nothing could change it. All right? So, we have the governor's pitiful deed. Let me go ahead next with the king's prideful decree. Verse 9, therefore, king Darius signed the written decree. Now, why would he do that?

[41 : 19] Well, I think there are a couple reasons. One would be a political reason. A political reason. He would do this to establish his authority and he would do it to evaluate loyalty.

I gave you this quote from Gleason Archer, highly respected theologian. Several books that I have several of his books he's written.

And he wrote this. He said, the suggested mode of compelling every subject in the former Babylonian domain to acknowledge the authority of Persia seemed a statesman like measure that would contribute to the unification of the Middle and Near East.

So, this sounded like a good idea for Cyrus or Darius to do. So, it would establish his authority as king over this, especially over the Babylonian empire that he has just conquered and it would evaluate their loyalty.

Would they be loyal to him? This would measure that loyalty. But, of course, there was a prideful reason, I think, we should admit, certainly appeal to Darius's flesh to do this.

[42 : 38] And, you know, you can imagine he thought to himself, God, for a month. Why not? All right.

Now, though he will soon rue the day that he ever signed such a written decree, and he will because of what happens with Daniel, and I guess we should go ahead and say that these governors will also rue the day that they ever suggested to the king, because they're going to lose their lives, as well as the lives of their family, as they get eaten alive by lions in the den.

So, we'll have to stop right there. Next time, we'll see the prophet Daniel's prayerful devotion, and three other things after that. Thank you.