

Questioning God's Sovereignty & The Image of the Beast

A Study in Daniel 3-6

For study purposes today imagine this... so we can rightly apply the word of the Lord, so it isn't learning about history but useful for teaching, exhorting, instructing and even convicting. To imagine a way today to take the word and make it applicable in our lives without changing it whatsoever. We do not change the word, but rather take the labels from then and match it to our culture. Does that make sense?

For example... In place of a king we have a president and our king president rules from his throne called the oval office. Instead of a scepter he has a pen and sits at his desk to sign into law what he was presented to him by the lawmakers or he can veto that decree and it ends up floating around – so long that a delay is a denial. The same is true for religious bodies of people – there is always a leader of some kind in a gathering, one who drives the car of the fellowship so to speak – the Bible called them priests – they control what is permitted to enter and exit through speech, with the eyes and hearing, plus they give the commanded oversight for the organization. They too have advisors, elders, who assist with the vision of the leader/priest.

It is so very important we see that the Word is for today and just because some labels evolve and change does not mean it is not of the upmost importance for our instruction and command. There truly is nothing new under the sun, except that which man taints, including labels. Hopefully, this understanding will help us as we study a portion of Daniel today, to not discount it or look at it simply as prophecy but to embrace it for learning purposes and see it activated in our own lives. That's the goal anyway.

Setting up images to the beast for people to bow to in fear, causing them to stumble and question the sovereignty of the Most High God. Many right now are worshipping the fear being promoted.

This parallels what King Nebuchadnezzar did in his day – we can glean much wisdom and instruction on what Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego did in response, as well as Daniel.

Today the Lord directed me to Daniel chapters 3-6, as a reminder once again – that He is sovereign throughout and unto the end and He will deliver and rescue those who only bow down to His image every single time – it is those who have faith in their hearts, that even if – the flesh is not saved, their souls are joined to Him – so all outside circumstances and saber rattling done by the enemy is not profitable in God's Kingdom.

It's a crossing over time... where it is proven, just who is who and just is simply coming in the Name of the Lord, lacking full surrender to Him.

Some key points to keep in mind when we read Daniel 3 –

- Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego did not second guess, entertain or question the Sovereignty of God.
- They determined before the event... that God was able to deliver them out of the fire, but even if He didn't, they would keep trusting and serving Him and that His will was perfect and being done because He is sovereign.
- King Nebuchadnezzar – set up an image to be worshipped, just as many today are setting images of the beast to fear and bow down to and worship. It's the same thing, only manifesting differently – by promoting evil through discussing it continually, fixating on it and talking about it – it is a heart issue, as what you love you speak about, knowing all issues flow forth from the mouth that dwell in the heart. If talking about evil excites you – you have evil desires residing within.
- It's a fine line between warning people and planting seeds of doubt which cause many to stumble and question God's sovereignty. Tickling ears of those who desire to know deep secrets of satan is the same as setting up images for them to bow down to, over guiding people to surrender and fully trust the Most High God.
- King Nebuchadnezzar had to learn this the hard way and have his pride destroyed, which he did, but sadly he never fully surrendered to the God of the Bible and as we will read... for him, the handwriting was on the wall so to speak.

- Ask ourselves... How do we react when others do not respond to the images we've declared, our beliefs, our truth, our faith and how we believe or even what we believe? Has religion become an image we've set up? Do we believe our way is the only way to the Father and try to pressure others to worship just as we do? If so, we are reflecting more of King Nebuchadnezzar and less of Jesus.
- Keep in mind – it is the FALSE PROPHET that gives power to the IMAGE OF THE BEAST.

I am going to do a lot of reading today and let the Word of God do the teaching for us, which is much better than anything I can say anyway. I am sure as we read together the Holy Spirit will show us more along the way.

DANIEL 3

Nebuchadnezzar the king **made an image of gold**, whose height was ^(a)sixty cubits *and* its width six cubits. **He set it up** in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. ² And King Nebuchadnezzar **sent word to gather together** the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to **come to the dedication of the image** which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ³ So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces **gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up**; and they **stood before the image** that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁴ Then a herald cried ^(b)aloud: "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, ⁵ **that at the time you hear the sound** of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, **you shall fall down and worship the gold image** that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; ⁶ **and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.**"

⁷ So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, *and* lyre, in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages fell down *and* worshiped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Daniel's Friends Disobey the King

⁸ Therefore at that time certain **Chaldeans came forward and accused the Jews**. ⁹ They spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! ¹⁰ You, O king, **have made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the gold image**; ¹¹ **and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace**. ¹² There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have not paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up."

¹³ Then Nebuchadnezzar, in **rage and fury**, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. **So they brought these men before the king**. ¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, "**Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up**? ¹⁵ Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, **and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good!** But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. **And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?**"

(casting fear and threatening outcomes on people who do not believe in the image you have declared to be so is resembling this king – Can you see it?)

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, *we have no need to answer you in this matter.* ¹⁷ *If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king.* ¹⁸ *But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.”*

(They did not give answer to man and neither should we. And this is my favorite part and favorite answer to give... even if... We KNOW THE LORD IS ABLE TO DELIVER US FROM THAT WHICH THEY THREATEN US WITH. We KNOW He will deliver us from the enemy’s grasp and from those who are trying to force us to surrender to the image of declarations they state with their mouths – but, EVEN IF HE DOESN’T we will not bow down or worship that image because we do not serve their saber rattling gods. Our hearts and surrender is dedicated to one – the Almighty Father who’s hands keeps us the whole way through.)

Saved in Fiery Trial

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was *full of fury*, and the *expression on his face changed* toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. ²⁰ And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, *and cast them* into the burning fiery furnace. ²¹ Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. ²² Therefore, because the king’s command was *urgent*, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the *flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.* ²³ And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar was *astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke*, saying to his *counselors*, “Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?”

They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.”

²⁵ “Look!” he answered, “I see *four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.*”

(Have you noticed if you do not agree with what someone is stating they also get full of fury and the expression on their faces change towards you? These “kings” who try to rule over others will threaten if you do not totally agree with the image they give and in retaliation the fire they set upon you grows hotter and hotter. Notice they entered into the fire, they were not spared going into it – but Jesus was in the fire with them so they did not perish by it – the same is true for us. The Lord will use us to astonish those who declare such things upon us that never come to pass and fruition in scenarios they have schemed up in their heads. Just another reminder that Jesus holds the keys to life and

death and victory in Him through surrender always prevails. You want to be spiritually prepared to face every trial and fire? Surrender to Him and Him alone.)

Nebuchadnezzar Praises God

²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the [Ⓜ]mouth of the burning fiery furnace *and* spoke, saying, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come *here*.” Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego **came from the midst of the fire.** ²⁷ And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king’s counselors **gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.**

²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel[Ⓜ] and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! ²⁹ Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this.”

³⁰ Then the king [Ⓜ]promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

(No fire may consume the child of God... we do not react, look the same afterwards, have fragments remain to display of what we went through except of the testimony of the Lord – we may be thrown in the fire, but are never harmed by it only purified through it. So its different for us in that way. This happens so the Lord may use us an example of how He is by our side in the fire, delivers us from it because we trust in Him – yielding our bodies to Him always, in hopes others will decree – there is not God but ours who can deliver like this. – YOU ARE A WALKING TESTIMONY OF WHAT GOD IS CAPABLE OF DOING.)

DANIEL 4

Nebuchadnezzar the king,

To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth:

Peace be multiplied to you.

² I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me.

³ How great *are* His signs,
And how mighty His wonders!
His kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom,
And His dominion *is* from generation to generation.

(So not only did the image come down... this king by way of witnessing the one true God’s sovereignty had a heart change and he too started testifying – no longer of self, but of God. You can see even more now why those who believe without seeing are even more blessed. Then he had a dream that made him very fearful...)

⁴I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at **rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace.** ⁵I saw a dream which made me afraid, and **the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.** ⁶Therefore I issued a decree to bring in all the wise *men* of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. ⁷Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known to me its interpretation. **(he sought the wrong source for truth... like so many are doing today)** ⁸But **at last Daniel came before me** (his name *is* Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god; **in him is the Spirit of the Holy God**), and I told the dream before him, *saying:* ⁹"Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, **because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God is in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation.**

(The source of truth we seek is everything because how we seek, we shall receive – our reward reflects what we are seeking)

¹⁰"These *were* the visions of my head *while* on my bed:

I was looking, and behold,
A tree in the midst of the earth,
And its height was great.
¹¹The tree grew and became strong;
Its height reached to the heavens,
And it could be seen to the ends of all the earth.
¹²Its leaves *were* lovely,
Its fruit abundant,
And in it *was* food for all.
The beasts of the field found shade under it,
The birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches,
And all flesh was fed from it.

¹³"I saw in the visions of my head *while* on my bed, and there was a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven. ¹⁴He cried [Ⓜ]aloud and said thus:

'Chop down the tree and cut off its branches,
Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit.
Let the beasts get out from under it,
And the birds from its branches.
¹⁵Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth,
Bound with a band of iron and bronze,
In the tender grass of the field.
Let it be wet with the dew of heaven,
And *let* him graze with the beasts
On the grass of the earth.
¹⁶Let his heart be changed from *that of* a man,
Let him be given the heart of a beast,
And let seven times[Ⓜ] pass over him.

¹⁷ 'This decision *is* by the decree of the watchers,
And the sentence by the word of the holy ones,
In order that the living may know
That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men,
Gives it to whomever He will,
And sets over it the lowest of men.'

¹⁸ "This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, since all the wise *men* of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you *are* able, for the Spirit of the Holy God *is* in you."

Daniel Explains the Second Dream

¹⁹ Then Daniel, whose name *was* Belteshazzar, *was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him*. So the king spoke, and said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you."

Belteshazzar answered and said, "My lord, *may* the dream [□]concern those who hate you, and its interpretation [□]concern your enemies!

²⁰ "The *tree that you saw*, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which *could be* seen by all the earth, ²¹ whose leaves *were* lovely and its fruit abundant, in which *was* food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home— ²² *it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.*

²³ "And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, *bound* with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven [□]times pass over him'; ²⁴ this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: ²⁵ They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven [□]times shall pass over you, *till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.*

(If you do not want chopped down over and over – come to the realization, God is God and we are not. Until we realize the Most High rules in all kingdoms – including kingdoms men have established because He is sovereign – we will reap that which we have declared upon another in our own lives.)

²⁶ "And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump *and* roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, *after you come to know that Heaven[□] rules.* ²⁷ Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; *break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a [□]lengthening of your prosperity.*"

(Break off – turn away from all sin, containing a righteous way of life and thought pattern, show mercy to all – it is the way of God's Kingdom.)

Nebuchadnezzar's Humiliation

²⁸ All *this* came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹ At the end of the twelve months he was walking *about* the royal palace of Babylon. ³⁰ The king spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?"

(He just refused to stop elevating self... and his end proves the end of his rule along with himself.)

³¹ While the word *was still* in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! ³² And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven *times* shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses."

³³ That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

(Right now we are witnessing many people reaping the words and demands they have spoken over others and soon this will come to pass on many... it doesn't feel too good to reap the words of death you've declared or not so good intentions you have towards another, does it?)

Nebuchadnezzar Praises God

³⁴ And at the end of the *time* I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever:

For His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion,
And His kingdom *is* from generation to generation.

³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing;

He *does according to His will* in the army of heaven

And *among* the inhabitants of the earth.

No one can restrain His hand

Or say to Him, "What have You done?"

³⁶ At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. ³⁷ Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works *are* truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.

Many are being abased at the moment, or have been or soon shall be... Every single time we minimize the sovereignty of the Most High, without question He will deal with us in His perfect way. He doesn't share His glory with another, He doesn't wink at sin or excuse using His name in vain for profit and fame. We all will give account for every idle word spoken, just as He declared.

Belshazzar the king (King Nebuchadnezzar's son & heir) made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine (not sober) in the presence of the thousand (openly).² While he tasted the wine (under the influence of what he drank), Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which *had been* in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them (so flashy, presumptuous and inappropriate).³ Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God (this is when it gets really dangerous to tamper with the things of God for unholy means) which *had been* in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them.⁴ They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.

⁵ In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.⁶ Then the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his knees knocked against each other.⁷ The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers (he looked for answers from those who were familiar to him – not the Most High). The king spoke, saying to the wise men of Babylon (there are so called wise men among the Babylonian church of today), "Whoever reads this writing, and tells me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around his neck; and he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."⁸ Now all the king's wise men came, but they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation.⁹ Then King Belshazzar was greatly troubled, his countenance was changed, and his lords were astonished.

¹⁰ The queen, (more men ought to be listening to their women, just sayin) because of the words of the king and his lords, came to the banquet hall. The queen spoke, saying, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance change."¹¹ There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.¹² Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation."

The Writing on the Wall Explained

¹³ Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke, and said to Daniel, "Are you that Daniel who is one of the captives from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah?"¹⁴ I have heard of you, that the Spirit of God is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you.¹⁵ Now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing.¹⁶ And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."

¹⁷ Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation (true prophets do not accept elevation or riches, do they?) ¹⁸ O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor. ¹⁹ And because of the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he executed; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down. ²⁰ But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. ²¹ Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses. (again, God is Sovereign and His will shall be done and complete because it is perfect and eventually, everyone's chances to surrender run out.)

²² "But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. ²³ And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified. ²⁴ Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written.

(GOD HOLDS YOUR BREATH IN HIS HAND AND OWNS ALL YOUR WAYS – but you chose not to glorify Him)

²⁵ "And this is the inscription that was written:

MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

²⁶ This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; ²⁷ TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; ²⁸ PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." ²⁹ Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Belshazzar's Fall

³⁰ That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. ³¹ And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

(GOD HOLDS YOUR BREATH IN HIS HAND AND OWNS ALL YOUR WAYS – but you chose not to glorify Him)

The warning I have had in my spirit for months is this very thing... Time is running out on those who for whatever purpose besides the Lord's edify evil more than they glorify the Lord. It really doesn't matter for what reason they are doing it –

the Almighty is not pleased. For some this is a confirmation, others may resist it and if you are not sure – just pray about it and the Lord will show you His truth.

Remember at the beginning what we talked about regarding what a kingdom today is? We just do not know when the Lord will number our days and measure what we have been doing in what He calls a finished work. We may not believe our work is finished and the Lord can deem it finished at any given moment. All hands are on the table at that moment – you cannot repent, rethink, change anything – it is balance and weight time... Since this king/ruler we read about was not glorifying God and playing around with that which he shouldn't while taking lightly what he had oversight of, he was found wanting. What he had attained was divided – similar to the separation of sheep and goats, because there was mixture there and it was given away and sadly, that very night he was slain.

This is just plain sobering for all those who are playing church and using the Lord's name in vain for self-promotion and gain.

DANIEL 6

It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; ² and over these, **three governors, of whom Daniel was one**, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. 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.** ⁴ 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.** 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."**

It is a harsh reality of laying your life down for the sake of Jesus that you will be persecuted at times and falsely accused while the enemy lays snares to entrap and slaughter your reputation. It just is what it is... and in that lays the beauty of being worthy as a child of God inside His family to suffer the same afflictions He did. It truly is an honor to drink of His cup of suffering in such a precious way. Perception is everything and when you look at the cost in truth, it truly is a small thing to undergo being an outcast and gazing stock on His behalf.

⁶ So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: "King Darius, live forever! ⁷ All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, **that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.** ⁸ 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 ⁹ does not alter." ⁹ Therefore **King Darius signed the written decree.**

Just fyi... for being kings they certainly seemed to be tricked often by crafty men. This isn't the only time a King signed a decree by falling into a trap of manipulation – very similar to what happened in the Book of Esther.

Daniel in the Lions' Den

¹⁰ 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.

Idle threats from man didn't stop Daniel and they will not stop us either from calling out to the Lord, praying and giving Him praise.

11 Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. **12** And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: "Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty 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 ^(b)does not alter."

13 So they answered and said before the king, "That Daniel, who is ^(c)one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

The enemy through these men with dark hearts, set the stage then accused once the trap was set... very common practice for those who are compromised, even the religious fall into this trend. And they often ask questions they already know the answer to in order to entrap you. It happens a lot.

14 And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he ^(d)labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. **15** Then these men ^(e)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."

Be very careful what you decree... later you might want to take it back, but cannot as all words go out to perform and if nowhere to land in truth – they will return upon your own head. Many people declare a false thing while trying to convince people it came from the Lord – only it wasn't from Him, it was a vain imagination and they end up suffering that very thing personally. They give warnings that are not from the Lord at all, only to be required to experience it themselves. The wise are slow to speak and quick to listen.

16 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."* **17** 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.

Daniel once again was used in the trial to increase the worship of the Almighty in open display before multitudes of people. Be aware, when people are questioning the sovereignty of God for Him to use you in a trial to demonstrate His delivering power before those who are watching. Even this king trusted God to deliver Daniel.

Daniel Saved from the Lions

18 Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no ^(f)musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep ^(g)went from him. **19** Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. **20** And when he came to the den, he cried out with a ^(h)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?"

²¹ Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! ²² 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."

²³ 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 out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.

This is a true redemption story... it also increased not only the king's faith, but all who witnessed the PROTECTION the Lord used to keep Daniel safe.

It is this PROTECTION we too can stand on... especially these days with all the roaring lions around us setting up ways for us to question and doubt the covering protection of our God. I hope every single time you hear that lion roar – you remember Daniel, you remember the Lord and how He sent an angel to protect Daniel. We are not to fear anything coming upon the Earth, yet the lions roar to fear, planting seeds of doubt to question the sovereignty of our Father in Heaven. No matter what happens... The Almighty shall PROTECT His own, just as he did Daniel.

It is my hope that you listen less to lions roaring and more to the Lord from this day forward, so you are able to stand before the Son of God one day with a steadfast heart saying, I trust You and You Alone Jesus as Lord in my life, with a clear conscience.

Darius Honors God

²⁴ And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast *them* into the den of lions—they, 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.

²⁵ Then King Darius wrote:

To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth:

Peace be multiplied to you.

²⁶ 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.

²⁷ 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.

²⁸ So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Life lesson here.... GOD ALWAYS GETS THE GLORY and no undermining, traps, snares, deceit or trickery goes without notice on His behalf. He will and does deal with those who lay snares and burdens in His timing – which may not be in our timing, but He is always on time.

Daily tests come to choose which god you will serve as Lord in your life. Is it the Almighty? Is it self? It is man? Until placed in a true situation of deliverance, we just do not know fully who we serve. So be ready and alert each day.

Out of this whole study there was one Scripture the Lord pressed upon me the most. It was Daniel 6:26-27 and it states:

His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed,
And His dominion shall endure to the end.

²⁷ He delivers and rescues,
And He works signs and wonders
In heaven and on earth,

Specifically... HE DELIVERS AND RESCUES.

If you do not take anything else away from this study, remember.... Our God DELIVERS AND RESCUES, He shall make an escape from everything that is coming upon the Earth, just as it is written. Our part is to be found worthy when that event unfolds, not informed, but worthy as a bride made ready, spotless and blameless.

Just a couple more things from this chapter, it noted that NO MATTER OF HURT was found upon Daniel because HE BELIEVED IN HIS GOD and this is after he was thrown in the lion's den – he could have been very hurt in the heart for the accusations, the betrayal and plots to kill him, but he wasn't. Those who did this to him suffered their own fate and ended up being cast into the very lion's den they used to destroy Daniel in. So look at this... GOD DELIVERES HIS OWN, RESCUES THEM AND IN TURN THOSE WHO PLOT AND PLAN END UP PERISHING BY REAPING THE DESTRUCTION THEY SOWED UPON ANOTHER IN THE VERY SAME WAY IT WAS CARRIED OUT. The same thing happened to Haman in the Book of Esther.

Isn't that interesting considering we have all suffered so much pain and yet we welcome Jesus into our hearts to heal and make whole, so no hurt is found in us either. If we invite Jesus inside, He will bind up the wounds of the broken hearted and heal us... If we cling to hurt, we are not clinging to Him – but if we cling to Him, the hurt goes away. He is just so amazing like that!

Lastly... the word tells us...

GOD'S KINGDOM AND DOMINION IS NEVER DESTROYED AND REMAINS UNTIL EVEN THE END. So what are you worried and fretting about? The only real reason to be concerned is if you are not in His kingdom all the way.

We need a reminder and confirmation of the Lord's sovereignty. Let's read Psalm 73 and I encourage you to keep reading it as often as you need to, when people are coming at you like roaring lions seeking to devour you, causing you to fear and question if the Lord will rescue and deliver you out of the threatening position you find yourself in. He has, He is and He will deliver – until when? Even the very end.

May He strengthen you to break the jaws of every roaring lion out there and may you be like Daniel, free of hurt, trusting only in the Lord and a great asset to display the mighty delivering power of the Most High God.

PSALM 73

The Tragedy of the Wicked, and the Blessedness of Trust in God

73 Truly God *is* good to Israel,
To such as are pure in heart.

² But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled;
My steps had nearly slipped.

³ For I *was* envious of the boastful,
When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

⁴ For *there are* no [Ⓜ]pangs in their death,
But their strength *is* firm.

⁵ They *are* not in trouble *as other* men,
Nor are they plagued like *other* men.

⁶ Therefore pride serves as their necklace;
Violence covers them *like* a garment.

⁷ Their [Ⓜ]eyes bulge with abundance;
They have more than heart could wish.

⁸ They scoff and speak wickedly *concerning* oppression;
They speak [Ⓜ]loftily.

⁹ They set their mouth against the heavens,
And their tongue walks through the earth.

¹⁰ Therefore his people return here,
And waters of a full *cup* are drained by them.

¹¹ And they say, "How does God know?
And is there knowledge in the Most High?"

¹² Behold, these *are* the ungodly,
Who are always at ease;
They increase *in* riches.

¹³ Surely I have [Ⓜ]cleansed my heart *in* vain,
And washed my hands in innocence.

¹⁴ For all day long I have been plagued,
And chastened every morning.

¹⁵ If I had said, "I will speak thus,"
Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children.

¹⁶ When I thought *how* to understand this,
It *was* [Ⓜ]too painful for me—

¹⁷ Until I went into the sanctuary of God;
Then I understood their end.

¹⁸ Surely You set them in slippery places;
You cast them down to destruction.

¹⁹ Oh, how they are *brought* to desolation, as in a moment!
They are utterly consumed with terrors.

²⁰ As a dream when *one* awakes,
So, Lord, when You awake,
You shall despise their image.

²¹ Thus my heart was grieved,
And I was vexed in my mind.

²² I *was* so foolish and ignorant;
I was *like* a beast before You.

²³ Nevertheless I *am* continually with You;
You hold *me* by my right hand.

²⁴ You will guide me with Your counsel,
And afterward receive me *to* glory.

²⁵ Whom have I in heaven *but* You?
And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You.

²⁶ My flesh and my heart fail;
But God *is* the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

²⁷ For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish;
You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry.

²⁸ But *it is* good for me to draw near to God;
I have put my trust in the Lord GOD,
That I may declare all Your works.