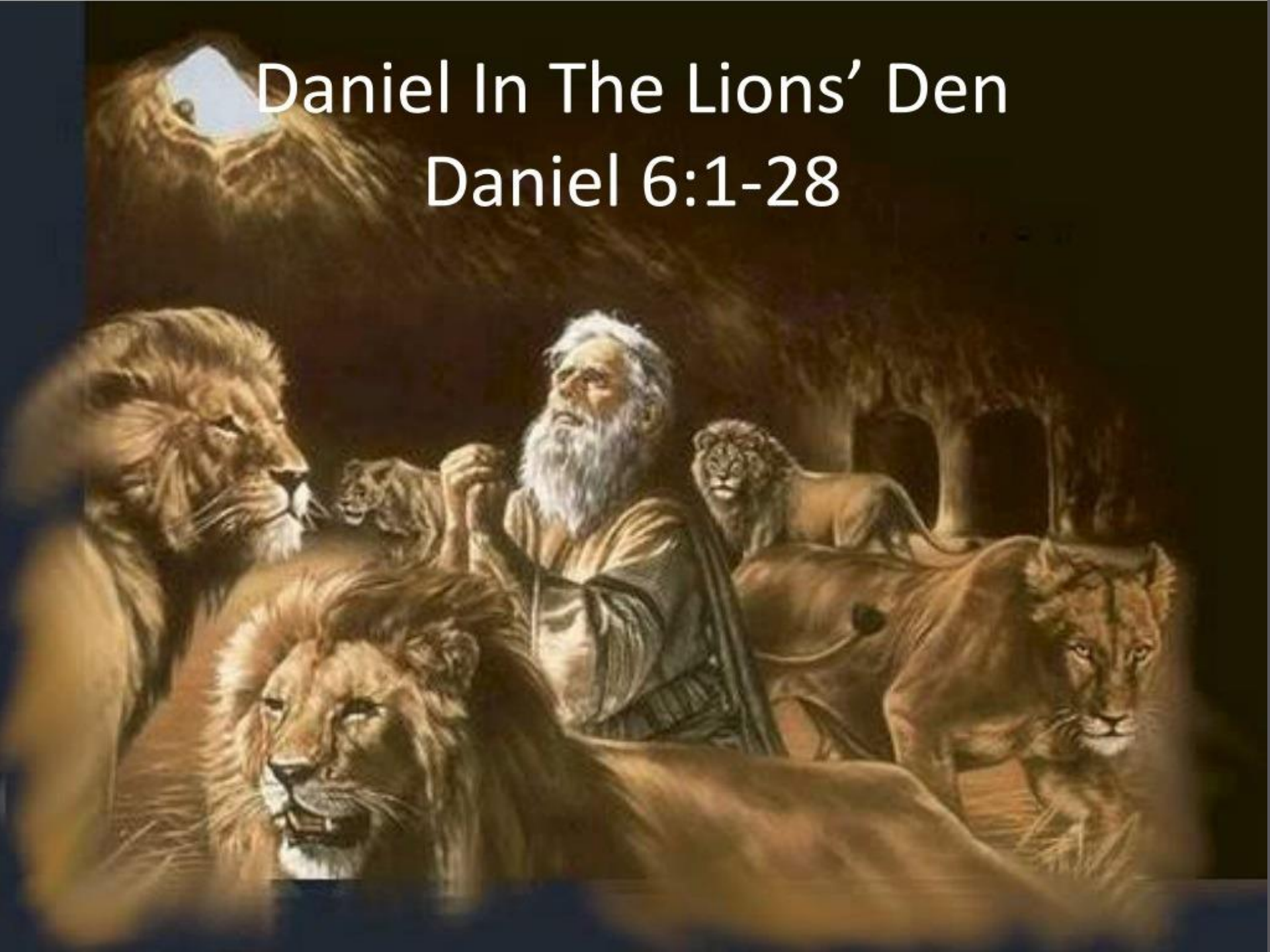
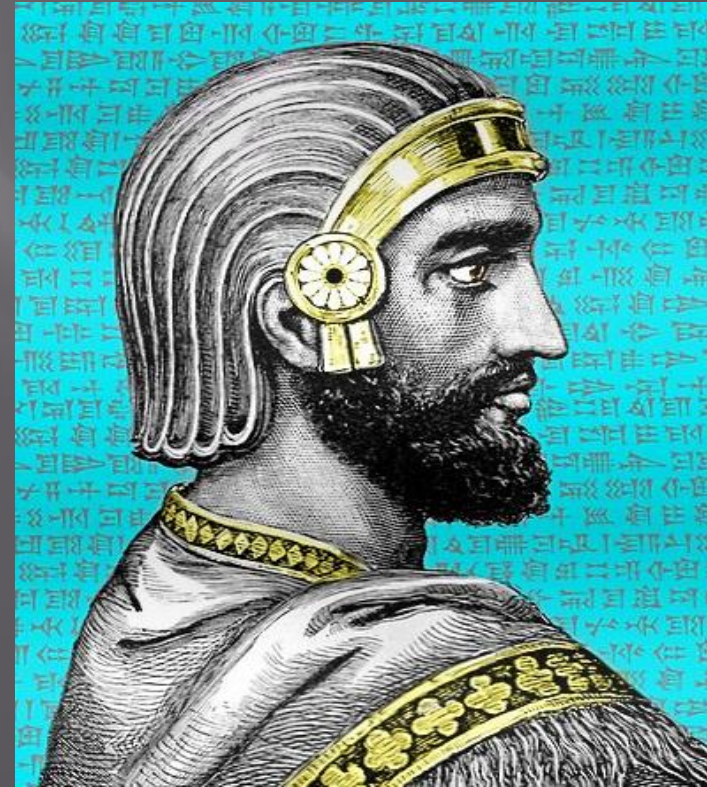


Daniel In The Lions' Den

Daniel 6:1-28



Considering the context of this chapter, and the last verse of Chapter 5, it's clear that Darius is another name for Cyrus the Great. Actually, Darius is his Median name, since his mother was a Mede (Mandana, daughter of the Median king, Astyages). Cyrus' father was a Persian (King Cambyses I); thus, Cyrus united the Medes and Persians in his dual heritage as a Persian and a Mede! Darius, means: *“He who hold firm the goodness.”* Later, in Daniel 9, Cyrus is also known as, Xerxes, another royal name which means *“ruling over heroes.”*





Lydia

• Sardes
Ionia

Armenia

Sogdiana

Bactria

Parthia

Gandhara

Assyria

Media

Babylonia

• Babylon

Persia

• Pasargadae
Persepolis

Judah

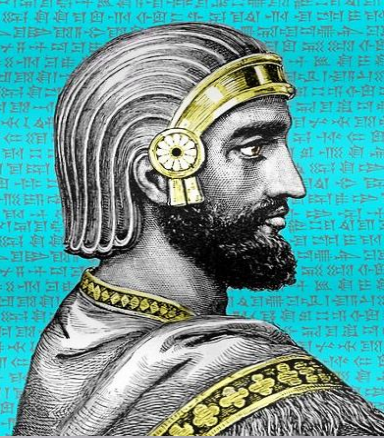
India

Egypt



The following chart give a general chronology for Cyrus' entrance into Babylon and events that occurred thereafter:

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| 3 Heshvan (Oct 29, 539 BC) | Cyrus arrives in Babylon; appoints Gubaru as Governor of Babylon |
| 4-10 Heshvan (Oct 30 – Nov 5, 539) | Gubaru appoints satraps |
| 11 Heshvan (Nov 6, 539) | Gubaru dies |
| 12-29 Heshvan (Nov 7 -24, 539) | Cyrus completes the appointment of satraps and places three overseers (including Daniel) over the satraps. |
| Kislev 539 – Shebat 538 (Nov 25, 539 – Feb 21, 538) | Daniel distinguishes himself; Cyrus plans to appoint him as the Governor of Babylon (v.3) |
| Late Shebat – Early Adar 538 (Late Feb – Early March, 538) | The plot against Daniel is hatched; the plot “succeeds” and Daniel is rescued from the lions. |
| 1 Nisan (March 24, 538) | Cambyses appointed king of Babylon. |



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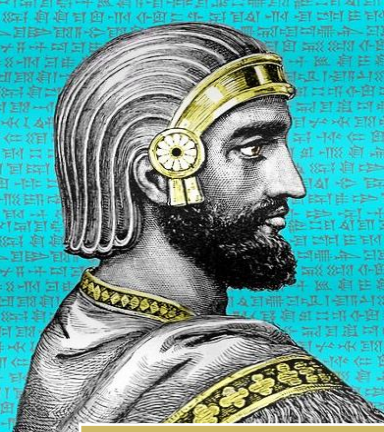
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And this chart lists all of Cyrus' successors as Rulers of the Medo-Persian Empire:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Cambyses II (530 – 522 BC) | Egypt is conquered at the Battle of Pelusium, thus adding Pharaoh of Egypt to the royal Persian titles. Daniel's death (?) |
| Darius I (522 – 468) | Also known as Darius the Great; expands the Empire to its greatest extent (Macedonia/N. Africa/Indus River) |
| Xerxes I (486 – 465) | Known as Ahasuerus; this is the king known by Esther and Mordecai |
| Artaxerxes I (465 – 424) | He was the ruler during the third wave of exiles who returned to Judea led by Nehemiah. |
| Xerxes II (424) | Assassinated by his half-brother Sogdianus, who in turn was murdered by Darius II. |
| Darius II (424 – 404) | Ruler during the final phase of exiles returning to Judea led by Ezra |
| Artaxerxes V (July, 330 - 329) | Last king of the Empire; defeated by Alexander |

[4-9] The Decree for Daniel's Overthrow

[4] Jealousy leads Daniel's peers to hatch a plot to get rid of this foreigner. It seemed that Cyrus desired to appoint Daniel as the chief governor, or Grand Vizier. Therefore, the other officials hatch a plot to overthrow Daniel by using His religion against him.

[5] The plotters meet to plan for Daniel's overthrow. They decide to focus on Daniel's religious practices since they cannot find fault with his administrative record or his leadership.



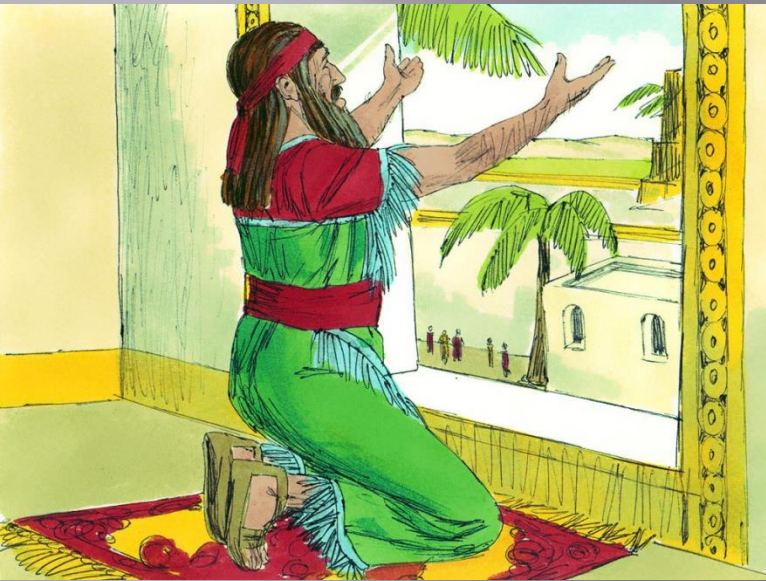
[4-9] The Decree for Daniel's Overthrow

[6-9] The plotters gain audience with Cyrus. They flatter the king by convincing him that he should be worshipped as divine for a period of one month.

It's especially interesting, since Cyrus was very lenient toward the religious practices of those he conquered.

The plotters appeal to the king on the basis that the decree would protect the king's honor. They knew all along that once a decree was signed by Cyrus it could not be annulled (cf. Esther 1:19; 8:8). In secular history, there are also examples of this concept which is called the "*Law of the Medes & the Persians.*"

[10-15] Daniel's Courageous Prayer



[10-12] When Daniel hears of the decree he goes to his house and stands before an open window, falls on his knees and prays aloud as he had done before.

The plotters were watching Daniel. They immediately tell the king and demand that Daniel be cast into the lion's den as the decree required.



[10-15] Daniel's Courageous Prayer

[13-14] Cyrus is very troubled at the report and he gave serious thought for the rest of the day as to how to save Daniel. Cyrus knows that the other officials have tricked him and have used his decree against him in order to rid themselves of Daniel. Even so, Cyrus knows that he cannot change his decree or ignore it.

[15] The plotters remind Cyrus again, *“It is the law of the Medes and the Persians that no interdict or ordinance which the king has established can be changed!”*

[16-18] The Reluctant Sentence

Cyrus has Daniel brought before him and encourages Daniel by expressing his desire that somehow Daniel's God would deliver him.

Daniel is carried to the lion's den a stone is set to seal the entrance so that no one could tamper with it (as with the sealing of Christ's tomb).



Cyrus goes back to the palace and spends the rest of the day fasting. He had a restless night with little sleep and no entertainment.

[19-23] Daniel's Deliverance



Early the next morning the king goes to the lion's den and calls to Daniel. *“O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom you serve continually, able to deliver you from the lions?!”* He waits for an answer and then is astounded to hear

Daniel's clear voice.

“My God has sent His angel and has shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocence was found in me; and also before you, O king, have I done no hurt.” Daniel is lifted from the den.



[24-28] Cyrus' Reaction

Cyrus the Great calls for the men who had brought charges against Daniel, and their families, and orders that they be cast into the lion's den. It seems to be a rather harsh punishment. But it should be remembered that it was a common practice that officials would have insisted on family solidarity. This isn't an uncommon punishment (cf. Num. 16:25-33; Joshua 7:24; and Esther 9:13).

According to Mosaic Law, the wives and children of guilty men were exempted from sharing in the punishment. But not according to Persian Law! The hungry lions devour their prey very quickly, indicating that they were indeed hungry.

[24-28] Cyrus' Reaction

Cyrus the Great then writes a proclamation to all the people of his kingdom to honor and respect the God of Daniel as the living God, and to acknowledge that His kingdom was one that would not be destroyed. Some commentators claim this section contains too much scriptural language to come from a pagan king. It is worth not even arguing since we know Daniel was the author and evidently had a lot of influence on the king; as he did with Nebuchadnezzar II.

The closing verse tells us that Daniel prospered for the remainder of Cyrus' reign and also in the reign of his successor, Cambyses II.