

The Decree of Darius the Mede. Daniel in the Lions' Den and His Deliverance

by Arno Clemens Gaebelein

Arno Clemens Gaebelein preaches on the story of Daniel in the lions' den, highlighting Daniel's steadfast faith in the face of persecution and the miraculous deliverance by God. The chapter also points to the end times, where the deification of man and the rise of the Anti-Christ are foretold, emphasizing the importance of staying faithful to God amidst worldly pressures. The narrative of Daniel's prosperity under Darius and Cyrus serves as a prophetic type of the future deliverance and prosperity of the faithful remnant.

Description

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Transcript

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between Daniel's deliverance and the deliverance of the faithful remnant?" a: "Daniel's deliverance foreshadows the deliverance of the faithful remnant, who will be saved from the lion's mouth during the time of the end." - q: "Who is Cyrus, and what is his significance in the Bible?" a: "Cyrus is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, who will gather the scattered sheep of the house of Israel and deliver them out of the lion's mouth." - q: "What is the characteristic feature of world empires, according to the Bible?" a: "The characteristic feature of world empires is the deification of man, where individuals claim divine honor and worship." quotes: - "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." - "God, a holy and righteous God and a God of love, found a way to save man. God's holy Law condemns man, who is a sinner and the curse of the law rests upon him. God's Love is set upon the world and He 'so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'" - "The deliverance of Daniel once more foreshadows the deliverance of the faithful Jewish remnant." applicationPoints: - "We must remain faithful to our God, even in the face of danger and persecution." - "The deliverance of Daniel foreshadows the deliverance of the faithful remnant, who will be saved from the lion's mouth during the time of the end." - "The Lord Jesus Christ will gather the scattered sheep of the house of Israel and deliver them out of the lion's mouth." keywords: - "Medo-Persian Empire" - "Daniel" - "Darius" - "Deification of Man" - "Lions' Den" - "Faithfulness" - "Deliverance" - "Cyrus" - "Type of Christ" ---

In this chapter we are on the ground of the second world empire, the Medo-Persian, represented in the dream image of Nebuchadnezzar by the chest and arms of silver. It is therefore inferior and continues in the downward tendency. And this comes out in this chapter. Daniel is seen in the highest position of the empire, the first of three presidents over the whole kingdom, and Darius the Mede intended to give him a still greater place of honor. Most likely Darius heard of what happened in that eventful night when Belshazzar was feasting and when the enemy entered the dried-up river bed and took Babylon.

But this condition did not prevail very long. The old Prophet, over 80 years of age, is soon envied by other presidents and princes. But they cannot discover anything whatever in him concerning the kingdom. A plan is concocted by them which, according to their mind, will surely rid them of the hated Daniel. The plan reveals the cunning of the Serpent, With lying tongues they come to Darius to inform him that all the presidents have consulted together to establish a royal statute. But as Daniel was one of the presidents and had not been consulted nor agreed to it, they plainly told a falsehood.

The decree to be established was that for 30 days no one in the realm of the empire is to ask a petition of any God or man, save Darius. In other words, the King is to take the place of God. And he who does not do according to this royal statute is to be cast into the den of lions. The King is well pleased with this proposition for it flatters him. He signs the writing and the decree and the laws of the Medes were irrevocable, so that it had to be carried out.

Beautiful it is to see Daniel's steadfastness, how; the man of faith, whose first steps in the life of faith are recorded in the beginning of this book, now acts. " Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

The aged man of prayer, in sweet communion with God, continues thrice daily to pray and to give thanks. Faith looks away from earthly circumstances to an omnipotent Lord. The accusation soon follows. The King now discovers that he is in a hopeless position. His law demands that Daniel be cast before the lions,

his heart filled with love towards Daniel demands that he be saved. But though his heart was set on delivering Daniel and he labored till the going down of the sun he found no way to deliver him. Well may we think here of another Law and another Love. God, a holy and righteous God and a God of love, found a way to save man. God's holy Law condemns man, who is a sinner and the curse of the law rests upon him. God's Love is set upon the world and He "so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The curse of the Law came upon Him who knew no sin and who was made sin for us and therein is Love manifested. Daniel is cast into the lions' den as our blessed Lord was given to the lion (Psalm xxii, 21), and a stone is laid upon the mouth of the den and it is sealed with the King's signet. He is so to speak in a grave, as good as dead in the eyes of the world, for who has ever heard of hungry lions not devouring a man. And all this brings before us that other place, the tomb in the garden, where He was laid and the stone before it, which bore the seal of the Roman world power. But as Daniel could not be hurt by the lions, so He who went into the jaws of death could not be holden by death. The tomb is empty and He is victor over death and the grave. All this is blessedly foreshadowed in this experience of God's prophet.

After a restless and sleepless night, Darius, who had such regard for Daniel, went very early in the morning to the lions' den and cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel. "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" Then came the answer which filled the heart of the King with joy. Daniel was alive. His accusers and their families are given to the lions, which claimed them at once.

Then followed the proclamation of the King: "Then King Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, that in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

In this historical incident we behold almost the same characteristic as in the third chapter. There was set up the image of gold to be worshipped, the deification of man; and here a man is put in the place of God, honor and worship is demanded for him. That this once more directs our attention to the time of the end, when the times of the Gentiles come to a close, needs hardly to be stated. It is significant that the same deification of man is mentioned in the second empire, which was shown in the Babylonian. It is the characteristic feature of every one of these world empires. Nebuchadnezzar and Darius took the lead.

In the one which followed, the Graeco-Macedonian, we find Antiochus Epiphanes, who took the same place. In the Roman Empire we have emperors and others, like Herodes, claiming divine honors; in papal Rome the popes claim infallibility. And in apostate Protestantism the deification of man appears likewise. But all points to the end, when the man of sin, the Son of perdition will appear, the final Anti-Christ "who opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or worshipped; so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thessal. ii, 4). Of the same person we read also in this Book: "And the King shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all" (xi, 36, 37),

The deliverance of Daniel once more foreshadows the deliverance of the faithful Jewish remnant. It is strange that expositors and teachers put the church into this time of the end. The church, according to the testimony of the New Testament Scriptures, will no longer be on earth when this predicted time of the end comes. We have then seen that these four chapters foreshadow the moral characteristics of the times of the Gentiles, down to the end, when the stone smites the image and it will forever pass away. Self exaltation, the pride and deification of man, impiety, blasphemy, hatred, persecution, cruelty, man putting himself in the place of God are the leading features. Even so it is.

But we must not pass over the last verse of the sixth chapter. "So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

It tells of the prosperity of the man of faith even as the delivered remnant will prosper. But here is another prophetic type. Isaiah had announced the birth and work of this same Cyrus over a hundred years before he was born. Let us read what Isaiah said of him.

That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him ; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates ; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight : I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron; And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name : I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me (Is. xlv. 28; xlv. 1-4).

This is the remarkable word. What Isaiah had announced happened, for under Cyrus the remnant returned. .God calls Cyrus "my shepherd " and "my anointed." In this he is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here then is the application. When the time comes, when a man, the Anti-Christ claims divine honor and worship and when the remnant of His people is delivered out of the lion's mouth, then another Cyrus appears upon the scene, one greater than Cyrus, one who will gather the scattered sheep of the house of Israel, even our Lord Jesus Christ

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