

1. The account of Daniel being cast into the lion's den is one of the most familiar stories of the O.T.
2. However - from the viewpoint of biblical scholarship - more attention has been given to Darius the Mede.
3. The reason is that much of the criticism against the book of Daniel is based on what is claimed to be a gross historical error.
4. The claim being that history has no place for such a person by the name of Darius. They claim that Daniel confused Darius I - king of Persia (521-486 B.C.) with the conqueror of Babylon and identified this figure as Darius the Mede.
5. Here is the issue:

"Darius the Mede" - at age 62 - received the kingdom (Babylon) after the death of Belshazzar (5:31) and was the son of Ahasuerus of the seed of the Medes - which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans (Daniel 9:1).
6. However - there is no reason to assume that the book of Daniel is in error. Darius the Mede is a different person from Darius I of Persia.
7. Darius the Mede was a subordinate to Cyrus the Great.
8. Cuneiform texts refer to Darius the Mede as Gubaru who was appointed by Cyrus to be governor over all of Babylonia.
9. The tendency to deny the historical accuracy of Daniel simply because there is no corroborating historical information stems from the liberal bias of modern scholarship.
10. Daniel's historical record has proven to be a reliable source of information. (i.e. Belshazzar)
11. The organization of the new kingdom is detailed in verses 1-3.
12. Daniel's integrity made impossible any corruption - and his favor with Darius aroused the jealousy of the other officials. (v. 4-5)
13. The only way to get to Daniel would have to be through a conspiracy. (v. 6-11)
14. The custom of praying toward the temple in Jerusalem was adopted by Solomon. (2 Chronicles 6:34-39)
15. The other officials saw what they needed to see and brought their findings to Darius. (v. 12-15)
16. With the assurance from the mouth of Darius - Daniel's accusers began to level their charge and attempted to put as bad a light on the situation as possible.

17. First - they confirmed that Daniel was not truly one of them - he was an exile captured from Judah - an attempt to humiliate him and make him seem more likely to be disloyal.
18. Next - Daniel's actions were said to have been due to disrespect, not merely of the king's law ("the injunction") but of the king himself - he did not consider the king significant.
19. Not only had Daniel disobeyed the king and broken the law, but he did it three times every day ("prays three times a day"). It was not a mere lapse on Daniel's part.
20. The sentence is carried out against Daniel. (v. 16-20)
21. The king's actions demonstrate that he held out hope that Daniel's God could deliver him, but his "anguished" voice says that he did not believe it was likely.
22. In verses 21-28 we find Daniel's deliverance account and the next decree of Darius.
23. The reason for Daniel's miraculous deliverance is stated in the last phrase of verse 23.
24. Daniel's integrity had been vindicated by God himself. Now the king commanded that those who had "falsely accused" the prophet should be thrown into the den of lions. (verse 24)
25. It seems cruel to us that the families were destroyed along with the conspirators, but that was an official Persian law and the conspirators knew it.
26. We find an affirmation to the sovereignty of God in verse 27.
27. The chapter closes in verse 28 with a brief historical note concerning Daniel.
28. In this biblical account faithfulness is exemplified:

Daniel was faithful in old age, in his godly example (v. 5)

In his own prayer life (v. 10)

In trials and testing (v. 16)

In testimony and his deliverance (v. 22)

It provided an opportunity for a witness to unbelievers (vv. 26-27)

Daniel was blessed (v. 28)