

1. Last week I taught the Doctrine of Babylon and when time ran out I was in the process of giving you several points about Darius the Mede.

2. I want to review some of that learned last week and then we will study Daniel chapter six.

3. The next question that arises is who is Darius the Mede? The Bible records three persons who bear the name Darius.

- First, there is Darius the Mede, found in our passage and following

Dan 6:1 It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom,

Dan 6:6 So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said: "O King Darius, live forever!"

Dan 6:9 So King Darius put the decree in writing.

Dan 6:25 Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language throughout the land: "May you prosper greatly!"

Dan 6:26 "I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. "For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end.

Dan 9:1 In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom--

Dan 5:1 And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.)

- The second personage is Darius the king, or Darius king of Persia. He is better known in history as Darius I, Darius Hystaspes or Darius the Great. A cousin of Cyrus the Great, he ruled as king of Persia from 521 to 486 B.C.
- Third, there is the reference to Darius the Persian in Nehemiah 12:22. This is Darius Codomannus or Darius III, the last king of Persia, whose empire was destroyed by Alexander the Great.

3.1 Scripture and secular history both substantiate the fact that both the Medes and the Persians played an important role in the downfall of the Chaldean Empire.

4. Recall our numerous prophecies in such passages as:

4.1 Jeremiah 50:9 predicts: "...I [the Lord] will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nation ..." This would include not only the army of Cyrus, but the armies of the Median king Astyages and Croesus of Lydia, whom Cyrus had defeated.

4.2 Jeremiah 50 and 51 describe the actual fall of Babylon in some detail, and Jeremiah 51:11 states: "... the LORD hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it...."

4.3 Isaiah 45:1 confirms that Cyrus is the Lord's anointed of whom God said: "whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him."

5. Thus we see once again that Scripture accurately prophesied historical facts long before they occurred. According to both the divine record and history, Chaldea fell to the Medes and the Persians.

6. The army that captured Babylon was led by Gobryas, a Persian general under Cyrus, while the man who assumed the rulership of the Chaldean Empire was Darius, a Mede.

7. Although many historians have attempted to present these two men as one and the same person, they were separate individuals.

8. Daniel 9:1 declares without equivocation that Darius was "the son of Ahasuerus [Achasheroth--a title for king or ruler, as is czar or caesar], of the seed of the Medes," a royal personage.

9. This fact was verified by the Jewish historian, Josephus:

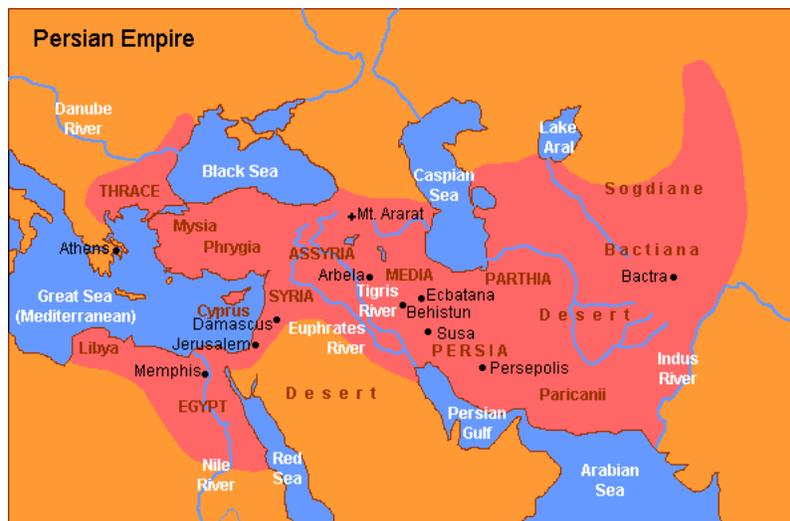
"Such, then ... was the end to which the descendants of King Nebuchadnezzar came. Now Darius, who with his relative Cyrus put an end to the Babylonian sovereignty, was in his sixty-second year when he took Babylon; he was a son of Astyages but was called by another name among the Greeks ..."

10. The royal houses of the kingdoms of Media and Parthia (or Anshan) were closely related by a marriage, which the Median king, Astyages, had arranged.

11. He had wed his daughter, Mandane, to Cambyses, King of Anshan. This union produced Cyrus the Great, King of Anshan, who later became king of Persia.

12. Astyages also had a son Darius II. He is both Darius the Mede of our passage and an uncle of Cyrus the Great.

13. Cyrus spent little time in Babylon after its capture; he left the throne in the royal hands of his uncle, Darius.



14. To further cement this alliance Cyrus had married the daughter of Darius.

14.1 Approximately two years later, upon the death of Darius, Cyrus united the two kingdoms and took to himself the title, King of Persia.

15. All the events of Daniel 6 transpired within a two-year span during the reign of Darius the Mede. The Chaldean Empire had been replaced by the silver breast and arms of Nebuchadnezzar's image (Dan. 2:32 and 39).

Dan 2:32 The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,

Dan 2:39 "After you, another kingdom will rise, inferior to yours. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth.

16. The arms represented the two kingdoms of Media and Anshan that were then merging into the breast the powerful Persian Empire!

17. God used this empire to champion and protect His people; and during the two hundred years of its existence, the Jews experienced their Golden Age.

18. To our knowledge, Nebuchadnezzar was the only born-again king of the Chaldean Empire; however, under the Persian rulers there was a notable trend toward regenerate leadership.

19. In the days of Isaiah, Cyrus was referred to as the Lord's "anointed," the only time the Lord applied that term to a Gentile ruler.

20. Apparently he was a believer long before he consolidated the Persian Empire. Cyrus is mentioned many times in Scripture as the Lord's special servant.

2Ch 36:22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

2Ch 36:23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.

Ezr 1:1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

Ezr 1:2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Ezr 1:3 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.

Ezr 1:4 And the people of any place where survivors may now be living are to provide him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with freewill offerings for the temple of God in Jerusalem."

Isa 44:28 Who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid.'"

Isa 45:1 "This is what the LORD says to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their armor, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut:

Isa 45:2 I will go before you and will level the mountains; I will break down gates of bronze and cut through bars of iron.

Isa 45:3 I will give you the treasures of darkness, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, who summons you by name.

Isa 45:4 For the sake of Jacob my servant, of Israel my chosen, I summon you by name and bestow on you a title of honor, though you do not acknowledge me.

Isa 45:5 I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me,

17. The conversion of Darius the Mede is recorded in Daniel 6; this is remarkable considering "Darius the Median" was sixty-two years old when he "took the kingdom" (Dan 6:25-26).

Dan 6:25 Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language throughout the land: "May you prosper greatly!

Dan 6:26 "I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. "For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end.

18. Not many people become believers that late in life! "Took" in verse thirty-one is the Peal perfect of the Chaldean word QEBAL and means literally that he "received" the kingdom.

19. Here then in verse thirty-one is a reference to Darius' appointment as regent of Babylon.

19.1 Before Cyrus departed for Ecbatana, he delegated the political rulership of Babylon to Darius, and left the military administration in the able care of Gobryas.

Now let's move forward with a study of verse one of Daniel chapter six:

KJV

Dan 6:1 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom.

NIV

Dan 6:1 It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom,

1. Darius received the Kingdom from Cyrus and was pleased to administer it under the great King Cyrus.

2. The plan had most likely been devised by Cyrus before he left Babylon.

3. The word "princes" is a translation from the Hebrew Achashedrephena - it is also a translation of the Greek word SATRAPES (from the Septuagint) and means "guardian" or "watcher."

4. The reorganized old Chaldean Empire had been divided into one hundred and twenty Provinces, each division was to be headed by a Satrap or Governor.

5. Let me give you an expanded translation of verse one:

Expanded Translation:

Dan 6:1 Darius, at the urging of Cyrus, decided to divide the Kingdom into 120 provinces with a Governor over each semi-autonomous state.

Now let's take a look at verse two.

KJV

Dan 6:2 And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage.

NIV

Dan 6:2 with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The Satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss.

1. Responsibility for administration was further delegated by the division of the one hundred and twenty provinces into three groups.

1.1 "Over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first" is literally, "with three governors appointed over each of the three groups, of whom Daniel was one".

2. In Daniel 5, Belshazzar rewarded Daniel by elevating him to the third ruler in the Babylonian kingdom; little did he realize how soon Daniel would be a ranking survivor of the empire.

3. God has not seen fit to reveal the mechanics of His protection for Daniel on the night Belshazzar was slain. History does provide record that Cyrus spared the life of Belshazzar's father, Nabonidus.

4. Even though blessed with ability and intelligence, Darius apparently played only a passive role in the administration of the newly reorganized empire.

5. Daniel was appointed as one of three "presidents" so that the king "should have no damage," or literally, "should not suffer financial] loss."

6. This brilliant plan ensured the effective management of the far flung Persian domain and safeguarded the financial well-being of the nation.

7. Before proceeding let me give you an expanded translation of verse two:

Expanded Translation:

Dan 6:2 The provinces were then divided into three regions over which a "Regional Manager" was appointed. Daniel and two other Satraps were placed over their respective provinces in order to make sure the King was not cheated out of that which he considered to be his just "due" i.e. taxes and/or tribute.

8. Now for an exegesis of Dan 6:3.

KJV

Dan 6:3 Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

NIV

Dan 6:3 Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.

1. The literal translation of the Chaldean adverb EDAYIN rendered in the KJV "then," should read "at that time."

2. This all-encompassing word takes into account every event from the moment Gobryas led the Persian troops into Belshazzar's banquet hall right down to verse three of Chapter six.

3. Daniel's accomplishments in the human realm as well as his spiritual status had been recognized immediately; and Cyrus, himself a believer, considered Daniel's spiritual maturity an important asset to his administrative chain of command.

4. Yet Daniel's elevation to high rank, his appointments first by Belshazzar and then by Cyrus and Darius and his remarkable success in the administration of the kingdom must be understood in the light of Biblical principles.

4.1 Without divine promotion Daniel could not have succeeded!

5. God promotes prepared people! Daniel was adequately prepared through daily absorption of Bible doctrine and its application to experience.

6. He regarded life, its problems and solutions from the divine viewpoint; hence, he was ready for advancement. Consequently, the Lord blessed Daniel in a most spectacular way.

7. The Word states that "this Daniel was preferred." The Peal perfect of the verb "to be" (HAWAH), plus the participle of NETSACH, presents the concept of surpassing and conquering.

8. The reflexive stem connotes Daniel's conquest of himself through the Word.
  9. Twenty-three years had passed since the death of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel was content to live in relative obscurity.
  10. He had once enjoyed the limelight, but when the "light of the lime" left he was more than content to take in the Word and grow in God's grace.
  11. If we assume that Daniel was about fourteen at the time of his capture in 606 B.C., then the date of his birth would have been 620 B.C.
  12. The reorganization of the empire under Darius was accomplished in about 538; this would have made Daniel nearly eighty-two years old at the time of his promotion.
  13. The important principle of Psa 92:14 emerges from Daniel 6:3, that in God's service age does not hinder success!
- Psa 92:14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing [idiomatic for prosperity and blessing].
14. Additional examples of this principle can be found in the productivity and promotion of two other heroes from the Old Testament: Joshua and Caleb.
  15. Caleb was eighty-five years old when he led a tremendous military victory over the Anakims and claimed his portion of the Promised Land (Jos 14:6-14).

Jos 14:6 Now the men of Judah approached Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God at Kadesh Barnea about you and me.

Jos 14:7 I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to explore the land. And I brought him back a report according to my convictions,

Jos 14:8 but my brothers who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt with fear. I, however, followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly.

Jos 14:9 So on that day Moses swore to me, "The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever, because you have followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly."

Jos 14:10 "Now then, just as the LORD promised, he has kept me alive for forty-five years since the time he said this to Moses, while Israel moved about in the desert. So here I am today, eighty-five years old!

Jos 14:11 I am still as strong today as the day Moses sent me out; I'm just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then.

Jos 14:12 Now give me this hill country that the LORD promised me that day. You yourself heard then that the Anakites were there and their cities were large and fortified, but, the LORD helping me, I will drive them out just as he said."

Jos 14:13 Then Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave him Hebron as his inheritance.

16. At least from the Scriptural record, neither Caleb's nor Joshua's spiritual faithfulness ever faltered; on that basis God awarded them their promotions.

16.1 For forty long years, Joshua was Moses' adjutant; he was content to remain in the shadow of his great leader until God Himself advanced him to a place of prominence (Jos 1:1-9).

Jos 1:1 After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide:

Jos 1:2 "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them--to the Israelites.

Jos 1:3 I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses.

Jos 1:4 Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates--all the Hittite country--to the Great Sea on the west.

Jos 1:5 No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Jos 1:6 "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them.

Jos 1:7 Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

Jos 1:8 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Jos 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

End Lesson Taught 9-16-2001