

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: God is Sovereign over History

Outline:

- A. The personal history of the prophet Daniel – chapter 1
- B. The prophetic history of the Gentiles – chapters 2-7**
- C. The prophetic history of Israel – chapters 8-12

Daniel 2 through 7 is about the place of the Jews in what Jesus termed “the times of the Gentiles” (Lk. 21:24). During this time, the Gentiles would oppress the Jews, and yet the God of the Jews reveals Himself to still be totally SOVEREIGN! The times of the Gentiles began with Babylon taking the Jews captive and continues throughout history until the Second Coming of Christ.

Slide # 2

Babylon (c. 605-539 BC)

Medo-Persia (c. 539-331 BC)

Greece (c. 331-63 BC)

Rome (c. 63 BC....)

– **SECOND COMING!**

ETERNAL KINGDOM...

The pagan Gentiles believed that when they took over another people, it showed that their gods were stronger than those of the people they had conquered. But the God of Israel stepped in EARLY to show in the case of the Jews being taken captive to Babylon that was NOT the case.

God intervened dramatically in the lives of the leadership both in Babylon and then of the Medes and Persians to make it unmistakably clear that although His people Israel were in captivity (under oppression), yet He was still SOVEREIGN!

Daniel 2:4b through chapter 7 was written in Aramaic, the language of the Gentiles. God wants the KEY message of His sovereignty made known to them.

He made it known to Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2, 3, and 4. He made it known to Belshazzar in Daniel 5, and now in our study today we see that He made it clear to Darius the Medo-Persian leader in chapter 6.

At the end of Daniel 5 we saw the fall of Babylon in 539 BC to the Medes and the Persians. The events in Daniel 6 probably took place in the first few years after that in the context of the Medo-Persian Empire.

Daniel was now at old man – most believe he was now in his 80s, probably about 82 or so. Daniel 5 concludes with Darius the Mede being made king over the realm of what was previously Babylon. Chapter 6 continues on from there.

Daniel 6:1–28 (NKJV)

1 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.

Darius sub-ruled under Cyrus the Persian, but he had a rather large area that he controlled, involving much of the territory previously ruled by Babylon. He set up over this area 120 satraps.

As I said last week there has been no end of discussion over who Darius was. He is definitely not to be confused with Darius the Great who later in history (521-486 BC) became king of Persia.

Some think that **Darius** was simply another name for Cyrus. An argument for this is that verse 28 could be translated as “*during the reign of Darius, even Cyrus the Persian.*” The problem is that Cyrus was Persian and this Darius was a Mede – so that doesn’t fit.

Some think that **Darius** was Cambyses, the son of Cyrus. However, that didn’t happen until a little later in the reign of Cyrus.

Most probably, **Darius** was an official known as *Gubaru* in ancient documents, whom Cyrus appointed as ruler over Babylon immediately after its capture (cf. Dan. 9:1 – “made king over the realm of the Chaldeans”). “Darius” was an honorific title meaning, “holder of the scepter” which Archaeologists have commonly found on inscriptions related to various Persian rulers.

The ancient Annalistic Table of Cyrus stated that Gubaru “appointed governors in Babylon.” – **Renald Showers**

The word “Satrap” means “protector of the kingdom.” Satraps were rulers over various provinces, responsible for law and order and the collection of taxes. Darius set up 120 of them in his assigned area surrounding Babylon.

Over the 120 Satrap rulers, Darius appointed three overseeing governors, of whom one was Daniel. They evidently were responsible for making sure revenue from taxes was properly collected and accounted for. This would call for men of honesty and integrity.

Amazingly, Daniel was so quickly recognized as such a man and appointed for such a role. Daniel was so impressive that very quickly, people saw he was an outstanding individual. We see this throughout his life, even from the time he was a young man.

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.

Among all these leaders, Daniel distinguished himself, and Darius gave consideration to making him the supreme overseer over the entire realm of his rule. Darius was obviously very impressed with the character and ability of Daniel (cf. 5:12), and clearly God’s hand was upon him in a special way.

However, there was a little problem in the kingdom.... a problem with jealousy on the part of the other governors.

And some suggest Daniel may have been a little too honest for their liking. They very well may have wanted to bilk the system a bit, but Daniel, being the man of character that he was, was having none of it. Also, it seems that resented Daniel being a Jew in his prominent position.

Whatever all was involved, these other leaders wanted Daniel OUT!

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.

What a great testimony! When your enemies can’t find any dirt on you, that is amazing! Concerning his work in the kingdom, he was flawless! They could find no charge that would stick! The reason being: He was faithful!

There was no scandal or blunder – no area in his public service that they could point to and say “***He is really messing up here***”. They evidently couldn’t even charge him with slowing down because of his age. They, by their own admission, had NOTHING!

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.”

Daniel’s testimony and commitment to God stood out so clearly that they knew the only way they could get something on him was if they could concoct a situation where it was God versus government (cf. Ezek. 14:14). They knew exactly where Daniel’s number one LOYALTY lay.

His stand for God was **consistent and predictable**, and therefore, they reasoned that if they could somehow play off his stand for God against the law of the king, they could trip him up. And so they hatched this plot!

6 So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: “King Darius, live forever!

Poised with this devious plot, they thronged before the king. They arrived with great commotion and excitement, acting as if they had come up with a special idea to honor the king. They come all respectful, addressing the king with honor, saying, “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.

Wasn’t that nice! They were here to honor the king, and they have come up with a GREAT idea to do this very thing! The whole thing was a charade. It was deceptive. And they start out with a flagrant lie saying, “**ALL** the governors, administrators, satraps, counselors, advisors have come up with this royal statute.

But what about Daniel – the leading figure in the kingdom under Darius? He wasn’t in on it! His endorsement was quietly left out! This proposed “royal statute” to honor the king was that “whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days”, except for the king, was to be thrown into the den of lions. “Prayer” was to be made only to the king!

In effect, they were saying, “We think so much of you Mr King live forever that we want you to play God for a month.” “No one can pray to any other person or god for a month except to you O King.”

The petitions involved were understood to be of a RELIGIOUS nature. The King alone was to be looked to as **the higher power** during this period. Thus, allegiance to him was to be supreme!

This was pure FLATTERY!

Slide # 3

Proverbs 29:5 (NKJV)

5 A man who flatters his neighbor Spreads a net for his feet.

Flattery is insincere praise with ulterior motives. It is manipulative! It says wonderful things to a person, but doesn't really mean them because it has an agenda!

They came up with this “***royal statute***” by which everyone could show their worshipful allegiance to the king, and now all it needed was the king's signature to put it into law.

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 does not alter.”

The boast of the law of the Medes and Persians was that when the king signed something to law, it couldn't be changed. It was then set in stone. The law was then considered to be inspired by the gods and therefore irrevocable. To violate this would be to incur the wrath of the gods.

So, in the name of honoring the King above all (as a god) for a month, they urged the King to sign the decree into law, emphasizing that it could not be altered (cf. Est. 1:19; 8:8).

Note: The Medo-Persian kings did not have the same absolute power wielded by Nebuchadnezzar (cf. 2:38-39; 3:28; 5:19). He could arbitrarily decide or change anything he wanted at any time. But Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold, and the Medo-Persians were only of silver. In the Medo-Persian system, the king was not above the law, not even the law of his own making. In that sense, the kingdom of silver was inferior to the kingdom of gold that preceded it.

9 Therefore King Darius signed the written decree.

Flattery won the day!

With an irrevocable system, you would not want to do anything rash or that you didn't think through carefully. But all **caught up in the emotions and the flattery** of what is happening, the king SIGNED the decree.

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.

Daniel didn't miss a beat! He knew exactly what was happening, and he acted on principle without hesitation. He was a man of no compromise! He had long ago counted the cost, and in his mind, God was above all, including government that made laws that violated his relationship with God. As a man of prayer he would not compromise his prayer life.

Slide # 4

Acts 5:29 (NKJV)

29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: **"We ought to obey God rather than men."**

Yes, we ought to obey the laws of land at every point (Rom. 13:1-2), except for in the case where there is a conflict with the higher law of God's Word. In this case they essentially outlawed prayer to God. Well, for Daniel that wouldn't stand. He had been a man of prayer for many years as indicated by the language here which says, **"as was his custom since early days."**

Someone once said, **"A lot of crimes are not sins, and a lot of sins are not crimes."** It was a supposed "crime" for Daniel to pray, but it was no sin. It was sinful what the plotters were doing, but it was no official crime. This world is often upside down (cf. Isa. 5:20). In view was sinful lawfare. It was clearly morally wrong before God, although legally proper. As David said regarding the depravity of man: "Both the inward thought and the heart of of man are deep." (Ps. 64:6)

But for the man of prayer, it didn't matter what laws they passed, he was going to pray. Here we see part of the secret of his exemplary life. He was a man of prayer, day in and day out.

He was not making a show out of it, but he wasn't hiding it either. His windows were open. He was not ashamed! Jews out of the land prayed toward Jerusalem in accordance with what Solomon had instructed (cf. 1 Kings 8:33, 35, 38, 44, 48; 2 Chron. 6:34-39; Ps. 5:7; 28:2).

Slide # 5

1 Kings 8:48 (NKJV)

48 and when they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul **in the land of their enemies** who led them away captive, and **pray to You toward their land** which You gave to their fathers, **the city** which You have chosen and **the temple** which I have built for Your name:

Praying toward Jerusalem had significance because the Temple Mount was there where the Holy Temple had stood. This was the location associated with God's special presence called the Shekhinah. This was the epicenter of the Promised Land. This was where the FUTURE of the Jew was to be found in the Land of Promise. In praying toward Jerusalem, the Jews identified with all that God had promised in regard to this land.

Slide # 6

Psalms 137:5–6 (NKJV)

5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem, Let my right hand forget its skill!

6 If I do not remember you, Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth— If I do not exalt Jerusalem Above my chief joy.

Daniel went to prayer three times a day, which signifies a commitment to intensely seeking God. When committed to intense prayer, David prayed morning, noon, and evening (Ps. 55:16-17; Jer. 29:13).

And note that his prayers incorporated the element of THANKSGIVING. In the NT Paul says, "in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (Phil. 4:6-7).

11 Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

This was predictable!

So consistent was Daniel in the place of prayer that even his enemies knew they would find him there.

It was so important to him, and he had such convictions about prayer that they knew that he would not compromise his prayer life.

Daniel's prayer priorities serve as a rebuke to many professing believers who seemingly value prayer so little.

Here was Daniel on threat of death in the place of prayer and multitudes today with great freedom to pray are rarely, and certainly not habitually in the place of prayer! Many who call themselves Christian do not even have a regular quiet time. It's easy to talk about how important prayer is but practice reveals what we really believe!

"A person may preach from false motives. A person may write books and, make fine speeches and seem diligent in good works, and yet be a Judas Iscariot. But a person seldom goes into their closet and pours out their soul before God in secret, unless they are in earnest. The Lord Himself has set his stamp on prayer as the best proof of true conversion." - **J.C. Ryle**

John Fletcher (a contemporary of John Wesley) was known to greet a friend by saying, "***Do I meet you praying?***" Great question!

From the plotters' perspective, Daniel fell right into their trap. But again, Daniel knew exactly what was happening and refused to compromise his prayer life.

For Daniel, prayer was a lifestyle! It was a way of life!

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 does not alter."

They were tricky, like slick lawyers manipulating the king all the way. They were careful to start by asking this leading question. The king affirmed that indeed he had signed this decree in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter – that is, it cannot be changed.

Gotcha!! They had the king right where they wanted him, and they had Daniel right where they wanted him. It seemed their plan was working perfectly.

13 So they answered and said before the king, “That Daniel, who is 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.”

Now it all came out! Their antisemitism comes out. They did not refer to Daniel in terms of his dignified position, but rather as “***one of the captives from Judah.***” And they make it personal – like he has no regard for the king or the decree that he has signed. And the treasonous charge was that he makes his petition to his God three times a day.

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 labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

The king was not upset with Daniel but rather with himself. Instantly, he saw that they had used him to frame Daniel. He knew Daniel’s character and knew that he was loyal. I am sure he saw the jealous motive behind this, but what to do about it?

Immediately, he set his heart on delivering Daniel – who really was his most important helper in the kingdom. The king labored all day to the going down of the sun to deliver him. He looked for every possible loophole!

Slide # 7

According to Oriental custom, a punishment must be executed “on the evening of the day in which the accusation was made.”

– Renald Showers

15 Then these men 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.”

The accusers pressed the king! There must have been real tension in the air as the king now knew full well what was happening. Legally, through flattery, they had trapped him. The LAW was on their side!

Three times in this chapter, the emphasis is made that the law of the Medes and Persians cannot be altered (v. 8, 12, 15). This was lawfare at its finest!

I am sure the king was feeling some serious resentment toward them for deceiving him in this way, and that comes out at the end of the story.

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.”

The king had no choice. His entire credibility was on the line. So he gave the command and they brought Daniel to cast him into the den of lions.

Amazingly, the king sought to comfort Daniel, saying, “Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.” That almost sounds like a statement of faith.

The sense seems to be: “I have tried everything and now if you are going to be delivered, it **MUST** be your God who does it.” But actually, he stated it more strongly, saying your God “will” deliver you.

This would suggest that Daniel had been witnessing to Darius and that Darius knew something about Daniel’s God.

It was certainly clear that Darius desired that Daniel be spared.

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.

The word “den” could also be translated “pit”.

The stone assured Daniel could in no way climb out. And the seal was a legal guarantee that no one would tamper with it upon pain of death.

All the lawyers and legalize people were there, making sure the letter of the law was followed! The king sealed it with his signet ring, and so did his attendant officials.

They could probably hear the roar of the lions.

18 Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him.

The great injustice done to Daniel weighed heavily on the conscience of the king. He didn’t feel like eating or being entertained, and he couldn’t sleep. It was a **LONG** night!

The irony is that while the king couldn’t sleep, Daniel probably did!

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions.

The king is thinking about Daniel and Daniel's God. As they were getting ready to cast Daniel in with the lions the king said to him, "**Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.**" (v. 16) That suggests an element of faith. And he is still thinking about the "God-factor" early the next morning. Coming in haste suggests that he is hopeful that perhaps God has saved Daniel.

20 And when he came to the den, he cried out with a 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?"

This action also hints at faith. He cried out to Daniel, indeed with a lamenting voice – which is to say with a sad tone, but nonetheless inquiring about whether God had delivered him. The very fact that Darius thought such a deliverance possible speaks of some semblance of faith.

Note Darius here referred to God as "**the living God**". He had definitely learned some things about God from Daniel. In verse 16 he said He will deliver, but now in verse 20 he asks if the living God has been able (cf. 3:17).

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

This must have startled the king – in the early morning shadows. Of course, Daniel's greeting was polite protocol court talk, but rather ironic. Daniel (humanly speaking) should have been dead but here he is early in the morning vibrantly addressing the king with "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."

Daniel immediately credits his God for saving him. How did Daniel know about this angel? Was he visible? Did he talk to Daniel? Daniel doesn't give details other than an angel had shut the lions' mouths. This may simply have been an angel. Even one single angel has incredible power. A single angel killed 185,000 Assyrian warriors in one single night.

Slide # 8**2 Kings 19:35 (NKJV)**

35 And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead.

This angel may have been the preincarnate Christ in the form of the Angel of the Lord, as we suspect He was the fourth man in the burning fiery furnace in chapter 3 (cf. 3:25).

God uses angels to accomplish His purposes for His people including protecting them. Hebrews 1:14 indicates that they are ministering spirits who minister to God's children – mostly in ways of which we are unaware (cf. Ps 34:7; 91:11).

Slide # 9**Psalms 34:7 (NKJV)**

7 The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.

And note that Daniel said God delivered him because he was innocent of doing anything against the king. Daniel claimed that faithful allegiance to God above all made him guiltless in this matter. And clearly God vindicated him on this matter.

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.

The king really liked Daniel and was exceedingly glad that God had delivered him. It was a new day! He commanded Daniel be removed from the pit. And as they evaluated him, he was totally without any injury.

Remember, Daniel is thought to have been in his mid-80s at this point. I don't think they lowered him gingerly into the pit. Verse 16 says they "cast him into the den of lions." It had to have been quite a drop, and yet here he was, totally unharmed. This is not to mention spending all night with the hungry lions. It truly was a miracle that God performed because of Daniel's faith.

Slide # 10**Hebrews 11:33 (NKJV)**

33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

It is interesting to note why God saved Daniel: because of his integrity, both godward and manward, and because he believed. These are two great allies to have when all around the soul gives way. – **John Phillips**

Not every faithful servant of the Lord is delivered from trial and death in some miraculous way. Hebrews 11:1-35 names some great men and women of faith and describes their achievements, but verses 36 through 40 describe others who also had great faith and yet were persecuted and martyred. – **Warren Wiersbe**

God is God and He decides the part He wants us to play in His masterpiece plan that has many moving part with various roles.

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.

What a difference a day makes! The previous day the king did what he was legally bound to do, but this was a new day. And on this day he commanded that the accusers of Daniel and their families be thrown into the lions' den (cf. Num. 16:1-35; Josh. 7; Deut. 19:16-21; 24:16; Est. 7:9-10). And boy, were those lions hungry. They were torn in pieces even before they got to the bottom of the den, showing what an awesome miracle the preservation of Daniel was.

Some suggest that it was perhaps only the key ringleaders who were the real instigators who experienced this fate.

Persian rulers executed all of a man's relatives when he committed a crime worthy of death. This was a sure way of preventing assassination attempts upon the life of the king by disgruntled relatives in future years. – **Renald Showers**

The attempt by false accusation to exterminate this Jewish captive-turned-executive boomeranged (cf. Haman's similar fate, Es. 7:9–10). The accusers had persuaded Darius to put in effect a decree that was intended to eliminate Daniel, but ironically they could not dissuade the king from eliminating them!

– *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*

Ultimately, people reap what they have sown (Gal. 6:7).

Slide # 11

Proverbs 26:27 (NKJV)

27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him.

25 Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you.

Just like Nebuchadnezzar at an earlier time (cf. Dan. 4:1), this event of Daniel being delivered inspired Darius to write an open letter to all people far and wide.

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.

He decreed that the people must reverence this God who has revealed Himself so clearly in reference to Daniel. It is assumed that what the king decreed for everyone else, he first applied to himself.

And then he makes what amounts to a powerful statement of faith. He declares this God to be “the living God”. Living things MOVE! This God moves in history and in the lives of His people. He is a relational and active God. He is for real!

He is steadfast (or enduring) forever. This is a way of saying He is the eternal God! His kingdom will not be destroyed – it will be an everlasting kingdom. And His dominion (sovereign control) shall never 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.

Slide # 12

- The living God
- Enduring forever
- Having an eternal kingdom
- His sovereign control will never end
- He is a God of deliverance
- He is a miracle-working God

And the great PROOF of all this, God had delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

Some question the faith of Darius because he spoke in terms of “***the God of Daniel,***” but we need to realize he is emphasizing this because of how God had so uniquely and supernaturally worked in relation to Daniel. Daniel was the catalyst here, and yet the statements of affirmation are from Darius himself and are very strong.

The king's decree is similar to that of his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar. It sounds something like the Hallelujah chorus to me. I cannot imagine these words coming from anyone other than a true believer in the God of the Jews. ...Such praise does not come from the lips of an unbeliever. – **Bob Deffinbaugh**

Sovereignty is a LORDSHIP issue! The statement of Darius was a LORDSHIP STATEMENT whereby he humbled himself under the truth of the God of Israel. This is where all Gentiles must come in order to be saved. It is further developed in the New Testament in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ, but this is a consistent testimony of faith in the God of Israel by a Gentile convert in the Old Testament.

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

Cyrus the Persian was the main ruler, but Darius the Mede for a time had a major sub-role in ruling over the region of Babylonia.

God preserved Daniel through reign of Nebuchadnezzar, through the reign of Belshazzar, through the reign of Darius, and into the reign of Cyrus who was God's chosen instrument to let the Jews return to their homeland (cf. 2 Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-3).

Slide # 13

Chap. 2 **SOVEREIGN** (Confession of Nebuchadnezzar: “your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings” – 2:47).

Chap. 3 **SOVEREIGN** (Decree of Nebuchadnezzar: “there is no God who can deliver like this” – 3:29).

Chap. 4 **SOVEREIGN** (Testimony of Nebuchadnezzar: “His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation” – 4:34).

Chap. 5 **SOVEREIGN** (Statement of Judgment: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN – 5:25).

Chap. 6 **SOVEREIGN** (Decree of Darius: “His kingdom...shall not be destroyed...His dominion shall endure” – 6:26)

Slide # 14**Daniel 2 - 6***“The Times of the Gentiles”***Key Lessons:**

1. God is **SOVEREIGN** over the Nations.
2. God **SOVEREIGNLY** preserves His people, Israel.
3. God **SOVEREIGNLY** uses His people, Israel, as His witness people.

We are still living in the times of the Gentiles, and all three of these realities still remain in place. God remains sovereign over all the nations. He still rules in the kingdom of men and sets up over whom He chooses. He is still preserving His people Israel in spite of themselves. At the end of OT history in Mal. 3:6, God says it is because He does not change that they are not consumed.

And finally, God still sovereignly uses Israel as His witness nation to the Gentile world. In every chapter in Daniel 2-6, it was through the Jew that God made the truth of His sovereignty known.

Daniel the Jew revealed the secret of the king's dream involving world history in chapter 2. The Jewish children revealed God's sovereignty in the fiery furnace in chapter 3.

It was through Daniel the Jew that Nebuchadnezzar's fate was revealed in chapter 4. It was through Daniel the Jew that Belshazzar's fate was revealed in chapter 5. And it was through Daniel the Jew that God's sovereignty was manifested in the lions' den of chapter 6.

It is the Jews who are God's special witness people (Isa. 43:10). God has chosen to reveal Himself to the world through them – even in the dark times of oppression known as the times of the Gentiles. It is through the Jews that God gave us the Scriptures. It is through the Jews that we have prophetic truth. In Amos 3:7 God says that He does nothing unless He first reveals “His secret to His servants the prophets.” Prophecy swirls around the Jew! It is through the Jews that we have the Savior – Salvation is of the Jews (Jn. 4:22). And even though the Church is also a witness people for God we must always remember we are merely grafted in branches while Israel is the root (Rom. 11).

The TRUTH of God in terms of revealed truth is centered essentially in Israel. If you want proof of God – look no further than Israel. Israel is God's great apologetic for the world. This is the message of Daniel! And it remains true to this very day. Israel is back in the land in fulfillment of prophecy! Last days truth swirls around Israel. God displays His SOVEREIGNTY in various ways, but in terms of special revelation, essentially in relation to ISRAEL. This is how God has chosen to communicate His truth to the Gentile World.

A FAMILY OF MICE WHO LIVED IN A PIANO

A story is told about a family of mice who lived inside a large piano. All the dark spaces of their world were filled with sound and harmony. At first, the mice were impressed by it. They drew comfort and wonder from the thought that there was SOMEONE who made the music, though invisible to them, above – and yet close to them. They loved to think of the GREAT PLAYER whom they could not see.

Then one day, a daring mouse climbed up part of the piano and returned very thoughtful. He had discovered how the music was made. Wires were the secret; tightly stretched wires of graduated lengths which trembled and vibrated. They must revise all their old beliefs. None but the most conservative could any longer believe in the UNSEEN PLAYER.

Later, another explorer carried the explanation further. Hammers were now the secret, numbers of hammers dancing and leaping on the wires. This was a more complicated theory, but it all went to show that they lived in a purely mechanical and mathematical world. The UNSEEN PLAYER came to be thought of as a myth. But the pianist continued to play.

During the times of the Gentiles, the God of Israel has largely been discarded in the minds of modern man. But His sovereign plan continues to play out. If you doubt it, watch Israel. Israel is God's great "apologetic"!

Even in the times of the Gentiles, Israel is the key to God's program for the world. The Jews would be scattered throughout the world – they were. They as a people would be preserved – they were! They would come back, first in blindness – that is where they are today. Israel had to be back in the land in order for the last days' prophecies to be fulfilled. They are there!

The UNSEEN PLAYER – continues to play out His sovereign plan in relation to His chosen people, Israel.

And He invites the whole world, saying...

Isaiah 45:22 (NKJV)

22 "Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.

The One true sovereign God of Israel has revealed Himself most fully and finally in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 17:3 (NKJV)

3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Acts 16:31 (NKJV)

31 So they said, "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved,** you and your household."

Dare to be a Daniel!
Dare to stand alone!
Dare to have a purpose firm!
Dare to make it known.

God help us in faith to take our stand for God!