

Daniel 6:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

Analysis

The king's cry combines hope and despair: 'O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?' The address 'servant of the living God' shows theological development—Darius now distinguishes the 'living' God from lifeless idols. The question 'is thy God...able' could mean either doubt or hope that the answer is yes. The repetition of 'continually' (cf. v. 16) again emphasizes Daniel's consistent faithfulness. This question represents humanity's universal longing—is God truly powerful to save in impossible circumstances?

Historical Context

The designation 'living God' appears throughout Scripture contrasting Yahweh with lifeless idols (Jeremiah 10:10; 1 Thessalonians 1:9). Ancient Near Eastern polytheism featured gods with limited power over specific domains. Darius's question addresses whether Daniel's God has power over physical nature (lions) and political structures (irrevocable law). The theology is progressing—from 'most high God' (v. 16) to 'living God,' showing deeper understanding through witnessing Daniel's faith and coming deliverance.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the crisis of impossible circumstances force the fundamental question: is God really able to save?
2. What does the progression in Darius's theological language teach about how witnessing faithfulness educates observers about God's character?

Interlinear Text

וְכֵן	אָמַר	לְדָנִי־אֵל	עַם	מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהִים	לְמֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהִים	לְעֹלָם וָעֶד	חַיִּים:
Then	Daniel	unto	O king	said	O king	for ever	live
H116	H1841	H5974	H4430	H4449	H4430	H5957	H2418

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 2:4 (Kingdom): Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation.

Daniel 6:6 (Kingdom): Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever.