

Daniel 6:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

King Darius's decree represents remarkable theological testimony from a pagan ruler. The phrase "I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel" demonstrates how God's deliverance of Daniel influenced imperial policy throughout the Medo-Persian Empire. The command to "tremble and fear" (dahlin uzain, ܕܠܝܢ ܐܝܬܝܢ) uses emphatic Aramaic terms for reverential awe and holy fear, appropriate responses to encountering the living God.

The titles ascribed to God reveal deep theological insight for a pagan: "the living God" (Elaha chayya, ܐܠܗܐ ܚܝܝܐ) contrasts Yahweh with lifeless idols worshiped throughout the empire; "stedfast for ever" affirms God's unchanging nature and eternal existence; "his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" echoes Daniel 2:44 and 4:34, acknowledging divine sovereignty over earthly empires; "his dominion shall be even unto the end" confesses God's rule extends throughout time until history's consummation.

This decree fulfilled God's purpose in Daniel's ordeal—not merely personal vindication but imperial testimony to God's supremacy. One man's faithfulness resulted in empire-wide proclamation of Yahweh's sovereignty, demonstrating how

individual obedience advances God's kingdom purposes beyond personal blessing. This points to Christ's faithful obedience, which secured salvation for multitudes and will ultimately result in every knee bowing and every tongue confessing His lordship (Philippians 2:10-11).

Historical Context

Darius's decree (circa 538 BC) provided legal recognition of Yahweh's supremacy throughout the Persian Empire, creating favorable conditions for Jewish religious practice during exile. This decree, combined with Cyrus's earlier edict allowing Jewish return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-4), demonstrated how God sovereignly used pagan rulers to accomplish His purposes for His people. The Persian policy of religious tolerance, when combined with supernatural demonstrations like Daniel's deliverance, advanced knowledge of Yahweh throughout the ancient world.

Archaeological evidence reveals that Persian kings sometimes issued decrees honoring foreign deities, particularly when impressed by miraculous demonstrations. The Cyrus Cylinder shows similar religious tolerance. Darius's decree represents divine orchestration—using Daniel's faithfulness and miraculous deliverance to create legal protection and testimony platform for Jewish communities throughout the empire during the exile period.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does God use individual believers' faithfulness in hostile contexts to create broader opportunities for gospel advancement?

2. What does this passage teach about God's sovereignty over human authorities and His ability to influence governmental policies for His kingdom purposes?

Interlinear Text

וְשִׁלְטֹנִי הוּא	בְּכָל	יּוֹם	שֶׁ יַעֲשֶׂה	קְדָמִי	מִן
and his dominion	That in every	I	a decree	make	I
H7985	H3606	H1768	H2942	H7761	H4481
אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵינוּ	מִן	וְדָלִי יִן	זָעִין	לְהֹוֹ	וּמַלְכוּתֵהּ
God	I	and fear		men tremble	and his kingdom
H426	H4481	H1763	H2112	H1934	H4437
וְקָיָם	חַיֵּה	אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵינוּ	הוּא	וְדָלִי יִן	דָּנִי אֵל
and steadfast	for he is the living	God			of Daniel
H7011	H2417	H426	H1932	H1768	H1841
תִּתְחַבֵּל	לֹא	דָּלִי	וּמַלְכוּתֵהּ	לְעֹלָמְךָ	יִן
be destroyed	that which shall not		and his kingdom	for ever	
H2255	H3809	H1768	H4437	H5957	
סוֹפָא:	עַד	וְשִׁלְטֹנִי הוּא			
the end	shall be even unto	and his dominion			
H5491	H5705	H7985			

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 4:34 (Kingdom): And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:

Luke 1:33 (Kingdom): And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Psalms 2:11 (Parallel theme): Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Psalms 29:10 (Kingdom): The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever.

Daniel 2:44 (Kingdom): And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Daniel 3:29 (References God): Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

Daniel 4:3 (Kingdom): How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.

Daniel 7:14 (Kingdom): And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Jeremiah 10:10 (Kingdom): But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

Romans 9:26 (References God): And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.