

# Daniel 6:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

## Analysis

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The conspirators' request—"establish the decree, and sign the writing"—uses emphatic language demanding immediate royal action. The phrase "that it be not changed" appeals to "the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not," referencing the famous irrevocability of Persian royal decrees (cf. Esther 8:8). This legal principle, designed to uphold royal authority, becomes a trap binding the king to enforce a law he will desperately wish to revoke.

The Aramaic *di la tishne* (לֹא יִשְׁתַּנֵּה, "which altereth not") emphasizes absolute unchangeability. Once signed, the decree becomes permanent regardless of changed circumstances or the king's wishes. The conspirators weaponize this legal tradition, creating a situation where the king's word condemns his most valued servant and the king cannot undo his action. This demonstrates how legal rigidity, while protecting against arbitrary rule, can enable injustice when manipulated by the wicked.

This irrevocable decree parallels divine law—God's word does not change and His decrees stand eternally (Psalm 119:89, Isaiah 40:8). Yet unlike human law manipulated for evil, God's unchangeable word serves perfect justice and mercy. The law's curse for sin stood irrevocable until Christ fulfilled it completely, satisfying justice while extending mercy (Romans 8:3-4). Believers rest in God's unchangeable promises (Hebrews 6:17-18) while navigating human legal systems that may be corrupted against righteousness.

## Historical Context

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The irrevocability of Medo-Persian law was proverbial in the ancient world (referenced in Esther 1:19, 8:8). This legal principle reflected the belief that royal authority depended on the unchangeable nature of the king's word—if decrees could be revoked, royal power would appear weak and unstable. Persian kings were considered semi-divine, making their pronouncements sacred and permanent.

This legal tradition, while intended to establish stable governance and prevent arbitrary rule, created vulnerability when rulers were manipulated into hasty decrees. The conspirators exploited this weakness, using the very mechanism designed to protect subjects against capricious authority to destroy an innocent man through legal procedure.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. How does the irrevocability of Persian law illustrate both the value of unchangeable standards and the danger when rigid systems are manipulated for evil?
2. What comfort does God's unchangeable word provide compared to human legal systems that may be corrupted against righteousness?
3. How does Christ's fulfillment of the law's unchangeable requirements demonstrate God's perfect balance of justice and mercy?

## Interlinear Text

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לֹא אֶדָּי כִּתְבָּא וְתִרְשָׁם אֶסְכֶּרְיָא תִּקְיָם מֶלֶכָּא כְּעַן |  
Now O king establish the decree and sign the writing H1768 not  
H3705 H4430 H6966 H633 H7560 H3792 H3809

לֹא אֶדָּי וּפְרִס מִדֵּי כִתְבָּא לְהִשְׁבִּיחַ  
changed according to the law of the Medes and Persians H1768 not  
H8133 H1882 H4076 H6540 H3809

תִּשְׁבֹּדָא:  
which altereth  
H5709

## Additional Cross-References

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**Daniel 6:15** (Kingdom): Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

**Esther 1:19** (Kingdom): If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered, That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she.

**Isaiah 10:1** (Parallel theme): Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;

**Daniel 6:12** (Kingdom): Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, 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 altereth not.

**Esther 8:10** (Kingdom): And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus' name, and sealed it with the king's ring, and sent letters by posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries:

**Esther 3:12** (Kingdom): Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.

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