

DON'T OPPOSE GOD'S PEOPLE DOING GOD'S WORK

Ezra 6:1-12

Darius the Great is also known as Darius Hystaspis or Darius, son of Hystaspis. He reigned over Persia from 521 – 485 B.C as one of the most able Persians kings. Darius continued Cyrus the Great's policy of restoring the Jewish people to their homeland. In 520 B.C., Darius's second year as King, the Jews resumed work on the still-unfinished temple in Jerusalem. Darius assisted by ordering the project to continue, even granting a generous subsidy to help revive temple worship. The temple was completed in 516 B.C., in the sixth year of Darius's reign.

- I. The Decree of Darius – Verses 1-12
 - A. The original decree of Cyrus – Verses 1-5
 1. Yes, Cyrus said they may build the temple (vv. 1-3).
 2. The cost is to be paid from the royal treasury (v. 4).
 3. Nebuchadnezzar took and now Cyrus and Darius return temple utensils (v. 5).
 4. Verse 2 – The efficient Persian government kept its records on scrolls of papyrus or leather at Ecbatana, on the road between Baghdad to Teheran. It was a city at 6,000 feet elevation, with a climate conducive to the preservation of scrolls.
 5. Verses 3-5 – These added details, appropriate to the official memorandum, were not included in the public proclamation of 1:2-4.
 - B. The specific instructions to the tattletales – Verses 6-7
 1. Keep away from the building sight.
 2. Leave this work on the house of God alone.
 3. Let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site.
 4. You pay for it out of the taxes you raise. You are taking a pay cut. Do so without delay.
 - C. The decree of Darius
 1. Whatever the priests in Jerusalem request that they may offer acceptable sacrifices to the God of Heaven and pray for the life of the king and his sons is to be given to them daily without fail (vv. 9-10).
 2. Any man who violates this edict shall be impaled on lumber from his own house and his house shall be made a refuse heap.
 3. May the God who has caused His name to dwell there overthrow any king of people who attempts to change it, so as to destroy this house of God in Jerusalem.
 4. I, Darius, have issued this decree, let it be carried out with all diligence!
 5. The temple was completed four years later.
 - D. Tattenai, Shethar-bozenai, their colleagues, and the officials of the provinces beyond the River should have left things well enough alone. The Darius ruling was worse on them and better for the Jews than that given by Cyrus.
 - E. Don't oppose God's people doing His work. His work will accomplish what He desires. His people will prosper. It will not end well for you.

Absalom

1. Killed his brother Amnon for raping his sister Tamar
2. Burned Joab's field because he did not get an audience with David
3. Stole the kingdom from David
4. Hung by his own hair in a tree and was executed against David's orders for killing Joab's brother
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Shimei

1. Threw stones and mocked David as he fled from Absalom
2. Begged for mercy upon David's return and Absalom's death
3. Solomon executed him for failing to obey terms of the stay of execution.
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Haman

1. Filled with pride; wanted to be elevated by King Ahasuerus
2. Was so envious of Mordecai that he ordered all the Jews executed
3. Fell on the bed of queen Esther begging for mercy. Ahasuerus walks in.
4. Hung on the gallows he built for Mordecai
5. "Now King Ahasuerus laid a tribute on the land and on the coastlands of the sea. And all the accomplishments of his authority and strength and the full account of the greatness of Mordecai, to which the king advanced him are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Persia? For Mordecai the Jew was second only to King Ahasuerus and great among the Jews and in favor with the multitude of his kinsmen, one who sought the good of his people and one who spoke for the welfare of his whole nation.
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Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego

1. Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated (Daniel 3:19).
2. The Lord walked with them in the furnace.
3. In humility Nebuchadnezzar had to admit God defeated him and later in pride Nebuchadnezzar lived for 7 years as an animal.
4. "Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to prosper in the province of Babylon" (Daniel 3:30).
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Daniel

1. The Position of Daniel (6:1-3) – "Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom" (Daniel 6:3).
2. The Plot against Daniel (6:4-9)

3. The Prayer of Daniel (6:10-11) –
 “Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously. Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God.”
4. The Prosecution of Daniel (6:12-17)
5. The Protection of Daniel (6:18-23)
6. The Promotion of Daniel (6:23-28)
 - a. “Then the king was very pleased and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. Then the king gave orders, and they brought those men who had maliciously accused Daniel, and they cast them, their children, and their wives into the lion’s den; and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones” (vv. 23-24).
 - b. “So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian” (Daniel 6:28).
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Sanhedrin

1. They opposed Christ because He was a threat to their way of life.
2. He performed miracle after miracle.
3. They plotted His death – all part of the Divine plan.
4. Christ rose again after three days and walked around for 40 days so there were many eyewitnesses to the resurrection and then ascended.
5. The more they tried to stop Christianity, the faster it spread.
 - a. Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: If we this day are judged for a good deed *done* to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:8-12).
 - b. In Thessalonica it was said of the Pauline team, “They have turned the whole world upside down.”
6. Don’t oppose God’s people doing His work. His work will accomplish what He desires. His people will prosper. It will not end well for you.

We do not have time to talk of John the apostle who they boiled in oil and banished to a penal colony only to author the gospel declaring the deity of Christ and the Revelation of Christ. The overcomers in the seven churches. The two witnesses and the 144,000 who cannot be stopped until God says so. Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet cast into the lake of fire and a host of others. Don’t oppose God’s people doing His work. His work will accomplish what He desires. His people will prosper. It will not end well with you.

What is the message today? Don't oppose God's people doing His work. His work will accomplish what He desires. His people will prosper. It will not end well for you.