



**From Individual to Corporate Worship:  
A Narrative Study of Daniel 6**

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## ABSTRACT

Though several themes are argued from the narrative of Daniel 6, this article analyses the passage through narrative analysis to unearth the theme of worship. This narrative study reveals worship as a central theme in Daniel 6, which should not be relegated to other theological values in Daniel. True worship practiced by an individual progress to a corporate stage where all citizens come to render their sincere worship to God. Through genuine worship Daniel seems to be identified as God's faithful servant. The narrator shows Daniel as God's servant, who serves Him persistently. While in exile, God's steward is identified as a servant who holds on to his faith and worship Him no matter the consequences.

## Introduction

The book of Daniel is a challenging OT book.<sup>1</sup> It has faced many criticisms from scholars.<sup>2</sup> Yet the book has themes that shape the

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<sup>1</sup> The book of Daniel falls under the writings of the Jewish canon. Perhaps Daniel was originally among the prophets, but was moved to the Writings because (a) Christians used it to support the messiahship of Jesus; (b) it played a role in the first and second revolts of the Jews against the Romans. It was downgraded by a rabbinical curse: anyone who used the book to calculate the time of the end was cursed (b. Sanh 97b). The LXX, however, places Daniel among the Prophets, so do Josephus and a Hebrew-Aramaic codex dating to the 2nd century AD. Also this study accepts Daniel, the prophet, as the author of the book of Daniel which is a 6th century BC document.

<sup>2</sup> Bracy V. Hill argues that “Daniel is a complex book with rich history of Christian interpretation.” Bracy V. Hill II, “Apocalyptic Lollards? The Conservative Use of the Book of Daniel in the English Wycliffite Sermons,” *Church History and Religious Culture* 90, no. 1 (2010): 4. Nathan Moskowitz also posits “that many people have scratched their heads proffering wild and colourful interpretations in this book, losing sight of its original historical context.” Nathan Moskowitz, “The Book of Daniel, Part 1, A Theological-

understanding of God's work in history. The book has two literary genres: historical narrative and apocalypse. Most scholars consider the entire book as an apocalyptic prophecy.<sup>3</sup> While studies in the book have long centered upon exegetical and prophetic studies,<sup>4</sup> analysis of the narrative has not been fully explored. This study focuses on the narrative analysis of Daniel 6 by bringing out the significance of the narrative.

While most debates in the scholarly circles in the book of Daniel has long centered on authorship as well as the date of composition,<sup>5</sup> “it remains a perplexing phenomenon that the theological insights into the book of Daniel have not increased proportionately”<sup>6</sup> in the treatment of the book. This development has led Brevard S. Childs to question,

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Political Tractate Addressed to Judaen Hasidim Under Seleucid-Greek Rule,” *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (2010): 98.

<sup>3</sup> John F. Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 2008), 13; George A. Keough, *Let Daniel Speak* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1986), 12; Albert M. Wolters, review of *Daniel's Spiel: Apocalyptic Literary in the Book of Daniel* by Jin Hee Han, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 71, no. 3 (2009): 609-610; John J. Collins, *Daniel: With an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, *The Forms of the Old Testament Literature* 20 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), 33; Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary*, *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* 23 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1978), 13.

<sup>4</sup> Also a major discussion in the OT including the book of Daniel has centered mainly in diachronic source criticism as well as the more recent synchronic criticism. See J. Paul Tanner, “The Literary Structure of the Book of Daniel,” *BibSac* 160, no. 629 (Jul-Sep 2003): 269; Gerhard F. Hasel, “Establishing a Date for the Book of Daniel,” in *Symposium on Daniel*, *Daniel and Revelation Committee Series*, vol. 2 (Washington DC: Review & Herald, 1986), 84-91.

<sup>5</sup> J. Benton White, *Taking the Bible Seriously* (Louisville, KY: Westminster, 1993), 116; J. Paul Tanner, “The Literary Structure of the Book of Daniel,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 160, no. 639 (2003): 269; Gerhard F. Hasel, “Establishing a Date for the Book of Daniel,” in *Symposium on Daniel*, *Daniel and Revelation Committee Series* 2 (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1986), 84-91.

<sup>6</sup> Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1979), 613, quoted in John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, *Word Biblical Commentary* 30 (Dallas, TX: Word, 1989), xxxix.

“Could it be that an important dimension of the book has been overlooked?”<sup>7</sup> as this relates to the issues of the theology espoused in it. However, a careful look at the book of Daniel shows a widespread of several “intertwining theological, prophetic, and eschatological-apocalyptic themes”<sup>8</sup> which has to do with the daily devotional and religious well-being of the reader. This calls for a closer examination to bring out the prevailing theological issues in the book.

In the OT, worship has been one of the most important theological interest, and the book of Daniel is not an exception to this. However, as most of the scholarly discussions on worship as a theological topic has centered on other books, in the book of Daniel this theme has not received its due.

Worship “plays a crucial role in the unfolding drama of God's people. There is an intense battle between true and false worship presented in this apocalyptic document.”<sup>9</sup> Jiri Moskala posits that the issue of worship is “brought up in different stories describing events that happened in the Babylonian and Medo-Persian empires, and is mentioned as well as one of the main problems during the time of the dominancy of the little horn and at the end of the world history.”<sup>10</sup> There are a variety of texts that bear witness to worship in the book of Daniel (cf. 3:12, 14, 17, 18, 28; 6:16, 20 [MT]; 6:17, 21; 7:14, 27). The subject of worship is seen as the pivot to which the fight of God and Satan hinges on.<sup>11</sup> The issue is what the whole struggle for dominance of the world

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Gerhard F. Hasel, “The ‘Little Horn,’ the Saints and the Sanctuary in Daniel 8,” in *The Sanctuary and the Atonement*, ed. Arnold V. Wallenkampf and W. Richard Leshar (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Institute, 1981), 177.

<sup>9</sup> Jiri Moskala, “Worship in the Book of Daniel,” in *Encountering God in Life and Mission*, ed. Rudi Maier (Berrien Springs, MI: Dept. of World Mission, Andrews University, 2010), 20.

<sup>10</sup> Moskala, “Worship,” 20.

<sup>11</sup> Genesis 4:3-5; 8:20, 21; Jeremiah 17:12; and Job 38:7 point out that the idea about/of worship in the world can be seen as of the same age with man's creation. Richard M. Davidson emphasizes this notion also and stresses that the Great Controversy is centered on worship. See Richard M. Davidson, “Cosmic Metanarrative for the Coming Millennium,” *Journal of Adventist Theological Studies* 11, nos. 1-2 (2000): 102-119.

dwells on rising up to its climax in world history (cf. Rev 13-17).<sup>12</sup> As worship has to do with sincere lifestyle relationship with the Creator, a true affiliation with Him is envisaged.<sup>13</sup> At the interplay of true and false worship which is revolving in and around the book of Daniel, worship to the object of proper worship, God is deemed justly suitable. This justifies a comprehensive look at how the narrative of Daniel 6 project the theme of worship for a common theological insight that pervades the book. This paper studies the subject matter in Daniel 6 at this point using narrative analysis.

## The Narrative Analysis

The analysis of the narrative will include discussions about the plot, the settings, the props, the characters, the actions, analepsis/prolepsis of the narrative together with its relation to the theme of worship. However, in some cases, the discussions will overlap and those features that are discussed prior to its headings will not be repeated.

### Plot

The narrative encompasses the whole chapter and it centralizes on worship.<sup>14</sup> In the plot, a problem arises when Darius planned to set Daniel

<sup>12</sup> Jon Paulien, *What the Bible Says About the End-Time* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1994), 122; Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2002), 421-424.

<sup>13</sup> See Isaiah 1:11-17; 58:3-14; Amos 5:12-15, 21-24; Micah 6:6-8; Zechariah 7:3, 8-10; 8:16-18. See also Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: From Cranmer to Hooker, 1534-1603*, vol. 1 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970); Andrew E. Hill, *Enter His Courts With Praise: Old Testament Worship for the New Testament Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1996); Ralph P. Martin, *Worship in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975); David Peterson, *Engaging With God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992); Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old & New: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994); Paul Bradshaw, ed., *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 2002); John Jefferson Davis, *Worship and the Reality of God: An Evangelical Theology of Real Presence* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> Although some scholars argues for other themes. For example John Barton,

above the other administrators and satraps (v. 3). Due to the intentions of Darius towards Daniel (v. 3), the other administrators and satraps see their positions shaking. This presents a narrative problem for the administrators and satraps that needs to be solved. They plan to find charges against Daniel (v. 4). They want to eliminate Daniel. This is the development of the plot which is progressing in deepening the problem. The administrators and satraps deceive Darius to sign a decree to prevent worshipping and praying to any other being except him.

The plot reaches a crisis that can be seen as the crucial epochal event or central conversation about the problem in v. 10. Daniel prays to his God facing west towards Jerusalem. This action by Daniel is seen as disobedience to the decree of Darius. The action of Daniel praying can be seen as the central and most memorable part of the narrative, as it contradicts the edict of Darius (cf. vv. 7-8).

A complication then opens another problem in the narrative in v. 16. Daniel is thrown into the Lion's den on the charge that he had prayed to his God. In the narrative the plot comes to a resolution when Daniel is rescued by God and God is worshipped in the kingdom (vv. 21, 26-27). The other administrators and satraps together with their family are cast into the lion's den (v. 24). They are overpowered by the lions even before they get to the bottom of the den. The resolution also presents a call to worship the living God. The problem and the resolution are central in the narrative and it is mainly about the worship of God.

The plot serves as a source of inspiration and comfort for the original as well as the modern readers of the narrative who find answers to the quest for their faith as to whom to worship. The king who is to be worshipped now calls on his subjects to rather direct their prayers and worship to the God of Daniel. Darius acknowledges that his supremacy is limited. The pattern of the narrative plot is what Resseguie called a U-

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"Theological Ethics in Daniel," in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, vol. 2, ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2001), 666-669, in summarizing, considers 'submission to God' as the theological ethic of the book of Daniel. Barton seems to limit the submission to God to Jews in the face of crisis.

Shaped plot (comic plot).<sup>15</sup> The narrative begins with the notion of authority and power vested into Darius who cannot use this authority to deliver Daniel because he is limited with the authority vested in him. He then acknowledges that there is a God who cannot be limited by His authority and power but uses His power to deliver those who are faithful to him. And in vv. 6-9 special powers and privileges are given to Darius to be a deity through a decree and the requirement of the decree are given, which is followed by the endeavor of the citizenry to meet the requirement. In v. 10, the readers find that it is hard for Daniel to obey the decree to worship man rather than God. He chooses to worship God instead. The only God, whom he loved, is to be disregarded. This marks the beginning of the down turn.

The verses that follow (vv. 12-16) are falling actions, where the administrators and satraps report all the actions of Daniel and pressed on Darius to execute him. The bottom of the U of the narrative is found in vv. 21-23, where Daniel finally is delivered from the hands of the lions in the den, pulled out of the den, and Darius orders the execution of the plotters. Darius greatly astonished by the great deliverance of Daniel, and how humanly with all his power could not stop him from performing that act. He wholeheartedly acknowledges and thereby issue a decree to the effect of how powerful and mighty God is. At this very point, the resolution of the plot is reached with the intervention from the God of Daniel, which is found in v. 22 onwards. And finally, in v. 26-27 the people are called to worship and exalt God with Darius leading in the exaltation of God. Regalado observes that:

The [is] progression of the nature of the decree—from [Darius] initial decree to pray (a[B] solely to him alone for thirty days to his second edict “to fear and tremble” (!y*liêx*]d'äw> !y[ia]z") before the living God of Daniel. Another progressive movement in the decree is also apparent in terms of the object of worship. The object of worship and reverence in the first decree was Darius,

<sup>15</sup> Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 205.

while in the second it was God. The level of progression is clear: from human as the object of worship to God. It is noticeable that the direction of the progression in [Daniel 6] is toward God.<sup>16</sup>

It can be deduced from the narrative that the king's testimony about Daniel, who serves God continually suggests that for Daniel worship is due to only the God of Israel and that all prayers should be directed to Him. The narrative has a simple and direct plot, and with the use of suspense and surprise the narrator keeps the readers into the narrative. The narrative has a happy ending.

### ***Setting***

A story setting is said to be “the background against which the narrative action takes place.”<sup>17</sup> The settings of Daniel 6 are numerous and diverse, and are real. The striking features of the spatial, temporal, and sphere background is their specificity to the narrative. The locale and times in the story are clearly pinpointed. The events occurred in a specific geographical region with emphasis on the palace of Darius and the lion's den. These setting contribute to appreciating the character traits of the characters and the development of the plot. The settings of the narrative are analyzed in the order of the spatial setting (i.e., palace, lion's den, house, upper room, and Jerusalem), the temporal setting (i.e., 30 days, three times, until sundown, night, and first light of the dawn), and the religio-cultural (sphere) setting (i.e., Medo-Persians, king, satraps, administrators, children, wives, God, and angel).

### ***The Spatial Settings***

Spatial settings play a central and crucial role in the theme of worship in

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<sup>16</sup> Ferdinand O. Regalado, “Progressions in the Book of Daniel,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 20, nos. 1-2 (2009): 61.

<sup>17</sup> Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 87. See also William Harmon and C. Hugh Holman, *A Handbook to Literature*, 8th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999), 417.



Daniel 6. In the narrative, certain spatial settings give information about the place of the event to the readers. Some spatial settings inform the readers about the events that happen around the palace of Darius, and some explain the scene that took place in the residence of Daniel. Another set of spatial settings describe the effects of disobedience to a decree and conspiracy against a fellow.

In the spatial settings that give information about the place of the event to the readers, there is a spatial pattern where the setting develops from uncertainty to certainty. While the reader does not find explicit details about the place of Darius when he plans to appoint administrator and satraps, the reader could imagine the palace as the place. The reader finds that Darius is to set them stationed over the realm (v. 1). And since kings mostly operate and make decisions in their palace, the spatial setting of the palace fits in this regard though reference to palace in the narrative is made in v. 18. The palace is where Darius “spent the night fasting . . . and he could not sleep” (v.18). The phrase *על-מלכא* (vv. 6, 12 & 15) serves as a location spatially in the narrative. It can be noted that while the narrator does not mention the place where Darius decided to appoint the administrators and satraps, he is specific in telling his readers that when the administrators and satraps wanted to find charges against Daniel, they went together *על-מלכא* (v. 6), then when the administrators and satraps find Daniel praying to his God they go together *על-מלכא* (v. 12), and when Darius wants to rescue Daniel from being thrown to the lion's den, the administrators and satraps go *על-מלכא* (v. 15) . This progression *על-מלכא* places the story in a spatial locale of the palace which highlights the power and authority seat of this kingdom.

Another important spatial setting emphasized by the narrator is the *בגב אריונתא* with seven references (vv. 7, 12, 16, 17, 19, 23, 24). The narrator uses it as a means of qualifying the authenticity of the place or location where Daniel and later the administrators and satraps are placed. After Daniel disobeyed the king's decree, the narrator tells the reader that the concluding remark specifically comes from the king that Daniel be thrown *לגב אריונתא*.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> The den of lions was probably an underground pit with perpendicular walls

The narrator seems to identify the experience of Daniel and the humiliation of the other administrators and satraps with that of the implied readers. Just as Daniel, they are also led by the God of Daniel towards the belief and assurance of being faithful to Him, at the cost of their lives even לְגַב אֲרִי־נֹתָא. While the administrators and satraps know that they are getting Daniel to be eliminated by casting him לְגַב אֲרִי־נֹתָא, they did not have specific knowledge of the God who rescues His people from danger and glorify Himself through such occasions. This narrative will be a comfort and a source of inspiration, to the reader, in the pursuance and quest to stand for the Lord and to dedicate time to prayer and worship.

לְגַב אֲרִי־נֹתָא is seen as monuments. The reference to it seven times (vv. 7, 12, 16, 17, 19, 23, 24) is for a particular emphasis. Daniel considers himself safe in a den that serves as refuge place for him from the evil fellows. It also serves as a death den for the evil fellows of Daniel.

The spatial settings that involved the disobedience of Daniel to the decree of Darius are very comprehensive. The settings include “the house” (v. 10), “the upper room” (v. 10), and “Jerusalem” (v. 10). These descriptions are historical, as one can really attest to the fact that the reason of Daniel's facing Jerusalem while praying was due to his believe in the dwelling temple of Israel's God among his people.<sup>19</sup> The temple built and dedicated by Solomon was in Jerusalem and per the belief of the people of Israel, it was a place of prayer and worship.<sup>20</sup> The implication here is that the reader should always call on the Lord of Israel. The narrator highlights at this scene, as no one can see Daniel praying in the upper room of his house unless the windows are open facing toward

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and an opening at the top. The condemned were lowered or thrown into it from above. For full discussion on the lion's den see John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 30 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1989), 128; Zdravko Stefanovic, *Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise*, Commentary on the Book of Daniel (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2007), 211.

<sup>19</sup> Ernest C. Lucas, *Daniel*, AOTC 20 (Leicester, UK: Apollos, 2002), 150-151; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 129.

<sup>20</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 129; Lucas, *Daniel*, 150-151.

Jerusalem. This is an implication that his conspirators will really be having a tough time in detecting him praying. The settings here enhanced the strength of the conspirators' plot and impress upon the readers the crucial role of the conspirers in catching Daniel praying.

The narrator uses four spatial setting of enclosed places (i.e., palace, lion's den, house, and upper room), with one of the spatial setting having its enclosure destroyed and in ruins (i.e., Jerusalem). Daniel prays from an enclosed place but faces unenclosed place. The narrator's use of the spatial setting here brings significance to the narrative. It enhanced the vitality of the character Daniel and impresses upon the readers the crucial role of prayer and worship.

The reference to Jerusalem<sup>21</sup> in the narrative's spatial setting is significant to note. Daniel opening the windows in the upper room toward Jerusalem to pray is symbolic. Jerusalem is where the temple of God stands and Daniel probably used to worship and pray in Jerusalem. It was a place of refuge for him. Though in captivity, he seeks refuge from Jerusalem - the holy land.

Another spatial setting used in the narrative is palace. Darius operates from the palace in his quest to be worshipped and prayed to. Palace signifies kingship and authority. Darius is shown as a king who is having power and authority even over the entire realm and kingdom. Moving out of the palace to the lion's den at "the first light of dawn" probably can be interpreted as the king relinquishing his authority and power to a more supreme powerful being, the God of Daniel.

### *The Temporal Settings*

The primary setting of Daniel 6 is time-based (cf. *30 days* [יֹמֵי תְלָתִיּוֹן], vv. 7, 12). Though it do not mark the beginning of the narrative, it is significant in the story. It is repeated twice (vv. 7, 12). It serves as a connection between a period of strict worship imposed on the citizens of Medo-Persia due to a plot to oust Daniel. After the administrators and

<sup>21</sup> Solomon had taught the Jews to pray to the Lord facing Jerusalem (2 Chron 6:21, 34-39; cf. Pss 5:7). See Lucas, *Daniel*, 151; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 129.

satraps giving a worship proposal to Darius, he accepts and signs it into a decree (v. 7). They reiterate to Darius the decree he signed was for *יוֹמָיו תְּלָתַיִן* (v. 12). Stressing on the *יוֹמָיו תְּלָתַיִן* was to tell Darius that the days set for his worship is still in place and has not elapsed. The repetition of the entire verse is a way emphasizing the worship element to Darius. The narrator is bringing out a motif. This motif is seen to be giving the narrative a formal coherence which affirms the authority of the king, Darius to be worshiped.

In vv. 10 and 13, another temporal setting *שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים* (*three times*) is used by the narrator. This is use to show the number of times Daniel prayed to his God in a day. It is after these *שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים* of prayer that the administrators and satraps approach the king to report the actions of Daniel. Again *שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים* is repeated twice in the narrative. This stresses on a motif that the narrator wants his readers to be aware of. The motif can be seen as prominent in prayer and worship. Praying *שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים* will not be significant, but Daniel's act of praying qualifies as a motif because of the narrative context. The re-emphasizing pattern of praying *שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים* in Daniel's upper room and in the court of Darius occurs in a context of decisiveness to get rid of Daniel. The narrator pinpoint through the temporal settings with respect to time (30 days and three times) is employed in the narrative to indicate the particular time frame that the decree was to be in place and enforced, and the number of times Daniel prayed in a day.<sup>22</sup> Resseguie posits that “a series of three may indicate that an action is complete, finished and there may be the intensification of the action in its occurrences and the series reaching a

<sup>22</sup> According to Jewish tradition, the custom of praying three times a day originated with the patriarchs: Abraham instituted the prayer in the morning, Isaac the afternoon prayer, and Jacob the evening prayer (m. Ber 4; b. Ber 26b, 31a). Also foundational for Jewish prayer were the daily prayers in the home (esp. grace after meals) and the frequent spontaneous prayers of the individual. There were three hours of Prayers: Sunrise (around 6:00 am or the 1st hour), Nine in the morning (the 3rd hour), Three in the afternoon (9th hour). See David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1996), 5:449.

climax.”<sup>23</sup> The narrator's reference to the prayer of Daniel *וַיִּתְּחַן דָּנִיֵּאל* is stressing the completeness and finality of Daniel triumph over his adversary. The temptation of Daniel builds to a climax towards his dedication and commitment to his God: the worship of the living God.

A temporal setting “night” and “first light of the dawn” underscores the relentless and unceasing torment of Darius. The temporal settings in vv. 16-23 are at the very uncertainty in the narrative. The phrase “the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting” (v. 18) has the sense of uncertainty. This phrase in the story tells the reader the king is disturbed and in a state of worry after he had “made every effort until sundown” (v. 14) to deliver Daniel. The narrator's comment “no diversions were brought to him, and could not sleep” (v. 18) is an indication of the condition of the king that night. The narrator's use of “at the first light of dawn” shows the time the king hurried to the lion's den as well as the king's quest to resolve his uncertainty about the state of Daniel and to do away with his doubts. The narrator emphasizes the temporal settings places the narrative is a sphere of time and its significant relation to worship.

### **The Religio-cultural (Sphere) Settings**

The religio-cultural settings are related to personality who are either divine or human. “Medo-Persians,” “King,” “satraps,” “administrators,” “noble,” “Cyrus the Persian,” and “children and wives” are related to human personalities. “God” and “angel” are related to divine personalities in the sphere settings. These two groups are related to authority and worship. The reader can conclude that it is a favourable place to look for spiritual insights and encouragement, and to ascertain who has authority and worthy of worshipped.

The divine personalities-God (*יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ* in vv. 10, 16, 20, 22, 23, 26) and the angel of the Lord (*מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה* in v. 22)-play significant role in accenting the narrative's theme of worship. There is a development in

<sup>23</sup> Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 49.

addressing the deity in the narrative. Darius who had authority and power cannot use his authority to rescue Daniel. He had to surrender his authority to the supreme person with authority, the God of Daniel, to rescue Daniel. The angel of the Lord then came into the scene in v. 22 and Daniel testifies that He shuts the mouth of the lions as an act of confirmation that those who are faithful to God, He protects them from the evil one. However, in vv. 26-27 the narrator adds that Darius does not withhold his worship to God, as well as the citizens. He indicates that worship and prayers be directed to the God of Daniel because He deserves it. It was a realization that his (Darius) authority is limited and he does not deserve the worship of man.

The second group is the human personalities. They are bonded by the law of the Medes and Persian which they cunningly made Darius to sign. They are part of the worship that Darius renders to the Lord. In their quest to get rid of Daniel, they give authority to Darius and make him the person to be worshipped. However, that authority landed them in the lion's den and to their death.

### *Props*

Several props are used by the narrator in the narrative which includes window (v. 10), stone (v. 17), mouth of the den (v. 17), signet ring (v.17), decree (vv.7, 12, 15, 26), lions' mouth (v. 21), and bones (v. 24). A relationship can be drawn between the props and the characters which make the narrative interesting. The window, angel, mouth of the den, and stone are associated with Daniel. The signet ring and decree are also associated with Darius. The lions and bones are associated with the administrators and satraps. The window is shown by the narrator as what Daniel opens before he offers his prayers to God. The administrators and satraps find Daniel praying through this window.

The stone was placed over the mouth of the lion's den to ensure no escape for the offender thrown inside. In the life of the people of Israel placing a stone over an opening denotes several activities according to the situation of the time. However, it was mainly used to cover the opening of tombs. As in the case of Jesus Christ a stone was placed at the mouth of the tomb in which his dead body was placed (Matt. 27:65, 66). Also, Jesus ordered for the stone of the tomb of Lazarus to be rolled away

(cf. John 11:38, 39). The stone usage in the narrative was to secure the lion's den so that nobody to rescue Daniel from the destruction of the lions. However, as Jesus came out of the secured tomb victorious, as the faithful servant of God Daniel have his deliverance from the lions.

The signet ring<sup>24</sup> is what the king and his nobles use to seal the *opening* to the lion's den. Using the signet seal turns to close people's doubtful mind. "The stone closing the month of the lion's den or pit was sealed in some way to ensure that it could not be tampered with in the night."<sup>25</sup> The narrator stresses that it was sealed "so that nothing to Daniel could be changed" or the king finds a means to draw him up out of the lion's den (v. 17).

According to Van Der Toorn, "To prevent Daniel from escaping, the mouth of the pit was covered with a stone sealed with the signet of th king and the signet of his lords. Daniel seemed to be doomed."<sup>26</sup> An authority seal (the signet ring) is placed at the mouth *opening* of the lion's den, and the people in authority looks through an *opening* window to see Daniel praying in his upper room. A stone is placed at the *opening* mouth of the den, and *an angel* closed the *opening* mouth of the lions. Those who *pushed* cunningly for a decree to be signed are *pushed* down into the lion's den, and "the lions overpowered them and crush all their 'bones'" (v. 24).

𐎠𐎲𐎠𐎹 the administrators and satraps *pushed* to be signed by Darius leads to Darius signing a new 𐎠𐎲𐎠𐎹. The narrator's use of these props brings the artistry in the narrative. He interplays the props in the narrative to an extent of clarifying the unity of the narrative or text.

### **Characters**

In narratives "the characters and their portrayal are an essential part of the narrative. Narrative analysis not only looks at who is represented in

<sup>24</sup> The royal seals typical of that time were made of chalcedony and featured pictures of a king doing heroic acts (e.g., killing a beast) under the protection of the winged sun disc (representing Ahura Mazda).

<sup>25</sup> Lucas, *Daniel*, 152.

<sup>26</sup> Karel Van Der Toorn, "In the Lions' Den: The Babylonian Background of a Biblical Motif," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 60 (1998): 626-640.

the narrative but how the author presents them.”<sup>27</sup> There are four identifiable characters in the story.<sup>28</sup> The characters are the “dramatis personae,” the persons of the story. Among them, there are those that have the characteristics of being round and dynamic, while there are also others that have flat or static characteristics.<sup>29</sup> The narrator, through a reader elevating method of storytelling, introduced the main characters as Darius, Daniel, and the administrator and satraps. The other character is God who belongs to the background characters.

### *Darius*

It is accepted that in the biblical texts the narrator is reliable and omniscient, accurately reporting events and dialogue and developing character.<sup>30</sup> Eike Mueller argues against this assertion. To him not every narrator is omniscient by default since the narrator's knowledge, intrusion, distance and ideology strongly affects this ascertain. However, from the story the narrator can be seen as omniscient. He sees beyond the physical. The emotional state of Darius and simultaneous actions are reported at the same time. The story opens with the narrator showing that Darius<sup>31</sup> decided to appoint 120 satraps and above them three administrators. Darius as a main character is seen right from the beginning of the narrative. The narrator shows Darius as powerful and a man in charge of affairs with the power to appoint.

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<sup>27</sup> Eike Mueller, “Cleansing the Common: A Narrative-Intertextual Study of Mark 7:1–23” (ThD diss., Andrews University, 2015), 64.

<sup>28</sup> Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 121.

<sup>29</sup> Jerome T. Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative: A Guide to Interpretation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009), 24-27.

<sup>30</sup> Mark Allan Powell, *What Is Narrative Criticism?* Guides to Biblical Scholarship, New Testament Series (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1990), 23-24.

<sup>31</sup> The identity of Darius is debatable in scholarly circles. William H. Shea argues that (1) Darius the Mede referred to the Ugbaru in the Nabonidus chronicle is the general who conquered Babylon as recorded in Daniel 5: 31. (2) Darius was made king – a vassal king, to rule with Cyrus as referred to in Daniel 9:1. (3) Darius appointed the sub-governors after the short departure of Cyrus from Babylon (Daniel 6: 1-2). (4) Daniel's reference to the evening



By contrast, Darius is a round, dynamic character. The narrator uses dialogue, displeased, emotion (spend the night fasting), suspense, dramatic irony, recognition, commanding, and commissioning in showing the reader about Darius. Darius has several traits: he is deceived, powerful, firm, caring, concern, perplexed, and receptive. He is swindled and disconsolate, yet persistent in his quest to set Daniel free. He believes that Daniel is set up and knows that the God of Daniel will save him. He leaves him with these words “may your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you” (v. 16) before Daniel is placed in the lion's den. Darius develops in the narrative. Although he seeks for the release of Daniel, he found Daniel safe in the den. Although he holds onto power and authority, he could not use his power to save Daniel. Although he serves a different god, He comes to worship “the living God,” the God of Daniel. This lively narration makes Darius a more memorable character in Daniel 6.

Through telling, the narrator informs the implied reader that Darius planned to set Daniel over the whole realm (v. 3), He is displeased of the state of Daniel (v. 14), and he set to rescue Daniel (v. 14). Darius also encourages Daniel (v. 16), he seals the lion's den with his signet ring (v. 17), he fast and spends the night sleepless (v. 18). In v. 23, the narrator informs the reader that Darius rejoices over the safety and rescue of Daniel. He issues two orders at that time: for Daniel to be release and for the accusers of Daniel to be thrown into the lion's den (v. 24).

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of Sacrifice (Daniel 9: 21) coincided probably to the night that Darius was assassinated through ingesting poison at the night/evening sacrifice. William H. Shea, “The Search for Darius the Mede (Concluded), or, The Time of the Answer to Daniel's Prayer and the Date of the Death of Darius the Mede,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 12, no. 1 (2001): 97-105. For discussion on the identity of Darius see William H. Shea, “Darius the Mede in His Persian-Babylonian Setting,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 29 (1991): 235-257; William H. Shea, “Nabonidus Chronicle: New Readings and the Identity of Darius the Mede,” *Journal of Adventist Theological Society* 7 (1996): 1-20.

Through showing, Darius has authority. He appoints 120 satraps and three administrators over the satraps (v. 1). He orders for Daniel to be thrown into the lion's den (v. 16). He signs a decree first for him to be worshipped (v. 9) and later for God to be worshipped in the kingdom (vv. 25-26). These shows how powerful Darius is. Darius is also shown as caring, concern, and empathic. He shows concern when Daniel is brought before him and tries to save Daniel (v. 14) and at the first light of dawn he goes to the lion's den (v. 19), and cries in anguish (v. 20). Again, Darius is shown as receptive. He gives audience to the satraps and administrators (vv. 6, 9, & 13) and in his reception to his officials, he is deceived to sign a decree seeking to elevate him into a god to be worshipped. The narrator shows that Darius who defends and sticks to the law of the Medes and Persians (v. 12) is the same person who issues another decree to nullify the earlier one.

There is a contradiction which occurs between what Darius does or expresses and what he implies. Darius signs the decree “as a law of the Medes and Persians” which he knows cannot be changed.<sup>32</sup> To Young, “the action of Darius was both foolish and wicked. What led him to yield to the request of the ministers can only be conjectured, but probably he was greatly influenced by the claim of deity which many of the Persian kings made.”<sup>33</sup> But he “set his mind on rescuing Daniel and makes every effort to deliver him” (v. 14). This shows a sharp disparity between what he signs and what he does. This irony can be seen to play upon the innocence of Darius. Either Darius “is confidently unaware of the possibility of there a point view that invalidates his own, or an ironist pretends not to be aware of it.”<sup>34</sup> This irony heightens the narrator's ideological point of view. The irony accents the misunderstanding and, more important, Darius limited point of view. His hope of redeeming Daniel was dashed with his being thrown in the lion's den, for Darius is

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<sup>32</sup> Stefanovic, *Daniel*, 215.

<sup>33</sup> Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949), 134.

<sup>34</sup> D. C. Muecke, *The Compass of Irony* (London, UK: Methuen, 1969), 20.

not expecting Daniel to be the person to go contrary to the decree he signs. But it is Daniel's casting into the lion's den that makes possible his redemption, and leading to the worship of God in the kingdom. The two decrees from Darius all "leads to worship."<sup>35</sup>

### *God*

The narrative opens with the narrator showing that Daniel prayed to God, "three times a day . . . just as he had done before" (v. 10). The narrator shows Daniel as a prayerful person from the start of the narrative. Daniel directs his worship to God (v. 10). God is seen as a passive character right from the beginning of the narrative.

God is shown as merciful and caring for and towards His faithful ones. He sends His angel to shut the mouth of the lions when Daniel is placed into the lion's den (v. 22). He is a God who does not want His people to suffer from the evil plots of people and therefore rescues anyone who stands for Him and His commandments. He proves to Darius that power and authority is His (vv. 26, 27). He also has the authority to send angel (v. 22). God is shown also as the object to direct our prayers and worship (v. 10). When Daniel is rescued miraculously, He becomes an active character who deserves all the worship of man. John E. Goldingay states that "earthly might asserts its authority in order to acknowledge the power of God; one who rules for a while as king acknowledges one whose kingship is unconstrained by time."<sup>36</sup>

The narrator shows God as an active character who delivers His own. To Desmond Ford, the narrator:

shows that God is able to deliver, but as to whether He will or will not do so must ever be left in His hands to

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<sup>35</sup> Loren M. K. Nelson, *Understanding the Mysteries of Daniel and Revelation* (Coldwater, MI: Remnant, 2010), 55. See also Paul Birch Peterson, "The Prayers of Daniel," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 7, no. 1(1996): 51-63.

<sup>36</sup> John E. Goldingay, "The Stories in Daniel: A Narrative Politics," *Journal for the Study of Old Testament* 37 (1987): 99-116.

decide. He did not deliver Daniel from the decree of the king or from the horror of being thrust alive into the den of famished lions. In New Testament times he did not deliver John the Baptist. And in subsequent ages many martyrs left to perish were comforted as they recalled that one whose fidelity had been attested by Christ Himself had yet been permitted to suffer.<sup>37</sup>

### *Daniel*

Through telling the reader is informed that Daniel is to be appointed as an administrator among other two administrators who will oversee 120 satraps over the whole realm of the kingdom (vv. 1, 2). However, before the appointment the narrator shows that he prays even before the narrative starts (v. 10). The implied reader is told that Daniel distinguished himself above the administrators (v. 3). According to Goldingay:

Daniel distinguishes himself in the affairs of government—because of his remarkable spirit . . . that in turn reflected God's involvement in his life and in the shaping of the person he was. In his commitment to his God also lay his vulnerability. At one level there is nothing intrinsically religious about Daniel's colleagues' hostility; it is simply that religion is of key significance to Daniel, and therefore this constitutes his vulnerability . . . the possibility of conflict over Daniel's religious commitment is inherent in his position as a minister of state, for the state characteristically assumes it has quasi-divine significance.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Desmond Ford, *Daniel* (Nashville, TN: Southern, 1978), 136.

<sup>38</sup> Goldingay, "The Stories in Daniel," 100.

He has some qualities that made him distinguished himself. He has “an excellent spirit” (v. 3), “not corrupt/no corruption was found in him” (v. 4), and “trustworthy” (v. 4). Ellen G. White points out that “Daniel was faithful in his work. His business transactions, when subjected to the closest scrutiny of his enemies, were found to be without flaw. He was an example of what every business man may become when his heart is converted and consecrated, and when his motives are right in the sight of God.”<sup>39</sup>

Daniel is portrayed as prayerful. He prays three times a day (v. 10, 13) to God, and even when an edict is passed to direct all prayers to Darius, he continues to go to God in prayers and worship. The narrator indicates though Daniel prays in his upper room, it is to the full sight of his plotters. Goldingay posits that:

When prayer is fashionable, it is time to pray in secret, but when prayer is under pressure, to pray in secret is to give the appearance of fearing the king more than God. One must render to Caesar, but one must also render to God. Obedience to the state is presupposed, but so is the fact that there are limits to that obedience. Daniel is duly caught petitioning God when he is only allowed to petition the king, and is duly denounced.<sup>40</sup>

Gerhard Pfandl also observes that “Daniel's refusal to stop praying to his Lord, and his willingness to face death was not the result of a sudden decision. It was because he had developed a lifelong habit of saying no to

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<sup>39</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2002), 254.

<sup>40</sup> John E. Goldingay, “The Stories in Daniel,” 103. Also the prayer of Daniel was not “custom, nostalgia, or superstition” as others might think. Its import was to what God has promised. “He promised to hear prayers directed towards Jerusalem.” With this Andrew E. Steinmann seems to suggest that Daniel was following and depending solely on the promise of God in his prayers. See Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel*, Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia, 2008), 316.

evil that he was able to do it again when he faced the lion's den."<sup>41</sup> Daniel is faithful to his God. When he hears of the signing of the edict he continues with his worship to God. Even in his trial and casting into the lion's den, he does not deny his faith nor complained above the treatment meted out to him. He has faith in his God and he stands for Him. Deliverance is brought to Daniel in the lion's den when the angel of God shut the mouth of the lions. His deliverance from the narrator's point of view is a miraculous work of God. That leads to his God to be worshipped in the kingdom.

### *Administrators and Satraps*

The other administrators and satraps with Daniel are two and 120 respectively. Darius plans to appoint them (vv. 1, 2) to help so that he will not be defrauded. The implied reader is told together with their wives and children are thrown into the lion's den (v. 24) by the command of Darius, and they were devoured by the lions (v. 24). Their destruction follows the deliverance of Daniel whom they conspired to get rid of.

The narrative shows the implied reader that the administrators and satraps are jealous. Due to jealousy and envy of the position Daniel is about to occupy, they planned against him (v. 4). In their quest to find fault against Daniel, they "could not find fault or charge against Daniel" (v. 4). After several deliberation and consideration, they arrive at a point that unless they find something against Daniel concerning the law of God, their plot for Daniel will be in vain. According to Nichol:

Darius plans to elevate Daniel to the highest civil office in the state, the king doubtless acted in the interests of the crown and of the empire. However, he failed to take into account the feelings of jealousy that would naturally be aroused among the Median and Persian

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<sup>41</sup> Gerhard Pfandl, class notes for OTST 871 Exegesis of the Book of Daniel, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Silang, Cavite, Philippines, January 2017, 62.

dignitaries when a Jew, a former minister of the Babylonians, occupied a position that according to their expectations should be theirs.<sup>42</sup>

The narrator also shows the administrator as cunning, deceitful, and very convincing. They coil the king to accept elevating him into a god to be worshipped, equaling him to God. They convince the king to sign the decree to see him worshipped (vv. 6-9). They are also shown as policing (v. 11). They follow Daniel closely to make sure that he prays to his God. It is not surprising that in their policing they found Daniel praying and reported the matter to the king (vv. 12-13). When they king sought to free Daniel, they are shown to have reminded the king to exercise the punishment towards disobedience to the law of the Medes and Persians.

In the narrative, Daniel is named while the other administrators and satraps remain anonymous. The naming of Daniel is a way of bestowing identity and elevating Daniel from his unseen position just as he is elevated from the depth of the lion's den to a celebrated position in the kingdom. The anonymity of the other administrators and satraps works in the opposite way. Their unnamed identity parallels their loss of position and lives. Their selfishness and hatred devour everything, leaving them with nothing, even they and their family to face death-not a pardon, not even a name. "The anonymity allows us to identify with the character's traits, for we can inhabit the locus of the nameless character, identifying with the character's successor . . . failure."<sup>43</sup> The negative traits of the other administrators and satraps may be a compelling critique of a self-absorbed life and the positive traits of Daniel may inspire for change.

### **Analepsis/Prolepsis**

In time order, the most striking feature of the narrative is the three

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<sup>42</sup> "Daniel," *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., ed. Francis D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1976-1980), 4:810

<sup>43</sup> Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 130.

anachrony. The story's anachrony occurs in Daniel 6:10, 1, and 14. In v. 10, Daniel prayed to God. It is an internal heterodiegetic repeating analepsis. The temporal setting *three times* introduces the first analepsis, Daniel “got down on his knees, prayed, and gave thanks to his God” (v. 10). It explains Daniel's rebellion against the decree of Darius but his faithfulness to God and subsequently why God delivered him from the lions.<sup>44</sup> The purpose of the anachrony is for story-telling drama, to place in the giving of Darius power over power right next to his inability to save Daniel, his casting of Daniel into the lion's den, to reiterate the consequences or results of being faithful, and prayerful in the sight of the Lord.

Another analepsis is evident in the narrative: an internal homodiegetic completing anachrony where Darius thought that he could use his authority to deliver Daniel. Probably, the purpose of this anachrony is for the story telling drama, to place the thought and actions of Darius next to the surprise and dismay discovery of the deliverance by Daniel by his God. So, all these analepsis have the characteristics of uniting the story in a dramatized way and highlighting the theme of worship. As Winfried Vogel points out the narratives of Daniel 6, “the central issue is worship and the usurpation by pagan rulers of the reverence that belongs only to Yahweh.”<sup>45</sup>

Prolepsis occurs in Daniel 6:14 where the narrator notes that Darius sets his mind on rescuing without any reference in the narrative of Darius' activities warranting readiness really to deliver Daniel. It is a mixed homodiegetic completing prolepsis. It serves to interpret Darius' actions in the narrative which points in advance that he is limited in his authority. The narrator informs explicitly that Daniel prayed to God, he was delivered, and his God is worshiped. It serves as an important point of reference.

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<sup>44</sup> Bill T. Arnold, “Wordplay and Narrative Techniques in Daniel 5 and 6,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 112.3 (1993): 479-485.

<sup>45</sup> Winfried Vogel, “Cultic Motifs and Themes in the Book of Daniel,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 7, no. 1 (1996): 35.



The primacy effects the reader initially gets is that Daniel is prayerful and faithful. He violates human commandments that seek to relegate God, the one who deserves his worship, to the background. The reader is lured into making a deep emotional commitment and into forming an opinion that affect his/her understanding of the character of the people of God and how He deals with His people. The narrator then shifts to inform the reader that after the Daniel's deliverance, the administrators and satraps are thrown to the lion's den where they are killed by the lions. According to Jacques Doukhan, "the punishment is collective so as to avoid possible retaliation from surviving family members. This time no angel intervenes."<sup>46</sup> An act of retribution to the people, who plots evil against God's people, presents a recency effect modifying the behaviour of the administrators and satraps and revises the primacy effect of retribution.

### **Implications on Worship**

The worship experience of Israel and the characters in the book of Daniel help to elucidate the principles and theology of true worship. The narrative has indicated a theme of worship in Daniel 6. The study points out that worship is due to God alone, the God of Daniel. God's people maintain their loyalty to the God of Israel, not to men. From this perspective, the theology of worship in Daniel 6 is that worship is due only to God.<sup>47</sup>

The narrative study observes that through worship Daniel seems to be identified as God's faithful servant. He is shown as God's servant, who serves Him persistently (6:16, 20). While in exile, God's steward is identified as a servant who holds on to his faith and worship to Him no matter the consequences.

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<sup>46</sup> Jacques Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel: Wisdom and Dreams of a Jewish Prince in Exile*, (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2000), 95.

<sup>47</sup> Daniel Berchie and Elisha K. Marfo, "Service of Worship in Daniel: A Theological Discourse," *Insight: Journal of Religious Studies* 8, no. 2 (2012): 8.

The narrator's portrayal of worship in local and universal settings indicates the significance of worship in Daniel 6. According to Daniel 6, Daniel distinguishes himself in a foreign land. Although he is the only individual involved in this service in this setting, his faithfulness and worship to God introduces the Medo-Persians to God's true God. Therefore, God needs His people to be faithful worshippers as Daniel is so that they may be prepared in introducing others to His true worship.<sup>48</sup>

When worshipers go before God in silence and with humility of heart, the affectionate voice of God is heard revealing things of the future. In this state of serene environment and atmosphere of silence, the worship of God is faithfully carried out. This helps the worshipers to reflect, confess, and intercede in prayer for themselves and well as for others. This creates a time of loneliness with the Lord where the heart is poured out to Him. As shown in the case of Daniel, God hears His people and act swiftly for their favor. Daniel's experience in this condition of worship is worth and appealing of emulation.

The fundamental theological concepts of worship can be said to stem from God's sovereignty in history. The way human beings ascribe God's divine nature is a very important issue in worship. These show that Daniel calls on his readers to join him in the worship and praise of God for His might and wisdom and to understand the significance that it carries. The worship of God brings transformation and purification into His likeness to those who follow Him daily while those who keep wickedness in their hearts remain impious. This act of wickedness leads to destruction.

The struggle seen in the book over who should be worshiped is one that requires thoughtful consideration. Should human beings worship God or gods, the Highest or the little horn, YHWH or man? How does true worship address the problem of syncretism, especially in the end time? The study in Daniel observes that in true worship, worshipers express total loyalty to God that leads to the gift of an everlasting life in the presence and kingdom of God Himself. Total allegiance is to be given

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<sup>48</sup> Berchie and Marfo, "Service of Worship," 9.

to God only. Daniel's worship is accepted by God due to his commitment to Him and his reliance on His providence above all other things. Daniel and the Hebrew men do not reduce their worship to please men, to deny the genuineness of worship that emanated from their hearts. Thus, worship should be strongly God-centered. In this case, true worship should be executed only according to the commandments of God, not based on human creativity or preference. This is especially true when the latter contradicts the former.

The role of true and genuine worship is an answer to the revelation of the God of heaven. True worship is a recognition and demonstration of God's greatness and one's own nothingness. When faced with a death threat and persecution, true followers and believers need to consult God for His revealing grace to know things for the present time and future, and to stand firmly for God. Without sincere worship in prayer, revelation as the book of Daniel portrays will be difficult to be experienced. Thus, revelation is a result of earnestly seeking the Lord in prayer and worship. As depicted in the lives of the Hebrew men unadulterated worship is not an erstwhile event. Genuinely worshiping God in the past is not a guarantee for the present or the future if the practice is not strictly adhered to. Israel, who denies their Lord by worshipping idols, is led into exile to a foreign land, later they realize that bowing down before God and worshipping Him alone would bring liberation and effect their return to the beautiful land, Jerusalem.

## **Conclusion**

What is the overall picture of the narrative which the study demonstrates? At the heart of the narrative is the role of worship by God's people. The narrator informs the reader who God is, a God that Daniel worships and he does what is right in His sight. God's actions to Daniel emphasize His authority, power, and supremacy.

In conclusion, we may say that the narrative focuses on the role and work of God with His people who are faithful to Him. God's deliverance of Daniel in the lion's den and His worship by Darius and the command for citizens to do the same shows the point of view the narrator wants the implied reader to note. The story is a worship story. God moves

from a passive character to an active character who delivers His people. True worship progresses from an individual to corporate level. The story shows how He carefully watches and works through people to deliver His people. He alone is to be worshipped.

This narrative study reveals worship as the central theme in Daniel 6, which should not be relegated to other theological values in Daniel. True worship which is practiced by an individual progresses to a corporate stage where all the citizens come to render to the God of Daniel. This conclusion is reached by support in the book of Daniel. Scholars and commentators may find this theme of worship as well as other related issues worthy of study. Further exploration into other themes in the chapter or perhaps the entire book of Daniel will add to the conclusions reached in this study.

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