

Friday, November 29

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Daniel 6:1 - 28

6 1 Darius the Mede decided to divide the kingdom into 120 provinces, and he appointed a high officer to rule over each province. **2** The king also chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the high officers and protect the king's interests. **3** Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and high officers. Because of Daniel's great ability, the king made plans to place him over the entire empire. **4** Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling government affairs, but they couldn't find anything to criticize or condemn. He was faithful, always responsible, and completely trustworthy. **5** So they concluded, "Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the rules of his religion." **6** So the administrators and high officers went to the king and said, "Long live King Darius! **7** We are all in agreement—we administrators, officials, high officers, advisers, and governors—that the king should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions. **8** And now, Your Majesty, issue and sign this law so it cannot be changed, an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked." **9** So King Darius signed the law. **10** But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God. **11** Then the officials went together to Daniel's house and found him praying and asking for God's help. **12** So they went straight to the king and reminded him about his law. "Did you not sign a law that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions?" "Yes," the king replied, "that decision stands; it is an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked." **13** Then they told the king, "That man Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is ignoring you and your law. He still prays to his God three times a day." **14** Hearing this, the king was deeply troubled, and he tried to think of a way to save Daniel. He spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of this predicament. **15** In the evening the men went together to the king and said, "Your Majesty, you know that according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, no law that the king signs can be changed." **16** So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, "May your God, whom you serve so faithfully, rescue you." **17** A stone was brought

and placed over the mouth of the den. The king sealed the stone with his own royal seal and the seals of his nobles, so that no one could rescue Daniel. **18** Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He refused his usual entertainment and couldn't sleep at all that night. **19** Very early the next morning, the king got up and hurried out to the lions' den. **20** When he got there, he called out in anguish, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you serve so faithfully, able to rescue you from the lions?" **21** Daniel answered, "Long live the king! **22** My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty." **23** The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him, for he had trusted in his God. **24** Then the king gave orders to arrest the men who had maliciously accused Daniel. He had them thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. The lions leaped on them and tore them apart before they even hit the floor of the den. **25** Then King Darius sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world: "Peace and prosperity to you! **26** "I decree that everyone throughout my kingdom should tremble with fear before the God of Daniel. For he is the living God, and he will endure forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed, and his rule will never end. **27** He rescues and saves his people; he performs miraculous signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions." **28** So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

2 Peter 3:1 - 18

3 1 This is my second letter to you, dear friends, and in both of them I have tried to stimulate your wholesome thinking and refresh your memory. **2** I want you to remember what the holy prophets said long ago and what our Lord and Savior commanded through your apostles. **3** Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. **4** They will say, "What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created." **5** They deliberately forget that God made the heavens long ago by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water. **6** Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood. **7** And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment, when ungodly people will be destroyed. **8** But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. **9** The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some

people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. **10** But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment. **11** Since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this, what holy and godly lives you should live, **12** looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along. On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames. **13** But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness. **14** And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight. **15** And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. This is what our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom God gave him— **16** speaking of these things in all of his letters. Some of his comments are hard to understand, and those who are ignorant and unstable have twisted his letters to mean something quite different, just as they do with other parts of Scripture. And this will result in their destruction. **17** You already know these things, dear friends. So be on guard; then you will not be carried away by the errors of these wicked people and lose your own secure footing. **18** Rather, you must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All glory to him, both now and forever! Amen.

Psalms 119:129 - 152

119 129 Your laws are wonderful. No wonder I obey them! **130** The teaching of your word gives light, so even the simple can understand. **131** I pant with expectation, longing for your commands. **132** Come and show me your mercy, as you do for all who love your name. **133** Guide my steps by your word, so I will not be overcome by evil. **134** Ransom me from the oppression of evil people; then I can obey your commandments. **135** Look upon me with love; teach me your decrees. **136** Rivers of tears gush from my eyes because people disobey your instructions. **137** O LORD, you are righteous, and your regulations are fair. **138** Your laws are perfect and completely trustworthy. **139** I am overwhelmed with indignation, for my enemies have disregarded your words. **140** Your promises have been thoroughly tested; that is why I love them so much. **141** I am insignificant and despised, but I don't forget your commandments. **142** Your justice is eternal, and your instructions are perfectly true. **143** As pressure and stress bear down on me, I find joy in your commands. **144** Your laws are always right; help me to understand them so I may live. **145** I pray with all my heart; answer

me, LORD ! I will obey your decrees. **146** I cry out to you; rescue me, that I may obey your laws. **147** I rise early, before the sun is up; I cry out for help and put my hope in your words. **148** I stay awake through the night, thinking about your promise. **149** In your faithful love, O LORD, hear my cry; let me be revived by following your regulations. **150** Lawless people are coming to attack me; they live far from your instructions. **151** But you are near, O LORD, and all your commands are true. **152** I have known from my earliest days that your laws will last forever.

Proverbs 28:21 - 22

27 21 Showing partiality is never good, yet some will do wrong for a mere piece of bread. **22** Greedy people try to get rich quick but don't realize they're headed for poverty.