

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading For November 29:

Daniel 6:1-28:

In 5:29 we read that Belshazzar had commanded Daniel be made one of three key leaders in the kingdom. Even though the Babylonian empire fell to the Medo-Persian empire, nevertheless, somehow Daniel still ended up being promoted to be one of the three presidents, each of whom oversaw those who collected taxes from the populace (1-2). Daniel distinguished himself so much over the other presidents and the satraps that the king planned to place him over the whole kingdom (3). The text attributes Daniel's success to the LORD (3). Other leaders were so jealous of this Hebrew who had now served the Babylonian/Medo-Persian empires for over seventy years, they wanted to come up with a way to get rid of him (4). They knew, however, they would find no accusation against him, unless it had to do with His worship of God (5), so they encouraged the king to sign an irrevocable edict that no one could pray to a god or any man other than the king for thirty days or he would be thrown in a den of lions (6-9).

Though Daniel knew about the law and the consequence, he still prayed three times a day as he had previously done (10). No doubt, these conspiring leaders knew Daniel regularly did this. Knowing that Daniel has broken the law, leaders ran to the king with the news. With much distress he ordered Daniel to be thrown in with the lions (11-15). The king declared, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you" (16). This is a key statement in the narrative, for it introduces to the reader what is about to happen. The LORD sent an angel to shut the mouths of the lions, so Daniel was saved (17-23). In response, knowing that the other leaders had conspired against Daniel maliciously, the king had them and their families thrown into the lions and they were all killed (24). Thus, God shows He is sovereign and, as such, is able to deliver His righteous people and bring to judgment those who are wicked. The original readers were to be moved to follow Daniel's example as they look forward to their own restoration. This text should have the same impact on us today.

The king passed an edict that people should be allowed to worship the LORD and all should respect Him (25-27). Also Daniel prospered (28), which is a theme through the first six chapters. Those who trust in God and thus walk in righteousness will prosper. This foreshadows Jesus Christ who would always do the will of the Father and, through His obedience, we are able to be saved and experience the blessings of God (Romans 5:18-19).

2 Peter 3:1-18:

As the Apostle Peter brings this letter to a close wherein he has warned the original readers of coming false teachers who would call into question the sufficiency of the Lord's work in them, he reminds them that prophets and the Lord Jesus Himself told us that in the last days scoffers would arise (1-3). They will call into question whether or not Jesus is truly coming again, which was no doubt part of the false teaching about to come to them or already emerging among them (4). Peter goes on to explain that these scoffers overlook the reality that whatever God speaks comes to pass, two examples of which are creation and the flood (5-6). God has also spoken and thus decreed that the heavens and

earth will be judged because of the ungodly, and so the Lord will return (7). Additionally, they must realize that God does not work on the same time table we do, for long periods of time to Him are nothing, and what is more, in His patience for all His people to come to Him and not to perish, He is waiting to consummate the end of this age and the beginning of the age to come (8-9). We must remember, however, that this future time, the Day of the Lord, will come quickly, which implies we must be ready (10).

The reality that the Lord will come again and the heavens and earth will be refashioned should move us to pursue holiness (11-13). So, based upon our resources in Christ and this promise of eternal reward or judgment, we must seek to be godly in Christ.

Finally, Peter exhorts his readers one more time not to be carried away by false teachers who suggest it doesn't matter how we live, for we don't have to worry about judgment. Instead, grow in the realm of the transforming grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ (14-18). In context, this means that rather than following the false knowledge of the false teachers, the original readers are to follow the teaching of Peter in regard to the grace of Christ, how he empowers us for godly living, and how we should be motivated to godliness by our future reward and the warning of future judgment for those who do not listen.

In addition to the main message we have just outlined in this chapter, do not miss that Peter viewed Paul's writings as part of Scripture (3:16). Just like Paul viewed the words of Jesus in the Gospels as Scripture (1 Timothy 5:18), so here we learn there was an awareness early on in the Church that the body of Scripture was growing past what we find in the Old Testament.

Psalm 119:129-152:

Many previous themes in this psalm are reemphasized. Take special note, however, of the very first exclamation: "Your testimonies are wonderful..." One thing we dare not miss from this psalm is how much we should prize and treasure the Scriptures.

Proverbs 28:21-22:

We must remember that showing partiality in how we treat people is not wise. When we do this, we encourage people to do wrong even for small rewards. Also, a person who lacks generosity, who cares little for other people, but only for himself, this kind of person will be truly poor in that he will lack God's blessing.