

EPISODE NO. 207

Dan. 6:1-28

Daniel Was Thrown into the Lions' Den

1 King Darius thought it would be a good idea to choose 120 governors. He wanted them to rule throughout the entire Persian kingdom. 2 So, Darius chose three men to be co-presidents over those 120 governors. Daniel was one of those three co-presidents. The co-presidents reported directly to the king, so that the king would not suffer any loss. 3 Daniel showed that he could do the work better than the other co-presidents and the governors. Daniel was exceptionally talented. Because of this, the king was planning to put Daniel in charge of the whole kingdom. 4 So, the other co-presidents and the governors tried to find some excuse to accuse Daniel. However, Daniel continued doing the business of the government faithfully. And, they could not find anything wrong with Daniel. Therefore, they could not accuse him politically. Daniel was trustworthy. He did nothing wrong, and he never cheated the king. 5 Then those men said, "We will never find any excuse to accuse Daniel! We MUST find something bad to report in connection with his religion!"

6 So, the two co-presidents and the governors went to the king as a group. They said: "O King Darius, live forever! 7 The co-presidents, the governors, the assistant governors, your advisers, and the generals of the soldiers have all agreed about this: We think you should declare a special law that everyone MUST obey — no one should pray to any god or man except to YOU, O king! That ban should be enforced for the next 30 days. Anyone who will not obey this ban MUST be thrown into the pit with the lions! 8 Therefore, O king, make this special law NOW! Write it down so that it CANNOT be changed!" (The laws of the Medes and the Persians could never be canceled.) 9 So, because of their recommendation, King Darius made that special law. They wrote it down, and he signed it.

10 When Daniel learned about the new law and that it had been signed by the king, he went to his own house. He went to his room upstairs. (The windows of that room opened toward Jerusalem.) And, Daniel knelt down and prayed. He went into the presence of God, praising Him, just as he had always done. He did this three times each day.

11 Then some of those jealous men went as a group and found Daniel praying. They saw Daniel asking his God for help. 12 So, they went into the presence of the king and they began to talk to the king regarding the ban that he had signed. They said, "Didn't

you sign a special law that says that no one is allowed to pray to any other god or man for 30 days!?! O king, you are the ONLY one that anyone can pray to! And, doesn't that special law say that anyone who disobeys that ban will be thrown into the lions' pit!?"

The king answered, "Yes! And that law, like any law of the Medes and the Persians, CANNOT be changed!"

13 Then those men answered in the king's presence, "Well, Daniel is one of the captives from Judah, and he is NOT paying any attention to you or to the ban which you signed! Instead, Daniel still prays to his own god three times every day!" 14 The king became very upset with himself when he heard this. He decided that he had to rescue Daniel. All day long, King Darius tried hard to think of a legal way to save Daniel.

15 However, those men who had gathered in the presence of the king said, "O king, don't forget that the law of the Medes and the Persians says that NO law or command given by the king can be changed!"

16 So, King Darius commanded them to bring Daniel and to throw him into the lions' pit. Then the king said to Daniel, "May your God — the One whom you always serve — save you!"

17 They brought a huge stone and put it over the opening of the lions' pit. Then the king used his signet ring to put his special seal on the rock. The rings of his royal officers put their official seals on that rock, too. (This showed that NO ONE could break the seal, move that rock, and bring Daniel out.) 18 Then the king went back to his palace. He did NOT eat anything that night. No performers came to entertain him. The king got very little sleep that night.

19 The next morning, King Darius got up at daybreak. He rushed to the pit of the lions. 20 As he came near the den, he was worried. He called out to Daniel. The king said, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Has your God — the One that you always serve — has HE been able to save you from the lions!?"

21 Daniel answered the king, "O my king, live forever! 22 My God sent His angel to shut the mouths of the lions! They have NOT hurt me, because my God knows that I am innocent. I have never done anything to harm you, O my king!"

23 Then King Darius was very happy about Daniel. The king told his servants to raise Daniel out of the lions' pit. So they lifted him out. They did not find any injury on Daniel. (This was because Daniel had trusted in his God.)

24 Then the king gave a command. The men who had accused Daniel were brought to the pit of the lions, and THEY were thrown into the lions' pit. Their wives and children were also thrown into it. The lions overpowered them before they even hit the bottom of the pit. And, the lions crushed all their bones.

25 Then King Darius wrote a letter to all the ethnic groups and to all nations — to those who spoke every language — those who were living on all the earth:

“I wish you great success! 26 I am making a new law. This decree is for people in all regions of my kingdom:

‘ALL OF YOU MUST FEAR AND RESPECT THE GOD OF DANIEL!’

Daniel's God IS the living God! He endures forever. His kingdom will NEVER be destroyed. His rule will NEVER end. 27 God rescues and saves people. And He performs powerful proofs and amazing things in heaven and on earth! God saved Daniel from the power of the lions!”

28 So, Daniel was successful during the time that Darius was acting king, and during the time that Cyrus the Persian was emperor.