

UNCOMPROMISING FAITH

... the just shall live by his faith Habakkuk 2:4



DANIEL

Faith In His Sovereignty

The Writing on the Wall

Daniel 5:1-30

Lesson 11

Background Information

King Nebuchadnezzar died after a 43-year reign. He was not the direct father of Belshazzar. Either Nebuchadnezzar was his grandfather through his mother's side, or he was Belshazzar's father in the sense of having previously occupied the throne Belshazzar now sat on. After Nebuchadnezzar died, his evil son Merodach, ruled for only two years when he was assassinated by his brother-in-law, Neriglassar, because of his wickedness. Neriglassar ruled for four years until he died a natural death. His son, Laborosoarchod, who was an only child of diminished mental capacity, ruled for only nine months when he was beaten to death by a gang of conspirators. The conspirators appointed Nabonidus, one of their own, to be king. He ruled until Cyrus the Persian conquered Babylon. Belshazzar was the son of Nabonidus and co-regent with his father. According to Babylonian records, Belshazzar became co-regent in the third year of Nabonidus' reign (553 b.c.) and continued in that capacity till the fall of Babylon (539 b.c.). David Gusik

Can you just imagine being Daniel, standing before the king to interpret God's Words to him? The proclamation was both accurate and just. *"You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and the Persians."* God charged Belshazzar with knowing all that had transpired with Nebuchadnezzar and how he had proclaimed Him to be the Most-High God and yet his heart remained unchanged. Judgment came swiftly, that very night his kingdom was torn from his hands. The "writing is on the wall" – God's Word was fulfilled just as Daniel said. It has been said that for the spirit directed child of God, "God's Word in your mouth, is just as powerful as God's Word from His mouth." His Word is always reliable and true, and cuts to the heart of the situation.

Treasures of the Heart

... the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses.

Daniel 5:21



What does it say?

The first step is getting the lay of the land. **Carefully observe the text** looking to see where you might dig to find hidden treasure. **Mark your text** looking for repeated words, contrasts or similarities. Look for answers to, Who? What? When? Where? Why or How?

Daniel 5:1-9

1 Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand. 2 While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which [had been] in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. 3 Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which [had been] in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. 4 They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.

5 In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. 6 Then the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his knees knocked against each other. 7 The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spoke, saying to the wise [men] of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing, and tells me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and [have] a chain of gold around his neck; and he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." 8 Now all the king's wise [men] came, but they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation. 9 Then King Belshazzar was greatly troubled, his countenance was changed, and his lords were astonished.

Daniel 5:10-16

10 The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came to the banquet hall. The queen spoke, saying, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance change. **11** "There is a man in your kingdom in whom [is] the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father--your father the king--made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, [and] soothsayers. **12** "Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation."

13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke, and said to Daniel, "[Are] you that Daniel who is one of the captives from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? **14** "I have heard of you, that the Spirit of God [is] in you, and [that] light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. **15** "Now the wise [men], the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing. **16** "And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and [have] a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."

Daniel 5:17-30

17 Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation. 18 "O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor. 19 "And because of the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he executed; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down. 20 "But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. 21 "Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling [was] with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses. 22 "But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. 23 "And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who [holds] your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified. 24 "Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written.

25 "And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. 26 "This [is] the interpretation of [each] word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; 27 "TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; 28 "PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." 29 Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and [put] a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

What does it mean?



What lesson can I draw from my observations? Ask yourself, "What was the intended meaning of the original author?" Is there a command to obey, or a warning to heed? An example to follow or avoid? **State each lesson in a simple sentence that you could share with someone else.** (aim for 10 words or less).

Daniel 5:1-9 _____

Daniel 5:10-16 _____

Daniel 5:17-30 _____

How can I apply it?



Ask yourself, "What course of action do I need to take to apply each lesson?" How should it change me? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? (aim for 10 *words* or less)

Daniel 5:1-9 _____

Daniel 5:10-16 _____

Daniel 5:17-30 _____

Challenge: Use cross-references to find correlating scripture that backs up a main point of the chapter. Summarize your findings in your own words.

What **D**id **G**od **S**ay?

God's Words to us reveal what He wants us to understand Who He is and know His ways. **See if you can discover God's sovereign rule behind the scenes – and how He expects His people to act in the midst of difficult circumstances. Simply state what God is trying to communicate about Himself and how it can help you trust Him when you can't see Him working.**

What words or phrases are repeated? Repeated words help us discover the main point.

Define three words: does it supply any added meaning to the text?



Getting The Point

See if you can boil down the meaning of **each section** into one or two words. This helps you fully understand what the author is trying to convey. (It's fun to alliterate if you want to try) Did you catch the vision?

Daniel 5:1-9 _____

Daniel 5:10-16 _____

Daniel 5:17-30 _____

Title State the main **point** of the passage in the form of a title.

Flex Your Muscles Can you discover an N.T. example of this O.T. truth?

Radiating His Truth...

If we think we can hold God in our hand, we are standing on the threshold of judgment. – David Helm

