

GLEANINGS FROM THE BOOK OF DANIEL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY

DANIEL CHAPTER 5:13-31 THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

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.”

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.

30 That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. 31 And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

*Belshazzar is the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar.

1) Why do think Daniel refused to take the gifts & position the King offered him? What does that tell you about Daniel's character?

2) Compare your answer to question 2 with Paul's instructions in 1 Timothy 6:5; what type of person does the apostle warn Christians to avoid? Is that warning still relevant today?

3) If you were offered a prestigious and lucrative job, how would you know whether you should accept it? What are examples of opportunities in life that you would reject?

4) When Nebuchadnezzar faced God's punishment Daniel was sorry and upset (Daniel 4:19). Why do you think Daniel has a very different attitude towards Belshazzar's destruction?

5) Read 2 Timothy 4:2; how can you prepare yourself so that like Daniel you'll always be ready to speak to others about God when the opportunity presents itself?

6) There's a lesson here for Christians; when you need wisdom and direction seek the Lord not worldly counselors. What are some areas in your life for which only God's Word can provide good direction?
