

# DANIEL

“Keeping the faith when the heat is on”

Mike Taylor

www.TaylorNotes.Info



## CHAPTER 5 BELSHAZZAR'S CONTEMPT



Daniel Chapter 5 tells the story of Belshazzar, the king of Babylon, who held a great feast and defiled sacred vessels from the Temple in Jerusalem by using them to drink wine and praise idols. During the feast, a mysterious hand appeared and wrote a cryptic message on the wall. Terrified, Belshazzar summoned all his wise men, but none could interpret the writing. Daniel was called, and he explained the message: Belshazzar had been weighed in the balances and

found wanting. That very night, Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians, and Belshazzar was killed, marking the end of his reign.

### I. CHAPTER 5 OUTLINE

#### A. Belshazzar's Feast and Sacrilege (Daniel 5:1-4)

- Belshazzar, the king of Babylon, hosts a great feast for a thousand of his nobles.
- During the feast, Belshazzar orders the gold and silver vessels, taken from the temple in Jerusalem, to be brought for drinking.
- The king and his guests drink from the holy vessels while praising the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

#### B. The Handwriting on the Wall (Daniel 5:5-9)

- Suddenly, the fingers of a human hand appear and write on the wall of the king's palace.
- Belshazzar is terrified, his face turns pale, and his knees knock together in fear.
- He calls for the enchanters, astrologers, and wise men to interpret the writing, offering rewards of royal robes and a high position, but none of them can interpret the message.

### **C. The Queen's Recommendation of Daniel (Daniel 5:10-12)**

- The queen (most likely the queen mother) hears the commotion and enters the banquet hall.
- She reminds Belshazzar of Daniel, a man filled with the spirit of the holy gods, who had previously interpreted dreams and solved difficult problems during Nebuchadnezzar's reign.
- She encourages Belshazzar to summon Daniel to interpret the writing.

### **D. Daniel's Interpretation of the Writing (Daniel 5:13-28)**

- Daniel is brought before the king, who offers him rewards if he can interpret the writing.
- Daniel rejects the rewards but agrees to interpret the message.
- Daniel first reminds Belshazzar of Nebuchadnezzar's humbling by God when he became proud and arrogant.
- He rebukes Belshazzar for his failure to humble himself before God, despite knowing about Nebuchadnezzar's experiences.
- Daniel interprets the mysterious words written on the wall: "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN."

### **E. The Fall of Babylon and Belshazzar's Death (Daniel 5:29-31)**

- Despite Daniel's warning, Belshazzar keeps his word and rewards Daniel with a purple robe and a high-ranking position.
- That very night, Belshazzar is killed, and Darius the Mede takes control of Babylon, marking the end of the Babylonian Empire.

## **II. DISCUSSION QUESTION**

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If God is sovereign over all nations why have there been nations with terrible leaders?

## **III. APPLICATION**

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1. I am to pray for our nation as we approach the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. I am to be diligent in \_\_\_\_\_ to vote for our county's leaders.
3. I am to praise God for his \_\_\_\_\_ over all nations, including America.