

DANIEL: Life in the Present; Hope for Our Future

Chapter 5 The Writing on the Wall

(Daniel Chapter 5; Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

Mistakes we make with our kids:

Context: The year is 539BC. 23 years have passed since Nebuchadnezzar has died (563BC). Daniel is an older man by now. The empire of Babylon went to his son, and five kings later (within 20 years), these kings have destroyed his legacy and left the empire in ruins. The Medo-Persian army has Babylon surrounded. Belshazzar, the new King, is most likely Nebuchadnezzar's grand-son- but there is no Hebrew/Akkadian word for grandfather/grandson. As imminent doom approaches, the king and nobles do what anyone would do . . . they throw a feast in their own honor, mock God, and praise the idols of silver and gold. They feel secure. Walls protecting Babylon are huge over 100 feet high= 4 chariots side by side on top. Because of Daniel, there is 20 years of supplies to outlast any siege. The Euphrates river runs through the city. At the heart of this empire, young **Belshazzar is arrogant, proud, and rotten from the inside out.**

READ Daniel Chapter 5:

Belshazzar the king [of Babylon] ¹held a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand. ² When Belshazzar tasted the wine, [i.e. in his drunkenness = made a bad decision], he gave orders to bring the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his ^{1a}father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. [= He wanted to remember the good ole' days when Babylon had conquered the greatest of Kingdoms, conquered God, the God of the Hebrews & their magnificent golden temple] ³ Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God which was in Jerusalem; and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. ⁴ They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone. [He used what was consecrated to God and instead mocked God, and used them praised the idols] = serious offense to God.

⁵ Suddenly the fingers of a man's hand emerged and began writing opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the ^{1a}back of the hand that did the writing. ⁶ Then the king's ^{1a}face grew pale and his thoughts alarmed him, and his hip joints went slack and his knees began knocking together. ⁷ The king called aloud to bring in the conjurers, the ^{1a}Chaldeans and the diviners. The king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon, "Any man who can read this inscription and explain its interpretation to me shall be clothed with purple and *have* a necklace of gold around his neck, and have authority as ^{1a}third ruler in the kingdom."⁸ Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the inscription or make known its interpretation to the king. ⁹ Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, his ^{1a}face grew *even* paler, and his nobles were perplexed.

¹⁰ The queen entered the banquet ^{1a}hall because of the words of the king and his nobles; the queen spoke and said, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts alarm you or your ^{1a}face be pale. ¹¹ There is a man in your kingdom in whom is ^{1a}a spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of your father, illumination, insight and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were found in him. And King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, your father ^{1a}the king, appointed him chief of the ^{1a}magicians, conjurers, ^{1a}Chaldeans *and* diviners. ¹² *This was* because an extraordinary spirit, knowledge and insight, interpretation of dreams, explanation of enigmas and solving of difficult problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Let Daniel now be summoned and he will declare 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 ^{1a}exiles from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? ¹⁴ Now I have heard about you that ^{1a}a spirit of the gods is in you, and that illumination, insight and extraordinary wisdom have been found in you.¹⁵ Just now the wise men *and* the conjurers were brought in before me that they might read this inscription and make its interpretation known to me, but they could not declare the interpretation of the ^{1a}message. ¹⁶ But I

personally have heard about you, that you are able to give interpretations and solve difficult problems. Now if you are able to read the inscription and make its interpretation known to me, you will be clothed with purple and wear a necklace of gold around your neck, and you will have authority as the ^[a]third ruler in the kingdom.” [= Insignificant for a kingdom on the brink of ruin and doom]

¹⁷ Then Daniel answered and said before the king, “^[a]Keep your gifts for yourself or give your rewards to someone else; however, I will read the inscription to the king and make the interpretation known to him. ¹⁸ ^[a]O king, the Most High God granted ^[a]sovereignty, grandeur, glory and majesty to Nebuchadnezzar your father. ¹⁹ Because of the grandeur which He bestowed on him, all the peoples, nations and *men of every*^[a]language feared and trembled before him; whomever he wished he killed and whomever he wished he spared alive; and whomever he wished he elevated and whomever he wished he humbled. ²⁰ But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit became so ^[a]proud that he behaved arrogantly, he was deposed from his royal throne and *his* glory was taken away from him. ²¹ He was also driven away from ^[a]mankind, and his heart was made like *that of* beasts, and his dwelling place was with the wild donkeys. He was given grass to eat like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until he recognized that the Most High God is ruler over the realm of mankind and *that* He sets over it whomever He wishes. ²² **Yet you, his ^[a]son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, ^[a]even though you knew all this,** ²³ but you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines have been drinking wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which do not see, hear or understand. But the God in whose hand are your life-breath and all your ways, you have not glorified. ²⁴ Then the ^[a]hand was sent from Him and this inscription was written out.

²⁵ “Now this is the inscription that was written out: ‘^[aa]MENĒ, ^[ab]MENĒ, ^[ac]TEKĒL, ^[ad]UPHARSIN.’ ²⁶ This is the interpretation of the ^[ac]message: ‘MENĒ’—God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it. ²⁷ ‘TEKĒL’—you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient. ²⁸ ‘PERĒS’—your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians.”

²⁹ Then Belshazzar gave orders, and they clothed Daniel with purple and *put* a necklace of gold around his neck, and issued a proclamation concerning him that he *now* had authority as the ^[ae]third ruler in the kingdom. ³⁰ **That same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain.** ³¹ ^[ah]So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two.

This is one of the most tragic stories in the Bible:

- It does not matter how much **you** know or have experienced in life, if you don't teach it to your children.
- By the way, it is NEVER too late to let your family SEE & experience that you have been **changed!!!** = grace!!!
- We are called to give **truth** away to others. You go through life experiences, in part, to help others. = [Neb.'s son, grandson knew what happened to his father – but it never made an impact on him. Belshazzar was Proud and put God to a test. For as much as Nebuchadnezzar had changed (miraculously) – it needed to translate to his own children and family = his legacy. **What will be the legacy you leave behind?**

Deut. 6:4-9 “‘Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! ⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as ^[b]frontals ^[c]on your forehead. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

What are we to impart to our children? Spiritually – to teach, & MODEL to them:

1. **To Love God first and most with every part of their lives** (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17)
2. **To Know and Follow Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord** (Lordship: Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 4:5)
3. **To learn how to be filled daily with the Holy Spirit** = God controlling our lives, helping us, empowering

4. **To learn how to pray daily and listen and watch for God** (Phil. 4:6; Mk. 11:24; Jn 15:7; 1 Thess. 5:17)
5. **To learn how to study God's Word and let it feed their soul daily** (Ps. 119:9; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12)
6. **To learn how to forgive WELL – the greatest missing trait in the heart.** = supernatural/goes ag. instinct
7. **To boldly live out their faith in an ever-increasing hostile world** – where God, Jesus, the Bible are rejected

Raising children in this culture = extremely tough. Today less than 20% of the U.S. believe the Bible is the literal word of God: That it has any merit to guide/inform life: (*1970-80's =40% 1960's 50-60%, 1950's 70-75%) Today, **Less than 12%** of young adults believe the Bible is important (not just fables)

*50's – swimming w/stream. 60's = walking up stream 70-80's – paddling up rapids; **today – climbing waterfall**

Dad, Mom ... what is your plan? How will you impart these truths to your kids?

- **More importantly, How will you MODEL them - if you are not even living this out in your own life??**
“You cannot give away what you don't own!”

- Even after Nebuchadnezzar repented, and gave his life to God – was it too late for the son?

- God gave mercy to Nebuchadnezzar. God sent a warning through his dreams; Then, He gave him 12 months to repent; then He humbled him; even then, He restored his kingdom. – But to the son, Belshazzar there was an **immediate judgment**. (Why did the son not receive mercy?) = arrogance; pedigree (**he knew better**, he had a family history of pride); Belshazzar mocked God and abused the sacred, dedicated elements to praise idols.

1 Chronicles 28:9 “As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with ^ᵐa whole heart and a willing ^ᵐmind; for the Lord searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.”

Romans 1:20 “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.”

You have NO excuse to reject God. And God does not owe you anything. He didn't have to save you = GRACE!
 Your children will have NO excuse to reject God. – Don't be the reason they do!

What are we to take away from this tragic story in Daniel Chapter 5? = Don't tempt God.

APPLICATION:

What have you been through that others need to hear? What warning can you give them by your life and testimony?

What is your plan to disciple your children? Your kids need to know your failures; your successes; your times of brokenness. How God has changed you. – Can they SEE that change in your life daily?? How you treat them...

In what way do you sense God is calling you into greater humility, dependance, and obedience in your life?

Belshazzar crossed a line. Is there an area of your life where you are thinking of crossing a line?

Are you flirting with temptation? Have you already crossed the line? Then, Seek forgiveness today (1 John 1:9).