



# Dare TO Be Honest

DANIEL 5

# Dare



- ✓ Read a chapter of Daniel week.
- ✓ Keep a journal—record God's "mighty acts."
- ✓ Do what Daniel encourages you to do.

# Each chapter of Daniel asks a question about God—and myself

- Dan 1—Is God **here**? *defile themselves—implies stained before God.*
- Dan 2—Does God **reveal**?  
*No one can reveal it except the gods, and they do not live among men.*
- Dan 3—Can God **rescue**?  
*Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?*





# Each chapter of Daniel asks a question about God—and myself

- Dan 4—Does God **rule**? *He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"*
- Dan 5—Does God **judge**? *God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.*



Daniel 5:1, NIV

*King Belshazzar gave a great banquet  
for a thousand of his nobles and  
drank wine with them.*



# Is this story made up?

- No record of any king named Belshazzar [until 1881, that is].
- Writing on the wall doesn't happen (nor fiery rescue, lions ...)
- One more tall tale in the Book of Daniel, breathing into historical events the involvement of the god of a conquered people. It is fiction for theological purpose.





**The Nabonidus Cylinder (Sippar)—1881 AD**

*As for me,  
Nabonidus, king  
of Babylon, save  
me from sinning  
..., and as for  
Belshazzar, the  
eldest son-my  
offspring-instill  
reverence for  
your great  
godhead in his  
heart ....*



# Daniel 5:2,4, NIV

*While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them.... As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.*





Nebuchadnezzar – 605-563 BC



Evil-Merodach – 562-560 BC



Neriglissar—560-556

Labashi-Marduk—556

Nabonidus – 556-539 BC weds Neb's daughter



**Belteshazzar** – co-regent in Babylon (Neb's grandson)

(Now we see why Daniel was offered #3 post in kingdom!)

## Daniel 5:5-6, NIV

*Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. The king watched the hand as it wrote. His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his legs became weak and his knees were knocking.*









# Daniel 5:8-9, NIV

*Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or tell the king what it meant. So King Belshazzar became even more terrified and his face grew more pale. His nobles were baffled.*



# Daniel 5:11-12, NIV

*“There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him.... Your father, King Nebuchadnezzar, appointed him chief of the magicians, enchanter, astrologer and diviner. He did this because Daniel, whom the king called Belteshazzar, was found to have a keen mind and knowledge and understanding, and also the ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve difficult problems. Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what the writing means.”*



# Daniel 5:13,16, NIV

*So Daniel was brought before the king, and the king said to him, "Are you Daniel, one of the exiles my father the king brought from Judah? ... If you can read this writing and tell me what it means, you will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around your neck, and you will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom."*





# Daniel 5:17-18, NIV

*Then Daniel answered the king, “You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the writing for the king and tell him what it means.*

*“Your Majesty, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendor. ....*



# Daniel 5:20,22-23, NIV

*“But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory.*

*“But you, Belshazzar, his son, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you ....”*



# Daniel 5:23-24, NIV

*... You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways. Therefore he sent the hand that wrote the inscription.*





# Belshazzar's rebellion

- He knows these are utensils dedicated to the worship of the Lord.
- He rejects Neb's decree.
- His dread—not curiosity—speaks of knowledge of God and Neb.
- He dared God to do something.



# Daniel 5:25-28, NIV

*This is the inscription that was written:  
mene, mene, tekel, parsin*

*Here is what these words mean:*

***Mene:*** *God has numbered the days of  
your reign and brought it to an end.*

***Tekel:*** *You have been weighed on the  
scales and found wanting.*

***Peres:*** *Your kingdom is divided and given  
to the Medes and Persians.*



# God warns—why?

- Why write on the wall at all?
- Adam & Eve, Cain, the world of the Flood, the nation of Israel, ... Judas—all warned. Without excuse!
- Nineveh repents; God relents.
- *For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent and live!*

Ezekiel 18:23,32; 33:11





# Daniel 5:30-31, NIV

*That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain, and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two.*



# Is this story true?

- Belshazzar is confirmed as an historical figure, co-regent of Nabonidus.
- “Third highest” is confirmed.
- Greek historian Herodotus records the fall of Babylon. The Medes divert the flow of the Euphrates River. They go under that walls, without long siege.



# God acts—in judgment

- Belshazzar rejects the knowledge he had.
- “The soul that sins will surely \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Habakkuk anticipates these events as God’s revealed answer to his praying.



# 4 Applications for today

- **God answers prayer**—but not necessarily as we think.
- God answers prayer—but not necessarily as we think.
- “Your kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”





# 4 Applications for today

- **Teach your children well.**
- Dt. 6:4-9 says “on your heart” first, then talk about them to your children.
- Thoughtfully pass along the lessons God has taught you—your children and grandkids.



# 4 Applications for today

- *We are accountable to God for what we know.*
- *Today if you hear his voice do not harden your heart.*



# 4 Applications for today

- **God, guide me to responsive people.**
- God prepares situations for his messenger to tell and display the truth.
- Daniel's character was known.  
Demonstration + proclamation.



# 3 Times God writes (John Lennox)

- The Ten Commandments—gives the Law.
- Belshazzar's feast—pronounces judgment on sin (law-breaking).
- Before the woman caught in adultery—extends mercy.

*Neither do I condemn you.  
Go and sin no more.*





# God acts—in judgment

“The soul that sins shall surely \_\_\_\_.”  
Our judgment fell on Christ.

“For he himself is our peace ...”

Eph 2:14



# Hebrews 4:14,16, NIV

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess .... Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.









