

Daniel

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[0 : 00] In the book of Daniel, and right now we are currently dealing with chapter 5 of Daniel, and the writing is on the wall.

This is Belshazzar. He is the son of Nebuchadnezzar, who learned the hard way that it is the Most High who rules in the heavens, and he gives the kingdoms to whomsoever he will.

It took seven years of living like an animal for Nebuchadnezzar to realize that. But once he got the message, he apparently was a changed man, and he has much said so in his testimony that now I know that it is the Most High who rules in the kingdoms of men, and he gives it to whomsoever he will.

Now Nebuchadnezzar, in the portion we are dealing with today, here in chapter 5, is off the scene. And his son, Belshazzar, is on the throne, and he is conducting this extended banquet for all of the hoi polloi in Babylon, and they are enjoying the wine flowing freely and the sumptuous food and everything else, and it was a huge gathering.

And this is going on for several days. We don't know exactly how long. But it was just a long, drawn-out affair that went on and on and on, and the wine flowed freely and the food kept coming and everything.

[1 : 34] And we are told in verse 23, the sentence that is delivered against Belshazzar. Well, let's just jump in with verse 22, and I'm going to break this up, but we've got to, for time's sake, start somewhere.

So let's start with verse 22. And he is talking, Daniel is talking to Belshazzar, and he says, You, his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this.

That is, he knew the situation regarding his father and the hard lesson that he learned, but Belshazzar was not going to learn from it. And here is just an example of the arrogance of human beings, because no doubt, Belshazzar probably thought, this is another, what shall we call this, another assumption that should not have been made, another faulty assumption.

Well, my dad, Nebuchadnezzar, really got in a jam with this situation, but I'm different, I can handle it. It won't befall me like it did the old man.

Well, that's ego talking, and it's Belshazzar, and we are told that you have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this.

[3 : 08] So he is conducting a lifestyle in complete contrast with knowledge of what he is doing, and probably congratulating himself that he's going to get away with it.

You have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven, just like your father did, 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.

And here, by the way, let me repeat this again, because it is so critical that we understand this. This point that I have tried to make for quite some time, I trust you've all gotten, but I want you to see it reinforced, and that is this.

Man left to his own has a warped, skewed mind. His thinking intellect is out of kilter.

It causes him, in his vain reasonings and imaginations, Romans 1, to come up with all kinds of ridiculous concepts that he would call God, or the higher power, or whatever, and is completely unreliable.

[4 : 36] This is man using his fallen intellect that leads himself astray, and it enables people to, what we've got right here, it enables people to praise gods of silver, of gold, of bronze, of iron, of wood, and stone.

Now, modern man doesn't do that nearly so much in what we would call a civilized society. But we have other gods. It may be materialism.

It may be people. It may be drugs. It may be this. It may be that. And virtually everybody that involves themselves in some incapacitating thing like that is, what shall I say, they are putting more confidence in their ego, more confidence in their ability than what they ought.

And it too is a faulty assumption. Fellas, we are drowning in faulty assumptions. And the thing that makes them so deadly is that we tend to act on them.

Look at what we are dealing with today right here in this country by way of drug addiction and alcohol. I don't think, I don't think there is a young person, and they're not all young, but I don't think there is a young person who ever began experimenting with cocaine or something like that, but what they didn't think, I know what's happened to a lot of people who have used this.

[6 : 15] But I'm different. I can handle it. It will not get a hold of me like it has them. That is a faulty assumption.

There are things that come into our life, opportunities, temptations, for which you are no match. And this is why the scriptures say flee temptation.

Don't flirt with it. Don't experiment with it. Just flee it. Get rid of it. Get out of its, get out of its realm. But there is that ego thing that says, I can do it because I'm different.

I'm stronger than most people. I'm wiser than most people. No, you're not! You're just like the rest of it. Cut out of the same bowl of cloth. And that faulty assumption often leads to disaster because people tend to act on what they faultily assume to be the case.

And it isn't the case at all. And here we've got a situation here with old Belshazzar and it's the same old song being played all over again. And verse 24, then the hand was sent from him and this inscription was written out.

[7 : 35] This is the writing on the wall. that was written out, Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsen. And this is the interpretation of the message.

And Daniel is interpreting this for the king. Mene means God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it.

Belshazzar, the curtain is coming down. It's all over. Tekel, which means you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient.

This is the scales of the almighty. This is this is Belshazzar's attitude and actions being evaluated by God and the verdict simply is this.

Belshazzar has passed the point of my toleration and my long suffering and it's over for him. He's been found weighed in the scales and found wanting and Perez, which means your kingdom, you can even see the similarity between this word Perez and Persians and it's not a coincidence either.

[8 : 57] Your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and the Persians. 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 third ruler in the kingdom.

Why was this? Why was all of this elevation? Well, because this is what Belshazzar earlier in the chapter had promised for anybody that could do that. But Daniel didn't give any time frame.

He just said this is what's going to happen. Now we see a similarity there because when Daniel gave to Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation of the image that this was what was going to befall him, he didn't give him a time frame either.

And we don't know how long that went on but Nebuchadnezzar was strutting around the city and one time one night he looked over the expanse of the great city and he said it is not this great Babylon that I have built.

We don't know how long that was between that and the time that Daniel told him what was going to happen. Could have been months. We don't know.

[10 : 18] But we do know this, Nebuchadnezzar was thinking well I remember what Daniel said and I remember how accurate he was in describing that great image but nothing has happened yet and everything is just as it was and then the Lord said that is it and seven years living like an animal came into play.

Now we have got a similar situation here and there is no time frame given to Belshazzar either. But we do know from reading the text that at the time had already arrived.

And while they were conducting this drunken orgy inside the palace the engineer department of the Medes and the Persians this was the ancient army engineers were outside the city because you see in this vast city of Babylon it was located very close to and I get my rivers mixed up I don't remember which one it was I don't remember if it was a Tigris or the Euphrates but it was one of the two and I think it was the Euphrates but I'm not sure.

Anyway there was a tributary of the Euphrates if that's the one it was that ran right under the city kind of convenient like because it provided that's how they got the water because they had a wall around them yeah they had a wall all the way around a very formidable wall in fact it was a wall that was so great and so defensive that the Medes and the Persians didn't even attempt to attack the wall so they diverted this stream that ran right through the city and dried it up all the while this drunken party was going on that lasted probably a couple of weeks or more and they are making a roadway in that stream having diverted it right under the city and the Medes and the Persians are coming in like flies and before they can awaken and arm themselves from this drunken orgy it's too late they've already fallen and you know there's similarities like this

I remember reading the book 1776 about about Washington and his troops crossing the Delaware and surprising the Hessians and they were sleeping off they were sleeping off a celebration for Christmas and caught them by surprise and they too had succumbed to the celebration and everything that went with it and the next thing they knew the English were upon them and that was the thing that turned the tide of the Revolutionary War what Joe what you just told about that river dried up and you didn't get from the Bible you got that from history that's what happened in history that's what made this so believable that's what makes Daniel so believable because history records things just like the Bible records it indeed it does and if you check with a lot of like Encyclopedia Britannica or Americana you can find this kind of information but it's really significant what is happening and these

[13:40] Medes and the Persians are now and they are the second element you see Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon was that head of gold and now it moves down to the chest of silver and the arms and the two arms represent the Medes and the Persians and they are together on this thing they have united and they are going to be the new world rulers in fact the kingdom that will be established by the Medes and the Persians will outstrip geographically every other kingdom that has existed in terms of territory and the expanse of it it is absolutely huge and we find all kinds of innovations taking place here with the Medes and the Persians in fact there is the first mail delivery system that was established in the history of humanity by the Medes and the Persians and I guess you could almost say the first pony express is established too for getting word throughout the whole kingdom and it's going to be very involved so let's read here in verse 29

Belshazzar makes good on the promise that he has given and he elevates Daniel to this exalted position the third ruler in the kingdom and that same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain so Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of 62 now once again let me remind you that we've got an unfortunate chapter division here and most chapter divisions are unfortunate because it breaks up the continuity so just forget about the chapter division and continue reading and when we do we see that it seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps these are like governors these are individuals and they are going to constitute a governing body we would perhaps call these representatives or senators or something like that governors each one is going to be responsible for a certain geographical area and the text goes on to say over the kingdom that they should be in charge of the whole kingdom and over them three commissioners these are like the bosses of the satraps these are like the governors and the satraps are like vice governors or under governors that the whole political system is being established there and the satraps might be accountable to them and that the king might not suffer loss that simply means that orderliness will be established throughout the whole kingdom because where you do not have order you have chaos and where chaos exists everybody loses and this is a way of consolidating all of the gains that had been made militarily and this is going to be an enormous political undertaking but apparently it's going to be very very efficient so they've got something going here that is really new and we are told that

Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom this is an amazing thing in that Daniel has been able to establish himself as the principal go-to guy whenever these people got together and held a meeting they were always discussing pro and con this issue

that issue debating back and forth just like governments do today just like parliament does in England just like congress does in Washington just like the Knesset does in Israel and each one presents different issues and different cases and different solutions and they argue and they debate about it and they end up voting on something and trying to reach a consensus and there's they're trying to hammer out certain things because they've got a new government and a new province and a new everything established and they're struggling with certain issues and all of a sudden somebody turns to

Daniel and says Daniel what's your take on this what do you think and Daniel elaborates a little bit and says well you can do this you can do thus and so and thus and so and these guys start scratching their heads and say hey why didn't we think of that that's brilliant that yeah that'll work that'll work everybody in favor of that raise your hand and they decide that's the way to go hey this guy's valuable we need to keep him around he comes up with these brilliant ideas well they're not Daniel's brilliant ideas Daniel is in connection with the one who offers brilliant ideas and he is ever concerned for his own and he is demonstrating that here he has an extraordinary spirit that's not just an attitude but it's an acumen an insight an understanding and Daniel

Daniel had a number of really important assets that virtually none of these people had and you know what it was more than anything else Daniel understood human nature we have got a congress that is filled with representatives and senators many of whom do not understand human nature they just don't there's a small pocket of committed believers in congress who really do understand the lay of the land and the way people are and they are always in a minority and today is no exception and you all know as well as I do that

[20 : 18] Jim Jordan is just one of them but there aren't many and they probably represent 10% or less of the house of representatives but they are trying to make an inroad and an impact because they do have a level of understanding but well anyway let's move on then then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs why would they do that huh yeah yeah they're jealous hey you know this guy's got some great ideas but he's making us look bad he's making us look bad anytime the king wants some insight on something he's not coming to us he's going to Daniel we're losing our clout we're losing our influence we need to neutralize this guy because this reminds me of a statement that the ruling class in in in

Israel made at the time during the earthly ministry of our Lord and they got together and they said if we don't stop this guy Jesus of Nazareth if we don't neutralize him you see the common people the masses have been flocking to him and hanging on his every word and the text says the common people heard him gladly if we don't neutralize this guy the Romans and remember the Romans were in charge politically and militarily and the Jews in the religious establishment were given a certain amount of leeway by the Romans and the idea was listen you priests you Sadducees you Pharisees you keep your people in line you make them turn the line religiously because if they don't you can be replaced we'll fire you and they knew that and they said if we don't neutralize Jesus of Nazareth the Romans will come and take away our place our position they will remove us and with that all the perks and benefits that go with it will suffer that's a similar situation we've got here this is nothing more than political expediency that is driven by jealousy and envy and greed and everything that Daniel understood that these guys didn't they didn't understand and most people today they don't understand it either they think you know the only thing that's wrong with the government and Republicans tend to think this way the only thing that's wrong with the government is there's too many Democrats in it if we were really in charge really in power we could make this nation what it wants to be what it needs to be and you know what the Democrats are saying the only thing that's wrong is that Republicans have too much influence if we could neutralize them boy we'd show this country how things could be done and both parties are at each other jockeying for position for ascendancy all because this is the way human nature is and most of them don't even begin to understand it the reason we're going downhill and downhill is because we no longer fear God when this country was created we feared

God or biggest percentage did we feared God in other words we believed in God and we followed God's precepts his way of doing it and we're getting away from God and now we are getting weak weak weak well you can expect to pay the price it's a cause and effect thing nobody has ever been able to overcome it so that's that's what we're dealing with and hey any other comments thank you Joe any other comments before we bring this to a close yeah what you know God said in the Bible

back when he was talking to Nebuchadnezzar each government that takes over each of these kings that takes over is going to be weaker that's right you say well how can they be weaker I mean if they defeated they were stronger militarily but in spirit and in the government method that they utilized they were weaker and the weeks then are weaker than the person's gone and Rome was weaker people may not make this statement not believe it but a democracy is very weak our governments were weak and you'd say well how can we we've got atomic bombs we didn't defeat anybody we're not weak no military we're not but politically spiritually we are terribly weak and the democracy gets the weakest from a political standpoint more than one kind of we're seeing that there's more than one kind of weakness keep in mind this deterioration is always downward starts with the head of gold then the silver then the bronze then the iron then the iron mixed with clay so it goes stronger weaker weaker weaker until you get right down to the bottom and then the bottom falls out of everything hey guys

I appreciate you being here Merry Christmas and enjoy your breakfast RESPONSE by read