

Bible Study

Daniel Chapter 5:1-30

Opening Question:

1. Why do people choose to worship idols more than worshipping God?
2. What is the difference between being boastful & being humble?

Read Daniel 5:1-30

Discussion Questions

1. Observation & reflection
 - (a) What word or idea stands out to you, what did you struggle to understand?
 - (b) What is the theme of the passage?
 - (c) Is there any shift or change or difference from previous chapters?
2. What traits do we observe in the behaviour and attitude of Belshazzar?
 - (a) What are some examples of this in our culture today?
3. What gods do Belshazzar and his Nobels value/worship?
 - (a) How did Daniel describe them?
 - (b) What are some examples of this in our culture today?
4. Belshazzar's actions seem to have been driven by a desire to impress those at the feast rather than by reverence for God.
 - (a) How and when are we tempted to do the same?
5. Contrast Belshazzar's action/order in V2 with what his father, Nebuchadnezzar, had done in Daniel 2:2. What is the difference between the two?
6. Why do you think that God used a hand to write on the wall?
 - (a) What is the lesson for us in the king calling Daniel?
 - (b) What is the meaning for us today?
 - (c) What is the purpose of God's correction in our lives?
7. Why do we need to have a proper understanding of both God's love and his justice. (Galatians 6:7; Romans 1:18 and Ecclesiastes 12:14)
8. Belshazzar abused the things of God and did not properly honour God. Read Romans 6:1-4 and discuss how we also can abuse God's grace.
 - (a) How might we know when we are abusing God's grace or just wrestling to overcome sin?

9. What do we see in Daniels manner and approach?
 - (a) In what circumstances is it difficult to speak truth?
 - (b) What are some ways we can respectfully speak truth?

10. What does Belshazzar do after he hears the interpretation?
 - (a) What is the lesson for the church today?

11. The events recounted in Daniel 5 took place at the very end of King Belshazzar's reign, long after the events reported in Daniel 7 and 8. Why might Daniel have chosen to place them right after the events described in Daniel 4? What point was Daniel making by putting the story of God's judgment against Belshazzar right after his account of God's judgment and restoration of Nebuchadnezzar?

Thought Points

- Belshazzar was regent of Babylon from 553-539BC. His father King Nabonidus was the last king of Babylon
- Repentance is turning to away from idols and towards God
- Reputation is built by doing something consistently over time
- All good things come from God, and He alone is worthy of our praise.
- There will come a time when God will weigh each persons character.
- Meaning of Writing on the Wall:

Mene, Mene	numbered and numbered again	Psa 90:12, Eph 5:16-17 John 9:4, Rom 13:11-14
Tekel	weighed in the balance and found deficient	Mat 25:28-29 Heb 9:27 2Cor 5:10
Upharsin (Peres)	divided and given to the Medes and Persians	Rom 6:23 James 1:14-15

Extra Reading

Luke 12:1-3, 13:3, 1Cor 4:4-5, Heb 12:5-11, 1 Thes 1:9, 7, 1Peter4:19, Titus 2:8, Romans 1:18-19, 2:1-11, 5:8-10, Acts 5:27-32, John 12:42-43, James 4:10

Personal Reflection:

- Do you know someone with a similar approach to life and God as Belshazzar? How can you share the truth of the gospel with them?
- Is there is an area of your life where you feel like you're abusing God's grace by sinning again and again? What should you do about it?
- How has Christ changed the "writing on the wall" of your life?
- In your life have you seen something start off not as an idol but later become an idol?