

1. Last week I taught verses seven through twelve of Daniel chapter five.
2. Before resuming our study of Dan 5:13 I want to give you an expanded translation of Dan 5:1-12.

Dan 5:1 King Belshazzar summoned a thousand of his nobles for a grand party; it soon turned into a licentious and drunken orgy.

Dan 5:2 Under the influence of the wine, Belshazzar commanded his wine steward to bring the sacred golden and silver vessels which his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of Israel's Temple; he wanted this done in order that he, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink from the sacred vessels of Jehovah God.

Dan 5:3 And so it was done, the golden vessels from the Holy City, used in the Temple of the house of God were brought before him; they were filled with wine and the king, and his guests, then toasted the gods of Babylon.

Dan 5:4 They drank their wine, and praised the Babylonian gods; these idols of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone were extolled as superior to the God of Israel.

Dan 5:5 Suddenly, as the King watched, the fingers of a human hand crawled slowly up the wall and began to write, the writing was unmistakable because they appeared under the lampstand directly behind the King. The king watched as the hand slowly wrote Babylon's final history.

Dan 5:6 Belshazzar's face turned pale; he was so terrified that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way; he could no longer stand, the King sank slowly to his pillowed couch.

Dan 5:7 The king called out in a desperate and loud voice for his Secretary of State, the head of the CIA and his top ranking religious advisor; he then said to them, "Whoever reads what has been written on the wall and tells me what it means I will clothe him in royal garments of purple to take his place among the pantheon, I will also place a gold chain around his neck and he will be elevated to the third highest office in the land."

Dan 5:8 The King's wise men were hurried into the room, they made quite a show for they were obviously puzzled as they consulted with one another but they could not read the writing or tell the king what it meant.

Dan 5:9 So King Belshazzar became even more terrified; his face grew paler because His greatest minds were baffled; no one could read the "handwriting on the wall."

Dan 5:10 The Queen mother had heard the commotion from her nearby apartment in the palace; quickly she ran down the hall to the banquet hall. Seeing the King's pallor and obvious consternation she feared for his health. She exclaimed, "O king, live forever!" "Don't be alarmed, be calm!"

Dan 5:11 There is an old man who still resides here in Babylon who has the spirit of Jehovah God in him. During your grandfather's reign he was found to have special insight and intelligence and wisdom like even that of a god. King Nebuchadnezzar appointed him chief of the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners.

Dan 5:12 The man's name is Daniel, though Nebuchadnezzar called him Belshazzar; he was found to have a keen mind, a man full of knowledge and understanding, he also had the ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve difficult problems. I would urge you to call for him; I feel sure he will tell you what the writing means."

3. Now let's see what we can learn from Dan 5:13-15.

KJV

Dan 5:13 Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry?

Dan 5:14 I have eeven heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee.

Dan 5:15 And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing:

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Dan 5:13 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?"

Dan 5:14 I have heard that the spirit of the gods is in you and that you have insight, intelligence and outstanding wisdom.

Dan 5:15 The wise men and enchanters were brought before me to read this writing and tell me what it means, but they could not explain it.

Principles:

1. In accordance with the Queen's wise suggestion, Daniel was brought before the king. Belshazzar was now sober and had regained some degree of composure.
2. He seemed to recall the historical incident identifying Daniel with the hostages whom Nebuchadnezzar had brought from Judah in 606 B.C.
3. Still peeved at the failure of his own advisers, he with chagrin told Daniel of their unsuccessful attempts to decipher the handwriting on the wall.
 - 3.1 He then asked Daniel to interpret the writing on the wall
4. After which the King listed the rewards awaiting Daniel, provided of course, he could successfully explain the meaning of that written.

5. Before we move to verses sixteen and seventeen I want again to give you an expanded translation of Dan 5:13-15:

Expanded Translation:

Dan 5:13 After the queen made her recommendation; Daniel was brought into the presence of Belshazzar. The king asked, "Are you the Daniel, the Jewish exile, whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king, brought from Judah?"

Dan 5:14 I have heard that the Spirit of God is in you, that you possess brilliant knowledge and extraordinary wisdom.

Dan 5:15 The wisest of my advisors were brought in to translate this writing but none of them could read it; none could tell me what it means.

Now let's see what we can learn from Dan 5:16 and 17.

KJV

Dan 5:16 And I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Dan 5:17 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

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Dan 5:16 Now I have heard that you are able to give interpretations and to solve difficult problems. 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."

Dan 5:17 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.

Principles:

1. In spite of the queen mother's impressive report, Belshazzar was not fully convinced of Daniel's abilities; but a desperate man will cling to any hope so he repeats "If you can read the writing," and then he recapitulates the generous reward.

2. Daniel's refusal to accept this magnanimous offer is classic! With perfect tact and impeccable manners, he firmly but politely declined to be bribed or bought!

2.1 His gift of prophecy was not for sale!

3. Unlike Balaam of old, Daniel would not be hired out in order to advance himself.

3.1 He was not in the Lord's service for the acquisition of wealth or fame, but he was ready to perform the king's request in a manner compatible with grace!

4. Daniel's attitude paralleled that of Abraham, who told the King of Sodom, "I will not take from you a thread, even to a shoe latchet, I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich" (Gen. 14:23).

Gen 14:21 The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Return to me my people whom you rescued and you keep the goods for yourself."

Gen 14:22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, and have taken an oath

Gen 14:23 that I will accept nothing belonging to you, not even a thread or the thong of a sandal, so that you will never be able to say, 'I made Abram rich.'

5. The same principle is found in Matthew 10:8: "... freely ye have received, freely give."

Mat 10:8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

Mat 10:9 Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts;

Mat 10:10 take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep.

5.1 The same principle can be seen as it relates to the pastor-teacher.

1Pe 5:2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

6. "Yet I will read" is literally the word "proclaim" (QERA). God had a special job for Daniel; therefore, Daniel would "make known" (YADA, meaning to "cause to make known") the mysterious inscription.

6.1 Because Daniel was familiar with Jeremiah 51 and Isaiah 47 and was confident of "wisdom from above," he firmly believed God would give him the power to interpret the writing on the wall;

6.2 Recall the Queen has described Daniel as:

6.2.1 a significant man known by all

6.2.2 a Spiritual man

6.2.3 a wise man

6.2.4 a man who could solve even the most difficult of problems and

6.2.5 therefore a man recognized by all as a successful citizen of Babylon

7. Yet Daniel would be careful to give credit where credit was due. He would give credit to the Lord!

8. Now let's see what we can learn from Dan 5:18-19:

KJV

Dan 5:18 O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor:

Dan 5:19 And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.

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Dan 5:18 "O king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendor.

Dan 5:19 Because of the high position he gave him, all the peoples and nations and men of every language dreaded and feared him. Those the king wanted to put to death, he put to death; those he wanted to spare, he spared; those he wanted to promote, he promoted; and those he wanted to humble, he humbled.

1. Daniel addressed himself to Belshazzar: "O thou king, God in His grace made your grandfather the ruler of the Chaldean Empire. God also granted him success, majesty, glory and honor!"

1.1 Daniel is not going to let this occasion be wasted. He will first preach a fine sermon using his personal knowledge of history; Nebuchadnezzar's testimony will be repeated.

2. Nebuchadnezzar no doubt possessed great leadership ability and personality; his military success at the Battle of Carchemish secured his position and won him the respect and admiration of His subjects.

3. However, Nebuchadnezzar neither earned nor deserved these achievements.

3.1 He was what he was by the grace of God; God gives solely on the basis of His own character out from His grace.

3.2 This was the real reason why Nebuchadnezzar was held in awe by the people of all racial, geographical and linguistic divisions throughout the inhabited earth.

4. However, as sovereign, he became autocratic, occasionally ruthless, and in time, became inordinately proud. He failed his prosperity test.

Expanded Translation:

Dan 5:18 The most high God gave your grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, a great kingdom and international fame.

Dan 5:19 Because God made him so great, the nations and peoples of every language dreaded and feared him. Whomever Nebuchadnezzar wished, he killed or let live whomever he wished, he both promoted or demoted as he saw fit.

Now let's see what we can learn from verses twenty and twenty-one.

KJV

Dan 5:20 But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

Dan 5:21 And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

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Dan 5:20 But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory.

Dan 5:21 He was driven away from people and given the mind of an animal; he lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like cattle; and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he acknowledged that the Most High God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and sets over them anyone he wishes.

Principles:

1. "When his heart was lifted up" (RUM), he became proud.

1.1 His old sin nature took over and controlled every area of his life so that his norms and standards were altered.

2. Because his mind hardened (TEQEPH), Nebuchadnezzar literally became obstinate and chose against God.

2.1 Therefore, he was "deposed" (NECHATH) from his throne and his glory was "taken" or removed (ADA) from him.

3. Under divine judgment, "he was driven (TERAD) from the sons of men." Then Nebuchadnezzar's mentality became like that of an animal, and he lived with the wild asses and ate grass.

4. Gone was the brilliant intellect and dazzling personality; the once honored monarch suffered from a strange zoanthropic malady!

5. God's judgment is always perfect, and He knows what is best for each person of the universe.

5.1 Therefore, when He put Nebuchadnezzar "out to pasture" for seven years, it was only until Nebuchadnezzar "knew" (JEDA), that is, until he recognized that God was the true Sovereign of the universe - this would be the King's expression of positive volition, we would call it faith in Jesus Christ.

6. While he had exercised absolute control over many nations of the Babylonian Empire, Nebuchadnezzar would come to realize that God the Father "appointeth (QUM) whomsoever he will" (TSEBA).

7. God is sovereign over all!

8. Now let me give you an expanded translation of verses twenty and twenty-one:

Dan 5:20 But when his heart became proud and his spirit was hardened by arrogance, he was pulled down from his royal throne and then deprived of his glory.

Dan 5:21 Suffering from zoanthropy, he was cast out of the palace and was made insensate as a beast; he lived with the wild asses, and ate grass like the oxen roaming the field; his body was bathed with the dew of the earth and the rain from heaven, until he learned that the most high God rules over the kingdom of men and appoints men to rule as He will.

9. We are ready for verses twenty-two and twenty-three:

KJV

Dan 5:22 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;

Dan 5:23 But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and e thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

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Dan 5:22 "But you his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this.

Dan 5:23 Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. 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.

Principles:

1. It was one thing to recall a past monarch's failures, but quite another to censure the reigning king before his entire court! That took courage!

2. Daniel spoke forthrightly: "Thou . . . hast not humbled" (SHAKEL) indicated Belshazzar's total lack of grace orientation, his failure to accept Christ, plus his sin of pride. "Thine heart" refers to the right lobe, which is the source of both unbelief (Heb. 3:12) and faith (Rom. 10:9 and 10).

Heb 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

Rom 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Rom 10:10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

3. "Thou knewest" is the Piel perfect of JADA. The word "all" proved that Belshazzar had full Gospel information and was without excuse (Rom. 1:18-20).

Rom 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Rom 1:19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

Rom 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

4. Because of negative volition, his mind took in false doctrine (idol worship); the details of life became predominant in his thinking; mental attitude sins controlled his frontal lobes.

5. From there, it was only a short step to the state of unrestrained arrogance. Daniel continued, "Pride caused you to 'lift up' yourself (RUM) against God the Father and the Author of grace.

5.1 Brazenly, you brought in the vessels of God's house and drank wine from them.

5.2 You rationalized that He was powerless to liberate the Jewish hostages you have been holding these many years, and you believed that your idols of wood, metal and stone were mightier than the God of Judah.

5.3 Therefore, your frame of reference has become so perverted that you have sought to appease your gods by blaspheming the only true God in whose hand thy breath (NISHMA) resides.

5.3.1 You have not glorified (HADAR meaning to respect and recognize the authority of Jehovah) Jehovah." 1Jo 3:23a.

1Jo 3:23a And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ ...

6. Let me now give you an expanded translation of verses 22 and 23:

Expanded Translation:

Dan 5:22 And you have not humbled yourself and accepted those things your grandfather taught you.

Dan 5:23 You have instead rebelled against the Lord of Heaven. You had the vessels of His temple brought before you so that you and your entourage might drink wine from them; you praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, inanimate objects which neither see nor hear nor have intelligence. But the God, in whose hand is your life breath and the One who controls everything you do, Him, you refused to worship.

End Lesson Taught 8-19-2001