

# Daniel 4-5

## Teaching Notes

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### Introduction:

Is it not such a great blessing when you hear of the amazing things God does in our lives? We call these testimonies. We find in scripture that these are also called “the works of God.”

When it comes to our testimonies, others’ testimonies, and God’s testimonies, we should

#### **(1). Share**

*(Psalm 9:1 I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works.)*

#### **(2). Give Thanks**

*(Psalm 107:31 Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!)*

#### **(3). Meditate Upon Them**

*(Psalm 119:27 Make me understand the way of Your precepts; So shall I meditate on Your wonderful works.)*

#### **(4). Remember Them**

*(Psalm 111:4 He has made His wonderful works to be remembered; The Lord is gracious and full of compassion.)*

There is something so precious about remembering the works of God. We see the Person and Character of God; and, we see the signs and wonders of God in the lives of our brothers and sisters, today and those that have gone before us.

Well, Daniel 4 is a chapter that details God’s marvelous works. Guess in whose life? In the life of Nebuchadnezzar. This chapter details the testimony of King Nebuchadnezzar’s conversion.

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# Chapter 4

## Verses 1-3: Praise to God

*(Daniel 4:1 Nebuchadnezzar the king, To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you.*

**Daniel 4:2** *I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me.*

**Daniel 4:3** *How great are His signs, And how mighty His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And His dominion is from generation to generation.)*

### Verse 1:

It appears that this testimony was a letter sent all across the world.

Remember that King Nebuchadnezzar was the king of the greatest empire in the world in this generation (and according to chapter 2, incomparable to any kingdom in all generations).

**The Point:** There is no doubt that God used this letter and this testimony to spread the good news of salvation in the true God, Jehovah.

### Verses 2-3:

I like what he said: “I thought it good.”

There is a local, first generation Calvary Chapel pastor who is currently finishing his new book, detailing his testimony. Just like Nebuchadnezzar, he “thought it good” to share the great signs and mighty wonders in his life.

Also, I find it valuable to note what Nebuchadnezzar calls the Lord. He calls Him, “Most High God.” Where do we first find that particular name of God? In Genesis 14 with Melchizedek. Melchizedek was named “the priest of God Most High.” (Gen.14:18) Bells start to ring: Jesus’s eternal priesthood did not originate in the Levitical, Aaronic priesthood; it originated in the priesthood Melchizedek, the priest of God Most High.

When Nebuchadnezzar first used this name of God, he was still rebellious; but now he uses this name as a redeemed man in worship to “God Most High.”

- And in the dream in this chapter, the angel (watcher) uses this name of God.

Let’s hear how Nebuchadnezzar repents and believes:

- Verse 4 takes up back in time to what happened 8+ years before:
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## **Verses 4-7: The Dilemma**

*(Daniel 4:4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace.*

*Daniel 4:5 I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.*

*Daniel 4:6 Therefore I issued a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.*

*Daniel 4:7 Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known to me its interpretation.*

*Daniel 4:8 But at last Daniel came before me (his name is Beltshazzar, according to the name of my god; in him is the Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the dream before him, saying:*

*Daniel 4:9 "Beltshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God is in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation.)"*

### Verse 5:

Was this another dream-vision from the Lord? Yes. Later, verses 24-27 make it explicitly clear that Nebuchadnezzar received another dream from the Lord.

- Side Note: Also, it appears in this verse that King Nebuchadnezzar uses the word dream and vision synonymously. Therefore, we will call this a "dream-vision."

### **The Mercy of God:**

The Lord never gives up on anyone. He exhausts His divine effort to save everyone, "for He is willing that none should perish but that all should come to repentance."

### Verses 6-7:

I found it noteworthy that Nebuchadnezzar did not seek Daniel first, especially after his first prophetic dream was revealed, and the miracle of the fiery furnace.

As we see, he repeats exactly what he did in chapter 2. He exhausts those in the occult and those with world wisdom.

### Verses 8-9:

So, King Nebuchadnezzar **finally** calls up Daniel.

The question I have is, “Why was King Nebuchadnezzar so hesitant to call upon Daniel first, knowing the signs and wonders God had done through Daniel with his 1st dream and the deliverance that the Lord brought with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego?”

Could it be that Nebuchadnezzar is trying to avoid Daniel? Was it because Nebuchadnezzar was hoping with all his heart that this was not another dream from Daniel’s God, the only true and living God, the God that Nebuchadnezzar has been rejecting?

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## **Verses 10-18: The Dream-Vision**

*(Daniel 4:10 These were the visions of my head while on my bed: I was looking, and behold, A tree in the midst of the earth, And its height was great.*

**Daniel 4:11** *The tree grew and became strong; Its height reached to the heavens, And it could be seen to the ends of all the earth.*

**Daniel 4:12** *Its leaves were lovely, Its fruit abundant, And in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, The birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches, And all flesh was fed from it.*

**Daniel 4:13** *“I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven.*

**Daniel 4:14** *He cried aloud and said thus: ‘Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts get out from under it, And the birds from its branches.*

**Daniel 4:15** *Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth, Bound with a band of iron and bronze, In the tender grass of the field. Let it be wet with the dew of heaven, And let him graze with the beasts On the grass of the earth.*

**Daniel 4:16** *Let his heart be changed from that of a man, Let him be given the heart of a beast, And let seven times pass over him.*

**Daniel 4:17** *‘This decision is by the decree of the watchers, And the sentence by the word of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the lowest of men.’*

**Daniel 4:18** *“This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, since all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for the Spirit of the Holy God is in you.”)*

(Graphic 1)

## NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

DANIEL 4:10-18



The dream is self-explanatory. I enjoyed this visual to show you the size of the tree in his dream-vision.

### Answered Questions:

- First, a question some might have is, “Who are the *watchers*, the *holy ones*?” (vv13&17). We can presume, based on the context, that these are angels.
- Second, something to point out in the dream-vision is that one of the angels called God the “Most High.” This is a name of God that Daniel also used to speak of the Lord (we will see Daniel use it in chapter 5 and 7).
  - You could say it’s another reminder that this dream-vision was from the Lord.

### Verse 18:

Clearly, King Nebuchadnezzar knew that Daniel was truly the only one able to interpret it. And King Nebuchadnezzar still knew why. - The only reason why Daniel could interpret divine dreams was because Daniel was God’s servants.

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### **Verse 19: Daniel’s Heart**

*(Daniel 4:19 Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, “Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you.” Belteshazzar answered and said, “My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!)*

Daniel immediately knew the interpretation of the dream. It caused uneasiness. If you compare the 1st and 2nd dream, Daniel did not hesitate to tell the 1st dream. But with this 2nd dream, he hesitates to tell Nebuchadnezzar because he knows what will happen to Nebuchadnezzar if this prophecy concerns him.

We are told that Daniel wishes that it was not concerning Nebuchadnezzar, rather Nebuchadnezzar's enemies.

Feinberg, a Messianic-Jewish theologian points out something in this verse that I want us to highlight: Daniel was just like the other prophets: as servants of God, they did not rejoice over the suffering, humiliation, and judgment of the wicked. As true servants of God, they grieved over the judgments God called them to declare.

### Personal Example:

There were particular sermons earlier this year that I grieved over before I preached them: teachings in James, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, and Jude. If there is a recurring theme in these books it is, "Judgment begins at the house of God." I'll be honest: I was not excited, delighted that I was preaching the truth of God's judgment upon a disobedient believer or apostate believer. Certain Sundays I was troubled to preach these things because God's righteous judgment is troubling. Of course, we want to speak the truth in love; but we still must speak the truth.

Daniel inspires me to know that there is a **healthy balance**: When the servant of God preaches the word of God, which includes at times God's judgments, he should first **examine his heart**.

We've all met or been those people who just want to rebuke certain people. People who just find so much joy in spiritually spanking other people.

The fact that Daniel hesitated to give the interpretation inspires me to believe that Daniel loved Nebuchadnezzar. Do you have love for the person, enough to hesitate sharing the judgment intended for that person?

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## **Verses 20-27: The Interpretation**

**(Daniel 4:20** *"The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth,*

**Daniel 4:21** *whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home—*

**Daniel 4:22** *it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.*

**Daniel 4:23** *“And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him’;*

**Daniel 4:24** *this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king:*

**Daniel 4:25** *They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.*

**Daniel 4:26** *“And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules.*

**Daniel 4:27** *Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.”)*

King Nebuchadnezzar would receive God’s judgment unless he repented and believed. If he did not believe, he would be humbled.

- (1). V25. He would know who truly rules over the world - that it is God.
- (2). V25. God chooses who rules earthly kingdoms.
- (3). V26. Only an acknowledgement of the true King (God) - after 7 years - will the kingdom be restored.

### Verse 27:

This was a dream-vision of personal judgment. And it seems valid that just like his first dream, Daniel could have only told Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation. But we see Daniel’s love for King Nebuchadnezzar. In addition to the interpretation, he gives **advice** to the king. What’s the advice?

Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar to repent so that there may be an aversion to the judgment.

- Comparative example: This reminds me of Nineveh in the book of Jonah. Jonah preaches the God-given sermon that Nineveh will be overthrown. As a response to the judgment, the people of Nineveh “believe in God.” They fasted so that God may be merciful and avert the judgment. Look at what they said,

- (**Jonah 3:9** *Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?)*
- And then, we see how our merciful God responded:
- (**Jonah 3:10** *Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.*)

In reference to time-period, Jonah was 200+ years before Daniel. Possibly Daniel thought of Jonah and Nineveh.

Very similarly, Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar: if you simply repent, it might be that God will avert His judgment and extend mercy!

Lastly, note that Daniel is specific in how Nebuchadnezzar must repent:

**(1). A practice of sin.** Clearly, Nebuchadnezzar practiced sins that aren't disclosed.

**(2). Cruelty.** Clearly, Nebuchadnezzar was ruthless and cruel as a king over the poor. True repentance for Nebuchadnezzar (the fruit of godliness - to use the terminology from the parable of the sower) especially included the exercise of mercy to the poor.

How does Nebuchadnezzar respond to this divine dream-vision? Unfortunately, he does not repent!

## **Verses 28-33: Unrepentant → Judgment**

**(Daniel 4:28** *All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar.*

**Daniel 4:29** *At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon [A year passes. That's some time to repent. God is patient, is He not?].*

**Daniel 4:30** *The king spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?"*

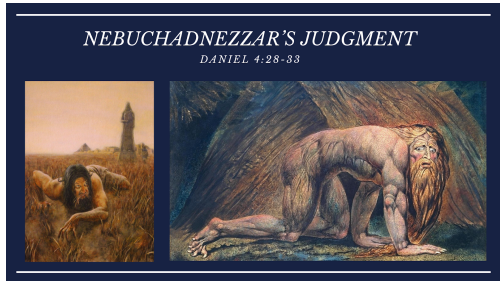
**Daniel 4:31** *While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you!*

**Daniel 4:32** *And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses."*



**Daniel 4:33** *That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.)*

(Graphic 2)



This blows my mind. King Nebuchadnezzar is now undergoing the humbling process.

- I think of Herod when he did something very similar, but Herod died!
- (**Acts 12:21** *So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. Acts 12:22 And the people kept shouting, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" Acts 12:23 Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died.)*

Even in this, we see God's mercy upon Nebuchadnezzar. For Nebuchadnezzar very soon will **finally and truly** repent and believe.

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## Verses 34-37: Nebuchadnezzar's Conversion

(**Daniel 4:34** *And at the end of the time [7 years] I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation.*

**Daniel 4:35** *All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?"*

**Daniel 4:36** *At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me.*

**Daniel 4:37** *Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.)*

Verse 34:

ESV - my reason returned to me; CSB - my sanity. This is simply **a miracle**.

Also, you see that King Nebuchadnezzar blessed, praised, and honored the Lord? You see his praise continue in verses 35-37.

What I want to first point out is what I see in verse 26, going back to the prophetic dream:

- (**Daniel 4:26** *“And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules.”*)

The Lord knew that Nebuchadnezzar would not repent; and the Lord also knew that Nebuchadnezzar would finally repent after the 7-year judgment. This is what the stump represented.

**Why does this amaze me? Because God knows those who are His.**

He knows those who will be His, no matter how long it takes their stubborn heart to get there. (**Ephesians 1:4** *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,*)

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Verses 35:

Nebuchadnezzar understood that he is not sovereign. God is sovereign.

- Note in this verse, he comes to that Biblical understanding, rephrased as doctrine by the Apostle Paul in Romans 9:20,
  - (**Romans 9:20** *But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, “Why have you made me like this?”*)

King Nebuchadnezzar finally understood that God is sovereign, that God is righteous and true in all His ways. And he finally understood God’s pursuit to redeem Nebuchadnezzar.

Verses 36-37:

Nebuchadnezzar recognized that God saved him, blessed him, and restored him after he was humbled by the Lord.

All he can do is praise, extol, and honor the Lord! And from what we read in the first verse of this chapter, all he could do is share with the world his testimony of God’s incredible mercy and redemption for a wretch like me.

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## Conclusion, ch4:

I admire that this testimony starts with praise to God and ends with praise to God. Personally, I find Nebuchadnezzar's testimony is one of the most profound testimonies in scripture. There are certain people in scripture where it's popularly said, "If God can save Saul of Tarsus, God can save anybody." I put Nebuchadnezzar on that list too. "If God can save Nebuchadnezzar, God can save anybody."

No matter how stubborn and prideful a person may seem, there is always hope for repentance. The God of love pursues every man to redeem them to Himself. And if one will open his heart to Him, he will be saved.

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## Intro to Chapter 5:

Now, in chapter 5, we see how God uses Nebuchadnezzar's testimony to pursue another man.

- I find it significant to teach from both chapters today because this next chapter is uniquely connected to chapter 4. To get the full weight of chapter 5, connecting it to chapter 4 is helpful.

In our lives, it's clear God uses our testimony to glorify Him among each other, yet He also uses our testimony for our families, friends, and acquaintances to repent and believe. A testimony becomes a tool to witness.

To which man does God use Nebuchadnezzar's testimony as a witness for salvation? King Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, Belshazzar. Let's fast-forward 30+ years into chapter 5:

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## Chapter 5

### Verses 1-4: The Feast

*(Daniel 5:1 Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand.)*

*Daniel 5:2 While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them.*

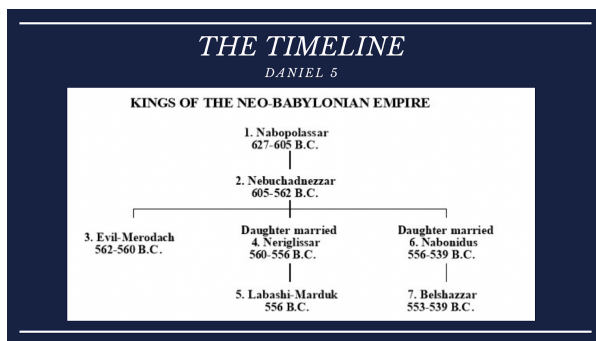
*Daniel 5:3 Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which had been in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them.*

**Daniel 5:4** *They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.)*

By this point, it seems to be clear that King Nebuchadnezzar passed on to glory. Now, his grandson is reigning in his place.<sup>1</sup>

- Note in verse 2 that the term “father” is used. So one might assume that Belshazzar was a son. To answer that:
  - Pusey: “In Hebrew nor in Chaldee (the Aramaic dialect of the Babylonians) is there a word for “grandfather.” Grandfather or forefathers were always referred to as “father(s).”

(Graphic 3)



**Constable:** (Belshazzar came to power some nine years after Nebuchadnezzar died.<sup>269</sup> The events of this chapter, therefore, occurred about 66 years after those in chapter 1, and about 36 years after those in chapter 4. Daniel received the revelation in chapter 7 in the first year of Belshazzar (553 B.C., 7:1), and the revelation in chapter 8 in Belshazzar’s third year (551 B.C., 8:1). Thus chapter 5 follows chapters 7 and 8 chronologically by 14 and 12 years respectively. Daniel would now have been in his 80s.)

- Some of you are like, “wait what?” 4 weeks ago he was just a teenager. Yes, he is likely now in his 80s.

Back to the text: Look at King Belshazzar. He dishonors God by drinking wine from the holy cups from God’s temple.

**This was a wicked act.** Exodus 40 reveals that the vessels of the temple are holy. In addition, the vessels of the temple were only meant to be touched and used by the Levite priests.

Let’s look at what happens next:

<sup>1</sup> [More](#) on Belshazzar.

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## Verses 5-12: The Sign

**(Daniel 5:5** *In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.*

**Daniel 5:6** *Then the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his knees knocked against each other.*

**Daniel 5:7** *The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spoke, saying to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing, and tells me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around his neck; and he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."*

**Daniel 5:8** *Now all the king's wise men came, but they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation.*

**Daniel 5:9** *Then King Belshazzar was greatly troubled, his countenance was changed, and his lords were astonished.*

**Daniel 5:10** *The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came to the banquet hall. The queen spoke, saying, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance change.*

**Daniel 5:11** *There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.*

**Daniel 5:12** *Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Beltshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation.")*

### 1st Insight:

I want to take note of the queen. Note in verse 2 that his wives and concubines were with the king at the great feast. The queen was not there. This was likely the queen mother, Belshazzar's mother, Nebuchadnezzar's daughter.

The queen only came when this miraculous sign appeared, particularly after nobody was able to interpret it. And the first thing that comes from her mouth is that Daniel, the Jewish prophet, can solve this. She never forgot Daniel. She never forgot what happened 30+ years before when her father had a dream-vision that led him to animalistic-insanity for 7 years until he was converted and redeemed by El Elyon, God Most High. She never forgot what happened 66 years ago, when her father appointed a young Jewish teenager

named Daniel to be the ruler over the whole province of Babylon because he interpreted the most impossible dream. She never forgot Daniel.

- You just never know the impact you have in people's lives years and decades later.

### 2nd Insight:

I want to highlight Daniel here. Put yourself in Daniel's shoes:

Imagine seeing the king of the earth repent and believe in the Lord. You are one of his most powerful government leaders in this kingdom. The kingdom is thriving because of this godly king. Daniel must have had a great time serving and leading with the converted King Nebuchadnezzar. But like any government, once the old king goes, so does his leadership team. How do we know that? Note that Belshazzar is not very familiar with Daniel, confirmed in verse 13+16. Before we continue, I want to share an application:

### **Application: Season to Season**

Daniel goes from one the most powerful and influential people in his youth and adulthood, but now for the past several years (about a decade, possibly more), Daniel finds himself as an old man, forgotten for all that he did for the Lord and for the Babylonian empire, the world. Daniel, a great man of God from a previous generation, now finds himself hidden, away from the stage, enjoying those hidden years with the Lord. No doubt he was serving the Lord. No doubt He remained faithful to the Lord. But we can't overlook those hidden years of Daniel.

The world teaches us: The best years are behind you. But what does the Bible teach us? **The best years are ahead of you.**

While this is encouraging to all of us, I find it all the more encouraging for those who are closer to life's finish line, at the last half or last quarter so to speak. For those older folks who've been a Christian for some years, think of all the steps of faith you've taken over the years. Think of all the lives you've impacted in your witness, in your ministry, etc. Think of those things.

And check this out, you don't even have to necessarily be in your 80s like Daniel to resonate with this. You can be doing great things for the Lord in a public format, and then all of a sudden from one day to the next, you are

forgotten and you now find yourself directed by God to walk on a path hidden from the public eye.

### **Encouragement 1:**

*(Ecclesiastes 3:1 To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven:)*

The Encouragement: You don't want to hold onto the past or let the past define you. We should always be moving forward. And moving forward means recognizing and thriving in your current season.

There are those public years and there are those hidden years, so to speak.

### **Encouragement 2:**

Be like Caleb who said, "I'm 80 years old, but I still haven't accessed all the promises that God has for me. Give me my sword. Let's overtake that city!" Or, be like Daniel who was simply available to be used by God as we see in this text.

What's very important to note is this: In those hidden seasons, don't think God is done with you; that you are unusable.

**Make yourself available and take steps of faith to serve the Lord.**

You may be in that hidden season now. You are asking the Lord, "Lord, open doors for me." Sometimes, like Daniel, they'll just fall into your lap because you'll get that phone call from the queen who knew you decades prior. And other times, the ball is in your court. God is waiting on you to take a step of faith.

And sometimes God wants you in a new generation. Look Daniel was old school, but that didn't matter. God was going to use Daniel in his 80s.

**Let's keep moving forward. Because you never know what doors God is going to open.**

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## **Verses 13-22: The Testimony**

*(Daniel 5:13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke, and said to Daniel, "Are you that Daniel who is one of the captives from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah?"*

*Daniel 5:14 I have heard of you, that the Spirit of God is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you.*

**Daniel 5:15** Now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing. *[Daniel is back at it again, just like old times.]*

**Daniel 5:16** And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.”

**Daniel 5:17** Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, “Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation. *[Side note: Let’s be that person who is content in the Lord. That we are able to do things from a heart of love and not an expectation to be paid.*

*There’s nothing like that moment where someone comes up to you and says, “Hey do you know so and so’s reputation and character?” And you can respond, “You can trust that guy. That man has no ulterior motives.” We all know that reputation is priceless.]*

**Daniel 5:18** O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor. *[Daniel is sharing King Nebuchadnezzar’s testimony to Nebuchadnezzar’s grandson.]*

**Daniel 5:19** And because of the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he executed; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down.

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

**Daniel 5:21** Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. 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 rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses.

**Daniel 5:22** “But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this.)

What a powerful moment.

Daniel opens up the interpretation of this miraculous sign by reminding Belshazzar of his grandfather’s testimony of his conversion. And he says, To repeat: “*You have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this.*”

All to say, this was a powerful, heavy moment for a man like Belshazzar.

And also, isn't it wonderful to see that Nebuchadnezzar did not just influence his children but he influenced his grandchildren with the knowledge of the Lord and his own personal testimony?

- This is why chapter 5 is directly linked to chapter 4 in my mind.

Nebuchadnezzar’s witness of the Lord was rejected by his grandson and his grandson’s judgment for it was coming quickly.



## Verses 23-31: Interpretation and Results

**(Daniel 5:23** *And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified.*


**Daniel 5:24** *Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written.*

**Daniel 5:25** *“And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN*

**Daniel 5:26** *This is the interpretation of each word. Mene: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it;*

**Daniel 5:27** *Tekel: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting;*

**Daniel 5:28** *Peres: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.” [This*

*is the prophetic fulfillment of the 1st dream that Nebuchadnezzar had. (Graphic 4)  As you see in the graphic, the prophecy has begun.*

**Daniel 5:29** *Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.*

**Daniel 5:30** *That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain.*

**Daniel 5:31** *And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.)*

According to history, this happened on October 13, 539 BC. This was 2,482 years and 12 days ago today.

Why did Belshazzar fulfill his word by appointing Daniel 3rd ruler in the kingdom?

(1). Was he too intoxicated?

(2). Was he repentant?

(3). Was it to simply honor his word publicly, but still in his heart he remained unrepentant?

(4). Since he knew his kingdom was coming to an end, did he simply do it knowing the position would not last long anyway?

- Honestly we don't know why he did it. It's one of those mysteries.

But what do we learn and conclude from this portion?

God's word was fulfilled. Babylon was taken over by the Medes and Persians.

Will we see Belshazzar in heaven? The text doesn't indicate yes or no. Yet, what we surely see is that Belshazzar was given one last chance to repent before he was killed that evening by the Medo-Persians, the next world power.

**Closing:**

**First**, I want to close with the mercy of God, in reflection on Belshazzar's life: Even to his final hours, God is pursuing the heart of Belshazzar to repent and believe and find salvation just like his grandfather preached to him as a little boy.

**Second**, I want to close with the power of one's testimony. Your witness and testimony is **powerful**. For the current generation (chapter 4) and for the future generation decades later (chapter 5). Preach the gospel and preach the word to your family, friends, and acquaintances. Preach the gospel and preach the word to your grandchildren, just like Nebuchadnezzar did to his grandson, Belshazzar. Pray for divine opportunities to preach to others.

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