


God's Reign and Daniel's Faithful Prayer

Daniel 5:1-6:28

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Part 1: Belshazzar's Arrogance and God's Judgment (5:1-30)

1a+b: Who was Belshazzar? In what way did he commit a serious sin against God? (1-4)

Belshazzar was Nebuchadnezzar's grandson through his daughter Nitocris.

Became the last king of ancient Babylon. He reigned for a short time during Daniel's life in Babylon.

Had chances to learn from the mistake that his grandfather made and clear his conscience but ignored the lessons from the history and ended up becoming the king that led the great Babylonian kingdom to an utter destruction.

Gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. This was not a small banquet. It was one of the greatest banquet that the kingdom held. There was no tomorrow

Took the gold and silver goblets that were taken from the temple in Jerusalem. These were used for the worship and praise of God of Israel. But he used it for his own pleasure and glory.



1c-e: What did the king's reaction reveal about his limitation of human reign? (5-9)
What did the Queen's counsel tell about Daniel's influence? (10-12) What do you learn about Daniel through his attitude toward the king's reward and request?

As the drunken king revealed, God sent him a sign: a human hand appeared, floating near the lampstand and writing four words in the plaster of the wall: "MENE MENE TEKEL PARSIN." The king paled and was extremely frightened; he called his wise men and astrologers and enchanters to tell him what the writing meant, promising "purple robe and have a gold chain placed around his neck, and he will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom" (verse 7).

Fear happens when you realize that you cannot do something on your own.

She was not swayed by the current situation, but told the king about Daniel the prophet.

- Daniel has the spirit of the holy gods in him.
- King Nebuchadnezzar found him to have insight and intelligence and wisdom like that of the gods.
- King Nebuchadnezzar appointed Daniel the chief of the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and diviners.

Daniel refused the rewards but decides to do it anyway




2a+b: What had Belshazzar seen and experienced through the story of his father? (18-21) Why did he commit the same sin anyway? (22-23; 1Sam 13:12-13)

Daniel goes to tell the king how the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty, greatness, glory and splendor. Daniel reminds Belshazzar that it was God who put the king in a high position to do what he was able to do with his authority.

Daniel rebuked Belshazzar's pride: although the king knew the story of how God humbled his grandfather, he did not humble himself. Instead, he dishonored God by drinking from the sacred items of the temple (verses 22–23). “...*though you knew all this.*” (22b)

1 Samuel 13:12-13 I thought, ‘Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the Lord’s favor.’ So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering.” “You have done a foolish thing,” Samuel said. “You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time.

1 Sam 2:30 “Therefore the Lord, the God of Israel, declares: ‘I promised that members of your family would minister before me forever.’ But now the Lord declares: ‘Far be it from me! Those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained.’”



2c-e: What did God demonstrate through the writings of the fingers of a human hand? (25-28) What does it mean to be “weighted in the scale and found wanting”? (30; 1Sam 2:3) What were the tragic consequences of Belshazzar's life?

Mene means “*God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end.*”: God is in control of all things.
Tekel means “*you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting.*”: God is the only one who can judge.
Parsin means “*your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians*” : God foretells.


That night, the Persians invaded. Cyrus the Great, king of Medo-Persia, broke through the supposedly impenetrable wall of Babylon by cleverly diverting the river flowing into the city so that his soldiers could enter through the river duct. (Daniel 5:29–30).

1 Sam 2:3 “*Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the Lord is a God who knows, and by him deeds are weighed.*”

God weighs (measures) one’s life (in His standards)

In what way can our life be weighed in God’s scale?


The life of those who honor God those who humble themselves / those who obey God’s word.



Part 1 Main Points

- We see emphasis on Daniel's life in between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, especially by the queen
- We are given the chance to learn from past mistakes and history. If we do this with humility and a desire to change, God will help and lead us. If we do not take that chance, we are bound to repeat the tragic history.
- God's judgment is inevitable, however it is not meant to be for his pleasure, but rather an expression his love for sinners, the ultimate goal being to help everyone repent and be accountable for their sins.






Part 2: Daniel's Faithfulness in Prayer and God's Rescue (6:1-28)

3a-b: In what way was Daniel exalted by the king? (1-3) What intrigue did the satraps and administrators have against Daniel? (4-9)

Under the new ruler, Daniel excelled in his duties as one of the administrators to such a degree that King Darius was contemplating making him head over all the kingdom (Daniel 6:1-3), made one of the 3 administrators over them. (in a way, the promise of Belshazzar came true, Daniel becoming the 3rd highest ruler), and was so distinguished that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. (2nd highest ruler of the nation)

This infuriated the other administrators so much that they looked for a way to bring Daniel down. They could find no wrongdoing on Daniel's part, so they focused on the matter of Daniel's religion. Using flattery, the administrators coaxed Darius into issuing a decree forbidding prayers to any god other than the king for the next thirty days. The penalty for disobedience was to be thrown into a den of lions.

Daniel disobeyed the edict, of course, and continued to pray openly to the true God. As Daniel made no attempt to hide his activity, he was seen praying and arrested. With much regret the king gave the order for Daniel to be thrown into the lion's den, but not without a prayer that Daniel's God would rescue him (Daniel 6:16).



3c-e: How did Daniel live his prayer life continuously despite the life-threatening situation? (10) What do you learn of the essentials of faith from Daniel's faithful prayer life? Why was he charged and punished? (11-18)

“Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.”

Daniel was already living the life of prayer, fully dedicated to God. Prayer was his life. “It is what he has done before.” Practically, we have to grow little by little

It is very easy to give up. The situations are almost never favorable for us. So if we only focus on the status or reality, we will not be able to pray. We can pray to God because we know that God is the Most High God who is sovereign and almighty.

His prayer life was not built within a day or two. Prayer became a part of himself that he could continue to do what he has been doing. He could not live or breathe without praying to God because prayer was the source of his daily strength to work and live for God's glory. Our prayer life cannot be instantly built. But it starts with a small decision of faith to pray daily.




4a-b: Which wonderful scene did the king see, when he came to the lion's den? (19-22) What did Daniel testify about his God in the midst of hardships?

At the first light of dawn, since he could not sleep, it was easy for Darius to rise very early. We can imagine him waiting for the first glimmer of dawn so he could see how Daniel was doing. The king called out to Daniel

He told the king that God had sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths and so he had remained unharmed. (22) *“My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty.”*

Daniel recognized that it was his God who sent His angel to close the mouths of the lions. Before the power of God, the lions were not able to devour the servant of God.

Daniel confesses that this was the result of his innocence that he had done nothing wrong before the king. God is the only one who is able to judge and punish. And God found no grounds for punishing Daniel.



4c-e: What testimony did the king give about the God of Daniel? (25-27) How did God bless Daniel's faith?

Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language in all the earth: (v.25b) *“May you prosper greatly! (v.26a) I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel.” (v.26b) “For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end. (v.27) He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.”* King Darius genuinely praised the God of Daniel

There is a time when God is not my God, but someone else's. Of course, there is the involvement of our heart soil in receiving God and accepting his words. King Darius received a great rescue from God by giving his own testimony about Him. Daniel's life was spared and he was able to continue to prosper throughout King Darius' reign.

Godly men will be persecuted (even) by friends and family. A Godly man will have much trouble in life.
But in the end, a godly man is rewarded.
Trust in God and keep our faith in God.



Part 2 Main Points

- This kind of Faith Daniel has cannot grow overnight, it takes experience, communication, and prayer, to have this really strong relationship with God. We need to grow on our faith, step by step
- God understands that with our faith in him comes persecution, hardships, and difficulties. So God stays with us and aids us in our time of need
- Although it may seem that God works within one person, his power impacts the lives of everyone.



Conclusion

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| The life of Daniel | The life of the kings (Belshazzar, Darius) |
| Faith in God who reigns | Faith in their own power, authority & kingship |
| Life of prayer & faith | Life in fear, anxiety, and insecurity |
| Peace in the den of lions | Fear on the throne |
| → God blesses | → God punishes |

Through this passage, we see two different lives and how people's actions are responded by God. Sinful life leads to punishment and instant death. Faithful life leads to blessing and salvation



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