



A JOURNEY THROUGH THE BOOK OF DANIEL

YES, NO & MAYBE

1. When something bad is about to happen to me, I try to distract myself with something good.
2. There is no such thing as a second-generation Christian.
3. God mostly communicates in riddles and mysterious imagery.
4. If you don't perform up to God's standards, He will remove you from your place of leadership.
5. God typically lets people know why He is judging them harshly.

DIG DEEPER

- What are some of the different ways that you've witnessed God communicating with you or others near you?

› READ Daniel 5:1-4 (NLT)

›› King For a Chapter!

- Who is this Belshazzar?
 - Belshazzar was Nabonidus' eldest son and was appointed by his father as his coregent. (Nebuchadnezzar is referred to as Belshazzar's father in the sense that he was his ancestor or predecessor.) This coregency explains why Belshazzar was called king (v. 1) and why he exercised kingly authority even though Nabonidus actually held the throne.

- Nabonidus did much to restore the glory that had belonged to Babylon under the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Nabonidus' mother was the highpriestess of the moon god at Haran. Perhaps because of her influence, he had great interest in restoring and expanding the Babylonian religion and did much to restore abandoned temples. He was absent from Babylon for 10 of his 17 years, from 554 through 545. In Haran he restored the temple of the moon god Sin, and then he attacked Edom and conquered parts of Arabia where he then lived for some time.

›› Why This Party?

- On the night of October 12, 539 B.C.
- We learn from both cuneiform records and Greek historians Herodotus and Xenophon, that the Persians were at that time poised on the plains outside of Babylon ready to take the city.
 - The Babylonia Chronicle indicates that just a few days earlier, Cyrus the Persian had defeated Nabonidus and the Babylonian army near Sippar, which was only fifty miles from Babylon. King Belshazzar was co-reigning with his father Nabonidus, and perhaps he felt that he needed help from the gods.
 - idols made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone: The six elements.

- « Why do you think that it is so easy for following generations to lose the relationship with God that their forefathers had?

› READ Daniel 5:5,6 (NLT)



» **The Writing Is On the Wall!**

« Why do you suppose that God chose this method to communicate with Belshazzar? Why do you think God uses riddles and perplexing imagery, instead of just talking in a booming voice?

» **READ Daniel 5:7-12 (NLT)**» **Third Highest Ruler?**

• Why do you think that Belshazzar offered this specific position?

» **The Queen Mother & Her Advice**

• Evidently she was not a wife of Belshazzar for his wives were with him in the hall (vv. 2–3). She was the king's mother, or perhaps even his grandmother. Her familiarity with both Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel seems to suggest that she was the king's grandmother. She evidently had previous contact with Daniel.

» **READ Daniel 5:17-28 (NLT)**» **The Writing Deciphered**

• **MENE** (menē) is an Aramaic noun referring to a weight of 50 shekels (a mina, equal to 1 1/4 pounds). It is from the verb menâh, "to number, to reckon."

• **TEKEL** (teqēl) is a noun referring to a shekel (2/5 of an ounce). It is from the verb teqāl, "to weigh."

• **PARSIN** (parsîn) is a noun meaning a half-mina (25 shekels, or about 2/3 of a pound). It is from the verb peras, "to break in two, to divide." The word on the wall was actually Ūparsîn, which means "and Parsin."

Then Daniel proceeded to interpret the meaning of these words. He explained that MENE meant that God had numbered (menâh) the duration of the days of Belshazzar's kingdom and was about to bring it to an end. TEKEL meant that Belshazzar had been evaluated by God, weighed (teqîltâh, from teqāl) in a balance and had been found wanting, that is, he was too light.

Apparently Daniel intended a play on words for a change in the vowels in perēs gives the word "Persian" (Pāras). Thus the message was that because of the moral and spiritual degradation of the king and his kingdom, God would terminate the Babylonian Empire and give it to the Medes and Persians.

« Why do you think that God used this method to communicate with Belshazzar? What does this interaction reveal about God and His character?

» **READ Daniel 5:29-31 (NLT)**

« This comes across as a very swift and very harsh ending to this story. Why do you think that the story ended this way? Does it fit with God's typical behavior and judgment?

MY PRAYER...

1. How do I search for solutions at times when I should simply go to God with my problems?
2. Do I treat some religious or spiritual items with less reverence than I should?
3. What new aspect of God's character does He want me to know?

