

**God Speaks To Us
Through Devastation!
Daniel 5:1-31**

- On March 19, 2003, Saddam Hussein and his sons, Uday and Qusay, invited a few close friends and advisors to have dinner with them at an exclusive restaurant in downtown Baghdad
- They did this in spite of the fact that there was an imminent threat from the United States, who at that time was sizably increasing its armed forces on the Iraq border in Kuwait
- Saddam and his sons were used to “the good life” and refused to let the military build-up ruin an opportunity with their friends

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- Someone tipped off the United States Special Forces of their location, and their dinner party came to an abrupt end when President George Bush ordered cruise missiles to demolish the building. Saddam Hussein and his sons escaped, but it was the beginning of the end of Hussein's 30-year reign

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- Daniel chapter five tells of a similar event with Belshazzar, who was the king of Babylon, a city which was thought of as being indestructible
 - Remember, Babylon was a city of 12 square miles with walls 80 feet high and 360 feet wide
 - It was thought of as the most powerful nation in the world—unbeatable, right?
 - While Belshazzar was entertaining guests, that same night, the Medes and Persians were planning an invasion

In the midst of the party, the Bible says that the fingers of a human hand began to write on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace where they were.

Sometimes God Finds Ways To Get Our Attention!

- Moses had his burning bush experience
- Paul had his Damascus road experience (T.I.A.)
- Jonah had his “in the belly of the whale experience”
- We can have various trials that God **allows to happen** (**sometimes we have to be scared straight!**)

Illnesses can do it!

- James 1:2-4 says that trials are an opportunity to grow our endurance

This Was A Fearful Experience!

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.”

1) Appropriate fear is healthy and produces a respect for God, *“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,” Hebrews 10:31*

An Appropriate Response To Tragedy!

- King Nebuchadnezzar learned the identity of God, worshipped Him and declared Him
- King Nebuchadnezzar had brazenly and audaciously declared that he had built the most powerful nation on earth by his own power, and for his own majesty, 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?”***
- God humbled him by driving him into the wilderness with a mental illness, Daniel 4:33-37 ***“Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled, He was driven away 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. And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to the heavens, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the most high and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For his dominion is everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation.”***

Daniel 4:33-37

*“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 4:33-37

“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. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol an 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.”

However, This “Come To God Event” Had No Revival Effect On King Belshazzar!

- He simply glossed over the event, congratulated Daniel for his dream interpretation, and gave him some purple clothes, a gold chain, and a new job title
Daniel 5:29
- But that very night, he was killed by the Medo-Persian invasion, and Darius took over the kingdom at 62 years of age. Daniel 5:30

What Should We Learn!

#1 Even tragic lessons about others are still lessons for us
(Romans 15:4; Luke 13:1-5, Jesus was told of the Galileans who were slain while in the temple making sacrifices)

#2 Some of us are like Belshazzar, who failed to remember the lessons of his father's reign, as well as God pointing a lesson *directly* at him
(MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN)

#3 The Writing On The Wall

MENE-God has numbered the days of your reign and has brought it to an end (Our days, too, are numbered, Psalms 90:10-12)

TEKEL-You have been weighed on the balances and have not measured up (God weighs us too, Matthew 25, the parable of the talents)

PARSIN-Your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and the Persians (God is longsuffering but just, and has the final verdict 2Peter 3:9)

The Plan Of Salvation

Hear the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Believe the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Repent of Sins

Acts 17:30

Confess Christ

Acts 8:37

Be Baptized

Acts 8:38