



# Daniel

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The Handwriting on the Wall Daniel 5:1-31

- The successor to Nebuchadnezzar was Evil-merodach. (see 2 Kings 25:27)
- Nabonidus was the last king of Babylonia and Belshazzar was his son.

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The Handwriting on the Wall Daniel 5:1-31

- This chapter refers to Belshazzar as Nebuchadnezzar's son.
  - This was a common way to refer to an ancestor.
  - There were still people, including the queen mother who had firsthand knowledge of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.
  - Belshazzar was aware of the events that had taken place during Nebuchadnezzar's reign.

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The Handwriting on the Wall Daniel 5:1-31

- Nabonidus was the last king of Babylonia and Belshazzar was his son.
  - It is documented that Nabonidus spent the last ten years of his reign away from Babylon in the Arabian oasis of Teima.
  - Belshazzar was reigning in Babylon as the functioning king.

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The Handwriting on the Wall Daniel 5:1-31

- Nabonidus was the last king of Babylonia and Belshazzar was his son.
  - A clue to this scenario is that he offered anyone who interpreted the handwriting the place of third in the kingdom. This makes sense if he occupied the second place in the kingdom behind his father Nabonidus.

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The Handwriting on the Wall Daniel 5:1-31

- Belshazzar threw a big party where the wine flowed freely.
- Nebuchadnezzar had taken part of the vessels from the Temple in Jerusalem in 605 B.C. at the time that Daniel and others were taken into captivity at the reign of Jehoiakim. (2 Chronicles 36:5-7)
- More vessels were taken in 597 B.C. when Jehoiachin was taken as a prisoner to Babylon. (2 Chronicles 36:9-10)

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### The Handwriting on the Wall Daniel 5:1-31

- These vessels had been dedicated to Yahweh and therefore were forbidden for any common use.
- These are the vessels that were brought out to this drunken gathering.
- To add insult to injury, as they raised these vessels to their lips, they were praising their false gods who were represented by various idolatrous images.
- At this moment a hand appeared and wrote words on the wall in the presence of all the people.

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### The Handwriting on the Wall Daniel 5:1-31

- Belshazzar was visibly shaken.
- He urgently called for the king's counselors to come, read, and interpret the message.
- They were unable to do so to the consternation of all present.
- The queen mother who was obviously absent from this gathering received word about the event.
- She told the king of Daniel and assured him that Daniel would reveal the interpretation.

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### The Handwriting on the Wall Daniel 5:1-31

- Daniel was summoned and given the opportunity to interpret the writing.
- The king promised the same reward of position and wealth if Daniel would accomplish this task.
- Daniel began by telling the king that he could keep his rewards but he would interpret the writing.

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The Handwriting on the Wall Daniel 5:1-31

- Daniel reminded Belshazzar of the greatness of Nebuchadnezzar and how God had humbled such a great king because of his pride.
- Belshazzar had not humbled himself although he knew about what had happened to Nebuchadnezzar.
- Daniel contrasted the false gods who do not see, hear or know, with the God who holds our breath in his hands and the one to whom we are accountable.

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The Handwriting on the Wall Daniel 5:1-31

- The writing and interpretation:
  - MENE, MENE: God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end.
  - TEHEL: You have been weighed in the balance and found wanting.
  - PERES: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians.

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The Handwriting on the Wall Daniel 5:1-31

- The fulfillment happened that very night:
  - Belshazzar was killed.
  - Darius the Mede began a new era of reign for the Medes and Persians. (Remember this was the arms and torso of the statue of Nebuchadnezzar's first dream.)

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Lessons

- Remain faithful to God in every season of life.
- Honor what is sacred.
- Learn from the failures of others.
- Live with the realization of your accountability to the one true God who hears and knows.