

Chapter 7 — "The Writing on the Wall" (Daniel 5:1-31)

"You did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways. Therefore he sent the hand that wrote the inscription." — Daniel 5:23b-24

PART I: UNDERSTANDING THE CONTENT

1. When History and Archaeology Confirm Scripture

The transition from Nebuchadnezzar to Belshazzar involves a complex historical gap. How does the 1854 discovery of the Nabonidus clay cylinders confirm the historical accuracy of Scripture regarding Belshazzar's co-regency and the 'third highest ruler' reward (Dan. 5:1-3, 7, 16)?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

2. The Drunken Feast

Belshazzar threw a lavish party for a thousand nobles. What three specific 'strikes' or progressive sins occurred, culminating in the intentional desecration of the sacred gold and silver goblets from the Jerusalem temple (Dan. 5:1-4)?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

3. A Prophetic Hand and the Queen Mother's Counsel

When the writing hand suddenly appeared, how did Belshazzar physically react, what failure did the wise men of Babylon experience, and how did the queen mother redirect the king to the memory of Daniel (Dan. 5:5-12)?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

4. Daniel's Response and Prophetic Rebuke

Why did Daniel emphatically reject the king's gifts, and how did he use the memory of Nebuchadnezzar's past humbling to directly confront Belshazzar for his deliberate failure to honor God (Dan. 5:13-24)?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

5. A Divine Decree, a Broken Empire, and Immediate Judgment

What meaning did the Spirit reveal behind the four-word inscription 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin' (Dan. 5:25-28), and how was this sudden judgment fulfilled that very night as the Medes and Persians entered Babylon (Dan. 5:29-31)?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

PART II: APPLYING THE MATERIAL

6. Heeding the Divine Warning Signs

We often fail to recognize 'the writing on the wall' in our relationships, finances, or health. How can you cultivate the spiritual discernment needed to recognize God's early warnings in your life before disaster strikes?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

7. Serving with Integrity vs. Seeking Reward

Daniel told the king, 'You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else' (Dan. 5:17). How can you protect your heart against greed or the subtle desire for human applause when serving the Lord?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

8. Honoring the God Who Holds Your Life

Daniel rebuked the king for failing to honor 'the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways' (Dan. 5:23). What subtle choices do believers make that reveal they are living as if they control their own destiny?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

9. The Brevity of This World's Empires

Belshazzar's seemingly invincible kingdom fell instantly 'that very night' (Dan. 5:30), just as Jesus taught in the parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:20). How should the stunning brevity of human history influence your daily priorities?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

10. Humbling Yourself Before God

Scripture emphasizes that 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble' (Prov. 16:18; James 4:6). What specific steps can you take this week to repent of pride and submit more fully to Jesus Christ?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS