

## Daniel 5 – Transition in the Daniel 2 Image, from Gold to Silver

By Holly Effiom

### VV1-4

Who is Belshazzar? Is this the same person as Belteshazzar mentioned in Dan 1:7?

What is it that Belshazzar is doing?

Why is he calling for the gold and silver vessels that Nebuchadnezzar captured when he conquered Jerusalem?

How long ago were these vessels constructed? Ex 31

Being gold and silver, in what part of the house of God were these vessels likely used before?

Is it likely that Nebuchadnezzar used these vessels before at a dinner party? Why or why not?

What did the king do with the vessels once they were brought to him?

Did drinking from the vessels of the house of God inspire him to praise the God of heaven?

### VV5-9

What does the king see after using the vessels of God for his own purposes?

Is it possible that the king was drunk?

Was the king the only one to see the hand writing something on the wall?

Was the king able to translate what was written? How do you know?

How do you know that the king was fearful?

Who did Belshazzar call to read and interpret what was written on the wall?

What was it to be the third ruler in the kingdom?

Were the wise men unable to read the writing because it was missing or visible only to the king?

What does it mean that king Belshazzar's countenance had changed in him? What affect did this change have on his lords?

### VV10-12

Is the queen Belshazzar's wife or mother? How do you know?

Was the queen present at the banquet?

How did the queen learn of what was taking place at the banquet?

What does it mean when a person says, "O king live forever"? Might this be a standard greeting for royalty – Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego use it in Dan 3:9 also?

What information does the queen share before the king? How would she know this information if she is an age-mate or even younger than the king?

What in this passage proves that Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego practiced divination?

**LESSON:** While divination was Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego's "jobs" for a time, they were not worshippers of any other gods, even under threat of death. Because of their faithfulness to the One True God, He made them to *excel* at their job.

How does this improve our understanding of divination? Is it inherently good or evil? Neither, it is the hands of the practitioner that makes it good or evil.

How does this improve our understanding of a "job" or the nature of "work"? Any job you are given to do, if you commit it to the One True God, He will prosper you in it (Ps 37:5). Notice how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were promoted into other positions in the province, after showing their faithfulness to God (Dan 2:49; 3:30).

It's not necessarily the job title but rather the hands of the practitioner that matters to God.

### VV12-16

What is the "spirit of the gods"? This particular phraseology is used frequently in this book – Dan 4:8, 9, 18.

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What does the use of this term tell you about the person using it?

What does this tell you about Belshazzar? Does it sound like he grew up at his father's knee, considering the events of Dan 4?

If the leader has an attitude or belief-system, what is likely the attitude or belief-system of the people he rules?

What does 1 Cor 8:5-6 teach us about gods? Were there "lords" in Belshazzar's court (Dan 5:9)? Who were these "lords" (Dan 5:2-3)? Who were the "gods" Belshazzar worshipped (Dan 5:4)?

Does 1 Cor 8:5-6 say that "gods" and "lords" do not exist?

Is 1 Cor 8:5-6 say that it's a case of mistaken identity: that the attribution to "gods" and "lords" is actually the One True God?

What did the king offer Daniel to interpret the writing on the wall?

How is it possible for Belshazzar to make Daniel the "third" ruler in the kingdom – third behind whom?

What does this tell you about what is important to Belshazzar?

1. How you look;
2. Having money;
3. Gaining position.

What does it tell you about what is likely important to the people of his kingdom? How do you know?

Would you say that Belshazzar is one of those kings that fornicated with "Babylon the Great"? (Rev 17:1-5, 9-10; Rev 13:1)

Is "Babylon the Great" at this point in V16 a physical kingdom or a spirit?

V17

Comparing Daniel's words to king Belshazzar and to king Nebuchadnezzar in Dan 4:19, 27, which of the two kings do you think Daniel liked?

In the case of a "leader", when a leader offends God who is it that suffers? (See Page 2, "Spiritual Concept" from Dan 1)

What happened to Daniel and his friends the last time a leader offended God?

What was important to Daniel? Was he impressed with the possibility of getting a scarlet robe and gold chain? How do you know?

Despite his apparent "miff" with this particular king did Daniel plan to still do his job?

VV18-24

Where was Nebuchadnezzar given this kingdom, majesty, glory, and honor? Dan 2:37

What did it mean to have a kingdom, majesty, glory, and honor, according to Daniel?

Where did we read about Nebuchadnezzar losing his kingdom? Who wrote this account?

Why did this happen, according to Daniel?

Why did the Most High God do this Nebuchadnezzar?

Did Belshazzar know about this account before Daniel reminded him?

How has Belshazzar offended God, according to Daniel?

**LESSON:** Notice that it was pride that offended God in the case of Nebuchadnezzar and now in the case of Belshazzar.

You might ask, "In what way was Belshazzar being prideful – he had not dared to say that Babylon was great because of himself, like his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, did?"

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God saw pride in Belshazzar's lack of respect for the things of God, in the way he had the vessels of God from the temple in Jerusalem brought out to be used by all and sundry for his own glory and that of the gods of gold and silver, and brass and whatnot, but NOT for the Most High God!

Hence, Daniel's anger – pride will once again bring judgment, which means instability of the nation; young men fighting and dying; women and children being killed and raped, and pressed into servitude, or made eunuchs (perpetual servitude)... Exactly like Daniel and his friends. *Pride!* Page 24

VV25-28

What was the writing that Belshazzar saw on the wall?

What does the word MENE mean?

What does the word TEKEL mean?

What does the word UPHARSIN mean?

How is this even related to the interpretation of the vision given to Nebuchadnezzar in Dan 2:39?

Did Daniel plead with Belshazzar to “break off” his sins like he did with Nebuchadnezzar? Dan 4:27 Why or why not?

VV29-31

What did Belshazzar say after Daniel explained the writing and its interpretation? What did Belshazzar do? Why?

What happened to Belshazzar that very night?

Why is Belshazzar called the king of the Chaldeans here?

Who are the Chaldeans, according to Dan 2:2?

Who conquered the Babylonians at that time?

Was Darius a “Persian”? Wouldn't that make the interpretation of the writing incorrect?

How old was Darius?

LESSON: According to Josephus (“Antiquities of the Jews”, Book 10, Chapter 11, verses 2 and 4), Darius, king of the Medes, and Cyrus, king of the Persians, had joined forces to make war on the king of Babylon; furthermore, Darius and Cyrus were “kinsman” of some sort. Sir Isaac Newton (“The Chronologies of Ancient Kingdoms Amended”, Chapter 6) goes further in explaining the genealogy of Darius, “...son of Hystaspes, the son of Arsamenes, of the family of Achæmenes, a Persian...” So, even though Darius is described as a Mede at the end of this chapter; ethnically, he was also of a Persian clan. Hence the interpretation of the writing on the wall was, technically-speaking, correct, UPHARSIN: the kingdom is divided and given to the *Persians*.