



The Writing on the Wall

Daniel Ch. 5. (All of it)

The '**Writing on the Wall**' is another 'Bible saying'
you can still hear people say today.

It means that the truth of some of your past deeds - maybe the future too - were found out & now everyone will know, because it is 'Writing on the wall' (or the TV news, the newspaper or the www) for all to see. It can be scary.

Daniel is one of the most popular people in the Bible and especially in God's opinion - and certainly in the Old Testament, BC. (Before Christ)

Apart from Jesus, Daniel is the only person that I know of who was so especially loved by God. Moses was great - but he murdered an Egyptian, Abraham told lies to protect his wife when in a foreign land ... but only Daniel is recorded in Holy Scripture - from the voice of an angel of God: "Oh Daniel, you who are highly esteemed of God." Or another translation: "Oh Daniel, greatly beloved of God." (Daniel 10:11 TLB)

Daniel had spent most of his life in Persia (today it is Babylon and Iraq) living a life of integrity. (without serious fault).

He was taken prisoner by Nebuchadnezzar's army as a teenager and because of his integrity, intellect and good nature, was raised to be a servant of the king of Babylon. (Place names change a lot over many hundreds of years).

He was taught the language, customs and laws of the Babylonians and served king Nebuchadnezzar as one of his top officials for most of his life, even though he was a Hebrew (Jewish) slave.

At the time of his capture many fine gold and silver temple articles were taken from the temple in Jerusalem to king Nebuchadnezzar's palace as 'Loot' or valuable booty, or the 'spoils of war' - but the king respected them as sacred - not to be used or abused.

Years later after Nebuchadnezzar died, King Belshazzar, his son, became king of Babylon. *He was not as wise as was his father, King Nebuchadnezzar.*

Belshazzar gave a very big party for thousands of his nobles (important people) and to impress them with his wealth. Belshazzar, who had had too much to drink, called for the gold and silver goblets (drinking cups) that his father had brought from the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. Then the guests all drank from them, praising their gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood and stone. (V 2-4)



“Suddenly they saw the fingers of a hand writing on the plaster of the wall.” (v.5) Everybody began to stare in amazement, especially Belshazzar:

“His face blanched with fear, and such terror gripped him that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way beneath him.” (V6. TLB)

When the writing was finished it read: **“MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN.”**

Belshazzar was sweating (as do most people when caught doing wrong) and probably thought of his past sins.

He called for his astrologers, diviners and soothsayers and promised those riches if they could tell him the meaning of the words. *None of them could!*

The Queen Mother calmed Belshazzar by telling him, reminding him really, of the powers Daniel had and about his past record. She really spoke of Daniel with praise and honour and said to call him: “There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the Holy Gods in him.” (V 11)

Daniel was summoned and promised great rewards if he could explain the meaning of the writing. Great rewards did not interest Daniel.

But, Daniel reminded Belshazzar of things that happened to his father Nebuchadnezzar - which, as a king, he should have remembered - but too much ‘drink’ had caused him to be stupid. Alcohol plays nasty tricks on your brain! Daniel actually tells King Belshazzar off for praising ‘gods’ of gold and silver etc. “... but you have failed to praise the God who gives you breath and life.”

How can a king forget three of Daniel’s friends thrown into a fiery furnace and walking out - or Daniel himself spending a night in the lion’s den and walking out next morning? Wow! Brave Daniel to rebuke a king and risk his very life.

Then the meaning is translated:

The writing on the Wall read:

“MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN.”

Daniel spoke:



Mene means ‘numbered’ - God has numbered the days of your reign, they are ended.

Tekel = means ‘weighed’ - you have been weighed in God’s balances (scales) and failed the test.

Parsin = means ‘divided’ - your kingdom will be divided and given to the Medes and the Persians.

Daniel was robed (clothed/dressed) in purple (the very best/royal colour) and a gold chain placed around his neck. (Da.5:22-31 from the Living Bible)

That very night Belshazzar the Babylonian king, was killed and Darius the Mede entered the city and began reigning for sixty two years. When God sets a plan - nobody can change it.

Daniel spent all his working life in Babylon - serving the king, yet never did he depart from God’s ways and what he knew was right.

A very good read is Daniel chapter 1 to chapter 6. From then on you need God’s guidance to help you understand it. It is for very mature Christians.



For the reader who is a Christian, there is a really beautiful hymn written many years ago about Daniel. You can hear it sung on Youtube. It is called "Dare to be a Daniel" – I have written the words here for you below:

1. Standing by a purpose firm,
Heeding God's command,
Honour them the faithful few
All hail to Daniel's band. (chorus)

2. Many giants great and small,
Stalking through the land,
Headlong to the earth would fall
If met by Daniel's band. (chorus)

Chorus:

Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone,
Dare to have a purpose firm and dare to make it known.

3. Many mighty men are lost,
Daring not to stand,
Who for God had been a host,
By joining Daniel's Band. (chorus)

4. Onward then ye happy band,
On to victory grand,
Satan and his host defy
And shout for Daniel's band. (Chorus)

Grand 'stuff' for a Christian believer

Others: **What do you worship?**

