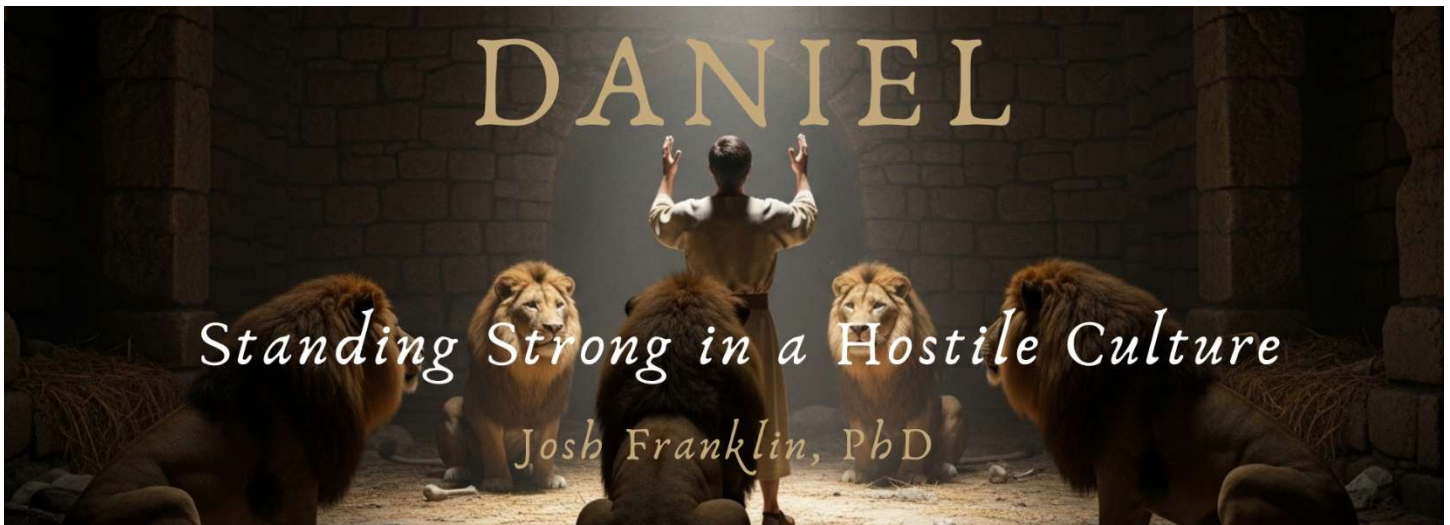




When God Crashes Your Party

Daniel 5:1-31



Picture: recreation of the Ishtar Gate in Babylon. The impenetrable walls of Babylon were at least 40 Feet high (some parts could have been 200-300 feet high), 87 Feet thick (like a 6-lane road). They used to do chariot races on the walls of Babylon.

This siege from the Medes and Persians were for upwards of 2 years. Daniel prophesied this in Daniel 2.

“One historian said that the Babylonians had enough food, water, and provisions to last the entire city for more than twenty



years. When Cyrus besieged the city, he realized that he couldn't do this forever, so he devised another plan. The great Euphrates River ran through the city, so Cyrus took the best men of his army and stationed half of them at the place where the river entered the city and the other half where it ran out. Then he took the rest of his army and went to a place where the Euphrates passed a huge swamp. He built a huge sluice gate or canal by which he planned to divert the Euphrates away from the city.”^a

23 years have passed from Daniel 4 to Daniel 5. Daniel is probably around 80 years old. Nabonidus is considered by history as the last king of Babylon, however Belshazzar was co-regent.

Picture: NABONIDUS CYLINDER – “In 1881, Assyrian archaeologist (with British citizenship) Hormuzd Rassam excavated the royal palace in Babylon. He found a drum-shaped clay cylinder covered with inscriptions, which is now in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin, and a copy is in the British Museum in London. In

^a David Jeremiah and Carole C. Carlson, *The Handwriting on the Wall* (Dallas: Word Pub., 1992), 104.

one of the inscriptions, King Nabonidus petitions the god SIN and specifically speaks of, “Belshazzar my firstborn son, my own child.”^b

1. SCRIPTURAL FULFILLMENT of Coming Judgment

Daniel 5 is written about events that occurred in 539 BC. Jeremiah prophesied these events about 90 years prior:

- 50:1-3 (general prophecy)
- 51:57 (drunken kings)
- 51:11 and 51:28-29 (Medes destroy Babylon)
- 51:36-37 (the military victory)

PRINCIPLE: The Bible can be trusted as the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16).

2. SINFUL FOOLISHNESS of this World (5:1-4)

The Downward Spiral of This Drunken Party:

1. **INTOXICATION** (200 years later, Alexander the Great would die in a drunken stupor in this same city 323 BC)
 2. **INDULGENCE** (5:1)
 3. **INDIFFERENCE** (5:1)
 4. **IRREVERENCE** (5:2-4)
- 1 Cor. 10:12 – let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he falls.

PRINCIPLE: There is no human wall so high, no human fortress so secure, no activity so hidden that it can protect sin from the wrath of God. [Bryan Chappell]

3. SOVEREIGN FINGER of God (5:5)

4. SOBERING FEAR of Belshazzar (5:6-16)

- He called for wisemen to interpret, not to simply read.
- Hebrews 10:31 – it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

5. SECURE FAITH of Daniel (5:17-24)

PRINCIPLES: Even if invited, godly people don't go to the drunken parties of this world (2 Cor. 6:17).

Don't revise or excuse away the clear statements of God's Word. Fear God, not man (Prov. 29:25).

6. SEALED FATE of Babylon (5:25-31)

Mene is an Aramaic noun from a verb meaning “to number.” It means your number is up, you're finished, your time has run out, it's over.

Tekel is a noun from a verb meaning to weigh as one might weigh on a scale. *All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirits. (Prov. 16:2)*

Upharsin is a noun from a verb that means to break into, to separate or to divide.

PRINCIPLES: God will hold you accountable for the light given to you (Luke 12:47-48).

One drop of the blood of Jesus will outweigh all sins that you have committed, when you trust in Jesus!

^b Michael Youseff, *Leading the Way Through Daniel* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House, 2012), 118-119.