

Poised Under Pressure Series - Part 3  
Daniel 4 & 5  
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Good morning. Today we continue our series on the book of Daniel. We will be covering chapters 4 and 5. Chapters 4 and 5 are actually two stories. Chapter 4 is the testimony of King Nebuchadnezzar and Chapter 5 a story about his son, King Belshazzar. Chapter 4 seems to be a copy of a kingly memo sent out by King Nebuchadnezzar himself as a testimony to the supremacy of the Most High God. Chapter 5 a retelling of the down fall of King Belshazzar. The two stories may seem completely different but there is one theme that binds them together and that is this:

**The Most High God is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and sets over them anyone he wishes.**

Four times this sentence is repeated in these two chapters.

The Most High God is sovereign over all the kingdom on earth and sets over them anyone he wishes.

Tell the story of Daniel Chapter 4.

**Daniel 4:28-30**

**<sup>28</sup> All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>29</sup> Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, <sup>30</sup> he said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?"**

Even as the words were on his lips, a voice came from heaven.

Immediately he is driven away from the people and everything that was said about him was fulfilled.

**Daniel 4:34-37**

**<sup>34</sup> At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever.**

**His dominion is an eternal dominion;  
his kingdom endures from generation to generation.**

**<sup>35</sup> All the peoples of the earth  
are regarded as nothing.**

**He does as he pleases  
with the powers of heaven**

and the peoples of the earth.

No one can hold back his hand

or say to him: "What have you done?"

<sup>36</sup> At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before. <sup>37</sup> Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

What an incredible testimony. Can you imagine what it must have been like to be a Jew in exile to read this testimony of Nebuchadnezzar? How this would have boosted their faith? We've been captured, our city destroyed, but our God reigns supreme. Nothing happens without his notice, no one rules without his approval.

We could probably park ourselves on chapter 4 for the morning and draw some great observations from the text. But I think you'll find that as we look to chapter 5 you'll see why these two stories back to back are so powerful.

#### **Daniel 5:1-17**

Daniel is funny; he tells the king he is going to read the writing and I'm assuming everyone looked at the wall but then Daniel gives him a speech. You know...

#### **Daniel 5:18-24**

<sup>25</sup> "This is the inscription that was written:

MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN

<sup>26</sup> "Here is what these words mean:

**Mene:** God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.

<sup>27</sup> **Tekel:** You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting.

<sup>28</sup> **Parsin:** Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

### **Daniel 5:29-31**

**<sup>29</sup> Then at Belshazzar's command, Daniel was clothed in purple, a gold chain was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom.**

**<sup>30</sup> That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain, <sup>31</sup> and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two.**

Two very different stories, with two different men, two opportunities to acknowledge God, two different results. One common problem. Pride.

Pride is kind of a difficult topic to talk about.

Andy Stanley said pride cannot see itself in the mirror. It is best to assume you are prideful and go from there.

We need people in our lives that we invite in, behind the exterior because the bible commands us to watch for yourself, but you can watch yourself by yourself.

### **Psalm 139:23-24**

**<sup>23</sup> Search me, God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.**

**<sup>24</sup> See if there is any offensive way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.**

Do you think that Nebuchadnezzar would have repented earlier if he knew his sin would be passed on to his son and it would cost him his son's life?

Galatians 6:7

**<sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.**

Proverbs 16:18

**<sup>18</sup> Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.**

1 Peter 5:5 <sup>5</sup>In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."

James 4:6 quotes the same verse.

**1.) Pride causes us to misuse the things of God**

<sup>2</sup> While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. <sup>3</sup> So they brought in the gold goblets that had been taken from the temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. <sup>4</sup> As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.

**2.) Pride deafens our ears and blinds our eyes to the word of God.**

<sup>8</sup> Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or tell the king what it meant.

**3.) Pride stifles our ability to learn.**

<sup>22</sup> "But you, Belshazzar, his son, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this.

**4.) Pride causes us to worship the wrong things.**

**You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand.**

Your false gods do not love you. Wood, gold and metal, seem like such silly things to worship, but are they? When you compare them to the things we worship, sports, academics, our looks, fitness, leisure, control...

**5.) Pride makes us forget who our source of life is.**

**But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways.**

I mean, isn't that the point of these two chapters?

**The Most High God is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and sets over them anyone he wishes.**

Ask the worship team to come up.

I'd like to end our time worshiping God together. It's a song of surrender, a song that acknowledges our weakness and his strength. A song that declares our trust in his wisdom and his rulership.

The song is "Be Thou Exalted."

Exalted mean (of a person or their rank or status) placed at a high or powerful level; held in high regard. elevated · prominent · superior · lofty · grand · eminent · prestigious.

Be thou exalted Jesus forever.

As the song comes to an end I'd like to ask you to do something with me as a community. I recognize that not everyone is able to participate but if you are, I'd like to ask us to kneel before the Lord as we sing the final chorus and we humble ourselves before the Lord.

Prayer Ministry

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