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# PURPOSE IN YOUR HEART

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- **SLIDE**

- Our last class was, *“Daniel’s Thoughts Troubled Him”*

- **SLIDE**

- Nebuchadnezzar is contented and prosperous.
  - When things are going well in your own life, it often makes you more vulnerable to problems... BE AWARE!

- **SLIDE**

- Like Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of a tree, we’ve all been cut down to size at one time or other.
- Sometimes it’s as simple as a coworker pointing out that you gave an incorrect answer.
- Sometimes it’s a boss who overrules a decision you made.
- Sometimes it’s a coach who takes you out of a game.
- Being cut down may lead to all kinds of feelings, none of them good: humiliation, being put down, losing face.
- The big question is whether you learn something positive from the situation. If you continue to look at it as a negative event, then you’ll never get past the humiliation.

- **SLIDE**

- We learn a lot about the character of Daniel by how he handles this interaction
- He isn’t glad to see the mighty brought low
- He doesn’t delight in seeing the proud abased

- ***Daniel's thoughts troubled him***

- He felt honest **COMPASSION** for this man who has treated him poorly

- **SLIDE**

- Daniel gives some unsolicited advice: repent. What does Daniel's advice teach us about God?
- God does not desire to harm us.
- He desires our willing obedience.
- Why does God bring Nebuchadnezzar back into all his glory?

- **SLIDE**

- God Loves US!
- God is not against honoring individuals.
- Nebuchadnezzar is entitled to enjoy the benefits of what he has done. He is a very successful man.
- What he needs to do, and what he finally does, is to acknowledge God as the source of his success.

- **SLIDE**

- Today we will look at Chapter 5, and our class is called, "**Let Thy Gifts Be To Thyself**"

- **SLIDE**

- The Bible doesn't tell us much about the time between chapter 4 and chapter 5, but this is one of the largest ancient Kingdoms ever to live, AND they were very particular about recording their events in writing, so their history is very well known

- **SLIDE**

- Nebuchadnezzar dies an old man

- **SLIDE**

- His son, Evel-Merodach takes over

- **SLIDE**

- His Brother kills him, and takes over

- **SLIDE**

- In a conspiracy, Nabonidus gains the throne, and marries Nebuchadnezzar's daughter

- **SLIDE**

- Years later Nabonidus and his wife move to Arabia, and he retires by giving his son, Belshazzar the throne
- When we join the story, things are not looking real good...
- The Medes and Persians under Cyrus are closing in
- They have camped outside the city wall for several weeks
- Inside Babylon there is enough provision for years of siege if necessary, so the king is not really concerned
- We actually know the date of this story, it is Saturday, October 12, 539 BC
- And it all begins with a party...
- Daniel 5:1-4
  - 1) Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.
  - 2) Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein.
  - 3) Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.
  - 4) They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

- Not only does this king not know the true God of heaven...

- Remember how Nebuchadnezzar had ended the previous chapter?

- Daniel 4:37

- 37) Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

- But, this king is four monarchies and many years removed from the lessons that Nebuchadnezzar had learned, and he probably doesn't even know about the special abilities of Daniel, and his relationship with the True God
- But, Belshazzar is going to get a rude awakening tonight, and he's going to learn awfully quickly about what God has planned for him
- Belshazzar is going to die tonight
- But, before that he is going to get scared...
- Have you ever really been scared?
- I mean hair-raising, spine-tingling, knee-knocking scared?
- What if you were to find out that you were going to die tonight?
- What if you saw what was going to be written as your epitaph?
- That is what happens to Belshazzar today, Saturday, October 12, 539 BC

- **SLIDE**

- If 3 words would be written as your epitaph, what would they be?
- Belshazzar faced that question, and he saw the handwriting on the wall...
- I'd like to suggest 3 words today that could be chiseled on your tombstone to the glory of God
- They will represent the opposite of what Belshazzar received in judgment

- **SLIDE**

- The first is: **REVERENCE**
- This is an age like that of Belshazzar where very few even know the one, true God, say nothing about Reverence Him
- How can we learn to revere God?

- **SLIDE**

1. Intense worship

- **SLIDE**

2. Careful speech

- **SLIDE**

3. High personal standards

- **SLIDE**

4. Humble approach to life

- Let's see what happens to Belshazzar

- Daniel 5:5-9

- 5) In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.
- 6) Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.
- 7) The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. *And* the king spake, and said to the wise *men* of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.
- 8) Then came in all the king's wise *men*: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof.
- 9) Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished.

- Sounds amazingly familiar, doesn't it?

- King has scary dream

- Thoughts trouble him

- Brings in the Chaldeans and Soothsayers and Wise Men

- They can't help him

- He is so scared that his countenance changes

- Then Daniel enters the scene...

- Daniel 5:10-16

- 10) *Now* the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house: *and* the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed:

- 11) There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom *is* the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, *I say*, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, *and* soothsayers;
- 12) Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.
- 13) Then was Daniel brought in before the king. *And* the king spake and said unto Daniel, *Art* thou that Daniel, which *art* of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry?
- 14) I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods *is* in thee, and *that* light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee.
- 15) And now the wise *men*, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing:
- 16) And I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.

- The best math that I saw, says that Daniel is about 81 years old by now
- Belshazzar is a very young man put into a position that he really didn't earn, by his father
- It must have been quite a sight
- Daniel stands before the king and says,
- Daniel 5:17-24

- 17) Then Daniel answered and said before the king, **Let thy gifts be to thyself**, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.
- 18) O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour:
- 19) And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.
- 20) But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:
- 21) And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that

the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and *that* he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

- 22) And thou his son, O Belshazzar, **hast not humbled thine heart**, though thou knewest all this;
- 23) But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, **which see not, nor hear, nor know**: and the God in whose hand thy breath *is*, and whose *are* all thy ways, **hast thou not glorified**:
- 24) Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.

- Daniel refuses the reward

- ***“Let thy gifts be to thyself”***

- Some people just can't be bought

- It wouldn't have hurt anything for Daniel to get paid for his labor, but he wanted to prove a point to Belshazzar

- Daniel begins by reviewing the story of Nebuchadnezzar's

- Then Daniel rebukes Belshazzar

- False gods are no gods at all

- The true God holds your very existence in his hand, the hand that judges, or the hand that can uphold you

- Daniel's rebuke of Belshazzar tells us what Daniel felt about how we should live...

- **SLIDE**

- Like Daniel, we must pursue a RELATIONSHIP with God

- That is the SECOND word, that I want you to remember today

- You could have REVERENCE chiseled on your tombstone, and you could also have RELATIONSHIP

- We need to develop a relationship with God

- But how?

- **SLIDE**

1. Admit your need of Him

- **SLIDE**

2. Believe in His forgiveness and presence in your life

- **SLIDE**

3. Commit to following Him - It's like a marriage relationship

- What were the three words that Belshazzar saw that scared him so much?

- Daniel 5:25-28

- 25) And this *is* the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.
- 26) This *is* the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.
- 27) TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.
- 28) PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

- **SLIDE**

- These are all words for money in their language...

- **SLIDE**

- MENE is the word for Mina, which you may be familiar with, a standard day's wages

- **SLIDE**

- TEKEL is another form of the word, Shekel, which there are 50 shekels in a Mina

- **SLIDE**

- PERES, or it's plural form, UPARSIN was a Half a Mene

- **SLIDE**

- So it's like saying "\$100, \$100, \$2, \$50" to someone...
- But the words are also in use in the language, and have meaning...
- Think about a couple of the coins in our language that have common phrases...
  - A PENNY for your thoughts
  - Not worth a plugged NICKEL
  - Turn on a DIME



- Imagine if those phrases were so old and so commonly used, that the coin itself had developed meaning in our language
- The Penny represented Thoughts, the Dime turning, etc.
- To say to someone, “Penny, Penny, Dime and Nickel”, might mean, “Think! Think! Turn your life around, or it won’t be worth anything!”

- **SLIDE**

- In Babylonian, MENE had developed into the idea of “To Number”

- **SLIDE**

- TEKELS were commonly used as weights in scales, so they had also come to mean “To Weigh”

- **SLIDE**

- PERES was half a Mina, so it mean “To Divide”
- So, we see this hand writing these figures of money up on a wall, but the meaning is quite clear to Daniel
- Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsin – Your Kingdom has been numbered, weighed in the scales and found wanting, and it shall be divided and separated from you
- This odd scene now gets even odder...
- Having delivered to Belshazzar a condemning rebuke about the King’s wickedness, and then a condemning interpretation about his own pending doom...
- The King still honors his word, and honors Daniel
- Daniel 5:29

29) Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and *put* a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

- Wow! Third in the Kingdom!
- For about three hours...

- Daniel 5:30-31

30) In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.

31) And Darius the Median took the kingdom, *being* about threescore and two years old.

- **SLIDE**

- The last of the three words that I want you to remember about your potential epitaph is REALITY
- We must demonstrate REALITY before God

- **SLIDE**

- This kind of is the sum of the other two words, REVERANCE and RELATIONSHIP
- Psalm 90:12

12) Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

- Belshazzar represents the practicing atheist who cannot face the reality of his own impotence in the face of greater forces, and he can only brace himself with the help of alcohol to block out the stark truth
- We don't need to escape from our lives, we can enjoy a life of REALITY with God, if we live a life of REVERANCE of Him, and have developed a RELATIONSHIP with Him