



DANIEL :

A PROPHET FOR TODAY

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## CLASS 1: INTRODUCTION/ ISOGOGICAL INFORMATION

1. We hold that the Book of Daniel is written by the Prophet Daniel. There are many in higher-critical circles who reject this.

2. Structure and Dating of the Book:

a. Daniel 1-6: The Six Narratives of Daniel.

b. Daniel 7-12: The Four Visions of Daniel

c. Based on the Evidence of the Book from linguistic evidence suggests that it was not written before 536 BC and not later than 300 BC. It was during the time of the Babylonian Captivity (which began in 586 BC).

3. Style of writing

a. Daniel frequently uses “chiastic” writing:

(An example from the book of Genesis: “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man will his blood be shed..” (9:6).

b. Daniel uses two languages in the book: Hebrew (1:1-24a, and 8:1-12:13) and Aramaic (2:4b-7:28).

4. Major themes:

a. The Messiah

b. God as the protector of His people

c. The Uselessness of false gods and the Power of the True God

d. Maintaining the integrity of faith

e. Eschatology (end-times teaching)



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5. Chapters in Daniel

- a. Chapter 1:1-21            The Judeans are steadfast in their faith
- b. Chapter 2:1-49            Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Statue
- c. Chapter 3:1-30            God's Faithful Servants are Saved from Death
- d. Chapter 3:31-4:34        Nebuchadnezzar is judged for his arrogance
- e. Chapter 5:1-6:1            Belshazzar is judged for his arrogance
- f. Chapter 6:2-29            God's Faithful Servant Daniel is rescued
- g. Chapter 7:1-28            Daniel's vision of the four kingdoms
- h. Chapter 8:1-27            Daniel's First Vision of Post-Babylonian kingdoms
- i. Chapter 9:1-27            Daniel's Prayer and Vision concerning Jerusalem
- j. Chapters 10-12            Daniel's Second vision explained, the antichrist, the end.

6. Names of the Hebrews

- a. Daniel- Beltshazzar, (the very name of Nebuchadnezzar's god, also his son, the King who follows, is given a contracted form of this name: Belshazzar)
- b. Hannania – Shadrach
- c. Mishael – Meshach
- d. Azariah – Abed-Nego

7. History and Outline we will follow:

- a. King Nebuchadnezzar- The King who plundered Jerusalem, bringing them into their exile in Babylon.
  - 1. During the third reign of the Judean King, Jehoiakim.
  - 2. After plundering Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar had some of the "royal family, Nobility, youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in wisdom,



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endowed with knowledge... etc. Daniel is one who was brought by the King's the king's eunuchs.

3. The Dream and the Interpretation of Dream
4. The King's Golden Image and the Fiery Furnace
5. Nebuchadnezzar's reign ends in shame and contempt (4:28ff)
6. In the end he acknowledges God and is restored.

b. King Belshazzar

1. The son of King Nebuchadnezzar. His name is a shortened form of the name of King Nebuchadnezzar's god, Belteshazzar (the name also given to Daniel).
2. Drunkard. Used the vessels that were taken from the Temple/ Sacralage.
3. "Praised the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.
4. The Lord takes notice.
5. The "Handwriting on the wall"
6. Daniel's interpretation:
  - a. "Mene, Mene, Tekel, and Parsin"
  - b. Mene (used twice)- God has numbered the days of Belshazzar's Kingdom. "Really short..."
  - c. Tekel- the scale is tipped against him.
  - d. Perez/Parsin- the kingdom is divided among the Medes and Persians.
7. That very night Belshazzar was killed.

c. King Darius (Chapter 6)

1. Was 62 years old.
2. Originally liked Daniel, 6:3



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3. The “ordinance.” “Woke” has always been with us and has always stood against the faith in the True God. 6:6ff. The penalty: The Lion’s den.
4. Daniel and his friends continued to pray, breaking the ordinance of the King.
5. The woke snitches turned Daniel in.
6. Daniel is cast in and spared. The woke are thrown in and instantly devoured. In God’s kingdom, the “woke” of that time—and of today will *never* prosper in the Kingdom of God.
7. Darius declares that the God of Daniel is the living God.
8. Now Daniel prospers in Darius’ kingdom. 6:26

d. King Cyrus 6:28

1. Daniel’s dream
  - a). Lion with Eagles’ Wings
  - b). A bear
  - c). A Leopard
  - d). Terrifying Beast
2. The “Ancient of Days”
3. Son of Man given dominion
4. Daniel’s Interpretation
5. Daniel’s Vision of the ram and the goat
6. The Ten Horns
7. The Little Horn
8. Daniel’s interpretation
9. Daniel’s Prayer for the People
10. Gabriel gives answer



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11. King Cyrus ultimately releases Israel from captivity.

12. The Seventy Weeks

13. Daniel's Terrifying vision.

e. Chapter 12- The End of Time

1. Michael, the Great Prince

2. The General Resurrection

3. The shut seal

4. The Good and the Wicked

5. The 1335 Days





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## Daniel Chapter 2 (Class 2)

### I. Outline

#### **A. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream: V. 1-16**

1. Nebuchadnezzar demands that the “magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans” not only interpret his dream, but *tell him what the dream was*.

- a. What does the Second Commandment say about all of these practices?
- b. Nebuchadnezzar threatens all of them with a grizzly death and destruction of everything in their lives if they do not answer him.
- c. Daniel and his friends are also on the “hit-list.”
- d. Daniel steps forward and volunteers to the king's demands.

#### **B. God reveals the king's dream to Daniel: V. 17-30**

a. God reveals the dream to Daniel in a vision. Note here that Daniel clearly states that the goal of the dream is to reveal “what will happen in the latter days.” (v. 28). He is actually referring to the Messianic Age, not just the future of the Kingdom of Babylon. This may have been lost on Nebuchadnezzar but would not be lost on Daniel's readers which point us to the advent of the Messiah, long promised to Israel. <sup>1</sup>

בְּחֹזֶן

The Hebrew Word for “vision” used in verse 19 often replies to a PROPHETIC vision only given to the prophets in the OT

- b. Daniel's prayer to the Lord v. 20-23
- c. Arioch, the leader of the guard, tells Nebuchadnezzar that he has found someone who can tell the king his dream: Daniel.
- d. Daniel tells the king that it is the “God in heaven” who has made this known.

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Steinmann, *Daniel*. Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2008). Page 133.



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e. Daniel explains that it is not his wisdom he speaks, but God's. Relate this to the preaching and teaching of God's Word today.

### **C. Daniel Tells of the Dream. V. 31-36**

a. Daniel starts by revealing the dream.

1. A great image, mighty, bright, and scary.
2. Head of gold
3. Chest and arms silver
4. Middle and thighs of bronze
5. Legs of iron
6. Feet of iron and clay.
7. Feet are smashed with a stone

b. "This was the dream"

c. Some theologians believe that Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten the dream (Calvin, Josephus). However it is most likely that he remembers the gist of the dream, but because he fell back asleep he cannot remember its details. He certainly has to remember the gist of the dream in order to be able to know when his demand that the dream be recounted to him has been obeyed. Therefore, in his statement, "my spirit was troubled to *know/understand* the dream and will "know it only if it is described to him, but that he wants to "understand the meaning." <sup>2</sup>

### **D. Daniel Interprets the Dream (v. 36-45)**

1. Notice that Daniel affirms the authority of the king, given by God. (v. 38)
2. The Dream's Interpretation
  - a. King Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold.

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<sup>2</sup> Steinmann, Page. 117,





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- a. The types of metals described by Daniel each are inferior to the one that comes before.
- c. Two inferior kingdoms will arise after his reign- of bronze that will rule the earth.
- d. The fourth kingdom will be strong as iron that breaks and shatters all things. The most attention is given to the iron kingdom
- e. It will be a divided kingdom- partly strong and partly brittle.
- f. The admixture of iron and clay will be mixed marriages that will not endure.
- g. In the end God will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed that will bring an end to all earthly kingdoms. It will stand forever.
- h. The lack of specific information prevents identification of these kingdoms.
- i. For us as Christians, the determinative factor is the establishment of God's kingdom with the coming of Jesus the Messiah during the Roman era (and into eternity!).
- j. While it is common for Dispensationalists to "number the toes [two legs/10 toes] to represent the ten states of the Roman empire, Daniel does not number them. It is an assumption on their part. <sup>3</sup>
- k. The Crushing Stone: See Luke 20:17-18 and Matthew 21:42-44).

### **E. Daniel is promoted in Nebuchadnezzar's Kingdom (v. 46-49)**

- 1. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges Daniel's God.
- 2. He grants Daniel the honor of gifts and making him ruler over the whole province of Babylon.
- 3. Daniel's request to make Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego rulers over the affairs of Babylon was granted by the king.

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<sup>3</sup> Steinmann, p.137



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### Point to Ponder: Civil Disobedience

Civil disobedience is when Christians disobey laws that conflict with God's Word and Commandments. This has occurred throughout the history of God's people.

In the New Testament we see it clearly in Peter's exchange with the Sanhedrin in Acts 5:27-29

*And when [the Sanhedrin] had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us." But Peter and the Apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."*

In the Book of Daniel, Civil Disobedience happens twice. The first with the Three Men who refused to bow to Nebuchadnezzar's statue. The second was Daniel, who continued to pray to and worship God when Darius commanded that no one could worship their own "god".

Note that Civil Disobedience brings with it repercussions: The three men were thrown into the fiery furnace and Daniel was thrown into the Lions' Den.

Those who stand on the Word of God *will* experience the hatred, punishment, imprisonment, torture, and even death in this world (see Matthew 24), but the one who endures to the end will be saved.

God delivered these men from certain death, in both cases causing the two kings to turn to the Lord. But even if we are not delivered before we die, in Christ we have complete deliverance before God by His blood.

Some areas to think about:

- The complete shutdown of churches during the coronavirus debacle while allowing big-box stores, liquor stores, etc. to remain open?
- Governmental funding of abortion?
- The direct attacks of both government and society on the family?
- The lawlessness of society today with false justice?
- ???
- How should we, as Christians, handle these situations? What should be done before becoming civilly disobedient?



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### Daniel Chapter 3 (Class 3)

#### ***Despite the Death Threat, the Judeans Remain Faithful and Entrust themselves to the Lord***

##### **A. Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image**

1. An existing ancient Babylonian transcription, found in archeology states, "Beside my statue as king...I wrote an inscription mentioning my name,...I erected for posterity. May future kings respect the moment, remember the praise of the gods. ... He who respects...my royal name, who does not abrogate my statues and not change my decrees, his throne shall be secure, his life last long, his dynasty shall continue..."

B. The refusal of the Three Judeans to worship the statue.

1. The Chaldeans may have felt that the Judeans were given positions that should not have gone to conquered foreigners, but to native Babylonians. Their accusation against the Judeans consists of three charges:

- a. They do not heed the king's royal authority.
- b. They do not serve the king's gods.
- c. They do not worship the golden statue. <sup>4</sup>

3. Note that Daniel is not present in this.

4. "Maliciously accused" in the Aramaic actually translates as, "they ate pieces of the Judeans." It is an ancient idiom/figure of speech for slander. "

5. Read Revelation 13:7ff. Note similarities

6. The Musical instruments cited:

- a. Horn- brass instrument
- b. Flute – like today. May have been labial or may have had some kind of "whistle" like structure (think recorder).
- c. Harp- similar to David' harp- small instrument with strings that are plucked.

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<sup>4</sup> Steinmann, page 182.



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d. Trigon- A triangular harp (Unknown what this was exactly)

e. drum- similar to what we have

f. other non-specified instruments.

6. Music and worship go together even in pagan worship today.

5. The same rage that Nebuchadnezzar had against his magicians is present again and poured out upon Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.

a. Nebuchadnezzar gives them a chance but they still refuse.

b. The three are not afraid of death, (v. 16-18)

1). We should not be afraid of martyrdom. God will deliver us, whether it be in an earthly way, but ultimately in His coming Kingdom.

### **C. The Fiery Furnace**

1. Nebuchadnezzar's rage causes him to make the furnace seven times hotter.

a. Those who deliver the Judeans to the furnace are slain by the heat of the fire.

b. The three are bound in their clothing. Persian terminology is used here, so we are not exactly what the clothing is, even though it is specifically named. Traditionally the text has called the clothing, "coats, pants, turbans and other clothes"

c. The men were thrown into the furnace.

### **D. The Son of Gods**

1. Traditionally understood as the pre-incarnate Jesus.

a. Verse 24.

b. They are walking around, very much alive.

c. Nebuchadnezzar calls them forth.

d. Once again Nebuchadnezzar refers to "their" God as the "Most High God."

e. Their survival—without any smell of fire, burns, or charring—confirms God to Nebuchadnezzar.



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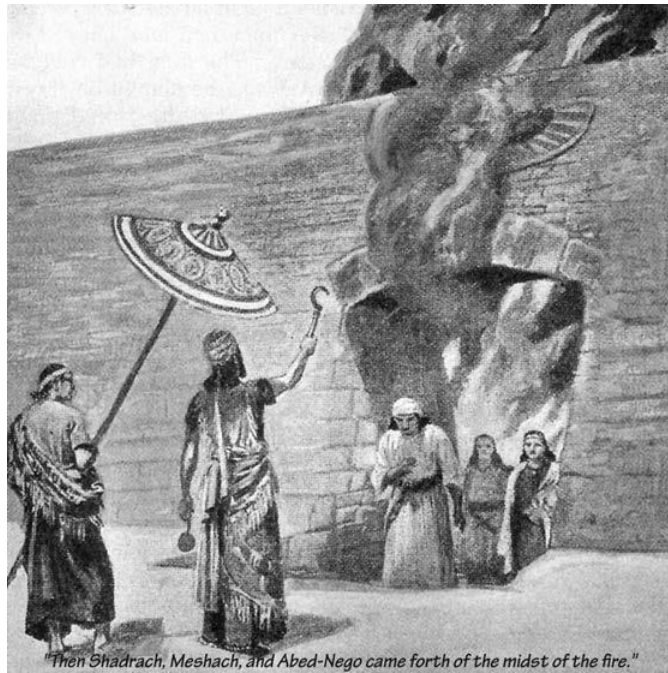
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### **E. Nebuchadnezzar's proclamation**

1. Verse 29. He issues an order/proclamation that forbids blasphemy against their God.
2. The penalty was severe.
3. The Second Commandment is very severe: God will not hold blameless those who take His name in vain. Yet it is such a common sin today.
4. The King promotes the three





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Notes on Chapter 3



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## CLASS 4: DANIEL CHAPTER 4

### **IV. Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream : The Tree v.1- 15**

A. This dream is a prophecy given to the King, revealing what the Lord is about to do with him.

1. Once again, the pagan advisors cannot interpret the dream.
2. Once again, the King calls Belteshazzar (Daniel) to interpret it as he had the first dream of the King.
3. Note that here the King admits that Daniel was named after his god.
4. In this case the King reveals to Belteshazzar, and does not make him reveal the content of the dream.
5. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges that “a spirit of the holy gods dwells in him” (still not recognizing YHWH). The only other person in the Bible referred to this way is Joseph, by Pharaoh in Genesis 41:38)

### **B. The Dream: (v. 7-15)**

1. A tree that stretches toward to the heavens. Similar to the Tower of Babel. (Genesis 11:1-9).
2. The Tree becomes strong (v.8).
3. The Tree was visible to the entire earth (v. 8)
4. Leaves and fruit abundant, food for all. (v. 9)
5. Shade for the beasts, branches for the birds (v. 9)
6. A Watcher who was a holy one came down from heaven- Both watchers and holy ones in the Bible are among the ranks of angels. (“Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones... *LSB* 670). They call the King to chop down the tree. (vv. 10-11)
7. Leave the Stump, with a band of iron and brass, with the grass of the field. Chopped down but a remnant of the tree remains. It will be made wet by the dew of the field. This is unlike the total destruction of the tree in Ezekiel 31.



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8. The heart is changed from a human heart to that of a beast.

9. Seven times pass over it- This symbolizes the “full time of judgment.” It is a figure, much like the numbers in the OT and the Revelation. (e.g. “The Seven Years of Famine”). Do not equate 7 with years, as is the error of many Christians today. It is an indeterminate, but limited amount of time where God’s judgment rests on Nebuchadnezzar.

10. The decree from the watchers and holy ones indicate that this vision is given by God Himself. This judgment is to fall on every aspect of the tree’s majesty. Note that the angels deliver God’s decree and not their own.

11. The dream is given so that the living may know that the Most High rules the human kingdom and gives it to whomever he wishes.

### **C. Belshazzar’s interpretation of the dream:**

1. Daniel’s reluctance to interpret the dream (v. 19)
2. For the original Judean exiles, this tree that was about to fall represented Babylon.
3. The tree being seen “to the ends of the earth” shows the power and prominence of Babylon in the world at that time.
4. The Decree of the Angels:
  - a. imperative decrees: chop down, strip, leave (v.11-12)
  - b. We are not sure what the “binding with a band of iron” represents.
  - c. The tree’s “human” mind turning to the “mind of a beast” represents Nebuchadnezzar losing his mind (for a time) and living like an exiled beast in the desert.

### **D. Daniel’s Exhortation to King Nebuchadnezzar**

1. The primary reason that Daniel exhorts the King (v. 24) is to bring the King to repentance.
2. He exhorts the King to “break off your sins...practice righteousness...showing mercy to the oppressed.





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### **E. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream is Fulfilled: (28-37)**

1. As Nebuchadnezzar was admiring the kingdom that he built, God speaks to Him in “a voice from heaven” declaring that his kingdom has departed from him and that he would be driven out to the beasts of the field. He will become one with the beasts.

2. This takes place immediately. Daniel's interpretation finds reality.

3. “Immediately the word was fulfilled...” Again, indicating the Lord's hand in this.

4. After the seven times had passed, Nebuchadnezzar is restored as King. (v. 34-36).

5. While Nebuchadnezzar praises God, there is no evidence that He embraced or had saving faith in God.

a. In the first three chapters he had at least 3 major encounters with God, but then reverted back to his sinful ways

1. Praising God after Daniel tells him his first dream and interprets it, but then builds the statue to himself following his praise of God.

2. The Fiery Furnace- where he praises the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego, but then is faced with this exile.

3. This exile- where he ends with a doxology to God.

4. More to follow.

Excursus:

Some see a Messianic “type” in Nebuchadnezzar. A “type” is a prophecy that uses person, place, and event rather than words. It in no way “compares”, but rather points forward.



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Ye watchers and ye holy ones,  
Bright seraphs, cherubim, and thrones,

Raise the glad strain:

“Alleluia!”

Cry out, dominions, principedoms, pow'rs,

Virtues, archangels, angel's choirs:

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia!

Notes on Chapter 4



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## CLASS 5: DANIEL CHAPTER 5

A. History of the Kings of Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon's Fall:

1. Amel-marduk (562-560)
2. Neriglissar (560-556)
3. Labashi-marduk (556)
4. Nabonidus, with co-regent Belshazzar (550-539)

a. While the text calls Belshazzar the son of Nebuchadnezzar (cf. 5:11, 5:18) King Nebuchadnezzar is not the biological father of Belshazzar. "Father" is used in a thematic way, as in a preceding King. This was common usage at this time. (As Pastors, for instance, we often refer to those who trained and molded us as "Fathers in the Faith").

b. We have learned from extra-Biblical history that there were three kings that followed Nebuchadnezzar's reign prior to Belshazzar.

c. History records that Belshazzar was the biological son of Nabonidus.

d. Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians in 539 BC.

B. Belshazzar's sin (v.2-4)

1. Sacrilege – Belshazzar along with his lords, wives, and concubines were drinking from the Holy Vessels that were plundered from the Temple in Jerusalem when Jerusalem fell in 586 BC.

2. Idolatry- In drinking from the Holy Vessels, they worshiped the "gods" of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood and stone.

3. Daniel calls out Belshazzar in his interpretation of the writing on the wall (v. 22-23).



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#### C. The Hand (v.5-9)

1. Immediately after Belshazzar's sin, a human hand appears writing on the plaster.
2. The king was terrified: (v.6).
3. He does not know what to make of this so he calls in "loudly" those who may be able to help him:
  - a. The enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers.
  - b. Once again, they are unable to help the King.
4. The Queen overheard the consternation of the King , and she tells him about Daniel and his relationship to King Nebuchadnezzar (v. 10-11)
5. King Belshazzar calls upon Daniel to interpret this.

#### D. Daniel's interpretation:

1. Daniel begins by discussing the Kingship of Nebuchadnezzar: (v. 17-21).
  - a. God gave him the kingship, all peoples, nations, and languages, who trembled and feared him.
  - b. His spirit became hardened.
    - 1). Pride
    - 2). His glory was taken from him.
    - 3). He was driven from among the children of mankind into the wilderness where he lived as an animal.
    - 4). His glory was returned to him before his end.



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2. Daniel points out Belshazzar's sin (v. 22-23)

- a. He has not humbled his heart.
- b. They drank from the Vessels of the Temple.
- c. They praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or know. (Idolatry).
- d. Belshazzar did not honor God who gave him life and breath.

3. The Words Written by the Hand and their meaning:

- a. Four words appeared on the wall: MENE, MENE, TEKEL and PARSIN
- b. The Interpretation
  - 1). MENE – God has numbered your days.
  - 2). MENE- The repetition of this word shows that God has severely numbered Belshazzar's days.
  - 3). TEKEL- you have been weighed. The scale is tipped against Belshazzar.
  - 4). PARSIN (Some Bibles have PERES) – your Kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians. (539 BC)

4. Daniel is clothed in purple (sign of citizenship) and a gold chain placed upon his neck.

- a. Daniel did not desire this from Belshazzar (v. 17)
  - b. He received it anyway.
5. The words written by the hand on the wall had immediate fulfillment



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*Handwriting On The Wall*

4^3771

peres

"Divided"

LPN

tekel

"Weighed"

K54

mene

"Numbered"

K54

mene

"Numbered"

NOTES ON CHAPTER 5