

# Daniel 5

## January 12, 2025



### **CONVERSATION STARTERS**

- What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?
- What Scripture has been shaping you recently?
- Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?
- What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?
- What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?
- What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?
- What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

### **INTRODUCTION**

*As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.*

#### **Snowman**

Today, we are going to play a word-guessing game where you try to guess the word before the snowman melts! Instead of adding to the picture when an incorrect letter is guessed, you erase part of a drawn snowman.

#### **Supplies Needed:**

- Pre-written words on slips of paper
- A cup or small bowl to draw the slips from
- A whiteboard and marker or a drawing pad and marker

#### **How to Play:**

1. One student volunteers for a turn at the board and draws a snowman. Decide in advance how many parts the snowman will have so this can be the same each round.
2. The student at the board picks a slip of paper from the cup and prepares the board by drawing one blank for each letter of the word and possibly giving a clue (person, place, thing).
3. The other students take turns guessing letters one at a time.
4. If a guessed letter is in the word, the student at the board fills in the blank(s) with that letter.

- 5.If a guessed letter is not in the word, the student at the board erases one part of the snowman.
- 6.The students win if they guess all the letters correctly or figure out the word before the snowman completely melts.
- 7.The turn is over if the snowman melts before the word is guessed.

Words to Use:

Daniel  
Belshazzar  
Nebuchadnezzar  
King  
Vessel  
Gold  
Silver  
Temple  
Jerusalem  
Babylon  
Hand  
Gold Chain  
Purple  
Queen  
Chaldean  
Humble  
**End with:** Mene Mene Tekel Parsin

Teaching Moment:

The most difficult phrase written on the board was the last one. In today's passage, a mysterious hand appeared and wrote on the wall during the king's party, writing "Mene Mene Tekel Parsin." We're going to talk about what this meant and what we can learn from these events.

**What have been some of your takeaways from our study of Daniel so far?**

## ***DISCUSSION***

 ASK MULTIPLE VOLUNTEERS TO READ DANIEL 5:1-31.

**How would you describe the actions of Belshazzar at the beginning of this passage?**

**Things quickly get crazy in this passage! What happened?**

**When has God interrupted you to send a clear message?**

How would you describe Daniel's response to the king?

What did Daniel say Belshazzar did in verse 22? How might we also be guilty of this?

Why do you think Daniel recapped parts of Nebuchadnezzar's experiences that Belshazzar likely already knew?

What did Daniel say the words meant?

Do you think the king took what Daniel said seriously? What evidence do you see to support your answer?

How does today's passage remind us again of God's ultimate authority?

### ***GOING DEEPER***

Read Daniel 5:23b: "But you have not glorified the God who holds your life-breath in his hand and who controls the whole course of your life." What does this indicate about how we should live before God each day?

Where might God be speaking to you right now? How can you make sure you are readily listening and looking for Him?

### ***APPLICATION***

King Belshazzar was prideful, but we can be too. How can we grow in humility before God?

Belshazzar didn't learn from Nebuchadnezzar's mistakes. How can we learn from the lives of others to live wisely daily?

What is your big takeaway from today's passage?

### ***PRAYER***

Thank God for sending Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. Ask Him to show you areas where you are proud and need to make changes. Thank Him for being on the throne, no matter who reigns in our human kingdoms.

## LOOKING AHEAD

*Encourage your group to look ahead to next week's scripture passage as we continue our study of Daniel.*

**January 19, 2025 --- Daniel 6**

## COMMENTARY

### DANIEL 5

**A Mysterious Message on a Wall (5:1–12).** Belshazzar held a great banquet for all his nobles and their wives. He ordered that wine be served in the golden and silver goblets Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Lord's temple in Jerusalem years before. While Belshazzar and his guests drank from the goblets, a hand appeared in thin air and wrote a mysterious message on one of the palace walls. The frightened king sent for his wise men and diviners and decreed that whoever was able to interpret the message would be elevated to third in the kingdom. (Technically speaking Nabonidus was still the king, with Belshazzar being his vice-regent.) When they were unable to decipher the message, the queen (or queen mother) reminded Belshazzar of Daniel, who years before had gained a reputation as a skillful interpreter of dreams and riddles.

**Daniel Interprets the Message (5:13–31).** When summoned by the king, Daniel agreed to interpret the writing, though he declined the king's gifts. Before interpreting the message, however, he reminded Belshazzar of how God had humbled proud Nebuchadnezzar. He also denounced the king for his arrogance and for his disrespect for the temple vessels. Finally, Daniel turned to the cryptic message, which read, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin." He interpreted the message as being an ominous warning of impending judgment on Belshazzar's kingdom. "Mene," meaning mina (fifty shekels), sounds like a related word meaning numbered. Belshazzar's days were numbered and his reign about to come to an end. In similar fashion "tekel," meaning shekel, was a play on a related word meaning weighed. Belshazzar had been weighed like a shekel on the scales of divine justice and had been found lacking. "Parsin," meaning half-shekels (in 5:28 the singular form "peres" is used) was taken as a play on a related word meaning divided. Furthermore, it sounds like Persian. Belshazzar's kingdom would be divided between the Medes and Persians. This prophecy of Belshazzar's demise was fulfilled that very night.