

## DANIEL 5: HAND WRITING ON THE WALL

Text: Daniel 5:5

INTRO: Bible critics have tried harder to dismiss the book of Daniel than perhaps any other book of the Bible. Those who are not willing to accept the concept of supernatural revelation and predictive prophecy seek to attack this book at every turn. Regarding the historical portions of the book, perhaps none have been attacked so much as chapter 5.

- A. For centuries no mention of Belshazzar had been found in any historical record outside the Bible. Critics denied that such a person ever existed.
- B. But then around 1850 & shortly thereafter, several records were discovered that mention Belshazzar by name & that indicate that he ruled in the city of Babylon & its environs while his father, Nabonidus, the emperor, was staying in Arabia.
- C. The book of Daniel has been greatly criticized for continually referring to Belshazzar as the “son of Nebuchadnezzar” when other historical records indicate that his literal father was Nabonidus, who was a usurper to the throne & not related to Nebuchadnezzar at all. Assuming the historical records that have been discovered are correct, there are several possible solutions to this problem.
  - 1. “Son” could possibly be used in the sense of “successor.”
  - 2. Belshazzar could be the literal son of Nebuchadnezzar & the adopted son of Nabonidus.
  - 3. Perhaps more likely, Nabonidus might have married a widow of Nebuchadnezzar, making Belshazzar Nebuchadnezzar’s step-son, or perhaps Nabonidus married Nebuchadnezzar’s daughter, making Belshazzar Nebuchadnezzar’s grandson.
  - 4. There are other possibilities, including the possibility that the scant records that have been discovered so far are not totally reliable.
- D. The dates mentioned in Daniel differ slightly with the dates as recorded in Jeremiah. Fact is, the Jews usually reckoned any part of a year as a whole year. The Babylonians did not, so the “4<sup>th</sup> year of a particular king to

the Jews, would only be his 3<sup>rd</sup> year according to the Babylonians.

- E. Any other problems mentioned by critics who would like to do away with the supernatural events & predictive prophecy in the book of Daniel have similar solutions.
- F. Finally, we have the endorsement of Jesus Christ to the accuracy & dependability of Daniel—and that should certainly settle the question.

Mark 13:14, "So when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not" (let the reader understand), "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

- I. BELSHAZZAR'S BLASPHEMY, vs. 1-4.
- II. THE HAND, WRITING ON THE WALL, vs. 5-9.
- III. DANIEL IS SUMMONED.
  - A. The queen's advice, vs. 10-12.
  - B. Daniel is brought in, vs. 13-16.
  - C. Daniel's message to the king:
    - 1. No charge, vs. 17.
    - 2. A history lesson, vs. 18-23.
    - 3. "The hand-writing on the wall," vs. 24-28.

NOTE: The reason the other "wise men" couldn't explain the message. (1) It was not in complete sentences (2) The words had more than one meaning. First, they were usually associated with money.

MENE=MINA (50 shekels) from "numbered"  
TEKEL=SHEKEL from "weighed"  
UPHARSIN=1/2 SHEKELS from "divided" But  
PERES had still another meaning—"Persian."

- D. Daniel rewarded, vs. 29.
- IV. IMMEDIATE FULFILLMENT OF DANIEL'S PROPHECY,  
Vs. 30-31.

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