

Life Group Notes 10/31/2021 Streamed Week 80
Pastor Mark Daniel Week 5 Chapter 5

(This is written to give you good things to enjoy, because look again at what Paul told Timothy (1 Tim 6:17-18)! I think he was thinking of us at the time: **17 Instruct those who are rich in the present age not to be conceited and not to put their hope in the uncertainty of wealth, but in God, WHO RICHLY PROVIDES ALL THINGS TO ENJOY. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, and to be generous and ready to share...**) The following ice breaker is just a starter for your group. The message comes after the second bar. Please enjoy!)

CROWD BREAKER: Say something about the pastors. What has struck you about them, that has instructed you, and helped you in the decisions you make? Use this OR Mark's opening question: "What is your reputation? If someone were to describe you, what would they say about you?" Would they be accurate? —The scribe

Note: Be good to one another. Be sensitive and kind. Let God heal our hearts...and guide our discussions. **PLEASE PRE-READ THESE NOTES AND CHOOSE THE DIRECTION THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR GROUP. The purpose is to unite, not divide; to fearlessly proclaim the freedom the gospel brings. Any part of these notes might be appropriate as a crowd breaker for your own group. The goal is to create memories from Sunday that will serve for a long time.** BE COGNIZANT OF YOUR GROUP'S TIME AND BE SENSITIVE! **Some groups would like to dwell on a single idea. Let the Spirit be your guide. Never feel obligated to complete this study. This study is also a great devotion, taken slowly through the week.**

Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions raised by Pastor Mark's message from this Sunday. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to guide all our discussions, using the highlights as trail blazes. **The purpose is to minister to one another.**

Belshazzar's Feast (*Scribe's note: In history, Belshazzar is said to be the son of Nabonidus and therefore the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. He is therefore reported to be the regent, not the king of Babylon, having rights and privileges but not kingship. The Aramaic word "son" can also mean offspring/grandson.*)

Pastor Mark says, "Daniel had a reputation." **How did he earn that? How would Belshazzar have learned of his reputation?**

¹Later, King Belshazzar held a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and he drank wine with them. ²Under the influence of the wine, Belshazzar gave orders to bring in the gold

and silver vessels that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king could drink from them, along with his nobles, his wives, and his concubines.

3 Thus they brought in the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king drank from them, along with his nobles, his wives, and his concubines. **4** As they drank the wine, they praised their gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone. ***What do you notice? What do you predict the outcome will be? How is this like his father Nebuchadnezzar's error?***

The Handwriting on the Wall

5 At that moment the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. As the king watched the hand that was writing, **6** his face grew pale, and his thoughts so alarmed him that his hips gave way and his knees knocked together. ***What would your reaction be?***

7 The king called out for the enchanters, astrologers, and diviners to be brought in, and he said to these wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this inscription and tells me its interpretation will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around his neck, and he will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom." ***How does this repeat the pattern we've seen? How many times have we seen the pattern? Who are you gonna call?***

8 So all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the inscription or interpret it for him. **9** Then King Belshazzar became even more terrified, his face grew even more pale, and his nobles were bewildered.

10 Hearing the outcry of the king and his nobles, the queen entered the banquet hall. "O king, may you live forever!" she said. "Do not let your thoughts terrify you, or your face grow pale. **11** There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him. In the days of your father, he was found to have insight, intelligence, and wisdom like that of the gods.

"Your father, King Nebuchadnezzar, appointed him chief of the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and diviners. Your own father, the king, **12** did this because Daniel, the one he named Belteshazzar, was found to have an extraordinary spirit, as well as knowledge, understanding, and the ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve difficult problems. Summon Daniel, therefore, and he will give you the interpretation." ***Why is it significant that it is the queen who makes the suggestion? Do the wise men not know about him? Why didn't the astrologers make the suggestion?***

13 So Daniel was brought before the king, who asked him, "Are you Daniel, one of the exiles my father the king brought from Judah? **14** I have heard that the spirit of the gods is in you, and that you have insight, intelligence, and extraordinary wisdom.

15 Now the wise men and enchanters were brought before me to read this inscription and interpret it for me, but they could not give its interpretation. 16 But I have heard about you, that you are able to give interpretations and solve difficult problems. Therefore, if you can read this inscription and give me its interpretation, you will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around your neck, and you will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom."

17 In response, Daniel said to the king, "You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the inscription for the king and interpret it for him. 18 As for you, O king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness, glory, and honor. 19 Because of the greatness that He bestowed on him, the people of every nation and language trembled in fear before him. He killed whom he wished and kept alive whom he wished; he exalted whom he wished and humbled whom he wished. **How is this consistent with what we have seen of Daniel's character? How significant was Nebuchadnezzar? Do you remember the "head of gold" (The dream in Chapter 2)? What comes next?**

20 But when his heart became arrogant and his spirit was hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne, and his glory was taken from him. 21 He was driven away from mankind, and his mind was like that of a beast. He lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like an ox, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until he acknowledged that the Most High God rules over the kingdom of mankind, setting over it whom He wishes. **How important is it to keep "significance," as in Nebuchadnezzar's royal power, in perspective? What happens when you lose perspective?**

22 But you his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this. 23 Instead, you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven. The vessels from His house were brought to you, and as you drank wine from them with your nobles, wives, and concubines, you praised your gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you have failed to glorify the God who holds in His hand your very breath and all your ways. 24 Therefore He sent the hand that wrote the inscription. **Predict the outcome.**

25 Now this is the inscription that was written:

MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN.

26 And this is the interpretation of the message:

MENE means that God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.

27 TEKEL means that you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient.

28PERES means that your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians." **Put yourself in Daniel's place. How many times has he brought good news by interpretation so far? How many times has he brought bad news? How harsh is this word?**

How does God weigh your life? How sobering is it to know that your deeds will be weighed in the balance?

29Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel in purple, placed a gold chain around his neck, and proclaimed him the third highest ruler in the kingdom.

30That very night Belshazzar king of the Chaldeans was slain, **31**and Darius the Mede received the kingdom at the age of sixty-two.

Look at Daniel's reputation and compare it to yours. Who did people run to in Daniel's day? Why? What was Daniel's chief attraction? If you were accused of being a Christian and arrested, would there be any evidence to prove it, to hold against you?

Pastor Mark asks: "If folks are going through darkness, do they know where to find the light?" **Answer this question.** He says, "God has put us on this earth to be dispensers of that hope." **Think of the oil in a lamp. Do you have oil to dispense?**

Look up 2 Corinthians 5:6-11

6Therefore we are always confident, although we know that while we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord. **7**For we walk by faith, not by sight. **8**We are confident, then, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. **9**So we aspire to please Him, whether we are here in this body or away from it. **10**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive his due for the things done in the body, whether good or bad.

11Therefore, since we know what it means to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is clear to God, and I hope it is clear to your conscience as well. **Talk about this. How does this compare to what happened to Belshazzar and Daniel that night? How sobering is this? How constantly aware was Paul of his position? Have you ever been hurt when a hard truth was spoken? How did you respond?**

Look up 1 Corinthians 9:26-27 ...**26**Therefore I do not run aimlessly; I do not fight like I am beating the air. **27**No, I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. **How does this relate to what we just read? What do you want your reputation to be? What steps do we need to take to make this happen? Where does the love and compassion Mark spoke of come into play in this? How do we learn to "ground ourselves"?**

Look at the Lord's prayer.

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name. Your kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven?” **How does this ground us?**

“Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who have sinned against us.” **How does this equip us? Why are we better equipped when we have forgiven others? Mark talks about “keeping short accounts...in a place of humility.” How does this help?**

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. **How does this provide the protection we need? Why is it not good to lose track of the evil we face?**

For yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever...**The Roman Catholics do not speak this part of the prayer. What do you think of its addition? How does it complete what the first verse started? How does this help to keep everything in perspective?**

How can we pray?

Take time to pray for one another. Be blessed.

Follow the Truth wherever He leads you. He has a Name: Jesus. What is your next step? –the scribe