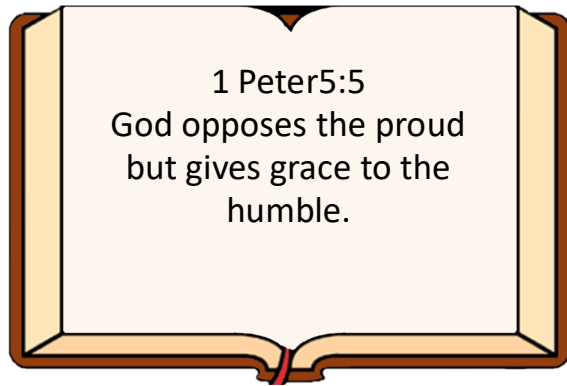


Weekly Memory Verse



Daniel Reads the Writing on the Wall



Who does God oppose? _____

Who does God give grace to? _____



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Lesson Link

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King Nebuchadnezzar ruled over Babylon for forty-three years. Daniel was about sixty years old when the king died. After Nebuchadnezzar died, several different kings ruled Babylon during the next twenty-three years, including Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar's grandson. Daniel continued to trust and obey God as he went quietly about serving King Belshazzar.

During that time the nation of Persia became very strong. Persia was ruled by King Cyrus. Like Nebuchadnezzar, he wanted to rule the world, so he began to conquer the nations around him.

Cyrus's army set up camp outside the walls of Babylon and began to attack the city. Because the walls of the city were very strong and over 300 feet high, Belshazzar and the people felt very secure inside the city of Babylon. Belshazzar did not even order his soldiers to guard the walls, because he was so sure his enemies could not climb over them or break them down.

During this time King Belshazzar planned a huge banquet in the palace for 1000 of his nobles. They had much food, wine, and entertainment, and they gave no thought to the Persian army outside the walls of Babylon. As Belshazzar drank wine with his guests, he remembered the beautiful gold and silver cups that King Nebuchadnezzar had brought from God's temple in Jerusalem. These cups had been used there in worshiping the true and living God.

Belshazzar ordered, "Bring the gold and silver cups out. Everyone may drink from my magnificent cups." His guests drank from the gold and silver cups while they praised their own false gods of wood and stone and iron—gods that could not hear or answer their prayers.

Suddenly, in the middle of the party, something frightening happened! The fingers of a human hand appeared on the wall. The hand began to write a message on the wall. The king was so terrified that he turned pale.

This is the message that was written on the wall: MENE, MENE [mĕn'-ā], TEKEL [tĕk'ĕl], PARSIN or (UPARSIN [oo-par'-sin]). It was a strange language, which the king could not read or interpret.

Belshazzar shouted for his astrologers and enchanters to come to him. He said, "If anyone can read this writing and tell me what it means, I will give him a purple robe and place a gold chain around his neck. I will make him the third highest ruler in the kingdom."

But his wise men shook their heads. None of them could read it or tell him what it meant. Then Belshazzar became even more afraid. He did not know what to do.

Just then the king's mother appeared. She said, "Don't be afraid. There is a man in your kingdom who can read this writing and tell you what it means. Your grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, found him to be the wisest and smartest man in the kingdom. His name is Daniel. Call for him. He is the one who can tell you what the writing on the wall means."

So Daniel was brought before King Belshazzar. The king said to him, "I have heard that you can interpret dreams. If you can read the message on the wall and tell me what it means, I will give you a royal robe and gold chain to wear, and I will make you the third ruler of this nation."

Daniel said, "You may keep your gifts for yourself and give the rewards to someone else. However, I will read the message and tell you its meaning. Your ancestor Nebuchadnezzar humbled himself before the true and living God. But you have not done so, even though you knew all about this. You are proud and have gone against God by drinking wine out of cups that were dedicated to Him. You have praised your idols, which cannot see or hear. You did not honor God, but He is the one who has power over your life and everything you do. So God sent the hand that wrote the message on the wall. The message is about your future."

Then Daniel told the king and the wise men what the words of the message meant, saying, "MENE means God has counted the days until your kingdom will end. TEKEL means you have been weighed on the scales, and you do not measure up to God's standard. PARSIN (or UPARSIN) means your kingdom is being divided and will be given to the Medes and Persians."

Belshazzar had the right to put Daniel to death if he did not accept his interpretation or like what he said. However, an amazing thing happened. The king was faithful to his promise and gave an order for Daniel to be dressed in purple clothes and given a gold chain. Then he announced that Daniel was the third highest ruler in the land. God was truly in all this.

The banquet continued despite Daniel's prediction. That very night God's message did come true!

While the banquet was going on inside the palace, the Persian army was very hard at work outside the city. They discovered a way to enter the city of Babylon through the river, which ran through the city.

That very night the Persian army entered Babylon, taking the king and the people completely by surprise. The Persian army stormed into the banquet hall and killed everyone, including King Belshazzar. Darius the Mede was appointed king over Babylon. The Medes and Persians were now in control of the Babylonian Empire. God's Word came true, just as Daniel had predicted to Nebuchadnezzar and now to Belshazzar.

Circle the correct answer.

The king saw the (*bones, fingers, skin*) of a human hand write words on the wall.

Circle the correct answer.

At night, the Persian army entered the city (through the gate, through the river under the wall, over the wall).