### Daniel

## Chapter 5

1[Well, several years later], BelShazzar [the last Babylonian king] had prepared a feast for 1,000 of his most important men, and they were each served wine.   
  
2Then, while BelShazzar was tasting and drinking the wine, he told [his servants] to bring in the items of gold and silver that his ancestor NebuChadnezzar had taken from the Temple [of Jehovah] in JeruSalem, so that the king, his important men, and his concubines and mistresses could drink from them.  
  
3So they brought in the items of gold and silver that had been taken from the Temple of God in JeruSalem. Then the king, his important men, and his concubines and mistresses 4started drinking wine from them, while they praised their gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone.  
  
5But within that very hour, the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and started writing on the whitewashed wall near a lamp in the king’s palace!  
  
When the king saw the knuckles doing the handwriting, 6his appearance changed… He was so deeply disturbed that he became incontinent and his knees started shaking! So the king called out to have the priests, Chaldeans, and astrologers brought in to him.  
  
7Then he said to those wise men of Babylon:  
  
 ‘Whoever can read this writing and interpret it for me will be dressed in purple, a gold necklace will be placed around his neck, and he’ll be appointed as the third ruler in my kingdom!’  
  
8So thereafter, all the king’s wise men were brought in to him… But they were unable to read the writing or interpret it for the king. 9Therefore, King BelShazzar was still disturbed and his appearance was still changed. And of course, all of his important guests were also very disturbed.  
  
10Then the queen entered the banquet room and said this to the king:  
  
 ‘O king,  
  
 ‘May you live throughout the ages!   
  
 ‘Don’t allow this to bother your thoughts and change your appearance, 11for there’s a man in your kingdom who’s filled with the Breath of God.  
  
 ‘Back in the days of your ancestors, he was found to be an insightful and understanding man. And it was because of this that your ancestor King NebuChadnezzar put him in charge of all his advisors, Chaldeans, and astrologers.  
  
 ‘12This man has a greater measure of [God’s] Breath, and he’s the most intelligent and understanding when it comes to such things as interpreting dreams, reporting things that are [forgotten], and untying knots. [This man] is DaniEl, whom the king renamed BelTeShazzar.  
  
 ‘You should call for him and he’ll interpret [these words] for you.’  
  
13So DaniEl was thereafter brought before the king, and the king asked him:  
  
 ‘Are you DaniEl, the one whom my ancestor the king brought here from among the captives from Judah? 14I’ve heard that the Breath of God is in you and that you’re insightful, understanding, and exceedingly wise.  
  
 ‘15Now, my wise men, priests, and astrologers have come here and they all tried to read this writing and to interpret it for me, but they couldn’t explain what it means!  
  
 ‘16However, I’ve been told that you’re able to interpret such judgments. So, if you can read this writing and interpret it for me, I’ll dress you in purple, I’ll place a gold chain around your neck, and I’ll appoint you to be the 3rd ruler in my kingdom!’  
  
17However, DaniEl said to the king:  
  
 ‘You can keep your gifts and you can give the [power] over your house to someone else… But I’ll read the writing and interpret it for you, O king.  
  
 18‘O king,  
  
 ‘It was the Highest God who gave the kingdom, greatness, honor, and glory to your ancestor, NebuChadnezzar. 19And it was because of this greatness that God put him over all the peoples, tribes, and languages, and made them tremble in fear before him. Therefore, he could destroy anyone he wished, beat anyone he wished, promote anyone he wished, and humble anyone whom he wished to humble.  
  
 ‘20But when his heart became too haughty and his spirit became too proud, he was brought down from the throne of this kingdom and this honor was removed from him. 21Then he was driven away from among mankind and his heart became like that of a wild animal. So he lived among the zebras, he was fed grass like an ox, and his body was bathed and washed by the dew from the skies until he recognized that the Most High God is the One who really rules all the kingdoms of mankind, and He can give [the power] to whomever He chooses.  
  
 22‘Now you, O BelShazzar, have not humbled your heart before God, which is something that you knew you should do, 23and you’ve acted haughtily before Jehovah the God of the heavens by having the items from His Temple brought before you, where you, your important men, and your concubines and mistresses drank wine from them as you were praising your gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone, who can’t see, hear, or know anything at all… Yes, you failed to glorify the God who holds your breath and everything you are in His hands.  
  
 24‘So it’s because of this that the knuckles of a hand were sent from His presence… Yes, He’s the One who sent this writing to you.  
  
 25‘This is what the writing says:  
  
 ‘Mene, Tekel, Peres.’  
  
 26‘And this is what it means:  
  
 ‘Mene means that God has measured your kingdom and brought it to an end.  
  
 27‘Tekel means that He’s weighed you on a scale and found you to be lacking.  
  
 28‘Peres means that your kingdom will now be divided among the Medes and Persians.’  
  
29Well after that, BelShazzar gave the order to dress DaniEl in purple, to put a gold chain around his neck, and he proclaimed him to be the third ruler in his kingdom.  
  
30However, that very night, BelShazzar (the king of the Chaldeans) was killed 31and Darius the Mede took the kingdom as his own at the age of 62.