

**Thursday, November 28**

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**Daniel 5:1 - 31**

**5** **1** Many years later King Belshazzar gave a great feast for 1,000 of his nobles, and he drank wine with them. **2** While Belshazzar was drinking the wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver cups that his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem. He wanted to drink from them with his nobles, his wives, and his concubines. **3** So they brought these gold cups taken from the Temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. **4** While they drank from them they praised their idols made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. **5** Suddenly, they saw the fingers of a human hand writing on the plaster wall of the king's palace, near the lampstand. The king himself saw the hand as it wrote, **6** and his face turned pale with fright. His knees knocked together in fear and his legs gave way beneath him. **7** The king shouted for the enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers to be brought before him. He said to these wise men of Babylon, "Whoever can read this writing and tell me what it means will be dressed in purple robes of royal honor and will have a gold chain placed around his neck. He will become the third highest ruler in the kingdom!" **8** But when all the king's wise men had come in, none of them could read the writing or tell him what it meant. **9** So the king grew even more alarmed, and his face turned pale. His nobles, too, were shaken. **10** But when the queen mother heard what was happening, she hurried to the banquet hall. She said to Belshazzar, "Long live the king! Don't be so pale and frightened. **11** There is a man in your kingdom who has within him the spirit of the holy gods. During Nebuchadnezzar's reign, this man was found to have insight, understanding, and wisdom like that of the gods. Your predecessor, the king—your predecessor King Nebuchadnezzar—made him chief over all the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers of Babylon. **12** This man Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, has exceptional ability and is filled with divine knowledge and understanding. He can interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve difficult problems. Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what the writing means." **13** So Daniel was brought in before the king. The king asked him, "Are you Daniel, one of the exiles brought from Judah by my predecessor, King Nebuchadnezzar? **14** I have heard that you have the spirit of the gods within you and that you are filled with insight, understanding, and wisdom. **15** My wise men and enchanters have tried to read the words on the wall and tell me their meaning, but they cannot do it. **16** I am told that you can give interpretations and solve difficult problems. If you can read these words and tell me their meaning, you will be clothed in

purple robes of royal honor, and you will have a gold chain placed around your neck. You will become the third highest ruler in the kingdom.” **17** Daniel answered the king, “Keep your gifts or give them to someone else, but I will tell you what the writing means. **18** Your Majesty, the Most High God gave sovereignty, majesty, glory, and honor to your predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar. **19** He made him so great that people of all races and nations and languages trembled before him in fear. He killed those he wanted to kill and spared those he wanted to spare. He honored those he wanted to honor and disgraced those he wanted to disgrace. **20** But when his heart and mind were puffed up with arrogance, he was brought down from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. **21** He was driven from human society. He was given the mind of a wild animal, and he lived among the wild donkeys. He ate grass like a cow, and he was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he learned that the Most High God rules over the kingdoms of the world and appoints anyone he desires to rule over them. **22** “You are his successor, O Belshazzar, and you knew all this, yet you have not humbled yourself. **23** For you have proudly defied the Lord of heaven and have had these cups from his Temple brought before you. You and your nobles and your wives and concubines have been drinking wine from them while praising gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone—gods that neither see nor hear nor know anything at all. But you have not honored the God who gives you the breath of life and controls your destiny! **24** So God has sent this hand to write this message. **25** “This is the message that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN . **26** This is what these words mean: means ‘numbered’—God has numbered the days of your reign and has brought it to an end. **27** means ‘weighed’—you have been weighed on the balances and have not measured up. **28** means ‘divided’—your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians.” **29** Then at Belshazzar’s command, Daniel was dressed in purple robes, a gold chain was hung around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom. **30** That very night Belshazzar, the Babylonian king, was killed. **31** And Darius the Mede took over the kingdom at the age of sixty-two.

## **2 Peter 2:1 - 22**

**2 1** But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach destructive heresies and even deny the Master who bought them. In this way, they will bring sudden destruction on themselves. **2** Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of these teachers, the way of truth will be slandered. **3** In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money. But God condemned them long ago, and their destruction will not be delayed. **4** For God did not spare even the angels who

sinned. He threw them into hell, in gloomy pits of darkness, where they are being held until the day of judgment. **5** And God did not spare the ancient world—except for Noah and the seven others in his family. Noah warned the world of God’s righteous judgment. So God protected Noah when he destroyed the world of ungodly people with a vast flood. **6** Later, God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and turned them into heaps of ashes. He made them an example of what will happen to ungodly people. **7** But God also rescued Lot out of Sodom because he was a righteous man who was sick of the shameful immorality of the wicked people around him. **8** Yes, Lot was a righteous man who was tormented in his soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day. **9** So you see, the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their trials, even while keeping the wicked under punishment until the day of final judgment. **10** He is especially hard on those who follow their own twisted sexual desire, and who despise authority. These people are proud and arrogant, daring even to scoff at supernatural beings without so much as trembling. **11** But the angels, who are far greater in power and strength, do not dare to bring from the Lord a charge of blasphemy against those supernatural beings. **12** These false teachers are like unthinking animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed. They scoff at things they do not understand, and like animals, they will be destroyed. **13** Their destruction is their reward for the harm they have done. They love to indulge in evil pleasures in broad daylight. They are a disgrace and a stain among you. They delight in deception even as they eat with you in your fellowship meals. **14** They commit adultery with their eyes, and their desire for sin is never satisfied. They lure unstable people into sin, and they are well trained in greed. They live under God’s curse. **15** They have wandered off the right road and followed the footsteps of Balaam son of Beor, who loved to earn money by doing wrong. **16** But Balaam was stopped from his mad course when his donkey rebuked him with a human voice. **17** These people are as useless as dried-up springs or as mist blown away by the wind. They are doomed to blackest darkness. **18** They brag about themselves with empty, foolish boasting. With an appeal to twisted sexual desires, they lure back into sin those who have barely escaped from a lifestyle of deception. **19** They promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves of sin and corruption. For you are a slave to whatever controls you. **20** And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before. **21** It would be better if they had never known the way to righteousness than to know it and then reject the command they were given to live a holy life. **22** They prove the truth of this proverb: “A dog returns to its vomit.” And another says, “A washed pig returns to the mud.”

### **Psalm 119:113 - 128**

**119 113** I hate those with divided loyalties, but I love your instructions. **114** You are my refuge and my shield; your word is my source of hope. **115** Get out of my life, you evil-minded people, for I intend to obey the commands of my God. **116** LORD, sustain me as you promised, that I may live! Do not let my hope be crushed. **117** Sustain me, and I will be rescued; then I will meditate continually on your decrees. **118** But you have rejected all who stray from your decrees. They are only fooling themselves. **119** You skim off the wicked of the earth like scum; no wonder I love to obey your laws! **120** I tremble in fear of you; I stand in awe of your regulations. **121** Don't leave me to the mercy of my enemies, for I have done what is just and right. **122** Please guarantee a blessing for me. Don't let the arrogant oppress me! **123** My eyes strain to see your rescue, to see the truth of your promise fulfilled. **124** I am your servant; deal with me in unfailing love, and teach me your decrees. **125** Give discernment to me, your servant; then I will understand your laws. **126** LORD, it is time for you to act, for these evil people have violated your instructions. **127** Truly, I love your commands more than gold, even the finest gold. **128** Each of your commandments is right. That is why I hate every false way.

### **Proverbs 28:19 - 20**

**27 19** A hard worker has plenty of food, but a person who chases fantasies ends up in poverty. **20** The trustworthy person will get a rich reward, but a person who wants quick riches will get into trouble.