

Daniel

Part 2

Speaker	Frank Wallace
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[00:00:00] Now we turn please to the fifth chapter of Daniel. Daniel chapter 5 and we'll read the whole chapter beginning at verse 1. Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar whilst he tasted the wine commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem that the king and his princes his wives and his concubines might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem and the king and his princes his wives and his concubines drank in them. They drank wine and praised the gods of gold and of silver and of brass of iron of wood and of stone.

[00:01:04] In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed and his thoughts troubled him so that the joints of his loins were loosed and his knees smote one against another. The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers the chaldeans and the soothsayers and the king spake and said to the wise men of Babylon whosoever shall read this writing and show me the interpretation thereof shall be clothed with scarlet and have a chain of gold about his neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then came in all the king's wise men but they could not read the writing nor make known to the [00:02:02] king the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled and his countenance was changed in him and his lords were astonished. Now the king by reason of the words of the king and his lords came into the banquet house and the queen spake and said oh king live forever let not thy thoughts trouble thee nor let thy countenance be changed there is a man in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods was found in him whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father the king I say thy father made master of the magicians astrologers chaldeans and soothsayers for as much as an excellent spirit and knowledge and understanding interpreting of dreams and [00:03:01] showing of hard sentences and dissolving of doubts were found in the same Daniel whom the king named Belshazzar now let Daniel be called and he will show thee he will show the interpretation. Then was Daniel brought in before the king and the king spake and said unto Daniel art thou that Daniel which heart of the children of the captivity of Judah whom the king my father brought out of jury I have even heard of thee that the spirit of the gods is in thee and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee and now the wise men the astrologers have been brought in before me that they should read this writing and make known unto me the interpretation thereof but they could not show the interpretation of the thing and I have heard of thee that thou canst make interpretations and dissolve doubts [00:04:01] now if thou canst read the writing and make known to me the interpretation thereof thou shall be clothed with scarlet and have a chain of gold about thy neck and shalt be the

third ruler in the kingdom. Then Daniel answered and said before the king let thy gifts be to thyself and give thy rewards to another yet I will read the writing unto the king and make known to him the interpretation oh thou king the most high god gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom and majesty and glory and honor and for the majesty that he gave him all people nations and languages trembled and feared before him whom he would he slew and whom he would he kept alive and whom he would he set up and whom he would he put down [00:05:04] but when his heart was lifted up and his mind hard and in pride he was deposed from his kingly throne and they took his glory from him and he was driven from the sons of men and his heart was made like the beasts and his dwelling was with the wild asses they fed him with grass like oxen and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till he knew that the most high ruled in the kingdom of men and that he appointed over it whomsoever he will and thou his son oh Belshazzar hast not humbled thine heart though thou knewest all this but has lifted up thyself against the lord of heaven and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee and thou and thy lords thy wives and thy concubines have drunk wine in them and thou [00:06:04] was praised the gods of silver and gold of brass iron wood and stone which see not nor hear nor know and a god in whose hand thy breath is and whose are all thy ways hast thou not glorified then was the part of the hand sent from him and this writing was written and this is the writing that was written meaning meaning deco you farcin this is the interpretation of the thing meaning god hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it deco thou art weighed in the balances and are found wanting paris thy kingdom is divided and given to the medes and persians then commanded belshazzar and they clothed daniel with scarlet and put a chain of gold about his neck and made [00:07:04] a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom in that night was belshazzar the king of the chaldeans slain and darius the median took the kingdom being about three score and two years old so not a very inspiring story not a story in one sense can be called the glad tidings very solemn solemn story i believe we could write over this story a simple statement that we find in the epistle to the hebrews when paul spoke about those who died because they disobeyed the commandments of god [00:08:02] and paul says died without mercy died without mercy and this could be written over the story very very solemn very very sad a man who had excellent opportunities brought up in the highest position favored to see his grandfather we believe he was the grandson of belsh of nebuchadnezzar brought up in this favored circle knowing full well how god had wrought with nebuchadnezzar daniel told him plainly you knew all about this and it didn't make the slightest impression upon your hard heart and before we go any further isn't it true that we've known those who have been brought up in christian homes who have listened to the gospel time and time again [00:09:01] who have been brought up by godly parents and they've turned their backs upon these things and they've gone their own way hardened to the claim of the gospel and lost to the christian testimony and perhaps except for the intervention of god's grace lost eternally very sad very solemn we can't say a great deal about this man belsh for the simple reason we have no information regarding him there was a time when archaeologists and historians and perhaps theologians too had a great deal of skepticism skepticism about this man belshazzar his name didn't appear in any of the ancient records his name didn't appear on the inscriptions that had been found and so there was a very very large question mark placed against this man belshazzar suddenly [00:10:07] a clay cylinder was found and on it was found the name belshazzar and as william kelly says in one of his writings ah now they believed the existence of a man called belshazzar and they didn't believe the bible they believed the clay cylinder man requires some proof before he can exercise his belief that's that's the opposite from a christian a christian doesn't need proof he believes implicitly in the word of god there may be many hard things that he can't in any way explain but he waits patiently believing that the time will come when something will be discovered that will make it plain and of course there was a time when luke the writer of the gospel was charged [00:11:03] with great inaccuracies in his account in the gospel until eventually they discovered it was the historians that had to adjust their thinking that

luke was meticulously correct in his writing in the gospel that suddenly as light came to as evidence came to light then luke was proved to be a very exact historian indeed and this is always true if people mock and this is the story of here a mocker a mocking monarch if people mock let them mock let them keep on mocking the time will come when the mockery will be proved empty and faith will be proved correct keep on exercising faith well anyway here's this man belshazzar and what an impious mocking monarch he was he went a lot further than his grandfather we read last night that [00:12:05] nebuchadnezzar he took the vessels from the temple in jerusalem and he placed them in the treasure house of his god as far as the divine record is concerned we have no evidence that he used them in an unholy or impious way but this man goes very much further and there he is with a thousand of his lords great time of festivity great time of enjoyment satisfying natural desires and lusts and he gives out the order bring out those vessels of gold that were used in the temple of jehovah in jerusalem let's drink out of them and that was a challenge to god throwing this thing back into god's face what do we believe in relation to jehovah we discount him our gods are stronger than jehovah let's drink out of them these vessels that were used for his worship and [00:13:04] they do then in the midst of all their impious drinking the hand begins to write on the plaster of the wall what a terrifying experience and the king was shaken to the roots of his being terrified conscience affected troubled writing on the wall there was the hand writing writing writing he didn't understand what the writing was this was a mystery it certainly brought to an end the festivities here was something that was unnatural something that was mysterious something that struck his conscience it was trouble oh when god intervenes man is a puny creature indeed think of him there belshazzar great king in babylon tremendous city walls high we understand [00:14:09] the walls were so high and so broad that the chariots could run around them three abreast tremendous walls that were built there impregnable they thought and all the time they're feasting and enjoying themselves the enemy is at the gate and slowly but surely he's making plans directed by god we mentioned this last night the king was mentioned cyrus my anointed my shepherd the one that god was using to overcome babylon and bring to an end its impiety and he didn't know it the judgment was right at the door there they were feasting and enjoying themselves oh what a solemn scene it is so he sends for his wise men the clever men the intellectuals the elite of his kingdom tell me what the writing is in the wall we don't know we can't decipher it [00:15:09] don't know what it means we said this last night that when the jew the godly jew is dependent upon his god and exercises faith he's always superior to the gentile and that's what we find again in this story the clever men the men he depended upon unable to decipher the writing on the wall and the queen she remembers remembers he was a woman who didn't forget belshazzar had forgotten forgotten all the history in connection with nebuchadnezzar but here was one who didn't forget the queen she said oh i know a man daniel send for daniel he's a man great deal of wisdom he's the man that will give to you the interpretation of this writing upon the wall [00:16:02] and so as we read together daniel is sent for and of course when the world is up against it they can turn to the men of god and the women of god for their support and help and prayer and may offer them gifts and blandishments for their favor that didn't work with daniel daniel was very like abraham you remember when abraham came back from smiting the kings and the king of uh forget which king it was it was king of sodom offered him some gifts abram said i don't want your gifts i've lifted up my hand to the most high the possessor of heaven and earth the most high can give to me all that i require in my pathway daniel was of the same caliber he said i don't want your gifts don't want these things but he says i'll give you the interpretation and so step by step daniel explained to belshazzar what the writing on the wall was [00:17:11] and it was a writing of judgment judgment belshazzar you're finished your kingdom has come to an end you've been weighed in the balances and you've been found wanting the medes and the persians they are going to take over your kingdom what unthinkable this great powerful king living in this great impregnable city as they thought it was is it possible that the kingdoms to come to an end god had said it and when god said it it was as good

as done it only required the execution of it and that came when cyrus captured the city put men women and children [00:18:04] to the sword and that was the end of the babylonian empire weighed in the balances and found wanting isn't that a solemn word that we read in that night was belshazzar the king of the chaldeans slain no respite no opportunity to repent he had had his opportunity he had had the opportunity to bow before the might of the most high god and acknowledge that there was one greater than nebuchadnezzar one greater than belshazzar the most high god and he didn't recognize him and he suffered the consequences i think it's a tremendously sad story and a tremendously solemn solemn story and before we apply it still further to the present day [00:19:04] let us remember this that what it emphasizes is the greatness and supremacy of god we find we found this in speaking about nebuchadnezzar last night he made decrees he made arrangements for certain people but he was overruled because they had faith in a greater than nebuchadnezzar and here we find the most high god oh that this may sink into our souls if we get frightened by the events that we see in the world if we get fearsome about the danger of evil elements taking over control remember that god is greater than all the powers that exist and he won't allow anything to get out of hand it's a verse that often appeals to me and i quote it often to my own soul the words that the lord jesus spoke in connection with himself being [00:20:04] a shepherd and he encouraged the sheep now he says i give unto my sheep eternal life and they shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand my father who is greater than all now there's the statement my father who is greater than all none shall pluck them out of my father's hand i think that's a tremendous thing you think of any power any power that you like to think of and of course we think of satan as the one who has the most power and we think of him and all those who follow his ways the power is formidable but think of that my father who is greater than all no man shall pluck them out of my father's hand now we can think about that in connection with this chapter the most high god he is the arranger of matters upon earth [00:21:01] unknown to belshazzar even unknown to cyrus as we read in the book of isaiah we mentioned this last night it's worth mentioning again that cyrus was a shepherd cyrus was his anointed he doesn't know me god says he doesn't know me but he's being used by me and i believe that that goes on all the time in the administration that god has as the most high god in the affairs of men oh dear friends what a consolation it is to know that all is safe in the hands of god the time will come when of course the powers of evil will be put down effectively and will have no force or no power or no influence in this poor sad world and that will be when the son of the most high takes the throne of david and rules in this world and then oh what a difference peace and blessing and prosperity and help and encouragement for all and evil subdued [00:22:04] evil influences put down and everything for the glory of god and for the blessing of mankind and those who belong to the church will reign with him and take part in that administration we may not qualify for the 10 city administration or even the five city administration but we'll be privileged to be part of the civil service of that day and that will be an honor indeed to reign with christ having in some measure suffered with him here upon earth the most high god and this is exactly what daniel said the most high ruled in the kingdom of men and that he appointed over it whomsoever he will and if the lord will when we come to wednesday evening and consider the great image that nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream we'll see how this operates and the great [00:23:03] the great remedy that god will bring in through his well-beloved son it would be sad if we finished our little talk this evening ending at this solemn statement then was belshazzar the king of the chaldeans slain but we have to leave that there that was god's government upon him i want to say a few words about mockery and there's a great deal about mockery in the bible and you'll find that wherever you find mockery those who are mocked always come out on top pre-eminently of course in connection with christ and his things but also seen in the old testament you remember that when isaac was born there was a feast made [00:24:01] and there was one who mocked ishmael he mocked there what happened to him he and his mother were cast out and of course that's the root of the trouble in the middle east at the present moment ishmael and

isaac never got on together and ishmael and isaac don't get on together in a modern age in spite of the efforts of arafat and the leader of israel or anyone else the united nations ishmael and isaac will never get on together but the lord jesus christ when he comes he will deal with the matter most marvelous statement that we find in the book of isaiah assyria my people egypt my people israel my people all blessed together under the messiah only god can do that man cannot do it today impossible but god will do it do it [00:25:08] through christ bring these contrary elements together in peace and harmony for a thousand years without any interruption anyway mockery ishmael mocked it says that precisely and eventually he was cast out and we know that isaac went from strength to strength we read those verses about him he became great and very great and much greater he went on and on and on and he was one of the well-known patriarchs abram isaac and jacob those whom god chose to be the fathers of israel another statement in the old testament you remember that when they were building the wall in the recovery from babylon san velat he mocked at the jews what are those poor jews doing why [00:26:04] look at that wall they're building a fox will knock it over he mocked well on they went they didn't worry much about san velat they kept on building and up went the wall god honored them blessed them and there was a temporary return to the worship of jehovah god was supporting his servants these are two occasions from the old testament there might be many more oh when we come to the new testament and we think of the mockery that was shown to the son of god how solemn that was the soldiers decked him out in a purple robe put a reed in his hand for a scepter and a crown of thorns upon his head and they bowed their knees in mockery and hailed him as a king mockery mockery mockery all the time isn't it sad and there he was [00:27:09] great and glorious son of god god himself manifest in flesh possessed the limitable power and quietly and humbly he bore all that was hurled against him he had a work to do and nothing was going to divert him from it he had to accomplish the will of his god this was read this morning lo i come in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will oh god and nothing would turn him aside from his desire to accomplish that will cost what it may and they mocked him well a few years afterwards the city of jerusalem was ringed with crucifixes titus and 70 ad besieged jerusalem and eventually raised it to the ground all the jews who sought [00:28:08] to escape from jerusalem were captured the trees all around jerusalem were cut down to make crucifixes and the city was ringed with thousands of persons hanging up in crucifixes the mockery was a very sad thing but it reaped the consequences god is not mocked whatsoever a man sows that shall he reap whatsoever a nation sows it shall reap god is not mocked indeed we read in the first chapter of proverbs i will laugh when your fear cometh i will mock at your calamity the tables are turned when god begins to work and oh how sad it was that that great city should reap such awful consequences because of their rejection of the [00:29:03] messiah and their shameful treatment of him and the lord in luke's gospel depicted this with accuracy what would come against the city what would befall it and he wept over it his feeling heart in relation to it wanting to bless them oh if you'd only known the day of your visitation and they missed it just the same as belshazzar he knew but he didn't respond israel didn't know didn't know that their messiah was there and yet they should have known what he said and what he did was all a manifestation of who he was and they closed their eyes and they closed their hearts and they closed their ears and they reaped the consequences god is not mocked and we all know that we know that in our own lives those of us who are believers we know that whatever we sow we reap if we sow to the flesh we off the flesh reap corruption [00:30:03] if we sow to the spirit of the spirit we reap life everlasting it's a divine principle that no one can bend no one can avoid we reap what we sow and so we find that those people who mocked mocked the son of god had fearful consequences to experience if we move on after the lord jesus died and rose out from amongst the dead and then ascended to god's right hand we find the good tidings going out far and wide far and wide and we read in the acts of the apostles the activity of his servants and how the gospel spread and you remember when paul was in the city of athens he preached on mars hill and he preached well and he he used skillfully the

knowledge that he had [00:31:01] to bring before them the glad tidings and he listened until he came to the truth of the resurrection and when he preached about the resurrection of christ it said some mocked and it's the same today people don't believe in the resurrection they think it's impossible it's something that's not not correct even to talk about resurrection you're mad one said to paul paul you're mad resurrection people don't live after they die when they're dead they're dead forever and so paul was accused of being mad because he spoke about the resurrection and here in act 17 they mocked mocked at the resurrection now those of us who know the lord jesus christ we implicitly believe in resurrection we know it's one of the main features of the gospel day the christian era based upon the death resurrection and ascension of christ these are the foundational [00:32:07] truths destroy them and we've nothing left and so we believe implicitly in the truth of the resurrection of christ let man mock he doesn't do anything by mocking he only reveals his own ignorance and his own opposition to the truth the fact is now is christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of those who are dead marvelous thing the resurrection of our lord jesus christ and what a hopeless thing it would be when we take a loved one to a burial ground if we didn't have the truth of resurrection in our souls this is what gives us a triumph at the burial of a loved one one who loved the lord jesus one who's gone to be with christ whose spirit has gone to be with christ and we bury that body in the absolute certainty of the truth of resurrection that when [00:33:02] the lord comes that body will be raised and changed and there will be body and soul unite body and spirit united in glory just like christ now we move on a little further and we come to peter's epistle and we read about those who mocked mocked about the coming of our lord jesus christ the scoffers who mocked about the coming of the lord my old grandfather was a genuine believer he was brought up in the church of scotland and there was no doubt at all about his belief in the savior but when i spoke to him uh well i used to get the scripture truth and edification you remember those two books well scripture truth is still with us but edification has long since gone out of print but when i brought them home he always grabbed them first and read them very thankful for that but i remember speaking to him once about the lord's coming oh he says we've [00:34:06] heard about that over and over and over again and it's never happened oh but i says it will happen but you see that that's the attitude we've heard about that for a long long time where is the promise of his coming we scoff at that oh that's that's old hat that don't want to hear any more about that and that's very sad when people mock because one day it's going to be a tremendous reality i often wonder how will those people feel who have heard the gospel over and over again who have heard the truth of the lord's coming and who have rejected it and there the truth is in their minds and suddenly their loved ones are all gone and many many more whom they knew they're all gone and there can only be one explanation the lord has come and they're all gone [00:35:04] what they preached about has happened oh what a tremendous consternation there must be and what regrets to realize their loss and loss forever doesn't it make you glad you're a believer doesn't it make you glad that you're on the right side of the fence you belong to the lord jesus christ if death should overtake you you're all right if the lord should come you're all right there's nothing to fear my it's a wonderful thing to have this assurance in one soul absolute assurance 100 assurance that's very very important no doubts absolutely sure that you're right with god through our lord jesus christ well we don't want to speak any more about mocking neither do we want to speak about [00:36:01] dying without mercy we want to speak about the mercy of god and praise god the preaching of the glad tidings tells us that there is mercy available for any and everyone even the most impious of people the most objectionable of people those who have opposed god in every possible way thank god there's mercy mercy for the mockers mercy for the scoffers mercy for the unbelievers and as we sometimes sing as long as the lamp holds on to burn the vilest sinner may return and so we're thankful that tonight we're not preaching this truth which is a part of scripture died without mercy that was true in the mosaic law but we're preaching today that there is mercy no one need die without mercy i don't believe what some say that there comes a time in a person's [00:37:01] life when they're

asked to accept christ as savior and if they don't accept at that particular moment they've lost their opportunity i don't believe that the word of god tells me that grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life grace is on the throne grace is available at all times for all people in all conditions grace is available for the most outright evil person for the most wicked person and of course the apostle paul was such a person he was the chief of sinners and grace and mercy he says so himself for which cause i obtained mercy and there was a man whose consuming desire was to stamp out from this earth the name of christ and all who followed him and he obtained mercy and we believe that if the apostle paul or saul of tarsus as he was [00:38:04] could receive mercy everyone can receive mercy who is ready to accept it as offered by god oh how wonderful the mercy of our god how does it operate it operates through our lord jesus christ who died on the cross and satisfied god in relation to sin and man's opposition and evil and because he satisfied god god can clear the guilty can forgive those who oppose freely happily and bless them time and bless them for all eternity so we're very thankful as i look around this company i think all belong to the lord jesus praise god for that let us continue to pray that those who are still refusing the mercy of god their hearts their eyes their consciences [00:39:01] may be affected and they may accept the lord jesus while they have the opportunity and not be so foolish as belshazzar who knew all the things that daniel spoke about and yet they had no effect upon his conscience or upon his way of life may we all be encouraged for his namesake