

# Bible Studies for Life: September 17

*Staying True in a World Far From God: Speak Truth Boldly*  
• *Daniel 5:13-17, 22-28*

*By Becky Brown*



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First, Daniel and his three Judean friends refused to defile themselves with the king's special food regimen. Next, God used Daniel to reveal both the content and the interpretation of the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

God was paving the way for Daniel to be used as a light in this very dark place of Judean exile in the sixth century BC. Never forget that God was both the Dream Weaver AND the Dream Revealer! In Daniel 2:28, Daniel said so! "There is a God in heaven Who reveals mysteries!"

In Daniel chapter three, the familiar story of the three Jewish boys condemned to die in the fiery furnace left us with another famous truth quote. They had refused to bow in worship and honor to the golden statue that Nebuchadnezzar had fashioned.

Daniel 3:16-18 records their stance on the matter: "Our God we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire but even if He does not, we will NOT serve your gods or worship this golden image!" Through their lives or through their deaths, these young men refused to cave to culture.

Never forget that God was also the Fire Fighter AND Rescuer of the Faithful! My dad, lifelong pastor and missionary to Israel, says it this way: "There is One God in heaven and He is unequaled. There is one throne in Heaven and it is occupied! Daniel and his friends served the Enthroned God."

Daniel chapter five brings us to a time when Daniel was no longer that teenaged exile from Judah. He could have been old enough to need 80 candles on his birthday cake. Nebuchadnezzar was gone and his son-in-law Nabonidus was king.

His grandson, Belshazzar, was left in charge of the kingdom for most of the reign of Nabonidus. "Sir Bel" was a "party animal" as we might describe him today. He enjoyed the high life of prestige and recognition and debauchery.

Belshazzar held a feast for 1,000 nobles, men of influence in Babylon. This was a wine tasting event, to be specific. Just to make it more pleasing, Belshazzar called for the servants to bring out the golden vessels from Jerusalem that had been confiscated when Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the temple and completely conquered the holy city of God.

As they sipped their wine in pride and indulgence from these holy cups, a hand appeared and a message was written on the wall. Belshazzar was terrified.

Once again, the "wise men" of Babylon could not interpret the message. The current Queen Mother of the kingdom (probably the widow of Nebuchadnezzar) reminded Belshazzar of the ability of Daniel to interpret dreams. They called for Daniel. He came and stood faithfully, declaring truth.

Daniel rehearsed the history lesson about Bel's grandfather. As the story progressed, Belshazzar realized that he knew better than to behave this way. Even Nebuchadnezzar had humbled himself before Almighty God.

Belshazzar should have learned that lesson. His open rejection of God cost him the kingdom and his own life before the night was over. The Medes and Persians were staging a takeover of Babylon as they were drinking their wine out of the stolen temple utensils.

Just outside the city walls of Babylon, doom was about to be delivered like cold pizza.

Basically, the handwriting on the wall declared that Babylon and its evil kings had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. The holiness of God was on one side of the scales and

the evil of the world was on the other side.

Belshazzar was a light weight. God and His holiness will always be the heavy weight. Heaviness is equated with true value.

The golden nugget of truth in this narrative is found in Daniel 5:22-23. Belshazzar had refused to humble his heart before the God of Heaven. He knew that he was to do it and openly and brazenly refused, choosing rather to make mockery of God.

The indictment was spoken through Daniel: "The God in whose hand are your life-breath and your ways you have not glorified." After Daniel's handwriting class, King Darius of Media/Persia would occupy the throne of Babylon. Belshazzar was slain.

Daniel is definitely one of our finest biblical characters who stands for truth in a world far removed from God. We do well to follow his example.

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