

A selection of readings from Daniel chapter 5. You can find the readings starting on page 742 in your pew Bible.

King Belshazzar made a great feast for a thousand of his lords and drank wine in front of the thousand.

Belshazzar, when he tasted the wine, commanded that the vessels of gold and of silver that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem be brought, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. Then they brought in the golden vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. They drank wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

Immediately the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, opposite the lampstand. And the king saw the hand as it wrote. Then the king's color changed, and his thoughts alarmed him; his limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together. The king called loudly to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers. The king declared to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing, and shows me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around his neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or make known to the king the interpretation. Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, and his color changed, and his lords were perplexed.

Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king answered and said to Daniel, "You are that Daniel, one of the exiles of Judah, whom the king my father brought from Judah. I have heard of you

that the spirit of the gods is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. Now the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought in before me to read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not show the interpretation of the matter. But I have heard that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.”

Then Daniel answered and said before the king, “Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another. Nevertheless, I will read the writing to the king and make known to him the interpretation.

And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN. This is the interpretation of the matter: MENE, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; TEKEL, you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting; PERES, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.”

Then Belshazzar gave the command, and Daniel was clothed with purple, a chain of gold was put around his neck, and a proclamation was made about him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

That very night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was killed.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please join me in praying Psalm 139.

Leader: O LORD, you have searched me and known me!

**People: You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.**

Leader: You search out my path and my lying down
and are acquainted with all my ways.

**People: Even before a word is on my tongue,
behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.**

Leader: You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.

**People: Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is high; I cannot attain it.**

Leader: For you formed my inward parts;
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.

People: I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Leader: Wonderful are your works;
my soul knows it very well.

**People: My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.**

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Leader: Your eyes saw my unformed substance;

**People: in your book were written, every one of them,
the days that were formed for me,
when as yet there was none of them.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it
was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. *Amen.***

Leader: Please stand for the reading of the Gospel.

(allow them time to stand)

**The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew.**

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

“Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.