

#### **46). November 9-15—Daniel**

##### **1) Dan 5:2–3, 23—Wives and Concubines of Belshazzar ~540 BC**

The wives and concubines of Belshazzar participated in one of the Bible’s most dramatic scenes of divine judgment. During a great feast, Belshazzar commanded servants to bring the sacred vessels Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Jerusalem temple (Dan 5:2). The king, his nobles, his wives, and his concubines drank wine from these holy objects while praising “gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone” (Dan 5:4).

These women witnessed the mysterious handwriting on the palace wall and heard Daniel’s interpretation: “God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it” (Dan 5:26). That very night, Belshazzar died and the Medo-Persian army conquered Babylon (Dan 5:30–31).

By drinking from vessels stolen from the Lord’s temple, these women participated directly in the king’s mockery of Israel’s God. Daniel condemned Belshazzar for lifting himself up “against the Lord of heaven” and bringing “the vessels of his house before thee” so that he, his lords, his wives, and his concubines could drink wine in them while praising false gods (Dan 5:23). Their actions fulfilled Jeremiah’s prophecy that Babylon would fall for its pride and idolatry (Jer 51:6–8). Daniel teaches that those who mock sacred things and reject God’s authority will face His judgment, regardless of their earthly power or status.

##### **2) Dan 5:10-12—Queen of Babylon ~540 BC**

The queen of Babylon demonstrated wisdom and composure during Belshazzar’s crisis. When the mysterious hand wrote on the palace wall, the terrified king and his lords could not interpret the message (Dan 5:5–9). Hearing the commotion, the queen entered the banquet hall and immediately calmed the king: “O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed” (Dan 5:10).

Unlike those already at the feast, the queen had not been drinking from the sacred temple vessels, suggesting she was not one of Belshazzar’s wives or concubines mentioned earlier (Dan 5:2–3). Most scholars identify her as the queen mother, likely the widow of Nebuchadnezzar or another former king, whose authority allowed her to enter unbidden and speak boldly.

The queen’s counsel revealed her knowledge of Babylon’s history. She reminded Belshazzar of Daniel, “in whom is the spirit of the holy gods,” whom Nebuchadnezzar had made “master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers” (Dan 5:11). She described Daniel’s exceptional gifts: “an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts” (Dan 5:12). Her recommendation proved accurate—Daniel interpreted the writing and pronounced God’s judgment on the kingdom (Dan 5:25–28).

The queen’s intervention shows how a woman’s wisdom and institutional memory preserved knowledge that saved the moment, even as it revealed Babylon’s doom. Her respect for Daniel’s God-given abilities stood in stark contrast to Belshazzar’s sacrilege.

##### **3) Dan 6:24—Wives of Daniel’s Accusers ~500 BC**

The wives of Daniel’s accusers suffered death alongside their husbands and children when King Darius executed the conspirators who had plotted against Daniel. After Daniel emerged unharmed from the lions’ den, Darius commanded that the accusers be cast “into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.”

This punishment reflected ancient Near Eastern practices where families shared the consequences of a leader’s crimes. The swift, violent deaths—the lions overpowered them before they reached the bottom—proved Daniel’s survival had been miraculous, not the result of tame lions (Dan 6:22–23).

The execution fulfilled the accusers’ own decree. These officials had manipulated Darius into signing an irrevocable law forbidding prayer to anyone except the king, knowing Daniel would disobey (Dan 6:7–9). Their scheme backfired when the same law and lions they used against an innocent man became instruments of their judgment.

Though Scripture does not record whether these wives participated in or knew of their husbands’ plot, they experienced its consequences. Their deaths served as a witness to surrounding nations that “the God of Daniel” was “the living God” who “delivereth and rescueth” His faithful servants (Dan 6:26–27).

4) Dan 11:6–7—**Daughter of the King of the South** ~540 BC

The daughter of the king of the south became a political pawn in a failed peace agreement between rival kingdoms. Daniel prophesied that “the king’s daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up” (Dan 11:6).

This prophecy was fulfilled when Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II of Egypt (the south), married Antiochus II of Syria (the north) to end their war. Antiochus divorced his wife Laodice to marry Berenice, but when Ptolemy II died, Antiochus restored Laodice. She poisoned him and murdered Berenice and her infant son to secure the throne for her own children.

Daniel foretold that “out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail” (Dan 11:7). Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III, invaded Syria to avenge her death, fulfilling this prophecy precisely.

Though used as a diplomatic tool and then betrayed, this daughter’s death sparked consequences that shaped the ancient world, demonstrating how God’s prophetic word encompasses even the suffering of those caught in political schemes.

5) Dan 11:17—**Wife of the King of the South** ~540 BC

Daniel prophesied that a king of the north would attempt to conquer through marriage alliance: “he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him.” This was fulfilled when Antiochus III of Syria gave his daughter Cleopatra I in marriage to Ptolemy V of Egypt, hoping she would advance Syrian interests. The phrase “daughter of women” may emphasize her exceptional status or beauty. However, the prophecy “corrupting her” suggested treachery in the plan—Antiochus intended to use his daughter as a spy or saboteur. Yet “she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him” proved true when Cleopatra loyally supported her husband and Egypt’s interests rather than betraying them for her father. Her refusal to corrupt her marriage for political gain thwarted Antiochus’s scheme and demonstrated that even detailed prophetic plans can be disrupted when individuals choose loyalty over manipulation.

6) Dan 11:37—**Women Worshipers of an Unnamed Deity** ~530 BC

From Babylon c. 530 BC, Daniel prophesied of a future arrogant king who would reject every religious devotion. The Hebrew behind, desire of women/*chemdat nashim* has generated three different interpretations:

- **A deity beloved by women: Tammuz/Adonis.** The most widely held scholarly position among commentators who read Daniel 11 as referring to Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The cult of Tammuz-Adonis—a male fertility deity whose death and resurrection cycle made him particularly beloved among women worshippers throughout Syria and the ancient Near East. Ezekiel 8:14 records women "weeping for Tammuz" at the Jerusalem temple gates, confirming the cult's penetration even into Israel. The goddess Ishtar/Mylitta is sometimes proposed as an alternative, but most scholars favor the male Tammuz. This interpretation positions the phrase as a third deity alongside "the gods of his fathers" and "any other god" — all of which this arrogant king rejects.
- **No desire for women — sexual indifference or deviance.** This reading does not fit the Hebrew text, nor does it fit the historical Antiochus IV, who was known as a womanizer, making this interpretation difficult to sustain if the passage refers to him.
- **The Messiah** reading, favored by some Protestant futurists, but lacks support in the Hebrew grammar, the Septuagint, the Jewish Targums and ancient source. It is a post-Reformation theological imposition on the text rather than grounded in reading.

This verse's gives three parallel phrases. The structure confirms that the king rejects the gods of his fathers, *chemdat nashim*/the one desired by women, and any other god, exalting himself above all. This parallelism strongly suggests *chemdat nashim* refers to a deity rather than to the king's personal desires, supporting the first interpretation.