Babylon is Fallen
Belshazzar’s Feast and
the Lion’s Den
A Study of Daniel 5 & 6

Presented by: Mark LaRose
Date: 06/30/19 Draft
File: Daniel 3-4
Relationship with Christ

• The Most Important Understanding about our Salvation:
  – We believe eternal life is a gift from God in Christ Jesus and we are justified by His grace and His faith who paid the price; death, for our transgressions

Romans 3:21-26; 4:4-5,25; 6:23; Ephesians 2:4-10; Titus 3:4-7 (Is 53; Eze 36:25-27; John 3:3-8,16; 16:8; Rom 5:6-10; 8:1-4, 14-17; 1Cor 15:3-4,20-22; 2Cor 5:14-15,19-21; Gal 1:4; 3:13-14,26; 4:4-7; Phil 2:6-11; Col 1:13-14; Heb 8:7-12; 1Pet 1:23; 2Pet 1:3-4; 1John 2:2; 4:10)

• God “sent his angel to show his servants” the future (Rev 22:6) “Do not despise prophecies.” 1Thess 5:20
  – Purpose: To share the vital necessity of a character transforming relationship with Christ, namely the Gospel of His sacrifice for all who call Him Lord and Savior (Ps 1:1-2; Matt 20:25-28; Luke 19:17-20; John 20:21; Rom 12:2; 2Cor 3:17-18; Gal 5:22-25; Eph 5:19-21; 6:12-18; Phil 3:7-14; Col 2:6; 1Thess 5:16-23; Heb 10:25; 2Pet 2:9; 3:18; 1John 4:4)
Principles of Bible Study

• Paul’s counsel to Timothy:
  – 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2Tim 3:16-17 (Ps 119:105; Prov 30:5-6; Is 8:20; John 17:17; 1Thess 2:13; Heb 4:12)
  – for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. 2Pet 1:21

• Bible versions:
  – Use versions with the closest translation to the original language
    • Recommend comparing NKJV (used here), NASB95, KJV, and ESV
  – Concordance sources: www.abibleconcordance.com; www.blueletterbible.org

• Use of Expository study methods (versus Thematic study)
  – This method explores the literal meaning of each word in Scripture and its relationship to other words in its context (exegesis)
Principles of Interpretation

• It’s important to be consistent by using the same principles, pattern, and understanding of the Book of Daniel for the prophecies in Revelation (Num 12:6; 2Chron 20:20; Joel 2:28-29; Amos 3:7; Acts 2:14-21; Rev. 12:17; 19:10; 22:8-9)

• Every word deserves careful consideration
  – “For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little.” Isaiah 28:10,13

• The Historian method of interpretation is used for both Daniel and Revelation

• Some of Daniel and much of Revelation is symbolic; identified based on content
  – Look for definitions elsewhere within these two books first, then the Bible as a whole; then in history

✓ The visions of Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, and 10-12 build on each other progressively, amplifying and adding important details; “repeat and enlarge”

✓ Application of the 1 prophetic day = 1 year rule (Numbers 14:34, Ezekiel 4:4-6) is key to the proper interpretation of time prophecies in Daniel and Revelation (Gen 29:27; Lev 25:1-7)
Rebellion or Redemption?
Daniel the Prophet  

- Daniel and his 3 friends were exiled in 605 BC when the Lord allowed Nebuchadnezzar to rule over Jerusalem as foretold by Jeremiah (Jer 25:27:22) as recorded in 2Ki 24:10-17 (Is 39:6-7; Jer 29; Micah 4:10)
  - Ezra indicates (2Chr 36:15-21) that the 70 year Babylonian exile was directed by God because His chosen people did not turn from evil and false worship

- Much of Daniel is literal, however symbolic language is used such as Dan 1:20 (“ten times”), the beast’s descriptions (Daniel 7, 8 & 11) referring to kings and kingdoms, and both literal and spiritual applications in Daniel 11:40-45

- The book of Daniel is written in a chiasm, a double list of related items in which the order of the second list is opposite of the first list:
  - The outer chapters (Dan 1:1-2:4a and 8-12) were written in Hebrew
  - The inner chapters (Dan 2:4b – Dan 7:28) were written in Aramaic
Chronological Overview

The Book of Daniel

- Daniel 1: an account of the first Babylonian exile (605 BC)
- **Daniel 2:** Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the **kingdoms** (603 BC)
- Daniel 3: Nebuchadnezzar builds the image of his dream to worship
- Daniel 4: Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the great tree
  - Chapter 4 is a letter written by Nebuchadnezzar
- **Daniel 7:** Daniel’s dream of the **kingdoms** as beasts (553 BC)
- **Daniel 8:** Daniel’s vision with further **kingdom details** (551 BC)
  - Daniel 5: an account of the fall of Belshazzar and Babylon (539 BC)
  - Daniel 6: The lion’s den and Darius the Mede (539/8 BC)
- **Daniel 9:** Gabriel further explains 2300 days/years in ch.8 (538 BC)
  - Including the 70 weeks (490 yrs) “cut off” of the 2,300 years until Christ’s ministry began
- **Daniel 10-12:** Gabriel provides specific details of the **kings and kingdoms** to come through the second coming of Jesus (535 BC)
Daniel 5

- Daniel 5 Structure:
  - Daniel 5:1-4 describes Belshazzar’s feast
  - Daniel 5:5-12 gives the account of a hand writing on the wall
  - Daniel 5:13-29 describes Daniel’s interpretation of the writing
  - Daniel 5:30-31 records Belshazzar’s death and the fall of Babylon
Daniel 5:1

• “Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand.”

  – Belshazzar co-reigned with his father, Nabonidus (556-539BC), from about 553BC (Dan 7:1; 8:1)
    • Babylon had been under siege for 2 years, however the city had provisions for 20 years
    • Nabonidus had surrendered in Sippar (50 miles north of Babylon) 2 days earlier and fled
  – Feasting and drinking: An attempt to bolster morale through the appeal of appetite
    • Appetite, the first of Jesus’ three temptations, must be overcome
  – Wine: The emphasis here shows the revelers were getting drunk; providing a false sense of security
    • Wine is symbolic of false doctrine (Ps 60:3; Prov 31:4-7; Is 28:7; Jer 25:15-18; 51:7; Zech 5:3-4; Col 2:22-23; Matt 24:49; Luke 12:45; Rev 14:8; 18:3)
While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which had been 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 and iron, wood and stone.

1. **Gold and silver vessels:** King Belshazzar used the gold and silver goblets Nebuchadnezzar removed from Solomon's temple in 597 BC to get drunk with 1,000 guests. (2Ki 24:13; 25:15; 2Chr 36:10; Ezra 1:7-11; Jer 52:19; Dan 1:2)

2. **The use of the temple goblets openly mocked God, while praising idols made of 6 elements; Satan’s counterfeit number** (Dan 5:23; Rev 9:20)
   - “I am the Lord, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.” Is 42:8
Daniel 5:5-6

• “⁵ In the same hour the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. ⁶ Then the king’s countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his knees knocked against each other."

  – The source of the common saying; “the writing on the wall”
  – God had foretold of Babylon’s fall because of its iniquity:
    • By Medo-Persia as shown to Isaiah 21:1-9 ("Elam" became Persia)
    • As again pronounced in Jeremiah 50:1-51:58
  – Knees knocked: The effect of divinity on the wicked (Eze 7:17; 21:7; Nah 2:10)
Daniel 5:7-9

- “7 The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spoke, saying to the wise men of Babylon, “Whoever reads this writing, and tells me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around his neck; and he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.” 8 Now all the king’s wise men came, but they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation. 9 Then King Belshazzar was greatly troubled, his countenance was changed, and his lords were astonished.

- Astrologers, Chaldeans, soothsayers: Gen 41:8; Dan 2:2,27; 4:6-7; 5:11,15; Is 47:13
- Belshazzar was second in the kingdom to his father, so he could only offer third place
- Greatly troubled: The wicked are terrified by the unknown and the prospect of judgment (Job 18:11; Is 21:2-4; Jer 6:24; Dan 2:1)
Daniel 5:10-12

• “10 The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came to the banquet hall. The queen spoke, saying, “O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance change. 11 There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers. 12 Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation.”

– The Queen may likely have been Belshazzar's mother and daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. She obviously knew Daniel. (Dan 1:7; 2:48; 4:8-9; 6:3)
Daniel 5:13-16

• “13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke, and said to Daniel, “Are you that Daniel who is one of the captives from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? 14 I have heard of you, that the Spirit of God is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. 15 Now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing. 16 And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. 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.”

– Daniel was exiled in 605BC, making him about 84 years old in 539BC
– Belshazzar acknowledges his knowledge of God
Daniel 5:17-21

•  “17 Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, “Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation. 18 O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor. 19 And because of the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he executed; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down. 20 But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. 21 Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses.

– Daniel reminded the 1,000 leaders God determines who rules the nations
Daniel 5:22-24

• “22 “But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. 23 And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified. 24 Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written.”

Daniel provides the reasons for Babylon’s fall

• Prior knowledge of truth, but failure to adopt it
• Pride leading to lack of glorifying God (Ex 10:3; 2Chr 36:12)
• The abomination of claiming idols are superior to the Lord of heaven (x 6) (Hab 2:18-19)
• Profaning God’s holy vessels (Ex 40:9; Num 18:3; Is 52:11)
• Multiple sexual relations (Gen 2:24; 1Tim 3:2)
Daniel 5:25-28

- “25 “And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. 26 This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; 27 TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; 28 PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.”

  - A riddle involving units of weight applied to money, used for “balances”
    - "Mene": To number - twice mentioned, parallel to Babylon twice fallen (Is 21:9; Rev 14:8; 18:2), referencing its literal fall in 539BC and its future, spiritual fall during the 6th plague (Rev 16:12)
    - “Tekel”: To weigh, to measure, to bring into judgment (Job 31:6; Ps 62:9; Jer 6:30; Rev 11:1-2)
    - “Upharsin” [verb form of “peres”]: To divide, to punish
Daniel 5:29-31

- “29 Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. 30 That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. 31 And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.”

  - Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians on 10/12/539 BC
    - The fall of literal Babylon is important to properly understand the future fall of spiritual Babylon (Is 21:9; Dan 7:11; Rev 14:8; 16:12; 17:16; 18:1-24)
      - Isaiah (chapters 41, 46, 47) and Jeremiah (chapters 50, 51) predict and describe the fall of literal and spiritual Babylon
        » Note the "alliance" of nations predicted by Jeremiah in 50:9 referring to Medo-Persia as well as apostate Protestants (Rev 17:16)
    - This opened up the rule of Medo-Persia (the silver chest and arms of the Dan 2 statue), the bear with one raised shoulder & 3 ribs (Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt conquered) of Dan 7, and the Ram with 2 horns (1 larger) of Dan 8
      - Darius the Mede was succeeded by his nephew, Cyrus about 537 BC, also marking the 70 years of exile as foretold by Jeremiah (Dan 9:1)
Daniel 6

• Daniel 6 Structure:
  – Daniel 6:1-5 Daniels’ appointment and the plot against him
  – Daniel 6:6-9 Darius’ decree restricting prayer
  – Daniel 6:10-17 Daniel ignores man’s law and is thrown into the Lion’s den for his undivided devotion to God
  – Daniel 6:18-24 Daniel is delivered and those plotting his death received the punishment envisioned for him
  – Daniel 6:25-28 Darius’ decrees that the whole kingdom honor and respect God
Daniel 6:1-3

• “1 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; 2 and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. 3 Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm.”

– Darius the Mede had led the army that took the city of Babylon and served as vassal king under King Cyrus
– Satraps: Governors over the 120 provinces of the empire  (Est 1:1)
– Darius the Mede is likely Cyaxares II: https://truthonlybible.com/tag/cyaxares-ii/
– Excellent spirit: A wonderful character attribute  (Dan 5:12)
Daniel 6:4-5

“4 So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him. 5 Then these men said, “We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God.”

- Governors and satraps were envious of Daniel (about 84 years old)
- Faithful, no error or fault: A character attribute of God’s people at the time of the end
  - “…walk before me, and be thou perfect.” Gen 17:1 (Lev 11:44; 19:2; James 1:4; 1Pet 1:15-16)
  - “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” Matt 5:48
  - “…that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” Col 4:12
- Law of his God: Clearly, Daniel had a well known reputation that differentiated him from the common religious practices then popular
Daniel 6:6-9

- “6 So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: “King Darius, live forever! 7 All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. 8 Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.” 9 Therefore King Darius signed the written decree.”

- **Statute and Decree:** Wicked people achieve their desire to control via legislation and evil scheming (Est 1:19; 8:8; Ps 59:3; 62:4; 64:2-6)
  - Alludes to the time of the end: Legislation will be passed of a religious nature, in opposition of God’s law (The Ten Commandments), in order to ensnare God’s people
Daniel 6:10-12

• “10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days. 11 Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. 12 And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king’s decree: “Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?” The king answered and said, “The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.”

— Kneeling three times each day is key to a close relationship with Jesus

• Israel had been instructed to face Jerusalem when seeking God  (1Ki 8:29-30,35,42,44,46-48; Ps 5:7; Jon 2:4; Acts 5:29)
Daniel 6:13-15

• “13 So they answered and said before the king, “That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.” 14 And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. 15 Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, “Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed.””

  – One of the captives: Strong cultural bias existed despite Daniel’s service record of the past 66 years (Dan 3:12; 5:13; Est 3:8)
  – Greatly displeased: Wicked strategies are accomplished through compromise of integrity (Mark 6:26)
  – Constitutional power was used to enforce evil (Est 8:8; Ps 94:20-21)
Daniel 6:16-17

- “16 So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.” 17 Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.”
  - **Serve God continually:** This is key to salvation; for deliverance
  - **Stone sealed:** Alludes to Christ being sealed in the tomb (Lam 3:53; Matt 27:66)
Daniel 6:18-23

• “18 Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him. 19 Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. 20 And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?” 21 Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever! 22 My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you.” 23 Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.”

– Lion’s mouths shut: Referenced in Heb 11:33 (Ps 81:11-13; Jer 32:17; Luke 1:37; 2Tim 4:17)
Daniel 6:24

- “24 And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions—them, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.”

- This retribution is consistent with the law of Moses (Deut 19:18-19; Est 7:10; 9:10)
  - Were the families complicit with the sins of the fathers? According to God, each is to be punished for their own sins. (Deut 24:16; 2Ki 14:6)
Daniel 6:25-28

• “25 Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. 26 I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, And steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, And His dominion shall endure to the end. 27 He delivers and rescues, And He works signs and wonders In heaven and on earth, Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. 28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.”

- Decree: In this case a prophecy about the living God (Ezra 1:1-2; 6:8-12; 7:13; Dan 2:44; 3:28-29; 4:1,3,34; 7:14,27; Hos 1:10; Rom 9:26)
- The Daniel 9 vision and events took place during the reign of Darius the Mede (Oct 539BC-Nov 538BC) (Dan 9:1)
- Darius the Mede, was supported and protected by the angel Gabriel (Ezra 1:1-2; Dan 1:21; 11:1)
Our Mission as the Remnant

• “Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” (Rev 19:10)
  – The understanding of prophecy is a call to action; to share the gospel of everlasting life through a relationship with Jesus, proclaiming the 3 angels’ message of Rev 14:6-12

• “...obey God’s commandments” (Rev 12:17) and “Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.” (Rev 14:7)

• “...Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant—Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer.” (Is 56:6-7)

• “Be holy...blameless” (1Pet 1:16-19; 2Pet 3:10-14)
He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! Revelation 22:20
Additional Information

I am indebted to Tim Roosenberg who has studied Daniel 11-12 since the early 2000’s and has dedicated his ministry to providing people with knowledge of the times that we live through seminars and his website; http://www.islamandchristianity.org

I am also indebted to two individuals whom have dedicated their lives in a study of Revelation 17 since the late 1990’s. Their website, http://666man.net, provides significant depth on the many related Bible passages and prophecies that correlate completely to the prophecies of Daniel

For an excellent verse by verse commentary see: http://www.bibleexplained.com

For a deep perspective of how Revelation represents the spiritual fulfillment of much of the Old Testament see: Louis F. Were, The Certainty of the 3rd Angel’s Message, 1945

Ellen Gould White was a prolific author and an American Christian pioneer. Along with other Sabbatarian Adventist leaders such as Joseph Bates and her husband James White, she formed what became known as the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Smithsonian magazine named Ellen G. White among 100 Most Significant Americans in an acknowledgement of her influence on religion. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellen_G._White
Ellen White Comments  Daniel 5

✓ “In the history of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, God speaks to the people of today. The condemnation that will fall upon the inhabitants of the earth in this day will be because of their rejection of light. Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have lived in error, but from the fact that we have neglected Heaven-sent opportunities for discovering truth. The means of becoming conversant with the truth are within the reach of all; but, like the indulgent, selfish king, we give more attention to the things that charm the ear, and please the eye, and gratify the palate, than to the things that enrich the mind, the divine treasures of truth. It is through the truth that we may answer the great question, “What must I do to be saved?””  {BEcho September 17, 1894, par. 5}
“On every page of God’s word the injunction to obedience is plainly written, and yet how often His commands are lightly regarded or wholly set aside! The command for the observance of the holy Sabbath of the Lord is placed in the very bosom of the decalogue, and is so plain that none need err as to its import, and yet it is treated with as great profanation as were the sacred vessels at the feast of Belshazzar. The condemnation of those who trample upon God’s holy Sabbath will not come because they have conscientiously observed the first day of the week, but because they neglected opportunities for searching the Scriptures and learning, not what man has said, not what the ministers say, not what the fathers have said, but what saith the infinite God! What day has God specified as His holy day? What did He command men to honour when He spoke with an audible voice from Sinai? That voice is to be obeyed above every other; the edicts of kings and nations are void before a command of God. The Lord of hosts commands our obedience.”

{BEcho September 17, 1894, par. 6}
“Admitted to a share in kingly authority and power at fifteen years of age, Belshazzar gloried in his power, and lifted up his heart against the God of heaven. He despised the One who is above all rulers, the General of all the armies of heaven. “Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand” (Daniel 5:1). The profane orgies of royal mirth were attended by men of genius and education, by masters of architecture. On this occasion there was music and banqueting and wine drinking. Decorated women with their enchantments were among the revelers. Exalted by wine, and blinded by delusion, the king himself took the lead in the riotous blasphemy. His reason was gone, and his lower impulses and passions were in the ascendancy. His kingdom was strong and apparently invincible, and he would show that he thought nothing too sacred for his hands to handle and profane. To show his contempt for sacred things, he desecrated the holy vessels taken from the temple of the Lord at its destruction.”—Letter 51a, 1897, pp. 3-4. (To Dear Friends, July 8, 1897; See Prophets and Kings, pp. 523-4.) {10MR 307.1}
“Through the folly and weakness of Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, proud Babylon was soon to fall. Admitted in his youth to a share in kingly authority, Belshazzar gloried in his power and lifted up his heart against the God of heaven. Many had been his opportunities to know the divine will and to understand his responsibility of rendering obedience thereto. He had known of his grandfather’s banishment, by the decree of God, from the society of men; and he was familiar with Nebuchadnezzar’s conversion and miraculous restoration. But Belshazzar allowed the\textbf{love of pleasure and self-glorification} to efface the lessons that he should never have forgotten. \textit{He wasted the opportunities graciously granted him, and neglected to use the means within his reach for becoming more fully acquainted with truth. That which Nebuchadnezzar had finally gained at the cost of untold suffering and humiliation, Belshazzar passed by with indifference.” \{PK 522.2\}
“In the history of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, God speaks to the people of today. The condemnation that will fall upon the inhabitants of the earth in this day will be because of their rejection of light. Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have lived in error, but from the fact that we have neglected Heaven-sent opportunities for discovering truth. The means of becoming conversant with the truth are within the reach of all; but, like the indulgent, selfish king, we give more attention to the things that charm the ear, and please the eye, and gratify the palate, than to the things that enrich the mind, the divine treasures of truth. It is through the truth that we may answer the great question, “What must I do to be saved?””  {BEcho September 17, 1894, par. 5}
“Little did Belshazzar think that there was a heavenly Witness to his idolatrous revelry; that a divine Watcher, unrecognized, looked upon the scene of profanation, heard the sacrilegious mirth, beheld the idolatry. But soon the uninvited Guest made His presence felt. When the revelry was at its height a bloodless hand came forth and traced upon the walls of the palace characters that gleamed like fire—words which, though unknown to the vast throng, were a portent of doom to the now conscience-stricken king and his guests.” {PK 524.1}

“Hushed was the boisterous mirth, while men and women, seized with nameless terror, watched the hand slowly tracing the mysterious characters. Before them passed, as in panoramic view, the deeds of their evil lives; they seemed to be arraigned before the judgment bar of the eternal God, whose power they had just defied. Where but a few moments before had been hilarity and blasphemous witticism, were pallid faces and cries of fear. When God makes men fear, they cannot hide the intensity of their terror.” {PK 524.2}
“It was not the hand of the priest that rent from top to bottom the gorgeous veil that divided the Holy from the Most Holy Place. It was the hand of God. When Christ cried out, “It is finished” [John 19:30], the Holy Watcher that was an unseen guest at Belshazzar’s feast pronounced the Jewish nation to be a nation unchurched. The same hand that traced on the wall the characters that recorded Belshazzar’s doom and the end of the Babylonian kingdom, rent the veil of the Temple from top to bottom, opening a new and living way for all, high and low, rich and poor, Jew and Gentile. From henceforth people might come to God without priest or ruler.” {Ms101-1897.16}
“When Belshazzar had his great sacrilegious feast, there was present in the splendid halls a witness which he did not discern. The revelers were drinking their wine, and partaking of their luxurious feast, and praising the gods of silver and gold, extolling their own wisdom, magnifying their deeds, and dishonoring God, but right over against the wall, facing the king, a bloodless hand was tracing the terrible characters testifying of his true condition: “Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.”” {ST December 29, 1887, par. 5}

“The Lord is weighing character in the sanctuary today, and those who are careless and indifferent, rushing on in the paths of iniquity, will not stand the test. God has endowed us with reasoning powers, and he requires us to use them to his glory. He has given us this body, which he wishes us to preserve in perfect health, that we may render the best service to his cause. He has paid an infinite price for our redemption, and yet men and women dependent from day to day upon his mercies, for life, for health, for food, for all the blessings they enjoy, refuse to obey his laws, refuse to accept his Son as their Example and Saviour.” {ST December 29, 1887, par. 6}
“*We cannot wait until the Judgment before we consent to deny self and to lift the cross.* It will be too late then to form characters for Heaven. It is here and now that we must take sides with the humble, self-denying Redeemer. It is here we must overcome envy, strife, selfishness, love of money, and love of the world. It is here that we must enter the school of Christ and learn the precious lesson of meekness and lowliness of mind; *and here it must be our aim and our earnest effort to be loyal to the God of Heaven, by obeying all his commandments.*” {ST December 29, 1887, par. 9}

“Our only safety is in constant communion with God.* Our petitions should ascend in faith that he will keep us unspotted from the corruptions of the world. Did not Jesus tell us that iniquity would abound in the last days? But his grace will be granted to us according to our day. Those who are open to the influence of the Spirit of God will receive strength to withstand the evils of this degenerate age.” {ST December 29, 1887, par. 10}
“It was not long before reverses came. Babylon was besieged by Cyrus, nephew of Darius the Mede, and commanding general of the combined armies of the Medes and Persians. But within the seemingly impregnable fortress, with its massive walls and its gates of brass, protected by the river Euphrates, and stocked with provision in abundance, the voluptuous monarch felt safe and passed his time in mirth and revelry.” {PK 523.1}
“From the history of Daniel we may learn that a strict compliance with the requirements of God will prove a blessing, not only in the future, immortal life, but also in the present life. Through religious principles, men may triumph over the temptations of Satan and the devices of wicked men, even though it costs them a great sacrifice. What if Daniel had made a compromise with those heathen rulers, and had denied his God? What if, on first entering the court, he had yielded to the pressure of temptation, by eating and drinking as was customary among the Babylonians? That one wrong step would probably have led to others, until, his connection with Heaven being severed, he would have been borne away by the power of temptation. But while he clung to God with unwavering, prayerful trust, he could not be forsaken. The divine protection is pledged to those who thus seek it, and God cannot forget his word.” {ST November 4, 1886, par. 11}
Ellen White Comments  Daniel 6:4

✓ “Daniel was counted peculiar, and every man who makes God his counselor, and who seeks him in simplicity of heart, will be counted peculiar by the world. But this is the faith we need, this is the experience that we must have; for Christ has died to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. We should live with an eye single to his glory, and then we shall be able to gain the victory over the world. We must come out from the world and be separate, if we would be the sons of God, the heirs of heaven. If we do this, we shall enter in through the gates into the city, we shall have a right to the tree of life, and we shall see the King in his beauty.” {ST November 4, 1889, par. 11}

– Note: egwwritings.org {YI November 1, 1900, par. 1-22}
“Daniel, the Hebrew captive, the prime minister of a royal realm, encountered great obstacles to a life of fidelity to God. But at the very beginning of his career, he determined that whatever might oppose, he would make the law of God his rule of action. As he maintained his steadfastness amid the lesser trials which he daily met in the court of a heathen king, his faith, courage, and firmness grew stronger; and when the royal decree went forth forbidding him to offer supplication to his God, he was able, with the den of lions open before him, to stand true to principle and to God.” {LP 297.3}