

The Writing is on the Wall

Daniel 5

¹ King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them.

² While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them.

³ So they brought in the gold goblets that had been taken from the temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. ⁴ As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.

⁵ Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. The king watched the hand as it wrote. ⁶ His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his legs became weak and his knees were knocking.

⁷ The king summoned the enchanters, astrologers and diviners. Then he said to these wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing and tells me what it means will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around his neck, and he will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom."

¹⁶ Now I have heard that you are able to give interpretations and to solve difficult problems. If you can read this writing and tell me what it means, you will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around your neck, and you will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom."

²² "But you, Belshazzar, his son, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. ²³ Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honour the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways. ²⁴ Therefore he sent the hand that wrote the inscription.

²⁵ "This is the inscription that was written: mene, mene, tekel, parsin

²⁶ "Here is what these words mean: Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end. ²⁷ Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting.

²⁸ Peres: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

²⁹ Then at Belshazzar's command, Daniel was clothed in purple, a gold chain was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom.

³⁰ That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain, ³¹ and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two.

Notes for Leaders

Preparation

- WHAT YOU NEED TO PRE-ORDER-

- Chalk
- Print outs of the interpretation
- Prizes for interpreting
- Clay - if you want to make the cups...

1. Interpreting the Writing on the Wall

Depending on the ages of the young people, you may want to do different words than those provided ('**humble yourself**' is the one to work out in this session. If you want to make it more tricky, cut the characters up, and hide them. The colour coding helps to work out which word they are in. Orange, Humble. Green is Yourself.

2. Writing on the wall

Let the children write on the wall with chalk, maybe with some focus around key verses...

3. Decoding - Wordsearch

Quick wordsearch.

4. Design your own cups

God's people carefully crafted these cups to reflect the reverence they had for their creator. Use the gifts God has given you to create your own cup.

Further ideas...

If you have the budget too, you could even create these cups from clay, fire them, or let them dry out for the following week. Or alternatively decorating cups, plastic wine glasses with sharpies, and try adding verses to them.

The King's Disrespect

Years after King Nebuchadnezzar, a new king ruled Babylon—King Belshazzar. One night, he held a huge feast and used golden cups from God's temple in Jerusalem to drink wine and praise false gods. This was very disrespectful to God!

Daniel 5:4 (NIV) says: "As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone."

The Mysterious Handwriting

Suddenly, a hand appeared and began writing on the palace wall! The king was terrified. No one could read or understand the message. The queen remembered Daniel and told the king to call him.

Daniel 5:25-26 (NIV) says: "This is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN. Here is what these words mean: Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end."

Daniel's Warning

Daniel explained that King Belshazzar had not learned from Nebuchadnezzar's mistakes. He was prideful and did not honour God. Because of this, his kingdom would be taken away.

Daniel 5:23 (NIV) says: "You did not honour the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways."

That very night, King Belshazzar was killed, and his kingdom was given to another ruler.

Daniel 5:20 (NIV) – **"...the Most High God is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and sets over them anyone he wishes"**

Lesson for Today

This story teaches us that we must respect God and acknowledge Him in all we do. Pride and disrespect lead to consequences, but those who honour God will be blessed.

Key Takeaways:

- Always respect and honour God in your actions.
- Pride leads to downfall, but humility brings blessings.
- God sees everything we do and will judge rightly.

Let's choose to honour God in our words and actions every day!



Lesson for Today

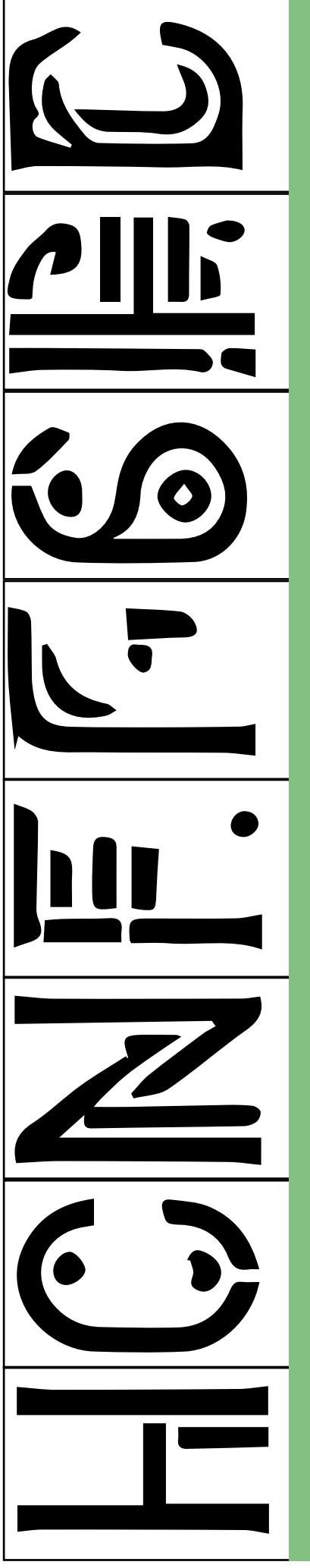
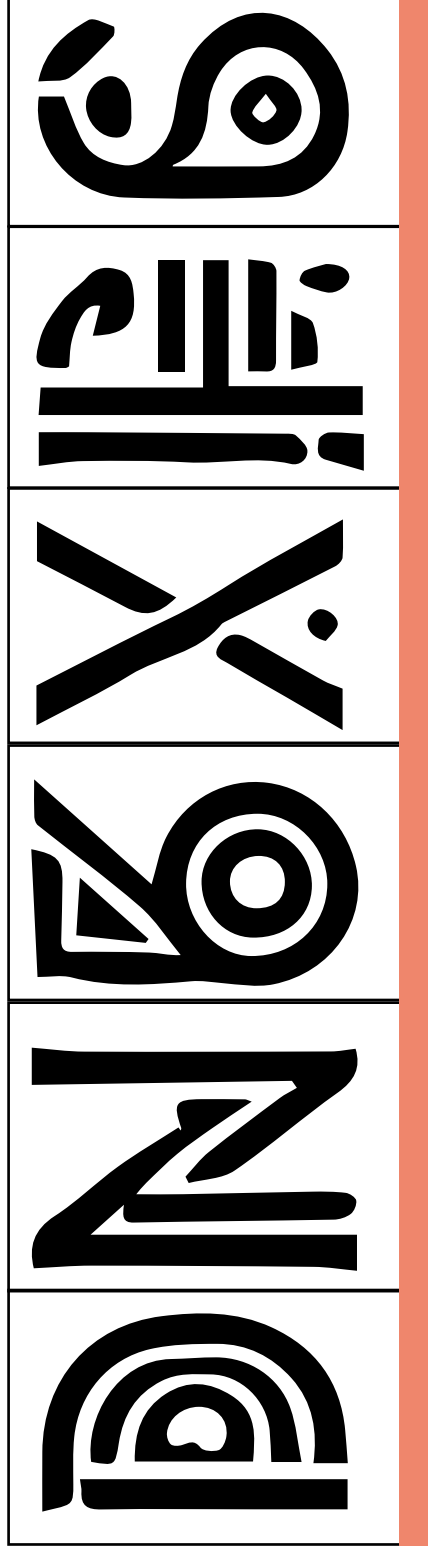
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Get the children to write these verses on a wall with chalk, or if you don't have a wall provide some big paper stuck to a wall.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.” – Matthew 22:37

“Love your neighbor as yourself.” – Mark 12:31

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” – Ephesians 4:32

“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his deed.” – Proverbs 19:17

“Let all that you do be done in love.” – 1 Corinthians 16:14

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Word Search

R G T A C D N B A Q W B K X M
C U L C Q W N K O I C N K K E
Y X L L R J U D G E M E N T N
M K T E B E L S H A Z Z A R E
H E M K R D A T W W I K V R O
P W V A I N H E Y Y Q G Z Y I
I A T F P N D L L S T O N E M
Q D R G M C G G J Y F D B M E
K Q C S T S D D A C J R Q L G
Y N U F I X E I O K C N N P E
T Z P N B N I D L M U Y F R E
E R S U U P T N C B O U O I D
K D J S G O L D V I J I G D K
E K H A N D W R I T I N G E I
L W A L L O K P D A N I E L Y

HANDWRITING

KINGDOM

RULER

STONE

TEKEL

BELSHAZZAR

PARSIN

GOLD

WALL

MENE

JUDGEMENT

DANIEL

PRIDE

CUPS

GOD



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