

The Handwriting on the Wall

Daniel 5

Authority

How do people respond to authority?

How do people respond to God? How do you and I respond to God?

The Setting

King Nebuchadnezzar had conquered Judah (God's people) almost
70 years earlier

Daniel was one of the captured people

Now 80+ years old

King Nebuchadnezzar had learned...

Daniel 4:32 and 37b

King Belshazzar

→ perhaps Nebuchadnezzar's grandson

Daniel 5

1-4: King's feast: worshiped his idols with God's treasures

5-9: God interrupted with an ominous puzzle

10-12: Queen mother: knew what God had done

13-16: King sought Daniel's help

17-24: Daniel rebuked the king for ignoring God

25-28: Daniel delivered God's judgment

29-31: God judged the king as He promised

The Big Idea

**All people will be blessed or judged
based on whether or not
they humble themselves
under God's authority (Daniel 5:21)
and in God's hand (Daniel 5:22, 24)**

Jesus said:

Matthew 23:12

"For those who exalt themselves will be humbled,
and those who humble themselves → **under God's authority**
will be exalted." → **in God's hand**

Fundamental Realities

1) There is a supernatural being ("God")

Moral argument; Kalam Cosmological Argument

Fine tuning argument; And more...

2) We are not supernatural beings ("God")

Life's fundamental question:

→ What will we do about God?

Application

Humble ourselves under God

Under God's authority

He has final authority over everyone

He can lower and raise up as He chooses

He is the final judge of everyone

Our existence and future depend entirely on Him

To **know** these things is to "fear" God

In His hand

He "holds in his hand your life and all your ways"

In His grace and kindness

The least person is God's hand is far greater
than the greatest person not in His hand

I realize a different need day to day and hour to hour

"Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

I will say of the Lord,

'He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust.'" *Psalm 91:1-2*

Outside of His hands, there is no safety or peace

Outside of His hands we are trusting "gods"
that cannot save and will be judged

Where do you stand with God?

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. How do you tend to respond to authority? How might that affect your default response to God?
2. What makes it challenging to humble ourselves **under God's authority**? What is wonderful about it?
3. What makes it challenging to humble ourselves **in God's hand**? What is wonderful about it?
4. What does it look like for you to "rest in the shadow of the Almighty"?