

Remnant Life Church  
April 21, 2024  
**What is Written on Your Wall?**  
Dan 5:1-30

People often have questions regarding their relationship with God

- For some, it is, “Does God have a plan for my life?”
- For others, it may be, “Does God care about the details and events of my life?”
- And still others, “Does God really hear my prayers?”
- And then there are those who want to know, “Does God still speak to people?”

I believe the answer to each of those questions is a firm and confident “YES”

- But the reason many people have a difficult time answering that last question is because they are hung up on the literal definition of “speak” in order for them to hear God
- Audible speech is only one way that God communicates with His people, and it happened less than 10 times throughout the Bible – for example....
  - Moses at the burning bush and on Mount Sinai
  - Samuel as a boy
  - The Apostle John through a vision that would be recorded and read as the book of Revelation
- So, yes, while God does speak to His people today, it is most often in other ways as a way of “getting our attention”
  - It all comes down to one thing – faith!
  - God desire is for our faith to be strengthened, especially in a world that has turned its back on the Creator and is now welcoming lies as the truth
- The book of Daniel contains some of the most fantastic demonstrations of God’s power through many types of situations
  - And in one of those accounts, God spoke to a king in a very unusual way
- The overall theme of Daniel is the Kingdom of God as victorious over all times, circumstances, and ages.
  - We see this in the 2 parts of Daniel, where God’s power is displayed
  - First is in the present involving the various accounts in **chaps 1-6**
  - And then His presence in the future through the prophecy seen in **chaps 7-12**

As we read the following account in **Daniel 5** of the handwriting on the wall, know that God wants us to have faith in every situation in our lives

**READ – Daniel 5:1-9**

- The background for the book of Daniel begins with the Babylonian rule over Israel
  - The Jewish people were under Babylonian captivity for a total of 70 years
  - It began when King Nebuchadnezzar (who was King of Babylon from 605 to 562 BCE) when he overthrew the northern kingdom of Israel and captured the people in 598

- The captivity ended in 528 when the Syrians conquered the Babylonians, and their king, Cyrus, gave the Hebrew people permission to begin returning to Jerusalem
  - You can read of that return and the people rebuilding the walls and temple in the books of **Ezra** and **Nehemiah**
  - Did you notice through these accounts how God used everyone and anyone to accomplish His will – even those who did not worship Him (Cyrus, Darius, Nebuchadnezzar, and Belshazzar)
  - This is where your faith must be exercised to receive answers to your prayers, even in ways that may not make sense to you or seem to be outside the realm of your expectations.
  
- The first 4 chapters of the Book of Daniel take place during the rule of Nebuchadnezzar
  - (**Dan 1**) Daniel and his three friends are captured and made to integrate into the Babylonian culture – they are shown to be healthier and wiser than the others through God’s favor
  - (**Dan 2**) Nebuchadnezzar’s dream is interpreted by Daniel, and we then read of his promotion to a position of great power and authority over all of Babylon
  - (**Dan 3**) The image of gold and the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego
  - (**Dan 4**) Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the tree
    - Daniel interprets and foretells Nebuchadnezzar’s loss of sanity and punishment (**Dan 4:19-27**)
    - Becoming like an animal because of his great pride (**Dan 4:28-33**)
    - Nebuchadnezzar’s mind and power are restored, giving glory to God – (**Dan 4:34-37**)
  
- The time of the **5<sup>th</sup>** chapter, that we are reading this morning, is under the rule of King Belshazzar
  - After Nebuchadnezzar died, his son ruled for 2 years
  - After him a son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar reigned for 3 years
  - Then Nadonidus for 17 years who had a son who co-ruled with him named Belshazzar
  - Approximately 25 years have passed from the end of chapter 4 and the beginning of chapter 5
  - Daniel is now about 80 years old

What about that 25-year period?

- The Bible has many time “gaps” where we have very little or no information
  - Once again, of critical importance is the context
  - The Bible is not a history book, but there is history contained within it
- For instance, there is no record of Jesus’ life from the age of 12 to the age of 30
  - This is not a weakness in the Scripture
  - We can understand that Jesus was living the life of a typical first-century Jewish young man

- It was at the age of 30 that he would have been considered a responsible man and it was at that time His ministry began
  - Likewise, there is nothing recorded between the book of Malachi (the last book of the OT) and the Gospel of Matthew (the first in the NT)
    - Called the Intertestamental Period
    - Approximately 400 years
    - Often called the “400 Years of Silence”
  - There is nothing recorded of Daniel’s life in the 25 years from Nebuchadnezzar to Belshazzar
    - That is likely because he did not have the same influence
      - We can determine that by how he is first addressed in **Dan. 5:13**
      - *So Daniel was brought before the king, and the king said to him, “Are you Daniel, one of the exiles my father the king brought from Judah?”*
      - Belshazzar did not know Daniel
    - As we just heard, there were several rulers between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar
      - This is similar to the situation with the descendants of Jacob
      - They were brought to Egypt by Joseph but the Pharaoh who came to power later did not know the story of Joseph and his family
      - It led to the enslavement
    - All we know of Daniel during that time is that he still faithful to God
- Let’s consider this morning what we can learn from Daniel through this time

**First point: We must be faithful during the times of silence in our lives**

- This is what separates true faithfulness from circumstantial faithfulness
- Many Christians fall away or allow doubt to come during these times of quiet or stillness
  - As an adult I have come to appreciate more and more the times of stillness
    - But for some reason, when we encounter these times as it relates to specific concerns we feel as if we must take action regardless of what God is telling us
  - This is often true in churches that embrace the gifts of the Holy Spirit as we do here at RLC
  - Prophetic words, words of knowledge, words of wisdom, miraculous healing...
    - All of these are given at GOD’S WILL
    - There is a great danger in using their occurrences or frequency as an indicator of God’s presence
    - God is always present but the activities and actions we desire to see are at His discretion and not at our insistence or manipulation!
- Daniel remained faithful, and we see the evidence of that later
- But what we just read is not about silence
  - It is about God doing something that had never been done before and has never occurred again
  - To get people’s attention!

**READ – Daniel 5:10-16**

- We are not told why the queen remembered Daniel but he obviously made an impression
  - Let me ask you something this morning – what kind of an impression do you make?
  - I'm not talking about trying to be impressive, but how do people remember or think of you?
  - As a Christian, it should always be your desire to live daily with integrity that is above reproach
- People are always watching and most often with a response of, “So that's how a Christian acts, huh?”
  - That can either be a positive or a negative observation
  - Daniel lived in a way that was memorable and God brought him back to a place of influence because of that

What do people see in you solely by your actions?

- The Italian monk St. Francis of Assisi is credited with the following statement, Preach the gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words.
- Who do the people you interact with know you to be?
  - What does your countenance say when things are not going just the way you want them to?
  - What do your emotions say about your walk with Jesus as a child of God?
  - How do you impact the people around you?
    - Do you bring a sense of peace, confidence, safety, love?
    - Or is it one of anxiety, fear, anger, even sadness?
- Who you are is not about the words you say, but the way you live your life.

As we heard Rod read, the queen came to the king and told him about Daniel

- She remembered who Daniel was
- The time of God's silence in your life never means He has left you, doesn't love you, or has no plans for you!
- It is all in His timing!
- Continue to be faithful during those times.

**Second point: Our faith must be maintained and seen by others to be a true example of Jesus Christ**

**READ – Daniel 5:17-24**

Two things are important in this segment of Scripture

1. Daniel's faithfulness to God
  - a. **Vs 17** - *Then Daniel answered the king, “You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the writing for the king and tell him what it means.*
    - i. I believe this verse should be the guide for every Christian teacher, prophet, author, singer, mega-church pastor or organizational leader
    - ii. The economy of our culture is what it is
    - iii. But the love of money has corrupted many a ministry

1. Katerina and I have, unfortunately, experienced this firsthand by an encounter she had with a prominent Christian leader
    2. *It is the love of money that is the root of all kinds of evil* (I Tim 6:10)
    3. Paul wrote these words to Timothy not only as an instruction but as a warning
  - b. Daniel maintained the right heart and his faithfulness to God even when presented with the things most valued in this world
2. Daniel's knowledge of history
- a. Even though 2 ½ decades had passed, Daniel remembered the powerful works of God
  - b. God not only wants us to remain faithful in the times of silence but He wants us to grow in faith by remembering His past works in our lives in spite of what we may be facing in that moment.
  - c. Daniel had not been used by God for many years, yet he never forgot who God was and still is
    - i. Belshazzar had everything, but no faith
    - ii. Daniel had comparatively very little but never lost his faith
    - iii. Would we remain so faithful if something we thought we should have or a position we thought we deserved was suddenly changed or even taken from us?
  - d. We only live in the moment; God lives in the eternal
  - e. Daniel knew what it was to have power and influence, and he knew what it was to be ignored and forgotten – yet his faith never waivered