**Going deeper in Daniel 5:13-30**

**INTRODUCTION**

It appears that a significant amount of time has elapsed between the episode in the last chapter with Nebuchadnezzar and what happens next. Daniel is probably elderly and has been forgotten. Belshazzar a new ruler of Babylon has thrown a party and he used chalices and vessels from the Jewish temple for his party. In the middle of it a hand appears and writes on the wall. All are terrified. No one can interpret the writing. The queen mother or grandmother remembers Daniel and so he is summoned.

**READ** – *Read (passage) aloud. Read it several times. Listen for what the Spirit of God is saying, don’t just think about it.*

13 So Daniel was called in before the king. The king asked, “Are you Daniel, who was one of the exiles my father the king brought here from Judah? 14 I have heard about you, that the Holy Spirit is in you, that you have insight and incredible wisdom in you. 15 Now the wise men and enchanters who were brought in here to read this writing and tell me what it means, but they could not tell me the meaning. 16 But I heard you are able to interpret and solve difficult problems. Now if you are able to read the writing and interpret it for me I will make you rich and powerful – a purple robe, a great gold chain around your neck and third in command in the kingdom.” 17 Daniel answered the king, “You can keep your gifts or give them to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read writing for the king and tell him what it means. 18 O king, the Most High God, gave your father Nebuchadnezzar a kingdom, greatness, majesty, and honor. 19 Because of the greatness God gave him all people from every nation and every culture were totally intimidated by him. He killed or spared whomever he wished. He promoted or brought down whomever he wished. 20 But when he became arrogant in his heart and his spirit was hardened with pride, God knocked him off his throne and took his glory from him 21 He was driven away from people and he lost his mind and lived like a wild animal. He ate grass like an ox and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he recognized that the Most High God rules over the kingdoms of men and puts whoever He wants in charge. 22 But you, Belshazzar, his son, have not humbled your heart although you knew all this. 23 You have lifted yourself up against the Master of heaven. You had the goblets that were set aside for God’s purposes from his temple brought in so you and your nobles, your wives, and concubines could drink from them at your drunken party. You used them and praised the gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone which do not see, hear, or know – blind, deaf, and unthinking gods. But you do not honor the God who holds your breath and your entire life in his hand. 24 So God sent the hand that wrote on the wall. 25 This is what was written: Mene, Mene, Tekel, Peres.

26 This is what the words mean: Mene, Mene: God has numbered the days of your kingdom and finished it. 27 Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and you came up short. 28 Peres: Your kingdom has been divided up and handed over 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 murdered. 31 Darius the Mede was sixty-two years old when he succeeded him as king.

**ENGAGE** – *Questions for going deeper. God is speaking… to you.*

1. Why do you think Daniel had been forgotten? Have there been times that you have felt forgotten like Daniel? What is God’s message here to those who may feel as though they are forgotten? Why might this be an important message to people living in exile?

2. In verse 17 what is offered to Daniel? Why do you think he turns it down?

3. What does his refusal tell you about what is important to Daniel? What does it say about his character? What would you do? Why?

4. Why do you think that Daniel still offers the interpretation of the vision?

5. The judgment on Belshazzar was far more final and seemed to leave little room for repentance compared to the judgment on Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 4. Why do you think that is?

6. What are the differences and similarities between Belshazzar and Nebuchadnezzar?

7. How does Daniel differ from them?

**PRAY** – *God has spoken. So, reply.*

\*Thank the Lord that He will never forget you or leave you.

\*Ask the Lord Jesus to give Daniel-like wisdom for the situations you are facing.

\*Ask the Lord to help you to show honor and respect for those who may believe different things than you.

**LIVE** – *This is where the rubber hits the road.*

Daniel is not rattled by the fact that the king has forgotten him or by his reminders that he is a captive and a slave. Daniel trusts that God has not forgotten him and this allows him to live with integrity and courage. Will you trust that God has not forgotten you and live with integrity and courage this week?