



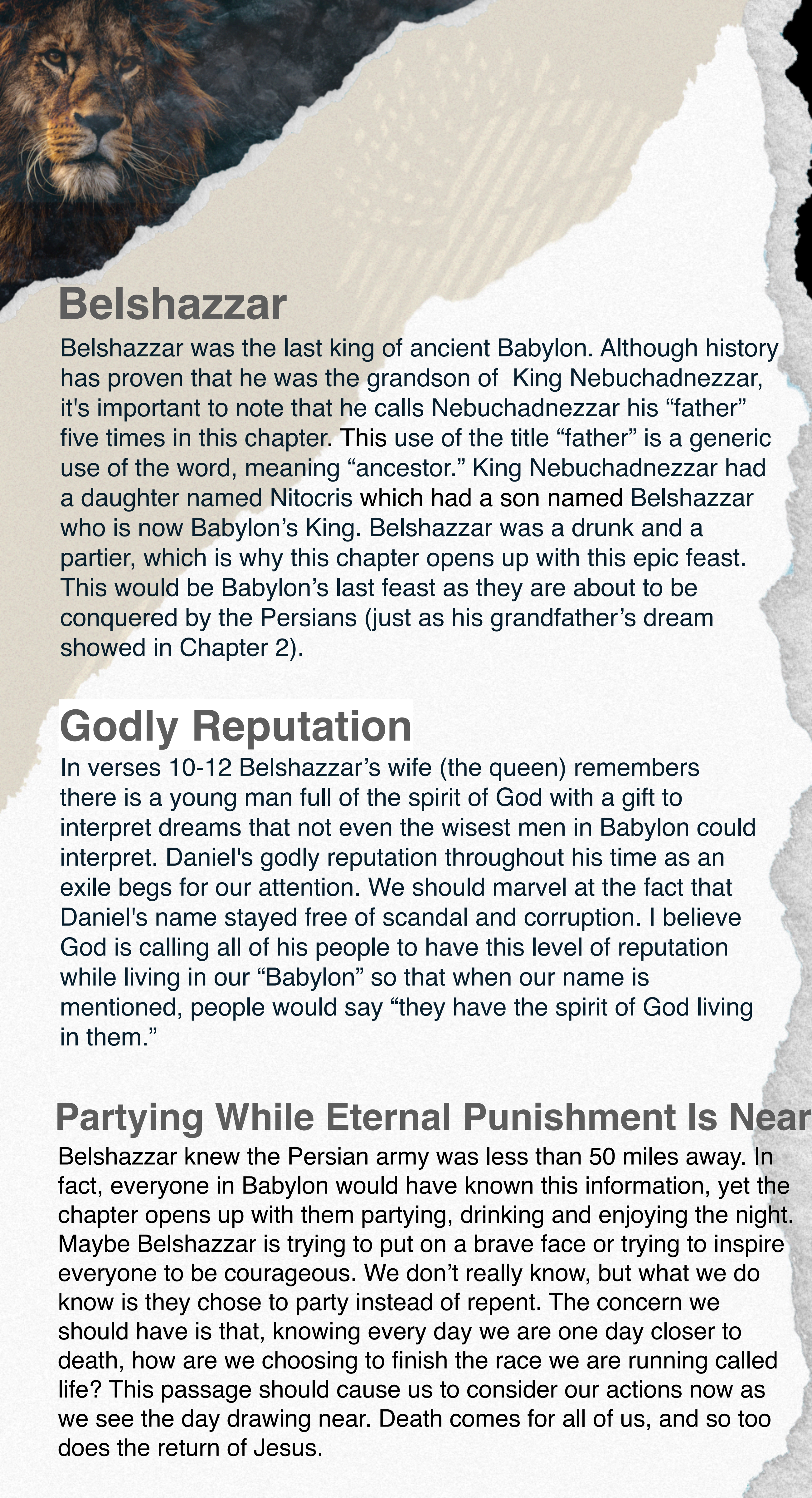
THE BOOK OF DANIEL

The Writing Is On The Wall

Chapter 5

Goal Of Chapter 5

Once again God is bringing down another King. Not King Nebuchadnezzar, but his grandson Belshazzar who is now reigning over Babylon. Just like Judah going into exile due to sin, Babylon is now being judged by God due to rebellion, hardness of heart and ultimately sin. Throughout this chapter, we'll see God's verdict on all of humanity as all of us have sinned. Yet those who have trusted in Jesus should rejoice because Christ has swallowed up God's wrath against even those who trust in him.



Belshazzar

Belshazzar was the last king of ancient Babylon. Although history has proven that he was the grandson of King Nebuchadnezzar, it's important to note that he calls Nebuchadnezzar his “father” five times in this chapter. This use of the title “father” is a generic use of the word, meaning “ancestor.” King Nebuchadnezzar had a daughter named Nitocris which had a son named Belshazzar who is now Babylon’s King. Belshazzar was a drunk and a partier, which is why this chapter opens up with this epic feast. This would be Babylon’s last feast as they are about to be conquered by the Persians (just as his grandfather’s dream showed in Chapter 2).

Godly Reputation

In verses 10-12 Belshazzar’s wife (the queen) remembers there is a young man full of the spirit of God with a gift to interpret dreams that not even the wisest men in Babylon could interpret. Daniel's godly reputation throughout his time as an exile begs for our attention. We should marvel at the fact that Daniel's name stayed free of scandal and corruption. I believe God is calling all of his people to have this level of reputation while living in our “Babylon” so that when our name is mentioned, people would say “they have the spirit of God living in them.”

Partying While Eternal Punishment Is Near

Belshazzar knew the Persian army was less than 50 miles away. In fact, everyone in Babylon would have known this information, yet the chapter opens up with them partying, drinking and enjoying the night. Maybe Belshazzar is trying to put on a brave face or trying to inspire everyone to be courageous. We don’t really know, but what we do know is they chose to party instead of repent. The concern we should have is that, knowing every day we are one day closer to death, how are we choosing to finish the race we are running called life? This passage should cause us to consider our actions now as we see the day drawing near. Death comes for all of us, and so too does the return of Jesus.

MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN-

Mene, Tekel and Parsin

Daniel was given the supernatural ability to translate the mysterious writing on the wall into Aramaic. Although he received great honor from Belshazzar, the meaning of these words is condemnation for Babylon. The interpretation of this writing is given to us in verses 26-28.

This is the interpretation of the matter:

Verse 26 Mene: God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end

Verse 27 Tekel: you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting

Verse 28 Peres: your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians

Questions:

1. Jesus says in Matthew 3:2, Matthew 4:17, and Mark 1:15 “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Knowing this, how does that impact the way you go through life?
2. Daniel remained impeccable with his character. How would your friends, co-workers and family describe your character and your godliness?
3. This chapter is a picture of God's ultimate judgment on humanity. How is your relationship with Jesus, the one who saves us from God’s wrath?