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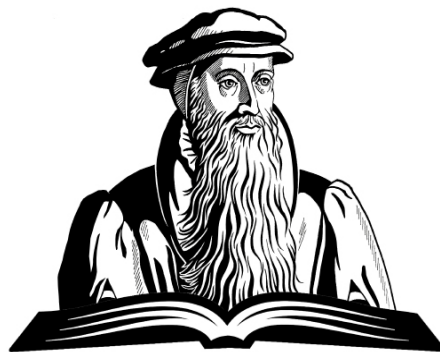
**BIBLE FOR
6TH GRADE STUDENTS**

Old Testament

Lesson 89

The Writing on the Wall

Lecture Presenter: Dr. Daniel Sweetman



The John Knox Institute
of Higher Education

Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide

John Knox Institute of Higher Education

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Dr. Daniel Sweetman is an instructor at Grace Christian Academy in Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA.
www.gcagr.org

Module

BIBLE FOR 6TH GRADE STUDENTS

Old Testament

113 LESSONS

(Additional lessons forthcoming)

77 Lessons presented by Mr. Daniel Van Brugge

36 Lessons presented by Dr. Daniel Sweetman

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|--|---|
| 01. The Bible: The Word of God | 26. Joseph and His Brethren |
| 02. Creation: The Work of an Almighty God | 27. Jacob Comes to Joseph |
| 03. Man: A Special Place in God's Creation | 28. God Heard Their Cry |
| 04. A Gracious Promise | 29. Moses and the Burning Bush |
| 05. Cain and Abel | 30. Let My People God |
| 06. Only Noah Found Grace | 31. Deliverance |
| 07. The Coming Judgment –A Way of Escape | 32. God's Patience with a Complaining People |
| 08. The Noahic Covenant | 33. Keeping the Law: Not to Merit /Thankfulness |
| 09. The Tower of Babel | 34. The Lord Dwells Among His People |
| 10. Abram: Called by God | 35. A Priest for the People |
| 11. Abram Intercedes for Lot | 36. Moses Intercedes for a Rebellious People |
| 12. Melchizadek | 37. Worshiping God Rightly |
| 13. Righteous by Faith | 38. Walk Not According to the World |
| 14. Two Sons | 39. Hearts of Ingratitude |
| 15. Lessons from Lot's Life | 40. Aaron's Rod Blossoming |
| 16. Faithless Abraham – Faithful God | 41. The Serpent of Brass Lifted Up |
| 17. Abraham Tested – God's Provision | 42. Phinehas Turning Away God's Wrath |
| 18. Isaac and Rebekah | 43. Cities of Refuge |
| 19. Jacob: A Better Desire than Esau | 44. A New Generation |
| 20. Jacob the Deceiver | 45. Moses' Last Days |
| 21. God Preserves Jacob | 46. Joshua—God's Promise Fulfilled |
| 22. Jacob Returns to Beth-el | 47. A Promise to Rahab |
| 23. Joseph Loved – Joseph Hated | 48. The Rise of Judges |
| 24. An Eye upon God | 49. Gideon—God with Him |
| 25. Joseph Raised Out of Prison | 50. Samson |

51. Ruth the Moabitess
52. Samuel Judges Israel
53. Israel's First King
54. The Kingdom Established
55. David Anointed the Next King
56. David Hunted by Saul
57. The Last Days of Saul
58. David, the Next King
59. Fetching the Ark
60. Thou Art the Man
61. David's Return to Jerusalem
62. Seven Sons of Saul Killed
63. Genealogies of Israel
64. David Appointed King
65. David's Kingdom Established
66. David Prepares for the Temple
67. David's Departing Instructions
68. Solomon Becomes King
69. Solomon Builds the House of God
70. The Kingdom is Rent
71. A Wicked Divided Kingdom
72. Ahab's Reign and Death
73. Elisha Begins his Work
74. Elisha's Voice is Heard
75. A Succession of Kings
76. Ahaz and Hezekiah
77. The Captivity of Judah
78. Introduction to the Prophets
79. Isaiah's Vision & Song
80. Isaiah Prophecies about Christ
81. The Prophet Jeremiah Called and Sent
82. Jeremiah Opposed and Comforted
83. Ezekiel, the Captive Prophet
84. Ezekiel's Comforting Visions
85. Daniel and His Three Friends
86. Nebuchadnezzar's Forgotten Dream
87. Three Friends in the Fiery Furnace
88. Nebuchadnezzar's Madness
- 89. The Writing on the Wall**
90. Daniel in the Lion's Den
91. Daniel's Visions and Dreams
92. Ezra—Return from Captivity
93. Ezra—Rebuilding the Temple
94. Ezra—The Scribe
95. Nehemiah—Rebuilding the Walls
96. Nehemiah—The Task Completed
97. Esther the Queen
98. Esther—Haman's Plot
99. Esther—The Jews Saved
100. Hosea—The Minor Prophets
101. Joel and the Day of the LORD
102. Amos the Fearless Herdsman
103. Obadiah Prophecies Edom's Fall
104. Jonah's Flight
105. Jonah's Mission
106. Micah Preaches Judgment & Mercy
107. Nahum—A Message for Nineveh
108. Habakkuk's Questions, God's Replies
109. Zephaniah—Threatenings & Promises
110. Haggai Urges Building the Temple
111. Zechariah—The Night Visions
112. Zechariah Prophecies of Christ
113. Malachi—Last Old Testament Prophet

Lesson 89

The Writing on the Wall

The Book of Daniel, chapter 5

Memory Verse

*“TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.”
Daniel 5:27*

Introduction

In this chapter, we read of the hand of God frightening Babylon’s heathen King Belshazzar. We also clearly read how God’s hand is directing all the events which take place on earth. Also today God’s hand guides and directs all things. When worldly people catch a glimpse of this, it confuses and frightens them. When God’s people may see something of the hand of God in their life, it comforts and reassures them that their Father in heaven will make all things work out for their good and his glory.

Belshazzar’s Feast

In Daniel 5, Nebuchadnezzar is no longer alive. Twenty-five years have passed, and several kings have come and gone. The new ruler of Babylon is called Belshazzar. Recent findings have confirmed that Belshazzar ruled Babylon while his father King Nabonidus was fighting the Persians. In verse one, we read that a huge feast was being held in the city and in the palace. Unbelievably, this took place even though Belshazzar’s father had just been defeated. Persian armies had marched right up to Babylon and were surrounding it at that very moment. Clearly, Belshazzar was confident that the city of Babylon with its enormous walls and stockpiles of food could never be defeated. Defiantly, King Belshazzar and a thousand nobles feasted, along with their wives and other women. Suddenly the king had an idea! “Bring in the gold and silver vessels which were taken from the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem!” Amid loud cheers, the holy vessels were brought in and filled with wine. Then they were raised, loud toasts were offered to the gods of Babylon, and the king and nobles drank them empty. Suddenly the king’s face turned ashen. His eyes bulged out as he stared up at the wall in front of him. It became deathly quiet in the room. Everyone saw it—a mysterious hand was seen moving on the wall by the lampstand. The fingers of the hand were writing letters in the plaster on the wall! The writing was in clearly visible letters! It was a vision that everyone saw!

The Writing on the Wall

The large banquet hall was thrown into confusion. “The king’s countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.” Wise men were called to learn the meaning, but no one could interpret the letters that were written on the wall. Then the queen mother came in and spoke of a man named Daniel. Though now an old man, Daniel was still wise and respected. The king sent for Daniel.

Daniel entered the palace and saw the frightened king, the holy vessels, and the writing on the wall. The king stammered something about rewarding Daniel with a chain of gold and making him the third ruler of the kingdom. Daniel said, "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation." He told Belshazzar that God Almighty is the one who rules over the kingdoms of men. He accused Belshazzar of not humbling his heart, but lifting himself up against the Lord of heaven. He pointed out the great wickedness that the king dared to drink wine from God's holy vessels. Daniel reminded him of something he knew. The king knew how God had humbled his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, for his pride. Belshazzar knew all that happened to his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar. This made Belshazzar's sin so much the worse. He was intentionally defying the Lord. Daniel told him that this hand was sent from God. Then Daniel read the writing on the wall out loud. It said "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN." The word MENE means "numbered." The days of Belshazzar's kingdom were numbered. TEKEL means "weighed." Belshazzar had been weighed on the scales of divine justice and found wanting. UPHARSIN means that the kingdom of Babylon would fall. It would be conquered by the Medes and Persians.

The Gospel in the Old Testament

History books describe how the city of Babylon was captured by the Persians. The city was well protected by great walls, and the Euphrates river also had a deep wall. The Persians lowered the level of the river Euphrates and entered the city under the wall. The book of Daniel tells us that the sudden capture of Babylon and the death of Belshazzar that very night was the judgment of God upon a mocking king. When King Belshazzar stood before God's judgment seat, he could not plead ignorance. We know so much more than this heathen king. We know the way of salvation. The Lord Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Take time to study God's Word. There we hear the Lord say, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Luke 11:9-10).

Review Questions

1. At what point did the mysterious hand appear upon the wall? (circle one)

- a. When the feast began.
- b. When the king ordered the vessels to be brought.
- c. When the wine was poured in the vessels.
- d. When they praised their false gods and drank the wine.

2. "And the King _____ the part of the _____ that wrote. Then the king's _____ was _____, and his _____ troubled him, so that the _____ of his _____ were loosed, and his _____ one against each other. The king _____."

3. What did the queen say to the king about Daniel? _____

4. What did the king promise Daniel if he interpreted the writing? (circle the ones that are true)
- a. He would be given many horses.
 - b. He would become the next king.
 - c. He would be clothed with scarlet and a great chain of gold around his neck.
 - d. He would be made the third ruler in the kingdom.

5. Here are the words written on the wall. Fill in the blanks.

MENE: *God hath _____ thy kingdom and _____ it.*
TEKEL: *Thou art _____ in the _____ and found _____.*
UPHARSIN: *Thy kingdom is _____ and given to the _____ and _____.*

6. How did Belshazzar react to Daniel’s warning words? (circle one)
- a. He became angry.
 - b. He mocked Daniel.
 - c. He rewarded Daniel
 - d. He humbled himself.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did Belshazzar become so afraid, when he didn’t even know what the words meant? Why did he not think that perhaps it was a good message?

2. Why do you think Daniel refused Belshazzar's gifts? Can you think of anyone else in the Bible who wouldn't take a gift?

3. Both Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar became proud and were punished. What is the main difference between them?

4. Belshazzar should have learned from what happened to Nebuchadnezzar. We can learn lessons from people in the Bible, but also from people around us. In what way have you learned from observing the mistakes or sins of other people?

5. After Daniel's warning, Belshazzar only had a few hours to live. What would you do differently if you knew you had only a few hours left to live?
