SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

REFLECTION JOURNAL · FIVE DAYS

Daniel

Chapter 5

The End of an Empire

MEMORY VERSE · DANIEL 5:27

“ ‘TEKEL’—you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient.”

THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO _____

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

This week in Daniel 5

Belshazzar had heard his grandfather's story all his life, and on Babylon's last night he still had not bowed. This week God asks me the question Daniel asked the king: not how much do I know, but what have I humbled my heart to obey? The good news is that the God who weighs every life has given us Christ, and in Him we are not found lacking.

How to use this journal

1. Each day, read the passage slowly — out loud if you can.
2. Answer the **Observe** question from the text before you write what it means.
3. Write honestly on the **Reflect** questions. No one grades this.
4. Do the **Respond** step today, not someday. Say the memory verse.
5. Bring this journal to the group. The last page is for the table.

The Complete Study, the O·I·A study, the slides and the film for this chapter are on the Daniel study page.

WHERE I AM AS I START THIS CHAPTER

What is going on in my life right now that I want to bring to God this week?

DAY 1 OF 5

A Party at the Edge of the Cliff

READ · DANIEL 5:1–4

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Once Belshazzar had tasted the wine, what did he order brought to the table, and where had those vessels come from (verses 2–3)?

REFLECT

The Medes and Persians were outside the walls, and the king threw a party (verse 1). When trouble is at your gate, what do you reach for to keep from facing it, and what does it end up costing you?

REFLECT

Those vessels were set apart for "the house of God," and the king used them to praise "the gods of gold and silver" (verses 3–4). What has God set apart in your life (your body, your time, your gifts) that you have been using for something smaller?

RESPOND — TODAY

Name one holy thing you have treated as common, and give it back to God in a short, honest prayer. Then use it once today, on purpose, for Him.

❒ READ IT ❒ PRAYED IT ❒ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (DANIEL 5:27)

DAY 2 OF 5

The Writing on the Wall

READ · DANIEL 5:5–9

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Where exactly did the hand write, and what happened to the king's face and body when he saw it (verses 5–6)?

REFLECT

The hand wrote "opposite the lampstand" (verse 5), in the brightest spot in the room, where no one could miss it. What truth has God set right in front of you that you have been trying not to read?

REFLECT

The king's best experts "could not read the inscription or make known its interpretation" (verse 8). Where have you been leaning on the world's experts for answers that only God's Word can give?

RESPOND — TODAY

Write down one thing you sense God has been saying to you lately. Bring it to Him in prayer and ask Him plainly what He wants you to do with it.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (DANIEL 5:27)

DAY 3 OF 5

The Man Everyone Forgot

READ · DANIEL 5:10–16

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What did the queen remember about Daniel that the king had forgotten (verses 11–12)?

REFLECT

Daniel was not at the feast and not on the king's mind, yet the queen said, "There is a man in your kingdom" (verse 11). When have you felt set aside or forgotten, and what does it mean to you that God never lost track of Daniel?

REFLECT

The king told Daniel, "I have heard about you" (verse 14), but he had never gone looking for him. Who is the faithful man in your life you have heard about but never asked for help, and what has kept you from asking?

RESPOND — TODAY

Reach out today to one older, faithful believer (a chaplain, a sponsor, a pastor, a brother) and ask him one honest question about walking with God.

❒ READ IT ❒ PRAYED IT ❒ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (DANIEL 5:27)

DAY 4 OF 5

You Knew All This

READ · DANIEL 5:17–24

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Before Daniel read a word of the writing, what story did he tell the king, and how did that story end (verses 18–21)?

REFLECT

Daniel said, "Keep your gifts for yourself" (verse 17), and then told the king the hard truth. Why do you think he refused the reward, and where are you tempted to soften the truth to get something from someone?

REFLECT

"Yet you … have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this" (verse 22). What is one thing you know is true from God's Word that you have not yet bowed to, and what would humbling your heart in it look like this week?

RESPOND — TODAY

Read verse 23 slowly: "the God in whose hand are your life-breath and all your ways". Take three slow breaths and thank Him for each one. Then tell Him: Lord, I humble my heart; I hand You my ways today.

❐ READ IT ❐ PRAYED IT ❐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (DANIEL 5:27)

DAY 5 OF 5

Weighed on the Scales

READ · DANIEL 5:25–31

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What three things did Daniel say the words on the wall meant, and what happened "That same night" (verses 26–30)?

REFLECT

Daniel told the king he had been "weighed on the scales and found deficient" (verse 27). If your life were set on God's scales today, what would you be counting on to make the weight, and why is Christ's righteousness the only thing that can?

REFLECT

Belshazzar's last night looked like any other party, and it was over by morning (verse 30), while the old prophet he ignored was still standing (verse 29). Since God numbers every kingdom's days (verse 26), how do you want to spend the days He has numbered for you?

RESPOND — TODAY

Ask God, in the words of Psalm 90:12, to teach you to number your days. Then thank Jesus by name that in Him you are complete (Colossians 2:10).

❐ READ IT ❐ PRAYED IT ❐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (DANIEL 5:27)

WHEN THE GROUP MEETS

Questions for the table

FOR THE GROUP · 1

Daniel told a king who could have killed him the hard truth, and turned down the king's reward to do it (verse 17). What makes it hard for you to tell another man the truth in love, and what would help you do it this week?

FOR THE GROUP · 2

Nebuchadnezzar's story of being humbled and restored was told to his grandson as a warning (verses 18–21). What part of your own story of God humbling and restoring you could help a younger man, and who needs to hear it?

FOR THE GROUP · 3

The God who wrote on the wall is the same God who holds your breath and all your ways (verse 23). How does knowing that change the way you face the thing that scares you most right now?

MY PRAYER

Lord of heaven, You hold my breath and all my ways, so today I humble my heart and bring You…

CUT OUT · CARRY IT · DANIEL 5:27

“ ‘TEKEL’—you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient.”