

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, February 11, 2018

**God's Graffiti
A Study of Daniel 5**

www.hillcrest.church



Do you or someone you know like trying to solve puzzles, play games like Sudoku, and get out of Escape Rooms? What makes it fun or frustrating?

That image comes from Daniel 5. In today's study, King Belshazzar faced a puzzle. He was disturbed by the way the puzzle appeared and what the puzzle meant. Have you ever heard someone say, "I think he's finally seen the handwriting on the wall"? What does that mean?

Here's what we learn from Daniel 5: Whenever we ignore God's rules for life, God will break into the middle of our rebellion and make us finally see the handwriting on the wall.

Read Daniel 5:1-6.

If Daniel 5 was the script for a movie and you were the music director, how would you musically score the scene in verses 1-6? In other words, what music would you choose for the opening verses? Would the musical score change somewhere in the story, and, if so, where? What tone of music would you use at the point of change and after?

To understand what was happening in 5:2-4 and why God reacted the way he did, read Daniel 1:1-2 and Daniel 5:18-24 and answer the following questions:

- ❖ Daniel summarizes the story of Nebuchadnezzar losing his sanity in chapter 5. In what chapter can we find the fuller story?
- ❖ In chapter 1, what did Nebuchadnezzar do with the articles from the temple of God? In chapter 5, what sin has Belshazzar added to his father's? (You can find the answer at 5:2-4 and 5:23.)
- ❖ How is this an insult to God?
- ❖ How is Belshazzar's sin worse than Nebuchadnezzar's sin? (5:22 may help here.)

List some things you have learned from your parents or grandparents. Why do people often fail, as Belshazzar did, to learn from the past?

Read Daniel 5:25-31.

What did the handwriting on the wall mean? (5:25-28)

How was that prophecy fulfilled? (5:30)

Read Psalm 94:4-9. How does the story in Daniel 5 illustrate the claims of Psalm 94?

The story of Belshazzar is a warning to all of us: When we make sinful choices, God is closer than we think. Read Numbers 32:23 and Galatians 6:7 and answer the following questions:

- ❖ What does “your sin will find you out” mean in Numbers 32:23?
- ❖ Give some examples from American history or your history where wrongdoing was finally exposed.
- ❖ In Galatians 6:7, Paul says that we “mock” God when we sin. We don’t often consciously think of our sinful choices as mocking God. Why is sinful behavior a way of mocking God?
- ❖ In Galatians 6:7, Paul says we reap what we sow. What does that mean in relation to sin and rebellion?

Read Psalm 139:7-12. Many Christians say Psalm 139 is one of their favorites. They say it comforts them with the reminder of God’s presence. It’s certainly a psalm about God’s presence, but did David feel comforted that God was so close to him? What were the verbs he used in verses 7 and 11?

Why does David think about escaping God in Psalm 139:7-12? What directions are mentioned in verses 8-9?

Do you ever feel like escaping God’s eyes? God’s restrictions? God’s hopes for you?

On the night before the cross, Peter swore he would never forsake Jesus. But Jesus predicted Peter would deny him 3 times before the rooster crowed at the next morning’s sunrise. To find out what happened after Peter’s third denial, read Luke 22:60-62. Describe how you would draw or paint the faces of Peter and Jesus in verse 61.

Psalm 139 ends differently than it begins. Read Psalm 139:23-24. How is his thinking in verses 23-24 different than his thinking in verses 7-12?

Why do we need God's help at identifying "any offensive way" in us (Psalm 139:24)? In other words, aren't our offenses obvious to us?

Why is it in our best interest to yield to his examination instead of trying to run from it?

How does the cross of Jesus assure us that God has our best interest in mind when he examines us and corrects us?



Close with praise reports and prayer requests