



2020 1Q Daniel: Lesson 6 From Arrogance to Destruction

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

In the aftermath of our POL seminar, I received the following email asking I share it with the class and answer it:

Good morning, Tim. I know you can be misinterpreted, so I thought I'd ask you to confirm a statement you made as an answer to someone's question at the end of the meetings. Did you say that if people are operating on a level lower than level 5 that they cannot be saved? The lives of some Bible characters and personal experience with other Christians seem to refute that statement. If you believe that Jesus Christ is the Savior and have given your heart to him and live an other-centered life, then do you have to "climb" through the levels of moral development before you are able to be saved? I can see that operating under Level 1 may prevent you from recognizing your need for God because you are self-focused, but I cannot see that the other levels necessarily prevent you from truly giving your heart to the Lord. Many I know love the Lord with all their heart and understand that the Holy Spirit is bringing them into all truth and helping them to develop their character, yet believe that the unconverted will be punished by God. It seems to me that the levels above level 4 bring freedom that the other levels have not yet experienced.

This is a good point to clarify—my point was that salvation by definition is a change of heart from enmity to God to trust in God, from selfishness to love and trust. If this change in heart hasn't happened then a person hasn't been saved.

To me, this is when a person moves from level four to five, which is an issue of the heart, not an issue of the answer one gives on a Bible quiz. I know many people who have been reborn, converted, changed from fear and selfishness to love God and others, but have never been taught theology above level four. So they *practice* level five while giving Bible answers at level four or lower.

Read first paragraph, "In Daniel 5..." What do you think about the sentence, "Such an act of desecration is tantamount not only to a challenge of God but an attack on God Himself."

Does it mean if one were to attack God then the righteous response from God is to use force to attack back and kill them?

Hmmm... what methods would that be? What kind of law would that operate under—imposed or design?

Do we have evidence of what God does when He is attacked?



When Jesus was bound, beaten and crucified, did He use power to punish His enemies? What is revealed?

Understand, Satan thought this would work; Satan's method is imperialism, rules over, power over, force to comply. Satan thought the most reasonable response to being threatened was to use force to protect self and kill one's enemies. This is Satan's way.

But Jesus showed God's way "Greater love has no man than he give his life for his friends."

Jesus said, if we have seen Him we have seen the Father—in other words if we could spit in the Father's face and curse Him and beat Him, He would also turn the other cheek and forgive us.

God in human form showed us how God responds.

But in heaven when Lucifer started His rebellion against God, did God kill Lucifer?

So, what is transpiring—was Belshazzar actually attacking God personally?

What was Belshazzar doing? He was defaming God, belittling God's reputation, name, disparaging God—and where do such actions have an impact?

If we call God names, ridicule God, deny the existence of God—have we hurt God? Or, do such actions have their impact in the minds of people?

And what would God's actions here teach? That God intervenes to protect and heal His people from those who would try and corrupt them.

This is revealed on another level—by interpreting the symbols of the sanctuary.

Remember, everything associated with the sanctuary was an object lesson, a teaching tool, a symbol of some larger reality. The lamb was a symbol for Jesus, the white robes symbol for purified Christlike character, daily priests symbolic of the priesthood of believers.

What were the vessels that Belshazzar used symbolic of?

God called Paul, His "chosen vessel." Acts 9:15.

Vessels carried the blood of the sacrifice or the wine of the drink offering. Both the blood and the wine are symbols of the life of Christ. We are to drink the blood or wine, which means we are to partake of the life of Christ and then share Christ with others.

Using the vessels for vile activities would be symbolically saying he is corrupting God's people, perverting their character, infecting them with Satan's views of God, using them to lie about God—



thus God acts to protect His people from having their hearts and minds corrupted with lies, selfishness and worldliness.

SUNDAY

The lesson asks us to compare how Belshazzar's actions in using the golden and silver vessels from the Temple for debauchery is like the harlot of Revelation 17 using the golden cup to intoxicate the nations.

The last paragraph states, "Like Belshazzar the woman in end-time Babylon holds a golden cup and offers polluted drink to the nations. In other words, my beams of false doctrines and a distorted worship system, modern Babylon lures the world into evil (Rev 17:4-6), oblivious to the judgment that will soon fall upon her."

What does the wine in the cup of the woman represent? False doctrines, lies, false beliefs that the entire world accepts and is confused by.

What would be the core false belief that the entire world has accepted?

That God's law functions like human law—this is the root think about how all the world believes this is who God is.

- All Christian religions teach God in order to be just must use His power to inflict suffering and death upon the wicked—why is this just? Because the law model they have accepted is the lie of Rome, that God's law functions like human law and therefore God must inflict punishment.
- Islam arose to protest many of the abuses of the Roman Church, yet it accepts the same lie that God in order to be just must use His power to inflict punishment on the wicked.
- Judaism has been infected with this view of God for millennia.
- Those who reject God do so because they compare the god presented in these various religions to how reality works and finds a conflict. They see nature and science and see laws that are design laws, constants, and then they look at the gods of the religions of the world and see a dictator who makes up rules and punishes rule breakers and they reject that god. In other words, they are also reacting to the lie, the wine of Babylon.
- Governments who claim God is on their side embrace the imposed law model—the wine of Babylon and believe using coercion or compelling power to force one's way is godly.
- And we believe as the future unfolds that our freedoms will be taken away by those who think they are doing God's will. Why? Because they believe in an imperial god who imposes punishments, the wine of Babylon.

MONDAY

The lesson asks us to read Daniel 5:5-8:



Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. The king watched the hand as it wrote. 6 His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way.

7 The king called out for the enchanters, astrologers and diviners to be brought and said to these wise men of Babylon, “Whoever reads this writing and tells me what it means will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around his neck, and he will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom.”

8 Then all the king’s wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or tell the king what it meant. (NIV84)

What was the purpose of the handwriting on the wall?

Was it to punish Belshazzar—in other words to cause the king emotional torment before he is killed by the invading army because he needs to suffer a certain amount of mental anguish before he dies?

Was it an act of grace, mercy, one last intervention by God to give the wicked king an opportunity to repent?

Do you think this would have caused the entire party to suddenly go from merriment to somberness and seriousness? Do you think the music stopped, the laughing stopped, and things got quite serious?

Would this be an opportunity for everyone in attendance to rethink their situation and repent?

Why did the king call astrologers and enchanters?

Do you think the king was looking for the truth or for an explanation that would soothe his anxiety and fears?

If any of our modern presidents were having a state dinner and something like this happened, a hand appears and writes on the wall—who do you think any of our presidents would call?

Why do you think the diviners could not read the writing? I find it quite strange—most of these types of people are very good at making things up to sound true even though they are not. I have seen similar things in many settings, someone speaks in tongues, just gibberish, hysteria, but another person gives a bland interpretation of some generic message that one could get on a Christian fortune cookie. Never anything that can be disproved and never anything that is actually testable or meaningful, yet most believe the interpretation.

Fortune tellers are very good at conning people with their so-called interpretations—so why do you think that these fortune tellers couldn’t give some made-up explanation?

Is it possible that the Holy Spirit impressed them with such uncertainty that they thought it best not to try?



TUESDAY

Read Daniel 5:9-12:

So King Belshazzar became even more terrified and his face grew more pale. His nobles were baffled. 10 The queen, hearing the voices of the king and his nobles, came into the banquet hall. “O king, live forever!” she said. “Don’t be alarmed! Don’t look so pale! 11 There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him. In the time of your father he was found to have insight and intelligence and wisdom like that of the gods. King Nebuchadnezzar your father—your father the king, I say—appointed him chief of the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners. 12 This man Daniel, whom the king called Belteshazzar, was found to have a keen mind and knowledge and understanding, and also the ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve difficult problems. Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what the writing means.” (NIV84)

Do you think the king didn’t know about Daniel? Is it possible that the king never heard the stories of the three worthies and the fiery furnace, didn’t know of Nebuchadnezzar’s dreams and their interpretation, didn’t know of the king’s insanity and restoration and declaration of the God of Daniel that went to the entire kingdom? Is it possible that Belshazzar didn’t know that Daniel was the chief of all the sages in the land?

Or, is it more likely, that Belshazzar did know but also knew Daniel served the God of heaven and not the gods of Babylon; that Belshazzar knew Daniel was Hebrew and the items just desecrated were from the Jewish Temple, and that as with ALL violations of God’s law there is a response of fear, anxiety, guilt, shame and truth magnifies this self-condemnation and Belshazzar, on some level knew he was wrong and knew Daniel would expose his wrong and didn’t want to hear from Daniel. Is it possible, the king called the other soothsayers because he wanted to cover his guilt with more lies and flattery?

Do we see God acting in grace to give the king one more opportunity to repent?

The lesson in the bottom green section asks us to read Romans 1:16-32:

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. [What kind of power is the power of God? The good news about God—His methods of truth, love and freedom. It is the power to demolish strongholds of lies that set themselves up against the knowledge of God. It is the power to win to love and trust and love and trust cannot be compelled, thus it is not by might, nor by power but by the Spirit says the Lord.] 17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.” [What does this mean? The righteous, or just, are those who choose in governance of self to do that which is right, in harmony with God’s design laws, methods and character, and then trust God with the outcome.]



18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be **known about God** is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world **God's invisible qualities**—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. [Why are people without excuse? What kind of law is described here? Can people know from nature what the tax code is? Can people know from nature what the speed limit is or any other imposed law? So, again God's laws are the design protocols upon which life is built—this is understood from what has been made. But people are free to reject it, but they cannot avoid the results of rejecting the truth. People are free to reject the truth about the dangers of smoking and believe it is healthy to smoke, but they cannot actually get healthy by smoking. In fact, they will get sick and die. This is exactly what is described in the following passages. The sad reality is that the world is intoxicated with the wine of Babylon and falsely believes God's law works like human law and thus misread these passages to teach the very lies that nature refutes. In other words, people teach that God's laws function like human laws and that God uses His power to inflict punishment for sin]

21 For although they **knew God**, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and **exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images** made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

24 **Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires** of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 **They exchanged the truth of God for a lie**, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

26 **Because of this, God gave them over** to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. 27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

28 Furthermore, **since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind**, to do what ought not to be done. 29 They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; 31 they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them. (NIV 84)

What type of law is being described? Design law—and what happens when we violate design law?



This is from *Hard Sayings of the Bible* about this passage:

In some sense, God's wrath is built into the very structure of created reality. In rejecting God's structure and establishing our own, in violating God's intention for the creation and substituting our own intentions, we cause our own disintegration. P 542

The human condition, which Paul describes in Romans 1:18-32, is not something caused by God. The phrase "revealed from heaven" (where "heaven" is a typical Jewish substitute word for "God") does not depict some kind of divine intervention, but rather the inevitability of human debasement which results when God's will, built into the created order, is violated. Since the created order has its origin in God, Paul can say that the wrath of God is now (constantly) being revealed "from heaven." It is revealed in the fact that the rejection of God's truth (Rom 1:18-20), that is, the truth about God's nature and will, leads to futile thinking (Rom 1:21-22), idolatry (Rom 1:23), perversion of God-intended sexuality (Rom 1:24-27) and relational-moral brokenness (Rom 1:28-32). P 543

The expression "God gave them over" (or "handed them over"), which appears three times in this passage (Rom 1:24,26,28), supports the idea that the sinful perversion of human existence, though resulting from human decisions, is to be understood ultimately as God's punishment which we, in freedom, bring upon ourselves. P 543

In light of these reflections, the common notion that God punishes or blesses in direct proportion to our sinful or good deeds cannot be maintained... God loves us with an everlasting love. But the rejection of that love separates us from its life-giving power. The result is disintegration and death. P 543 Kaiser, W., et al., *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, Intervarsity Press, 1996,

WEDNESDAY/THURSDAY

Read Daniel 5:13-28:

So Daniel was brought before the king, and the king said to him, "Are you Daniel, one of the exiles my father the king brought from Judah? ¹⁴ I have heard that the spirit of the gods is in you and that you have insight, intelligence and outstanding wisdom. ¹⁵ The wise men and enchanters were brought before me to read this writing and tell me what it means, but they could not explain it. ¹⁶ Now I have heard that you are able to give interpretations and to solve difficult problems. If you can read this writing and tell me what it means, you will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around your neck, and you will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom."

¹⁷ Then Daniel answered the king, "You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the writing for the king and tell him what it means.



¹⁸ “O king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendor. ¹⁹ Because of the high position he gave him, all the peoples and nations and men of every language dreaded and feared him. Those the king wanted to put to death, he put to death; those he wanted to spare, he spared; those he wanted to promote, he promoted; and those he wanted to humble, he humbled. ²⁰ But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. ²¹ He was driven away from people and given the mind of an animal; he lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like cattle; and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he acknowledged that the Most High God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and sets over them anyone he wishes.

²² “But you his son,^d O Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. ²³ Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways. ²⁴ Therefore he sent the hand that wrote the inscription.

²⁵ “This is the inscription that was written:
mene, mene, tekel, parsin^e

²⁶ “This is what these words mean:

Mene^f: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.

²⁷ *Tekel*^g: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting.

²⁸ *Peres*^h: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.” (NIV 84)

So, Belshazzar did know all about Nebuchadnezzar’s reign and therefore, most likely knew about Daniel—but didn’t originally call him.

Do we believe Belshazzar was overthrown by the Medes and Persians because he used the vessels of the Temple?

Or, was the use of the vessels, just another example of the prideful heart of the king?

If Belshazzar for some reason was unable to use the Temple vessels that night, say the servants couldn’t locate them during the party, do we think that Babylon would not have been overthrown?

How long after Daniel’s interpretation did the kingdom fall? Evidently, that very night. If the kingdom fell that night, how long had the attack on the city been in preparation by the Medes and Persians?

^d Or descendant; or successor

^e Aramaic UPARSIN (that is, AND PARSIN)

^f Mene can mean numbered or mina (a unit of money).

^g Tekel can mean weighed or shekel.

^h Peres (the singular of Parsin) can mean divided or Persia or a half mina or a half shekel.



Weren't preparations going on for months if not years, preparing arms, organizing, training, traveling, planning, preparing and then attacking?

If this was due simply to using the Temple vessels that night, would the army have been in place that night?

So, do we see the Persians were about to overthrow Babylon—whether the party happened that night or not, the Persian army was going to attack. God knew this and God loves all humans, including prideful and arrogant humans like Nebuchadnezzar. And just as God intervened with Nebuchadnezzar to give him opportunities to repent, God intervenes here and gives Belshazzar and all his household one final opportunity to repent before the enemy kills them.

What do we think about the “judgment” that happened that night?

What judgment was this?

There are four judgments:

1. Our judgment of God (Romans 2:4; Elijah at Carmel; Rev 14)
2. God's judgments of our condition, what therapeutic actions are needed to heal and save and eliminate sin, who trusts Him and what to fix in each heart and mind (this includes the investigative judgment)
3. Our judgment of angels during the 1000 years
4. The Great White throne judgment at the end of the 1000 years

What judgment was happening here? God judged or diagnosed the actual condition of Belshazzar's heart and judged that the handwriting on the wall would give Belshazzar one more opportunity to reflect and repent before the Persians came and killed him.

If we don't understand God's design law and instead read the story through human imposed law, what false spin do we put on this story?

FRIDAY

Read the second paragraph, “The history of nations...” What does it mean, “To every nation and to every individual God has assigned a place in His great plan.”? And how does God assigning people a place balance with “All are by their own choice deciding their destiny and God is overruling all for the accomplishment of His purposes.”?

Do we have a choice or not?

I think the story of Jonah reveals this quite perfectly.

- Was Jonah the only person in all Israel who was willing to work with God?
- Is God able to read the hearts of people?



- Did God know Jonah hated the Ninevites?
- God calls Jonah—was Jonah free to follow or run?
- When Jonah runs God overrules and sends a storm
- Did Jonah understand what was happening?
- Who chose for Jonah to be thrown in the sea?
- Do you think Jonah's choice was to jump ship and get picked up by a submarine? Or was Jonah basically saying, kill me? Was Jonah saying he would rather die than give a message of hope to Nineveh?
- Did God love Jonah? Did Jonah have hatred issues in his heart that needed working out?
- When Jonah was thrown in the ocean did God overrule and send a great fish?
- Did Jonah have time for reflection? Was Jonah forced by God to repent, or did Jonah realize in this circumstance that he needed to change?
- Who was the God of the Ninevites? Dagon the fish God.
- Was all of this accidental, that a messenger from God to Nineveh, the people who worshipped the fish god was delivered by a great fish?
- And did God further intervene for Jonah with the vine?

Do we see in this story the balance between free choice and God overruling for His purposes?

What about President Trump, has God assigned him a place?

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Questions: If you have questions please email them either at requests@comeandreason.com or topics@comeandreason.com. If you post on Facebook it is likely they will not be answered as I often miss questions posted on Facebook.

February 8, 2020: Come and Reason Class will meet at Bake Crafters at 10673 S Lee Hwy, McDonald, TN 37353 for this Sabbath only. Class will start at our regular time.

March 27,28, 2020: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at an AACC River Conference at Plano, TX. More info at <http://theriverconference.com/>

April 17,18, 2020: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Lakewood SDA church in Lakewood OH.

September 17-19 2020: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC National Conference in Dallas, TX

October 3, 2020: Come and Reason will have a one day seminar in Chattanooga TN on Healing the Mind, Recovering from Sexual Abuse, the Impact of Digital Media on Kids and more. Details coming soon.