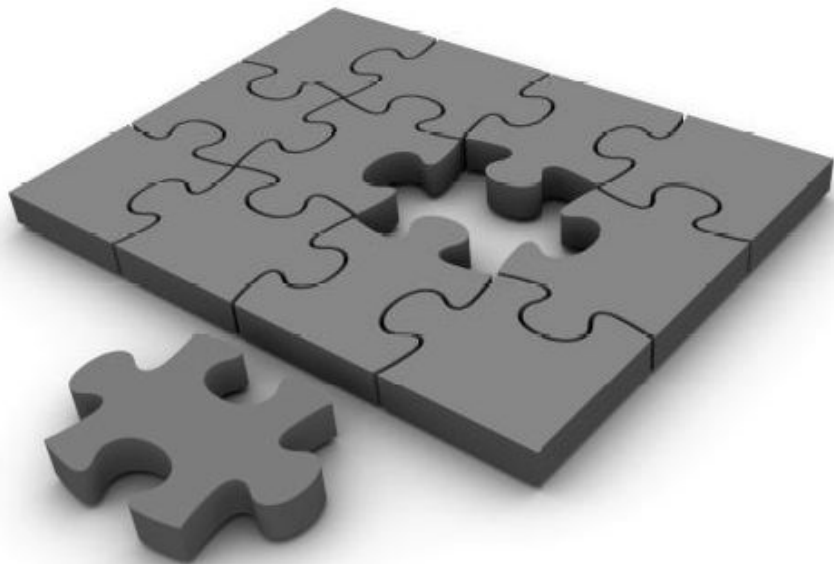


Studies in Daniel – (Study 20) “Suddenly...”

Reading: Daniel 5:1-6



Living a godly life in an ungodly world

Home Fellowship Group Bible Study notes
Tuesday 13th / Wednesday 14th January

The events in Daniel 5 take place 23 years after the death of King Nebuchadnezzar. There are three further kings of Babylon between chapters 4 and 5 and Nabonidus is now on the throne. Because he spent most of his time away he left the day to day rule to his son Belshazzar. Belshazzar was Nebuchadnezzar's son (v2) in the sense of being his descendant; a familiar form of address in Bible times (e.g. Jesus is called the son of David). By this time Babylon's empire had been greatly reduced, although Babylon itself was still considered impregnable. It had 20 years of food supplies and the Euphrates River flowed through the heart of the city, so that no embargo could affect them.

- 1) As we begin a new chapter in history, what main themes of the book of Daniel do these first four verses recall?
- 2) One writer observes that “across these opening verses of chapter 5 falls the ominous shadow of the closing words of chapter 4: ‘those who walk in pride he is able to humble’”.
What picture do these opening verses build up of this King?
- 3) Why do you think he called for the gold and silver goblets to be brought and used in this feast?
- 4) The summary of this chapter can be taken from verses 22-23.
What lessons had Belshazzar failed to learn?
- 5) The mood suddenly changes in verse 5 with the word ‘suddenly’; reminding us of a similar word at the beginning of 4:33. *What is significant about this ‘suddenness’ of God's actions?*
- 6) On what other occasions in the Old Testament do we read about the finger of God? What do these tell us about God?