

# Daniel 5:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Daniel answered and said before the king, 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.

## Analysis

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Daniel's response to offered rewards demonstrates integrity: '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.' Daniel refuses bribes that might compromise message delivery. He'll serve truth regardless of personal benefit. The phrase 'yet I will' shows he'll provide interpretation not for reward but out of prophetic obligation. This establishes his credibility—he has no vested interest in pleasing the king. Contrast with pagan wise men who depended on royal favor; Daniel's security rests in God, freeing him to speak truth without fear or flattery.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern court prophets and advisors often shaped messages to please rulers and secure rewards. Daniel's refusal of gifts before speaking demonstrates independence from royal manipulation. The offered rewards—purple robe, gold chain, third ruler position (v. 16)—represented significant wealth and power. Daniel's disinterest in these shows he values truth above advancement. This pattern appears throughout Scripture: true prophets refuse bribes and speak unpopular truth (cf. Micaiah, 1 Kings 22; Jeremiah's many confrontations with kings).

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does refusing rewards before delivering a message demonstrate integrity and establish credibility for speaking hard truth?
2. What does Daniel's financial independence from royal favor teach about the freedom that comes from finding security in God rather than human approval?

## Interlinear Text

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לְךָ	מִתְנַתֶּנָּה	לְמֶלֶךְ אֶל־	קֹדֶם	וְאָמַר	דָּנִיֵּאל	עָנָה	בְּאֵד יְיָ
	Let thy gifts	the king	before	and said	Daniel	answered	Then
	H4978	H4430	H6925	H560	H1841	H6032	H116
כְּתָבָא	בְּרָם	הֵב	לְאַחֶיךָ	וְנָתַתְּ זִבְיָתָהּ	לְהֵי		
the writing	yet	to thyself and give	to another	thy rewards	be		
H3792	H1297	H3052	H321	H5023	H1934		
אֶהוֹדְעָנָהּ	וּפְשָׁךְ אֶל־	לְמֶלֶךְ אֶקְרֹא					
and make known	to him the interpretation	the king	I will read				
H3046	H6591	H4430	H7123				

## Additional Cross-References

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**2 Kings 5:16** (Parallel theme): But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused.

**Genesis 14:23** (Parallel theme): That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich:

