

Daniel 5:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart,
though thou knewest all this;

Analysis

Daniel confronts Belshazzar: 'And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this.' The accusation isn't ignorance but willful pride despite knowledge. The phrase 'though thou knewest all this' refers to Nebuchadnezzar's humiliation (v. 18-21). Belshazzar had example and warning but chose pride anyway. The verb 'humbled' (Aramaic: shephel) means to abase or bring low. His refusal to humble his heart despite knowing God's judgment on his predecessor constitutes willful rebellion. This principle appears throughout Scripture: greater knowledge brings greater accountability (Luke 12:47-48).

Historical Context

As Nebuchadnezzar's successor, Belshazzar would have known the previous king's testimony (Daniel 4). Whether 'son' means direct descendant or successor, the relationship meant Belshazzar understood what happened to prideful rulers. Ancient Near Eastern courts preserved royal records and stories. Belshazzar's sacrilegious use of temple vessels (v. 2-4) while knowing God's power over Nebuchadnezzar demonstrates contemptuous defiance. His feast during siege shows either ignorance of danger or reckless fatalism—both stemming from failure to humble himself before God.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Belshazzar's example warn that knowing truth about God's judgment without responding in humility brings greater condemnation?
2. What does the accusation 'though thou knewest' teach about the danger of familiarity with spiritual truth producing presumption rather than repentance?

Interlinear Text

וְאַתָּה	בְּרֵךְ	בֶּלְשַׁצְצָר	לֹא	הִשְׁפִּי לָהּ	לִבְךָ	כָּל
And thou	his son	O Belshazzar	hast not	humbled	thine heart	all
H607	H1247	H1113	H3809	H8214	H3825	H3606
לְ	יְיָ	כָּל	דָּן הָ	יָדְעָהְ:		
though	H1768	all	this	thou knewest		
H6903		H3606	H1836	H3046		

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 10:3 (Parallel theme): And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? let my people go, that they may serve me.

2 Chronicles 33:23 (Parallel theme): And humbled not himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more.

2 Chronicles 36:12 (Parallel theme): And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the LORD.

James 4:17 (Parallel theme): Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

James 4:6 (Parallel theme): But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

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