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The Advice of the Queen Mother
5: 10-12

The advice of the queen mother DIG: Who was the queen mother? Why was she so confident? Who were the magi, enchanters, sorcerers and diviners? How did the queen mother know about Dani'el? What six characteristics did Dani'el possess?

REFLECT: What do you think it takes for a believer to achieve the kind of reputation Dani'el had? What does the world see when they look at your life? Does your reputation precede you? When they look at you, do they see the Messiah? How so?

The queen mother sensed that Dani'el knew God (October 12, 539 BC).



Just as **he** was not present when **Nebuchadnezzar** had **his dreams**, **Dani'el** was not present when the miraculous writing appeared at **Belshazzar's** banquet. The rest of the palace heard about the crisis in the banquet hall (**to see link click Cq – The Handwriting on the Wall**), and when the news came to **the queen mother**, **she** immediately went to **her son** to offer counsel and encouragement.[268]

Everything in the story depends on **her** intrusion. Without **her** counsel **Belshazzar** would have been left staring at the wall or watching **his** body quiver. The role of **the queen mother** here is like **Nabal's** unnamed **servant** in **First Samuel 25:14-17** and of Mrs **Naaman's Israelite servant girl** in **Second Kings 5:2-3**. These are all minor, unnamed characters, and yet the whole sequence of events in each case depends on **their** words.[269] **The queen mother, hearing the voices of the king and his nobles, came into the banquet hall. Her** first words were: **"May the king live forever!" she said. "Don't be alarmed! Don't look so pale (5:10)!** Things aren't as bad as they seem to be! **She** was optimistic about the whole situation and certain that, once the handwriting was accurately interpreted, everything would be fine.

The queen mother was most likely the wife of **his** father, the famous Nitocris. On this occasion **the queen mother** took the liberty of entering **the king's** presence without being called for **(Esther 4:11)**. **Her** attitude didn't match the gravity of the situation, but **she** reminded **Belshazzar** that **Dani'el** could solve **the king's** problem. **She** said: **There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him. In the time of your grandfather he was found to have insight and intelligence and wisdom like that of the gods (5:11a).** Often overlooked is the fact that women were the keepers of family stories in the ancient biblical world, and **the queen mother** admirably filled that role.

Then, **she** added: **Your grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, appointed him chief of the magi, enchanters, sorcerers and diviners (5:11b). Magi** (Hebrew: *chartom*, refers to a magician or wise man, often associated with the practice of interpreting dreams, or performing magic)**, enchanters** (Hebrew: *ashshaph*, refers to a class or wise men who were often consulted for their ability to interpret dreams, signs, and omens, and as such, were key figures in the king's advisory team)**, sorcerers** (Hebrew: *kashaph*, refers to the use of drugs, potions, or spells and is associated with "sorcery" or "witchcraft") **and diviners** (Hebrew: *gezar*, primarily conveys a sense of separation or determination, often implying authority or finality in a decision being made. They were important in a theocratic society that was shaped by divine and royal decrees).

So **Belshazzar** was not entirely ignorant of **Dani'el**, for **he** knew something of **Dani'el's** life before coming to **Babylon (5:13)**, something **the queen mother** didn't explicitly mention. Moreover, **8:27** implies that **Dani'el** was serving in some bureaucratic capacity as recently as **the third year of Belshazzar (8:1)**. **He** may have been relegated to a minor role under the new regime; apparently not among

the movers and shakers in the **Babylonian** government at that time. Therefore, **Belshazzar** knew something of **Dani'el**; but it seems that what **he** didn't know, or had forgotten, was **Dani'el's** indispensable service to **his grandfather** by interpreting **his** dream (see **Aq – Nebuchadnezzar's First Dream**).[270]

Finally, after referring to **Dani'el** by **his** Hebrew name, **the queen mother** mentioned that the **man** in question was renamed **Belteshazzar** by **King Nebuchadnezzar**. **The king did this because Dani'el, whom the king called Belteshazzar, was found to have an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, and also the ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve difficult problems.** This description reminds us of the prophetic description **Isai**ah gave of **the Messiah: The Spirit of ADONAI will rest on Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and power, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of ADONAI – His delight is the fear of ADONAI, He will not judge by what His eyes see or decide by what His ears hear (Isaiah 11:2-3).**

How did **she** know this? **Her** father-in-law, **Nebuchadnezzar**, had confessed it **(4:8-9** and **18)**. However, there was still another reason: **Dani'el's** own holiness, which was the obvious driving force in **his** life since **his** first days in **Babylon (1:8)**. **He** was a wonderful illustration of the principle that **ADONAI's** character is known by others through our own character and lifestyle. **Dani'el** had a share of **the Spirit of Messiah** (without the permanent indwelling) just as surely as what believers now experience is a share of **the Spirit of Messiah** (with the permanent indwelling). No wonder there were so many ways that **Dani'el** resembled **Messiah**. This was what **the queen mother** was trying to express; **Dani'el** was in fellowship with **ADONAI**. **She** sensed that **he** knew **God** and **his** reputation preceded **hi**m.[271]

Here was information to act upon, even if it was a last resort. Normally, it would have been extremely humiliating for a woman to solve a **king's** dilemma, but desperate times call for desperate measures, and **Belshazzar** was desperate. **The king** not only had to rely on the help of a woman, but **he** needed the help of a Jewish exile whose **God he** had defied! Nevertheless, for the reasons above, **the queen mother** had the utmost confidence in **Dani'el's** ability to explain the riddle of **the handwriting on the wall**. **Her** directive to **the king** was this: **Call for Dani'el, and he will tell you what the writing means (5:12).** Thus, the scene was set for **Dani'el's** dramatic entrance onto the scene (see **Cs – Dani'el Interpreted the Handwriting on the Wall**).

*Dear heavenly **Father**, praise **You** for **Your** omniscient wisdom that knows and foretells with complete accuracy, events that are yet in the future! You wisely had the queen mother tell about **Dani'el's ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve difficult problems.** But **he** had to humble **himself** to take the advice of **a woman** who sensed that **Dani'el** knew **God** and could solve **the riddle**. Thank **You** for always bringing the right people to come forward at the right time to fulfill **Your** will. Please continue to do so today. In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen.*