



THE HAND WRITING ON THE WALL

Daniel 5:1 Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.

The time estimated to be the year between 539-538 B.C. About seventy years according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10; Daniel 9:2. After the death of Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach his son ascended the throne. After Evil-merodach, Belshazzar his son ascended the throne, and reigned for about seventeen years.

The events recorded in this chapter, characterized Belshazzar as a corrupt, self-absorbed, and reckless ruler. The king invited a thousand of his lords, who were men of great prominence for what seems to be a special occasion. Maybe, for an anniversary, a festival, birth-date celebration or a day to honour the gods of his kingdom. The bible tells us that it was a big feast day.

Daniel 5:2 Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein.

After tasting the wine, Belshazzar made two grave mistakes: Firstly, he drank wine in the presence of his guests, which for a king was strongly discouraged since excessive wine compromised the mental capacities. A king needed to remain alert against the threat of invasion. **Proverb 31:4-5.**

Secondly, while he tasted the wine, he commanded to bring the vessels of the temple, that they might drink in them. This profanity deliberately despised the God of Israel. The vessels were special to the Jews and were much talked about, Jeremiah 26:17; 27:18. In a show of arrogance and contempt, he sent for the sacred vessels that were taken from the temple of God.

Daniel 5:3 Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.

Daniel 5:4 They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

After tasting the wine, Belshazzar felt tipsy and, as a result, behaved most recklessly. Belshazzar's command to have these vessels brought to him for such unthinkable intentions aroused the wrath of God and brought him swift destruction. The vessels were designed for the sacred exclusive use by the Jewish priests in the temple of the Holy God, and had been dedicated to Him, therefore they were sanctified vessels. There is a difference between sacred and profane. Leviticus 10:10; Ezekiel 44:23.

When Belshazzar took Jehovah's vessels and praised the Babylonian idols, he promoted pagan worship and disrespected the true God of heaven and earth. Despite the personal witness of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar arrogantly showed no reverence for Daniel's God, and while he was revelling himself in sin, Cyrus and his army were working their way into the drunken city. When their heads were giddy, and their hearts merry, with wine, they were in the fittest frame of mind to praise the gods of gold and silver, wood and stone; yet their demise was coming without them knowing it.

Daniel 5:5 In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

While the night of pleasure steadily moves on, there came a moment of terror and soberness. There was no great noise to threaten their lives, no clashes of thunder nor flashes of lightning, no destroying angel with his sword drawn in his hand, only a hand, writing on the wall, over-against the candlestick, where they could all see it .

Daniel 5:6 Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. His face probably grows pale; his cogitation bothered him; his joints loosened and; his knees trembled like earthquake so that they smote against each other; and finally in distress the king cried out aloud.

Daniel 5:7 The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. *And* the king spake, and said to the wise *men* of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and

shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

As his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar did, Belshazzar sought the help of the wise men, but none of them could interpret the meaning of the writing on the wall.

Daniel 5:8 Then came in all the king's wise *men*: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof.

Daniel 5:9 Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished.

This was because they relied upon their pagan gods for such knowledge. Satan might be the god of this world, but he is not all-knowing nor does he have any powers except those temporarily granted to him by God. Real truth and wisdom come from God alone.

Something to think about

Although Belshazzar repeated some of the same sins that his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar had committed, Belshazzar descended even deeper into the idolatry. After demanding that the temple's golden vessels be brought to him, he and his guests worshipped their pagan gods and drank wine from these vessels. What has been the object of your worship? People, family, material things, wealth, work, religion, pleasure, or self.? Anyone or anything that we seek more than we seek GOD becomes our idol. The world of spiritualism is built of secret mysteries; but what is written to us by the finger of God is legible to all; whoever will may read the mind of God in the scriptures.

Daniel 5:10 Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house: *and* the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed:

Daniel 5:11 There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom *is* the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, *I say*, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, *and* soothsayers;

Daniel 5:12 Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.

Whatever the religion that this woman practiced, she credited Daniel as a truly godly man who possessed an exceptional spirit. She re-emphasised that in the days of the king's father, Daniel was set above

the wise men of Babylon.

Daniel Interprets the Handwriting

Daniel 5:13 Then was Daniel brought in before the king. *And* the king spake and said unto Daniel, *Art* thou that Daniel, which *art* of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry?

Daniel 5:14 I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods *is* in thee, and *that* light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee.

Daniel 5:15 **And now the wise *men*, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing:**

Daniel 5:16 **And I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.**

Daniel 5:17 **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.**

Daniel lived such a Godly life in Babylon, that he was remembered for it even generations after his years of active service in Nebuchadnezzar's court.

He left a legacy in the kingdom of Babylon, that testified of God's character as the supreme yet personal and loving God. When there were difficulties in the kingdom, they would all with consent turn to Daniel.

What do we want others to remember of us after we are gone?

Only those things that we do for the kingdom of God will be of any eternal value in heaven. Revelation 14:13; Matthew 6:20.

Daniel 5:18 **O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour:**

Daniel 5:19 **And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.**

Daniel 5:20 **But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind**

hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

Daniel 5:21 And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and *that* he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

Daniel reminded Belshazzar that the Great God gave the kingdom of Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar. The sovereign source of Nebuchadnezzar's great status was the Most High God Who determines all things, including the beginning and end of every king's reign. Daniel further explained how Nebuchadnezzar's pride had blinded his vision to the Almighty God's omnipotence. He had become so filled with pride, self-confidence and false security that God had to dethrone him for a while. Not only had he lost his throne but he lost his mind-and his identity as a human being. He remained in this state for seven years-then he finally accepted, and confessed God as the ultimate ruler over everything and everyone, including all earthly kings.

Daniel 5:22 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;

Daniel 5:23 But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath *is*, and whose *are* all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

Daniel reprimanded Belshazzar for refusing to humble himself despite knowing the history of his grandfather's reign. The hammer of divine justice that fell upon Nebuchadnezzar, was about to fall on Belshazzar with severity because he did not heed the lessons of the past. In this case, there was no remedy for Belshazzar.

(Romans 15:4; Romans 1:20-22: 1 Cor. 10:11.)

Something to think about

Whether positively or negatively, history does repeat itself.

Unfortunately, instead of learning from past mistakes, one generation after another always practice the iniquities of its fore parents.

Belshazzar refused to humble himself before God, despite knowing the events of his grandfather's reign. (Romans 15:4; Romans 1:20-22;1 Corinthians 10:11) His lewdness, therefore, ultimately surpassed

Nebuchadnezzar's foolishness because Belshazzar ignored the testimony of his grandfather.

We are individually accountable for the way we relate to Christ. If we came from an anti-God or atheistic background, we must break the cycle of our parents' sins and seek God. If we came from a rich Christian heritage, we should be thankful, but we must not depend upon the accomplishments of previous generations. We must move forward in our faith and not be slaves to the sins or achievements of our forefathers. We must be pioneers and break new grounds in our spiritual journey.

Daniel 5:24 Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.

Daniel 5:25 And this *is* the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

Daniel 5:26 This *is* the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.

God numbered the days of the Babylonian Empire, and more specifically of Belshazzar's reign, and He now declared it finished.

When God declares a thing finished-it is finished.

John 19:30; 2 Tim. 4:7 Rev. 16: 17; 21:6.

CONSIDER THIS

Our days are numbered. Psalm 90:12 (KJV) So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

We are weighed in the balances 2Corinthians. 5:10 (KJV) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Our Kingdom shall be determined Matthew 25:31-34 (KJV) When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory [32] And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats [33] And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. [34] Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Daniel 5:27 TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.

Daniel 5:28 PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. God numbered the days of the Babylonian Empire, and more specifically of Belshazzar's reign, and He now declared it finished.

When God declares a thing finished-it is finished. John 17:4; John 19:30; 2 Tim. 4:7 Rev. 16: 17; 21:6

Daniel explained that God had placed Belshazzar on the scale of life and he failed to measure up to God's standards. He was too reckless, irreverent and too consumed by idolatrous practices . He lacked the character traits necessary to be a good leader. The word upharsin (also translated as peres) means "to divide." So, in summary, the wall's inscription actually said, "numbered, weighed, and divided." This statement meant Belshazzar's kingdom was quickly nearing its end when he least expected. Although this king had been given many resources, he had recklessly squandered them. God ultimately divided the Babylonian kingdom and gave it to a different race of people, the Medes and Persians.

Daniel 5:29 Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and *put* a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Daniel ascended to prominent positions early in his life when he first came to Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar, and now in his later years, Daniel was promoted to a high position. He retained his high position throughout the Medo-Persian Empire. 1 Samuel 2:30

Daniel 5:30 In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.

Daniel 5:31 And Darius the Median took the kingdom, *being* about threescore and two years old.

God closed the final chapter on the Babylonian Empire and instituted the next great kingdom—the Medo-Persian Empire. Darius the Mede succeeded Belshazzar and reigned over Babylon.

Something to think about

When God surveyed the spiritual condition of Belshazzar's heart, he found that instead of humility, Belshazzar's heart was filled with pride; therefore, in God's eyes, Belshazzar was found lacking. But how did Belshazzar fall short? When God surveyed the spiritual condition of Belshazzar's heart, he found that instead of humility, Belshazzar's heart was filled with pride; therefore, in God's eyes, Belshazzar was found

lacking. But how did Belshazzar fall short? When people looked at him, they probably saw a man that had everything a person could desire—kingship, money, friends, food, wine, and pleasure. However, when God looked at this king, He found a life void of His Holy Spirit (emptiness).

Unlike a human judge who may be swayed by his own opinions, biases, or emotions, God is a righteous, holy, and perfect judge. (Proverbs 16:11). When we look at others, we may draw conclusions based upon their appearance or accomplishments, but when God judges each of us, He does not consider anyone's house, job, financial status, educational level, or family name. The Lord looks internally at the state of our heart. Samuel 16:7.