

DANIEL - The Handwriting on the Wall, Fall of Babylon – Daniel 5

DN-06

Daniel 5— The Handwriting on the Wall!

As we begin this chapter, we will find that the case studies we've looked at will help us with a deeper appreciation of Daniel 5. Let's begin with this tremendous SOP statement to set the stage:

"In my travels I have witnessed scenes of feasting and revelry; and as I have marked the effects of unrestrained indulgence, as I have listened to the blasphemous mirth, and seen the indifference and even contempt for all things sacred, I have thought of the sacrilegious feast of Belshazzar, to which were invited a thousand of his lords, his princes, his wives, and his concubines,—that feast where wine was freely drunk from the sacred vessels of the temple of God, while the revelers sang the praises of their gods of silver and gold. They knew not that an unseen Watcher heard every word of blasphemy, beheld every impious action." {CTBH 20.1}



We will first analyze the early verses of the chapter. Note the following:

Vs. 1-4 - “Drank wine” or “Drank” is mentioned in each of the first four verses.

Vs. 2, 3 - “Desecration of the golden and silver vessels (**Holy Vessels**) taken from Jerusalem, from the house of God to drink therein.

Vs. 4 - while drinking the king and his princes, lords, and wives/concubines praised the gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood and stone.

This action sealed
the king's fate and
the doom of
Babylon was certain.

Per the statement above we find an “unseen Watcher heard every word of blasphemy, [and] beheld every impious action.” What does this tell you about the picture of ‘Judgment’ we studied in the recent case studies?

Handwriting on the Wall (vs.5)

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

What does this handwriting indicate which we learned about in the last couple case studies?

At a deeper level, what was the tipping point for Belshazzar's fate? [hint: vss.1-4, 22]

When Daniel is called in, the humility of the aged prophet comes out in vs.17, what is his response to the king's offer to being able to interpret the Writing?

Vss. 18-21 - Daniel wisely recounts the history of Nebuchadnezzar, before interpreting the writing on the wall. He reveals, not only to the king but all his attendants of the feast, how the Most-High God gave Nebuchadnezzar a kingdom, majesty and glory and all that feared him because of it. Yet, when his heart was lifted up in pride, "he was deposed from his kingly throne" for seven times (years).

*Execution of
the Judgment,
mingled with
mercy.*

Vs. 22, 23 - Reveal four reasons why Belshazzar's probationary time had run out, which leads up to the meaning of the handwriting on the wall.

1) _____.

2) _____.

3) _____.

_____.

4) _____.

Vss. 25-28 MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN

VERDICT

MENE: _____

TEKEL: _____

PERES: _____

Thank the Lord for insight into the following:

"Admitted to a share in kingly authority at fifteen years of age, Belshazzar gloried in his power, and lifted up his heart against the God of heaven."

- Youth Instructor May 19, 1898, par 4

Belshazzar came into power as a teenager. Now, based on the prophecy of Jeremiah 29:10, the Lord allotted 70 years to be accomplished "in the desolations of Jerusalem." {cf Daniel 9:2; 2 Chron 36:21}

Looking at the math involved – Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar in 606/605 BC. Babylon fell into the hands of the Medes-Persians in 539 BC (approx. 66-67 years later).

606/605 BC - Jerusalem falls

-66 yrs

539 BC - Babylon falls to Medes-Persians

- 3-4 yrs

536 BC - Cyrus issues first decree to go back
and rebuild Jerusalem

Belshazzar came to power in approximately 551-553 BC (according to the scholars). This would put him in his late 20s at his death. Just a young man indeed. This is a warning to our younger generation that even in the youth of life, one's probation time can end. It all depends on the use or the rejection of the light granted him.

In that last night of mad folly, Belshazzar and his lords had filled up the measure of their guilt and the guilt of the Chaldean kingdom. No longer could God's restraining hand ward off the impending evil. Through manifold providences, God had sought to teach them reverence for His law. "We would have healed Babylon," He declared of those whose judgment was now reaching unto heaven, "but she is not healed." Jeremiah 51:9. Because of the strange perversity of the human heart, God had at last found it necessary to pass the irrevocable sentence. Belshazzar was to fall, and his kingdom was to pass into other hands.

{PK 530.3}

What additional lessons can be learned from Daniel 5? And how do we make sense of this picture consistent with the three aspects of Judgment we saw in the two other case studies and that really prevalent all throughout Scripture?

Daniel 5
-A Snapshot-

BELSHAZZAR'S IDOLUTRIOS FEAST

A Watcher
(indicates an examination process is in play)

VERDICT

Implicates all 3 Aspects of Judgment (w/mercy)

- Investigation
- Verdict
- Examination

Implicates all 3 Aspects of Judgment (wo/mercy)

- Examination

- Verdict

- Execution

Vs. 1 – 4 Taking the golden vessels for corrupt purposes drinking to pagan gods

Vs. 5 Handwriting on the wall

Vs. 17 The prophet Daniel reveals his humility

Vss. 18-21 History of Nebuchadnezzar recounted

Vs. 22 Part of Belshazzar's Judgment

- Thou knewest all this, yet did not humble thy heart
- But lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven
- Brought the golden vessels of Sanctuary into the drunken feast

Vss. 25-28 MENE MENE TEKEL UPHARSIN

Vs. 30, 31 Belshazzar slain / Darius the Median took the kingdom