

CALVARY BIBLE CHURCH

“Lessons from the Book of Daniel - #8”

Date: June 7, 2009

Text: Daniel 5:1-31

Speaker: Dennis L. Finnan. Sr. Pastor

THE END OF A KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION: One of the most popular sayings among secular people is “The handwriting is on the Wall.” Most people have no idea where this comes from, but we know its origin is found in the fifth chapter of Daniel. This is a short chapter that Daniel the prophet recounts in the telling of his life story in the kingdom of the Gentiles. Let’s review how the great magnificent Babylonian kingdom ends, and what actually happened as it was brought to God’s decreed end. We begin by viewing...

I. A NIGHT OF REVELRY - (5:1-9)

- A) Belshazzar’s Feast**
- B) Belshazzar’s Fright**

II. A NIGHT OF REVELATION - (5:10-28)

- A) A Suggestion**
- B) A Summons**
- C) A Summation**

III. A NIGHT OF RUIN - (5:29-31)

- A) Daniel is Spared**
- B) Belshazzar is Slain**

CONCLUSION: Perhaps a bible verse far in the future to this event best describes the whole event of chapter five. In John’s first epistle chapter 2, verse 17 we read: *“The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.”* The Babylonian kingdom ended that fatal night of revelry, but Daniel survives to live another day in service to his real King, Yahweh, who is eternal. This teaching is perhaps the best we can receive of all God’s practical advice here. Serve the Lord, stay faithful to Him, be a willing witness when called, and you will be invincible in your life and living. May the Lord find us so faithful.

BIBLE TEXT FOR MESSAGE

The New International Version

Dan 5:1-31 (NIV) King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. 2 While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. 3 So they brought in the gold goblets that had been taken from the temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. 4 As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.

5 Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. The king watched the hand as it wrote. 6 His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way. 7 The king called out for the enchanters, astrologers and diviners to be brought and said to these wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing and tells me what it means will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around his neck, and he will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom." 8 Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or tell the king what it meant. 9 So King Belshazzar became even more terrified and his face grew more pale. His nobles were baffled.

10 The queen, hearing the voices of the king and his nobles, came into the banquet hall. "O king, live forever!" she said. "Don't be alarmed! Don't look so pale! 11 There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him. In the time of your father he was found to have insight and intelligence and wisdom like that of the gods. King Nebuchadnezzar your father--your father the king, I say--appointed him chief of the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners. 12 This man Daniel, whom the king called Belteshazzar, was found to have a keen mind and knowledge and understanding, and also the ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve difficult problems. Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what the writing means."

13 So Daniel was brought before the king, and the king said to him, "Are you Daniel, one of the exiles my father the king brought from Judah? 14 I have heard that the spirit of the gods is in you and that you have insight, intelligence and outstanding wisdom. 15 The wise men and enchanters were brought before me to read this writing and tell me what it means, but they could not explain it. 16 Now I have heard that you are able to give interpretations and to solve difficult problems. If you can read this writing and tell me what it means, you will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around your neck, and you will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom."

17 Then Daniel answered the king, "You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the writing for the king and tell him what it means. 18 "O king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendor. 19 Because of the high position he gave him, all the peoples and nations and men of every language dreaded and feared him. Those the king wanted to put to death, he put to death; those he wanted to spare, he spared; those he

wanted to promote, he promoted; and those he wanted to humble, he humbled. 20 But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. 21 He was driven away from people and given the mind of an animal; he lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like cattle; and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he acknowledged that the Most High God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and sets over them anyone he wishes. 22 "But you his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. 23 Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways. 24 Therefore he sent the hand that wrote the inscription. 25 "This is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN 26 "This is what these words mean: Mene : God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end. 27 Tekel : You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. 28 Peres : Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

29 Then at Belshazzar's command, Daniel was clothed in purple, a gold chain was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom. 30 That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain,

31 and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two.

* * *