



CHRIST CHURCH

sermon notes

Daniel and the Writing on the Wall
 September 23, 2018
 Pastor John Speight

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Daniel 5:1–12 (NIV)

King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. 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. 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. As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.

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. His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his legs became weak and his knees were knocking.

The king summoned the enchanters, astrologers and diviners. Then he 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.”

Then all the king’s wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or tell the king what it meant. So King Belshazzar became even more terrified and his face grew more pale. His nobles were baffled.

The queen, hearing the voices of the king and his nobles, came into the banquet hall. “May the king live forever!” she said. “Don’t be alarmed! Don’t look so pale! 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.

Your father, King Nebuchadnezzar, appointed him chief of the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners. He did this because 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.”

Some Background to the Story

- Babylon was the most wealthy and powerful city of its day.
- The Babylonian Empire had dominated the region for almost 100 years.
- The walls of Babylon were considered to be impregnable. The walls were 56 miles long, 80 feet thick and 320 feet tall.
- King Belshazzar underestimated the threat posed by the powerful army of the Medo-Persian Empire.

- King Belshazzar felt so secure behind the walls of Babylon that he threw a party.

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Daniel 5:1–4 (NIV)

DID YOU NOTICE . . .

- Who was being honored and toasted at the party?
- Where the gold and silver goblets came from?

Why did King Belshazzar purposely use those gold and silver goblets?

- **TO OPENLY** _____

“Your Majesty, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendor. Because of the high position he gave him, all the nations and peoples 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.

But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. He was driven away from people and given the mind of an animal; he lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like the ox; and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he acknowledged that the Most High God is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and sets over them anyone he wishes.

But you, Belshazzar, his (grand)son, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this.” Daniel 5:18–22 (NIV)

As far as King Belshazzar was concerned . . .

- He was not going to be intimidated by a foreign God.
- He would not bow down and worship a God who wanted him to change his life.
- He refused to worship a God who called him to live a humble life rather than a proud, conceited life.

God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

James 4:6 (NIV)

The king sent for Daniel to interpret the handwriting on the wall, and Daniel told him:

“(God) sent the hand that wrote the inscription. This is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN. Here is what these words mean:

Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.

Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting.

Peres: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.”

Daniel 5:24–28 (NIV)

LIFE LESSON

- **THERE WILL BE A** _____

On the third day He rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. Apostles' Creed

“I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.”John 5:24 (NLT)