"THE PARTY IS OVER!"

Daniel 5:1-31

4-18-2021



INTRODUCTION: (verses 1 - 4)

***No one can mock God and get away with it!**

Three unexpected intrusions that ended Belshazzar's sinful party:

I. THE <u>WORD</u> OF GOD (v. 5-9)
(God's Message of Doom <u>Appears</u>)

II. THE <u>MAN</u> OF GOD (v. 10-29)
(God's Message of Doom is <u>Interpreted</u>)

III. THE <u>JUDGMENT</u> OF GOD (v. 30-31)
(God's Message of Doom is <u>Fulfilled</u>)

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INTRODUCTION: Illustration: Titanic:
"God Himself could not sink this ship…"

(verses 1 - 4)
Party life USA - wine, women, & song

"Fools make a mock at sin" (Prov. 14:9).

Belshazzar felt <u>secure</u> inside his walled, "impregnable" kingdom.

Belshazzar's false sense of security was based on:
<u>Military</u> security - the fortification of Babylon
<u>Religious</u> security - the presence of his gods
<u>Economic</u> security - a food supply that would last for over 20 years

Many people today rely on uncertain, weak defenses and live arrogant, carefree lives in defiance of God's Word.

The vessels were kept in the treasure house of Babylon's false gods (1:2) to be perpetual reminders (trophies, prizes, proof) of "the Babylonian's gods victory over the God of Israel" (so they thought).

To drink out of such vessels was to further insult Israel's God and to show God to be subordinate under the one drinking out of them.

Belshazzar is committing sacrilege. He is attempting to humiliate God by using God's vessels in his worship of his idols. God's vessels (like every instrument and piece of furniture in the temple) were not to be defiled and used for profane, common use.

Don't profane that which is sacred!

*Drinking alcohol out of vessels that came from God's holy temple is bad! But not any more terrible than for God's children to be drunk by allowing alcohol to enter their temple -- their bodies! (I Cor. 6:19-20).

V. 4

Can you hear the laughing, joking, cursing, etc., going on at this banquet? Pagan Babylonians making toasts to their gods: "Here's one for our great god - Bel!" . . . "I toast to Aku (the moon god)!" . . . "I down this one in honor of Nebo!" . . . "This time let's drink to Ishtar, my favorite golden goddess!" . . ."Let's hear it for the gods of Babylon! Let's hear it for our fearless leader Belshazzar!"

Can you hear as they mock the God of Israel? They insult His holy name as they, with feelings of triumph over Him, drink out of his vessels.

By drinking out of Jehovah's vessels, in effect they are making Jehovah do <u>obeisance</u> to Belshazzar's gods.

Belshazzar was in essence <u>daring God</u> to do something!

V. 5

God "crashes" Belshazzar's party.

Party time is <u>now over</u>!

The eternal truth of Galatians 6:7 rings loud and clear in Daniel 6 - ""Be not deceived, <u>God is not mocked</u> (snubbed)."

Example: the 42 young teenagers that mocked Elisha and were torn apart by bears (II Kings 2:23-24).

***No one can mock God and get away with it!**

Three unexpected intrusions that ended Belshazzar's sinful party:

I. THE <u>WORD</u> OF GOD (v. 5-9)
(God's Message of Doom <u>Appears</u>)

V. 5

"In the same hour" - God's announcement of doom came immediately, at the height of their hilarity [NOTE: God does not always respond to man's sin immediately, and because of this many wrongly think that they have gotten away with it.]

"Against the candlestick" - Near the <u>lampstand</u> where all could see the writing.

Modern archeology has excavated ancient Babylon and uncovered a large lime plastered wall in the palace complex, measuring 55 feet wide by 169 feet long. It was upon such a surface that God wrote his message of doom (Wood, p. 136).

"Undoubtedly Belshazzar sobered up as fast as any man in history. His flushed face turned pale, his mind panicked, his strength left him, his knees rattled in fear. The other guests would have had the same reaction. Conversations broke off in mid-sentence; people choked on the wine in their throats, terror swept through the banqueting room" (Walton, p. 41).

V. 6

The king's face changed from exuberant laughter and pomp to somber quietness and perplexity. He went from feeling secure and satisfied to being frightened to the point that his knees bucked from under him, and every muscle in his body became limp. As he attempted to regain his posture, in dread and terror his knees knocked together.

Nahum, prophecying about God's destruction of Nineveh, describes her as being "empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them will gather blackness."

V. 7

The king--like his late "father" Nebuchadnezzar--calls for his impotent, ignorant religious advisors to read the writing.

"Third ruler in the kingdom" (cp. v. 16, 29) - Why third? Because Belshazzar was second in command under his father Nabonidus. He rules as a co-regent.

V. 8

The words were written in Aramaic, the language of the Babylonians. However, the brevity of the message left the wise-men dumbfounded.

The words "numbered, numbered, weighed, and divided." were frightening but undiscernible.

Belshazzar, through he could not read it, had a feeling that this was a message of doom.

You mock God when you think you can violate His principles and get away with it.

When you violate God's law of _____, one day you will see the handwriting on the wall saying:

[Ex: "Smoking . . . Cancer"
"Separation . . . Defiled and corrupted by world"
"Homosexuality . . . AIDS"

II. THE MAN OF GOD (v. 10-29)
(God's Message of Doom is Interpreted)

"A message from God takes a man of God to interpret the words of God." (R. Foster, The Challenge, p. 24).

V. 10
"The queen" - possibly the late King Nebuchadnezzar's wife.

V. 11-12
"There is a man in the kingdom" - Daniel had a tremendous testimony! He was noted as a man who knew God and His truth, who had an excellent spirit (v. 12).

Can it be said of you . . .
"There is a man of God in the shop!" . . .
"There is a man of God in the office!" . . .
"There is a man of God living next door!" . . .

Belshazzar is somewhat unfamiliar with Daniel as evidenced by the Queen's detailed testimony about him. Daniel is now over 80 years old.

V. 14
"I have even heard of thee" - Daniel's Godly reputation is evident.

V. 17
"Let thy gifts be to thyself" - Keep your rewards for yourself.

Daniel's service was not for material gain. He was not motivated by filthy lucre.

Contrast Daniel with Gehazi, Elisha's servant (II Kings 5:16, 20-27; **v. 26)

V. 18
"The most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar . . ." - Everything Belshazzar's forefather had was sovereignly bestowed by God.

V. 22
"Thou . . . O Belshazzar hast not humbled thine heart" - The pride of Nebuchadnezzar was passed down to his "son" - WARNING: Your children will often become what you are!

"Thou knowest all this" - Belshazzar had no excuse for his pride. He had no excuse for his mockery of Israel's God. He knew what had happened to his forefather. He heard the former king's testimony (cp. 4:1ff). He knew whom he was disregarding. He was sinning against what he knew to be true (perhaps

this is why he was so frightened, even to the astonishment of his lords - v. 9).

*It is a serious matter to sin against light. Judgment is more severe for those who knew (Lk. 12:48, 20:47; II Pet. 2:20-21).

You mock God when you knowingly and deliberately do something against Him or His work and dare Him to do something about it.

All the time Belshazzar knew he was playing with God. He, like all the wicked, knew there is "a God with whom we have to do!"

V. 23

Belshazzar never learned the secret to victory (James 4:9-10 - "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up.").

"The God in whose hand thy breath is" - our ever breath and heartbeat depends upon God.

When God says that you have breathed your last breath of air, you will never get another!

"Hast thou not glorified" - God deserves and requires glory from everyone!

To not glorify God is to commit a most horrible sin. To ascribe the glory that belongs to God to man or false gods is the height of folly.

V. 25

The word MENE is <u>repeated</u> for emphasis. God is saying, "Your kingdom is <u>all done</u>, <u>all done</u>!"

V. 26

MENE = "God hath <u>numbered</u> thy kingdom, and finished it" - the days of Belshazzar and Babylon were numbered and finished.

Time now expired for this king.

Our days are also numbered - Heb. 9:27 (cp. Ps. 90:12).

V. 27

TEKEL - "Thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting" - The king had been weighed in God's moral balance (scale) and found light.

Cp. Rom. 6:23 - "All . . . come short of the glory of God."

V. 28

PERES - The singular of "parsin" - "Thy kingdom is divided" - split in two and given to the Medes and Persians.

PERES - The word has the same radicals (consonant letters - P R S) as the word Persia, and is apparently an intentional play on words.

(Persia was the strongest of the two countries in a dual monarchy).

Three statements were written by God:

"Your number is up!

You do not measure up!

Your kingdom is broken up!" (Foster)

V. 29

Belshazzar keeps his promise and rewards Daniel. Perhaps with a motive of altering the outcome of the handwriting, Belshazzar hopes to appease God by honoring God's man.

No one appeases the wrath and judgment of God by getting on the "good side" of the clergy.

III. THE JUDGMENT OF GOD (v. 30-31)
(God's Message of Doom is Fulfilled)

The world may mock now, they may deny God today; but there will be a "pay day someday!"

V. 30

"Herodotus and Zerophon testify that the city was entered by diverting the Euphrates River, and that the enemy entered to find the people in a drunken festival" (on Oct. 11 or 12, 539 B.C.)" (Ryrie Study Bible, p. 1230).

Phase # 1 for the "times of the Gentiles" is now completed. The Head of Gold (Babylon - Dan. 2:38) is now fulfilled. The prophecy of Isaiah 21:1-2 is now history.

The day is coming when the entire "time of the Gentile kingdoms" will be complete and then Jesus Christ will take over the world!

CONCLUSION:

The next time God does some handwriting, it will not be on a wall, but it will be int he sky for the world to read! (Rev. 6:12-17; cp. Joel 2:28-32).

The Day of the LORD is soon approaching!

SEE II Peter 3:10-11.