

## THE COMMUNIQUE ON THE WALL INTERPRETED

### Daniel 5:17-31

Intro: The communiqué that Daniel gives is really a sermon from God. Daniel is the preacher; the message is God's. I do not think that Daniel was at all timid in his presentation of the Word. He wasn't worried by the dignitaries in his presence; they did not unnerve him. Daniel feared God, but not man. Throughout his long life, Daniel was more concerned about God's holiness than honor. They may have never listened to him before, but that night they were listening. Never had they seen God's written Word as they did that night. The handwriting was on the wall, and the king was in trouble; but before Daniel gives the interpretation of the handwriting on the wall, he preaches a powerful message to Belshazzar concerning his pride and arrogance.

- I. Vss. 17-23, DANIEL'S SCALDING REPRIMAND OF BELSHAZZAR
  - A. VS. 17, Daniel agrees to give the interpretation of the handwriting on the wall, but refuses the gifts offered.
    1. Most men would have jumped at the offer, but not Daniel. He wanted to let all in attendance know that he was not for sale. As you look at the life of Daniel, you find a godly man who was at peace with God. The Bible says: "Godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Timothy 6:6).
    2. This man of God, Daniel, had a message to deliver and handwriting to interpret. and he will not be distracted by worldliness. How many of us have been distracted from the work of God and Word of God because of worldly things. To many people, their Christianity is nothing more than an empty shell. Any old excuse will keep them out of church.
  - B. Vss. 18-21, Daniel gives Belshazzar a needed lesson in history.
    1. VS. 18, Daniel presses a great truth upon Belshazzar, that the temporal blessings that he was enjoying could be traced back to what God had done for Nebuchadnezzar. The many temporal

blessings that this nation enjoys can be traced to God as the source.

2. VS. 19, Nebuchadnezzar had absolute sovereign position and power over Babylon, something that Belshazzar did not have and would never have. We are here reminded that: "The powers that be are ordained of God" (Romans 13:1b). With this power came responsibility; and as we shall see, God had to deal with Nebuchadnezzar to get him to give Him the glory (Daniel 4:37). There are those who listen to God and get right as Nebuchadnezzar did. Then, there are folks like Belshazzar who are not humbled by the hand of the Sovereign of the universe. How is it with you?
3. Vss. 20-21, The scripture says in Proverbs 16:18: "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." This is illustrated in the two verses before us. Walvoord, in commenting, says: "...God was greater than Nebuchadnezzar and held him responsible for his authority. Only when Nebuchadnezzar was properly humbled did God restore him to his glory and kingdom" (126).

C. Vss. 22-23, A lesson not learned.

1. VS. 22, Belshazzar, you have not learned the lesson of history. You have failed the test! Even though you know what you need to do to pass, you have failed. How many know what they need to do but refuse to do it? Refuse to get it right.
2. VS. 23, Belshazzar knew where the vessels that he and his concubines, wives and lords drank from at his urging, but he did not humble himself. Instead, he "lifted himself up against the Lord of heaven." Not only that, he praised false gods; gods that could not see, hear, or know anything. The world today is filled with those who worship false gods. There is only one true God, Jehovah. What Daniel said to the king was truthful and pointed, but not disrespectful.

II. Vss. 24-29, DANIEL'S SIGNIFICANT INTERPRETATION OF THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

- A. Vs. 24, The hand that wrote the message was removed, but the message stayed on the wall. Others were unable to interpret the handwriting, but Daniel could do so because it was his Father's hand that wrote it.
- B. VS. 25, What we have here is not a translation, but a transliteration of the Aramaic words that were written on the wall. What you read here is what king Belshazzar read.
- C. VS. 26, "MENE" means numbered. Simply put, the Belshazzar's time was up, his number was getting ready to be called.
1. The Bible says in Psalm 90:12: "Teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." One day our number will be called, and what we do for Jesus we must do now.
  2. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after that the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). The king would soon face the true God.
  3. One day, you are going to meet your maker. Will you be ready? Life is short; be prepared. James 4:14: "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow, for what is your life, it is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time then vanisheth away."
- D. VS. 27, "TEKEL" means to be weighed, to weigh. King Belshazzar was weighed in the balances, God's scales, and found wanting. He came up short just as Romans 3:23 says: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."
1. Your good is not going to outweigh your bad for we are sinners by nature. Good works can never save us (Titus 3:5).
  2. All that we put on God's scales is found wanting; it all comes short. The only way to have the scales balanced to God's approval is to have the blood of Jesus applied. It is only through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ that we can go to heaven.
- E. VS. 28, "PERES" means divided and is but another form of "UPHARSIN." At the very time that Daniel said these

words, the army of the enemy was about to take the city and kill the king. The Euphrates had been diverted, and the troops of the enemy were coming through the water system and taking the city. The kingdom of Belshazzar was about to be lost to the Medes and the Persians.

### III. VSS. 29-31, DANIEL'S SCARLET REWARD AND PROPHETIC FULFILLMENT

- A. VS. 29. As if in denial, as it seems many in our government are today at the impending collapse of the United States, Belshazzar, unrepentant of his sin of sacrilege and debauchery, called for royal garments and had them put on Daniel. Oh, that men in leadership would hear the words of God's men and repent. If America does not repent, we are doomed just as Babylon was.
- B. VS. 30, The king met his death without repentance. How will you meet yours?
- C. VS. 31, Thirty-two year old Darius is now in control of Babylon: the city was actually taken by Cyrus in the name of Darius. Belshazzar had that night lost his kingdom and his soul.
  - 1. Destruction came suddenly – “He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy” (Proverbs 29:1).
  - 2. Proverbs 27:1: “Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

Conclusion: Do not be like Belshazzar who ignored the warning of God, who worshiped false god's, and now resides in hell.

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