

## IS THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL Daniel 5:1-8

Intro: In the Book of Daniel, a very mysterious thing happened during a big party thrown by the king. What a party it was: a big crowd, dancing girls, drinking, and music. While everyone was drinking and carousing, the fingers of a man's hand came out of nowhere and began writing on the wall, fingers without a body. The band stopped, the dancing girls stood still, and faces grew pale. And what did that mysterious hand write? Well, it was a terrifying message. Charles Swindoll says: "The mysterious writing was God's word of judgement on this prideful king."(47) The message to Belshazzar was plain: "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting" (Vs. 27).

Could it be that God has been stretching out His mighty fingers across America to get our attention with storms, hurricanes, tornados, floods and fires? Unlike king Belshazzar, most Americans are not paying any attention to the handwriting of God.

Is the handwriting on the wall for America? Is it on the wall:

Economically?

Morally?

Spiritually?

### I. Vs. 1, THE SHINDIGGER'S LAST SHINDIG

A. Vs. 1, What a party. A party without any thought of tomorrow, a party of godless behavior.

1. America is partying on while we go down to the pit.

a. Sexually transmitted diseases are ravaging our young.

- In 1960, doctors battled two commonly- known sexually transmitted diseases (STD's), today over 30 exist.

- Twenty-five percent of sexually active teens have an STD.

- One in five Americans over the age of 12 has genital herpes. A 500% increase since 1976.

b. Economically and morally, we are on the slippery slop to hell.

2. They celebrate right up to the fall of the kingdom. Could that happen to us? Who would have thought it would happen to them: Babylon and all its splendor.

a. The hanging gardens of Babylon were magnificent and are listed as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient world.

b. The city was filled with beauty. So much so that Greek historian Herodotus said in 450 BC: "Babylon surpasses in splendor any city in the known world."

3. Belshazzar and his buddies felt secure in their sinful behavior. They thought that the city was impenetrable and that Jehovah God was not paying attention.

a. You are never safe in your sin for the Bible says in Numbers 32:23: "Behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out."

b. Instead of mourning over their sins, these people continued to play and party. It is time for us to mourn over our sin in America (James 4:8-10). We have become a wicked godless nation, a nation of self interest and selfishness. We are more concerned about our pocketbook and our agenda than in the will of Almighty God.

c. Abortion, AIDS, and violence rock our society.

4. The greatest threat to liberty is iniquity. Sin will destroy us if we do not repent. Our present course is unsustainable. If we continue on this path, we will not survive as a nation. As a church, we must do all that we can right now for one day it will be too late! Leave a tract; make a phone call; make a visit.

B. Vss. 2-4, That which was sacred was defiled.

1. It was defiled by alcohol abuse.

a. Alcohol is one of the nations most abused substances, if not the most abused.

b. 100,000 deaths are caused each year by drunkenness.

c. Underage drinking costs our nation 58 billion dollars each year.

2. They used that which was sacred for evil. They used the sacred vessels of God.

a. The vessels belonged to God and had been stolen by the enemy. Our young people are precious to God and are being stolen by Satan. We all need to reach out to the lost and misled of our Jerusalem. Mark 16:15: "Go ye into the world and preach the gospel to every creature." All of God's children are to be holy unto the Lord.

b. One way that we can stay holy is to stay under the preaching of the Word. The Lord's Day is to be special. Dr. Jerry Vines says: "The Lord's day is a thing of the past. It began as the 'Holy Sabbath.'

Then it was simply 'Sunday.' First, it was the 'Lord's Day,' now it just 'the weekend,' just another day. The Lord expects us to dedicate at least one day to go to His house and study His Word."(77)

c. Too many folks have too little time for God.

d. WE NEED REVIVAL IN AMERICA-- MAY IT BEGIN HERE AND MAY IT BEGIN NOW!

3. In verse 4, we see that these folks had not learned what king Nebuchadnezzar had learned. He would not have wanted the Babylonians worshiping false gods and idols (3:29).

a. Today the King of Kings is being ignored: "If ye love me keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

b. Today, men curse God, ignore His commandments, despise His Word, and abuse their bodies.

c. Is the handwriting on the wall for America?

## II. Vss. 5-9, THE FINGER OF GOD AND THE FEAR OF BELSHAZZAR

A. Vs.5, Feasting turned to fear. King Belshazzar had crossed the line. He had profaned the holy; he stepped over the line, and God was about to judge him.

1. America had better wake up and fear God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and America is in need of a lot of wisdom.

2. Belshazzar challenged the holy things of God, and now God will deal with the challenger.

B. Vs. 6, He did not know at this point what the message was, but the king knew who had written it. That is the way we ought to be when it comes to God's message in His written Word. We need to fear God when we willfully disobey the Word and discount its meaning or ignore its precepts all together.

C. Vss. 7-9, The king is troubled and his countenance is changed. When his counselors couldn't help, he turned to a man of God, Daniel.

## III. Vss. 17-23, THE SCALDING REPRIMAND OF DANIEL

A. Vss. 17-21, Daniel reminds Belshazzar of what had happened to Nebuchadnezzar. God had to deal with Nebuchadnezzar, so that the king would give the sovereign of the universe the glory.

1. We are to do all to the glory of God.

2. It is pride that causes men to fall. Proverbs 16:18: "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

B. Vss. 22-23, Here we have a history lesson not learned. He

failed the test. He knew what he had needed to do, but pride kept him from doing right.

#### IV. Vss. 24-29, THE HANDWRITING WAS ON THE WALL

A. Vs. 24, The fingers were gone, but the message remained. Daniel was the only one now in the building that could interpret the message.

1. He could do so because it was written by His Father's hand.

2. Many cannot read the handwriting on the wall because they do not know the one who wrote it.

B. Vs. 25-29, The interpretation of the handwriting.

1. Vs.25, The writing on the wall.

2. Vs. 26, "MENE" means numbered. Belshazzar's time was up.

a. Could it be that America's time is up, that we are finished.

b. Without a return to God, I fear that this is so.

c. One day we are all going to meet our maker; and when we do, we will be judged according to what is written in the Book of Books, the Bible. You had better pay attention to the Word and not your preconceived prejudices.

3. Vs. 27, "TEKEL" means weighed. We will not be weighed by man's scales, but by God's. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31).

4. Vs. 28, "PERES" the kingdom was divided. At the very moment that this was being interpreted, the Euphrates was being diverted and the troops of the enemy were coming through the water system to take the city and kill the king.

a. The enemy of sin and destruction is at our door, and America is in danger of falling. What are we doing to be a lighthouse in our community in this dark hour?

b. Let us not be divided; let us be united by the Word of God and never forsake its principles.

Conclusion: Is the handwriting on the wall for America? I believe it is. We must be willing to be light in the dark. This little light of mine is not going to be hid under a bushel!

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