THE BOOK OF DANIEL
BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU ASK FOR!  
DANIEL 5:18-31

From the confession and salvation of the great King Nebuchadnezzar to the rejection of Daniel’s God by Belshazzar, I am guessing if Belshazzar had it to do all over again, he would rethink asking for the temple articles from Jerusalem!

- God will not strive with mankind forever; be careful what you ask for and whose side you are on—especially when it comes to God’s covenant-people, Israel. “I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Gen. 12:3

- Before Daniel interpreted the handwriting on the wall, the bold and courageous prophet preached a sermon to Belshazzar that recounted the conversion of Nebuchadnezzar and condemned Belshazzar.
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HANDWRITING
v. 26-28

THE DAY OF RECKONING HAD ARRIVED.

- The pronouncement consists of just three Aramaic words since one is repeated.
- In our script, the writing looks like MN’MN’TKLUPRSUN, and with the words separated and vowels added, it reads MENE MENE TEKEL UPARSIN.
- In his interpretation, Daniel dropped the conjunction “U” and the plural ending of “IN” from the last word and made it PERES.
- The judgment of God is pronounced: Belshazzar, you have been numbered, counted out and measured, weighed and divided; the king is found deficient by God. **Verdict: Goodbye, you are done!**

  *The scales of God are perfectly accurate, exact, just, and fair.*
**THE CONSISTENCY OF GOD’S JUSTICE**

Abraham recognized this about God when he said, “far be it Lord,” concerning the righteous in Sodom. **Gen. 18:25**

- Why did Babylon fall? Its time was up, God was done, grace had ended—they had spit on God long enough!
- They had asked for it and they got it! Be careful what you ask for.
- With the unexpectedness of a thief, the Babylonian Empire and Belshazzar’s life ended that night.
- Every believer should take to heart God’s warning to ancient Israel, His chosen people found in **Amos 4:12**.

*God is gracious and longsuffering . . . but He also is just and will not strive with sin and rebellion forever.*
BABYLON MEETS ELE v. 29-31

- Like Mordecai (Esther 8:15), Daniel wears the purple robe of royalty; and like Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 41:42), he wears a golden chain of honor around his neck—both articles being symbolic of rule.
- A reward is promised to overcomers in Christ, which is you and me. Rev. 3:21
- How insignificant is the end of the greatest world empire in God’s eyes; He inspires Daniel to record it in a single sentence.
- That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain; and Darius the Mede (the historical figure Gobryas) took over the kingdom at the age of sixty-two.
- Archaeological discoveries from this period, and historians near to it, provide a vivid picture of what happened that night.
SOME ADDITIONAL APPLICATION FROM DANIEL 5

- As we see in the lineage of Israel’s kings, Belshazzar manifested the fact that a godly heritage does not always ensure a godly descent. **Eze. 18:19-20**

- **God has limits beyond which He will not go. Four lines that God draws are apparent in this chapter:**
  1. God has a deadline for His patience—which we do not know.
  2. God has a line on blasphemy which he has made perfectly clear.
  3. God has a line for judgment, the timing of which He alone knows.
  4. God has a finish line for every person and nation.

    Belshazzar crossed all four lines in one night.

- As Christians, we have one more line to cross as modeled by the apostle Paul; the first three are covered by the blood of Christ.
PROFANING GOD IS STILL BLASPHEMY

- Grace is for the repentant not the rebellious mocker.
- Though we no longer are under the Law, we are still created to praise and glorify God alone. Man is to keep sacred the things God sanctifies as holy; just as God told Aaron in Leviticus 10:11-12.

In a single night, the Babylonian Empire ceased.

- It is predicted that the Revived Roman Empire ("Babylon the Great") will also come to a sudden end in the last days. Revelation 18 provides a vivid forecast of its fall, a parallel to that dramatic October night of 539 B.C.
- Prior to the rapture of the Church, the tribulation, and Christ’s return, the condition of this world will be like the blasphemous feast of Belshazzar and the days of Noah. Matt. 24:37-39
HOW ABOUT THE WORLD WE LIVE IN?

- Belshazzar believed he was safe and well-protected, and immune to God’s judgment behind the walls of Babylon; and so will the lost in the end times.

- As God numbered the days of the Babylonian Empire, He also has determined the number of days of the end-time empire—seven years from the Antichrist’s confirmation of the covenant (Daniel 9:27) and not a day longer!

- Past empires are microcosms of the world at the end of this present age. After a period of rise and prosperity, empires decline, so it will be in the end times. Therefore, we should not be surprised to read in 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

- The handwriting is on the wall. Ask for mercy and grace, it is yours. Ask for justice and judgment, blaspheme God’s holy name, disrespect His son Jesus—you won’t like the result. Be careful what you ask for!