

Expositional Preaching from the Authorized Version of the Holy Bible
Current Book: *Daniel* – verse by verse

Scriptures for Today: Daniel 5:1-31 – *God’s judgment falls suddenly on Babylon!*

Today’s Message:

“Handwriting on the Wall”



INTRODUCTION

Last week, we learned how God gave the king of Babylon an entire chapter to share his incredible story of pride, abasement, and repentance toward God. Today, we will learn of the few kings that followed Nebuchadnezzar and the fall of the great Babylonian empire. The kingdom described in chapter 2 as the image’s “*head of GOLD*” will be brought to its **KNEES** in short order while the kingdom described as the image’s “*breast and arms of SILVER*” (*Medes-Persians*) will take over. The word of God is **RIGHT**, and its promises can be trusted. The historical fulfillment of God’s prophecies will cause your faith to grow stronger. God is not **MOCKED**, and His judgment is certain. This is God’s message to you today...

LEARNING TOGETHER

A. The Text Daniel 5:1-31

#1. *The Feast of Pride* – the king threw a grand **PARTY** for the Babylonian empire.

BELSHAZZAR THE KING MADE A GREAT FEAST TO A THOUSAND OF HIS LORDS

✓ The succession of kings following Nebuchadnezzar is documented in history.

- In **5:1**, we do not learn of his death; only the final king before Babylon falls.
- **King Nabopolassar** had reigned from 625 to 605 BC.
- **Nebuchadnezzar** his son reigned from 605 to **561 BC**.
- **Evil-Merodach** his son reigned from 561 to 559 BC (killed by conspirators).
- **Neriglissar** his brother-in-law reigned from 559 to 556 BC (killed in battle).
- **Laborosoarchod** his son was king for less than 1 year (beaten to death).
- **Nabonidas** (son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar) reigned from 555 to **538 BC**.
- **Belshazzar** (his son) was co-regent (co-kings) and ruled the **CITY** of Babylon.

✓ Belshazzar decided to throw a grand feast of which there is none the like in history.

- In **Esther 1:1**, king Ahasuerus (Persia) invited 127 princes to a 180-day party!
- In **5:1**, the king was leading the mass-intoxication event.
- In **5:2**, the alcohol mixed with his pride led him to call for God’s **VESSELS**.
- In **5:3**, the king and all those present drank wine in the sacred vessels of God.
- In **5:4**, they continued drinking and praised their vain, worldly, pagan gods.

Jeremiah 27:7
And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son’s son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.

Proverbs 20:1
Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

2023 VISION: Hold the Fort!
Making disciples and caring for souls!

#2. The Fingers of Judgment – God sent a HAND to write judgment on the wall!

Deuteronomy 32:35
*To me belongeth vengeance and recompense; **their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.***

Ezekiel 22:30
*And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: **but I found none.***

2 Peter 2:15
*Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam... **who loved the wages of unrighteousness;***

Revelation 20:15
*And whosoever was **not FOUND** written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

IN THE SAME HOUR CAME FORTH FINGERS OF A MAN’S HAND

- ✓ King Belshazzar saw FINGERS of a man’s HAND shocking him to the core.
 - In **5:5-6**, his countenance changed, and knees knocked his joints **LOOSE!**
 - In **5:7-9**, he CRIED ALOUD for worldly, wise men who once again FAILED!

THERE IS A MAN IN THY KINGDOM

- ✓ The queen, possibly king Nebuchadnezzar’s **DAUGHTER**, comes to help him.
 - In **5:10-12**, she shares Daniel’s testimony and has confidence in him!
- ✓ Daniel is summoned to speak – the king called him **DANIEL** as the queen had.
 - In **5:13-16**, he shares the handwriting mystery and offers Daniel a reward.
 - ❖ Notice, he says, “**THIRD ruler in the kingdom**” ... confirming his co-regency.
 - In **5:17-21**, Daniel rejects **REWARDS**... repeats Nebuchadnezzar’s story.
 - In **5:22**, the king KNEW ALL OF THIS and still did not HUMBLE himself!
 - In **5:23**, his pride led him to REBEL against God... **desecrate HIS VESSELS!**
- ✓ Daniel gives the interpretation of THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL!
 - **MENE** – God hath NUMBERED thy kingdom, and FINISHED IT.
 - **TEKEL** – Thou art WEIGHED in the balances, and art **FOUND** WANTING.
 - **PERES** – Thy kingdom is DIVIDED, and given to the MEDES and PERSIANS.

#3. The Fall of Babylon – the word of God was RIGHT; next world leader is Cyrus!

Isaiah 13:19
And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

Isaiah 45:1
*Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus... and I will LOOSE the loins of kings, to OPEN BEFORE HIM THE TWO LEAVED GATES; and **THE GATES SHALL NOT BE SHUT...***

Revelation 18:2, 10
*And he cried mightily with a strong voice, **Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen...** Alas, alas that great city **Babylon**, that mighty city! **for in one hour is thy judgment come.***

HISTORICAL APPLICATION

- ✓ The king Belshazzar was KILLED THAT NIGHT and the BABYLON FELL!
 - In **5:29-31**, Daniel was rewarded, king slain, and Cyrus’ uncle Darius took over!
- ✓ A word about the “*impregnable*” city of Babylon...
 - The city of Babylon was built in an exact square of 15 miles on a side (60 miles sq).
 - It was surrounded by a brick wall 87 feet thick and 350 feet high (6 chariots wide).
 - Outside the wall was a vast moat surrounding the city filled by the Euphrates.
 - The “*Hanging Gardens*” of Babylon was 1 of the 7 wonders of the ancient world.

PROPHETIC APPLICATION

- ✓ The prophecy of king Cyrus – **Isaiah 44:28-45:1-4** (**175 years before he was born!**)
- ✓ The strategy to drain/divert Euphrates – the BRASS GATES were left UNBOLTED!
- ✓ Future prophecy – God had made Cyrus to **1) Destroy Babylon, 2) Return Jews**
- ✓ Future prophecy – **Revelation 18** – Satan’s great city will FALL again **SUDDENLY!**

DEVOTIONAL APPLICATION

- ✓ God is the **AUTHOR** of HISTORY! The Bible is perfect in all of its teachings!
- ✓ You can TRUST God with literally **EVERYTHING** in your life; repent and believe.

<p>Isaiah 48:5 <i>I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; BEFORE IT CAME TO PASS I shewed it thee: lest thou shouldst say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.</i></p>	<p>Proverbs 3:5-6 <i>Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.</i></p>
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