



COUNTER CULTURE SERIES

Part 5: Writing on the Wall

Scripture: Daniel 5:1-31 (ESV) p742

Background: Nebuchadnezzar has passed some time after his humbling, and the throne has gone from among his sons, to Nabonidus and his son Belshazzar (who rules as co-regent with his disinterested father, who is mainly absent).

1. (v1-4) The King's (Idolatrous) Feast

- Many lavish feasts occurred in Babylon, with this one being a great feast that featured the vessels taken from the Temple in Jerusalem during the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar.

Lesson Flashback: Babylonians taking the Temple Vessels made them think their gods were better than God.

- The feast was filled with immorality, debauchery, and self-indulgence. They also praised the false idol gods of metals, stone, and wood.

2. (v5-12) The Writing on the Wall

- The writing on the wall was clearly seen by King Belshazzar and those at his feast.
- King Belshazzar was extremely terrified to the point of trembling!

WHO WROTE ON THE WALL?

- "MENE MENE TEKEL PARSIN" was written on the wall. King Belshazzar asked his Wise Men to interpret the message, with promise of great reward to whoever interpreted it.
 - None of the Wise Men were able to interpret the writing (surprised?).
 - The Queen then informed King Belshazzar that there was a man in the Kingdom named Daniel who could interpret it.
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3. (v13-31) Daniel Interprets the Writing

- Daniel bluntly responds to King Belshazzar, contrasted to the usual politeness found in the Babylonian court: Daniel is not interested in the material rewards and authority promised by Belshazzar.
- Daniel first attributes the greatness of Nebuchadnezzar's kingship and his humbling/restoration to the Most High God.
- Despite Belshazzar knowing what happened to Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar does not humble himself before God.
- Daniel interprets the writing on the wall:

MENE: _____

TEKEL: _____

PARSIN: _____

- The prophecy of the wall writings were quickly fulfilled: Belshazzar was killed and Darius the Mede received the kingdom. The Medo-Persian Empire now rules over Babylon.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Why are we to not serve false idols? (Read Exodus 20:4-6) p61

Why is it important to give credit to God?

How should we apply this prophetic interpretation in our own lives?

Closing Prayer Topic:

Father God, we pray that you help us to not seek the things of this world, but to seek You always. We pray that you will remind us that our days are numbered, we will be judged rightly, and that Your Son Jesus Christ is our only treasure. Amen.