



The Writing Is On The Wall – Week 4

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Overview

In our fourth message of **Brave**, we will learn two powerful lessons from the Book of Daniel that remain significant for today.

Discussion Questions

We begin in chapter five with an elaborate palace party given by Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, King Belshazzar.

“Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which had been in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone. In the same hour the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.” (Daniel 5:3-5)

The Queen Mother remembers Daniel and has him called to interpret the words on the wall. Daniel hadn't been invited to the party, but he's summoned when the chaos breaks loose. We never know our influence as Believers until a crisis comes to our co-workers, friends, and family.

- Can you share a time when you were given an opportunity to help someone you didn't expect would ask for help? What did you learn from that experience?

Daniel's interpretation is short and to the point:

“This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; TEKEL: you have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.” (Daniel 5:26-28)

Within hours of Daniel's solemn message to the king, the Medo-Persian army enters Babylon, Belshazzar is dead, and the Babyloynian Empire comes to an abrupt and inglorious end. Let's discover what we can learn from this powerful story.

Two Lessons

1. **We are wise to learn from the past.**

King Belshazzar should have learned what pride can do from his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar. When Belshazzar took the silver and gold vessels, he defiled them and crossed the line with his audacious, insolent pride. We can sum up this truth in four statements:

1. God allowed Babylon to become great.
 2. When they became great, their pride made them forget God.
 3. When they forgot God, they began to take Him for granted.
 4. When they took Him for granted, they deteriorated and lost their influence and ultimately their kingdom.
- How can the idols of pleasure, possessions, prominence, and power influence a nation to take God for granted?
 - Proverbs 16:18 says, **“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”** The opposite of pride is humility. One of the greatest ways to walk in humility is to have a grateful heart for God and others. What areas in your life can you practice humility and have a heart of gratitude?

2. **God weighs every human heart.**

“For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him...”
(2 Chronicles 16:9)

- God does not simply look at our outer actions, but He also inspects our inner motivations, thoughts, and intentions. What can we do to make sure that our inner motivations, thoughts, and intentions are pleasing to God?

Life Challenge

1 John 1:9 says, **“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”** God has the amazing ability to not only humble us, but to raise us up and give us a fresh start when we continually acknowledge our need for Him. Embrace a fresh start this week in any area of your life that prevents you from being a person marked by humility, servanthood, and thankfulness.

Prayer

Father, we thank You for all You have done for each of us and for allowing us to live in a place where we can still freely honor You. May we never take Your goodness, favor, and blessings for granted as we move forward in our motivations and actions to bring glory to Your name for all the world to see. Amen. Pray for the specific needs of the group.