

III. The Writing on the Wall

In Luke 10, Jesus sends his disciples out and he says,
"Heal the sick and preach the kingdom of God has come near to you. Luke 10:9

Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed. Luke 11:14

But some in the crowd accuse him of working under the devil's power, to which Jesus replies;

If I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Luke 11:20

Earle Ellis in his commentary on Luke 11:20, says:

"The lordship of Satan and of death now yields to the breaking powers of the new age, yet just as King Belshazzar's guests continued to feast unaware that his kingdom had fallen and his doom had been sealed, so the present age is unaware that Satan's reign is broken."

"Luke is telling us that the mission of the church, in making the kingdom visible through meeting physical needs, preaching of grace through repentance of sin, is now the current writing on the wall. It's only a token. It's only a minute foretaste of the universal revelation of the kingdom at the glorious coming of Jesus, but we Christians must explain that writing on the wall, that the kingdom of God is impending."

Ellis is saying Luke 11:20 is clearly a reference back to Daniel 5

Therefore Jesus is saying in Luke 11:20,

"The writing on the wall today is my people. My church. I've created a community where my Word is their light, where pride no longer reigns, where humility and ownership of sin is the new norm. Where mercy is the order of the day, where working on loving one another despite our weaknesses and temptations.

Jesus says, That is how I want the world to see my kingdom is coming down.

Sierra Community Church May 19th, 2019 Dan Wilvers



The Handwriting is on the Wall

Daniel 5:1-6; 13-31

But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt, declares the Lord, and will make it desolate forever. Jeremiah 25:11-14

Seventy years after the demise of Assyria in 608 BC. Babylon then fell to the Medes and Persians in October 539 BC. Daniel 5 is that night in October 539 BC

¹ King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. ² While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them.

³ So they brought in the gold goblets that had been taken from the temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. ⁴ As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone. ⁵ Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. The king watched the hand as it wrote. ⁶ His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way.

... ¹³ So Daniel was brought before the king, ... ¹⁶ Now I have heard that you are able to give interpretations and to solve difficult problems. If you can read this writing and tell me what it means, you will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around your neck, and you will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom."

¹⁷ Then Daniel answered the king, "You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the writing for the king and tell him what it means.

¹⁸ O king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendor.¹⁹ Because of the high position he gave him, all the peoples and nations and men of every language dreaded and feared him. Those the king wanted to put to death, he put to death; those he wanted to spare, he spared; those he wanted to promote, he promoted; and those he wanted to humble, he humbled.

²⁰ But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory.²¹ He was driven away from people and given the mind of an animal; he lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like cattle; and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he acknowledged that the Most High God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and sets over them anyone he wishes.

²² But you his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this.²³ Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways.

²⁴ Therefore he sent the hand that wrote the inscription.²⁵ This is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN.²⁶ This is what these words mean: *Mene*: 'God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.'²⁷ *Tekel*: 'You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting.'²⁸ *Peres*: 'Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.' "

²⁹ Then at Belshazzar's command, Daniel was clothed in purple, a gold chain was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom.³⁰ That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain,³¹ and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two.

I. The Party

¹ King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. vs 1

History tells us is that there is a huge shadow over Babylon and over Belshazzar in particular. Just two days before, Cyrus the Persian had brought the Medo-Persian army down, to within 50 miles of the city of Babylon.

II. The Voice of Judgment

Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. The king watched the hand as it wrote.⁶ His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way. Verses. 5,6

Daniel is teaching us two things here:

1. It's teaching us to trust God's Word.

"Then Daniel answered the king, 'You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the writing for the king ...' vs. 17

2. It's teaching us to come to grips with pride.

But you his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. (About Nebuchadnezzar) vs.22

...the Most High God **gave your** (predecessor) **Nebuchadnezzar** sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendor. vs. 18

The reason Nebuchadnezzar became king was ultimately through the sheer grace of God.

Isaiah 40: ¹⁵ Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales; ... ¹⁷ Before him all the nations are as nothing; they are regarded by him as worthless and less than nothing.... ²³ He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing.