



THE DEVOTED LIFE OF DANIEL
“The Writing on the Wall” Daniel 5:1-31

No. 3479

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Belshazzar knew about Nebuchadnezzar’s experience, but he chose to ignore it. He surpassed his predecessor in the behavior that had led to his downfall. The writing was on the wall for him long before “the fingers of a human hand appeared.” We should take note!

I. The Significance of the Writing on the Wall.

- A. Significant timing—the night the kingdom fell and the king was killed. v. 31f
- B. Significant situation—abuse of power, sex and alcohol. vv. 1-2
- C. Significant message—incomprehensible to the natural mind. v. 8; 1 Corinthians 2:14
- D. Significant ministry—“the spirit of the holy gods” at work. vv. 11-12

II. The Substance of the Writing on the Wall.

- A. The motivation for the message—God’s reaction to the king’s behavior. v. 24
 - 1. The king was well aware of the way God deals with the proud. v. 22
 - 2. The king assumed he could get away with his arrogance regardless. v. 22
 - 3. The king chose to “set himself up against the Lord of heaven.” v. 23
 - 4. The king brazenly profaned holy things. v. 23
 - 5. The king drunkenly worshipped the gods made by men. v. 23
 - 6. The king did not honor “the God who holds in his hand your life.” v. 23

Note: for a N.T. summary of such behavior see Romans 1:18f.
- B. The medium of the message.
 - 1. The “finger of God” had inscribed the law of God. Exodus 31:18
 - 2. The “fingers of a human hand” inscribed the application. v. 5
- C. The meaning of the message.
 - 1. The surface meaning—“Mina,” “Shekel,” “Parsin”—3 monetary weights.
 - 2. The deeper meaning—“Appointed,” “Evaluated,” “Divided”—3 verbs.
 - 3. The spiritual meaning—kings and kingdoms are under divine rule.

III. The Seriousness of the Writing on the Wall.

- A. When God speaks, people are supposed to listen.
- B. When God warns, people are supposed to heed.
- C. When God establishes, He also evaluates.
- D. When God delays, people are supposed to respond.
- E. When God consistently hears our “No,” He eventually adds His “No.”

Points to Ponder: Did you ever see the writing on the wall? What did you do?