

Habakkuk's Two Tables #25

PART FOUR: DANIEL

BELSHAZZAR'S FALL

“**In the history of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar**, God speaks to **nations** of today. We are to take to heart the lessons he sought to teach these rebellious kings; for if Belshazzar had pursued **a course in harmony with the instruction given to his grandfather**, he would have retained not only his kingdom but his life. He disregarded the lessons, and went on in rebellion against God, committing the very sins for which his grandfather had been reproved and punished. He, too, **lifted himself up in pride and exaltation**, and the final judgment of God fell upon him and his house. His great sin was that, notwithstanding God had given him light, he refused to walk in **the paths of righteousness**.” *Signs of the Times*, July 20, 1891.

THE WARNING MESSAGE

O thou king, **the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom**, and majesty, and glory, and honour: And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But **when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne**, and they took his glory from him: And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling *was* with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and *that* he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, **though thou knewest all this**; But hast **lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven**; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath *is*, and whose *are* all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: **Then** was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written. Daniel 5:18–24.

“Belshazzar had been given many opportunities for knowing and doing the will of God. **He had seen his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar banished from the society of men**. He had seen the intellect in which the proud monarch gloried taken away by the One who gave it. **He had seen** the king driven from his kingdom, and made the companion of the beasts of the field. But Belshazzar's love of **amusement** and **self-glorification effaced the lessons he should never have forgotten**; and he committed sins similar to those that brought **signal judgments on Nebuchadnezzar**. He wasted the opportunities graciously granted him, neglecting to use the opportunities within his reach for becoming acquainted with truth. ‘What must I do to be saved?’ was a question that the great but **foolish king** passed by indifferently.” *Bible Echo*, April 25, 1898.

SIGNAL: noun—A sign that gives or is intended to give notice; or the notice given. Adjective—Eminent; remarkable; **memorable**; distinguished from what is ordinary. *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*.

NIMROD'S MEMORIAL

“The schemes of the Babel builders ended in shame and defeat. **The monument to their pride became the memorial of their folly.** Yet men are continually pursuing the same course—**depending upon self**, and rejecting God's law. It is the principle that Satan tried to carry out in heaven; the same that governed Cain in presenting his offering.

“**There are tower builders in our time.** Infidels construct their theories from the supposed deductions of sciences, and reject the revealed word of God. They presume to pass sentence upon God's moral government; they despise His law and boast of the sufficiency of human reason. Then, ‘because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.’ Ecclesiastes 8:11.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 118–123.

BELSHAZZAR'S MEMORIAL

“Those who are unfaithful to the work of God are lacking in principle; their motives are not of a character to lead them to choose the right under all circumstances. The servants of God are to feel at all times that they are under the eye of their employer. He who watched the sacrilegious feast of Belshazzar is present in all our institutions, in the counting-room of the merchant, in the private workshop; and the bloodless hand is as surely recording your neglect as it recorded **the awful judgment of the blasphemous king.** Belshazzar's condemnation was written in words of fire, ‘Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting’; and if you fail to fulfill your God-given obligations your condemnation will be the same.” *Messages to Young People*, 229.

THE WINE OF BABYLON AND THE VESSELS OF GOD—BOUNDARY LINE CROSSED

Belshazzar the king made **a great feast** to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which *was* in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which *was* at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and **praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.** Daniel 5:1–4.

“When the tower had been partially completed, a portion of it was occupied as a dwelling place for the builders; other apartments, splendidly furnished and adorned, **were devoted to their idols.** The people rejoiced in their success, and **praised the gods of silver and gold,** and set themselves against the Ruler of heaven and earth. **Suddenly** the work that had been advancing so prosperously was checked. **Angels were sent to bring to naught the purpose of the builders.**” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 119

What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols? **Woe** unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it *is* laid over with gold and silver, and *there is* no breath at all in the midst of it. But the Lord *is* in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him. Habakkuk 2:18–20.

THE FOOL

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but **became vain in their imaginations**, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, **they became fools**. Romans 1:21–22.

EVERY MAN'S WORK SHALL BE MADE MANIFEST & THEN SHALL THAT WICKED BE REVEALED

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now if any man build upon this foundation **gold, silver, precious stones**, wood, hay, stubble; **Every man's work shall be made manifest**: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.

Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, **let him become a fool**, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is **foolishness** with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth **the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain**. 1 Corinthians 3:10–20.

“As fire reveals the difference between gold, silver, and precious stones, and wood, hay, and stubble, so the Day of Judgment will test characters, showing the difference between characters formed after Christ's likeness and characters formed after the likeness of the selfish heart. All selfishness, all false religion, will then appear as it is. The worthless material will be consumed; but the gold of true, simple, humble faith will never lose its value. It can never be consumed; for it is imperishable.

“Anyone can be just what he chooses to be. Character is not obtained by receiving an education. Character is not obtained by amassing wealth or by gaining worldly honor. Character is not obtained by having others fight the battle of life for us. It must be sought, worked for, fought for; and it requires a purpose, a will, a determination. To form a character which God will approve, requires persevering effort. It will take a continual resisting of the powers of darkness to stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel, to be approved in the day of Judgment, and have our names retained in the book of life. Is it not worth more to have our names registered in that book, have them immortalized among the heavenly angels, than to have them sounded in praise throughout the whole earth?

“In the probationary time granted us here we are each building a structure that is to have the inspection of the Judge of all the earth. This work is the molding of our characters. Every act of our lives is a stone in that building, every faculty is a worker, every blow that is struck is for good or for evil. The words of inspiration warn us to take heed how we build, to see that our foundation is sure. If we build upon the solid rock, pure, noble, upright deeds, the structure will go up beautiful and symmetrical, a fit temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.” *In Heavenly Places*, 47.

EARTHEN VESSELS

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. 2 Corinthians 4:6–7.

JUDAS

“In surprise and confusion at the exposure of his purpose, **Judas** rose hastily to leave the room. ‘Then said Jesus unto him, **That thou doest, do quickly.** . . . He then having received the sop went immediately out: and **it was night.**’ Night it was to the traitor as he turned away from Christ into the outer darkness.

“Until **this step was taken, Judas had not passed beyond the possibility of repentance.** But when he left the presence of his Lord and his fellow disciples, **the final decision** had been made. **He had passed the boundary line.**” *The Desire of Ages*, 655.

NIMROD

“When the tower had been partially completed, a portion of it was occupied as a dwelling place for the builders; other apartments, splendidly furnished and adorned, **were devoted to their idols.** The people rejoiced in their success, and **praised the gods of silver and gold,** and **set themselves against the Ruler of heaven and earth.** Suddenly the work that had been advancing so prosperously was checked.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 120.

RESTRAINT TAKEN AWAY

“In that last night of mad folly, Belshazzar and his lords had filled up the measure of their guilt and the guilt of the Chaldean kingdom. **No longer could God’s restraining hand ward off the impending evil.** Through manifold providences, God had sought to teach them reverence for His law. ‘We would have healed Babylon,’ He declared of those whose judgment was now reaching unto heaven, ‘but she is not healed.’ Jeremiah 51:9. Because of the strange perversity of the human heart, God had at last found it necessary to pass the irrevocable sentence. **Belshazzar was to fall,** and his kingdom was to pass into other hands.” *Prophets and Kings*, 530.

THYATIRA—THE PAPACY

And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Revelation 2:21.

And the Lord said, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and **now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.** Genesis 11:6.

And now ye know what **withholdeth** that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now **letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.** And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:6–8.

THE DIVINE PRONOUNCEMENT

In **the same hour** came forth **fingers of a man's hand, and wrote** over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. Daniel 5:5–6.

And the tables *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God, graven upon the tables. Exodus 32:16.

This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not*. John 8:6.

THE HAND WRITING ON THE WALL

“I have seen that the 1843 chart was directed by the hand of the Lord, and that it should not be altered; that the figures were as He wanted them; that His hand was over and hid a mistake in some of the figures, so that none could see it, until His hand was removed.” *Early Writings*, 74.

“There was in the palace **a woman who was wiser than them all**,—the queen of Belshazzar's grandfather. In this emergency she addressed the king in language that sent a ray of light into the darkness. ‘**O king, live forever**,’ she said; ‘**let not thy thoughts trouble thee**, nor let thy countenance be changed: there is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in **the days of thy father** light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, **made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers**: . . . now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation.’

“‘Then was Daniel brought in before the king.’ Making an effort to brace himself, and to show his authority, Belshazzar said: ‘Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry? . . .

“Daniel was not awed by the king's appearance, nor confused or intimidated by his words. ‘Let thy gifts be to thyself,’ he answered, ‘and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation. . . .

“Daniel did not swerve from his duty. He held the king's sin before him, showing him the lessons he might have learned, but did not. Belshazzar had not heeded the events so significant to him. He had not read his grandfather's history correctly. The responsibility of knowing truth had been laid upon him, but the practical lessons he might have learned and acted upon had not been taken to heart; and his course of action brought the sure result.

“**This was the last feast** of boasting held by the Chaldean king; for he who bears long with man’s perversity had passed **the irrevocable sentence**. Belshazzar had greatly dishonored the One who had exalted him as king, and **his probation was taken from him**. While the king and his nobles were at the height of their revelry, the Persians turned the Euphrates out of its channel, and marched into the unguarded city. As Belshazzar and his lords were drinking from the sacred vessels of Jehovah, and praising their gods of silver and gold, Cyrus and his soldiers stood under the walls of the palace. ‘In that night,’ the record says, ‘was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom.’

“Could the curtain be rolled back before the youth who have never given their hearts to God, with others who are Christians in name, but who are unrenewed in heart and unsanctified in temper, they would see that God’s eye is ever upon them, and they would feel as disturbed as did the king of Babylon. They would realize that in every place, at every hour in the day, **there is a holy Watcher**, who balances every account, whose eye takes in the whole situation, whether it is one of fidelity, or one of disloyalty and deception.

“We are never alone. We have a **Companion**, whether we choose him or not. Remember, young men and young women, that wherever you are, whatever you are doing, God is there. To your every word and action you have a witness,—the holy, sin-hating God. Nothing that is said or done or thought can escape his infinite eye. Your words may not be heard by human ears, but they are heard by the Ruler of the universe. He reads the inward anger of the soul when the will is crossed. He hears the expression of profanity. In the deepest darkness and solitude he is there. No one can deceive God; none can escape from their accountability to him.” *Youth Instructor*, May 26, 1898.

And this *is* the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

This *is* the interpretation of the thing: 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. Daniel 5:25–28.

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This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel *is* twenty gerahs:;) an half shekel *shall be* the offering of the Lord. Exodus 30:13.

A “mene” is fifty shekels, or one thousand gerahs. “Mene, mene” therefore equates to two thousand gerahs. A “tekel” is twenty gerahs. Therefore “mene, mene, tekel” equates to two thousand and twenty gerahs. A “upharsin” is one-half of a “mene,” and represents five hundred gerahs.

Mene	1,000
Mene	1,000
Tekel	20
Upharsin	<u>500</u>
	2,520

EXECUTIVE JUDGMENT

In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. Daniel 5:30.

“It was not long before reverses came. **Babylon was besieged by Cyrus**, nephew of Darius the Mede, and commanding general of the combined armies of the Medes and Persians. But within the seemingly impregnable fortress, with its massive walls and its gates of brass, protected by the river Euphrates, and stocked with provision in abundance, the voluptuous monarch felt safe and passed his time in mirth and revelry.” *Prophets and Kings*, 523.

That saith of Cyrus, *He is my shepherd*, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord **to his anointed, to Cyrus**, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open **before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut**. Isaiah 44:28; 45:1.

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, **he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth**; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Revelation 3:7–8.

THE FIRST AND THE LAST

“**To the last ruler of Babylon, as in type to its first**, had come the sentence of the divine Watcher: ‘O king, . . . to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.’ Daniel 4:31.” *Prophets and Kings*, 533.

“It has been **repeatedly** revealed to me that many professing Christians will, in the time of the final test, be greatly disappointed. **Many, many** will fail to provide themselves with that righteousness of Christ represented in the parable by the wedding-garment. They have trusted in their own righteousness, and have not manifested the humility of Jesus Christ. They may be seated at the supper table with others, but Christ will recognize them, and will say to them, ‘How camest thou in hither not having on a wedding-garment?’

“Unless those who profess to be Christians become sanctified through the truth, and learn to reveal the likeness of Christ in words, in deeds, in spirituality, in their relation to their fellow men, the great day of test and trial will find them unprepared to enter through the golden gates into the city of God. And unless they can now be made to feel their great need, they will not have a spirit to seek for the essential righteousness of Christ.

“When called before King Belshazzar to explain the mysterious writing on the wall, Daniel reminded the king of matters with which he was familiar, **but which had not taught him the lesson of humility that might have saved him.** ‘O thou king,’ said the prophet, ‘the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor: and for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: and he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.’

“Then the enormity of Belshazzar’s guilt was thus emphasized: ‘And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, **though thou knowest all this;** but hast **lifted up thyself** against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them, and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is and whose are all thy ways hast thou not glorified: then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.

“‘And this is the writing that was written, Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. This is the interpretation of the thing: Mene, God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Tekel; Thou are weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Peres; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.’

“The Lord does not suffer wicked practices to go on without sending reproof and warning. **There are men in high places who know of the reproofs, of warnings, of judgment sent, who know the example of God’s dealings with others who have been disobedient, yet who have not sought to correct their ways before God.** They have **endeavored rather to make of none effect the messages that God has sent.** They have continued to **exalt** themselves, and to carry out their own ways in defiance of the words of God. **They have not been ignorant of the right way, but they have allowed their eyes to be blinded.** In pronouncing judgment upon these, God will say, as he said to the wicked king, ‘Thou . . . hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this.’

“Many have continued in a wicked course of action, until the Lord Jesus cannot accept their services unless there is a genuine conversion. His people today have no excuse for turning away from **the counsels of his Spirit.** In his Word, he has given us examples that should be warnings to us, yet although we have known all this, many of God’s people have not taken heed to the warnings of God.

“‘Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

“Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.’

“Among the many discordant elements, some have been unable to discern the voice of God in the messages of warning and reproof that have been sent for the guidance of the church.

“Men who have refused to walk in the plain counsel of the Lord, are not the ones who should be entrusted with the care of his sheep and lambs. **Those who, while professing to believe the truth, resist the Holy Spirit, making light of the message from heaven, will surely be punished for their transgressions. They will not in the future have greater evidence of the truth of these messages than has been given in the past.** The Lord forbids that they should be entrusted with responsibilities that they might have borne, had they heeded the messages that the Lord in mercy sent them.”
Review and Herald, September 24, 1908.