

Faith Under Fire

The Handwriting is on the Wall - Daniel 5:1-31

The Historical Context

- Nebuchadnezzar has passed away.
- 4 kings in 6 years had succeeded him, and Belshazzar was not the current King, but the current ruler. His father the king had left the city for the last 10 years. (Amel-Marduk 2 yrs, Neriglissar 4 yrs, Labashi-Marduk a few months, Nabonidus last king of Babylon)
- Babylon was on the verge of being overtaken by the Medes and Persians. (Cyrus the Persian had already defeated Nabonidus 50 miles away a few days earlier.)

The Story Retold

- Big Party, but not out of victory. (to encourage the leaders or to get drunk before defeat?)
- He took the wine that had been taken from the Temple in Jerusalem for the worship of God.
- While drinking the wine dedicated for God, he worshiped and gave praise to his idols.
- The hand writes on the Wall and Belshazzar became fearful.
- The Queen recommends Daniel. (Possibly a wife of Nebuchadnezzar)
- The king should have known better... Daniel 5:22-24
- Menes – Numbered (coin) – His days are numbered.
Tekel – Weighed. The King has been judged.
Parsin – Your Kingdom will be divided and give not the Medes and Persians.
- Belshazzar was killed that very night. And Darius the Mede took over the kingdom.

The Sin of Blasphemy

The act of showing insulting God or showing contempt for God. A lack of reverence.

What did Belshazzar do that was so insulting to God?

What do we do today that can be Blasphemy against God today?

The sin of Blasphemy can be very broad. Any sin against God could be considered Blasphemy. Even how we attempt to interpret scripture could be considered Blasphemy. Do you allow the scripture to develop your world view, or do you allow your world view to interpret the Bible?

Do you use God's name as a curse word? That lacks reverence for God.

Are followers of God insulted only because they choose to worship their God? That is the result of arrogance and is blasphemy toward God.

How will You Respond when Life gets Difficult?

- Belshazzar responded in arrogance when he knew his days were numbered.
- His focus was in the wrong direction and on the wrong objects.
- Belshazzar failed to learn from others and history.