



The Good News

July 22nd, 2018

Volume 18, Issue 29

Will I be found wanting?

By Michael McCleary

Have you ever heard the phrase “You have been weighed, you have been measured, and you have been found wanting”? Or how about the phrase “His days are numbered”? Would it surprise you to learn that both of these phrases come from the Bible and both come from the same chapter of the same book of the Bible?

In the book of **Daniel, chapter 5**, we read of a fascinating account involving a man named Belshazzar. As king, he made a “great feast” (v.1) for “a thousand of his lords”. During the course of this feast, Belshazzar called for the gold and silver vessels that had been taken from the temple of God in Jerusalem when Babylon conquered the city. We read that “they drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone” (v.4). As this was taking place, “the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace”. We read how that he was frightened by what he saw and sought a man to read the writing and give its interpretation. As we read through the chapter we learn that Daniel is summoned, and he tells the king that the fingers wrote the words, “Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin”. Daniel gives the interpretation to the king, saying that “Mene, Mene” meant that God had numbered Babylon’s days (and Belshazzar’s days with it), and “Tekel” meant that King Belshazzar had been weighed in the balance of God and had been found wanting.

The question we want to ask is, what was lacking in King Belshazzar that brought about this terrible judgment from God (his death - v.30)? As we noticed earlier, King Belshazzar had made a great feast, and during this feast called for the vessels of the temple of God, vessels that had been sanctified to the worship of God and Him alone. Using these vessels, King Belshazzar and his party praised the gods of the earth. As we read through the heart of **Dan. 5**, we

learn that Daniel is called because the queen remembered that he was able to interpret Nebuchadnezzar’s dreams. As Daniel addresses the king in **Dan. 5:17**, Daniel gives Belshazzar a history lesson regarding Nebuchadnezzar, how that God had given him “a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor.” (v.18) But Nebuchadnezzar became proud and considered himself higher than he should. Consider Daniel’s words as he recites what happened to Nebuchadnezzar: *“Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. 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 rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses. But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you and you...have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold...which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified. Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written.”* (v.21-24). So, what was lacking in Belshazzar? He did not acknowledge God in all his ways, or acknowledge God’s power over all, even though he should have known this from Nebuchadnezzar’s experience. Therefore, this judgment came upon Belshazzar because he “knew all this” and yet did the same. The question for us is, do **we** acknowledge God in all our ways, acknowledging His power over all? If so, heed His Gospel, obey His voice, and be baptized for the remission of sins, for if we don’t Jesus could very well say to us in that Great Day, “**You** have been **weighed**, **you** have been **measured**, and **you** have been found **wanting**.”