

1. Last week I taught the Doctrine of Drinking. I had earlier taught verses one through four of Daniel chapter five.
2. Before resuming our study of Drinking, I want to give you an expanded translation of Dan 5:1-4.

Dan 5:1 King Belshazzar summoned a thousand of his nobles for a grand party; it soon turned into a licentious and drunken orgy.

Dan 5:2 Under the influence of the wine Belshazzar commanded his wine steward to bring the sacred golden and silver vessels which his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of Israel's Temple; he wanted this done in order that that he, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink from the sacred vessels of Jehovah God.

Dan 5:3 And so it was done, the golden vessels used in the Temple of the house of God were brought before him; they were filled with wine and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, then toasted the gods of Babylon.

Dan 5:4 They drank their wine, and praised the Babylonian gods; their idols of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone were extolled as superior to the God of Israel.

3. When time ran out we were about to analyze how alcoholism can lead to national disaster.
4. I want to review some of that earlier learned and then we will begin new material at point 14 on page 2.

#### The Doctrine of Drinking:

1. Drinking is never prohibited in the Bible but drunkenness is always classified as a sin.
2. There are people who cannot drink and they are called alcoholics therefore they should never ingest fermented beverages. The alcoholic will know if alcohol is his or her drug of choice.
3. Alcoholics with wisdom abstain from their drug of choice, for those who do not; there is often hell to pay.
4. People with alcoholism in their family should never try alcohol; there are however many alcoholics who stop early and there are many who unfortunately stop after reaching bottom. Some choose the sin-unto-death rather than abstinence.
5. Drunkenness is always condemned as a sin.

6. Drinking as used in this doctrine means "the consumption of fermented drink".

7. Wine was the principle drink of both Old and New Testament peoples.

8. Wine was made from various fruits. Strong drink was usually made from various grains.

9. Alcohol is recommended in certain cases for medicinal purposes.

10. Such use however must always be in moderation.

11. Jesus at Cana performed His first recorded miracle by turning water into wine.

12. There are numerous adverse effects of drunkenness

- Leads to abusive behavior
- Lowers inhibitions
- Leads to diseases of the liver and the eyes
- Slows the thinking process

13. Since alcohol can slow the thinking process-drinking by implication is to be avoided by people in positions of leadership.

14. Alcoholism can bring about national disaster.

Joe 1:5 Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine because of the new wine (their grape crop) for it is cut off from your mouth.

Joe 1:6 For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion.

15. Drunkenness is used to describe reversionism in the land.

Jer 13:13 Then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunkenness.

16. You can find many admonitions in the Scripture with reference to alcohol for it can be a fierce master.

Pro 21:17 He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.

Pro 23:20 Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh:

Pro 23:21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.

Pro 23:31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.

Pro 23:32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

Pro 23:33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

17. Drunkenness is a sin to be avoided like all sin; however the ramifications of those sins which can control the mind can lead to demon possession/control.

18. Conditions under which drinking is to be restrained:

18.1 Law of love applied toward the weaker brother and similarly the law of expediency toward unbelievers.

19. Common sense in drinking is obvious given the dire circumstances when abused.

20. We must not drink on the job; children should not drink; women should never drink with strangers; and no one should drink while driving and/or flying nor should you ride or fly with those who are drinking.

21. Since we have much controversy in the Body of Christ with reference to drinking I will close our summary of wine/drinking with this verse:

Rom 14:21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22. Let me again provide an expanded translation of verses one through four:

Dan 5:1 King Belshazzar summoned a thousand of his nobles for a grand party; it soon turned into a licentious and drunken orgy.

Dan 5:2 Under the influence of the wine, Belshazzar commanded his wine steward to bring the sacred golden and silver vessels which his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of Israel's Temple; he wanted this done in order that that he, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink from the sacred vessels of Jehovah God.

Dan 5:3 And so it was done, the golden vessels from the Holy City, used in the Temple of the house of God were brought before him; they were filled with wine and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, then toasted the gods of Babylon.

Dan 5:4 They drank their wine, and praised the Babylonian gods; these idols of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone were extolled as superior to the God of Israel.

23. Now let's take a look at Dan 5:5 and 6. An introduction might help us Segway from drinking to a bizarre warning from God—a chilling prediction of national disaster.

24. The King and His guest, as they drank from the Royal Vessels of the God of Israel were asking: Where was the God of Israel when His people were led into captivity and when His temple was plundered?

25. Why had He not assaulted the mighty Chaldeans and their gods whose praise we now sing about so lustily?

26. Where was He in Israel's time of need?

27. Boisterous voices no doubt were raised to an ever higher pitch; and the orgy assumed unparalleled proportions.

28. Then a sudden hush fell over the startled revelers as they witnessed the awesome spectacle of HANDWRITING ON THE WALL.

29. Now let's begin our exegesis.

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Dan 5:5 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.

Dan 5:6 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.

NIV

Dan 5:5 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.

Dan 5:6 His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way.

1. In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: the king watched as a part of a human hand wrote upon the wall.

2. Then the king's countenance changed for his thoughts greatly troubled him, so much so that "the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another."

3. The apostate king has now been challenged.

3.1 The means by which God chose to pronounce judgment on these Chaldeans who had rejected His Word was a message written by the "fingers of a man's hand."

4. This was an appropriate method for recording such a remarkable and memorable event, since it was customary in the ancient world to inscribe the deeds of kings on their palace walls.

5. Archeologists have discovered many such examples of cuneiform which describe the actual and sometimes alleged exploits of rulers. Hence, these inscriptions on the wall were an ancient form of today's history books.

6. No doubt a king as selfish and egotistical as Belshazzar had already filled the walls of his palace with imagined accounts of his own heroics; yet now, "over against the candlestick" where all could see, a new inscription was being written.

7. This was no ordinary occurrence for there was no one with chisel in hand to carve out the characters.

7.1 The ordinary now gave way to the extraordinary.

8. The spectacle of a detached hand forming four strange words on the wall aroused even the most intoxicated spectators.

9. The hand of God had once written the Mosaic law on a tablet of stone and now Babylon becomes yet another recipient of the hand of God.

10. Dramatically, the king's color changed and he grew pale. It is obvious that this miracle terrified the inebriated ruler.

10.1 I wonder if Belshazzar set a record for sobering-up.

11. The fright and shock sobered him instantly, and his mental attitude was "troubled."

11.1 Belshazzar was in a traumatic state of alarm; his fear resulted in a complete loss of poise and confidence: his knees knocked, and his body trembled from terror.

11.2 His fear now became contagious; other members of his court were filled with fear.

12. The most powerful man in the empire had "fallen apart!" Real security and confidence come from the peace and power of God, not from human position or accomplishments!

13. Since Belshazzar had rejected the Word of God and had no doctrine resident in his soul, he was understandably frightened by the supernatural event.

14. Had the people of this empire heeded the example of Nebuchadnezzar and learned the great truths of the Scriptures, they would have recognized that God had used their nation as an instrument to discipline the Jews.

Jer 25:8 Therefore the LORD Almighty says this: "Because you have not listened to my words,

Jer 25:9 I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon," declares the LORD, "and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin.

Jer 25:10 I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp.

Jer 25:11 This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

Jer 25:12 "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.

15. Babylon will now be forced to realize that God's divine purpose and use to discipline Israel in no way gave them a right to persecute the Jews and to become anti-Semitic.

15.1 The principle behind the discipline of Judah applies to all peoples: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge ...

Hos 4:6 my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. "Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.

16. The depth to which ungodly man can sink is amplified in Romans 1:22-32.

Rom 1:22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools

Rom 1:23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Rom 1:24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another .

Rom 1:25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen.

Rom 1:26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.

Rom 1:27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Rom 1:28 Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of

God, he gave them over to a depraved mind; to do what ought not to be done.  
Rom 1:29 They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, Rom 1:30 slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents;  
Rom 1:31 they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless.  
Rom 1:32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

16.1 Isaiah prophesied the downfall of Babylon when he wrote: "for thou [Babylon] shalt no more be called, the lady of kingdoms" (Isa. 47:5-9).

Isa 47:5 "Sit in silence, go into darkness, Daughter of the Babylonians; no more will you be called queen of kingdoms.  
Isa 47:6 I was angry with my people and desecrated my inheritance; I gave them into your hand, and you showed them no mercy. Even on the aged you laid a very heavy yoke.  
Isa 47:7 You said, 'I will continue forever--the eternal queen!' But you did not consider these things or reflect on what might happen.  
Isa 47:8 "Now then, listen, you wanton creature, lounging in your security and saying to yourself, 'I am, and there is none besides me. I will never be a widow or suffer the loss of children.'  
Isa 47:9 Both of these will overtake you in a moment, on a single day: loss of children and widowhood. They will come upon you in full measure, in spite of your many sorceries and all your potent spells.

17. Jeremiah also foretold of not only the fall of Babylon but the mechanics were even described:

Jer 50:1 This is the word the LORD spoke through Jeremiah the prophet concerning Babylon and the land of the Babylonians:  
Jer 50:2 "Announce and proclaim among the nations, lift up a banner and proclaim it ; keep nothing back, but say, 'Babylon will be captured; Bel will be put to shame, Marduk filled with terror. Her images will be put to shame and her idols filled with terror.'  
Jer 50:3 A nation from the north will attack her and lay waste her land. No one will live in it; both men and animals will flee away...  
Jer 50:9 For I will stir up and bring against Babylon an alliance of great nations from the land of the north. They will take up their positions against her, and from the north she will be captured...  
Jer 51:11 Make bright the arrows; gather the shields: the LORD hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it; because it is the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of his temple...  
Jer 50:14 "Take up your positions around Babylon, all you who draw the bow. Shoot at her! Spare no arrows, for she has sinned against the LORD.

Jer 50:15 Shout against her on every side! She surrenders, her towers fall, her walls are torn down. Since this is the vengeance of the LORD, take vengeance on her; do to her as she has done to others ...

Jer 51:28 Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion...

Jer 50:37 A sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that are in the midst of her; and they shall become as women: a sword is upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed.

Jer 50:38 And her waters shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images.

18. Now the hour of reckoning had come the handwriting stood emblazoned on the wall, and the end of Great Babylon was near.

19. Before moving to verse seven, let me give you an expanded translation of verse five and six.

Expanded Translation:

Dan 5:5 Suddenly, as the King watched, the fingers of a human hand crawled slowly up the wall and began to write, the writing was unmistakable because it appeared under the lampstand directly behind the King. The king watched as the hand slowly wrote Babylon's final history.

Dan 5:6 Belshazzar's face turned pale; he was so terrified that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way; he could no longer stand, the King sank slowly to his pillowed couch.

End Lesson Taught 8-5-2001