

DANIEL WK5// WRITING ON THE WALL

INTRO//

-What's up Faith Students! Welcome to the best night of the week! I'm so glad each and every one of you are here tonight!

-We're continuing our series in the book of Daniel and we've covered some crazy stories so far! But through it all Daniel and his friends have been faithful to God, and God has given them favor and kept them safe.

-Tonight we'll be in Daniel 5 but before we jump into that:

ILLUSTRATION//

-We all know that if you do certain things, you can expect something to follow:

- If I go to this class, I'm gonna get bored and fall asleep
- If I eat Taco Bell, I'm gonna feel awful later
- If I talk back to my coach or slack off, I'm gonna have to run

-Certain actions just have certain consequences, there's things we do where you can expect the outcome

-A saying for this idea is "the writing on the wall"

- means there's a clear sign this won't end well
- popular phrase that actually comes from scripture

SCRIPTURE//

-We see it in Daniel 5:1-9

"Many years later King Belshazzar gave a great feast for 1,000 of his nobles, and he drank wine with them. While Belshazzar was drinking the wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver cups that his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem. He wanted to drink from them with his nobles, his wives, and his concubines. So they brought these gold cups taken from the Temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. While they drank from them they praised their idols made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. Suddenly, they saw the fingers of a human hand writing on the plaster wall of the king's palace, near the lampstand. The king himself saw the hand as it wrote, and his face turned pale with fright. His knees knocked together in fear and his legs gave way beneath him. The king shouted for the enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers to be brought before him. He said to these wise men of Babylon, "Whoever can read this writing and tell me what it means will be dressed in purple robes of royal honor and will have a gold chain placed around his neck. He will become the third highest ruler in the kingdom!" But when all the king's wise men had come in, none of them could read the writing or tell him what it meant. So the king grew even more alarmed, and his face turned pale. His nobles, too, were shaken."

-Tonight we're gonna talk about the "writing on the wall" for King Belshazzar, and what he did that brought expected consequences for him. But before we do, let's pray!

CONTEXT//

-So what is happening in this story??

-King Belshazzar took over after King Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon, and they still had Daniel, his friends and Jerusalem in captivity.

-He was throwing a massive party and wanted to drink from cups that were stolen from Jerusalem's temple years before

-These were cups used in a temple to worship God, and now they were being used to get people drunk at a party while they were worshiping idols and false gods.

-Incredibly disgraceful and dishonoring to God

-When this happened the King noticed a hand writing a message on the wall

-Something literally out of a horror movie

-He freaked out, got scared and immediately called for an interpreter to tell him what it meant

-I have a feeling he knew exactly what it said, he knew it wasn't good, but he was hoping someone would tell him differently

-This hand was the hand of God and he was writing a message of warning to King Belshazzar

-God was angry he was being mocked and disrespected

-What was once used to worship Yahweh was not being used to get people drunk, numb and worship false gods

-God takes this seriously

-This shows us a key we can learn:

1//GOD WON'T SHARE A SEAT

-In this moment King Belshazzar is holding something of God in one hand while worshiping idols and false gods

-This can be a picture of us

-We want to serve and worship God but we also want to live for ourselves, distract ourselves from our fears and pain

-But God makes it clear in his message to Belshazzar that He won't share a seat

-Here's what I mean: He won't share the throne of our heart, he won't share being the priority of our lives

ILLUSTRATION//

-Because sharing a seat is uncomfortable

*Ask ask to sit down and share a seat with a student

-It's uncomfortable to share a seat, especially for a long time

-It was originally your seat, probably makes you mad I chose to sit down and share with you

- For many of us we want God to share the throne of our life with other people, relationships, school, sports, netflix, etc
- It gets uncomfortable! Some of us feel divided and like we're in constant tension because we want God and something else to lead and guide our life!
- Those things aren't all bad but they aren't God!
- An Idol is anything that takes priority and has a greater voice in our life than God
- That seat was made by/for God

-The truth is that God deserves our full attention, focus and devotion. He created us and we were created to know Him, personally. He sent his son Jesus to pay the penalty for our sins so that we could be made right with Him now and for eternity!

- He is WORTHY of being the Lord of our life, He deserves to have authority of our life and sit unchallenged on the throne of our heart.

-God is too good to share a seat, He won't do it

-We see that in this story with Belshazzar, God was warning Him that by continually worshiping idols and false gods he was setting himself up for failure

-Again King Belshazzar wanted an interpretation for the message and we've seen this before:

- King needs interpretation
- He calls on astrologers, fortune tellers, etc.
- They can't interpret the message
- They call Daniel
- He interprets the message/dream

-That's exactly what happens here!

- Something I find interesting/relate to Belshazzar to is that he mocked God in the good times, but as soon as he was fearful he calls on Daniel a servant of God who receives interpretations from Him
- It's like he only called out to God when He needed Him
- We often do this same thing, and it's easy to do when God is sharing a seat in our heart

-But another clear thing we can learn from this story, isn't just that God won't share a seat in our heart but also:

2// YOU CAN CHOOSE YOUR SIN BUT YOU CAN'T CHOOSE THE CONSEQUENCES

-You've maybe heard this before and it's so true!

-You can choose your sin, you can choose to do what you want, but you can't choose what happens

- Like I said earlier, we all do things that have expected outcomes
- When you mock God don't be surprised when he makes a fool of you
- Exactly what happens to King Belshazzar

Daniel 5:24-28 "So God has sent this hand to write this message. "This is the message that was written: Mene, Mene, Tekel, and Parsin. This is what these words mean: Mene means 'numbered'—God has numbered the days of your reign and has brought it to an end. Tekel means 'weighed'—you have been weighed on the balances and have not measured up. Parsin means 'divided'—your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

- Later that night Belshazzar was attacked and killed and their kingdom was divided
 - This was all prophesied earlier in Isaiah 44+ 45 and Jeremiah 51

-King Belshazzar faced very real consequences because of the mistakes and destructive decisions he made

-I don't say this to scare you, because the truth is God's grace and mercy is faithful to save and rescue us.

-But the truth also is that God saves us from our sin but not always the consequences. And the consequences may not be getting killed BUT, it doesn't mean there aren't still consequences to our decisions

- We can't make destructive decisions and expect different results
 - The "writing is on the wall" with some choices

ILLUSTRATION//

-Comfort vs Covering of God

-Comfort (I was planning on bringing up a beach chair, talking about how we love pursuing only what we like, what's comfortable and relaxing)

- Comfort is great, we love choosing what is comfortable
- The problem is chasing comfort often leaves us incredibly exposed when storms come

-Covering of God (hold an umbrella)

-Living God's ways and walking in his covering isn't always as nice, luxurious, comfortable, etc. But when the storm comes, we are prepared and protected!

-When we pursue comfort the writing is on the wall, we can expect destruction, but when we pursue the covering of God we can expect provision and protection

TRANSITION//

-We can learn so much from King Belshazzar

•He fell short in many ways and continued to choose to worship false gods and idols instead of the God of Daniel. He chose comfort instead of God's covering, God shared a seat with other idols in his life and it ended up ruining Him

-God has better for you than this!

Be personal, share a time/season where God shared a seat in your life

ALTAR//

-Salvation, maybe something else has authority/priority in your life completely

-A call for those who feel torn and divided, God doesn't have full authority in their life