

# Our Days Are Numbered

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[0:00] Thank you.

Thank you.

So you're like, he's setting us up. He's setting us up. See, this is what I think would be fair. Normally I would preach three times on a weekend. I think you should get three times the sermon tonight.

So, I mean, it's not even going to start snowing for a few hours. So, anyways. If you've got a Bible, if you've got a Bible, Daniel chapter 5 is where we're at this evening.

If you've been with us the last several weeks, we've been working our way chapter by chapter through the book of Daniel in a series that we've entitled Faithfulness in Exile.

[1:38] And this book, I've loved, absolutely loved teaching it. A lot of great feedback thus far from the book. And it has forced us to deal with a lot of difficult questions, things that we wrestle with every day.

Today, questions like, you know, how do we hold to our faith in a culture that is constantly worshiping false gods? I mean, there's all kinds of idol worship in our culture, and we want to be true to the one true God.

How do we balance patriotism, that is, we want good things to happen for America, yet not be involved in paganism, which would be the worship of any nation, even our own.

How do we guard against the Nebuchadnezzar complex of being obsessed with human kingdoms, particularly our own? And ultimately, how do we become less dependent on the world and more dependent on God?

Those are some really big questions, amen? And they're difficult questions for us to work through in our life. And the book of Daniel has really provided a great opportunity for us to think about these things.

[2:53] So Daniel 5 is where we're at now. And we will look at the whole chapter, but just read a portion of it to kind of get us intro into what the chapter is about.

So with that, if you're able to stand, please do so. As we honor the reading of God's Word. Daniel 5 verse 1 says, King Belshazzar made a great feast for a thousand of his lords and drank wine in front of the thousand.

Belshazzar, when he had tasted the wine, commanded that the vessels of gold and silver, that Nebuchadnezzar his father, and just kind of a quick note here, and we'll mention this later.

Father here doesn't mean biological dad, but Belshazzar is a descendant of the kings of Babylon. And in that sense, Nebuchadnezzar is a father-like.

Those that he had taken out of the temple of Jerusalem to be brought, and the kings and his lords and wives and concubines might drink from them. And then they brought the golden vessels that they had taken out of the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his lords and wives and concubines drank from them.

[4:05] They drank wine, and they praised the gods of gold and silver and bronze and iron, wood and stone. And immediately, the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace opposite the lampstand.

The king saw the hand as it wrote, and his color changed, and his thoughts alarmed him, his limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together.

And the king called loudly to all the enchanters, Chaldeans, the astrologers, and he declared to the wise men of Babylon, Whoever reads this writing and shows me its interpretation shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around his neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

And all the king's wise men came in, And they couldn't read the writing or make known to the king the interpretation. And when King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, his color changed, and his lords were perplexed.

But the queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came in to the banqueting hall, and the queen declared, O king, live forever, and let not your thoughts alarm you or your color change.

[5:27] There's a man in your kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him.

And King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, your father the king, made him chief of the magicians and enchanters and Chaldeans and astrologers. Because of an excellent spirit, knowledge and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems, were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belshazzar.

Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation. Let's pray. Lord, thanks for once again the opportunity to study your word.

Lord, and we will once again see so many parallels from what Daniel was going through in his day and what we are going through in our day. Lord, come and talk to us.

Encourage your people to be faithful in exile. And I pray this in Jesus' name. And God's people said, Amen. You can be seated. On the morning of June 18, 2023, a small research ship known as the Titan was lowered into the North Atlantic.

[6:48] Some of you remember this. There were five people on board that day, and they thought they were set out for the adventure of a lifetime. Their mission was to travel two and a half miles into the ocean and explore one of history's most famous shipwrecks, the Titanic.

Each of these individuals had paid enormous amounts of money for this rare opportunity. And the trip to the ocean floor, which was led by Stockton Rush, was expected to take roughly around two hours.

As the ship was lowered into the water and began to go down, everything seemed to be normal. In fact, the small cabin, though it was cramped, was filled with these passengers that were calm and excited about what was to come.

And as soon as the sunlight above disappeared, they were then surrounded by the cold, dark depths of the Atlantic Ocean.

About an hour and 45 minutes into the dive, contact with the support ship above suddenly and abruptly stopped.

[8:07] Investigators later concluded that the Titan's hull failed under the intense pressure of the ocean. The sub imploded instantly.

It's believed that the implosion happened so fast that the human brain would not have had time to even register what happened. One moment, the passengers were just descending normally, anticipating the exploration.

The next moment, it was over. And what makes that story so haunting and chilling to even think about is that inside the vessel, everyone probably felt ordinary.

And they had no idea that in just moments their time would be up. All of us have been in situations, or we know of people in situations, that whether it was abruptly, like with the Titan, or even knowingly, time ran out.

You see this in sports a lot, don't you? Where you have a team that is down by a lot of points and at the very end of the game, they make this late push and they begin to rally, but eventually, they run out of time.

[9:43] Or you've probably felt this way where you woke up in the morning and you had so much to do, so much that you had to get done that day, you just ran out of time. Maybe you were laying in the hospital room knowing there was so much more that you wanted to do with your life, so many things that you wanted to see and you wondered if you had run out of time.

If only you could go back and tell Him that you love Him, but you can't do that now because your relationship ran out of time. You feel called by God.

There is something that God wants me to do. I need to be more serious about my faith. I need to take the call of God more serious in my life and eventually, I'll get to it.

And you ran out of time. As country singer Cody Johnson sings, you can always put stuff off until tomorrow until you can't.

Listen, faith family, whether we want to think about this tonight or not, whether it is abruptly or just eventually, we will run out of time.

[11:01] As the Bible says, our days are numbered. Are you with me? That is exactly, that is exactly what happens here to the nation of Babylon here in Daniel 5.

You notice when we read verse 1, Daniel 5 starts with a brand new king. We're introduced to this king we have not seen anywhere else in the book of Daniel thus far.

In fact, up until this point, the only king that we've been talking about is King who?

Nebuchadnezzar. He's one of the main characters throughout the first four chapters.

But by the time you get to chapter 5, in fact, between Daniel 4 and Daniel 5, roughly about 25 years or so has passed.

And we're introduced to a new king. Now, we've actually gone through several different kings.

Nebuchadnezzar reigned for a little over 40 years. His son Marduk, who's one of the main Babylonian gods, led the nation in rebellion against Yahweh, and the establishment of the Babylonian gods.

[12:14] Then you go through a few more kings until you get to Nabodidus. You see Nabodidus here? Sounds like a disease, right? I've got a really bad case of the Nabodidus, right?

But pray for me. All right? Anyways, his son is actually Belshazzar, who we're introduced to here in Daniel 5. Are you with me? And so, really, the two of them co-ruled together.

That's why you really won't see Belshazzar on a Babylonian chart of kings, because he's the second in command with his dad.

Now, his dad was a pretty absent king, both physically as well as mentally. He just wasn't that involved. And so, Belshazzar is really the one who's the primary ruler of Babylon.

And here in Daniel 5, Belshazzar throws a party that would make Jeff Bezos' wedding reception in Venice look like a three-year-old birthday party.

[13:18] I mean, he throws a, we just read about it, a lavish, a lavish party for thousands. But here's what Belshazzar did not know.

It would be his last. Verse 1, King Belshazzar made a great feast for thousands of his lords and drank wine in front of the thousands.

He tasted the wine, commanded that the vessels of the gold and silver that Nebuchadnezzar, his father, had taken out of the temple of Jerusalem be brought. And the kings and the lords and wives and concubines, they drank from them.

And they brought in the golden vessels that had been taken from the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, the king and his lords and wives and concubines, they all drank from them. They drank wine.

And they praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. You see here the pride of Babylon once again.

[14:21] This scene in these four verses reflect in many ways what Babylon was all about. In fact, I told you way back at the beginning of this series that Babylon was known for just being this amazing city of beauty.

It was majestic in so many ways and so they did everything VIP. Everything was high class. And so this party not only reflects life in Babylon, it reflects life in our Babylon.

Haven't you noticed how every week we've seen, in fact, many of you have said the reason why you're enjoying this series is because you see so many parallels to our day today and the things that we see taking place even here in America.

Well, remember last week when I pointed out in chapter 4 what tends to fuel this pride and arrogance in a culture. Do you remember chapter 4, verse 4?

I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and doing what? Prospering in my palace. Okay, this is really profound but notice it on the screen.

[15:33] Comfort tends to make people comfortable, right? I went to seminary for that, right? That's really deep. Comfort, prosperity has a way of making people feel comfortable in life.

Listen to me, Faith family. Comfort, because this is even a word to the church, amen? Comfort and prosperity can cause people to lose a sense of urgency towards the things that matter most in life. Let me say it again. Comfort and prosperity can cause us to lose a sense of urgency about the things that matter most in life. This is why, you know this from church history, the gospel is actually spread more through persecution than through prosperity.

Because even the church, when it experiences comfort, gets comfortable. Well, the same thing here with the nation of Babylon is rather than being dependent on God, they become addicted to all their false gods.

Why? Because they're living the high life. They're living in prosperity. And notice the parallels between this Babylon and Daniel 5 and ours. You see, for example, the fullness of sensuality.

[16:58] Belshazzar throws a feast for thousands. He invites all of his lords and nobles. There's all kinds of wine. The wives and concubines are all there.

In other words, as we would say in the south, Belshazzar is living high on the hog. Right? I mean, he's living the good life. This is like whatever is pleasurable, enjoy it.

And that's what Belshazzar is doing. They are drunk, not just on wine. They are drunk on the pleasures of the world. Are you with me?

Second, is this feeling of superiority. This party is happening as we're going to discover in a couple hours, wink, wink. We're going to discover the Medo-Persian empire is on the rise.

There's another power that is even more powerful than Babylon now, but Babylon doesn't realize this or doesn't want to acknowledge this.

[18:03] They don't care. And the reason why they don't care is because they're Babylon. Losers! Losers! Kiss my big Springfield behind Shelbyville! Woo!

Ha ha! I am invincible! Invincible! Yeah! That's exactly how Belshazzar feels. Like, we're invincible. Don't you know who we are?

We're Babylon. We've been the most powerful nation in the world for so many years. Like, the last thing we're concerned about is this Medo-Persian empire.

The culture is full of sensuality, living high on the hog. This feeling of superiority that Babylon is invincible and no one is greater than us.

Thirdly, is the flaunting of success. Verse 4 says, they praised, it's like right here in black and white in the text. They praised what?

[19:00] The gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. Now, that might actually be a reference back to the vision of Daniel 2.

There's a few little differences there, but it's certainly possible that's the case. But regardless, here's what's happening. Is that Belshazzar and Babylon, they're obsessed with the gods that reflect their success.

The gods of gold and silver. I don't think I'm running either because I've got to give up my money. I ain't giving up my money. You want to play it. Sean, I ain't giving my money. I got it. I can tell you right now, let me put that presidential aspiration to bed.

If I have to give up my money, it's not happening. Can you even imagine Stephen A. as president anyways, right? But what's he saying there? And I love to bring cultural examples into the sermon. I'm not giving up my money, right? I'm addicted to this. This has given me a lifestyle lifestyle. And I'm not going to give up my lifestyle. Could you be any more American?

[20:10] Faith family, are you with me tonight? Babylon is full of sensuality. It's all about the pleasures of life. It has a feeling of superiority that no other nation is greater than us.

It flaunts its success by worshiping the idols of gold and silver and then lastly, the foolishness of spiritual arrogance.

verse 3 says they took the vessels that they had removed from the temple from where? Jerusalem. So way back, you remember way back when, when Nebuchadnezzar took these exiles from Jerusalem into Babylon.

Well, they also took some of these items from the temple there in Jerusalem. And what is Belshazzar doing here at this party? He is filling those vessels with wine and toasting as a way of mocking Yahweh.

This is essentially Belshazzar saying it's an act of spiritual defiance saying our gods are greater than the God of Jerusalem.

[21:23] The God of Israel. Are you with me? Like, I'm going to just ask this question. Does what I just described sound like any place you know? Can you think of a culture that indulges in sensuality?

That has a feeling of superiority over every other nation in the world? That is drunk on its success and has a sense of spiritual arrogance towards the one true God?

Welcome to Babylon. Babylon. Now, if you've been with us the last few weeks, you should be noticing by now some reoccurring themes in the book of Daniel.

In fact, if you're like, you're kind of preaching the same thing, I know, the text demands it. The book continues to bring up these constant themes and one of the things that it brings up again here, there's actually two reoccurring themes brought back in chapter five and one is the pride of human kingdoms.

The pride of human kingdoms. Or do you see that in these first few verses? I mean, once again, we see the arrogance and the pride and the self-exaltation of Babylon.

[22:35] Now, what's interesting, I think, in our casual reading of the Scripture is oftentimes we don't stop and actually think, are you with me?

You've zoned out, what do you do? Zone back in. We don't stop and think, wait, why does the author put chapter five right after chapter four? There's a reason, because I just told you there's like a 25 something year gap.

So, why would you tell us a story in Daniel 4 about Nebuchadnezzar and then of all the things you could have picked out in 25 years, you tell us another story about Belshazzar who several kings removed from Nebuchadnezzar.

Like, why are these two stories back to back? Are you with me? Like, there's a purpose as to why the biblical author is doing this. It's not random. And God, by His very Spirit, is seeing that these two things are put back to back.

And so, the reader needs to stop and ask the question, why? What is the point that's being emphasized here by arranging it in this way?

[23:46] Well, it's because one of the issues the book of Daniel is trying to confront is the existence of human pride. And notice what we learn with Nebuchadnezzar versus what we're going to learn from Belshazzar.

Are you still with me? The answer to the question I'm asking actually gets included in the text. It gives you the connection right here and shows you why these chapters go together.

Look at chapter 5, verse 18. O king, the most high God, gave Nebuchadnezzar your father kingship and greatness and glory and majesty.

Do you remember that language from last week? That's Daniel chapter 4 language. Remember the vision, the dream of the big tree that is great and glorious and majestic which represents Nebuchadnezzar.

Now because of the greatness that it gave him, all peoples and nations and language trembled and feared before him, whom he would, he killed and whom he would, he kept alive. Whom he would, he raised up and whom he would, he humbled.

[24:51] But when his heart was lifted up, so what's this story about? It's a story about human pride, human arrogance and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly.

He was brought, say it, down from his kingly throne. You remember that from last week, just say yes. Right? And his glory was taken from him and he was driven from among the children of mankind.

And his mind, we talked about all of this last week. He lost his mind. Pride leads you to insanity. His mind was made like that of a beast. And his dwelling was with the wild donkey.

So there's chapter 4. He's fed on the grass like an ox. His body wet with the dew until he knew. In other words, Nebuchadnezzar had to go through the school of humility.

And he went through the school of humility because he had to learn a lesson. And what is that lesson? The most high God rules. You with me?

[25:55] Okay. The most high God rules the kingdom of mankind and sets over it whom he will. And now who are we talking about? Belshazzar.

So I'm connecting chapter 4 now with chapter 5. You, his son, that is a descendant of these kings, Belshazzar, you have not humbled your heart though you knew all of this.

This is really important faith, family. Why these two chapters together? What is the author doing? He's connecting these two stories, both about human pride, to make this point.

The proud will either experience the grace of humility, or they will be judged severely. Please look at me.

your life is either going to go the way of Nebuchadnezzar or it's going to go the way of Belshazzar. Those are the only two paths. Because anybody that exalts themselves above God will be laid low.

[27:24] And it will either be through humility or it will be through judgment. which one will yours be?

In fact, Faith Family, this is a call to salvation. Listen to me tonight. If you are here this evening and you do not know Jesus Christ as Lord and King of your life, bow now before it's too late.

because you will either bow the knee of humility or you will be judged severely.

That's the message these two chapters are proclaiming to us. It is a warning for us to humble ourselves before the Most High God.

Amen? You with me? But chapter 5 not only repeats the theme of human pride, it also repeats the temporary nature of human kingdoms.

[28:34] We've seen this before even back in Daniel chapter 2. Look here at how the story continues in chapter 5. Now immediately, so this is right after this big party happens and they're toasting with all the vessels and immediately they say it, say it again, the fingers of a human hand appeared.

all right, this is creepy. And wrote on the plaster of the wall the king's palace opposite the lampstand and the king saw the hand as it wrote and the king's color changed and his thoughts alarmed him and his limbs gave way and his knees knocked together.

Now this is a very weird imagery here, is it not? I mean, put yourself in this situation. You'd be freaking out too. Okay? I mean, if you looked over while I was preaching and there was a human hand writing on the wall, you'd be like, what horror movie did I just enter into?

Right? I mean, imagine being at this dinner party and you look over, there's a hand sticking out of the wall. Right? It's almost like something from the Addams family.

Right? Anyways, you gotta finish it, you gotta finish it, right? So, that was the biggest clap you gave yet.

[30:01] Anyways, alright, so anyways. So, it's weird, that's what I'm saying, that's really the point I'm making is it's creepy. It's really, really weird. Right in the middle of this lavish party that represents or illustrates the pride and arrogance of Babylon appears a hand that writes a message on the wall.

That's where we get the phrase, you heard it said, the writing on the wall. Right here in Daniel chapter 5. So, Belshazzar is freaking out and he calls all the wise men together and asks them if they can give him a hand.

Come on, that was a good one. Come on. That was funny. Little dad joke 101, right? There. So, but nobody could give him a hand.

Anyways, verse 7, verse 7, verse 7. The king calls loudly to all the enchanters, Chaldeans, and astrologers. He declares to the wise men, listen, whoever can read this and interpret it is going to be clothed with purple, have a chain of gold around his neck, and shall be the third.

Now, this is interesting. Now, you know why it's the third. Because you've got Nabonidus, who's the main king, Belshazzar, his son, who's essentially second in power, but co-ruling, so the highest you can go up is what?

[31:29] Okay, that was free. I just thought you might enjoy that. So, then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or make known to the king the interpretation.

These guys are about as useful as a woodpecker with rubber lips. Alright, you'll get that later. It's actually nice to know that the efficiency of government workers hasn't changed in 3,000 years, right?

Too soon? Too bad. Okay, exactly. I love it. I love poking at you. So, anyways, it actually reminds me a lot of news media, right? All these experts that get called in who literally have no idea what they're talking about.

And that's what happens, is they get called in and he's like, tell me what this means and interpret it for me. And they're like, we can't. We can't read it. And the queen speaks up and says, listen, there is a guy that can.

And Daniel here is referenced. Daniel's brought before the king and the king answered and said, Daniel, you're one of the exiles of Judah whom the king, my father, brought from Judah.

[32:35] I've heard that you have the spirit of the gods in you and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. Now, Daniel here in all of these episodes, in chapter 2, in chapter 4, and now here in chapter 5, Daniel actually teaches something.

This is important. Okay, this is important. Daniel teaches us something that we need to remember in our life. And here's what it is. In times of uncertainty, we need divine revelation, not human speculation.

Okay? Amen. Let me unpack what I mean by this phrase. In times of uncertainty, in all three chapters, 2, 4, and 5, there's a dream or some episode like this and the king is freaking out. They panic. I mean, literally, Belshazzar has a full-blown panic attack in chapter 5 because he can't figure out what this means. So in times of uncertainty, what we don't need is human speculation. That's all the calling in of the experts who have no clue what they're doing. And it's obvious that they don't because they can't ever figure it out. Here's what we need. What we need is what Daniel gives the king, which is divine revelation.

[34:00] We need to know what has God said. Because what God has said is what gives us comfort in times of uncertainty. So when we're afraid, we don't turn to the talking heads on TV or five different medical possibilities or the opinions of even well-meaning friends.

We may seek those things out, but not ultimately. What ultimately we need, what ultimately we want, is the certainty that comes from God's Word.

Amen? Amen? And that's what Daniel gives the king. Because you're going to find out later when the king says, listen, if you do this, I'm going to give you this robe and I'm going to give you this gold chain.

You know what Daniel says? I don't want your gifts. I don't want your gifts. Do you know why? Because the interpretation of this is coming by divine revelation, not through Daniel's own imagination.

He's literally giving the king, listen, he's giving the king God's Word. This is what God has to say to you. Why would I take your gifts for that?

[35:11] Right? I don't care about third ruler in Babylon. What I care about is, thus says the Lord. And that's what Daniel does here. Now, what does the handwriting mean?

Look at verse 25. This is the writing that was inscribed, mene, mene, tekel, parson. This is the interpretation of the matter. Mene, please remember this.

God has, say it, numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end. Tekel, you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting.

Paris, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians. So what is this divine revelation, this writing on the wall, what's it ultimately about?

Two primary things. One is the power of God. You need to know this. This really is a zoned out, zoned back in moment. You've got to see this. While the image of this finger or this hand riding on the wall is creepy, that phrase, it's why I had you say it earlier, fingers, that phrase actually is used other places in the Bible.

[36:24] Look, for example, in Exodus 8, verse 19. This is after the third plague that happens in Egypt. Then the magician said to Pharaoh, this is the finger of God.

And Pharaoh's heart was hardened and he would not listen to them as the Lord had said. Look at Psalm 8, verse 3. When I looked at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and stars which you have set in place.

Look at Isaiah 48, verse 12. Listen to me, O Jacob and Israel, whom I called. I am he. I am the first and I am the last. I laid the foundation of the earth.

My right hand spread out the heavens when I called to them. They stand forth together. Is everybody with me? The hand or the finger of God refers to God's power.

His authority over everything. He put the universe in its place by his finger. That's pretty awesome.

[37:37] Right? It is a vision of the authority and glory and power of God. Secondly, this idea of finger or the message that is written there is about the passing of Babylon.

The message that was written, and again, you've got to remember this. Like, take this and kind of stick it in your brain to pull out later here. The meaning was what? God has numbered the days of your kingdom.

Your kingdom is divided. Let me say it again. God has numbered the days of your kingdom. Your kingdom is divided. Essentially, Babylon, you have run out of time.

time. You have run out of time. It's exactly what Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar through the vision back in Daniel chapter 2 that Babylon is temporary.

Your time, Nebuchadnezzar, is going to run out. And that's what's happened here. And what do we learn from this?

[38:56] Well, I think one of the main points, obviously, from the passage, look at verse 21. Nebuchadnezzar's fed like the ox, fed on the grass like an ox, and his body is wet with dew until he knew that the Most High God rules the kingdom and of mankind and sets over it whom he will.

And you, his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all of this. What's one of the big takeaways we have from chapter 5?

It's so important. It's so important. Look on the screen. Faith family, if you know, and you'd better know it after studying Daniel, if you know human kingdoms are temporary, then humble yourself before God before you run out of time.

God. The message of Belshazzar is that. You knew this. You have been warned.

Tonight, human kingdoms don't stand forever. Humble yourself before God eternal.

[40:10] That's the message of Daniel 5. is don't be foolish like Belshazzar. And have had the very example of Nebuchadnezzar. You knew the story of Nebuchadnezzar, your father, but you didn't pay attention to it.

You went on about business as usual. You went on about your life. Faith family, will you let go of your obsession with human kingdoms?

Whether it is yours, or whether it is others, whether it is national, or whether it is personal, will you continue to feast and get drunk off the kingdom of man?

let it not be so. Learn the lesson here, and humble yourself before God. Some of you, no doubt, remember the story of Ernest Hemingway.

Any Hemingway fans? He was certainly a significant part of American literature in the 20th century. You may or may not know this about him.

[41:15] He was born to very devout Christian parents, but Hemingway himself rejected any idea of truth, any sense of God, and his life very much played that out.

I mean, it was Daniel 5, and then some. A life full of drinking, paranoia, multiple marriages.

His life was so out of control. Like, he was so much Babylon, in these first four verses, his mother actually wrote him a letter.

And in the letter, she wrote this, quote, unless you come to yourself and cease your loafing and pleasure seeking and neglecting your duties to God, there is nothing for you but bankruptcy.

You have overdrawn. In other words, it was the warning of a mother to her son that he would soon run out of time.

[42:27] And she was right. Not long after that, Hemingway would take his shotgun and end his own life. A man that refused to hear the warning and humble himself before God eventually ran out of time.

And so was the case with Belshazzar. Notice this verse. That very night, Belshazzar the Chaldean king was killed.

And Darius the Mede received the kingdom being about 62 years old.

As God had prophesied through Habakkuk and Habakkuk 2, as God had prophesied through the prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 25, as God had told Nebuchadnezzar through Daniel and the vision of Daniel 2, listen to me, Babylon the great was great no more.

What's Daniel 5 ultimately about? I mean, there's a lot of lessons, I think, as I've pointed out that speak to us, but what is Daniel 5 ultimately about?

[44:02] Are you with me? Are you still with me tonight? Daniel 5 is about this, lean in, lean in and listen. Daniel 5 is about a prideful king who is committed to his own exaltation, superiority, he's all about himself, amen?

Who then is invaded by another kingdom because that king's days, as was revealed in the vision were numbered.

That invasion happened through the power of God which was revealed by the finger of God. Does that sound familiar to you?

It should. Luke chapter 11. verse 1. But some of them said, he cast out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons.

But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, I told you to remember this, every kingdom divided, that's Daniel 5, against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls.

[45:33] And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out?

But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Come on now. Come on. What is Daniel 5 about? What is the ministry of Jesus about? A prideful king who is committed to his own exaltation.

I'm referring to the kingdom of Satan. The kingdom of spiritual evil powers. And that kingdom gets invaded by another kingdom.

And that kingdom is invaded how? By the power of God which is revealed by the finger of God.

[46:41] And what was the message of Daniel 5? Look at it again. Literally read the writing on the wall. This is the interpretation of the matter.

God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end. What does Revelation 12 say about Satan?

Read it. Therefore rejoice O heavens and you dwell in them but woe to you O earth and sea for the devil has come down to you in great wrath.

Why? Because he knows his days are numbered. So what what is the little story of Daniel 5 foreshadow?

It foreshadows the bigger story of the ministry of Jesus in whom the kingdom of God overthrows all the kingdoms of this world be they physical or spiritual.

[47:46] the warning of Daniel 5 is a warning to all human kingdoms on behalf of the kingdom of God. Your day is coming.

Your time will run out for there is only one kingdom that stands forever. So amen?

Amen. Amen. So I close with this. How then do we be faithful in Babylon? How are we what are we to learn from Daniel 5? How should we be faithful in our own Babylon?

Because we are very much living in Babylon. Amen? A few quick applications and we're done.

Number one. This text would force every one of us tonight to think about our own submission to God.

Daniel 5 is not just a warning for the kings of this world. It's a warning for all of us. That we can I pointed out we can either learn the lesson of Nebuchadnezzar about humility or we can be like Belshazzar and just continue to get drunk off the kingdoms of this world.

[49:01] And we would do well. We would do very well. We would do eternally well if we would learn the lesson we just saying before this sermon what I surrender all.

That's the message for every one of us tonight. Submit yourself to God. Second, lean in here.

Our seriousness about life. This text would force us to think about the seriousness about life. Here's what I mean. What is obvious in the text is that as it relates to the king Belshazzar his days were numbered.

So are yours. And this is actually something the Bible tells us to think about. Look at Psalm 90 verse 12.

Many of you know this verse. Teach us to say it with me. Number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

[50:14] In other words, we only get so many days in this life. Amen? Use them wisely. Because none of us know when our time will run out.

So the Bible says number your days. Your days are numbered. Number your days so that you can live a life of wisdom and not waste the opportunities that you have.

You can always have that conversation with a family member about Jesus. You've always got ministry that you can do. You can always spend time on the things that matter most until you can't. until you can't. Lord teach us to number our days.

Amen? Lastly is our service to the world. Our submission to God our seriousness about life and our service to the world. I want you to listen closely here as I read and think about this text we're almost done I promise think about this text through the lens of Daniel 5 because this is about the church this is about us listen how are we to be like Daniel we're not to be like this is the evangelical subculture that I grew up in loved Daniel's example yeah you just run into a bunch of parties and tell them they're all going to hell stop it right the judgment of God's coming you sinners stop it was essentially the evangelistic strategy of what I grew up in but the gospel revolutionizes that it changes this look with the eyes of Daniel 5 through what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1 and 2 in 1

[52:18] Corinthians 1 verse 30 he says and because of him you are in Christ Jesus who became to us wisdom wisdom from God so that as it is written let no one let the one who boasts boast where in the Lord in other words stop okay I'm taking just a second I don't have services tomorrow neither do you right so here we go Daniel is saying listen I can't take any credit for the interpretation it's from God and what we would say is the wisdom that we have in terms of who Jesus is we can't take any credit for God showed us God opened our eyes to see who Jesus is and that is our wisdom our wisdom isn't math problems our wisdom is Jesus and I see Jesus for who

Jesus is because of God because of his grace in my life so keep reading chapter two although it is not a wisdom of this age or the rulers of this age who are doomed to pass away are you seeing Daniel there none of the rulers of this age understood this they're like Belshazzar if they had understood it you know what they wouldn't have done they wouldn't have crucified! the Son of Glory! But they didn't see it! That they didn't get it because it was by divine revelation! And he goes on to say the natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God because their folly their foolishness to him and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned for who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him but we church we have the mind of Christ are you with me come in close I'm wrapping it up here we go listen we have wisdom a supernatural wisdom his name is Jesus and we were given that wisdom just like Daniel by the Spirit I only see what I see about Jesus because the Spirit has opened my eyes to see it but the world doesn't understand it they do not understand the handwriting on the wall Belshazzar is just like our world he has no idea what this means it's foolishness to him so what is the mission of the church for us as

Christians every day to help the world see the handwriting on the wall not just to run into parties and say you're all a bunch of sinners and you're going to burn in hell but let me share with you the wisdom of Jesus let me share with you the beauty of the gospel and I understand at first it's going to sound foolishness to you but this is the wisdom of God there is an entire culture out there that can't read the handwriting but you have been given wisdom by the spirit to interpret it for them so think about your submission to God think about your seriousness about life and think about your service to the world Daniel why

[56:25] God has you here in Babylon on the morning of June 18 2023 five people set out for an adventure of a lifetime having no idea they were about to abruptly run out of time on an evening in 539 BC a king was

gathered with all of his nobles having the party of a lifetime having no idea he was about to be abruptly out of time fate family the day is coming when just like in Babylon the king will invade this world once more as first Corinthians 15 says in a moment in the twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet then shall come to pass the saying that is written death is swallowed up in victory oh death where is your victory oh death where is your sting but thanks be to

God who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ therefore be steadfast immovable always abounding in the work of the Lord knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain faith family the days of this world are numbered but God's kingdom is forever so let us give our lives to this before we run out of time and all God's people said amen let's pray Lord thank you for this gift of grace to study your word that gives us eyes to see the world in which we live gives us discernment to be able to reflect on our own hearts and the word to us is very clear we are to humble ourselves before your throne whatever pride whatever arrogance whatever self exaltation exists Lord crucified in us that we would not be like Belshazzar and drunk on the pride of Babylon but that we would be humbled before the feet of our kingdom help us think about our time and number our days for just as Babylon came to an end one night so will this world as we know it and we want to be faithful to help people understand the writing on the wall that they too might find salvation in Jesus in Jesus alone be with us now as we have this time of worship through remembrance and we reflect on the cross and all that you have done for us in sending Jesus demonstrating your power your finger your work through the cross and the empty grave and we pray this in Jesus mighty name amen to ending ending! ending ending ending ending ending ending!