

The Kings Final Night

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[0 : 0 0] Those who are visiting among us, as we come together around God's Word, let us seek his blessing upon his Word. Let us pray.

Eternal and ever-blessed Lord, we give thanks unto thee again for this opportunity of coming into thine own house, of gathering together in an act of worship.

And as we do so, we come acknowledging thine own sovereignty over us, acknowledging that our times are in thine own hands.

And we give thee thanks for the great privilege that it is to come around the Word of God. both fruit in our lives, to the glory of thine own name.

O Lord, we live in a changing world, a world that is changing from time to time. But we bless thee, O Lord, that our hope is in the unchanging God, in the God who is the same yesterday, today and forever.

[1 : 4 6] And so we come before thee and we seek that thou would grant to us the grace to humble ourselves and to acknowledge our own sinnership.

As we give thanks that thou has made provision for us in thy Son, as the fountain that has been opened for sin and for uncleanness.

And that we are encouraged to come to thee with boldness and with confidence, to seek thy mercy and to seek thy grace to help us in our time of need.

We pray, O Lord, for our community here. We pray for every home and every family. and we pray that it may please thee to visit us in a day of thine own power, that the dew of heaven would be outpoured upon us, and that the seed of the gospel may be watered, and that it may grow and bring forth fruit to the eternal good of many souls.

And to the glory of thine own name. Grant to us, O Lord, that we would have that concern for our people here.

[3 : 0 6] So many of them are still indifferent and careless as to the claims of thine own word. There is so much apathy among us.

But we pray, O Lord, that it may please thee to come in a day of thine own power, and to scatter all those things that hinder people from coming to the gospel, that thou, O Lord, would draw them by the cords of thine own spirit, that they may be lovingly persuaded to come and to hear the word of God.

And we pray, O Lord, that thou would work in the hearts of many, that they may see a people coming to repentance, a people who would sorrow over their sin and seek the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

We pray, O Lord, that thy church would indeed be brought to that point where she would travail, and where she would bring forth children unto thee.

O that we would be found with a concern as thy servant of old who said, O that my head were water and my eyes have found enough tears, so that I would weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.

[4 : 33] We pray, O Lord, that thou would come and visit us with thy right arm of salvation, for we acknowledge that it is thou and thou only that can bring souls alive through thy Holy Spirit.

O Lord, we pray that we may see that power working in our own day. we pray for all our communities throughout our islands and throughout our nation.

We pray for thy servants who have gone forth with thy word this night, that they may know the unction of thy known spirit upon them. O Lord, we pray for all people who gather together as we do in a place of worship, and pray that they may be encouraged, that they may be edified, that they may be brought to see their need and the sufficiency of Christ to meet with their need.

Bless our young people and our children. O that thou would raise up a generation that would fear thine own name. We pray, O Lord, for thy people, that they may be faithful witnesses for thee in this world.

We pray for those who are ill, that thine healing hand may be upon them. And those who have been bereft of loved ones, we pray that thine own comfort would fill their hearts.

[6 : 07] We seek, O Lord, that thou would be as a wall of fire around us as we come to read thy word and meditate upon it, that we may not be distracted by the things that are around us or even by the burdens that may lay heavy upon our hearts, but that we may be focused upon thyself.

And grant to us, O Lord, that we may see the glory of the incarnate word through the written word. We pray that thou would continue with us as we wait upon thee.

And all that we ask with the forgiveness of our many sins, in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. We shall now read the word of God as we find it in the book of Daniel and chapter 5.

Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his laws and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, whilst he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, that the king and his princess, his wife and his concubines might drink therein.

Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem, and the king and his princess, his wives and his concubines drank in them.

[7 : 38] They drank wine and praised the gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood and of stone. In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand and wrote over against the candlestick upon plaster of the wall of the king's palace.

And the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed and the sloths troubled him so that the joints of his loins were loosed and his knees smote one against another.

The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans and the soothsayers. And the king spake and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing and show me the interpretation thereof shall be clothed with scarlet and have a chain of gold about his neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Then came in all the king's wise men, but they could not read the writing nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled and his countenance was changed in him and his lords were stolen.

Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the conquered house and the queen spoke and said, O king, live forever. Let not thy thoughts trouble thee nor let thy countenance be changed.

[8 : 58] There is a man in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods. And in the days of thy father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods was found in him, whom the king, Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magician, astrologers, Chaldeans and soothsayers.

For as much as an excellent spirit and knowledge and understanding, interpreting of dreams and showing of hard sentences and dissolving of doubts were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belshazzar, now let Daniel be called and he will show the interpretation.

Then was Daniel brought in before the king and the king spake and said unto Daniel, art thou that, Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king, my father, brought out of Jewry?

I have even heard of thee that the spirit of the gods is in thee and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee. And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me that they should read this writing and make known unto me the interpretation thereof, but they could not show the interpretation of the thing.

And I have heard of thee that thou canst make interpretation unto solve doubts. Now if thou canst read the writing and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet and have a chain of gold about thy neck and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.

[10 : 28] Then Daniel answered and said before the king, let thy gifts be to thyself and give thy rewards to another. Yet I will read the writing unto the king and make known to him the interpretation.

O thou king, the most high God, gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom and majesty and glory and honour. And for the majesty that he gave him all people, nations and languages trembled and feared before him, whom he would, he show, he slew and whom he would, he kept alive.

And whom he would, he set up and whom he would, he put down. But when his heart was lifted up and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed of his kingly throne and they took his glory from him.

And he was driven from the sons of men and his heart was made like the beasts and his dwelling was with the wild asses. They fed him with grass like oxen and his body was weighed with the dew of heaven till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men and that he appointed over a tomb soever he will.

And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart though thou knewest all this, but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee and thou and thy lords, thy wives and thy concubines have drunk wine in them.

[11 : 51] Thou hast praised the gods of silver and gold of brass, iron, wood and stone which seeth not, not hear, nor know and the God in whose hand thy breath is and whose are all thy ways hast thou not glorified.

Then was the part of the hand sent from him and the writing was written and this is the writing that was written Many, many, tekel a portion. This is the interpretation of thee.

Many, God, hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it. Tekel, thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting. Whereas, thy kingdom is divided and given to the maids and persons.

Then commanded Belshazzar that the clothed Daniel was scarlet and put a chain of gold about his neck and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldean slain and Darius the median took the kingdom being about three score and two years old.

[12 : 52] May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word and seeking his help and blessing. Let us again turn to verse 25.

And this is the writing that was written Many, many, tekem a person. This is the interpretation of the thing many, God, hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it.

Tekem, thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting. But as thy kingdom is divided, and given to the maids and persons. Then commanded Belshazzar and the clothed Daniel with scarlet and put a chain of gold about his neck and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. The name Daniel means God is judge and the entire book named after Daniel is the work of one writer and it is a book that asserts and confirms the sovereign control of the true God over all the kingdoms of the earth.

In chapter 4 we read the words of Nechamet Neser I blessed the most high and I praised and honoured him that liveth forever whose dominion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom is from generation to generation and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand or say unto him what doest thou?

[14 : 41] The book reminds us that all earthly kingdoms and powers that they come and go but that God's kingdom endures forever.

Now Daniel is a Jewish exile who was taken in the first invasion of Jerusalem by the Babylonians under King Nechamet Neser.

He was very young when he was taken to Babylon probably in his mid-teens but he remained in Babylon for the rest of his life. He is presented to us as an outstanding godly man.

His life was characterised by faith by prayer by courage by consistency and by the lack of compromise. He was a man that was greatly beloved of the Lord.

As a child Daniel would probably have known of the prophets Habakkuk and Zephaniah and no doubt would have heard the prophet Jeremiah to whom Daniel refers in chapter 9 and particularly to Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the duration of the exile in Babylon.

[16 : 00] There we read in the first year of his reign that's in the reign of Darius. I, Daniel, understood by books the number of the years whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet that he would accomplish 70 years in the desolation of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem. When Daniel was taken to Babylon, he along with his three friends were selected for special training in the court of King Nechab Buknesa.

And Daniel excelled in all manners of wisdom and understanding. The prophet Ezekiel, who was taken to Babylon in the second invasion on Jerusalem, about eight years after Daniel was taken, Ezekiel testifies to the wisdom of Daniel in chapter 28 of his prophecy.

Now, we are probably more familiar with the beginning of the book of Daniel, with the dreams of King Nechab Bneser and their interpretation by Daniel and the remarkable delivery of Daniel and his friends from the fiery furnace.

During the reign of Nechab Bneser, Daniel is elevated to a position of high rank as governor of the whole province of Babylon and appointed the chief administrator over the Chaldean wise men.

[17 : 29] However, with the death of King Nechab Nechab Daniel occupies a less important position and not much is heard of him for around 20 years until the period that we have here in chapter 5 where Daniel again rises to prominence during the reign of Belshazzar.

Belshazzar was the last king of ancient Babylon. Belshazzar was Nebuchad Nesar's grandson, although he calls Nebuchad Nesar his father in verse 13.

Nevertheless, the use of that word father really means descendant, that he was a descendant of Nebuchad Nesar. Belshazzar was co-ruler of the strongest empire in the world.

Secular history tells us that he was actually co-ruler with his own father who spent most of his time away with the Babylonian army in battle.

However, the event recorded for us here in chapter 5 took place when Babylon was being challenged by the Medes and the Persians.

[18 : 49] In fact, we know the very date that the event took place. It was on the 11th of October 539 BC, the evening before the fall of Babylon.

On this night, Belshazzar decided to throw up a great feast with his household and a thousand of his noblemen. The king demanded all the gold and silver cups and vessels plundered from the Jewish temple by his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar to be brought to the royal banquet hall.

They filled the vessels with wine and drank from them praising their false gods. You may well ask why Belshazzar threw up such a great feast with the Medes and the Persians armies outside the city wall.

Maybe he felt quite secure and was confident in the city's resources so that although the army was nearby just outside the wall, he was so confident that they would never capture Babylon.

I mean, Babylon was the strongest empire in the world. And the city was surrounded by two walls, 350 feet high and 87 feet wide.

[20 : 12] On the walls were 250 defence towers towering another 100 feet high. Around the outside wall was about 30 feet wide.

The only way into the city was through one of its many gates or through the river Euphrates. Metal grates were installed underwater along the river to flow through the city walls while that would prevent intrusion into the city.

Or maybe it was simply a closing of the eyes to reality and a pretense as if everything is well, a running away from reality.

Calamity was at the city skates and yet Belshazzar throws up a feast, pretending to himself that everything was going well and he is feasting and drinking, deceiving himself that all is well when judgment is about to fall.

Belshazzar's ability to close his eyes to reality as a contemporary ring to it in every age. This evening this may be your own state.

[21 : 32] Just as Belshazzar and his householder noblemen feasted, the armies of the Medes and Persians were encamped outside the gates. Yet he closed his mind to the warnings.

He deliberately ignored the warnings that God had given to him because Belshazzar would have heard and been told of the events that took place during the reign of his grandfather Nebuchad Nesar.

But he deliberately ignored all that he heard and he ignored everything that he was told. He ignored how Daniel had interpreted his grandfather's dream recorded for us in chapter 2, a dream that spoke of the demise of Babylon.

There Nebuchad Nesar had a dream in which he saw a statue of a man that was broken in pieces by a stone. The statue itself was made of four metals, a head of gold, the chest and arms of silver, the body and thighs of brass or bronze and its legs of iron with the feet having a mixture of iron and clay.

And God revealed to Daniel and he also told him what it meant so he was able to bring its interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar.

[22 : 57] He said, this is the dream and which will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power and strength and glory.

And whithertoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given unto thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all, thou art this head of gold.

And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron.

For as much as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things, and as iron that breaketh all thee shall it break in pieces and bruise. This dream represented the Babylonian empire.

The head is gold. That was the Babylonian empire. And the Babylonian empire was followed by the Persian empire. And then came the empire of Greece.

[24 : 10] And then came the Roman empire. And here there in chapter 2 of this prophecy speaks of these empires.

Speaks of the Babylonian empire, of the Persian empire, of the empire of Greece, and the Roman empire. And in the stream Nebuchadnezzar saw a stone hewn out of the mountain rolling along, and without any human help, it shattered the image in pieces.

And Daniel said, For as much as thou sawst that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter.

And the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure. You see, that stone depicted the kingdom of God and which after overthrowing the powerfully earthly empires of Babylon, of Persia, of Greece, and of Rome.

All these are earthly empires that was and is gone. But this stone which depicted the kingdom of God is going to grow and grow until it becomes such a large mountain that it will fill all the earth.

[25 : 36] Daniel says, Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together and became like the chaff of the summer tession floor and the wind carried them away that no place was found for them and the stone that smoked mountain and filled the whole earth.

Belshazzar deliberately ignored the revelation that God had given to him through his grandfather. Many around us eat and drink and busily pursue a lifestyle that is not pleasing to God all the while deliberately ignoring God's revelation of himself in the scriptures in their own consciences suppressing the truth about God those whose motto is let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die well that was the motto of Belshazzar he deliberately ignored what he had heard about the dreams and the interpretation of the dreams of his father Nebuchadnezzar or his grandfather I should say Nebuchadnezzar but are you any better than Belshazzar you know the warnings of the word of

God it is appointed into man once to die and after death the judgment the soul that sinneth it shall die boast not thyself of tomorrow for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth you know that reality you know how foolish it is to boast ourselves of tomorrow for we know not what a day nor an hour may bring forth it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation you know all the warnings and you have heard the many exhortations to come to Jesus and to embrace him by trusting in him as your saviour but have you given any heed to the warnings you are still unsaved you are closing your eyes you are closing your mind and your heart to reality maybe saying well these things are for others maybe you are saying that could never happen to me well that was the way

Belshazzar was he thought it would never happen to him that Babylon would be conquered Belshazzar knew what happened to his grandfather Daniel says to him but when his heart was lifted up and his mind hearted in pride he was deposed from his kingly throne and they took his glory from him and he was driven from the sons of men and his heart was made like the beasts and his dwelling was with the his body was with the Jew of heaven till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men and that he appointed over it to him so ever he will and thou his son O Belshazzar has not humbled thine heart though thou knewest all this Belshazzar thinks that it will not happen to him instead of humbling himself before

God what does he do well verse 23 but has lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee and thou and thy laws thy wives and the concubines had drunk wine in them and thou hast praised the gods of silver and gold of brass iron wood and stone which see not nor hear nor know and the garden whose hand thy breath is and whose are all thy ways hast thou not glorified but just a sword showed total defiance against God in spite of everything that he knew and everything that he was told he showed total defiance against God he used the vessels of the temple probably drawing attention to the supposed power of their pagan gods by contrasting them with the seeming weakness of the god who used to be in the temple at

[30 : 24] Jerusalem then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem when the king and his princess his wives and his concubines drank in them they drank wine and praised the gods of gold and of silver of brass of iron of wood and of stone but while this feasting was going on unknown to Belshazzar and his guests that the day of reckoning is about to come you see God has his ways and when Belshazzar and his guests are having a good time which probably included lewd songs unrestrained behaviour forgetting God and his warnings laughter and hilarity his things was while Belshazzar was praising his gods of wood stone gold and silver ascribing to them glory and honour the true

God intervened and Belshazzar's peace was disturbed the guests were unaware of what was happening. Only the king could see the part of the hand that was writing upon the wall. 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. Then the king's cowardice was changed and his thoughts troubled him so that the joints of his loins were loosed and his knees smote one against another. The king begins to tremble. His wine and feasting was unable to give him any courage now. His wine and feasting made a great fellow and a popular person of him but now that was all gone. God's intervention brought about a complete silence and he brought that silence about by just four simple words. Belshazzar cannot read or understand them. So he cried aloud to bring in the wise men and he spoke to them and said, whosoever shall read this writing and show me the interpretation thereof shall be clothed with scarlet and have a chain of gold about his neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. But they could not read the writing nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof. And when Belshazzar saw that his wise men could not interpret the writing on the wall, he is panic-stricken. Then was King Belshazzar greatly troubled and his countenance was changed in him and his laws were astounded. These wise men were of no use for him. The moment that he needed them most, they were of no use to him. We are not told why he or his wise men could not read the words but they could not read neither could they interpret the words. They were of absolute no use to him now. Hearing all the noise, the queen enters the scene and she remembered Daniel and she advised Belshazzar to summon him.

Saying for as much as an excellent spirit and knowledge and understanding, interpreting of dreams and showing of hard sentences and dissolving of doubts were found in the same Daniel whom the king named Belshazzar. Now let Daniel be called and he will show the interpretation.

the queen here is not Belshazzar's wife for she is already at the feast but it could possibly be his mother or perhaps his grand, his grandmother, Nebuchadnezzar's widow for she is well acquainted with the events that took place during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel. Daniel was brought before the king and he suffered all kinds of gifts but he refused the gifts that Belshazzar offered him.

Belshazzar's still unaware that before the night is out he will have no gifts to give to anyone for the army is at the gate and the writing is upon the wall. Daniel before he interpreted the writing he rebuked Belshazzar for his lack of humility and for the pride of his heart. Although the king knew the story of how God had humbled his grandfather he did not humble himself. Instead he dishonored God by drinking from the sacred vessels that belonged to the temple at Jerusalem. Daniel gave Belshazzar a lesson on the sovereignty of God.

[35 : 46] God had given his grandfather the empire of Babylon and he took it from him for a while because of his pride. The Lord had brought him exceptionally low but Nebuchadnezzar eventually confessed that God was the sovereign ruler and the kingdom was restored to him.

He reminds the king that he is willfully rebelling against God against the knowledge he had of God's dealings with his grandfather.

And thou his son O Belshazzar has now humbled thine heart though thou knewest all this. And to make matters worse the king had attempted to demean the living God by abusing the vessels from his temple and to try to honour and extol the non-existent gods.

Daniel charges the king with the sin of dishonouring the Lord whom his grandfather had honoured. And the God in whose hand thy breath is and whose are all thy ways hast thou not glorified.

Belshazzar continued with his hardened heart despite all that he was told and all that he knew.

[37 : 19] Well, are you like Belshazzar? You have been told, you have heard and you have seen. But has that humbled you in your heart?

Then Daniel gives him the last sermon and he tells him the meaning of the writing on the wall. This was the last sermon that he was going to hear.

He had heard about his grandfather and God's dealings with his grandfather. He had heard about Daniel and how Daniel was given this great wisdom by God.

And now he was going to hear his last call, his last sermon. And the four words on the wall were many, many tackle a person.

Many numbered, numbered, which meant your days are numbered. Your days are numbered.

[38 : 25] Our times, our days are in the hands of God. The God in whose hand our breath ooze. Our days are numbered.

The current death rate is that three die every second. That 180 people die every minute. Nearly 11,000 every hour.

260,000 every day. The time was up. The day of reckoning had arrived. And that evening, Belshazzar would be gone from this wall.

From the table of feasting, he would go to a lost eternity. And that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.

That night, the Persians invaded and took the city. The soldiers diverted the river a few miles north of the city.

[39 : 25] And once the water had dried up in a few hours, the army marched along the riverbed into the city. They were probably doing so even as Daniel was speaking to Belshazzar.

But the king and his guests were oblivious to what was going on. They were so taken up with the feast while the enemy was at the very gate and executing their plan to take the city.

Many, many. The word is repeated to lay emphasis upon it. To lay emphasis that all our days are numbered. We are all on the self-same journey in this world.

And we are on a journey in this world to our eternal destination. Many, many.

Tickle. Weighed in the balances. And found wanting. God shall bring every work into judgment.

[40 : 33] With every secret thing. Whether it be good or whether it be evil. Every action of your life and of my life has been weighed by God.

He has noted every opportunity you have been given to come to Jesus and yet have rejected to come. Every invitation of the gospel that you have despised.

Every secret sin. Every open sin. All the defiance. All the misspent hours. Your neglect of holy things. The failure to take seriously his command to repent.

All these things are weighed by God. Tonight you may be saying to yourself in your heart. Well this Christianity is not for me.

I don't want to be different. There is time enough. Remember the man who said soul. Thou hast much goods laid up for many years.

[41 : 40] Take thy knees. Eat, drink and be merry. But what did God say to him? His God said to him. Thou fool. This night thy soul shall be required of thee.

Then who shall those things be which thou hast provided? So see that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich. Toward God.

Many, many. Your days are numbered. Your actions are weighed in the balances. Peres. Peres. Or your Persian is the word peres in the pruler.

Peres. The kingdom is divided and given to the Mets and Persians. And what was this, what was, did this, what effect did this have upon Belshazzar?

Well we read then commanded Belshazzar and the clothed Daniel with scarlet and put a chain of gold about his neck and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

[42 : 53] Well this shows us that Belshazzar is still blinded. Belshazzar is still blinded to the interpretation that has just been given to him by Daniel concerning the writing on the wall.

He is still blinded to the words of Daniel. Daniel has said to him, your days are numbered. Daniel has said to him, your actions have been weighed by God.

Daniel has just said to him that the kingdom is divided and the kingdom is going to be given to the Mets and the Persians. And still he is blinded to that truth.

A few hours afterwards, Belshazzar is gone. Belshazzar had seen, he had heard enough over the years to know that God judges sinners.

Yet he turned his eyes, his mind and his heart away from it all. He turned a deaf ear to the warnings. He refused to take note and he eventually perished.

[44 : 05] His journey in the world had come to an end. And even in those few last hours, the few last minutes of his earthly life, he was warned by Daniel.

And yet, it had no effect whatsoever upon him. He turned a deaf ear to it all.

If we forget our God, then we are as foolish, as blind and as blind as Belshazzar was. And we will stand under the same judgment as he did.

God holds our life in his hand, just as he held his way over Belshazzar's life. The Lord can humble us as individuals in a moment.

He can do that with our nation in a moment. If he chose to do so. Perhaps you are here tonight and you have never humbled yourself to confess your sinnership.

[45 : 18] You have never humbled yourself to confess that you have sinned against God. And maybe like Belshazzar, you have heard stories from your friends and relations about God's power and God's plan of salvation for sinners.

You have heard the gospel. But you have never put much stock in what you have heard. You may have even discounted such power.

Tonight may you learn from Belshazzar what a dangerous situation you are in. The Lord could demand your life from you this very night as he did with Belshazzar.

Then where would all your little accomplishments leave you? As long as you refuse to open your heart to Jesus Christ and accept him as your saviour, the handwriting is on the wall as far as your final destiny is concerned.

The Lord is saying to you tonight, your days are numbered. He is saying to you tonight, your actions are weighed in God's balances.

[46 : 35] And he is saying to you tonight, that soon your life will be over. You do not have to choose a special road to go to hell.

Just stay on your present road long enough and you will arrive at the destination. You do not need to go out and do some horrendous crime.

Just stay on the road of unbelief. Stay on the road of despising the gospel. Stay on the road of rejecting God's plan of salvation for sinners.

Just stay on the road of despising Jesus Christ and his work on the cross. And you will arrive at your destination of hell.

Individuals who come to God now recognize that they have nothing to offer him in return. They cry out to him for mercy. For the mercy that they need. And God has promised that if they will cry out for that mercy, that they will find it.

[47 : 46] Just as surely as those who remain unhumbled in this life and who don't seek that mercy, who never cries out for that mercy, they will go to eternal destruction.

So where is your own heart fixed tonight? Is your heart set on an invitation to Belshazzar's feast?

The feast that this world offers you? Is that where your heart is fixed tonight on what this world can offer you? Well, my friend, that is empty and meaningless when weighed on the scale of eternal things.

Or is your heart fixed on what Jesus invites you? On the invitation of Jesus who says, Come, for all things are now ready.

Is your heart fixed on a feast that can only be entered by grace alone? Nothing in your hand you bring simply to the cross.

[48 : 54] You cling simply to the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The writing is on the wall. Your days are numbered.

Your actions are weighed by God. And one day, yes, one day, we shall leave this world.

We shall enter our long home. We shall enter our eternal destination. But where will that be? May the Lord bless our thoughts.

Let us pray. Eternal and ever-blessed Lord, lay upon us the solemnity that it belongs to thy word when it reminds us that we are on a journey to our long home.

when it reminds us that we are all on this journey to our eternal destination. And we pray, O Lord, that we would take heed to the warnings of thine own word.

[50 : 00] A reminder to us that our days are numbered. That our breath is in thine own hand. Reminding us that all our actions are weighed in the balances of God.

A reminder that all earthly kingdoms will perish. That only the kingdom of God shall endure. All may we be citizens of that kingdom of God that shall endure forever and forever.

We pray that thou would bless thy word to us and that we would take our words this evening and that we would reflect upon them not only tonight but in the days that lie ahead if there be in accordance with thine own sovereign will.

We ask, O Lord, that thou would watch over us in coming days. And now, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore.

Amen. Amen.