

RUSSELL SANDERS

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DANIEL THE MAN – LESSON 10

THE DEFILEMENT

We now shift to chapter five of the book of Daniel, who is now deep into his eighties, perhaps closer to ninety in age. He has been in rulership positions in Babylon off and on (depending upon who was king) for around sixty-five years.

Daniel 5:1 says, ***“Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords...”***. In his intoxicated “party” condition, he commanded his servants to bring to the party all of the gold and silver vessels that his “father” King Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem. Then the king, all the princes (lords) of the empire, the kings’ many wives and his mistresses (concubines) were all drinking alcohol from these vessels that had been sanctified and made holy to Jehovah. As they drank, they gave praise to their various pagan gods.

God immediately responded to this sacrilege. He made to appear fingers like a man’s hand and wrote a message as they watched it. The king was terrified as he watched the fingers of a hand write this message on the plastered walls of his palace room. He had defiled God’s holy vessels.

Verse 2 mentions ***“his father Nebuchadnezzar,”*** so who exactly was this “king” Belshazzar? Nebuchadnezzar was his “father” in the generational lineage sense, much like Jesus was the “son of David.” The former great king was actually his grandfather from his second wife, the son of Nabonidus. The son of Nebuchadnezzar, Nabonidus had taken retirement outside the city of Babylon, most likely to Ur where he had built a temple to one of his gods. He had made his son Belshazzar as co-regent with him, ruling as king in his place and in control of the city of Babylon and its army. This is why in verse 29 that Daniel was made “third ruler” in the kingdom under the co-regents (kings) Nabonidus and the young Belshazzar.

We have often heard the common phrase of “the handwriting on the wall” to describe events in our own time to show results brought by previous actions of people. This is where that saying originated that is still used today.

Tomorrow we will look at what occurred from this event and the messages to take away from it.

One thing for certain is that we should not defile any vessel which is sanctified and holy unto God as Belshazzar had done. Our bodies are sanctified and holy unto God as the “temple” in which His Holy Spirit dwells. We should not defile it in any “unclean” manner.