

The Folly of Belshazzar

www.cvillechurch.com

Introduction: Men throughout the ages have confidently placed their lives on things that cannot last!

- A. The blinding nature of worldliness makes men to be fools.
 - 1. God will always destroy the proud in their confidence. (**Jas 4:4-6**)
 - 2. When a person is caught up in this spirit it seems reasonable to him!
- B. We will see the example of such a man, Belshazzar, the son of the last king of Babylon.
 - 1. The most prominent king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar died in 563 B.C. The events in this chapter take place decades later, in 539 B.C.
 - 2. Belshazzar was son of the current ruler Nabonidus. He was in charge in Babylon in the absence of his father.
 - 3. Babylon at this time was the greatest empire the world had seen up to this time.
 - 4. Belshazzar decided to have a drunken feast with the captured items from the temple of God. (**Dan 5:1-4**)
 - 5. We will contrast his folly with the godly calmness of the elderly Daniel.

I. The Folly of Belshazzar

- A. He had an unsound mind.
 - 1. If you met Belshazzar he would have seemed normal. What is an unsound mind? (**Rom 1:28; Eph 4:17-19**)
 - 2. When a man practices sin he will be hardened in time. He will then take risks and engage in practices that makes no sense.
 - 3. Because of this he shut his eyes to many things. He wanted to impress his lords and concubines with his rashness. They saw something that would shake their very soul and cost them their lives.
- B. He willingly forgot unpleasant truths.
 - 1. He knew about what the one true God did to Nebuchadnezzar! (**Dan 5:20-23**)
 - 2. How many times have unsound minds reasoned: "nothing will happen to me!?"
 - 3. Those in Noah's day made the same mistake. (**2 Pt 3:3-6**)
 - 4. How many today associate with others who laugh at the judgment of God?
- C. He has a false sense of security.
 - 1. After all, Babylon had built a very formidable series of walls around the city. There was also a river to supply water and food to the city. No army could take them, right?
 - 2. He should have learned of how venerable he really was. Consider the example of the Israelites that God delivered to Babylon. (**Hos 13:1**)
 - 3. Outside the city at this time was the great army of the Persians. While they were diverting the river for an attack under the walls, the Babylonians did nothing. (**Prov 16:18**)
- D. He found a terrifying end.
 - 1. God interrupted his drunken feast. (**Dan 5:5-6**)
 - a. He went from arrogance to terror.

b. As so many before him, he now increases his terror because he does not know what to do. Pride leaves you unprepared in the day of calamity. **(Dan 5:7-9)**

2. Now Belshazzar had little regard for the physical things he had earlier gloried in.

3. He now praises the God he moments earlier had scoffed at. **(Dan 5:13-14)**

4. His late bout of humility did him no good. **(Dan 5:23-30; Prov 1:23-28)**

II. The Godliness of Daniel

A. He patiently waited on God. **(Isa 40:31)**

1. What has Daniel experience in his lifetime?

2. Rather than conclude God had forsaken him, he kept on serving the Lord.

B. He possessed a wisdom the world cannot know. **(Prov 8:32-36)**

1. The wisdom of God cannot be known by the world! **(1 Cor 2:14-15)**

2. When worldly men get in trouble, whom do they turn to?

C. He has an understanding of what will last.

1. What did Daniel think of Belshazzar's offer? Why? **(Dan 5:17)**

2. Daniel learned to think this way from youth! **(Dan 1:8)**

D. He had the protection of God.

1. Daniel knew what was to happen that very night! Was he afraid?

2. When a man serves the Lord for years he knows the protection of God. **(1 Pt 3:12-13)**

3. Contrast the fear of Belshazzar to the confidence of Daniel. **(Phil 1:28)**

III. Which wisdom do you choose?

A. Where do you place your trust? **(1 Tim 6:17; Lk 12:15)**

1. We must never think of success in terms of things we see.

2. Sadly there are churches that attract people by show, great buildings and impressive numbers. What does God see?

B. Where is your mind?

1. A spiritual mind is the result of a determined effort to place God's word in our hearts. **(2 Tim 1:7, 13; Rom 12:1-2)**

2. Can you have a sound mind in a church that refuses open discussion and whose goals are numbers and money?

C. Where is your life?

1. When we have a spiritual mind we will make choices that place us in the midst of God's work! How often do we rationalize here? **(Jas 2:14-17)**

2. What are you doing in the Lord's service now?

Conclusion: What is first in your life today?

A. Absolute honesty is necessary if we are to take the first steps to a heart for God.

1. Satan blinds most with the pleasures of this world. **(2 Cor 4:4)**

2. If we are honest we will also see the powerful good news along with the bad news of our sins. **(Rom 1:16-18)**

B. When God is first, everything else will be second. **(Lk 9:24-25)**

1. Please do not discover this too late. **(Lk 17:32-37)**

2. Are you ready for the judgment day?