

Empire Church of the Brethren
Sunday Service Sermons

16 June 2024

Not Found Wanting.

When we get to heaven we do not want to be found wanting.

Remember, we are to be lacking in nothing.

But perfect as is our heavenly Father.

The only way is to be lost in Jesus.

Or you might say, put on Jesus or covered by Jesus.

Jesus is our only hope for now and then.

Text: "You are weighed in the balance and are found wanting." *Daniel 5:27.*

Compared to our Holy and perfect God we will always be found wanting.

This episode in the life of Daniel is found in *Daniel 5: 1-31.*

You might know it as the writing on the wall.

Most people know it that way.

Writing on the wall is not ordinary or common.

That is when there is no person in sight.

Have you ever wondered what angel did the writing on God's behalf?

I doubt if it was Michael.

Could have been Gabriel.

And then there are a host of other angels who could have done it.

The point is not whose hand it was but that it was a message from God.

I think that reference is used for a message from God.

King Belshazzar gave a great feast.

This king is a descendant of Nebuchadnezzar.

And apparently just as wicked.

This feast was more of an orgy or revelry and blasphemy than a meal.

It certainly was not pleasing to God.

They profaned the items taken from the Temple in Jerusalem.

While holding these sacred objects full of wine they praised their gods.

Then a hand that looked human appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall.

The king's face turned pale.

I guess he knew something out of the ordinary was happening.

His knees gave way.

He called his wise men to tell him what was written on the wall.

He would greatly reward the one who could tell him what was written there.

The wife of the king knew of Daniel and suggested the king call him to read the writing.

So Daniel was summoned.

The king told him that if he could tell him what was written on the wall he would reward him greatly.

Daniel told him to keep his gifts, but he would read the message.

Then Daniel told this king about what God did to Nebuchadnezzar.

Then Daniel said that this king was like his father and not yielding to God.

And he had dishonored God by what he did with the utensils from the Temple.

He said, "You did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways. Therefore he sent the hand that wrote the inscription."

The message was: God had numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.

You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting.

Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.
Daniel was rewarded for his interpretation of the writing.
That very night the king was killed and then Darius the Mede took over the kingdom.
Falling short of what is expected is never pleasant but when it comes to God it is especially troublesome.
Paul speaks of the sins of the flesh such as drunkenness and revellings.
We do not use that word much but it has a pertinent meaning for this study.
Spell check does not even know this word.
These are sins of indulgence that signify unbridled license and degrading conduct.
Paul observed such carrying on by victorious athletics in their celebration.
Laughing and dancing and praising the victor was a part of the celebration of the god of wine.
Celebration parties that lasted well into the night were such as these.
Such was the character of Belshazzar's feast.
Then he added blasphemy against the Hebrew God, Yahweh, who was holy and refused to be insulted.
The king used the gold and silver cups from the Temple for him and his guests.
They drank wine and engaged in riotous and degrading conduct with these holy utensils in hand.
When people surrender themselves to the passions of their lower nature, they lose all self-control .
Sin piles on top of sin as they seek to outdo one another in immoral and filthy behavior.
This king's feast was an abomination.
God can tolerate just so much sin and no more!
In the New Testament, Paul speaks of how God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts and gave them up unto vile afflictions and gave them over to a reprobate mind.
In the midst of the banquet hall, God suddenly appeared and wrote on the wall of the king's palace a message that no one could read.
After his wise men could not interpret it he called for Daniel.
The message was simple.
God had dealt with Nebuchadnezzar when he became proud, stubborn, and cruel, disciplining him in the wilderness.
Although Nebuchadnezzar repented and acknowledged the supreme God, Belshazzar had not profited by the example.
The present king was, therefore, ripe for judgment.
What did the message mean?
God had numbered the days of this king's kingdom.
He had been weighed on the scales and by divine measure was too light.
His iniquities so far exceeded his good points that he was in trouble, deep trouble.
This was God's Word, and there was no appeal from it.
The mills of God sometimes grind slowly, but at other times they work quickly.
In Belshazzar's case, judgment came the same night that Daniel proclaimed it.
The Persians were already casing the place and planning to attack.
They made their move shortly after Daniel startled the king and his leaders with the shocking warning.
Two different accounts tell us how the feat was accomplished.
One says the Persians diverted the water of the river which flowed through the city and came in the dry riverbed.
Another source says the people were so disgusted with the ruler that they revolted and opened the gates of the city allowing the Persians to enter unopposed.
Of course both versions could be true.
Belshazzar was wicked enough to incur the wrath of even a pagan empire.
Judgment always comes.
The moral law of sin and retribution is written into the universe.
We are not only punished for our sins, we are punished by our sins.
Sin itself pays us off.

The Scripture does not say, be sure your sin will be found out but rather be sure your sin will find you out.

Sometimes we say that sin doesn't pay, but the bitter truth is that sin does pay, it pays in currency that is minted in the coffers of hell.

If you were placed on the scales of God's righteous judgment, how would you rate?

Would you register sixteen ounces to the pound or would you fall short of the standard?

On one thing we must be careful.

The New Testament makes it clear that we are not saved by doing more good deeds than bad deeds.

We are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, by repenting of our sin and trusting Jesus as our personal Savior.

On the other hand, nowhere does the Bible, either in the Old Testament or the New Testament, minimize righteous deeds.

We produce fruit according to what kind of tree we are, and the good tree cannot produce bad fruit any more than a bad tree can produce good fruit.

Jesus told us that we can know people by their fruit.

What if Belshazzar had fallen down at Daniel's feet repenting of his sin and pleading for mercy?

What if Judas had come to Jesus and begged for forgiveness?

God would have saved either one of them at the last minute, working whatever miracle was necessary, if they had come with sincerity and genuine repentance.

Most likely, you have not gone nearly as far in sin as Belshazzar or Judas but you still need to be saved.

The only way you can be found not wanting on God's scales is to accept the substitution death of Jesus as the atonement for your sin.

We need to do this often for we fail often.

And he will forgive us as many times as we ask for his forgiveness.

How wonderful is that?