

Taking it Home:

- Sometimes it does not seem like there is justice in the world, but God is ultimate justice. God is a Protector of His children and He will give out justice.
READ Prov. 20:22 & Romans 12:17-21 as a devotional this week.
- Sometimes when we read the Old Testament Scriptures we disconnect from truly relating with the history of God dealing with affairs of men and nations. BUT, Jesus is still the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:8). Just like God dealt with Belshazzar's arrogance and mockery of Him, God will not be humiliated or allow those who attempt to arrogantly mock or humiliate Him today get away with their folly. READ Galatians 6:7-8 and interpret.
- Just like the Saints of the Old Testament & New Testament era, believers can have confidence, hope and enthusiasm as they watch God actively working in our lives today.
READ Psalm 27:1-2; 14; Prov. 3:5-6; Titus 3:5-8; 1 John 5:4-5 as a devotional sometime this week.

For a restatement of Pastor Matthew's sermon points, visit pastormatthew.net and click on the "Write This Down" tab.

Memoirs of an Ancient Prophet
Don't Linger When God Points His Finger
Daniel 5: 1-31

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Bethel Church
February 13, 2011

Don't Linger When God Points His Finger

Notes:

For more information about Growth Groups, Growth Group homework, and a podcast of sermons with homework, visit www.bethelfc.com.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 13, 2011

Daniel 5: 1-31

Quick Review: Approximately 30 years after God humbled Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 4, Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, Belshazzar is ruling the Babylonian empire as king. King Belshazzar has a feast with 1,000 noble invitees while at the same time the mighty Persian army is besieging the city walls around Babylon. So arrogant and so confident that the city walls were impervious to the Persian armies, King Belshazzar arrogantly mocks and humiliates the God of the Hebrews. Belshazzar orders the gold and silver goblets that had been taken from Solomon's temple in 586 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem, be used to drink wine for his drunken feast. God personally writes a message on the wall for King Belshazzar to know that his kingdom would be conquered by the Persians and he would be killed that very evening. The message from Daniel to Belshazzar is clear; God is sovereign and Belshazzar's reign as king was over; God raises up kings and He also deposes them!

My Story:

- When life's crisis' strike, it can seem as though God is not on His throne, or that He is not aware of the trials you're facing. Share a time when it seemed as though God did not seem sovereign; He seemed distant or disconnected from you, or someone you know, when facing a severe trial or crisis? How did you get through those dark times? Has your (or someone you know) thinking changed? Why? Why not?
- Again and again God demonstrates in the Book of Daniel that He is not only sovereign over the entire earth, He is a God of supreme justice. Are there times when it seems that ungodly people or nations get away with constantly hurting others and so people cry out for justice? Discuss. How do (did) you deal with those feelings?

Growing Deeper:

- In the midst of being besieged by the Persian army, King Belshazzar, grandson of King Nebuchadnezzar, boldly and arrogantly throws a big party. What did Pastor Matthew say about Belshazzar's confidence about why the walls of Babylon would hold back the Persian army?
- **READ Daniel 5:3 & 4.** King Belshazzar's actions, bringing out the gold & silver vessels taken from the temple of Solomon in 586 B.C. and drinking wine from them were intentionally meant to shame and humiliate the people of Israel and the God of Israel, Yahweh. **READ Daniel 5:20-23.** What is the comparison & huge difference between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar? Do you think God still humbles arrogant, proud people today? (Cf. **Matt. 23:12; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5**).
- In Daniel 5:4, what gods did King Belshazzar worship? Remember, in ancient days nations who defeated other nations thought their gods were more powerful than the gods of the nations they conquered. Was Belshazzar intimating that his gods were superior to Yahweh, the God of Israel when he desecrated the vessels from the temple of Solomon? How did God deal with Belshazzar's arrogance? (READ Daniel 5:30).
- One of the key applications of Daniel chapter's 4 & 5 is God's sovereignty over nations, kings, kingdoms, & the entire earth. **READ Genesis 12:1-3 and interpret.** God's covenant with Israel is eternal; He will always protect Israel because of His unilateral covenant that is unbreakable. These Scriptures are also prophetic for the future of Israel; a foreshadowing of current & future events. **READ and interpret Ezekiel 38:5-6 about the future invaders of Israel and how God deals with these invaders in chapter 39.**
- Pastor Matthew mentioned that God is still involved in the affairs of men & nations currently. Do you think arrogant leaders of nations who humiliate Israel currently will be dealt with by God? Discuss (use Scripture to defend your answer).