

Revelation 16:12 And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon [paganism], and out of the

mouth of the beast [papalism], and out of the mouth of the false prophet [Protestantism].

14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

17 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

THE SIXTH VIAL

Brother Emerson A. Wilson

Truth Marches On

As the powers of evil and falsity continue to work, even up to our very day and time, God in His love and mercy is working to uncover every falsity. Whether God sends forth the sounding of the trumpet or a vial of judgment, every move is to uncover that which is false order to loose God's people so they can serve Him and Him alone.

Our Scripture text says that the sixth angel poured out his vial on the great river Euphrates. Realizing that the Revelation is written in symbolic language, we must hold the fact that there is something about Euphrates that He using in symbolic language to talk about Babylon, or where God's people were bound. In the literal sense, Euphrates was the river that literal Babylon was built on; it was her security and her protection.

Let us go to Daniel's prophecy, which covers that period of time. God's people were carried away into Babylonian captivity because of their attitude toward God's Word and God's prophets. With them was carried away the furniture and golden vessels of the temple that God had dwelled in among Israel.

They were not down there very long until the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, made an image.

To make a long story short, there were three boys down there who wouldn't go to church in Babylon; it didn't make any difference how much pressure the king put on them. When they were thrown into the furnace of fire, those men stood with power over fire. When the king looked in and saw One who looked like the Son of Man standing in there with them, he brought them out and gave glory to God.

Daniel proved God true in the lion's den, and he was put up as the next ruler of Babylon. The old king that put him up there died. Several years passed, two or three other kings came into being, and finally a king by the name of Belshazzar ruled Babylon. Many years passed between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. Daniel had become old and had been forgotten. No one even knew he was in the province. Other kings had taken over, and because of it, Daniel was forgotten and moved out of his high position.

The Literal Story

Let us read Daniel 5:1-5: "Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, while 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 princes, his wives, 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 wait Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, 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. 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."

He brought in his astrologers, soothsayers, and the wise men of Babylon, but none could read it or interpret it. He felt very low until the old queen, the queen of the last generation, told him about Daniel.

Verses 14-31 tell us: "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 shew the interpretation of the thing: And I

have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve 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.

"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 [you will notice here that I am reading many words that are used in the Revelation, another situation where all kingdoms, languages, and peoples bowed down and served him], trembled and feared before him: whom he would 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 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 wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever 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; and thou halt praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor 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 this writing was written. And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. Then commanded Belshazzar, and they 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. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old."

Before God gave the handwriting on the wall, He had already moved on the Medes and Persians. He had already spoken to King Cyrus, and Darius was with him. When they dried up the riverbed, they walked in and came into the very festival that was going on and killed Belshazzar that very night. The message was then given to the people from Cyrus that they could go out on the dry riverbed, take the vessels back to the temple where they belonged, and build the temple back in Jerusalem for God. Now, that is the literal picture.

Euphrates Must Be Dried Up

We have a Euphrates in spiritual Babylon today which has to be dried up. In too many places, however, Euphrates is not being dried up. She is running bank-full. God's people are not getting out of Babylon because the message is not getting in. The kings of the east are not getting in because Euphrates, spiritual Babylon's stronghold, is not being dried up. It is just as it was in literal Babylon's stronghold; God's

people couldn't get out until the river was dried up. The kings of the east went in, and they came out on the dry riverbed.

Some of God's people are in spiritual Babylon today, and there is no hope of them getting out until Euphrates is dried up. The kings of the east (knowledge and understanding) have to get in to them and make a way for them to escape. They have to get some knowledge and see what they are in. Oh, how God hates it. While they think it is all right, it is an abomination unto God. They must have wisdom to know how to get out. But in order for those two kings of the east to get in, Euphrates has to be dried up.

This Babylon, which has God's people in it, people in it is Protestantism. God's people never were in Catholicism; there was never any Gospel there for anybody to get converted. Allow me to make the statement that we are dealing with Protestantism. Euphrates is a symbol of spiritual Babylon's stronghold on people, as well as their false security. Protestantism is full of the teaching of eternal security, and until that is dried up, cleared up from the minds of people, nobody is going to get excited about putting forth efforts to live righteously. Protestantism is full of it.

Not only is that her stronghold and her security, but another of her securities is the false agreement that she makes with hell and death, by causing people to join those churches and line up with their rituals. Isaiah said that when the truth is turned loose, it will overflow the hiding places, and people's agreement with hell and death will not stand (Isaiah 28:17-18).

Another stronghold that she holds over the people is lies, by lying to them and telling them we are all the Church of God. They tell people that God has a spiritual church, or a mythical church, and then a literal one. Brother, that makes two, and God has but one church. The same God who baptizes you by a born-again experience into

the spiritual body puts you into the local, working, visible phase of the Church of God. God never puts anybody in Babylon. The Spirit of God never leads anybody to go join a church. The Spirit of God never calls a man from Babylon to preach the Gospel.

According to the eleventh chapter of Revelation, the two witnesses, the Word and the Spirit, rose up and came out of Babylon. From then on, the cry was, "Come on out of her, My people." There may be individuals who are saved in sectarian organizations, and the Spirit of God may be working through their individual lives if they are walking in all the light they have; but the Spirit of God is not blessing the organization or the services.

So Babylon's stronghold, defense, or security is the antitype of the old river Euphrates, and it is used right here. Brother, it takes a heap of preaching to dry up, Euphrates. We might as well lay aside the idea that we can go along and just have services on Sunday and Wednesday night, and get the job done. We are not even starting to get it done. Babylon is getting stronger all the time, and the church is getting weaker in most places.

Brother, the only thing that will keep Babylon from taking strength, and it is the same thing that will bring strength to the church, is the straight pouring out of God's Word, service after service, telling people the truth just exactly as it is in God's Word. So, spiritual Babylon has a defense, a false security and a power, by which she holds people all those lies that she tells them. Now, that river has to be dried up. Truth has to be poured out so the kings of the east can get in.

God Is Not Mocked

I want to show you that spiritual Babylon has the same spirit that old Belshazzar had. What did Daniel tell him about his spirit? You became inflated in yourself. He was just as Nebuchadnezzar, when he

conquered the whole then-known world: he reared back, took a look at Babylon, and in so many words said, "Look what a city I have built." About that time, he was ready to go out and eat straw like the ox. Belshazzar came right along and inflated himself, and the same spirit is in spiritual Babylon.

We have already studied Revelation 13:4—what did that beast say? "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" Belshazzar, also, felt secure in the great province of Babylon. Right while he was praising the gods of silver, gold, brass, iron, wood, and stone, God had two kings with two armies channeling the river. It was just hours until he was going to lose his kingdom. What did the beast say? "Who is like the beast?" Old Roman Catholicism still makes that cry yet today. Brother, she will boast in the newspaper of how many millions belong to the Roman Catholic religion.

In other words, she is saying: "Who can equal the beast? Who is like the beast? Who has made a move such as we have?" But little does she know that God has a few Church of God preachers who are channeling the river and driving in upon her through the truth of God's eternal Word. While she boasts in what she can do, little does she know that God already has the Gatling guns of truth turned in upon her.

Revelation 18:7 tells us, ". . . she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously . . . for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." False religion feels they have the world so deceived that nobody will ever get enough understanding to point out the deception that they hold people in. That is exactly the attitude that Belshazzar had, but in the same hour there came a handwriting on the wall of God's divine judgment against that Babylonian kingdom.

Someone may question, "Does it happen the same way in the New Testament Babylon?" Yes, sir, just

the same. The whole eighteenth chapter of Revelation will tell you of how Babylon's merchants have waxed rich with the abundance of her delicacies. Oh, what a time they are having, until you get down to verses 17 and 19: "For in one hour so great riches is come to naught And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate."

I want to to the two together. There was Belshazzar in his pomp and splendor—wealthy, many wives and concubines, having a great feast and really living deliciously—but at the same hour, the handwriting of God came on the wall. Not only that, but that very night Belshazzar was slain.

Consider spiritual Babylon; they could think less about destruction or about the judgments of God coming down. But friend, whether you are a little bit wrong or a whole lot wrong, the judgments of God are going to come your way. God is not asleep. God is not mocked. God is very much awake. That is why Paul spoke about a people in this very day and time who would cry, "Peace and safety," and little do they know that sudden destruction is coming upon them (1 Thessalonians 5:3). That was the spirit of Belshazzar: "What do we have to worry about?"

Truth Brings Judgment

You may question, "What hour did Babylon's riches fade out, or when is the hour that Babylon's riches come to naught?" The hour that the handwriting appears, or the hour when the truth is revealed. There are plenty of people in Babylon who think that Babylon's riches are great, until you get the truth to them. The same hour that truth reaches their heart and mind, all those riches which they looked on in Babylon have lost all their value.

They are ready to walk off from them and leave them like a pile of sand.

While Babylon today, just as Babylon of old, is making merry (going on in their lasciviousness, loose living, and ungodliness), little do they know that the hour of God's judgment has come and the handwriting of God is appearing.

The handwriting of God appears so that people can see their true condition. When Daniel read the handwriting to Belshazzar, he read out his true condition; he showed him a picture of himself, how he was as God looked at him. Brethren, the handwriting of God will do the same thing today, whether it is on you and me individually, or on some false system of religion.

Protestant sects are held in high esteem, but the truth of the matter is that they are an abomination unto God. False religion has taken the fear of God off of man. I can remember when I was a boy when men did not smoke in front of some people and women in front of nobody. What took all that fear off? Preachers walking around with stogies in their mouths and their collars on backwards, claiming to be holy people, claiming to be men of God, but living like the devil.

They foam out their devilish doctrine of eternal security. That doctrine teaches that if you are born again and baptized, no matter what you do or what kind of shape you are in when God finds you and calls you to death, you will never be lost. That kind of doctrine lifts the fear of God off the hearts of man and turns lasciviousness loose. If you get enough truth to people to dry up that river, take away some of those false securities that people are resting in, you can still bring sweat on their brows, cause their ears to get red, and cause their knees to smite together.

Belshazzar's knees were not smiting together. He was having a wonderful time, playing around with his women and having sex orgies. Well, what brought the fear

of God back on him? The real handwriting of God and a preacher who could read it like it was. That will bring it back today too. Paul spoke of a cry of peace and safety, a peace where there is no peace, of safety when sudden destruction is coming on them. My friend, it is a picture of the darkness of false religion.

The Word of God lets us know that when you join one of these harlot bodies (Revelation 17), you will become a partaker of her sins. Brother, if you go down where the harlots are at, where prostitution is, all that woman has to do is get you to drink a little out of her cup and it won't be long until she will have you in any kind of corruption she wants to pull you into. This is exactly what the Revelation is picturing here, these harlot women with the cups in their hands. Brother, if they can get you to join them and drink of their wine, it will only be a matter of time until you are a partaker of her evil deeds.

According to Revelation 18, the only way to keep from being a partaker of her evil deeds is to come out of her. Why? She has a spirit and a power. She will take hold on you in such a way that you will turn down known truth and stand by her teachings and her catechisms.

The Vessels

It is just the same as in Belshazzar's day. He got along all right in his feast and in his drinking until he made one move: he called for the golden vessels that had been sanctified to be used in purity, and everyone who bore them was to be clean. There was a corrupt old king in the midst of his sex orgies as king them to bring those golden vessels so they could drink wine in them. He had no more than put it to his lips, however, until the handwriting, the judgment of God, was put forth.

Someone may question, "What are the vessels?" Let's just take time to consider the golden cup in the harlot's hand. Psalm 116:13 tells us

that the golden cup was a cup of salvation, but the harlot has emptied that out and filled it with the filthiness of the wine of her fornication. In other words, she is not reaching out the golden cup of salvation; she is reaching out to get you to join her organization instead of getting your soul saved.

According to Jeremiah, Babylon was a golden cup in God's hand. In the early days of the reformers, they laid the truth down just as it was. They preached justification, holiness, and clean living. They were offering a cup of salvation. God used those reformers, but when they started to pour out that salvation and fill their cup with the filthiness of their fornication, the handwriting of God appeared. God began to put judgment on it. Everywhere He can get a man with enough nerve, zeal, and inspiration to lay judgment on Babylon, He has been putting it on her ever since. He has never let up.

Someone may ask, "If that is the picture, why don't more people see it?" I only have one answer—Daniel 5:8—none of the astrologers, soothsayers, or wise men of Babylon could read the handwriting, and they cannot read it yet. Brother, you and I can only read it as the Spirit of God unfolds it to us, and He gives it to whomever He wants to.

Babylon's merchants couldn't read it. In other words, they were like a lot of preachers now: they were maintained at the king's expense, but in the time of urgent need, they couldn't help him one bit. Babylon is yet full of those kind of preachers. They are carried along at great expense. They make good wages, but don't earn a hamburger.

People with heavy burdens are going to them for counsel, and what do they tell them? "You've got to get hold of yourself. Maybe you had better see a psychiatrist. See if you can't get your nerves straightened." And they walk right away from those preachers and go jump in the river or blow out their brains: Brother, a preacher who can't show you

the way to Jesus when you're in the hour of grave need is useless.

When the handwriting of God appears, things change. I believe the same God who had a definite message for Belshazzar, if the man of God in tune with Him, has a definite message for every person who comes into the worship services today. My friend, it will be definite and it will strike your heart just as definitely as that handwriting on the wall struck, old Belshazzar's heart. That handwriting was a declaration of judgment; and remember, these are vials of judgment, vials of God's wrath. When the message gets through to man, things change. People lose their light, chaffy attitude toward the Gospel. You will act just as the king did.

Present Enjoyment Versus Eternal Destruction

Let us consider the handwriting. The handwriting appeared in the king's palace. Belshazzar lived in a king's palace. Guards may have shut out human intruders, but nobody could shut out the divine message and the divine messenger. Now you can just mark it down: if a ministry will be true and go to work with a real old-fashioned burden, God will get the message through to ever honest heart. There will be some way or circumstance where the honest hearts who need to see the handwriting of God will be exposed to it.

The same God who looked down on Belshazzar is looking down on you and me. The handwriting appeared at a time of pleasure. The intoxication of pleasure may blind you from judgment for a while, but it cannot stay the hand of judgment. God will get through to you. We're in a world that is pleasure mad and drunk on pleasure as much as Belshazzar was drunk on wine. We have people who are trying to be Christians who are drunk on pleasure. Brother, when the handwriting appeared, the fun was all over.

If we could only realize it, it is

very foolish for us to rest our security on our experience of present enjoyment. Too many hold the attitude "Don't bother me preacher; I'm enjoying myself," but blinded to the fact that judgment may come on them today. God may see fit to let a gas leak cut loose in your house and blow you to smithereens before morning. God may see fit to let a jet lose its power, and fall and blow your house to pieces. These things have happened to others, and they could happen to us. We can become so enveloped in the pleasure we are enjoying that we don't think that judgment could be possible.

Tragedy is never planned. Let's get back to some real solid thinking; for a little bit. Don't you think God would have a man prepared for that if he knew it was going to happen? He would if He could get through to him, but his mind is so taken up, cluttered, and self-satisfied that he is busy enjoying life the way it is.

I say again, it's foolish to rest our security on our experience of present enjoyment. The moment of greatest pleasure may bring us to the brink of deepest ruin. The same hour that Belshazzar reached the height of his pleasure, the same hour he reached the depth of his ruin and went straight to hell. Will he pay for that pleasure? He has been paying several hundred years, and hasn't take off a year.

God wants us to see something. These three unclean spirits like frogs—the spirit of the beast, of the false prophet, and of the dragon—have gone out into the whole world. These spirits have been out there for quite a number of years. What are they doing? They will do to us what they have been doing to Babylon, what they did to Belshazzar. If we allow them, they will get us so enveloped in our living in the present that we never give a thought that our foundation might be undermined this very night.

In the midst of sinful-revelry, drunkenness, profanity, where people were turned to lasciviousness and

rioting in a feast, judgment came. Friend, it is a foolish thought that the devil throws to you, that you will have time to pray, time to get right. It is not so in this lesson, and it has not always been so in the cases of many since then.

Consider Belshazzar again: his end came with the handwriting of God. The final judgments of God appeared to him under the circumstance of gross negligence. While the king was busy in sinful revelry, the enemy was at the gate; destruction was at the door.

These things happened unto them for our ensample so that we might learn. Learn what? Don't get so carried away in your daily living where you fail to keep in mind that death may be at your door tonight.

Ignored Examples

When Belshazzar called Daniel in, he just wanted him to tell him what "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin" meant. But God's man had more than that to say. Daniel began with Nebuchadnezzar, how his heart was lifted up the same way, and how God had sent him out seven years to live as an animal. Then in Daniel 5:22 he said, "And thou his son [or successor], O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this."

How much do you know today? How many times have you seen God make an example of somebody? How many times have you read through the Word of God about what God did to people who inflated themselves? God is a just God. He wasn't bringing judgment on someone who didn't know what he ought to do, how he ought to live, or how God felt about such an attitude as he had. Too many people today know better than they are living.

Belshazzar did not humble himself even though he knew, but verse 23 says, "But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven" This is exactly what Babylon is doing, lifting up herself against Lord

of Heaven. Regardless of what God's Word teaches, they follow the teachings of their lifting up themselves against the God of Heaven. When you put the preacher's words right against, God's Word, they turn the Word of God and follow the preacher and what he says. Verse 23 also says, "... thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified."

Daniel then told Belshazzar about the handwriting: "And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" (verses 25-28).

In verse 22 we see infidelity, or unbelief against past revelation. Every movement has fallen, and infidelity against past revelations of truth from God's Word was their downfall. Verse 23 shows how we substitute shadow for reality. Instead of the true God, we have images of all kinds. Back there it was images of gold, wood, hay, and stone; today it is the many different images that man has built images to the beast, to human organizations, and to the human doctrines preached.

In the latter part of the 23rd verse, you can see Belshazzar's failure in man's prime duty. What is our prime duty? To glorify God. You glorify God when you turn from sin. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." As long as there is sin in your life, you cannot glorify God. You glorify God by turning from sin. You honor God by obeying His commandments, day by day, just as you honor your father and mother when you obey them. So Belshazzar had failed in the express purpose

for his being here to glorify God. My friend, a revelation of judgment follows all, the misuse of talents and opportunities of life. The handwriting on the wall was a message to him straight from God, a revelation of judgment that follows all misuse of talents and opportunities of life.

Friend, when you go along after pleasure and get tied up in everything but glorifying God, you are wasting time that can never be redeemed. Somewhere down the line, you are going to have to answer to God and give answer for your department, for your time, talents, and efforts. This is why God put such judgment on Belshazzar; he knew better; he could have done better. God could have found him worshipping God, putting in his time serving God and helping a people to serve God. Here is a sentence that awaits everyone who neglects and abuses his mission in the world. Our mission, if we are the church, is to reach a lost-and-dying world.

Life Has Its Limits

The first part of the summons—Mene—that God had numbered his kingdom and finished it. Not only was the king to be killed that night, but that as the king of Babylon as an empire it would become a divided kingdom between the Medes and Persians. Just as the days of Babylon were numbered, so were the days of the king numbered. The end had come, and the nation itself was called to give an account of its stewardship.

Dear one, your and my life have their limits. The Bible teaches this truth over and over. Moses prayed, "So teach us to number our days . . ." (Psalm 90:12). Why? God has set our bounds, and we cannot go beyond them. What was the message to Belshazzar? Numbered. That old king thought he was going to live forever and that he was just getting things in shape where he could really enjoy livelihood, but death was on his trail. God gives us all sufficient time and opportunity

for the work He requires of us. He is a just God; He doesn't require any more of us than our faculties are equal to. He is just. Since this is true, we have no reason to murmur at the shortness of life, or to try to use the excuse that life is too short for neglecting our proper duty.

Dear one, there is a limit to our opportunities. You know what the cry is today: "We don't get in a hurry. There is plenty of time." Is there? Could you give me any text in the Bible that tells you not to get in a hurry, or that there is plenty of time? That is the spirit of the age, and it is coming out of the mouth of the dragon. He does not want you to have any zeal or punctuality. Many people feel they have plenty of time, but the truth of the matter is, we only have time and that is very short. There will be no work done in eternity. Whenever Jesus splits the clouds, it will all be over.

Yes, sir, we cannot postpone the work of today without interfering with tomorrow's work. If you put off until tomorrow what should have been done today, you have interfered in tomorrow's work; and you won't get done tomorrow what should have been done today. Jesus said in John 9:4, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

Now, we know that that night did come: there were 1260 years of it when the Christians could not work. They just stayed in the dens and the caves to hold the seed for the church. Now, we are over here in the end of the Gospel Day. Prophetically, day is running out, and evening has been going on for one hundred years. The night cometh. That eighth beast is forming, and when they completely surround the camp of the saints, your work is finished.

It is already working, and they are already surrounding the camp of the saints. That beast has formed and is forming; they are going to cut us off. The time is coming when we will not be able to speak as freely as

I am against conditions. When that time comes, God is going to send fire down from Heaven, and that will be the end. God is not going to leave us here when we are not able to work. But we had better work now, as never before.

We Have a Course to Finish

It is very foolish not to consider what our position will be at the end of our days. Who of us will be able to say, when God is ready to lift the spirit out of the body, "It is finished"? "Oh," someone may contend, "that was Jesus." Paul said the same thing before he lay down his head, and Peter could say the same. You and I, too, have to finish our course. I don't know what your course is, but you have one.

God didn't save you to sit around and wait for Jesus to come. There is a course for every one of us to follow, and we must be able to look God in the face and say, "I've finished it." God has given us time, faculty, and everything we need to do everything He wants us to do, so we will stand without excuse if we don't get it done. That old spirit will take hold of you. It will make you feel that there is plenty of time to do the things of God. No! No! Saints, if we are ever going to have the assurance of a crown of righteousness, we are going to have to be able to say, "I've finished."

Some people's courses may be shorter than others, and the requirements on some may be greater than on others. We stand as individuals before a just God. Those gifts are passed out according to man's ability. My friend, whatever course God has laid down, whatever faculty He has given us to work with, whatever course He has put us on, we must be able to say that we have finished it.

The next thing Daniel revealed to the king was his abuse of opportunity. Just as it did with him, the abuse of opportunity will lead to the loss of it. The king and the people would have been spared a lon-

ger life if they would have lived better. What brought the judgment on him? His debauchery, his trying to drag the things of God down to the corruption of the world. That is what Babylon is guilty of. Had he not turned to that debauchery, had he not stirred God to the place of judgment, they could have lived longer. This is the same thing that is causing the hand of God's judgment to come down on people yet today.

The first word of God's judgment against Belshazzar meant "numbered." The second word meant that he was weighed in the balance, and found wanting. What does this have to do with Babylon? In Revelation 6:5, we see the black horse, and he that sat on him had the balances in his hand. In other words, putting the Word of God out at starvation rate, and at the same time, giving people a false weight of their true condition.

The balance of God's Word says, ". . . the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). The true balance says that you cannot be a servant of God and a servant of sin, but the rider on this black horse with the balances in his hand weighs people and gives them a false weight. This spirit tells people: "Everybody is sinning; I sin and you sin. Don't worry about sin in your life." Following that black horse was the gray horse, and death and hell followed. What follows apostasy? What follows letting up on God's Word? What follows seeking a false weight in your experience? Death and hell. It will follow it every time.

Weighed According to Knowledge

So the second word was weighed. Proverbs 16:2 says, "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits." He does not weigh its according to profession, whether we join church or whether we've been baptized. He weighs the spirit first of all. You must be born again. There is no chance of anybody even getting on the way to Heaven without

being born again. That is the starting place. You must die born of God's Spirit to have any weft with God.

"Well," someone may say, "I've been born again. I'll make it all right." First Samuel 2:8 tells us, "... the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by his actions are weighed." He weighs the spirit, and He weighs our actions. How does He weigh them? According to knowledge. Belshazzar knew better. That is why he came up short in weighing. If he had not known better, God would not have put that on him. Brother, sister, when we step in God's balance, He puts our knowledge of truth on one side of the balance, and we stand on the other. By our action, we had better balance off to what knowledge of truth we have; or we will be found wanting and end up in hell.

Let us now read Micah 6:9-10: "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod [the Word of God], and who hath appointed it. Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable?"

After God's voice has cried out, after people know what they ought to do, even yet there is still scant measure. People sitting right under truth, where the Word of God is given, should be up to full measure, but they only have scant measure. They are behind on measuring to the message of truth.

That scant measure, or that standard which is not according to God's Word, is an abominable thing unto God. When Babylon took the balance, the Word of God was in their hand. What happened? It was no time until they were not putting out any Word of God. They were measuring people by the teachings of the church instead of the Word of God.

Let us consider verse 11: "Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?" Back then when they

used the scale, they carried the weights in a bag tied on them. When they weighed something out, they put the weights on them. Well, they had deceitful weights.

In other words, these filthy dreamers (Jude 8) dream they will be clean by the sacrifices of God, in spite of their daily sin. This is what is going on in Babylon. It has no reality; it is a dream. What do they dream? "Well, because I went down yesterday, ate a wafer, and drank some wine, even though I've smoked and cursed today, I'll be pure because of the sacrifice, because of what I partook at Babylon's table." People who are still living in wickedness think they are going to be pure because they went through some ritual of false religion. Brother, there is nothing that can make you pure but the blood of Jesus Christ.

The deceitful weights are just a picture of the kind of weight that is put in the balance to give the untrue weight of judgment of the individual life. This is why many people who have attended religious organizations think we are terrible when we just set up the plain old Word of God and start weighing people for what they are. It is so far different from what they have been told they are in Babylon.

That happens right around the church. People have one weight they put in the balance when they are going to weigh themselves, and another weight they put in the balance when they are going to weigh me. In any case, we must use the same measure on someone else that we use on ourselves. God hates deceitful weights. It is a practice of spiritual Babylon, and it doesn't belong around the Church of God.

Not only was Belshazzar weighed, but he was found wanting. If you come up short according to God's standard, you are found wanting. My friend, there are many lacks in Babylon today. She is found wanting for light. That is why there is a cloudy condition, and much of that cloudiness in Babylon has turned to darkness by now. It used

to be cloudy, a mixture of truth and error, but it has moved to a place of error, or darkness. As darkness is the absence of light, even so evil is the absence of good.

"Thy Soul Shall Be Required of Thee"

In Romans 12:21 Paul said, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Only one thing will overcome evil—good. It is very plain. We can only keep out sin by being filled with holiness. Be filled with holiness, or the Spirit of God, and you can keep out sin. The true judgments of God's Word will dry up Euphrates, take away Babylon's security, and take away the means by which she holds God's people. It will dry up the many lies of the devil which have you bound in sin as an individual, and the kings of the east, knowledge and understanding, will come to you and make a way for you to get out of sin.

You will be without excuse if you stay in bondage. When Cyrus dried up Euphrates, he gave the command that all the Jews could go back to Jerusalem and build the temple, but many of them didn't go. The knowledge and understanding came, the way of access was opened up, but many of them didn't go. Because of it, they were lost and died in Babylon.

The same thing is true with sin today. When the Word of God comes, the devil will tell you many lies. He gives you many reasons why you cannot get saved, but the truth will dry up the river. Knowledge and understanding will come, and when the way is opened up, if you die in that condition, you will be without excuse at the judgment bar.

It is very likely that Belshazzar heard no rumor or word of alarm while he was carrying on and drinking until the handwriting appeared. No thought even came to his mind that there was anything to be alarmed about. Everything was

secure. No one could get across Euphrates. But right while he felt so secure, Euphrates was being drained, and the enemy would soon be ready to come in. When you think about Belshazzar, you're thinking about a man who never woke up to die. The message that Daniel gave him did no good because he was not in control of his faculties. He had drowned them in the wine cup.

We read in Revelation 17:2, "... the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication [filthiness]." My friend, the only hope of some people in Babylon ever, ever seeing their true condition and getting out is for them to reach a point of soberness. They are not going to reach that point, however, if they keep going back to Babylon and drinking more wine. History says that as Belshazzar stumbled from the hall to his bed, a soldier crawled through the window and ran a sword through his body, and he went straight into hell.

What is the message? "Behold, I come as a thief." He came as a thief on Belshazzar, at a most unguarded time. He was not even thinking about judgment. He was under the influence of wine, benumbed, and his faculties couldn't operate right. He reached his appointed time to leave this world in that terribly hopeless state.

Friend, I just want to say this, It is time to sober up. Whether you are drunk on Babylon's wine, on the pleasures of this world, or with the spirit of the age, it's time to sober up. It is time to get sober to the place that we can bring our faculties together and do some serious thinking. Everything may seem all right just as it is now, but will it be all right if God chooses this night to require my soul?

The rich man was so taken up in riches that all he could think about when he sat down in his easy chair was more barns, more fields, more money. It never entered his mind that he was going to die that night

God's Spirit said, "Thou fool, night thy soul shall be required of thee . . ." (Luke 12:20).

What did Jesus teach His disciples? ". . . the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not" (Luke 12:40). When it is going to be so much like a thief, at such unguarded time, that even God's people who are thinking about spiritual things won't be thinking about His coming, what kind of shape will the world be in? What chance is there for the world? Their only chance is for you and me to sound the alarm. It is time for the handwriting to appear. It is time for men of God with a burden to not only read and explain the handwriting, but to bear God's message to lost-and-dying souls while there is still opportunity.

I thank God for truth that will dry up Euphrates. It will dry it up and bring knowledge and understanding. It will make a clear way for every man to get out of whatever bondage he is in. When knowledge and understanding come and the way is opened up, and we refuse to go, we will be lost without excuse.

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