

The Book of Daniel - Number Thirty

The Hour of Fear

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Belshazzar's fear of the mysterious handwriting addresses not only his death and the end of the sixth kingdom of Bible prophecy, but also the point in prophetic history when fear takes hold of the kings of the earth. Their fear is produced by the "east wind" of Islam. Their fear is as a woman in travail, thus identifying a progressively increasing pain, which comes with more and more rapidity. The fear begins at the "hour" of Belshazzar's feast, though it initially arrived on September 11, 2001. From then onward the winds begin to slip through the hands of the four angels who are holding them during the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand. The lamentation for Tyrus that Ezekiel identifies, defines Tyrus by asking the prophetic question, "What city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?"

The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the midst of the seas. Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters: the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas. Thy riches, and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, that are in thee, and in all thy company which is in the midst of thee, shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin. The suburbs shall shake at the sound of the cry of thy pilots. And all that handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships, they shall stand upon the land; And shall cause their voice to be heard against thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes: And they shall make themselves utterly bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee with bitterness of heart and bitter wailing. And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, saying, What city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea? When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many people; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise. In the time when thou shalt be broken by the seas in the depths of the waters thy merchandise and all thy company in the midst of thee shall fall. All the inhabitants of the isles shall be astonished at thee, and their kings shall be sore afraid, they shall be troubled in their countenance. The merchants among the people shall hiss at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt be any more. Ezekiel 27:25–36.

Tyrus is the city, or kingdom that the merchants of the earth cry bitterly over, and then ask, "what city is like Tyrus?" They do so in the "time," when the city is broken in the sea. In Revelation chapter eighteen, the whore of Tyre, who is the whore of Rome, who has committed fornication with the kings of the earth and is identified as that great city whose judgment comes in one hour, and in one day. She is the city that raises the prophetic question from the wailing kings and merchants.

Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! 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. Revelation 18:8–19.

The unsealing of the Revelation of Jesus Christ includes the message of the Midnight Cry. That message is the second prophecy of Ezekiel thirty-seven that brings the dead dry bones that have laid in the streets for three and a half days to life as a mighty army. That message is the message that includes the truth that it is Islam that the Lord employs to bring executive judgment upon the United States for Sunday enforcement. That judgment arrives in the “hour” of the great earthquake, which is also the “hour” that the handwriting came upon Belshazzar’s wall. The handwriting produced the fear, that is represented as taking hold of all the kings and merchants when the economic structure of planet earth is taken down by the “east wind” of Islam, who have secretly slipped into Belshazzar’s kingdom, through the neglected lower “wall” to the south.

The “city” or kingdom that the kings and merchants lament of and ask, “what city is like unto this great city” is the kingdom of the whore of Tyre, who is then singing her songs and committing fornication with those very kings. All the prophets speak of the end of the world and they agree with one another, so Ezekiel’s merchants are the same merchants in Revelation chapter eighteen. Three times in Revelation chapter eighteen they lament “alas, alas,” as the great city and the financial structure of planet earth is taken down. The Greek word translated as “alas,” in the passage, is the very same word that is translated three times in Revelation chapter eight, and verse thirteen, which is there translated with a different English word.

And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the

three angels, which are yet to sound! Revelation 8:13.

The kings and merchants are lamenting the destruction of the world's economy with the words, "alas, alas," meaning "woe, woe," and the "Woe" is a symbol of Islam. The fear that takes hold of Belshazzar and his lords when the handwriting appears on the wall, is the fear produced when the economic structure of planet earth is destroyed by ongoing attacks from Islam, which God employs as His providential tool to bring about His executive judgment upon those who drink the wine of Babylon, that is Sunday enforcement. This truth is the theme of the Isaiah twenty-three "burden" of the whore of "Tyre."

The burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them. Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished. And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, is her revenue; and she is a mart of nations. Be thou ashamed, O Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, even the strength of the sea, saying, I travail not, nor bring forth children, neither do I nourish up young men, nor bring up virgins. As at the report concerning Egypt, so shall they be sorely pained at the report of Tyre. Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle. Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient days? her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn. Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth? The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth. Pass through thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish: there is no more strength. He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms: the Lord hath given a commandment against the merchant city, to destroy the strong holds thereof. And he said, Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon: arise, pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest. Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; and he brought it to ruin. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste. And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot. Take an harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered. And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the Lord will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth. And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing. Isaiah 23:1-18.

The seventy years, which is as "the days of one king", is represented by the kingdom of Babylon, for a king is a kingdom, and literal Babylon reigned for seventy years. The seventy years of literal Babylon ended in the "hour" the handwriting appeared upon the walls of Belshazzar's banquet hall. That very night he was slain, by the power that came through the "wall" unnoticed, for he was having a party drinking the wine of Babylon, while Nebuchadnezzar's orchestra was playing the music, and the whore of Tyre sang the sweet melody, and apostate Israel danced and bowed.

Then fear took hold of all involved, for God had “taken counsel against Tyre” and had “purposed” “to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.” God therefore “shook the kingdoms” with the “great earthquake” of that “hour,” for God had “given a commandment against the merchant” kingdom, “to destroy the strong holds thereof.” In the “hour” of fear for Belshazzar, the kings and the merchants began a search to understand the meaning of the fiery words on the wall. The death of Belshazzar is about to happen, but at that point, he is still alive. He therefore sought to understand the mysterious words and offered rewards to the wise men, if they could interpret the writing, but it could not be done, for the wise men of Babylon employ the methodology of biblical study that was a counterfeit of truth. The mysterious words are as the vision of a book that is sealed.

Then came in all the king’s wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished. Now the queen by reason of the words of the king and his lords came into the banquet house: and the queen spake and said, O king, live forever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed: There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation. Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry? 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 show 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. Daniel 5:8–16.

The queen in the palace was not Belshazzar’s wife, but the queen of his grandfather, and she knew who could read the writing on the wall. There was a church (for a woman is a church prophetically), in the kingdom that knew who could understand the secrets of God.

“There was in the palace a woman who was wiser than them all,—the queen of Belshazzar’s grandfather. In this emergency she addressed the king in language that sent a ray of light into the darkness. ‘O king, live forever,’ she said, ‘let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed. There is a man in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; . . .now let Daniel be called,

and he will show the interpretation.’

“‘Then was Daniel brought in before the king.’ Making an effort to brace himself and to show his authority, Belshazzar said, ‘Art thou that Daniel which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, which the king, my father, brought out of Jewry? 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.... 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.’

“Daniel was not awed by the king’s appearance, nor confused or intimidated by his words. ‘Let thy gifts be to thyself,’ he answered, ‘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.... 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 thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this, but hast lifted up thyself against the God 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 in them, and 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 all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.’

“‘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.’

“Daniel did not swerve from his duty. He held the king’s sin before him, showing him the lessons he might have learned but did not. Belshazzar had not heeded the events so significant to him. He had not read his grandfather’s history correctly. The responsibility of knowing truth had been laid upon him, but the practical lesson he might have learned and acted upon had not been taken to heart; and his course of action brought the sure result.

“This was the last feast of boasting held by the Chaldean king; for He who bears long with man’s perversity had passed the irrevocable sentence. Belshazzar had greatly dishonoured the One who had exalted him as king, and his probation was taken from him. While the king and his nobles were at the height of their revelry, the Persians turned the Euphrates out of its channel, and marched into the unguarded city. As Belshazzar and his lords were drinking from the sacred vessels of Jehovah, and praising their gods of silver and gold, Cyrus and his soldiers stood under the walls of the palace. ‘In that night,’ the record says, ‘was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom.’” Bible Echo, May 2, 1898.

In the midst of the crisis, the queen (a church), identified that there is a source that can identify the “Future for America”. Daniel once again stands in his lot to fulfill his purpose at the end of the days. The witness of the ensign given in the fiery furnace by Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego is now given by Daniel, as he adds to the line of truth that in the “hour” of the Sunday law crisis,

those who represent the ensign will be brought before the state authorities to testify of the truth.

“‘They will deliver you up to councils, ... yea and before governors and kings shall ye be brought for My sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.’ Matthew 10:17, 18, R. V. Persecution will spread the light. The servants of Christ will be brought before the great men of the world, who, but for this, might never hear the gospel. The truth has been misrepresented to these men. They have listened to false charges concerning the faith of Christ’s disciples. Often their only means of learning its real character is the testimony of those who are brought to trial for their faith. Under examination these are required to answer, and their judges to listen to the testimony borne. God’s grace will be dispensed to His servants to meet the emergency. ‘It shall be given you,’ says Jesus, ‘in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.’ As the Spirit of God illuminates the minds of His servants, the truth will be presented in its divine power and preciousness. Those who reject the truth will stand to accuse and oppress the disciples. But under loss and suffering, even unto death, the Lord’s children are to reveal the meekness of their divine Example. Thus will be seen the contrast between Satan’s agents and the representatives of Christ. The Saviour will be lifted up before the rulers and the people.” *The Desire of Ages*, 354.

As with the three worthies, Daniel was not interested in any gifts, nor did he need to rehearse what he was going to say. He very simply presented the interpretation of the “seven times,” represented upon the wall.

We will continue the story of Belshazzar in the next article.

“Those who are unfaithful to the work of God are lacking in principle; their motives are not of a character to lead them to choose the right under all circumstances. The servants of God are to feel at all times that they are under the eye of their employer. He who watched the sacrilegious feast of Belshazzar is present in all our institutions, in the counting-room of the merchant, in the private workshop; and the bloodless hand is as surely recording your neglect as it recorded the awful judgment of the blasphemous king. Belshazzar’s condemnation was written in words of fire, ‘Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting’; and if you fail to fulfill your God-given obligations your condemnation will be the same.” *Messages to Young People*, 229.