

**“In the history of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, God speaks to the people of today.** The condemnation that will fall upon the inhabitants of the earth in this day will be because of their **rejection of light**. Our condemnation in the judgment **will not** result from the fact that we have lived in error, but from the fact that **we have neglected Heaven-sent opportunities for discovering truth**. The means of becoming conversant with the truth are within the reach of all; but, **like the indulgent, selfish king**, we give more attention to the things that charm the ear, and please the eye, and gratify the palate, than to the things that enrich the mind, the divine treasures of truth. It is through the **truth** that we may answer the great question, ‘What must I do to be saved?’

“On every page of God’s word the injunction to obedience is plainly written, and yet how often His commands are lightly regarded or wholly set aside! The command for the observance of the holy Sabbath of the Lord is placed in the very bosom of the Decalogue, and is so plain that none need err as to its import, and yet it is treated with as great **profanation** as were the sacred vessels at the feast of Belshazzar. The condemnation of those who trample upon God’s holy Sabbath will not come because they have conscientiously observed the first day of the week, but because they neglected opportunities for searching the Scriptures and learning, not what man has said, not what the ministers say, not what the fathers have said, but what saith the infinite God! What day has God specified as His holy day? What did He command men to honour when He spoke with an audible voice from Sinai? That voice is to be obeyed above every other; the edicts of kings and nations are void before a command of God. The Lord of hosts commands our obedience.” *Bible Echo*, September 17, 1894.

**“In the history of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, God speaks to nations of today.** We are to take to heart the lessons he sought to teach these rebellious kings; for if Belshazzar had pursued **a course in harmony with the instruction given to his grandfather**, he would have retained not only his kingdom but his life. He disregarded the lessons, and went on in rebellion against God, committing **the very sins** for which his grandfather had been reprovved and punished. He, too, **lifted himself up in pride and exaltation**, and **the final judgment of God fell upon him and his house**. His great sin was that, notwithstanding God had given him light, he refused to walk in **the paths of righteousness**.” *Signs of the Times*, July 20, 1891.

“Belshazzar had been given many opportunities for knowing and doing the will of God. **He had seen his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar banished from the society of men**. He had seen the intellect in which the proud monarch gloried taken away by the One who gave it. **He had seen** the king driven from his kingdom, and made the companion of the beasts of the field. But Belshazzar’s love of amusement and self-glorification effaced the lessons he should never have forgotten; and he committed sins similar to those that brought **signal judgments on Nebuchadnezzar**. He wasted the opportunities graciously granted him, neglecting to use the opportunities within his reach for becoming acquainted with truth. ‘What must I do to be saved?’ was a question that the great but **foolish king** passed by indifferently.

“This is the danger of heedless, reckless youth today. The hand of God will awaken the sinner as it did Belshazzar, but with many it will be too late to repent.

“The ruler of Babylon had riches and honour, and in his haughty self-indulgence he had lifted himself up against the God of heaven and earth. He had trusted in his own arm, not supposing that any would dare to say, ‘Why doest thou this?’ But as the mysterious hand traced letters on the wall of his palace, Belshazzar was awed and silenced. In a moment he was completely shorn of his strength and humbled as a child. He realized that he was at the mercy of One greater than Belshazzar. He had been making sport of sacred things. Now his conscience was awakened. He realized that he had had the privilege of knowing and doing the will of God. **The history of his grandfather stood out as vividly before him as the writing on the wall.**” *Bible Echo*, April 25, 1898.

**SIGNAL:** A sign that gives or is intended to give notice; or the notice given. Adjective—Eminent; remarkable; **memorable**; distinguished from what is ordinary. *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary*.

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**THE UNSEEN WATCHER—NO. 1**

“I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed,’ writes Daniel, ‘and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven; he cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: let his heart be changed from man’s, and let a beast’s heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him. This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.’

“**Here we are shown that God holds even heathen kings subject to his will.** He takes idolaters, and deals with them according to their evil ways and doings.

“The same Watcher who came to Daniel was an uninvited guest at Belshazzar’s **sacrilegious** feast. This monarch had everything to flatter his pride and indulge his passions. He was a great king, presiding over what was then the greatest kingdom on earth. His provinces were cultivated by captives, and his capital was enriched by the spoil of nations. He held the life and property of his subjects in his hand. To those who ministered to his pride and vanity, he was indulgent; they were his chosen favorites; but if at any moment they crossed his will, he was at once a cruel tyrant. His anger blazed forth against them without restraint.

“Admitted to a share in kingly authority at fifteen years of age, Belshazzar gloried in his power, and lifted up his heart against the God of heaven. He despised the One who is above all rulers, the General of all the armies of heaven. ‘Belshazzar the king made a great feast to **a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.**’ On this occasion there was music and dancing and wine-drinking. The profane orgies of royal mirth were attended by men of genius and education. Decorated women with their enchantments, were among the revelers.

“Exalted by wine and **blinded by delusion**, the king himself took the lead in the riotous blasphemy. Reason no longer controlled him; his lower impulses and passions were in the ascendency. His kingdom was strong and apparently invincible, and he would show that he thought nothing too sacred for his hands to handle and profane. To show his contempt for sacred things, he desecrated the holy vessels taken from the temple of the Lord at its destruction.

“A Watcher, who was unrecognized, but whose presence was a power of condemnation, looked on this **scene of profanation**. Soon the unseen and uninvited Guest made his presence felt. At the moment when the sacrilegious revelry was at its height, a bloodless hand came forth, and wrote words of doom on the wall of the banqueting hall. Burning words followed the movements of the hand. ‘Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin,’ was written in letters of flame. Few were the characters traced by that hand on the wall facing the king, but they showed that the power of God was there.

“Belshazzar was afraid. His conscience was **awakened**. The fear and suspicion that always follow the course of the guilty seized him. When God makes men fear, they cannot hide the intensity of their terror. Alarm seized the great men of the kingdom. Their blasphemous disrespect of sacred things was changed in a moment. A frantic terror overcame all self-control.

“Belshazzar had been given many opportunities for knowing and doing the will of God. He had seen his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar banished from the society of men. He had seen the intellect in which the proud monarch gloried taken away by the One who gave it. He had seen the king driven from his kingdom, and made the companion of the beasts of the field. But Belshazzar’s love of amusement and self-glorification effaced the lessons he should never have forgotten; and he committed sins similar to those that brought signal judgments on Nebuchadnezzar. He wasted the opportunities graciously granted him, neglecting to use the opportunities within his reach for becoming acquainted with truth. ‘What must I do to be saved?’ was a question that the great but **foolish king** passed by indifferently.

“This is the danger of heedless, reckless youth today. The hand of God will awaken the sinner as it did Belshazzar, but with **many** it will be too late to repent.

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“In vain the king tried to read the burning letters. He had found a power too strong for him. He could not read the writing. ‘The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and show me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. 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.’ In vain the king offered honor and promotion. Heavenly wisdom cannot be bought and sold. ‘Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished.’

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**THE UNSEEN WATCHER—NO. 2**

“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, 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. . . . 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 honor. . . . 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 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 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 are 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 lessons 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 dishonored 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.’”

## SACRILEGIOUS PROFANATION

“The prophet says, ‘I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils’ (Revelation 18:1, 2). **This is the same message that was given by the second angel.** Babylon is fallen, ‘because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication’ (Revelation 14:8). What is that wine?—Her false doctrines. She has given to the world a false sabbath instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and has repeated the falsehood that Satan first told Eve in Eden—the natural immortality of the soul. Many kindred errors she has spread far and wide, ‘teaching for doctrines the commandments of men’ (Matthew 15:9).

“When Jesus began His public ministry, He cleansed the Temple from its sacrilegious profanation. Among the last acts of His ministry was the second cleansing of the Temple. **So in the last work for the warning of the world, two distinct calls are made to the churches.** The second angel’s message is, ‘Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication’ (Revelation 14:8). And in the loud cry of the third angel’s message a voice is heard from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities’ (Revelation 18:4, 5).” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 118.

“We are not to drift into worldly channels. **Consider the cleansing of the temple** at the beginning of Christ’s ministry, and at the close of his life, his personal labors in the guise of humanity. Whom did he find intent on gain? The Jews had made the courts of the temple a scene of sacrilegious traffic. They had turned the ancient and sacred institution of the Passover into a means of vile profit. They bartered deep, turning the once sacred service instituted by Christ himself, into a worship of mammon. But Christ came **suddenly** into the temple courts; **divinity flashed through humanity**, and, raising a whip of small cords in his hands, with a voice that they will hear again in the execution of the judgment, he said, ‘Take these things hence.’ ‘It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.’ These priests and rulers saw as it were an avenging angel with a flaming sword, such as guarded the way to the tree of life.

“**Today** this sacrilegious work is being more than repeated. There will be **messages** borne; and those who have **rejected the messages** God has sent, will hear most startling declarations. **The Holy Spirit will invest the announcement with a sanctity and solemnity which will appear terrible in the ears of those who have heard the pleadings of infinite love, and have not responded to the offers of pardon and forgiveness.** Injured and insulted Deity will speak, proclaiming the sins that have been hidden. As the priests and rulers, full of indignation and terror, sought refuge in flight at the last scene of the cleansing of the temple, **so will it be in the work for these last days.** The **woes** that will be pronounced upon those that have had light from heaven, and yet did not heed it, they will feel, but will have no power to act. **This is represented in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins.** They cannot obtain a character from the wise virgins, and they have **no oil of grace to discern the clear light or to accept it.** They cannot light their lamps and join the procession that goes in to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” *Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers*, number 7, 1897.

“In cleansing the temple from the world’s buyers and sellers, **Jesus announced His mission to cleanse the heart from the defilement of sin**,—from the earthly desires, the selfish lusts, the evil habits, that corrupt the soul. **Malachi 3:1–3 quoted.**” *The Desire of Ages*, 161.

“Because of the cruelty and treachery of the Ammonites and Moabites toward Israel, God had declared through Moses that they should be forever shut out from the congregation of His people. See Deuteronomy 23:3–6. In defiance of this word, the high priest had cast out the offerings stored in the chamber of God’s house, to make a place for this representative of a proscribed race. Greater contempt for God could not have been shown than to confer such a favor on this enemy of God and His truth.

“On returning from Persia, Nehemiah learned of the bold **profanation** and took prompt measures to expel the intruder. ‘It grieved me sore,’ he declares; ‘therefore I **cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber**. Then I commanded, and **they cleansed the chambers**: and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering and the frankincense.’

“Not only had the temple been profaned, but the offerings had been misapplied. This had tended to discourage the liberalities of the people. They had lost their zeal and fervor, and were reluctant to pay their tithes. The treasuries of the Lord’s house were poorly supplied; many of the singers and others employed in the temple service, not receiving sufficient support, had left the work of God to labor elsewhere.” *Prophets and Kings*, 670.

#### **SECRET CHAMBERS**

“God speaks through his appointed agencies, and let no man, or confederacy of men, insult the Spirit of God by refusing to hear the message of God’s word from the lips of his chosen messengers. By refusing to hear the message of God, men close themselves in **a chamber of darkness**. They shut their own souls away from vast blessings, and rob Christ of the glory that should come to him, by showing disrespect to his appointed agencies.

“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. But Satan is a vigilant, unsleeping foe, ever at work upon human minds, seeking a soil in which he can sow his tares. If he finds any whom he can press into his service, he will suggest ideas and false theories, and make them zealous in advocating error. The truth not only converts, but works the purification of its receiver. Jesus has warned us to beware of false teachers. From the beginning of our work, men have arisen from time to time, advocating theories that were new and startling. But if those who claim to believe the truth, would **go to those who have had experience**, would **go to the word of God** in a **teachable, humble spirit**, and **examine their theories in the light of truth**, and **with the aid of the brethren who have been diligent Bible students**, and **at the same time make supplication unto God**, asking, Is this the way of the Lord, or is it a false path in which Satan would lead me? they would receive light, and would escape out of the net of the Fowler.

“Let all our brethren and sisters beware of anyone who would set a time for the Lord to fulfill his word in regard to his coming, or in regard to any other promise he has made of special significance. ‘It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.’ False teachers may appear to be very zealous for the work of God, and may expend means to bring their theories before the world and the church; but as they mingle error with truth, their message is one of deception, and will lead souls into false paths. **They are to be met, and opposed, not because they are bad men, but because they are teachers of falsehood, and are endeavoring to put upon falsehood the stamp of truth.** What a pity it is that men will go to such pains to discover some theory of error, when there is a whole storehouse of precious gems of truth by which the people might be enriched in the most holy faith. Instead of teaching truth, they let their imagination dwell upon that which is new and strange, and throw themselves out of harmony with those whom God is using to bring the people up upon the platform of truth. They cast aside all that has been said in regard to unity of sentiment and feeling, and trample upon the prayer of Christ as though the unity for which he prayed was unessential, that there is no necessity for his followers to be one, even as he is one with the Father. They go off on a tangent, and **Jehu-like**, call to their brethren to follow their example of zeal for the Lord. If their zeal led them to work in the same lines in which their brethren who have carried the heat and burden of the day, are working; if they were as persevering to overcome discouragements and obstacles as their brethren have been, they might well be imitated, and God would accept them. But men are to be condemned who start out with a proclamation of wonderful light, and yet draw away from the agents whom God is leading. This was the way in which Korah, Dathan, and Abiram did, and their action is recorded as a warning to all others. We are not to do as they have done,—accuse and condemn those upon whom God has laid the burden of the work.” *Review and Herald*, September 12, 1893.