

“The Final Judgment”
Daniel 5:18-31
(Preached at Trinity, May 18, 2014)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. **Chapter 5** opens with Belshazzar conducting a party and what a party it was. It was attended by a thousand nobles along with his wives and concubines. The wine was flowing freely and you can imagine the sounds of frolic and enjoyment among all. At the peak of the festivities Belshazzar commanded that they bring in the holy vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had captured from the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. As they drank from the golden cups they shouted the praises of the gods of silver and gold.
2. We cannot dismiss the significance of this. They had the holy vessels in their midst. These were the vessels separated and sanctified by God. Unmoved by the presence of the holy Belshazzar treated these holy vessels as he would common clay jars.
 - A. This is the sin of all of lost humanity. We treat the holy as common. They breathe God’s air every day. They consume His food and enjoy His goodness. It is all just so common. They fail to recognize that it all comes from the hand of the Divine.
Romans 1:20-21 NAS - "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. ²¹ For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened."
 - B. I’ve preached many times on the danger of an unholy familiarity with God – treating Him as common; not recognizing the infinite distance between the holy and the common, the sacred and the profane.
 - C. There is a great danger for us to become too familiar with the holy things of God
 - a. For many their relationship with God does not inspire awe – they are indifferent to His majesty
Spurgeon - There is a holy familiarity with God which cannot be too much enjoyed; but there is a flippant familiarity with God which cannot be too much abhorred.
 - b. Have you ever come into worship without a sense of awe – is it because you have become accustomed to the sacred
 - c. This was Belshazzar’s crime. The presence of the holy did not inspire awe – he was indifferent to God majesty – Worse, he made a mockery of it.
 - D. This also needs to be heard by our children. You have been raised being continually exposed to the holy character of God. The Gospel has been continually placed before you – and you have dismissed it. Or perhaps you’ve made a mockery of it.

No one is able to ignore the Gospel. It will either change you or condemn you.
2 Corinthians 2:14-16 NAS - " But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. ¹⁵ For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; ¹⁶ to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things?"

3. While Belshazzar is irreverently drinking from the holy vessels of God, suddenly a hand appears and begins writing on the wall:
 "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN."
 Belshazzar became terrified. At one moment he was boasting in his own glory, mocking the God of the Hebrew people, and the next moment his legs became as rubber and his knees knocked together.
4. Immediately Belshazzar began searching for an answer to the mysterious writing on the wall. None of his diviners were able to interpret the message. At this point the queen enters and tells the king about Daniel. Immediately Daniel is brought before the king
5. Daniel tells Belshazzar God's condemnation of his pride and wickedness.
 MENE – (A measure of weight – from a verb meaning "to number or recon")
 "God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it."
 TEKEL – (a shekel or measure of weight)
 "you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient."
 PERES – (a half shekel – it means "to divide")
 "your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians."
6. Babylon's cup was almost full. They had been weighed and found wanting. There remained but a single act to bring down the wrath of God and now judgment was upon them.
 - A. We've also seen this as God spoke to Abraham regarding the nations of the land of Canaan.
Genesis 15:13-16 NAS - "And *God* said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. ¹⁴ "But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve; and afterward they will come out with many possessions. ¹⁵ "And as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶ "Then in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete."
 - B. All men are filling up the cup of God's wrath upon them
Romans 2:5-6 NAS - "But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, ⁶ who will render to every man according to his deeds"
7. Tonight I want us to consider this text as it applies to God's final judgment upon all wickedness as He brings to an end all that is evil upon this earth. Babylon forever stands before us as an example of the intoxicating wickedness of this world, this age that that swallows men as they lust after it, the age loved by multitudes consumed by it. In the Book of Revelation God uses Babylon as an example for us of His final judgment upon evil.

- A. In **Rev 17** we find Babylon as a great harlot that woos people to partake of her lusts and pleasures, the abominations that lead men to destruction. She symbolizes all that seduces and leads men away from God.
Revelation 17:4-5 NAU - "The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality,⁵ and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."
- B. The Babylon that God destroyed through the Medes and Persians is like the spirit of the world in every generation.
 William Hendriksen wrote: "Babylon thus viewed is past, present, and future. Its form changes; its essence remains. The harlot represents the world at the centre of antichristian seduction at any moment of history."
 This wicked system will be destroyed at our Lord's coming.
Revelation 18:1-3 NAU - "After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. ² And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. ³ "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed *acts of* immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality."
Revelation 18:9-10 NAU - "And the kings of the earth, who committed *acts of* immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning, ¹⁰ standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come."
Revelation 18:14-17 NAU - "The fruit you long for has gone from you, and all things that were luxurious and splendid have passed away from you and *men* will no longer find them. ¹⁵ "The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning, ¹⁶ saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls; ¹⁷ for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!"
8. On the Day of Judgment all will be judged by God and there will be a perfect division between the righteous and the wicked. Tonight I want us to consider this coming judgment, but I want you to consider it on a personal level.
- I. We will all stand before Christ
- A. The judgment will be universal
2 Corinthians 5:10 NAU - "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."
1. God's judgment will be personal
 We will stand before God individually

2. We will be examined individually
 God not only knows our works, He knows even our thoughts. We will be judged according to the entirety of our personhood – every secret will be exposed and brought to light.
Romans 2:16 NAU - " on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus."
- B. Jesus Christ is taking notice of everything we do. We are being weighed in the balance.
1. God's word to Belshazzar the word to all who die without Christ: "you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient."
 2. Nothing passes by without His notice – Everything in this world is continually before Him
Psalm 33:13-14 NAU - "The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men; ¹⁴ From His dwelling place He looks out On all the inhabitants of the earth,"
 3. God knows every detail of every event since the beginning of time
 - a. He remembers the details of the fall of Satan
 - b. He remembers the flood and every individual that perished – several million
Genesis 6:5 NAU - "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." He knew their actions. He even knew their thoughts. And He remembers.
Amos 8:7 NAS - "The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob, "Indeed, I will never forget any of their deeds."
 - c. He remembers Sodom and Gomorrah and every detail of the lives of those that perished
 3. He knows the things we think are hidden
 - a. Sarah laughed silently within her tent, yet God knew
 - b. Achan stole the Canaanite treasures and carefully hid them, but God knew
 - c. Judas Iscariot had no idea that anyone knew about the money he often took from the disciple's treasury
John 12:6 NAU - "Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it."
 - d. Ananias and Sapphira thought they had everyone fooled
- C. What are your secrets? He has seen every detail of our life
1. He was there when you were born, when you took your first step, your first words.
 2. He knows every sin
 - a. Every time you disobeyed or disrespected your parents
 - b. Everything that has entered into your mind
 He knows every lustful thought, every covetous thought, envy, jealousy, hate, anger, thoughts of revenge, selfishness, racist thoughts, prideful thoughts
 - c. He knows every lie you have ever told

- d. He knows everything you have taken that did not belong to you
 - e. He knows how you use the internet or social networks or your cell phone – how much time, what you have viewed.
 - f. He knows the things that your heart adores
3. Nothing escapes His infinite eye
Psalm 139:1-4 NAU - "You have searched me and known *me*.² You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar.³ You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.⁴ Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all."
4. He also knows everything you have done for His kingdom
Proverbs 5:21 NAU - "For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He watches all his paths."

II. Apart from Christ all men will be found wanting

- A. All men will experience the same scrutiny as Belshazzar
MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PERES.
- 1. MENE, TEKEL – all will be weighed in the balance.
 - 2. All men apart from Christ will be found wanting.
Psalms 14:2-3 NAS - "The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, To see if there are any who understand, Who seek after God.³ They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one."
 - 3. Every human being will face the judgment given to Belshazzar, PERES: divided. The final judgment will be a final dividing. One way leads to life; the other leads to the outer darkness of hell
All men will hear one of two words: Come or Depart
Matthew 25:34 KJV - "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"
Matthew 25:41 KJV - "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"
- B. No one can meet God's standard
- 1. God demands perfect obedience to His Law
One single sin tips the scale of God's judgment and condemnation
But we don't have just one sin. We have loaded the scale with an infinite weight.
 - 2. For those who have trusted Jesus Christ He has taken all of their sins from the scale. He has covered us with His perfect righteousness

Conclusion:

1. There are several considerations in light of this approaching judgment.
2. Are you living in light of this approaching Day? It is near like an approaching storm. We can hear the thunder and see the flashing on the horizon.
3. If it was today are you ready to be weighed in the balance. All men will be found wanting. We desperately need Christ. Will you turn while it is still today?
Hebrews 3:12-13 NAU - "Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."
4. If your hope is in Christ does your life reflect that you know Him?