

**DANIEL (DARE TO BE GOD'S MESSENGER)
PROGRAM 17 (#911197)
WEEK 4 (911340)
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1-888-734-7707/ www.preceptsforlife.com

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SERIES: Daniel (Dare To Be God's Messenger)

TITLE: Program 17 – The Party's Over

TUESDAY

OPEN

Down through the generations there have been many songs written about parties. One was The Party Is Over My Friend. Another one was It's My Party and I'll Cry If I Want To. The other one was The Party's Over, Turn Off the Lights, My Friend. What about parties? What does God say about parties? Well, I want to take you to a party, a party that soon ended in a very dramatic way. It's a party you won't forget.

PART ONE

You've heard the expression; everybody loves a party. As a matter of fact, you can go to the malls and often you can find party stores where you can buy all sorts of things for festivities. You and I have heard some wonderful stories about some awesome parties. But we've also heard some stories about parties that ended in disaster. Well Daniel, in his book tells us about a party, a party that was thrown by Belshazzar. You say, who's Belshazzar?

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Well that's a good question. He's a man that we're meeting for the first time in the book of Daniel. And to put you in the context of that party, let's open up to Daniel, chapter 5, verse 1. And it says Belshazzar the king held a great feast, a great party for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousands. And when Belshazzar tasted the wine, he gave orders to bring out the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple, which were in Jerusalem, in order that the king and his nobles, and his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. And then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken out of the temple, out of the house of God, which was in Jerusalem; and the king and his nobles, and his wives, and his concubines drank from them. They drank the wine and praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze and iron, and wood and stone. And then there was performance at the party. It was a performance that they hadn't planned on. It was not somebody that they had hired to entertain them. All of a sudden God intervened. Suddenly a finger of a man's hand emerged and began writing opposite the lamp stand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace. And the king saw the back of the hand that did the writing. Then the king's face grew pale and his thoughts alarmed him; and his hip joints went slack and his knees began knocking together. And the king called aloud to bring in the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners. And the king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon, any man who can read the inscription and explain its interpretation to me will be clothed with purple, and have a necklace of gold around his neck and have authority as the third ruler in the kingdom. I mean that's quite an offer. What happened at this party so shook the king, and if you can catch a picture of this; but what was happening was he was sitting on his throne and as he sat on his throne and he saw this handwriting on the wall, which he did not understand, and it was probably in Aramaic and he spoke the language, but he didn't understand it: Mene, mene, tekel upharsin. He didn't understand it, but something about what happened all of a sudden just, in a sense, sobered

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that man up, scared him to death. So all of a sudden his hips go slack, I mean just slack. And it's like he is just lounging there, and, and in that thing. And not only do his hips go slack, but his knees begin to knock. They're not applauding. Believe me, they're not applauding. They are knocking. He is absolutely pale. He is so shaken. He has got to know what is written on the wall. All of a sudden the atmosphere at the party changed. And I want to tell you something. Not only did the atmosphere at the party change, but on that fateful night everything changed, absolutely everything. Now, you say what happened? Well I'm not going to tell you yet. Unless you've read the text, if you've read the text then you know what has happened. But I'm not going to tell you because I want to stop and I want to look at who Belshazzar is, not Belteshazzar. That was the other name for Daniel. But this is Belshazzar. And I want us to look at who he is. I want us to look at the timing in history and what is going on at this party. Well this man was about to cry. And it was his party. And the circumstances of that party are absolutely incredible because outside the walls, those strong fortifications of Babylon were the Medes and the Persians. As a matter of fact, just a week or so before they had defeated in that open field, Nabonidus who was the father of Belshazzar. They had defeated him and he went running. I mean he just took off and he left. But his son was inside the palace and his son thought he was perfectly secure. Why did he think he was perfectly secure? He thought he was perfectly secure because of the fortifications of that city. Remember Nebuchadnezzar had built a great, great city. You say, Kay, if I remember correctly when you were reading Daniel, chapter 5, you said that Belshazzars' was Nebuchadnezzar. Well this was a common thing to refer to a, a king as having his great-grandfather or his great-great-grandfather as his father. In other words you go to the, to the greatest of the kings and you align yourself with him and you say this was my father. It means I'm in the genealogy someplace in that genealogy. Now let me explain the place. And, and this may seem a little, a little unnecessary, but I want to give it to you

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because I want you to understand the timing of everything. I want you to know that Nebuchadnezzar died. As a matter of fact you might want to write it in the margin of your Bible. And often times I do this in pencil. Or you might want to write it in the margin of the worksheets that we've sent you on the book of Daniel or that you've downloaded as your study guide. But Nebuchadnezzar reigned from 605 B.C. to 562 B.C. He died in 562 B.C. And when he died Evil-Murdoch took the throne. Now Evil-Murdoch only lived for, I mean only reigned for two years. He reigned from 562 to 560. And then he was assassinated. So Evil-Murdoch, the son of Nebuchadnezzar lived just those two years. He was assassinated. He was assassinated by Neriglissar, N-e-r-i-g-l-i-s-s-a-r. Neriglissar, the general, was succeeded by his son. His sons name was Labashi Marduk. Now Marduk, remember was the name of one of the prominent gods. There was a big temple to Marduk. Remember, we talked about it. All right, now, that son, that son was murdered after being on the throne for 9 months. There was a coup: that coup was led by Nabonidus. Now Nabonidus is the father of Belshazzar. Nabonidus in this coup, when he took over, he was a man whose mother was a high priestess, a high priestess of the moon god. And so when he took over then he built this beautiful, beautiful temple to the moon god. He was a man who loved antiquities and who loved to explore. And so he would go off and he would do that. He had problems with the wise men in Babylon. And because the problems were so great, instead of fighting them and because his interests weren't there, he just went off to Arabia and there he lived and he put his son Belshazzar on the throne. All right now, Belshazzar married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. And because Belshazzar married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, then that put him in the line of Nebuchadnezzar. So in that marriage and in that alliance he was known then, as a son of Nebuchadnezzar. All right now, let's go on and let's see what's happening. It is 539 B.C. when this party is being thrown. All right, he ruled though, Belshazzar ruled, because this is not the last time you're going to see his

name. Belshazzar ruled from 553 to 539, 553 to 539 and you're going to see why everything stops at 539. Okay, the party is over at 539, not 5 in the evening, 39, not 5:39 in the morning, but 539, the year. All right now, he is sitting in a room. They have found a room and this is where they believe he possibly sat. They found a room in the archeological digs that was a 165 feet by 55 feet. All right now, the king always sat facing the door. He always sat and this is, I'm just building the scenario and you want to see it. He always sat with his back to the wall. Why? So his enemy couldn't come in from the back, so he could see anyone that came in from the door. All right, he sat on ah, his throne on a very high platform, so he was higher than anybody else at the party. He could see over their heads. And so he is setting there and all of a sudden he sees the handwriting on the wall. And of course when he does his hips go slack. I mean he just collapses in the chair and his knees are knocking and he is pale. And he is pale because of this extraordinary, extraordinary circumstance. Now what is about to happen? Well we'll see it as we come back after this, important announcement. And it is important; I want you to listen carefully so that you'll know how to study with us.

PART TWO

When Belshazzar lost it at the party because of the handwriting on the wall I really believe that it's because in his heart he knew all of a sudden, something divine had happened, something supernatural had happened and maybe it had to do with the fact that he had just called for them to get the vessels that belonged to the house of God and bring them to the party, this was a slap in the face of God. Go get those. Bring those in and let's toast our gods with those vessels. I mean this is entertainment boys. It is flaunting yourself in the face of God. And I believe that all of a sudden what happened was he realized listen, something supernatural has just happened. And in all probability it's because I have just taken the vessels from the house of that Hebrew God and toasted our gods of wood and iron and stone. We don't

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know. But we know that there was something that caused fear. And just handwriting on a wall, but if you put that with a fact of the action that he had just done; now watch. It says they drank the wine, verse 4, and praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze and iron and wood and stone. He had never seen his gods do anything like this. It was always a one-way worship of those gods. It was hoping yes, that those gods would give them victory, but they had never seen their god of wood or iron or stone ever open its mouth, ever speak, ever move its carved arm or walk with its carved feet. Now he is seeing a live hand, writing on the wall. And it says suddenly the fingers of the mans hand emerged began writing opposite this lamp stand on the plaster of the wall. So here they are drinking and, and honoring their gods with the vessels from the house of God and suddenly the hand appears. Let me ask you a question. Are you a child of God? If you are a child of God do you honor God as God? Do you bring Him the praise and the honor and the glory and the power that is due His name? Because the Bible tells us over and over and over that all praise and honor and glory and power and strength belong to you. Jesus tells us we're to love God with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our mind, with all of our strength. If you're a child of God, inside is the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is there to not only show you what is right, but also to convict you of what is wrong. So have you ever gone to a party and all of a sudden gotten caught up in the party and you end up crying at the party? You need to represent the kingdom very well, the kingdom of heaven, very, very well. Well what happens at this party? Well let's go on. He is shaken. He has called for the wise men. He has asked the wise men to come and to tell him what is going on. He has offered them a purple robe, a chain of gold on their necks, and he has offered them; this is incredible. I wonder if it's because he had too much wine, but he offered them the third rulership in the kingdom. Now stop and think of how that makes sense. Nabonidus, his father, has gone back to Arabia or gone someplace and they have been co-ruling. Belshazzar has stayed in Babylon.

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Now he's saying hey, there can be a third one that will rule with us if you can tell me the meaning of that. That's how desperate that king was to know what that handwriting on the wall said. Well, they couldn't find anybody. It says then all the king's men came in, but they could not read the writing, the inscription. So listen, it was written on the plaster; it stayed on the plaster. Listen, the Bible's written; it's here. It has stayed here. It has been preserved all these years. The Bible has been preserved for you and me to read it, to know it, to understand it. It's here. So, it says then the king was greatly alarmed. His face grew even paler and his nobles were perplexed. I mean you can imagine, this is one more big party that is going on and all of a sudden the whole atmosphere has changed. And everybody's sitting in that party hall and that banquet hall as they make this great feast, can look at the king; I mean he is in full view and they see that he is ashen white now and they are perplexed. And it says and the queen entered the banquet hall because of the words of the king and his nobles. And the queen spoke and said O king, live forever. Now, she said it, but it's not going to work. It was a greeting. It was saying, you know, we like you as our king and we want you to live forever. He says, she says do not let your thoughts alarm you or your face be pale. There is a man in your kingdom in whom is a Spirit of the holy God. And in the days of your father, illumination, insight and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were found in him. And King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, your father the king appointed him chief of the magicians, conjurers, Chaldeans and diviners. This was because there was an extraordinary spirit, knowledge and insight, interpretation of dreams, explanation of enigmas and solving of difficult problems were found in this Daniel whom the king named Belteshazzar. Let Daniel now be summoned and he will declare the interpretation. Then Daniel was brought before the king. And the king spoke and said to Daniel are you that Daniel who was one of the exiles of Judah, who my father the king brought from Judah? Are you the one that Nebuchadnezzar brought from Judah? Now listen, he's just

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looking a Jewish man in the face and he has just taken the vessels from the house of this Jewish man's God and used them to toast his gods. And he says now I have heard about you, that a Spirit of the gods is in you and that illumination, insight, and extraordinary wisdom have been found in you. Just now the wise men and the conjurers were brought in before me that they might read this inscription and make its interpretation known to me, but they could not declare the interpretation of the message. I want to stop there. The party's going to go on and we're going to study the party later. But I want us to stop and look at a very important precept for life. You and I need to see the contrast between us and between the world because this is what you see at this party. You see Daniel, a man who was tuned into God, Daniel who had the first five books of the Bible at least, but Daniel didn't have the complete revelation of God, so God dealt with Daniel through his prayer in dreams and visions. You and I have the Word of God and we're at the party, beloved. We're out there with the world. And that world does not know and understand God's Word. And it is your responsibility and my responsibility to make sure that they do. It is our responsibility at the world's party so to speak, in the world to let them know the Word of God, to let them see us as a representative of God. It is our responsibility beloved to make sure that in everything that we do, in everything that we say, in every way, that we give Him the honor and the glory and the strength and the power that is due His name. Now beloved, do it.