



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Daniel 5: 1-31

“Weighed, but Wanting”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee again for the opportunity to study the Scriptures together. We thank Thee for Thy Word and specifically for the Book of Daniel and for the truth that is contained within it. We again ask that Thou be with us as we study together; enable us to understand the things that will be most profitable to us. We commit each one present to Thee and pray that the particular needs that we each may have may be met through the Scriptures. We marvel Lord at the privilege that we have of holding in our hands the revelation of God, the record of the ways in which Thou hast dealt with men and of the ways in which Thou shall deal with men as well. Make us to be submissive to the Scriptures. We pray for Jesus' sake, Amen.

[Message] Returning tonight to Daniel chapter 5 and the subject is "Weighed, but Wanting." Daniel chapter 5, when you look through the Bible as the word of God, you discover, of course, that there is a weighing time for kings and for emperors and for presidents and other important men. The Bible makes a great deal over the fact that certain men have been made ministers of God. It is hard for us at times to realize that a man such as President Carter or of one of our other leaders among the nation should be called by Scripture a minister of God. But nevertheless, that is what the Bible says. And

as ministers of God, they are to be called to account. There is a time when their own actions shall be weighed by the standard of the holiness of God. There is a weighing time for nations, also. The Bible makes that plain

Now, of course, we do not speak of a weighing time for nations apart from the individuals involved, but God does deal with nations. He brings to the fore nations and then he plucks up these nations and establishes others, so there is a weighing time for nations. And of course, there is a weighing time for individuals and the Bible speaks very strongly about the fact that we must all, even as believers, appear before the judgment seat of Christ. And then all unbelievers are to be called to account before the great white throne judgment set forth in Revelation chapter 20. So when we read in Daniel chapter 5 about the weighing and the wanting, we are reading something that pertains to kings and emperors and nations and individuals and to us.

Now we have been saying that through these chapters of Daniel, which have to do primarily with history, that we can find three general principles of interpretation and we have been trying to follow these out, at least in measure. There is a historical reference in this particular chapter. And in this case, it is the judgment of Belshazzar, who was the king of Babylon. So, historically, this is the record of the events of 539 BC when the kingdom or the rulership of the world passed from Babylonia to the Persians.

Then we also pointed out that these chapters give us indications of certain important prophetic truths. And of course, the thing that stands out immediately here, since we have the overthrow of Babylon is that what we have here is a kind of typical anticipation of the overthrow of future babylonianism and Babylon as recorded in the last chapters of the Book of Revelations and also in certain chapters of the Book of Isaiah and Jeremiah. And then we also have been making application, that is their spiritual principles that are found in all of these chapters; and in this case, it is the thing that I opened with tonight, stressing the fact that, "Both sinners and saints shall be called to account before the Lord."

Now, I think as we read this chapter that is the thing that stands out for most of the readers. It is the application of the chapter to sinners and to the ultimate judgment that they face by virtue of their relationship or non-relationship to the Lord and his divine revelation. And what we have here told for us very plainly is that God does intrude in the affairs of men and every one of us shall ultimately have some form of judgment. Either that specially set apart for those who are not Christians, a judgment from which we shall by no means escape, or the judgment that is for believers by which rewards are affected.

Another interesting thing about this 5th chapter of Daniel is the fact that for a long time, this chapter was thought to be unhistorical because there were no records or there was no mention in the records of the name of Belshazzar the King. It is now a well-known fact the Nabonidus Chronicle, the name of Belshazzar is found and furthermore, historical information is given to the effect that he was a kind of co-regent with his father. And consequently when he promises Daniel that he will be a third ruler in the land, what we have here is historical fact.

So we learn again that it is safer to count upon the truthfulness and accuracy of Holy Scripture than the truthfulness and accuracy of the critics of Holy Scripture. It is, I think, a long history of interpretation in interpretation that almost always ultimately the word of God is vindicated. Now, we do not mean by that that everything in the Bible has been vindicated according to human understanding today. But down through the years, that has been the pattern, and I am sure that in the future, those things that we might consider to be difficulties will find their ultimate solution and we will find that the scriptures are accurate and true.

Let us turn now to Daniel chapter 5 and I am going to do as we have been doing, that is, I will just read a section and then discuss it. And then we will read the next section rather than reading through the whole chapter at the beginning and then rereading it. I hope, incidentally, that you are reading the Book of Daniel as you study through it with me.

“Belshazzar the King held a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand. When Belshazzar tasted the wine, he gave orders to bring the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, in order that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them.”

Incidentally, the term "His Father", if you have a New American Standard Bible, you will notice it says "His Forefather" because his father was not Nebuchadnezzar; that was his grandfather. Nabonidus was his father, so this is his father in the sense of forefather just as I say with reference to my little grandchild or my grandchildren, that I am their father. That is, I am their father through my daughter, but nevertheless they call me grandfather, so I am their father, and they are my children. At least that's the way I look at it.

“Now then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God which was in Jerusalem; and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron and stone.”

It was the year 539 B.C., in the East, the day is fierce and the light is garish, but the nights are full of beauty and haunting mystery. The day has passed, and now night has come down over the great brown capital of Babylon. Babylon had 250 towers. It was a magnificent city and the Euphrates River, as you probably know, flowed through the center of the city of Babylon. It washed the walls of the palaces, the orchards and the temples. Usually in the evening, the winds begin to stir and therefore the leaves and flowers of the hanging gardens which had been built by Nebuchadnezzar began to move.

Nebuchadnezzar had a wife who never got over the fact that she came from the mountains and so he built the hanging gardens in order to give her an impression of being in the mountains. It was one of the Seven Wonders of the World. So the winds stealing over the city began to scatter everywhere the fragrant incense of the particular forms of fruit and flower that were in bloom.

Soon light began to show in the castle or palace of Belshazzar. This night there was going to be a great banquet. And incidentally on the night of the destruction of the city of Babylon, according to some of the historians, I believe it is Herodotus. I used to read Herodotus when I taking Greek in college. And as I remember, in Herodotus, he makes mention of the fact that on the night of the overthrow of Babylon, there was a banquet. But at any rate, there was a banquet on that night and it was a great one, a thousand of the lords and nobles, their ladies, the wives and the concubines were present, which was rather unusual because for this kind of state banquet, the women are usually not involved. So this one must have been a banquet at which there was, it was planned, that there would be quite a bit of lust and of other forms of sexual impropriety.

From the windows of the yellow palace, gorgeous golden banners floated in the evening breeze. The banqueting was a large banquet and we read about it here when we read that, "They brought finally the vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God, which was in Jerusalem and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them." They have totally disregarded the fact that in Holy Scripture, it had already been said that in the future, men would say Babylon the Great has fallen, has fallen. Jeremiah had written concerning that and so had Isaiah. But they are not reading Scripture, they are not paying attention to the word of God and consequently, they are in deep trouble.

The floor of the palace, it has been said, was of tessellated marble, white, red, black and blue. And the walls were hung with tapestries on which were traced the winged symbols of Babylonish power and superstition. There were Persian rugs about,

they must have beautiful rugs. The candelabras, wrought in Damascus were swinging from the ceilings and illuminating the walls. The golden candlesticks were aglow with soft radiance, everything seemed to be lovely. There were strange fish that were flashing in the waters of the fountains. And now the guests have arrived and everything is ready for a big night.

We read of this banquet as, "A great feast for a thousand of his nobles and Belshazzar was drinking wine in the presence of the thousands." There is an ancient saying that says, "Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." And Belshazzar is a madman. Now he is not mad in the sense that he is crazy or insane, he had not gone around the bend as we say, but he was nevertheless insane in the sense that he paid no attention to holy Scripture.

Lord Byron has a poem called *The Vision of Belshazzar* and it has a stanza,

“The King was on his throne. The satraps thronged the hall: a thousand bright lamps shone; o'er that high festival. A thousand cups of gold, in Judah deemed divine -- Jehovah's vessels hold the godless Heathen's wine.”

Well, Belshazzar then was in his cups, as we say. And it was time for him to gratify his lust and so they were drinking, and others were drinking and evidently, so far as we can tell, some of the behavior was taking place in the side rooms and probably even as they drank more and more, some of the adultery and other forms of sexual sin were taking place in the auditorium itself until something happened. And we read in verse 5 through 9 after reading of the setting of the story thereof, the fingers on the wall:

"Suddenly the fingers 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."

We all can identify with that. That is the feeling you get when you stand before the preacher and he says, "Will thy have this woman to be thy wedded wife?" [Laughter] or when you stand on the first tee of a golf tournament for the first time and tee up your ball and wonder if you are going to even hit it at all, much less keep it in the fairway. Or some of the other things you all know, or when the I.R.S. calls you on the telephone, that's another time when your knees begin to knock together and your hip joints go slack.

So God has a way of speaking to individuals, and he speaks even to great kings like Belshazzar. "The king called aloud to bring in the conjurers." Is that not interesting? They always appeal to those that cannot help. That is characteristic of human nature.

"The king called for the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners. The king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon, 'Any man who can read this 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.' Then all the king's wise men came in but they could not read the inscription and make known its interpretation to the king. Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed. His face grew even paler and his nobles were perplexed."

The attempts of the magi or the wise men were unsuccessful. I don't know whether we can really say, is absolutely true or not, but undoubtedly this writing puzzled them considerably. It may well have been that as they looked at it, it was, the writing was arranged in such a way that it was not the normal way for reading their particular literature. In Chaldea, just as in Hebrew, you read from the right towards the left. It may be that these things were written in such a way that it was contrary to their custom. So I

can imagine them looking, then trying to stand sideways, looking at it sideways to see if it made any sense that way, then standing on their heads and trying to find out if it made sense that way, but they could not do it.

Someone has suggested, and I do not, I am not sure whether this is possible or spur of the moment, but some have suggested that the writing was like this, [Johnson is gesturing] instead of reading from this way, that it was down, and so that instead of reading this way, you should have read this way. "*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin,*" or *Peres* as the case may be, but at any rate, it was something that the wise men were unable to read. It may also have been that their eyes were holden as the New Testament says. It may be that it was a kind of writing that made absolutely no sense or the letters made no sense to them until the Holy Spirit gave understanding. So, they were unable to understand what they saw on the wall.

Now then the word goes out for Daniel in verse 10 through 16 we read of the finding of Daniel. Someone might have wondered at this point, "Where is the God of the Hebrews?" Well, the God of the Hebrews was a whole lot closer than anybody in that great auditorium realized. Someone also has said that preachers ultimately always have their day. Now Daniel, evidently for a considerable period of time has not had much influence in Babylon because King Belshazzar does not seem to know about him. And so it may have been a number years that Daniel, now a man of about 80 years of age, and so had, we might say, lost his influence. But when a man is faithful to the word of God and proclaims it without apology, sooner or later he will have an opportunity to speak and he will have an opportunity to speak to important men. The reason he will, is because God gives him the opportunity. He will always do it, and he will reach down and take his faithful servants and put them in the place where they can have an opportunity to speak for him.

So let's read now, we read "The queen entered the banquet hall because of the words of the king and his nobles, the queen spoke and said, 'O king, live forever!'" She



had heard of the thing that had happened and she had heard that they were unable to understand and were very much disturbed and her first advice is typical female advice, "Pull yourself together. Do not let your thoughts alarm you or your face be pale."

Now, we do not need advice like that in times like this. That's the one thing we cannot do. That is the way the legalist always goes about things. They always tell us to do something and, of course, our great problem is we do not have the power to do it. So we need something beyond exhortation. "There is a man in your kingdom in whom is a spirit of the holy gods, and in the days of your father, illumination, might, 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 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 Beltheshazzar.

“‘Let Daniel now be summoned and he will declare the interpretation.’ Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke and said to Daniel, ‘Are you that Daniel who is one of the exiles from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah. Now I have heard about you that the 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. But I personally have heard about you, that you are able to give interpretations and solve difficult problems. Now if you are able to read the inscription and make its interpretation known to me, you will be clothed with purple, and wear necklace of gold around your neck, and you will have authority as the third ruler in the kingdom.’”

Daniel, I say, was 80 years of age now. No doubt a very venerable figure and he began his interpretation by an illustration. He reminds Belshazzar of the condition of his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, and so in verse 17 through 21, he illustrates the matter that he is going to bring to the attention of Belshazzar.

Let me read these verses. Then Daniel answered and said before the king, ‘Keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else.’ He is another one of these men that serves the Lord and consequently, the money for the exercise of his ministry is something in which he is not interested. God has promised to supply the needs of his servants, and he does not need any money or rewards from those who are not of the children of God.

You see all through Bible, people think that when in Believers Chapel or in the messages that some of us give in the Chapel, we talk about money as something that is important in Scriptural teaching and the principles for money as being important. They are important. It is all through holy Scripture taught that God is responsible for the needs of his servants and consequently, his servants don’t have to beg for money. They don’t have to write prayer letters and give veiled hints that they need specific forms of money and the only thing really that keeps evangelicals doing this is that there are so many gullible evangelical people who will yield to that form of pressure. So Daniel begins properly, "Keep your gifts for yourself and your rewards to someone else." God supplies the needs of his saints and if they are faithful to him, he will meet all of their needs and generally, he meets them very well.

Now, he will meet their needs, they are not rich, but he meets their needs and we should look to him. We should expect men who minister in Believers Chapel to look first of all to the Lord for the supply of funds. That's why when people come to Believers Chapel and we talk to them about ministering in the chapel, we don’t expect them to say, "Now how much are you going to pay us? What kind of retirement program do you have? What about the insurance?"

Now, of course, we want to provide for the people who minister here, but we want them to minister in faith. We want them to minister looking to the Lord. We want them to have the same kind of faith that we and you have, that God supplies the needs of his people, and so we expect them to commit themselves before they know what they are going to be getting. We want them to take that step of faith. We want them to be willing to take that step of faith, and then we feel we have a responsibility. We, that is all of us, we have a responsibility to minister to those who minister to us; but we want men of faith to minister to us. They will be the men who will be able to help us in our spiritual life; so that little statement there is rather important. "Keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. However, I will read the inscription to the king and make the interpretation known to him." He was rewarded rather well incidentally by Belshazzar as we shall see.

O king, the Most High God granted sovereignty, grandeur, glory and majesty to Nebuchadnezzar your father. Because of the grandeur which he bestowed on him, all the peoples, nations, and men of every language feared and trembled before him. Whomever he wished he killed and whomever he wished he spared alive; and whomever he wished he elevated and whomever he wished he humbled. But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit became so proud that he behaved arrogantly, he was deposed from his royal throne and his glory was taken away from him. He was also driven away from mankind and his heart was made like that of beasts, and his dwelling place was with the wild donkeys; that part I think is new. I don't believe that was stated in the 4th chapter in this way. It was simply stated he would be with the wild beasts and so with the wild donkeys. He was given grass to eat like cattle and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until he recognized that the Most High God is ruler over the realm of mankind and that he sets over it whomever he wishes.

Now the accusation follows in verses 22 and 23 after that illustration. He says, "Yet you, his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart even though you knew all

this; but you have exalted yourself against the Lord of Heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before you, and you and your nobles, your wives, and your concubines have been drinking wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which do not see, hear or understand. But the God in whose hand are your life breath and your ways, you have not glorified.

Now notice the three charges that he lodges against Belshazzar. First of all he says, "You have sinned against the knowledge of the truth." Notice verse 22; "You have not humbled your heart even though you knew all of this." In other words, the history of Nebuchadnezzar had been recited to Belshazzar. But even though the history of the arrogance and pride and the judgment of God, and then the deliverance of Nebuchadnezzar had been recited to Belshazzar, he nevertheless had not humbled his heart, so he had sinned against the knowledge of the truth that he had.

Now that, of course, is an accusation that God brings against all of us and it is an accusation that we need to bear in mind. The fact that you sit in an auditorium like this in Believers Chapel, and listen to the word of God means that you are liable before him for the truth that is proclaimed here. You are liable for a response. I am not sure I can repeat this just on the spur of the moment, but it was one of the well known bible commentators Matthew Henry I think who said that, "We are liable not only for the truth that we know and have not applied, but the truth that we might have known and did not come to know." So we are liable for all of the truth of the word of God which we hold in our hands, and for the time that we might have spent in the study of holy Scripture. That's a very solemn thing and I do not look forward to the day when I have to stand before the Lord and be judged by him for the use of my time.

"So you have not humbled your heart even though you knew all of this." I like to say that many of you in this audience, you have had many opportunities to respond to the word of God. You have heard many sermons, some good, some bad; but nevertheless you have heard many sermons and you know your responsibility to study holy Scripture

and God is going to call you into account. You are going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ if you are a Christian, and you are going to have to give account. But the fact that you are still here in this audience is an optimistic fact. I have a good friend that likes to say that, "As long as we are living, it's all optimism because God has some usefulness for us. We are still here. Evidently He has some purpose for us." So He has some purpose for you and there is still time for you to alter your ways.

Now the next thing that he says about Belshazzar is that he has defied the Lord. He says, "You have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven" in verse 23, so he has defied the Lord and then finally he says, "You have worshipped the idols." He says, "You have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone which do not see, neither hear nor understand." Ah, that's something that we have not managed to do. Have we? Well, is that really true? I am afraid many of us have also worshipped the gods of gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. In fact, in the New Testament the Apostle Paul speaks about covetousness, which is idolatry. So, just as the ancient king gave himself to materialism, so we too give ourselves to materialism and Scripture calls that idolatry. So, Belshazzar, you have known truth you have not lived up to, you have defied the God of Heaven, you have worshipped the idols.

Now, in the words that follow verses 24 through 28, this is still part of the interpretation of Daniel, we have the elucidation of these words and you will see that the exposition that Daniel gives his first of all governmental, then personal, and then international. "*Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin.*" I will talk about that in just moment. Let me read verses 24 through 28. "Then the hand was sent out from him and this inscription was written out."

Now this is the inscription that was written out: *Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin.* This is the interpretation of the message: 'MENE'-- God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it. TEKEL --You have been weighed in the scales and found deficient, lacking. The Aramaic word *bassier* [phonetic] is one that means lacking or deficient. PERES --Your

kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians." Incidentally, there is no problem in that UPHARSIN is the third word of verse 25 or the fourth word but the third concept. And the PERES in verse 28, they are related, one being a plural and one being singular and there may be some textural difficulty here that we are not certain about.

But first of all, notice verse 26. This is the interpretation of the message: MENE -- God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it. That of course is a reference to the kingdom of Belshazzar itself, so this word is a governmental word.

There is an old story about a French preacher by the name of Bour de Louis, who was preaching before Louis XIV, and he wanted to rebuke the king for his profligate life. And so he drew in general terms, the picture of a great sinner and the judgment that was to fall upon him, but perceiving that Louis XIV who was known among other things for his licentiousness did not take the description to heart and the warning to himself, finally Bour de Louis subtly cried out in the voice of thunders, as Nathan did once to David, "Thou art the man!" And afterwards he said to the startled monarch, your majesty must not be angry for in the pulpit I have no other master than the King of Kings. And Daniel was a good illustration of that so he speaks to this great King and says, "God has numbered your kingdom."

Next, *Mene, Mene* -- incidentally there is an old story about a little girl. I think it was she went to a Bible class and the teacher was teaching on the handwriting of the wall using Daniel chapter 5 verse 25, "*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.*" And when she returned home, the parents asked the girl what the minister's sermon was about or the teacher's message. And she said, "It was mini, mini, tickle the person." [Laughter] *Mene* is a word that comes from an Aramaic word that means "to number" and the repetition seems to be for emphasis. The next word is a word that means "to weigh". You have been weighed on the scales and found deficient. Now, this is personal. He was speaking about

Belshazzar himself. And then final word *Peres* which means divided or broken, "Your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and to the Persians."

Now the response of Belshazzar is given in verse 29. Then Belshazzar gave orders, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a necklace of gold around his neck, and issued a proclamation concerning him that he now had authority as the third ruler in the kingdom.

Now, that appears at first as if that is very meaningful perhaps even significant response. It might even suggest that Belshazzar is a man of faith but I do not think that that is really true. Will you look carefully at that 29th verse again? "Belshazzar gave orders. They clothed Daniel and then he said...he issued a proclamation concerning him that he now had authority as the third ruler in the kingdom." But what has God said about the kingdom? Well he has said, "Your kingdom has been weighed on the balances found deficient and furthermore, it is going to be given over to the Medes and Persians. So it was quite clear, it seems to me, that he has not believed the message that has come to him and Daniel, I am sure did not think that this honor was all that great, to be third ruler in the kingdom that was going to be wrenched from the hands of Belshazzar this very night.

So here is the King, in the presence of the great prophet given a message from God and even in spite of the unusual circumstances, the brilliant way in which the message has come over and the interpretation given, he does not believe. So the retribution is described in verse 30. "That same night Belshazzar, the Chaldean king was slain." There is a text in Proverbs that says, "He, that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed."

Well, here is an illustration of it. "That same night, Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain." Some of the Greek historians tell us what happened that night. The Persians came and they see a loft, the River Babylon from the City of Babylon and consequently when the River, when the waters flowed though the city and since they had stopped the

waters from flowing through, all they had to do, they had diverted the river, all they had to do was march in under the walls and thus found themselves right in the midst of the city while the banqueting was going on.

You know, you learn some very important truths from the word of God and there are some things that even the United States of America does not know very well. Man pictures justice with scales and sword but blindfolded but God is a God of knowledge and acts with full light upon each case and each act with conscience, infallible, incorruptible accuracy. Empires do not stand behind many ICBMs they have. We do not stand as a nation because we are so powerful.

Now mind you, I believe that we ought to be as powerful as possible. I still think that Theodore Roosevelt gave some good advice about a big stick and I liked that because unfortunately the United States of America is not a Christian nation at all. It never was. And so consequently, we cannot plead that we are to have the support of God as a Christian nation so I am, for all the preparation that we can possibly make for any kind of activity on the part of our enemies but let us be very certain about this that our safety does not rest in our munitions. We have had many illustrations of that: The Maginot Line. I am old enough to remember all of the articles written before 1939 or 1940, whenever the Germans have finally attack the Maginot Line, I can still remember reading those comforting articles in which it was stated that the Maginot Line was the greatest series of fortifications that any nation had ever constructed. I forgot how many days the Germans took to completely run through the Maginot Line, about which so many words had been written. I was amazed. I remember being totally amazed at what had happened.

The unexpected happens constantly. Truman did defeat Dewey. He did. It is hard to realize that but he did. I had some good friends in the Dallas Seminary, because I was in the seminary at that time when they invited me over, invited my wife and me over that night for a victory party. There were great Dewey supporters. They invited us over.



I will never forget that night. Nine o' clock, it was a little bit of a damper, 10 o' clock, a little more, 11, consternation, surprise, astonishment and then it was terrible. It was really terrible. And they were Yankees and we were Southerners and we did not know enough not to be for Truman and so it was a very interesting night but Dewey did lose in spite of what everybody says. And other unexpected things do happen. And this was surely an unexpected thing.

Well, finally, the fulfillment of the prophecy is given in verse 31, "So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at the age of 62." Let me say just a few words by way of conclusion.

One of the principles that emerge from this most interesting chapter is the fact of judgment. "Shall not the God of all the earth deal justly?" Abraham said before the Lord. "The Lord is a God of knowledge and by Him, actions are weighed," Samuel says. So the fact of divine judgment is a fact with which we must live. There is the testimony of nature itself. You can look about you in nature around us and see the fact of divine judgment. Not everything in nature is good. In fact, when you see lightning and destruction, earthquakes and all of the other forms of natural disasters, those are anticipations of the fact that God does judge. He does judge. The testimony of conscience is also to that fact. God has implanted within every one of us the conscience. It is the monitor as John Calvin said, the monitor and it is by this that God also gives testimony to his righteousness and his holiness.

To me, one of the most significant illustrations of this was the illustration of King Herod. He had cruelly put John the Baptist to death because the forerunner had condemned his sins. And then after that, word came to Herod that there was a man by the name of Jesus who was going around preaching the word of God and saying things that sounded very similar to the things that John the Baptist said. And though he had had his head cut off, nevertheless, his conscience spoke before his mind could marshal

arguments against it and he said it is John whom I have beheaded. He is risen from the dead.

Deep down in the heart of man, there is the conviction that judgment is to come. There is the testimony of providence. There is the testimony of the law of God. There is the testimony of the gospel. The Scriptures themselves stressed very strongly the fact that all of the features of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ while they tell of marvelous grace, they also tell of marvelous judgment, too. When he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" We stressed and rightly so that this is the means by which we have everlasting life but never forget that when he said, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" He was bearing judgment and that is testimony to the fact that God does judge. The cross of Christ is a great testimony to the mercy and grace of God but it is also a great testimony to the judgment of God. So we can expect judgment.

The resurrection itself, we rejoice in the resurrection. We are glad because we know the Scripture teaches he rose again from the dead and testimony to the fact that the price has been paid. But the Apostle Paul in Acts chapter 17 tells us that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is an assurance that he has given...that he is going to bring men to judgment and consequently, men are to repent in the light of his resurrection. It is also, I think, taught very plainly here the failure of man, "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting."

Do you know, my dear friend in this audience that if you were to be weighed by God on the basis of what you are and have been, every one of you in this room would be wanting. You do not have the righteousness that God requires for acceptance before Him. Do you think because you are a good citizen and you pay your taxes and you are kind to your family and you provide for them and you are good to your friends and you think that you are not nearly so bad as half a dozen other people that you know? Do you think that you are going to get by on the basis of your goodness? You shall be greatly disappointed because God requires perfection. He says, "Thou shall love the Lord Thy

God, with all Thy heart, with all Thy mind, with all Thy soul and Thy neighbor as Thyself."

How many of you would like to stand and say you have always kept those words of the Lord Jesus? I will give you a few minutes right now if you would like to tell us how you have done it. I see, you are embarrassed, aren't you? You do not want to talk about it. No, you know you have failed to measure up to God's standard of holiness and righteousness. And do you know that if you do not have that kind of righteousness, you have no chance of standing before him on the basis of your own good works. You are weighed in the balances and as he says here, *bassier*, you have found too light. You do not have enough weight. You do not have enough of righteousness with you.

Now, the failure of man is evidenced by the weight of the commandments. Do you know that if you disobey one of the commandments, you have disobeyed all of them? You realize that? That is a startling thing, is it? If we offend in one point, we have offended in all because the law is like a pane of glass. If you break one part of it, you have broken it all. And so if you have broken one part of the law of God, you are a lawbreaker. That is what you are. So the commandments weigh us down. All of the other weights that keep us from living up to the standards of God are the weights of money, of religion, of education...all of the things that keep us from measuring up to the standards God has set forth in His word.

There is an old story about a minister-to-be, a young man, who had a conversation with R.A. Torrey, a well-known preacher of a generation or so ago. Mr. Torrey was a great evangelist and was the pastor of the Church of the Open Door in Los Angeles back in the earlier part of the 20th century. He was asked to talk to this young man who wanted to go into the ministry and Mr. Torrey said afterwards that he was a splendid looking young fellow and when he came to him, he said, "You want to go into the ministry, do you?" The man said, "Yes." And he said, "Are you a Christian?" He said, "Why, of course, I am a Christian. I was brought up a Christian and I am not going back

on the training of my parents." Mr. Torrey said, "Have you been born again?" "What?" Mr. Torrey said, "Jesus says, except the man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

He said, "Well, I have never heard of that before." Mr. Torrey said, "Then, did you know that you have committed the greatest sin a man can commit?" "No," he said, "I never did." "What do you think it is?" He said, "Murder?" "You are greatly mistaken." Let us see what God said. And he turned to that passage that I cited just a moment ago, "Thou shall love the Lord, Thy God, with all Thy heart, with all Thy soul, with all Thy mind." This is the first and great commandment. He turned to the young man and said, "What commandment is it?" He said, "The first and greatest."

He said, "Have you kept it? Have you loved God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind? Have you put God first in everything? In business? In pleasure? In social life? In politics?" "No, sir, I have not," he said. "Well, you have broken the commandment and what commandment is it?" He said, "Well, it is the first and greatest commandment." "What have you done then?" Mr. Torrey said. He said, "I have broken the first and greatest of the commandments. I have committed the greatest sin a man can commit, but I never saw it before."

That is the status of every one of us. That is the way we stand before God. We have broken the first and greatest commandment. There is nothing more that we could do to make our condemnation certain. It is already certain. But finally, there is, of course, the fact of redemption.

Now, Daniel does not talk about that in the 5th chapter of this book except indirectly. He talks about the great God and of course, he talks about the God who has made it possible for him to understand these things and we assume that this lies in the back of matter but it is not taught here. It is taught elsewhere in the word of God that the fact of redemption is a fact provided ultimately through the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, I wonder what shall be written on the wall of your character. Will it be weighed in the balances and found wanting? Or will it be weighed in the balances and found wanting but trusting in Christ? What will it be? May God, through the Holy Spirit, bring you to trust in him. Let us close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are so grateful to Thee for the privilege of studying the Scriptures. We thank Thee for this great chapter and we recognize the application of it to us, Lord. We have been weighed in the balances and found wanting. But we want to praise Thee and thank Thee for the blood that was shed on Calvary's cross that has covered all our sin. And we pray, O God, that if there are some in this audience who have never believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, give them no rest or peace until they rest in him. May they see their condemnation, their deficiencies, the judgment that awaits them, that is hanging over them. May they flee to the cross.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.