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“IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD.”
COL.3.1

DANIEL 5.25.

An Address (revised) at

***Forest Gate E. 7.
2nd March, 1912***

by

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DANIEL 5.25.

An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,
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Daniel 5.25-31. "And 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. Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old."

Last week we considered this wondrous narrative in connection with the character of Belshazzar, and the contrasted character of Daniel whose name was called BelTEshazzar. We saw on the one hand the pleasure-loving, God-defying monarch, and we saw on the other hand the faithful servant of the Lord, speaking plainly even in a King's presence; and now we approach the subject of that writing that caused Belshazzar such concern, and which made the background for Daniel's plain testimony to the truth.

Exactly how it was written we cannot say. A man's hand was seen, but there was a certain hiding of the person that wrote, it would seem, for we read there came forth fingers of a man's hand (in verse 5) as if to suggest to us that there was not the beholding of the whole man, but only the fingers of a man's hand. We are here then brought before us that there was probably mystery about it all. The characters were evidently distinct from the ordinary characters that would be written, for the wise men acquainted with different languages could not read them. There was mystery throughout, and each word was, as it were, a sentence. God would VEIL Himself when He REVEALED Himself, that He might make the King tremble, and the King's courtiers at least to feel awhile in danger. The

wording was brief, - MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. Only four words, and of those four words one is repeated twice over. I suppose that we may draw the inference that those who looked on could see that there was the same word there twice, and I suppose that we may say as there are only fifteen letters in the whole of the words that they were probably written very large in this banqueting hall that everyone present might behold them; - but more we cannot say. There is perhaps something symbolic as well as actual in there being four words, for these four words bring before us God's judgment on the world powers, and the number 4 is a worldwide number, as we have in the four metals of chapter 2. The repeated word reminds us of the repeated "Abraham, Abraham" and "Samuel, Samuel". It was the last word of summons, - "mene, mene". The word "MENE" is the word in Aramaic from which the word "maneh" comes, and from which our word "month" evidently comes, for the "month" is that which is numbered by the "moon". We should really say "moonth". It is only that we shorten it because of adding to the word, a point which is interesting in connection with Hebrew. Hebrew is frequently shortened when adding and we shorten "moonth" to "month" by leaving out one of the "o's". In Isaiah 65.11 we get the Hebrew word in the margin. There are those who "prepare a table for Gad, and furnish a drink offering unto MENI". "Meni" was evidently the moon-god. So where the word came forth "MENE" it was a striking witness from God not only that there was a numbering (although we have evidence in Jeremiah 25 at which we will look in a moment) but there was also God's witness against idolatry. The name of a "god", as it were, so definitely brought before those who saw it. Shall we next turn to Jeremiah 25? There God says in verse 12 "And it shall come to pass that when seventy years are accomplished that I will punish the King of Babylon and that nation saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations". So God had numbered the Kingdom, it was no mere accident. There was no mere chance. The "head of gold" had reached its end, and all Nebuchadnezzar's grand image of gold could not lengthen it any more. God had numbered the Kingdom of the Chaldeans. "MENE". The word comes afterwards in the interpretation of Daniel 5. "God hath numbered thy kingdom and FINISHED it". This is of course the INSPIRED interpretation. "FINISHED" is the word from which our word "peace" comes, for the word "peace" is as you know "a completed work" in the Hebrew. It is a strange idea to us but beautifully suggestive in its spiritual bearing upon that great peace offering of our beloved

Lord. Here then we have brought before us that God was going to quiet the King of Babylon. "God hath numbered and brought it to a quietness". It should be laid low, it should be silenced, and the mighty monarch should be brought down before the mightier God. The word "MENE" is the contrast in order of letters with the word "AMEN", that is the word "true", and surely God in numbering the kingdom was setting aside the words of men, and altering their truth, for the King of Babylon had sought to change times and seasons as the future king of Babylon will, - and had thought he could make his kingdom endure for ever, but GOD had "changed" IT.

Just one word before we leave this, as to the time of the Kingdom of Babylon. You will notice it was 70 years specially, in Scripture history. I do not say it was not longer, but Babylon is not viewed as the world power UNTIL it conquered Israel, till God gave Jehoiakim into his hand, that was from 606. Then it went on 70 years from 606 to 536. That gives the 70 years. Out of those 70 years we know that the King of Babylon was cast out for 7 years from his kingdom, (king Nebuchadnezzar). So we have the 70 and the 7 both brought before us, suggesting God's completely numbering and completely arranging, and finishing all off. As to the whole "times of the Gentiles" they are viewed as seventy sevens, and in the last seven of them (which is parallel with the seven times of Nebuchadnezzar) we know how Antichrist "the beast" will be exalting himself against God. So that we see this kingdom, though it is full of sixes, whether in the image that Nebuchadnezzar made, or in the name of the beast, the last king, (Nebuchadnezzar is the first king of the Gentiles and Antichrist is the last) (and they are both linked with 6's) is also linked with sevens. It is not only suggestive of man's finished work, but of man's completeness. And 7 is the number of peace. "God hath numbered thy kingdom and brought it to a quietness." The term is very suggestive, particularly as we have the Medo-Persian empire at its beginning as a type of the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus, for you know how the Medo-Persian kingdom arranged for the building of the temple. Truly, when God has ended the 70 sevens He will bring "peace". There is a number for the elect's sake. He hath made those days short at their end that there may be just the exact number.

As to the "TEKEL", The "T" is similar to the "S(h)." "SEKEL" is "SHEKEL", the Shekel, the coin among the Jews. We know how that they used to WEIGH out

money, so the word for "shekel" was the word for "weighing". "Thou art weighed in the balances (TEKEL or SEKEL) and art found wanting", something incomplete. It is remarkable here that the word "wanting" is the same word "holy", but for one little tittle. It is one tittle short of the word "holy". "CHASID" (חָסִיד) is the word "holy", and this is the word "CHASIR" (חָסִיר), so it was wanting. The very word is wanting (of a tittle) to make holy. He was weighed and found wanting, found lacking. The Easterns had the idea of a weighing after death. Egyptian false teaching is full of that, and the thought was if a man had more piety than impiety he would go into a blissful resting place, but if he had more sin than godliness he would go to hell. We know well that man had nothing good about him, and that God does not need to wait till after death to weigh. "Thou ART weighed ... and found wanting". The man was weighed.

So we have the cutting short of man's time in the "MENE"; the setting aside as to that which was called "length of days". Here we have the other side of man's weight. His day is cut off, his quantity before God NOTHING. The double setting aside of man. God has scales. He weighs actions, as 1 Samuel 2.3 says. He ponders spirits, as the Book of Proverbs says. That which is within and that which is without are alike weighed by God.

The word "UPHARSIN" is explained as "PERES". The "U" in front is a separate word, and in the Hebrew the one case where a vowel can begin a syllable. "Pharsin" is of course a form of the word that is distinct from "Peres", but not a distinct word. It is simply modified by two of what are called the servile letters, - the letters that modify forms. "PERES" gives us a single form, and a word with two meanings, for it means "DIVIDED" similar to the word "PERES" of "PERES-UZZAH", where we have the Lord "breaking forth" and making a "breach" upon Uzzah. The breaking forth, - the "PERES". And also similar to the word for "PERSIANS". The word has two meanings therefore. "PERES" denotes both "the dividing" and "the Persians". So we have brought before us by these three words, not only God's judgment on the individual but God's judgment on the Kingdom, and God's putting aside of Babylon's limited time of monarchy out of the "Times of the Gentiles". Yes, dividing, AND the Persians.

We notice next that after the interpretation Belshazzar did not repent, did not feel the anguish he had felt before, but brushing aside the grief that he had

known already, he spoke of clothing Daniel with a fine robe, and actually did so. How hardened the man must have been! And his courtiers were there, yet they did not tremble. It is sad to see people not trembling when the enemy had drawn near their gate, when the Lord was their enemy, and when the writing was on the wall, yet they did not tremble. Man brought forth his scarlet, and God soon shed their scarlet (blood). Man ruled (in his own opinion) for scarlet was the kingly colour, and God ended the Kingdom. In like manner will it be with Antichrist; his last acts will be a denial of God's authority, but in that night shall the Lord set up His Kingdom, and Antichrist will be laid low. His "scarlet" will be put on one side: his glory will be brought low. "In that night" or rather "that Day" will the Lord Jesus take the Kingdom, even as Darius took it from the wicked and profligate king.

There is a little difficulty as to Darius the Median who took the kingdom. You will notice that in 2 Chron. 36 we read concerning Cyrus that as soon as the threescore and ten years were up "In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia"; And in Ezra 1.1. "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia", and again "Cyrus king of Persia" and in verse 2 "Cyrus king of Persia" and in verse 7 "Cyrus the king", and in verse 8 "Cyrus king of Persia". Moreover in the Book of Daniel itself we are told (Daniel 1) that "Daniel continued even until the first year of King Cyrus"; and in Daniel 10.1. "In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia" a thing was revealed unto Daniel. Cyrus therefore comes in prominence before us, yet here we have Darius the Median. Even in the very chapter however that speaks of the Median, the writing on the wall has not "And the Medes" but "And the Persians". Thus this very chapter harmonises with the others in emphasizing the Persians. The Medes are however brought before us in Isaiah 13.17. "Behold I will stir up the Medes against them which shall not regard silver and as for gold they shall not delight in it." Summing up, it would seem that the words of Daniel 8 were being wonderfully illustrated. In Daniel 8 we find a prophecy which occurred in the third year of Belshazzar's reign, a prophecy that there would be a ram with two horns (verse 3) one higher than the other, but the higher coming up last. The empire was of the Medes and Persians, the Persians

came up last, but the Persians became more important than the Medes. It would seem that this was the last Median king, - Darius. I say "it would seem" because these are known by different names in the ordinary history. We have already found that in some other cases: for example, Nergal Sharezer is known as Neriglissar. This then would be the last of the Kings of the Medes, and Cyrus would be the Persian who was married to the daughter of the last king of the Medes, and who thus brought the Persian kingdom into prominence over the Medes. Thus Scripture agrees with other history, or rather, other history agrees with Scripture. We bless God that Scripture is not written to fit in. Anybody who was making a clumsy attempt at fitting in would betray himself. Scripture is full of difficulties in connection with history, shewing that it has not been written simply to PRETEND to be truthful, but that it IS truthful. We often find as in the case of Belshazzar that other history has no trace of certain people that are mentioned in Scripture, for a long while, and then we come across some document that clears it all up. Thus pronouncements against Scripture are not only unholy but UNWISE. They are pronouncements without any evidence and without sufficient proof. Doubtless we shall find further particulars of this last king of the Medes, and the king of Persia, as various discoveries are made.

Now we pass along next to consider this subject in connection with the work among the children. I would suggest that it might be taken somewhat in this way:

1. THE WRITING ON THE WALL.

- (a) Its manner. By a hand. In characters wise men did not know. (This is brought out by verse 16. "Now if thou canst read the writing and make known the interpretation thereof". It shows they could not read the writing by their not making known the interpretation.
- (b) Its wording. Mene, Tekel; and Upharsin explained. You have to consider the number of words.
- (c) Its meaning. Literally. The exact literal meaning of the words. With further interpretation, for Daniel adds further thought.
- (d) Its effect. At first fear. Then disregard.

Note. MENE is simply of course the MEASURING. TEKEL is simply of course the WEIGHING. But in the one case "God hath numbered THY KINGDOM". And in the other case "THOU art weighed in the balances and art found wanting.

2. THE TAKING OF BABYLON.

- (a) Its character. Its suddenness: mid the feasting, shewing the failure of man and the folly of man.
- (b) The result. To bring before the children how God brought the Medo-Persian empire along and brought Israel back to their land through this wonderful event.
- (d) Prophetic teaching. You notice there were two kings of Babylon at this time, one at Babylon and one away. So in the future day there will be the beast and the false prophet (the two beasts in Rev.13) and the beast Antichrist will be away from Babylon at the time the judgment falls there.

Q. Who is the other one that is away?

H. Nabonedus was away from Babylon at this time. His son Belshazzar the second ruler spared the kingdom, and therefore they only offered Daniel the third position, that of third ruler.

Q. Is that referred to again in Scripture?

H. No.

In like manner the taking of the Kingdom is by a twofold power, - Darius and Cyrus! Darius the Medo power, Cyrus the Persian power, and remarkably, the Lord will have His people with Him when He comes to reign. So we get the two kings of Babylon set aside by the twofold Kingdom of the Medes and Persians, and we are reminded in all the history of the future judgment of Babylon, for it will interfere with man's feasting, it will come suddenly on a city of great wealth, and it will be in connection with a finished and appointed time, and there will indeed be the breaking forth of the Lord, the PERES, for do we not read that the

Lord will rise up on mount Gilead, and also that He will manifest Himself as in the valley of Perazim, which is the very valley where there was a PERES, a "breaking forth"? (Isa. 28.21.)

Now we will have a Bible Outline on one verse, Daniel 5.30 "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain".

First Point. Man's glory is laid low. "The King of the Chaldeans slain". Stress both the "king" and the "Chaldeans". The term "king" denotes earthly force and power. The name "Chaldeans" refers to intellectual strength in its frequent usage. MAN'S GLORY IS LAID LOW.

Secondly. God acts at the right time, and often suddenly. "THAT NIGHT" has the double thought. First it has the thought "That night so quickly after his vain feast", but further "that night" because it was the exact termination of the period appointed long before.

Thirdly. Future parallels.

Further addresses available:

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