

The writing is on the wall

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[0 : 00] when he said, How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts, to me. We thank thee for the desire which thou hast awakened in each and every one of us to gather here in thy house at this morning hour.

And as we gather here, our prayer is that we would indeed be conscious of thy presence in our midst. For without thy presence, we confess our efforts are indeed in vain. But we thank thee that it is correspondingly true that if thou wilt bless, there is no human agency on earth who can hinder. And as we bow here in the attitude of prayer, help us to come with a prayer which is aright.

Keep from us, we pray thee, the prayer another had when he said, I thank God I am not like other men. But may we come humbly and reverently, like the publican of old, just simply saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner.

We thank thee for the truth contained in that statement. And in that prayer, that thou art indeed a merciful God, merciful to those and deserving of the least of thy mercies, we thank thee today for the wondrous plan of salvation, for the coming into the world of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for his life of perfect obedience, for his going to Calvary's cross, and that through his death countless millions have eternal life, that although on this day we may be very conscious of human weaknesses and frailties, yet we can come just saying, as the hymn writer said, nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy cross I cling.

[1 : 33] We thank thee, O Lord, for the ample forgiveness found there, and we thank thee that the door of mercy is still open, that thou art still saying today, to men and to women and to boys and to girls, come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

We pray, O Lord, that indeed on this day there would be many turning to thee. We would hear many saying, as that jailer said in Philippi so long ago, what must I do to be saved?

We pray for the preaching of the word today, not only in this community, but indeed throughout the world. We thank thee that thy word goes throughout the world, and we pray, O Lord, that as it is faithfully preached, it would redound in a rich harvest to thine own eternal glory and to the good of never-dying souls.

We remember the branch of the visible church to which we belong. We pray, O Lord, for it. We pray for all the work it does. At home and overseas, we remember especially the congregations which we are reminded of to pray for today.

We remember Gardens Down, and we pray for the ministry which Robin Gray will soon start there, that indeed does his soul succeed faithfully. In that needy area, there would be many turning to thee.

[2 : 49] We pray, too, for Kinloch, and we pray for Paul's ministry there, among that scattered area. We thank thee, Huth, for those who go forth, preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ.

And thou know us, for any of us who do this, we don't do so through any strength of our own, but we do so in prayer, that indeed thou art God, and thou hast promised to bless.

And our prayer is for all who are faithfully sowing the seed today, that it would yield a rich harvest to thine own eternal glory. We pray, Lord, for those unable to worship with us here today, through illness, through old age, that thou wouldst be with them where they are, and for any of our number, who are sorrowing or not sad, for thou art reminding us so often, that our days are as the days in the calendar, some long like midsummer, some short like midwinter, but all of a beginning, and all of an end.

Now pray it is, O Lord, for any in our number who are mourning, and are heavy-hearted, that thou wouldst uplift them, that thou wouldst be the great comforter, there would be only one set of

footprints in the sand, that thou wouldst indeed keep them and carry them.

We thank thee that thou art a God, the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. We pray, Lord, for the minister of the connexion at the time. We remember David and Mary and the family, and as they are away, thou knowest our prayers, that they would be both physically and spiritually refreshed and revived, to this great work to which thou hast called them, in this corner of the vineyard.

[4 : 24] We thank thee for the ministry carried out here, and we pray, O Lord, that thou wouldst add to the numbers, and that thou wouldst abundantly bless, the ministry which David so faithfully carries out.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wouldst give to him, joining mercies and bring him back safely, into our midst here once more. We pray for all who uphold his hand. We remember the elders, we remember the deacons, the members and the adherents.

We thank thee for thy goodness to them as a congregation, for the fact that here they have this settled building, for the fact that thou hast led them, as thou didst lead the children of Israel so long ago, and thou hast been to them, that pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night.

Continue with them, we pray thee. We remember our young ones, and pray that thou wouldst be with them at this time, that in the days of their youth, they would seek thee, the God who will never leave them, nor forsake them.

Remember, O Lord, the prayers of thy people, for thou knowest when we stand here, we are so very conscious, of God's people upholding us, at the throne of grace and prayer.

[5 : 32] We remember those who lead the singing, and we thank thee those who are thus gifted, and for the one who does the music. We pray, O Lord, that as our praise ascends to thee, thy blessings would indeed descend, to each and every one of us.

We pray now that thou wouldst be with us, as we seek to carry on this service. We pray, O Lord, that as we gather here, and as we go away, we would say it was good, for us to have been here, be with Antony, as he breaks the bread of life, to the congregation in the evening, be mouth, matter, and wisdom to him, and may this day indeed be a day, where thou be rejoicing in the kingdom of heaven, over sinners repenting, and where thy people would receive, spiritual nourishment to help them, on their way home.

We pray that thou wouldst go before us now, keep us looking unto thee, lead us and guide us, and pardon our sins, for Jesus' sake. Amen. O Lord, O Lord, as we bow to thee, in thy presence, we pray for all the young people gathered here, we thank thee for them, and our prayer for them is, that in the days of the new, they may make a wise choice, which they'll never be taken away from.

We pray for them, we pray for all they do, and as we go to Sunday school, our prayer is, that thou wouldst bless, those who teach them here. We thank thee for Sunday school teachers, for teachers we remember ourselves, who have never gone to heaven, but who taught us and told us, on the way of salvation.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wouldst bless, all the young people gathered here, and whatever they do, keep them looking unto thee, and go before them and help them, in thine arms forever, for Jesus' sake.

[7 : 13] Amen. Our reading this morning is taken from the Old Testament, and from the book of Daniel. The Old Testament, the book of Daniel, and it's reading in the authorized King James Version.

Daniel chapter 5, reading from the beginning. Belshazzar the king made a great feast, to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.

Belshazzar, whilst he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels, which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken, out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, that the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, might drink therein.

Then they brought the golden vessels, that were taken out of the temple of the house of God, which was at Jerusalem. And the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, drank in them.

They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. In the same hour came forth fingers, of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace.

[8 : 29] And the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote, one against another.

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. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished.

Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king, and his lords, came into the banquet house, and the queen spake and said, O king, live forever.

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.

[9 : 50] When the king Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers, forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belshazzar.

Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation. Then was Daniel brought in before the king, and the king spake and said unto Daniel, 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. And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me, the interpretation thereof, but they could not show the interpretation of the thing.

And I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts. 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 shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy words to another. Yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

[11 : 26] O thou king, the most high God, gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father, a kingdom and majesty, and glory and honour. And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him.

Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, and whom he would he set up, and whom he would he put down. 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 he was driven from the sons of men, and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointed over it, whosoever he will.

And thou, 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 wine 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.

[12 : 51] Then was the part of the hand sent from him, and this writing was written, and this is the writing that was written, Mene, Mene, Tekel, O Farzan. This is the interpretation of the thing.

Mene, God has 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 silver, 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 Chaldean slain, and Darius the Median to the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

Amen. May God bless that reading of his own holy and inerrant word, unto his name, be the praise and glory. I want you to turn with me this morning to the chapter which we've been reading, Daniel chapter 5.

[13 : 56] I want to focus in possibly on the words which have, words which have made their way now into part of the English language, where it says the words, the writing on the wall.

This account we are given of Belshazzar and the great feast that he is having. Now the background to this account, I want us to go back a long, long time.

Right back over 2,500 years. A way back to 539 BC. And we're here in this palace, in this place called Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar had been the king, and he's died. And his son was a man called Nabodonus. It wasn't actually Belshazzar, although Belshazzar speaks here about his father Nebuchadnezzar. Because you'll notice later on in this account, when Daniel talks to him about the dream and the interpretation, Belshazzar says to him, I will make you the third ruler in the kingdom.

[15 : 04] Now if Belshazzar was the king, of course Daniel would be the second ruler in the kingdom. But Belshazzar's father, Nabodonus, was still alive. He was away on various warring duties, which took him away a lot of the time.

And this was his son, this man called Belshazzar. Now unlike his father, Belshazzar wasn't in any way a warlike king. And we see him in this account, and he's having a great feast.

He's having a big feast, a feast with all his great men gathered round him. And in this feast, they are having, the wine is flowing freely, and then they bring out the various things, the sacred goblets from the temple.

And they're praising their own gods. They're claiming, the idea here is that they're claiming that the gods of Babylon had enabled them to conquer the people of Jerusalem.

So here there is this party, and here they are just having a good time without any word of anything. And then suddenly, we see that in verse 5, the whole scene changes.

[16 : 26] Suddenly, there is this finger, just fingers, coming forth and writing on the plaster of the wall. Now, the plaster of the wall in all these palaces was that on which people put, and you could actually just mark it, people put things which were very, very important.

But there's never been anything written as important as these words. And these words were written down there. And we see when these words are written, there's a total change coming on the scene. There's a total change coming on the scene here. There's a great impression made. We're told there in verse 6, the king's face changed.

We're told his knees smote against another. Instantly, we see this king, and instantly, he's sobered up. Instantly, he realizes that something here has happened.

Something he doesn't know about. It's ghastly thinkers writing words which he has no idea what they actually mean. So, one of the great things about humans is, the distinction of people is, that we can think, and by it, conversion and convictions might come.

[17 : 56] And if we look at this account here, of this man Belshazzar, there's three things we can say. We can say, first of all, about this man, it didn't appear likely that his thoughts would trouble him.

But we can say, secondly, yet well, his thoughts might trouble him. And thirdly, the application to ourselves as we sit here today.

Now, first of all, it didn't appear likely that Belshazzar's thoughts would trouble him. Even this happening, even this writing on the wall, you wouldn't think that it would bother him because Belshazzar came from a fierce nation.

His grandfather Nebuchadnezzar, remember, had been punished for having a haughty spirit. He was drinking wine here, and they were very drunk.

They were rioting in wild company. Belshazzar and all the ones with them, like all of us, we're all gregarious. We want the company of other people.

[19 : 05] We don't want to be in our own anywhere. Belshazzar here is in this wild company, and they're all having a good time, and there's no word of anything until suddenly this happens.

Suddenly, everything changes. Belshazzar here has ventured far, far in profanity. He's much worse than Nebuchadnezzar. He's actually taken these cups out of the house of God.

He's drinking with them. He's pouring scorn on God. He's trying to show that the gods that they've worshipped are far greater than Almighty God.

So he's just pouring scorn. And actually, in verse 23, you can see and you can read the detestation of Daniel himself when he speaks to him and he says to him, how haughty you are, how far you've gone in profanity, how you believe your gods are superior, and how the God in whose hand your

very breath is, you haven't glorified.

You are just laughing and defying him. And it shows also here that no one is out of the reach of God. There is no conscience so dead that it cannot be touched, that something cannot touch it.

[20 : 27] And this man, you would never think, would have this reaction. And yet he did. A reaction which shocked all those who were around. Everyone around in this great party were shocked at the way the king reacted.

Now, we might say it didn't appear likely that his thoughts would trouble him. But we can also say here that well might his thoughts trouble him.

Because what he saw here was terrible. What he saw here was a warning from God that he must take notice of. Looking at this, there were so many unanswered questions.

And it's not just what he saw. It's also what he could not see. Where was the hand? We're told quite simply that it was just fingers that were writing.

And to all watching, it was very obvious. But there was no hand. Who had written it? What was written? What did it mean?

[21 : 36] All these things when he looks here at this writing are things that trouble him. And you know, sometimes God gives people hints of something behind which is yet to appear.

What he had done was awful. What he had not done was awful. He was trying to be in defiance of God. And what he is doing, he's defying God.

All these things are things which trouble him. cause him and we're told, it's very graphic the illustration we are given there. We're told his knees smote against another.

The joints were loosed. He couldn't sit still. He was so upset with what he had seen. And of course for all those around, they're looking at this. They're looking at the king's reaction.

Because to them the king and in those days the king was looked on as a god. And yet here's this man. And what's happened? it's something that he can't understand.

[22 : 41] It's something that he can't understand at all. Now the most important thing about this is what was actually written.

And this is the relevancy. The relevancy to us, the relevancy to this man, the relevancy to everything. He didn't know what was written. He got a hold of all his magicians, all his soothiers. He gathered them all in. But nobody, but nobody could answer it. And then he's told about this man, Daniel. He's told about him.

Daniel's largely gone into the background. Daniel's largely gone off the sea. And suddenly he's told, bring this man in. And Daniel comes in.

Daniel comes in before the king. And we can see there even the way Daniel speaks to him. The kings in those days, if somebody spoke against them, they could actually kill them.

[23 : 44] They could actually take away their lives. But we see here Daniel speaking. And Daniel, we can see even from his voice, how he's critical of the king and of all he's done.

How he, as the king, has not humbled his heart. How the king has gone his own way. How Nebuchadnezzar, his grandfather, he was brought down to acknowledge that God was God, but this man here has not in any way done it.

And then Daniel goes to the root. And Daniel explains the words that are written there. And the first, each one of these words is a measurement of weight or units of money, looking back at the root of it all.

And Daniel is able to tell him. first of all, the many, he repeats it twice, he is saying to him, it was many just meant a number to count.

And he is saying to Belshazzar that God here has numbered your kingdom. God has numbered your kingdom. In other words, your kingdom is going to come to an end.

[24 : 56] He says there again in the second word, tekem, which means to weigh something. And he's saying here to Belshazzar, you've been weighed in the balances and art found wanting.

Weighed in God's eternal balances and art found wanting. In other words, how awful was that pronouncement.

And the third thing he says, peres, it's the plural of that word of portion, which is the word for division. And he says, your kingdom is divided up and it's been given to the Medes and Persians.

And the strange thing is when he makes this pronouncement, when this pronouncement is given to Belshazzar, Belshazzar doesn't say, that couldn't happen.

That's ridiculous. That's not going to happen at all. Because you know, the city of Babylon in those days was reckoned to be indestructible. It had huge amount of supplies.

[26 : 05] It had supplies for years. There was a river around the city and you couldn't actually in any way attack it. But you know, when Belshazzar is given these words from Daniel, he accepts them all.

We're told there he put Daniel, scarlet, chain of gold on his neck and said he would be the third ruler in the kingdom. He didn't say, you're speaking rubbish.

No, no. He accepted the words which were said. And he knew this pronouncement was very simply given. And he accepted this pronouncement.

And actually, Darius the king had actually the river Euphrates which went behind that city of Babylon. That night, while they were having their riotous time, they had carried on for some time, Darius had actually diverted the river Euphrates.

And that's how he got into the city. That king, that knight who came into the city, he managed to come up through the river bank. That although to themselves and to Belshazzar would have seemed impossible, that's how he came in.

[27 : 16] And he came in that night to the city. Now, that was simply Daniel. Making a pronouncement to this king. And when he makes this pronouncement, there is no word of any mercy.

He just says what's going to happen. Belshazzar accepted it. Belshazzar knew it was truth. And Belshazzar that night was slain.

Now, we might say, is there any application in what you're reading here and in what you're saying here to us? And people might say, well, there's none of us who are like Belshazzar.

There's none of us who are like this king. But you know, there may be similarities. Remember in the New Testament, the disciples asked Jesus, they had built a tower to Babel in the Old Testament.

This big tower they were going to build up to heaven. And remember, God smote them. And the people who were building it were all killed. And one of the things the disciples asked was, were these people who were building that tower much worse than anyone else?

[28 : 28] And God said something very striking to them. No, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. In other words, if we don't know the Lord Jesus, and we all know how we stand before God, only God knows that.

if we don't know the Lord Jesus, we are without hope, just as this man Belshazzar was. Now, Belshazzar was prosperous, and we may be, to a measure, prosperous too.

Belshazzar had worldly companions, and we may also have them. Belshazzar trifled with God, and we may also trifle too, because we come, and it's lovely to see people in church, but we come to church on a regular basis.

At the end of the day, we must ask ourselves what use we are making of these opportunities we are given, because every time we come to church, and every time we hear the gospel preached, and every time the minister tells us about the way of salvation, and every time we go out the door and we think, well, we'll think about it, but that's about as far as it gets, and it may be even when we're sitting here, it may have some impression on us, but we go out and it doesn't.

Every time we come, we are given this great opportunity, and days of opportunity do not last forever. We assume every day will be like the last, but so often and so sadly, we are reminded this is not so.

[30 : 07] Belshazzar didn't learn from his grandfather, from Nebuchadnezzar, from Nebuchadnezzar who himself fell from Greece, and who himself was out, remember, he had nothing in the end, but he didn't learn from what had happened.

And you know, above all, it may be written about our lives, just like it was about this man, Belshazzar. It may be, and we don't know any of us, our days, or how long we have.

We don't know, but if we're not Jesus, and if we don't believe in him, and if he's not our saviour, we are weighed in the balances, and we're found wanting.

We hear that expression used so often in the English language. It's said so often. When we used to study classical studies, the Sumerians, an ancient race, they used to have what was called a very, very graphic picture, and I still remember looking at it, called the weighing of the soul, where they used to put, they said a soul went on a scale, and the feather of truth went against it, and if you'd been truthful all your life, you were all right, and if you hadn't, you were not.

But that's not the way it works at all. God's balances are balances which are right. I remember as a youngster, and some of you'll remember, our shopkeeper used to put things in balances, and we used to get sweets, and sometimes we felt that we weren't getting as many as we should because the balances weren't quite right.

[31 : 42] But you know, God's balances are absolutely right. There is no miscarriage of justice. His balances, and the only thing that can satisfy him is that we know the Lord Jesus as our personal saviour.

not the saviour of our friends, not the saviour of our parents and our minister or our elders or anyone else, but as our personal saviour, the Lord God.

Otherwise, we will be weighed in the balances and found wanting. Winston Churchill, before the start of World War II, one of the great speeches he made to the government at the time, and he was critical of their policy, was he said at the very end, you are history will say you are weighed in the balances and are found wanting.

But you know, for ourselves in life, the most important thing is not to be weighed in God's eternal balances and not to be found wanting.

And you know, with this man Belshazzar, at the very end he was told, your kingdom is divided. It's going to be given to the Medes and Persians. There was no words of mercy.

[32 : 55] It was just pronouncement. It's done. Remember in the New Testament, Jesus speaks of a fig tree. And the fig tree, which has nothing on it. And cut it down.

Why cumbereth it the ground? Now none of us knows ourselves what our lives holds ahead of us. We plan for everything.

I was talking to kids about going on holiday. And we all plan for everything in life. But maybe the biggest certainty of all, that we are all travelling on, we don't prepare for.

Belshazzar the king here was a man who stood in defiance of God. And God gave this great pronouncement over his life.

And for Belshazzar, a judgment was passed. An awful judgment. And a judgment he had no chance of avoiding. But you know, for ourselves, although we may sit here today, and although God may say to us that we are weighed in balances found wanting, we are still in a day of opportunity.

[34 : 07] Each one of us is here. We see this king, Belshazzar, even one who was so far gone in sin, and yet his conscience bothered him. We come here.

We are given an opportunity to follow Jesus. And you know there's always the danger that we'll say, well, we'll leave it to a more convenient time.

And I've said this to you already here. None of us knows if that convenient time will ever come. And when we look at examples we are given in the Bible of those who are going to come to Jesus, those who said, we'll come later, we're never told that they ever came.

We're never told that they ever threw in their lot with Jesus. But Jesus is saying to us today, remember the man at the receipt of customs, Matthew. He's sitting there, a despised individual, gathering their taxes.

Nobody wants to know him. And Jesus is passing by. And Jesus just simply said to him, follow me. Not tomorrow, not next week, not next year.

[35 : 14] Follow me now. And Matthew got up and he followed him. And many of those around would say, why is Jesus calling someone like this?

But you know if Jesus is calling to any of us, the call is very clear. Follow me now. Come after me. And if we take Jesus as our whole, it's something we'll never regret.

If you ask any of God's people in here, they'll always say to you, well, I'm sorry I didn't do it earlier in life. I'm sorry I didn't come much earlier to know the Lord Jesus.

And yes, we'll have difficulties. But Jesus promises he will be with us and never leave us or forsake us. So when we look at this man, when we look at the judgment, terrible judgment pronounced on him, although the same things may be said of us, we are in a land of opportunity.

We are in a place of opportunity. We are given this opportunity to come to Jesus today, to follow him now, just as we are.

[36 : 23] As the hymn writer says, just as I am without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me, the blood has been shed. There is that way opened up back to thee.

Belshazzar went to his own place. He went to a lost eternity and he's gone. But for ourselves, there is a great opportunity given.

And may we, as we see here, the sin and the punishment that follows it. But there is a way opened up to us all, that if we follow Jesus, Jesus will be with us in life.

And he will never leave us or forsake us. He will never go from us. He will take us throughout life.

And he will take us one day to our desired haven.

And may that be true of each and every one of us. May we be resolved, as many of us have already here today, to follow Jesus. And it would not be said of any of us gathered here, that we were weighed in God's balances and were found wanting.

[37 : 28] Earthly balances, earthly pronouncements, earthly judgments may be wrong, but this one will never be wrong. And the only thing that will keep us safe for time and for eternity will be the blood of Jesus.

Jesus as our own personal saviour. Jesus as our friend. And may you say, each one of you, that Jesus would come into your life, that the Lord, he is God, and even to whole heirs, he will carry me.

And may God bless these few thoughts in his word. Let us pray. O Lord, our God, as we look and as we see the writing which was on the wall over this man's life, the fact that Belshazzar called in defiance of thee, but the fact that he was also called to an account, may we, O Lord, take a warning, may we, O Lord, take a listen from what we have read here.

And may we call unto thee, for thou art saying today, come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. We thank thee, O Lord, for the gospel offer given today.

May we hear it on all our lives, and may we all resolve to follow Jesus. We thank thee, O Lord, for the opportunity thou hast given to us. And we thank thee that if we follow thee, thou hast promised, thou wilt never leave us, nor forsake us.

[38 : 52] May we be conscious at all times of our abiding presence. Lead us and guide us and go before us. Keep us looking unto thee, and pardon our sins for Jesus' sake.

Amen. O unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us falleth before his Father's face with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, be power and strength, dominion and might, both now and forever more.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.