

THE WRITING ON THE WALL!



DO YOU REMEMBER the story of Belshazzar and the writing on the wall? To refresh your memory; it's in the Book of Daniel:

“Belshazzar the king of *Babylon* held a great feast for a thousand of his great men, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand. When he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave orders to bring in the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple which *had been* in Jerusalem, so that the king and his great men, his wives and his concubines might drink from them ... They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone. At that moment the fingers of a man's hand appeared and began writing on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, opposite the lampstand. And the king saw the form of the hand that did the writing. Then the king's face changed and his thoughts alarmed him, and his hip joints went slack and his knees began knocking together.” (Daniel 5:1 -2, 4-6)

When all Belshazzar's wise men could not explain the phenomenon, they brought in Daniel. The king promised to richly reward the man of God if he would explain the strange signs.

Daniel told the king to keep his gifts, but nevertheless, he would reveal the meaning of the writing on the wall.

First, Daniel told Belshazzar about his father – the great Nebuchadnezzar. The Most High God granted sovereignty, grandeur, and glory to Nebuchadnezzar, but this great man became proud and arrogant; and he lost his throne, and his mind. He was driven out and lived and ate like cattle.

Then Daniel laid it on the line for the present king:

““And you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this, but you have exalted yourself against the Master of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His House before you, and you and your great men, 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 all your ways, you have not honored *or* glorified.

“So the form of the hand was sent from Him, and this inscription has been written out. Now this is the inscription that has been written out:

MENE, MENE, TEKEL UFARSIN. (Numbered, numbered, weighed and divided.)

“This is the interpretation of the message:

MENE: God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it.

TEKEL: You have been weighted on the scales and found wanting.

PERES: Your kingdom has been divided and given it to the Medes and Persians.’

“That very night Belshazzar, *the* king of the Chaldeans, was slain.”
(Daniel 5:22-28, 30)

Make no mistake about it! Yahweh the Most High is keenly interested in the nations, both past and present. He looks down and sees the affairs of men. He sees the corruption of leaders, and the abandon of the peoples. God weighs the nations today, and finds them wanting! He sees soul-destroying addictions, society-destroying violence, and nation-destroying anarchy. And He is neither amused, nor nonchalant! It is written:

“God now commands all people everywhere to repent (*that is, to change their minds and to amend their ways with abhorrence for their sins*), because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man (*Y’shua the Messiah*) whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all by raising Him from the dead.” (Acts 17:30-31)

My friends, there’s a lot of “writing on the wall” today! And it’s not meaningless graffiti; **it’s a warning from God!**

***“You have been weighted on the scales
and found wanting!”***

You can read that “writing” every day as you read your newspaper or watch the television. The writing is in the frequent disasters around the world; you can read it in the alarming conflicts and instability of nations, in the shaking of our global economics, in the buildup of weapons of mass destruction, and in our world disorder. Take for example:

OUR GEO-PHYSICAL CATASTROPHES

EARTHQUAKES are not new. There have been some massive quakes in past centuries. But it is the increase of earthquakes that are so alarming.

The quake in Gujarat last January measured a massive 7.9 on the Richter Scale. It was India's worst earthquake for 50 years; the power was equivalent of 20,000 atom bombs.

Earthquakes of this size, according to a recent news report, are no longer rare; at least eighteen 7.9 quakes occur around the world each year. Major earthquakes are no more than 100 each year, and smaller tremblers are recording in the thousands.

The quake in Indonesia in December 2004, measured 9.0, and it triggered the Asian tsunami that destroyed nearly 300,000 people.

The “writing on the wall” with each earthquake is a warning of the **ultimate earthquake** that is scheduled for the Tribulation – the period of which Y’shua warned:

“Then there will be great tribulation, such as has never occurred since the beginning of the world until now; and there will be nothing like it again.” (Matthew 24:21)

Why! modern seismologists are also warning of the ultimate earthquake – “the big one.”

The Bible describes this “big one” in two passages:

“The earth is broken asunder; **the earth is split through**;_the earth is **shaken violently**. The earth reels to and fro like a drunkard, and it totters like a shack, for its transgression is heavy upon it, and it will fall, and not rise again.”

“Then there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was **a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth**,_so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. ... And every island fled away, and the mountains could not be found.” (Isaiah 24:19-20. Revelation 16:18, 20)

DROUGHTS and FAMINES also are not new. But you would expect that in our 21st century, when we seem to have much global goodwill and are seeking to build a global village, when we have big international food and water organisations, and when we have had great advances in agriculture such as the “green revolution,” that we would be conquering the plague of famine.

Of course, we can blame war, which often works together with drought (as in Afghanistan and Sudan), for the havoc of famine that ravages millions of people. But regardless, droughts are periodically afflicting many countries. Apart from Sudan and Afghanistan, droughts have been badly affecting Korea, Iran, Israel and parts of China, Russia, India, Africa, America and Australia.

Droughts and famines are “writings on the wall.” They are warning the nations of the times of famine and drought that are scheduled for the closing years of this present era. The prophets have warned of very severe famines.

“By the fury of YHWH of Hosts the land is burned up, and the people are like fuel for the fire. No one spares his brother. They slice off what is on the right hand but still are hungry. They eat what is on the left hand but they are not satisfied; **each of them eats the flesh of his own arm.**” (Isaiah 9:19-20)

Our **ERRATIC WEATHER CONDITIONS** are also “writings on the wall,” for in the Great Tribulation, there’s going to be some scorching times:

“The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun; and the sun was given power to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the Name of God (*Yahweh*) who had control over these plagues; but they did not repent and give Him glory.” (Revelation 16:8-9)

Prophecy of Commercial Babylon, the Revelation says:

“... in one day her plagues will come; death, mourning and famine - and she will be burned up with fire; for *YHWH* the LORD God who judges her is mighty.” (Revelation 18:8)

PLAGUES and PESTILENCES are certainly not new, but it has been reported that new diseases are arriving at the rate of one every year. And the only disease we have really eliminated (or at least, we hope we have), is smallpox.

Modern plagues such as Ebola and AIDS, as well as recalcitrant diseases including Foot & Mouth, Mad Cow, TB, Influenza, Heart Diseases and Cancer, SARS and Bird Flu are not only of great concern, but they are warnings of the plagues that are scheduled for the Tribulation.

“I looked and saw a pale, ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name ‘Death’; and Hades (*the realm of the dead*) was following close behind him. And authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with famine, with **plague and pestilence**, and by the wild beasts of the earth.” (Revelation 6:8)

“And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues, for the wrath of God was ended in them.” (Revelation 15:1)

Here’s one of those seven endtime plagues:

“The first angel went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and **loathsome and malignant** sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshipped his image.” (Revelation 16:2)

OUR SOCIAL DEGRADATION

CORRUPTION and VIOLENCE

Rampant corruption and violence in the nations today are more of the “writings on the wall.” Y’shua specifically prophesied that the days prior to His return would be as the days of Noah. And of Noah’s day we read:

“Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight; and the earth was full of violence.”
(Genesis 6:11)

I don’t need to give you examples of corruption and violence in the nations today. But I do remind you that the Great Tribulation will be a period of great violence.

“Then another horse, a fiery red one, went forth. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and cause men to kill one another. A huge sword was given to him.” (Revelation 6:4)

DRUG ADDICTION

Drugs are a major problem in most nations, and most governments and agencies are waging a losing battle against this evil that’s crippling the younger generations in particular. The writing on the wall warns of judgment coming upon the peddlers of dope. Y’shua warned about harming children:

“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been thrown into the sea.” (Mark 9:42)

In the Tribulation, drug-related sorcery will be rife. Men will be in deep bondage to this evil.

“And they did not repent of their murders, their *drug-related occult practices, witchcraft, magic and sorcery*, nor of their sexual immorality and their thefts.”
(Revelation 9:21)

So what we see today is indeed, a lot of “writing on the wall”!

SLAVERY

There are more slaves in the world today than when slavery was abolished. It is a big business in many parts of the world. It’s horrific!

The US State Department estimates that 2 million women and children are sold into slavery every year. They claim that perhaps 40,000 women in the US are in those numbers.

Another report from London says that children in slavery are counted in the millions.

The International Labour Organisation estimates that there are **250 million children** between the ages of 5 and 14 in slave labour around the world.

This is large writing on the wall, for Yahweh the Almighty God – the God who so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life – sees the injustice, the suffering, and all the agony. In Egypt ...

“the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of *their* bondage rose up to God. So God heard their groaning.”
(Exodus 2:23-24)

And so it is today. God hears the children, the women, and the men in their indescribable, inhuman, misery of slavery.

“He is coming to judge the earth. He judges the world in righteousness, and the peoples with equity.” (Psalm 98:9)

Abraham reasoned with God concerning the destruction He had decreed for the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham entreated:

“Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are *treated* alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?” (Genesis 18:25) **He will indeed!**

ETHNIC CONFLICTS and ETHNIC CLEANSING

It’s happened in Ruanda and Sierra Leone, in many other parts of Africa, in Chechnya, in Kosovo, Bosnia, Turkey, Kurdistan, North Ireland, Spain, and South America; and it’s still happening in Indonesia, Fiji, PNG, Philippines, Sri Lanka, India, Macedonia, Israel, Burma, Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan, and periodically in the US and UK. Nearly every country in the world has some form of growing, or dormant, ethnic trouble.

Y’shua the Messiah prophesied of this endtime conflict in six words:

“For nation shall rise against nation.” (Matthew 24:7)

If you look at the Greek text you will see the word *ethnos*. “*Ethnos* against *ethnos*.” From the Greek word “ethnos” comes our English word *ethnic*.

The Saviour is speaking of the ethnic conflicts such as we see today; and every one of them is a writing on the wall, warning of the war when **“the kings of the whole earth,”** are **“gathered together for the War of the Great Day of God, the Almighty ... to Armageddon.”** (Revelation 16:14, 16)

OUR ECONOMIC WOES

ECONOMIC TURBULENCE

You've heard about the Asian economic crisis, and the bankruptcy of Eastern Europe and Russia. You're now hearing about the Japanese economic crisis and the fear of a US meltdown. You've heard about the crash of technology stocks; you've heard probably about the trillions of dollars of Government bonds that have been issued; you may have heard of the widespread bankruptcies in the US, as well as in many other countries. (In the year 2000, two million Americans filed for bankruptcy.)

All of this is writing on the wall that says "*mene, tekel*":

**"God has numbered your kingdom ...
you have been weighted on the scales and found wanting."**

The nations are in debt up to the neck – both people and governments. God is warning that there is a day of reckoning coming. It's in the last days!

"Come now, you rich, weep and wail because of the miseries that are coming upon you. Your wealth has become rotten, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will testify against you and will consume your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the Last Days! See, the wages of the laborers who reaped your fields, and which have been withheld by you cries out *against you*; and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of YHWH of Hosts. You have lived on the earth in luxury *and* self-indulgence; you have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and murdered the righteous who were not resisting you." (James 5:1-6)

A word of encouragement, however, is given to believers in this period of economic turbulence:

"Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Master. See how the farmer waits expectantly for the precious 'fruit of the earth,' waiting patiently until *the land* receives the early and late rains. You too be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Master is near. Do not complain against one another brethren, so that you yourselves may not be condemned. Look! The Judge is standing right at the door!" (James 5:7-9)

THE MIDDLE EAST TURBULENCE

JERUSALEM and ISRAEL

Here you have writing on the wall every day. Look what Yahweh has said in Zechariah 12:2-3, 9:

"Look! I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the people around. Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. And on that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem a very heavy rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will be severely injured . . . And it will come about in that day that I will set out to destroy all the nations that come up against Jerusalem."

You can see it coming, can't you, my reader? All the world is becoming involved in the conflict over that one square mile of old, walled city of Jerusalem.

The United Nations General Assembly has condemned Israel's occupation of Jerusalem in spite of the fact that history, geography and archaeology all declare the city to be the ancient capital of the people of Israel.

The fact that **Israel exists** today as a nation, in its God-given land, is another writing on the wall, for God long ago said to the scattered people of Israel:

“For I will take you from among the nations; I will gather you from all countries, and bring you into your own land ... And you will live in the land that I gave to your *forefathers*; so you will be My people, and I - I will be your God . . . I will multiply the fruit of the trees and the produce of the field, that you may not receive again the disgrace of famine among the nations. The Master, YHWH says: On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities - *your wickedness, crookedness, and sins*, I will cause the cities *of Israel* to be inhabited; the ruins will be rebuilt, and the desolate land will be cultivated instead of lying waste in the sight of all who pass by.”
(Ezekiel 36:24, 28, 30, 33-34)

The nation of Israel is here to stay. God has planted her here. There is, however, a “time of Jacob's trouble” that's coming - the time when Israel will be brought through the fire, and purified as gold and silver is purified. (Zechariah 13:8-9)

Yes, there's a lot of handwriting over the land of Israel today. Israel itself is also being weighed in the balances. And so it is with every nation in the world today – they are being weighed in God's scales.

There are many, many more *mene tekels* in our news channels, dear friends, but there's one more I should draw your attention to. It's the widespread increase of ...

THE WIDESPREAD INTOLERANCE AND PERSECUTION

ANIMOSITY to the GOSPEL, and PERSECUTION of the FOLLOWERS of THE MESSIAH

Today more Christians are dying for Christ than at any time in church history. Some 160,000 Christians are killed every year because they are Christians.

There's an uproar in the nations - a movement that is seeking to do away with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and His Word. And that Gospel is put simply by the apostle Paul:

“Now brethren, I *again* declare to you the Good News which I have *already* preached to you - *the Good News* which you have received, and on which you *take your* stand; by which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the words that I preached as Good News to you - unless you believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance, that the Messiah died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.” (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

The atoning work of Christ on the cross and His resurrection – the very centre of the Gospel - is being attacked today, from within and without. But **on this Gospel**, as Paul says, **we take our stand**.

I've just received the following short story:

HE LIVES!

“It’s a lie!” exclaimed Alfred H Ackley.

“Why are you shouting so early in the morning?” Mrs Ackley asked her husband.

“Didn’t you hear what that good-for-nothing preacher said? He said it didn’t matter whether Christ be risen or not!”

It was Easter morning, 1932, and across the radio waves this “good-for-nothing preacher,” as Alfred Ackley put it, attacked the Biblical record of the risen King of Kings.

“Listen here, Alfred Ackley; it’s time you did that which you do best,” his wife said. She knew her husband was furious and there was only one solution.

At the piano, the words and melody came forth with a powerful declaration.

I serve a risen Saviour; He’s in the world today.

I know that He is living, whatever men may say.

I see His hand of mercy; I hear His voice of cheer,

And just the time I need Him, He’s always near.

He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!

He walks with me and talks with me

Along life’s narrow way.

He lives, He lives, salvation to impart!

You ask me how I know He lives?

He lives within my heart.

- Alfred H Ackley