

The writing's on the wall...

- We know the phrase:
 - the end has come, eg for a politician, or a dictator, or an idea, or a product...
 - there are signs that things are about to end - and if you care to look, you can see and guess where things are going
 - an assessment is going on and the thing in question has been **found wanting**

Notes

- Belshazzar (v.1)
 - descendant, probably grandson, sitting as regent while his father, Nabonidus, was away (for many years) on campaigns in Arabia
 - Babylonian empire without Nebuchadnezzar (d.562BC; 43 years after Daniel probably deported) has lost its drive, becomes a shadow of its former self...
- Gold/silver goblets (v.2): deliberate mocking of the God's of the conquered nation
 - corroborated by their praise of their own gods in v.4
- "Be sure your sins will find you out"
 - but do we believe they will?
 - Belshazzar didn't....
 - and God had to use miraculous means to grab his attention
- Queen (v.10)
 - unlikely to be Belshazzar's wife/wives, as they are mentioned in v.2 as being already present
 - most likely Nabonidus' wife, perhaps Belshazzar's mother, perhaps Nebuchadnezzar's wife... or perhaps the relationships are more complex!
 - someone with history, who knows Daniel from of old...
- Once Daniel has arrived on scene (v.13) we have Belshazzar's question:
 - notice how Belshazzar is interested in the meaning of the words (v.16), not the hand (!)
- Not subtle, is our Daniel!
 - probably in his late 50's, but sounds like not any longer in a prominent position
 - his security does not come from high office, power or influence - but from the continued relationship he has with God
- Diagnosis: **you have fallen short (v.22ff)**
 - pride, idolatry - and that when you knew better
- Prognosis: **your reign will end, you have been found wanting, and your legacy is taken away**
 - and promoting Daniel won't get you out of the judgement! (v.29)
- *And so it works out: v.30-31*

Conclusion

- Are we honouring God, throughout our lives?
 - we can't cover up or hide who we really are, ultimately
 - God knows and will call us to account...
 - how we treat other people, perhaps those we have power or influence over...
 - how we talk about other people when they are not around...
 - what money we "acquire", or the way we handle money entrusted to us by others...
 - what we watch, on TV or on the net, in the anonymity of our own homes...
- NB, **Belshazzar is not portrayed as excessively wicked - just careless of God!**
- **Appropriate response?**
 - repentance - like father, but not like son...
 - humbling, confessing, acknowledging God as sovereign...