



Modern-day Belshazzars

The book of Daniel provides us with the account of double tragedy in a royal family. The first tragedy concerns the king himself: he was reduced to a beast for refusing to acknowledge and worship the true and living God.

Do not be mistaken; this king had a high regard for this God of Daniel and of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

After Daniel interpreted his dream of the great image, he publicly proclaimed that Daniel's God is the God of gods, and a Lord of kings. Again, after the delivery of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the fiery furnace, he proclaimed: "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego...." and "there is no other God that can deliver after this sort."

The problem with king Nebuchadnezzar was that he only had head knowledge – that the God of Daniel and of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego is a great God and none can match His power. Unfortunately, this head knowledge was not converted into heart knowledge – causing him to acknowledge and worship this God and making Him his own.

The second tragedy concerns his son, Belshazzar, who succeeded the throne. He had witnessed how his father was punished for his pride and for not acknowledging and worshipping the true and living God; the God of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

He witnessed how his father was turned into a beast for 7 years and how he was restored

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Shining Light....

Moral decline in our society is pretty evident. The next generation of youths will be facing a greater spiritual battle in the years to come. No doubt, this has increased the worries and concerns of many parents.

I am but a young mother with three children still below ten. I have no first-hand experience and am not an expert in dealing with teens. However, I have observed the teens in our church and would like to share what I see.

We have to admit there are problematic teens causing much headaches but God is always faithful. He always have a shining light as example in midst of decay. There are wonderful teens in our church who are serving the Lord and faithfully too each week.

My children attend the children ministry and the helpers are mostly teens and they are there every week! My children know each "zair zair" and "gor gor" by their names. These are the big brothers and sisters assisting the adult teachers. They are not serving blindly. One of them came and gave me feedback on my kids. So it shows that these youngsters take their service seriously.

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when he finally acknowledged and worship God. He was a recipient of the king's decree that the whole land, including his family, should worship this God of gods.

So, in a sense, Belshazzar grew up in a God-fearing environment and ought to be God-fearing himself; but was he? Tragically not. Worst still, he went against God by profaning vessels dedicated for temple worship by using these vessels for toasting at a feast and offering wine contained in them to idols. God's judgement was swift; the same night, he was slain by the invading Persian army.

Are there Belshazzars today and who are they? Are they not children who grow up in a Christian home? Children who were brought up by their parents in the fear and admonition of the Lord? Children who grow up in Sunday School, been taught the word of God? Children who had been catechized and affirmed their faith?

In what ways are they like Belshazzar? They go the way of Belshazzar when they choose to disregard the fifth commandment by not honouring their parents and by their disobedience. They are also exhibiting the

“Belshazzar-syndrome” when they choose to adopt the value system of their school mates and non-Christian friends instead of those taught by their God-fearing parents and the church.

Is this not the greatest fear of Christian parents, that of their children going astray and turning away from the Lord? When it happens, it will certainly bring the greatest sadness to their hearts. What can parents do to avert such tragedy? Not very much, I'm afraid. As parents, we can only pray for them and beseech God's mercy to keep them. We should of course, continue to guide and counsel them from scripture so long as they are prepared to listen. Ultimately, they are in God's sovereign hand. There is no need to fret if your teenage child is wayward now; because, there is still hope if he or she is a child of God. Just the prodigal son, who returned to the father eventually.

Let us all fervently pray that none of our teenage children will go the way of Belshazzar but rather, that they will go the way of Isaac who was the perfect example of an obedient and God-fearing child.

Francis Leong

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Look around and you'll find teens managing the PA system during worships. This is tough. They have to be there early to set up the system and to take it down afterwards. This calls for commitment. The list goes on...pianist, organist, choir, mission trips.

Most of these teens have all one thing in common – their parents serve too! Thank God for these parents who set godly examples for them to follow. I thank God for them, for they are models for me as a parent on what I should do to bring up my children in the fear and nurture of the Lord. Yes. There is no guarantee that our children will walk the right way. But it is our responsibility to teach them right and pray for them. Nothing positive can come out if we as parents just sit down and lament on bad behaviour. We have to strive to do our part well.

So let's thank God for the teens that are serving well and for their parents that they may continue to walk right. Let all families echo the words of Joshua, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:15b

Editorial