

## BABYLON'S FALL (Daniel 5:1-31)

- I. Setting the Stage
  - A. Identifying Belshazzar—a probable timeline
    1. Nebuchadnezzar's humiliation and death 563-562 BC
    2. Son Evil-Merodach assassinated in 560 BC
    3. Son-in-law Neriglassar died of natural causes in 556 BC
    4. Grandson Laborosoarchad assassinated in 556 BC
    5. Nabonidas selected by assassins to rule till Babylon fell in 539 BC
      - a. May have married WIDOW of Nebuchadnezzar and ADOPTED Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar's SON
      - b. May have married DAUGHTER of Nebuchadnezzar and FATHERED Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar's GRANDSON
      - c. Spent last TEM years of reign at Teima oasis in ARABIA
  - B. Describing the situation
    1. Medes and Persians had OVERRUN the empire
    2. Nabonidas CAPTURED or KILLED at Borsippa
    3. Belshazzar and lords felt SECURE while Babylon STOOD
      - a. FORTIFIED to withstand any ATTACK
      - b. STOCKED to survive YEARS of siege
      - c. Supplied with WATER from Euphrates River within
- II. Belshazzar's Folly (Daniel 5:1-4)
  - A. CELEBRATING false SECURITY
  - B. BOASTING false SUPERIORITY
    1. BLASPHEMING the God of Israel
    2. PRAISING the gods of MATERIALISM
- III. Belshazzar's Fear (Daniel 5:5-9)
  - A. Frightened by sight of FINGERS writing on the WALL
  - B. Called for wise men to READ and INTERPRET the inscription
  - C. Promised PROMOTION for successful interpretation

- D. TERRIFIED by the INABILITY of his wise men—proves the IMPOTENCE of world rulers when confronted by GOD
- IV. Belshazzar's Desperation (Daniel 5:10-16)
- A. Comforted by the QUEEN—probably MOTHER, not WIFE
  - B. Encouraged to call on DANIEL
    - 1. Praised his SPIRIT and WISDOM
    - 2. Praised his POSITION under Nebuchadnezzar
    - 3. Praised his ACCOMPLISHMENTS under Nebuchadnezzar
    - 4. Implied he was RETIRED or DEMOTED
  - C. Summoned Daniel
    - 1. Identified him as a JEWISH CAPTIVE
    - 2. Admitted having HEARD of his stature
    - 3. Made him the same OFFER for interpretation of inscription
- V. Daniel's Sermon (Daniel 5:17-23)
- A. Cared NOTHING for the REWARDS
  - B. Reminded Belshazzar of Nebuchadnezzar's GREATNESS
    - 1. It was a GIFT from GOD
    - 2. It was much more SPECTULAR than Belshazzar's
  - C. Reminded Belshazzar of Nebuchadnezzar's HUMILIATION
  - D. Pointed out Belshazzar's UNREPENTANT arrogance despite history
  - E. Charged Belshazzar with foolish BLASPHEMY
    - 1. Profaned the SACRED
    - 2. Praised the MATERIAL
    - 3. Disdained the GIVER and DIRECTOR of LIFE
- VI. Daniel's Interpretation (Daniel 5:24-28)
- A. *MENE, MENE*—God has reached the END of kingdom's COUNTDOWN
  - B. *TEKEL*—God found Belshazzar to be SHORT of TRUE WEIGHT
  - C. *UPHARSIN/PERES*—Kingdom is DIVIDED and given to Medo-Persia
- VII. Conclusion (Daniel 5:29-31)
- A. Daniel received TEMPORARY PROMOTION
  - B. Belshazzar DIED
  - C. Darius of the Medes TOOK OVER
    - 1. Illustrates God's JUDGMENT of the wicked WORLD
    - 2. Shows God's PROTECTION of His PEOPLE