

DANIEL, Chapter 5

The Story of 10 / 11 (539 BC)

This was the last feast of boasting held by the Chaldean king; for he who bears long with man's perversity had passed the irrevocable sentence. Belshazzar had greatly dishonored the One who had exalted him as king, and his probation was taken from him. While the king and his nobles were at the height of their revelry, the Persians turned the Euphrates out of its channel, and marched into the unguarded city. As Belshazzar and his lords were drinking from the sacred vessels of Jehovah, and praising their gods of silver and gold, Cyrus and his soldiers stood under the walls of the palace. "In that night," the record says, "was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom." {YI, May 26, 1898 par. 6}

I. Daniel 5: Introduction

A. Belshazzar's Linage

1. Daniel 2:2, 11, 13, 18, 22

B. Rulers and Dates

1. Nabopolassar

- a. 626 – 605
- b. gained independence for Assyria
- c. Father of Nebuchadnezzar.

2. Nebuchadnezzar,

- a. 605 - 562 BC; 42 year reign.

3. Amel-Marduk (Evil-Merodach of Jeremiah 52:31 & 2 Kings 25:27),

- a. Son of Nebuchadnezzar
- b. 562 – 560 BC; approximately 2 year reign.

4. Neriglissur,

- a. Amel-Marduk sister's husband who dethroned him
- b. 560 – 556 BC; 7 year reign.

5. Labasi-Marduk,

- a. son of Neriglissur
- b. 556 BC; only a few months reign.

6. Nabonidus, (part of a conspiracy that assassinated Labasi-Marduk)

- a. Nebuchadnezzar's son-in-law
 - i. This makes Belshazzar Nebuchadnezzar's grand son
- b. 556 – 539 BC; 17 year reign.
- c. Possibly one of history's first archaeologists.

7. Belshazzar, ("Bel protect the king") son of Nabonidus

- a. Believed to be the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar.
- b. 550 -539 BC; 10years (25 years old at death)
- c. Co-Regent with his father, Nabonidus
- d. Appointed at the age of 15!
 - i. Jeremiah 27:7

8. Daniel

- a. taken captive 605 BC
- b. Prophesied King Belshazzar's death 539 BC
- c. approximately 82 years old

“Daniel was but a youth when carried away captive into Babylon. He was about fifteen or sixteen years old, for he is called a child, which means that he was in his youth.” *The Upward Look*, p. 83

II. Daniel 5: Body

A. Daniel 5:1 - 9

1. What is significant about the name King Belshazzar (Bel protects the king)?

- a. The name Belshazzar was for many years regarded as a fictitious literary creation of a post-captivity author assuming the pen name of Daniel (c. 165 B.C.). Now, however, it is well authenticated through archaeological studies that Belshazzar was a historic person. He was King Nabonidus' son appointed co-regent in 550 B.C. when he retired to Arabia, presumably to consolidation the weakening empire.
- b. Belshazzar, from the Assyrian inscriptions, has explained the seeming discrepancy between Daniel and the heathen historians of Babylon, Berosus and Abydenus, who say the last king (Nabonidus) surrendered in Borsippa, after Babylon was taken, and had an honorable abode in Caramania assigned to him. Belshazzar was joint king with his father (called Minus in the inscriptions), but subordinate to him; hence the Babylonian account suppresses the facts which cast discredit on Babylon, namely, that Belshazzar shut himself up in that city and fell at its capture; while it records the surrender of the principal king in Borsippa. The heathen Xenophon's description of Belshazzar accords with Daniel's; he calls him "impious," and illustrates his cruelty by mentioning that he killed one of his nobles, merely because, in hunting, the noble struck down the game before him; and unmanned a courtier, Gadates, at a banquet, because one of the king's concubines praised him as handsome. Daniel shows none of the sympathy for him which he had for Nebuchadnezzar. Xenophon confirms Daniel as to Belshazzar's end.

2. V. 1, what is so strange about Belshazzar holding a great feast?

3. Vs. 2 - 4; What kind of character did Belshazzar display in these verses?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

B. Daniel 5:5 - 9

1. What is the significance of v.5:

a. “*sha`ah* (Aramaic), properly, a look, i.e. a moment”

i. 2 Chronicles 16:9; Psalms 34:15; Genesis 16:13;

A **Watcher**, who was unrecognized, but whose presence was a power of condemnation, looked on this scene of profanation. Soon the unseen and uninvited Guest made his presence felt. At the moment when the sacrilegious revelry was at its height, a bloodless hand came forth, and wrote words of doom on the wall of the banqueting hall. {YI, May 19, 1898 par. 6} **Jeremiah 17:10; 1Chronicles 28:9**; Ps 7:9; 62:12; 139:23-24; Pr 17:3; Jer 11:20; 20:12; 32:19; Ro 2:6; 8:27; **Revelation 2:23**

b. “fingers of a man's hand”

ii. Exodus 31:18

2. V. 6, what one word describes the King's reaction? _____
3. Vs. 7 – 12, how many times has this scenario been repeated in the book of Daniel and what is its end times significance?
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a. The Queen Mother

i. Her opinion of Daniel. _____

ii. Her opinion of Belshazzar? _____

V. 11, 3 times, “your father”!

4. Vs. 13 – 16, Belshazzar's opinion of Daniel? _____

5. V. 17, Daniel's opinion of King Belshazzar? _____

a. Vs. 18 – 21, Daniel's opinion of Nebuchadnezzar? _____

i. Vs. 2, 11, 13, 18 _____

6. Vs. 22 – 23, list the 5 indictments of Daniel of the King.

a. _____

b. _____

Belshazzar had been given many opportunities for knowing and doing the will of God. He had seen his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar banished from the society of men. He had seen the intellect in which the proud monarch gloried taken away by the One who gave it. He had seen the king driven from his kingdom, and made the companion of the beasts of the field. But Belshazzar's love of amusement and self-glorification effaced the lessons he should never have forgotten; and he committed sins similar to those that brought signal judgments on Nebuchadnezzar. He wasted the opportunities graciously granted him, neglecting to use the opportunities within his reach for becoming acquainted with truth. "What must I do to be saved?" was a question that the great but foolish king passed by indifferently. {YI, May 19, 1898 par. 8}

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

i. V. 24 refers to what? _____

7. Vs. 25 – 28,

a. Mene _____

b. Mene _____

c. Tekel _____

d. Peres _____

i. What is God's opinion of King Belshazzar? _____

III. Daniel 5: Conclusion

1. Daniel 5:29 - 31

a. V. 29 _____

b. V. 30 _____

c. V. 31

In this Sanhedrin, assembled to plan the death of Christ, the Witness was present who heard the boastful words of Nebuchadnezzar, who witnessed the idolatrous feast of Belshazzar, who was present when Christ in Nazareth announced himself to be the Anointed One. This Witness was now impressing the rulers with the sinfulness of the work they were doing. Events in the life of Jesus rose up before them with a distinctness that alarmed them. They remembered the scene in the temple, when Jesus, a child of twelve, stood before the grave, learned doctors of the law, asking them questions at which they wondered. The miracle just performed appealed to their hearts, impressing them that Jesus was none other than the Son of God. Perplexed and troubled, the rulers asked, "What do we?" There was a division in the council. Under the impression of the Holy Spirit, the Pharisees could not banish from their minds the conviction that they were fighting against God. In their true significance, the Old Testament Scriptures regarding Christ flashed before their minds. {YI, May 18, 1899 par. 4}