



Daniel 5:1-31

8/16/20 AM

THE DOWNFALL OF A DYNASTY

Introduction:

BABYLONIAN EMPIRE			MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE		
Nabopolassar	Nebuchadnezzar	Belshazzar	Cyrus & Darius the Mede	Darius I	Xerxes Queen Esther
605	562	555 539			
605 DANIEL 536					
627	Jeremiah	574	Zerubbabel: rebuild of Jerusalem Temple		
	Ezekiel	593 559			
605 Daniel deported	586 Jerusalem destroyed		536 Temple started	516 Temple finished	

I. THE FEAST OF BELSHAZZER (vs. 1-9)

A. His Debauchery (vs. 1-4)

“a great feast for a thousand of his nobles”

“he gave orders to bring the gold and silver vessels”

“king...nobles...wives...concubines might drink from them”

“They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.”

B. His Discomposure (vs. 5-9)

“the fingers of a man’s hand emerged and began writing opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace”

“the king saw the back of the hand that did the writing”

“face grew pale...thoughts alarmed him...hip joints went slack...knees began knocking together”

“called aloud to bring in the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners”

“clothed with purple...necklace of gold...third ruler in the kingdom”

“they could not read the inscription”

“Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, his face grew even paler, and his nobles were perplexed”

II. THE FAME OF DANIEL (vs. 10-24)

A. The Queen’s Recollection (vs. 10-12)

“the queen entered the banquet hall...’There is a man in your kingdom in whom is a spirit of the holy gods’ ”

“in the days of your father, illumination, insight and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were found in him”

“your father...appointed him chief of the magicians...”

“an extraordinary spirit, knowledge and insight, interpretation of dreams, explanation of enigmas and solving of difficult problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar”

“Let Daniel now be summoned and he will declare the interpretation.”

B. Daniel’s Reputation (vs. 13-16)

“Are you that Daniel who is one of the exiles from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah?”

“the wise men...could not declare the interpretation of the message”

“I personally have heard about you, that you are able to give interpretations and solve difficult problems.”

C. God’s Reprimand through Daniel (vs. 17-24)

“Keep your gifts for yourself or give your rewards to someone else; however, I will read the inscription...”

Daniel’s review of chapter 4:

“The Most High God granted sovereignty, grandeur, glory and majesty to Nebuchadnezzar your father.... But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit became so proud that he behaved arrogantly, he was deposed from his royal throne and his glory was taken away from him...until he recognized that **the Most High God is ruler over the realm of mankind and that He sets over it whomever He wishes.**”

“Yet you, his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, **even though you knew all this**, but you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before you...”

“you have praised the gods...which do not see, hear or understand”

“The God in whose hand are your life-breath and all your ways, you have not glorified.”

“Then the hand was sent from Him and this inscription was written out.”

III. THE FALL OF BABYLON (vs. 25-31)

A. The Details of the Interpretation (vs. 25-29) “MENĒ, MENĒ, TEKĒ, UPHARSIN”

‘MENĒ’ - “God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it.”

‘TEKĒ’ - “you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient.”

‘PERĒ’ - “your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians.”

“Belshazzar gave orders and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a necklace of gold around his neck”

“issued a proclamation...that he now had authority as the third ruler in the kingdom”

B. The Death of Belshazzar (vs. 30)

“That same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain.”

C. The Downfall of the Kingdom (vs. 31)

“So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two.”

Conclusion:

- 1) The life of Belshazzar demonstrates that parents can reap chaos in their adult children if they have done nothing to bring them up in the fear of the Lord.
- 2) Even when the political system crumbles around them, godly people can still trust God.
- 3) Though older people may feel rejected by younger leaders, God will often call on them for service when He needs them.
- 4) God’s judgment may seem slow by our time frame, but it is certain and it is always right.
- 5) Never underestimate the power of one godly life.

Food for Thought:

- 1) How does Daniel model for us spiritual leadership to which we should all aspire in declining years?
- 2) If God were to warn America today, what would be the “handwriting on the wall” for us?
- 3) Discuss God’s way(s) of confronting pride and arrogance.
- 4) What do we learn from this chapter about the enticement of human rewards?