

The Book of Daniel Syllabus

Chapter 5

"Babylon is Fallen"

These words from the Book of Revelation reveal the final fall of "the Babylonian System."

Genesis 10 and 11 reveal that system's origins when the nations (gentiles) rebelled. The four kingdoms in Neb's metallic image, and Daniel's later bestial visions, operated in the worldly system known as the Babylonian System. Daniel 5 records the fall in one night of the golden head known as The Babylonian Empire, with which began "the times of the Gentiles."

Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian Empire was the First World Empire.

Assyria and Egypt did not conquer the known world.

Nebuchadnezzar did and subjugated it to Babylon.

The Babylonian Empire was built upon the foundations of the Tower of Babel; in the same geographical area.

Dan. 5:1 ¶ Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.

Dan. 5:2 Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, might drink therefrom.

Dan. 5:3 Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, drank from them.

Dan. 5:4 They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. (ASV)

Most agree Belshazzar was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar.

Some say grandson-in-law.

It is interesting to know that the Medes and the Persians were even then besieging the city. However, Belshazzar's daring blasphemy may have been the result of a

victory over the besiegers, some say, that very day. They also believed that Babylon contained resources to withstand any siege.

Clarence Larkin. *The Book of Daniel*. pp 79, 80

Babylon was well fortified. One of the most amazing cities of all time.

The city of Babylon was the most magnificent city the world has ever seen...[it] was built in an exact square of 15 miles on a side, or 60 miles around. It was surrounded by a brick wall 87 feet thick, which, according to Herodotus, was 350 feet high. On the walls were 250 towers, and the top of the wall was wide enough to permit six chariots to drive abreast. Outside this wall was a vast ditch or moat surrounding the city kept filled with water from the river Euphrates, and crossed by draw-bridges in front of the gates. Inside the wall, and not far from it, was another wall...

At the end of cross avenues magnificently burnished two-leafed gates of brass were built in the city walls that shone as they were opened or closed...

The city was divided into two equal parts by the river Euphrates that flowed diagonally across it...

Babylon contained one of the "Seven Wonders of the World," the famous "Hanging Gardens" These gardens were 400 feet square, and were raised in terraces one above the other, to the height of 350 feet, and were reached by stairways ten feet wide. The top of each terrace was covered with large stone slabs on which were laid a bed of rushes, then a thick layer of asphalt, next two courses of brick, cemented together, and finally plates of lead to prevent leakage; the whole was then covered with earth and planted with shrubbery and large trees. The whole had the appearance from a distance of a forest-covered mountain, which would be a remarkable sight in the level plain of the Euphrates.

. These "Gardens" were built by Nebuchadnezzar simply to please his wife, Amiytis, daughter of Cyaxares, king of the mountainous country of Media, and who was made more contented with her surroundings. The rest of the city was in its glory and magnificence in keeping with these palaces, towers, and "Hanging Gardens."

It contained many beautiful parks, and there was much unoccupied land that could be tilled, and help support the over 1 million population.

The character of its inhabitants, and of its official life at the zenith of its history, is seen in the description of "Belshazzar's Feast." Never before or since has this earth seen its equal. The Prophet Isaiah speaks of it as: "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' Excellency..." (Isaiah 13:19).

***Dan. 5:5** ¶ In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.*

***Dan. 5:6** Then the king's countenance was changed in him, and his thoughts troubled him; and the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.*

***Dan. 5:7** The king cried aloud to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. ...*

***Dan. 5:8** Then came in all the king's wise men; but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation.*

***Dan. 5:9** Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were perplexed.*

(ASV)

The writing was near the light, where it could be seen.

The Queen mother remembered Daniel, a man of God, who knew the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams 65 years earlier (Daniel 5:10-12).

Dan. 5:13 ¶ *Then was Daniel brought in before the king. The king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, who art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Judah?*

Dan. 5:14 *I have heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in thee...*

Dan. 5:17 ¶ *Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation...*

[Then Daniel rehearsed Nebuchadnezzar's God-given lesson in pride and humility.]

Dan. 5:22 *And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thy heart, though thou knewest all this,*

Dan. 5:23 *but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives and thy concubines, have drunk wine from them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver and gold... which see not, nor hear, nor know; and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.*

Dan. 5:24 *Then was the part of the hand sent from before him, and this writing was inscribed.*

Dan. 5:25 ¶ *And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.*

Dan. 5:26 *This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and brought it to an end;*

Dan. 5:27 *TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.*

Dan. 5:28 *PERES; thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians...*

Dan. 5:30 ¶ *In that night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain.*

Dan. 5:31 *And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old. (ASV)*

Prophecy fulfilled. The two-armed silver kingdom, the Medo-Persians, toppled the golden head. In deference to Cyrus' uncle, Darius the Mede became the first ruler.

Clarence Larkin, The Book of Daniel, p. 91

The Babylonians entrenched behind the impregnable walls of the city, with provisions to last them for years, and sufficient tillable soil to supplement the supply, scoffed at Cyrus, and made light of the siege...But it was a false security, for God had decreed over 175 years before that the city should be taken by a man not then born, Cyrus.

Is. 44:28 That saith of Cyrus, *He is my shepherd*, and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built; and of the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

Is. 45:1 ¶ Thus saith Jehovah to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him, and I will loose the loins of kings; to open the doors before him, and the gates shall not be shut:

Is. 45:2 I will go before thee, and make the rough places smooth; I will break in pieces the doors of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron;

Is. 45:3 and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that it is I, Jehovah, who call thee by thy name, even the God of Israel.

Is. 45:4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel my chosen, I have called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

Is. 45:5 I am Jehovah, and there is none else; besides me there is no God. I will gird thee, though thou hast not known me;

Is. 45:6 that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me: I am Jehovah, and there is none else.

Persia captures Babylon (Wikipedia)

In 539 BC, the Neo-Babylonian Empire fell to [Cyrus the Great](#), king of [Persia](#), with a military engagement known as the [Battle of Opis](#). The famed walls of Babylon were indeed impenetrable, with the only way into the city through one of its many gates or through the Euphrates, which ebbed beneath its thick walls. Metal gates at the river's in-flow and out-flow prevented underwater intruders, if one could hold one's breath to reach them. Cyrus (or his generals) devised a plan to use the Euphrates as the mode of entry to the city, ordering large camps of troops at each point and instructed them to wait for the signal. Awaiting an evening of a national feast among Babylonians (generally thought to refer to the feast of Belshazzar mentioned in Daniel V), Cyrus' troops diverted the Euphrates river upstream, causing the Euphrates to drop to about 'mid thigh level on a man' or to dry up altogether. The soldiers marched under the walls through the lowered water. The Persian Army conquered the outlying areas of the city's interior while a majority of Babylonians at the city center were oblivious to the breach. The account was elaborated upon by Herodotus, and is also mentioned by passages in the Hebrew Bible.

See pictures herein of the Ishtar Gate and Processional Way reconstructed in The Pergamon Museum in Berlin.