

You Shall Have No Other Gods Before ME!

Chapter five of Daniel is another chapter in the saga of Daniel's experiences in Babylon. As we shall see momentarily, this may be the first experience of tongues in the Bible, and its interpretation by Daniel marks the end of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. From a magnificent feast to the untimely death of Belshazzar, the glory of Yahweh, the true God of all the universe is manifest.

I. Belshazzar throws an incredible party

- A. Belshazzar is the son of Nabonidus and the adopted son of Nebuchadnezzar neither of whom are in the city Babylon at the time.
 - 1. It is difficult to say what has happened to Nebuchadnezzar; he may have relocated to a better climate due to failing health,
 - 2. Meanwhile Nabonidus is on a long campaign to rebuild the temples of the Babylonian gods, especially the moon god.
 - 3. The Queen mentioned in this event is the Queen Mother who is the mother of Belshazzar (?), not his wife.
- B. A thousand people are invited to the party which is devoted to the worship of the gods and revelry prevails as the wine flows.
- C. In his increasingly drunken state, Belshazzar gets the brilliant idea to bring out the gold and silver chalices from the Temple in Jerusalem and to use them to praise the gods of the Babylonians.

II. God has had enough

- A. The handwriting on the wall
- B. "You have been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Your kingdom will be taken from you and divided among the Medes and the Persians.
- C. At that very moment Cyrus was stealthily advancing into the city and that very night Belshazzar was slain as the Medes took over the city of Babylon.

III. Important lessons from the intervention of God and the handwriting on the wall:

- A. "Payday Some Day" Rev. Robert E. Lee
- B. "Sinners in the Hand of an Angry God" Jonathan Edwards
- C. Our days are numbered, even before there is one of them, Psalm 139:16
- D. Our God is a patient God, slow to anger and slow to wrath—but He does have a limit, and when that line is crossed He will be swift to bring rebuke.