

Daniel Lesson 6: From Arrogance to Destruction

The Study of Daniel Chapter 5

Memory Verse

Daniel 2:21 (NKJV) *And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.*

October 11, 539 BC

Jeremiah 27:6–7 (NKJV) *And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him. ⁷ So all nations shall serve him and his son and his son's son, until the time of his land comes;*

Belshazzar's Feast

Nabonidus was the father Belshazzar was technically the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar through Nebuchadnezzar's daughter.

His name means "Bel Protect the King". Security and sensuality before fall. After having Jews live in Babylon for 70 years they knew about Jeremiah's prophecy that Babylon would fall.

Belshazzar was so over confident in the walls and the water supply he had this feast in proud defiance. Tammuz - feasting instead of fasting

Daniel 5:1 *Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Drinking kings, drug use.*

Proverbs 31:4–5 (NKJV) *It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink; Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted.*

1 Kings 20:16 *So they went out at noon. Meanwhile Ben-Hadad and the thirty-two kings helping him were getting drunk at the command post.*

Ecclesiastes 10:16–17 (NKJV) *Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child, And your princes feast in the morning! ¹⁷ Blessed are you, O land, when your king is the son of nobles, And your princes feast at the proper time— For strength and not for drunkenness!*

Disregard for marriage.

Daniel 5:2 *His wives, and his concubines might drink from them...* **Daniel 5:23** *They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them.*

Daniel 5:3 *Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which had been in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them.*

2 Chronicles 36:10 *In the spring of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, with the precious vessels of the house of the Lord, and made his brother Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.*

Jeremiah 27:16 (NKJV): *Also I spoke to the priests and to all this people, saying, "Thus says the Lord: 'Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you, saying, "Behold, the vessels of the Lord's house will now shortly be brought back from Babylon"; for they prophesy a lie to you.*

Ezra 1:7 (ESV) *Cyrus the king also brought out the vessels of the house of the Lord that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and placed in the house of his gods.*

Ezra 1:11 (NKJV) *All the articles of gold and silver were five thousand four hundred. All these Sheshbazzar took with the captives who were brought from Babylon to Jerusalem.*

We are holy vessels that God does not want filled with the wine of Babylon. He wants to rescue us and bring us back to his house.

1 Thessalonians 4:4–5 (NKJV) *that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, ⁵ not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;*

The vessels meant for God's glory are being used to praise idols.

Consider the five reasons for Rome's downfall, as set forth by Edward Gibbon in his classic work *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. They are:

1. The undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home.
2. Increasing taxes and spending of public money for bread and circuses.
3. The mad craze for pleasure, with sports becoming more exciting and more brutal.
4. The building of gigantic armaments, when the real enemy is the decadence of the people.
5. The decay of religion, with faith fading into mere form.

Phillip Myers, in "Rome, Its Rise and Fall", made this observation on the Romans: "Almost from the beginning, the Roman stage was gross, and immorality was one of the main agencies to which must be attributed the undermining of the originally sound moral life of Roman society. So absorbed did the people become in the indecent representations of the stage that they lost all thought and care of the affairs of real life."

An Uninvited Guest

Daniel 5:5 (NKJV) *In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.*

John 8:6 (NKJV) *This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground **with His finger**, as though He did not hear.*

Exodus 31:18 (NKJV) *And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with **the finger of God**.*

The Party's Over, Samson, Jehu, Elijah

Enter the Queen

Nitocris, the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 5:11–12 (NKJV) *There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.*

¹² *Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation."*

Weighed and Found Wanting

Daniel 5:17 (NKJV) *Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation.*

The Fall of Babylon

Daniel 5:30–31 (NKJV) *That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. ³¹ And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.*

They are on the floor of the banquet hall the blood of royalty was mingled with the wine of Babylon.

*That night they slew him on his father's throne,
the deed unnoticed in the hand unknown.*

*Crown lists and scepterless, Belshazzar lay,
a robe of purple around a form of clay – Edward Arnold*

There are more prophecies about the fall of Babylon than any other Old Testament event.

Cyrus would lead the battle.

The gates would be left open.

The soldiers would be drunk.

Seized with fear like women.

Waters be dried up.

Judgment on Nebuchadnezzar's grandson.

Esther 1:10 *On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine,...*

Daniel 5:8 (NKJV) *Now all the king's wise men came, but they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation.*

Disregard for Holy Things

Daniel 5:1 *Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand. **Drug abuse.** God's name, the Sabbath and marriage. When a nation loses respect for these things you can see the handwriting on the wall.*

Daniel 5: 22 *"But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven.*

Worshipping the Works of Man – idolatry

The *Cyropedia*, is an embellished biography of Cyrus the Great, written around 370 BC by the Athenian gentleman-soldier, and student of Socrates, Xenophon of Athens.

"(26) Thereupon they entered; and of those they met some were struck down and slain, and others fled into their houses, and some raised the hue and cry, but Gobryas and his friends covered the cry with their

shouts, as though they were revelers themselves. And thus, making their way by the quickest route, they soon found themselves before the king's palace. (27) Here the detachment under Gobryas and Gadatas found the gates closed, but the men appointed to attack the guards rushed on them as they lay drinking round a blazing fire, and closed with them then and there. (28) As the din grew louder and louder, those within became aware of the tumult, till, the king bidding them see what it meant, some of them opened the gates and ran out. (29) Gadatas and his men, seeing the gates swing wide, darted in, hard on the heels of the others who fled back again, and they chased them at the sword's point into the presence of the king. (30) They found him on his feet, with his drawn scimitar in his hand. By sheer weight of numbers they overwhelmed him: and not one of his retinue escaped, they were all cut down, some flying, others snatching up anything to serve as a shield and defending themselves as best they could."

Both Xenophon, Herodotus, and Daniel agree that the city was taken by surprise at night and during the time of a festival, and with some (but apparently not much) loss of life. Some critics denied of the historicity of Daniel's naming Belshazzar as the king who was slain, until cuneiform evidence was found corroborating the existence of Belshazzar as the king reigning in Babylon.

Isaiah 44:27–28 (NKJV) ⁷ *Who says to the deep, 'Be dry! And I will dry up your rivers';* ²⁸ *Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, "You shall be built," And to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid.*

Isaiah 45:1–3 (NKJV) *"Thus says the Lord to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held— To subdue nations before him And loose the armor of kings, To open before him the double doors, So that the gates will not be shut: ² 'I will go before you And make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of bronze And cut the bars of iron. ³ I will give you the treasures of darkness And hidden riches of secret places, That you may know that I, the Lord, Who call you by your name, Am the God of Israel.*

Jeremiah 50:35–36 (NKJV) *"A sword is against the Chaldeans," says the Lord, "Against the inhabitants of Babylon, And against her princes and her wise men. A sword is against the soothsayers, and they will be fools. A sword is against her mighty men, and they will be dismayed...*

Jeremiah 50:38 (NKJV) *A drought is against her waters, and they will be dried up. For it is the land of carved images, And they are insane with their idols.*