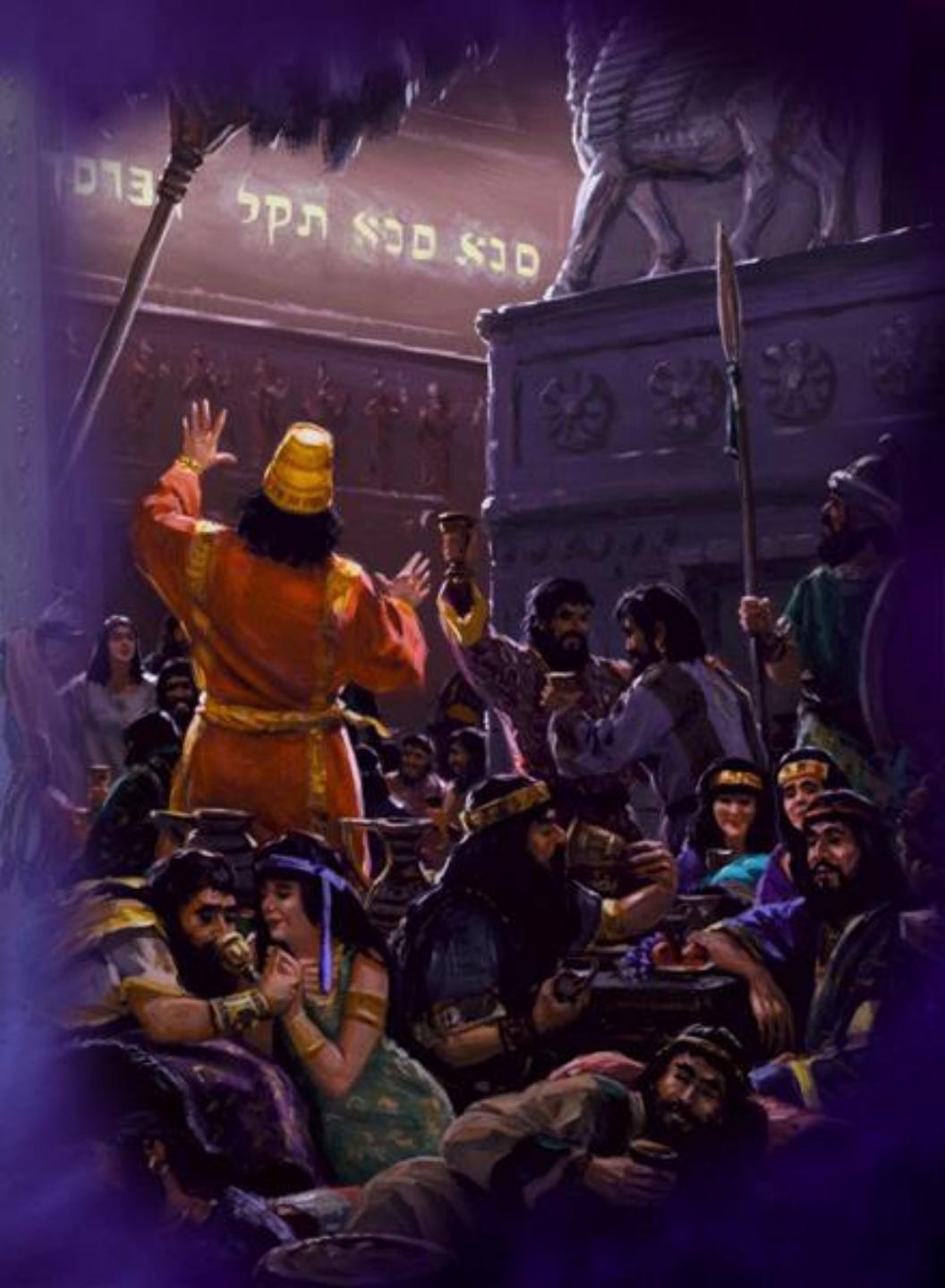


FROM ARROGANCE TO DESTRUCTION



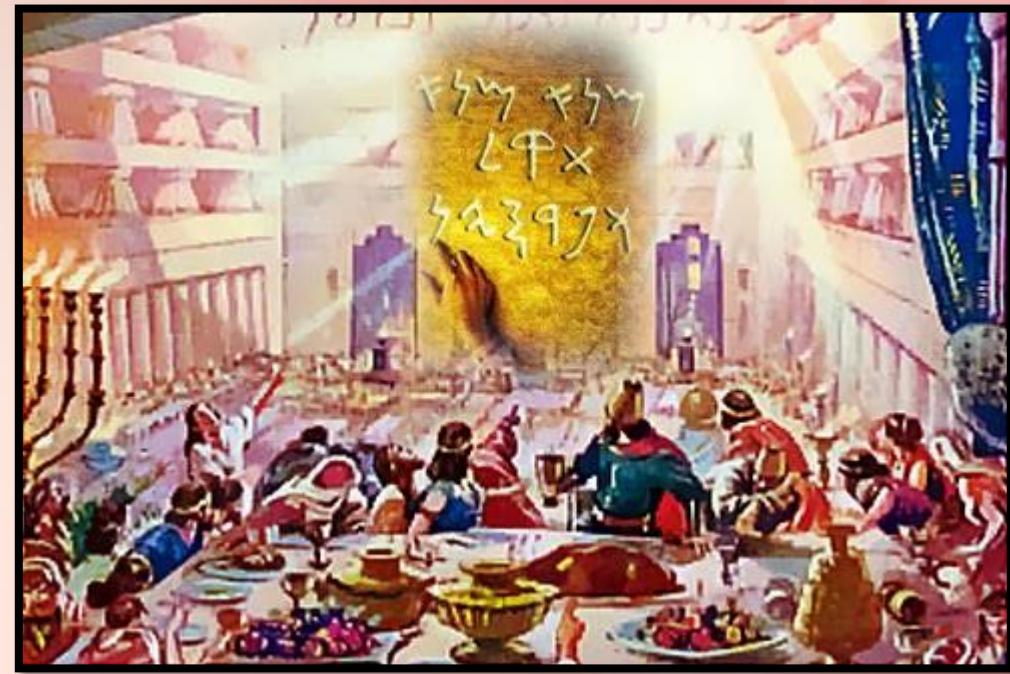
Lesson 6 for
February 8,
2020

Just 23 years after the death of Nebuchadnezzar (562 B.C.), Belshazzar was holding the feast mentioned in Daniel 5 (539 B.C.).

During that period, Babylon was governed by Nabonidus who was married to Nitocris, daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. She's the queen mentioned in Daniel 5.

Nabonidus appointed Belshazzar as co-regent. He became the governor of Babylon city.

Belshazzar was as arrogant as his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar. He felt invincible and held a great feast while Babylon was being besieged by the Persians.



- **The arrogance of Belshazzar. Daniel 5:1-4**
- **God's message. Daniel 5:5-8**
- **The queen's advice. Daniel 5:9-12**
- **The interpretation of the message. Daniel 5:13-28**
- **The destruction of Belshazzar. Daniel 5:29-31**



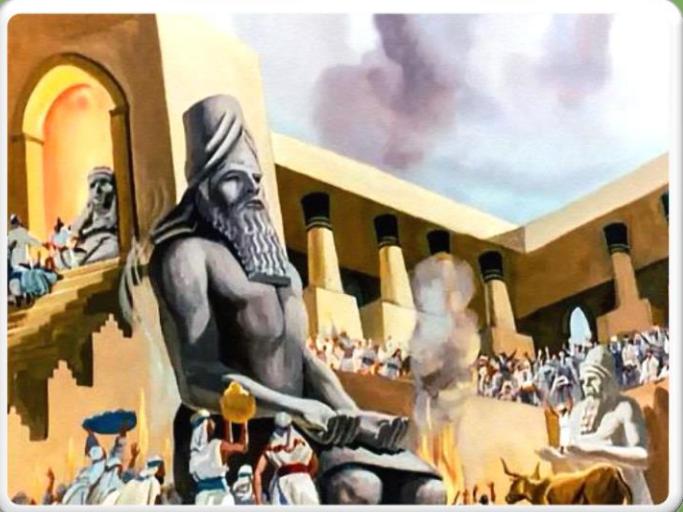
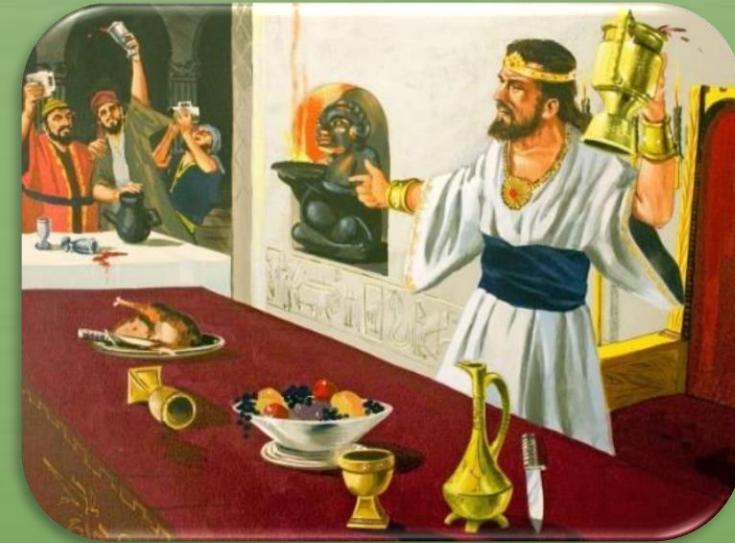
THE ARROGANCE OF BELSHAZZAR

“They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.” (Daniel 5:4)

Belshazzar got merry with the wine and ordered to bring the sacred vessels that were taken from the temple in Jerusalem.

He arrogantly used the tools which were meant to worship the true God to worship false gods.

The Babylonians used the sexagesimal system, so mentioning six types of materials was a reference to all the Babylonian gods.

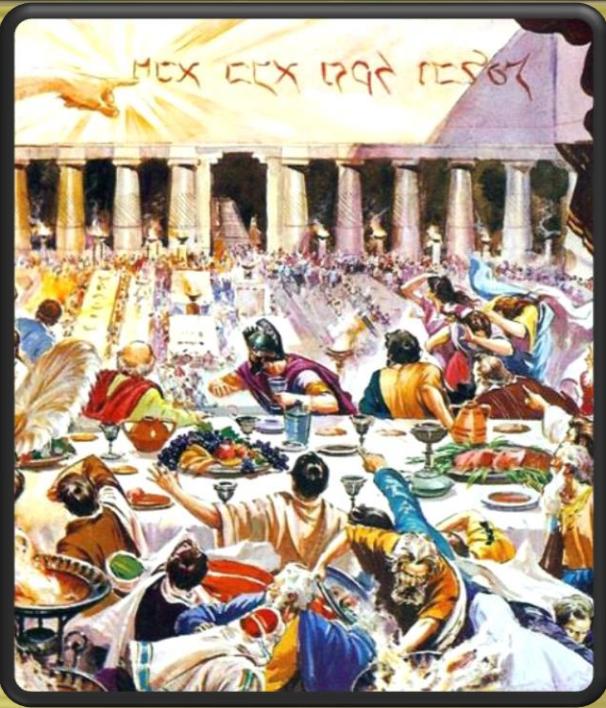


In the End Time,
“Babylon” will also use
elements from true
religion [the golden cup]
to make everyone accept
all types of lies [the
abominations]
(Revelation 17:4-6).



GOD'S MESSAGE

"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." (Daniel 5:5)



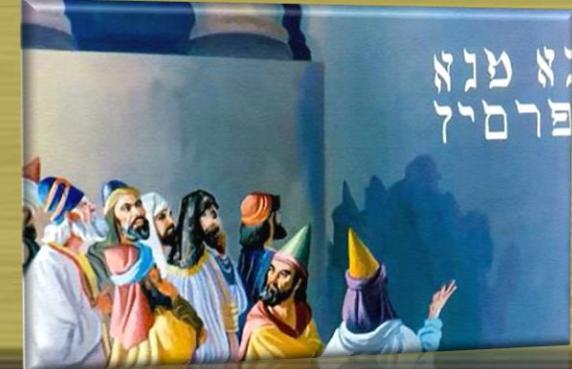
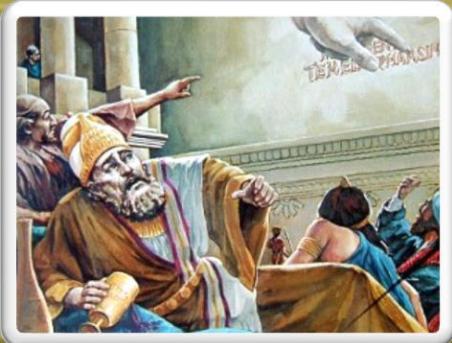
The feast was interrupted by a supernatural phenomenon: A hand was writing on the wall.

Everyone was scared. Belshazzar called all the wise men in his kingdom. However, he was seeking wisdom in the wrong place.

He offered great gifts as a reward:

1. *Purple clothing.* Royal dignity
2. *A chain of gold.* Authority
3. *Third ruler in the kingdom.* After Nabonidus and himself

As in previous occasions (Daniel 2, 4), the wise men of this world couldn't interpret God's message.



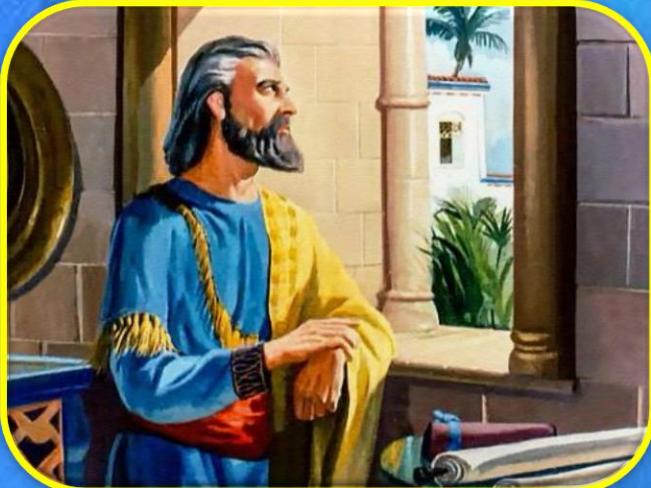


THE QUEEN'S ADVICE

"let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation."
(Daniel 5:12)

The queen reminded Belshazzar that there was an exceptional person in his kingdom:

- ↘ He has the Holy Spirit ["the spirit of the gods/of God"]
- ↘ He has superior knowledge and understanding
- ↘ He is chief of the wise men
- ↘ He can interpret dreams, solve riddles and explain enigmas



Daniel had worked with Belshazzar at least until his third year as governor (Daniel 8:1, 27). However, the king didn't want to deal with someone who disturbed his conscience.

The queen was aware of the influence that Daniel exerted on her father. If anyone in Babylon could help Belshazzar, it was Daniel.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE MESSAGE

"But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this." (Daniel 5:22)



Daniel rejected the king's reward. His interpretation wouldn't be influenced by gifts. He showed Belshazzar his condition before interpreting the message:



The king knew about Nebuchadnezzar's experience and how he repented being after humiliated by God. But Belshazzar had chosen not to follow his example.



He had humiliated God by desecrating the sacred vessels



He had praised gods that couldn't see, hear or think



He knew that his life relied on God, but he hadn't honored him

For this reason, God had sent him a special message.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE MESSAGE

"And this is the inscription that was written: 'MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.'"

"Numbered, numbered, weighed, divided." The message was written in Aramaic and could be easily read, but interpreting it was not that easy.

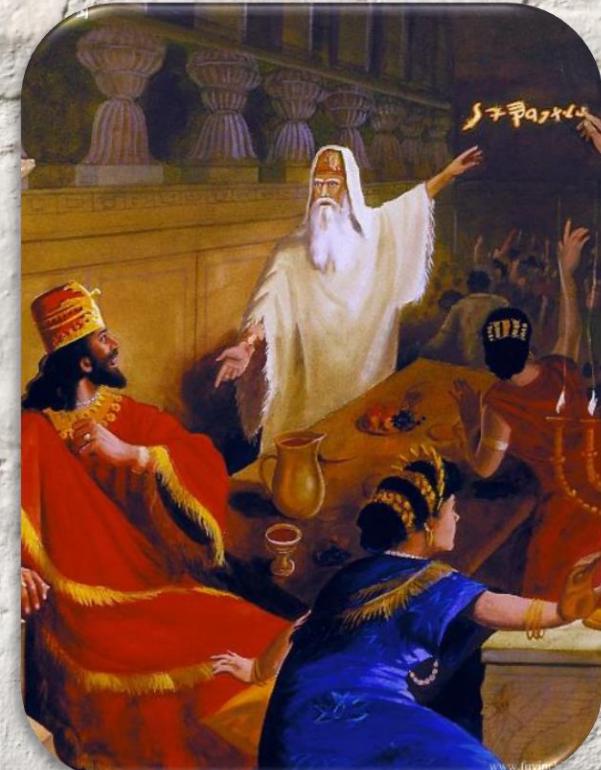
(Daniel 5:25)

- 🔥 **MENE [Numbered]**. God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it
- 🔥 **TEKEL [Weighed]**. You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting
- 🔥 **UPHARSIN [Divided]**. Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians

Daniel didn't soften the message. Belshazzar had overstepped the limits.

The king had not changed his attitude.

His sentence would be fulfilled that very night.



THE DESTRUCTION OF BELSHAZZAR

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



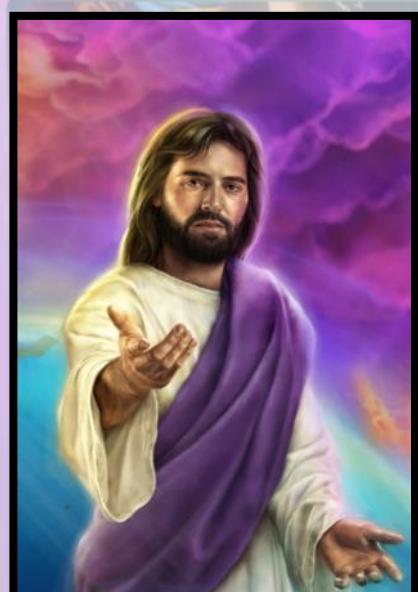
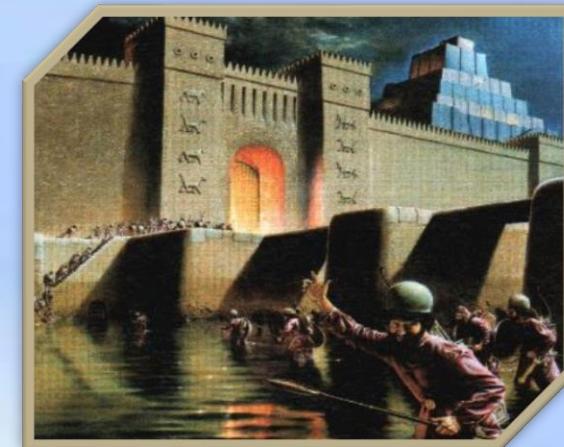
While the people of Babylon were enjoying the feast, the Persians were digging a canal to divert the Euphrates.

They crossed the walls by using the riverbed and easily entered the city (which was left unguarded because of the feast).

The city was captured in just some hours, and Belshazzar was killed.

Cyrus chased Nabonidus, and Darius the Mede stayed as the governor of Babylon city.

The story of Belshazzar teaches us to make the most of the opportunities that God mercifully gives us to accept His salvation.



“Little did Belshazzar think that an unseen Watcher beheld his idolatrous revelry. But there is nothing said or done that is not recorded on the books of heaven. The mystic characters traced by the bloodless hand testify that God is a witness to all we do, and that He is dishonored by feasting and reveling. We cannot hide anything from God. We cannot escape from our accountability to Him. Wherever we are and whatever we do, we are responsible to Him whose we are by creation and by redemption.”

E.G.W. (Temperance, cp. 6, p. 49)