

Collapse of a Kingdom Daniel 5

Had no shelter from the elements (dew)
Until he acknowledged sovereignty of God

I. Profane Orgy - 5:1-4

1. King Belshazzar celebrates defiantly - 1
Reigned as co-ruler with father, Nabonidus
Feeling secure, Medo-Persian army nearby
Wall, 87 ft. thick, 350 ft. high, moat 35 ft. wide
Pasture land inside walls
Euphrates river ran through the city
Could withstand a 25 yr. siege
2. Belshazzar celebrates profanely - 2-3
He & guests drank wine from temple vessels
3. Belshazzar celebrates in idolatry - 4
Defies God by profaning temple vessels
Praises his gods (idols)

II. Paralyzing Interruption - 5:5-9

1. Drunken orgy interrupted - 5, 6
Human fingers seen writing on palace wall - 5
Belshazzar visibly shaken as he watched - 6
2. Wise men unable to interpret writing - 7, 8
King offered riches & 3rd position in kingdom - 7
None could read or interpret the writing - 8
3. King is sobered & visibly shaken - 9
Celebration turned into a stressful event
Defiant king reduced to a shaken man

III. Prophet Recalled - 5:10-16

1. Queen-mother remembers Daniel - 10-12
Nebuchadnezzar's widow or Nabonidus' wife
Tells Belshazzar about Daniel
Has spirit of holy gods, great wisdom
Nebuchadnezzar's experience with Daniel
Interpreted dreams, made head of wise men
2. Daniel brought in before the king - 13-16
King praises Daniel for what he heard
Acknowledges failure of his wise men - 15
Offers Daniel riches, 3rd position in kingdom - 16
If he can interpret this writing

IV. Personal Message - 5:17-24

1. Daniel refuses honor, King's reward - 17
He will interpret writing without reward
2. Gives the king a lesson in history - 18-21
Reminds king of God's sovereignty
God's dealing with Nebuchadnezzar
God gave him a great kingdom - 18-19
Nebuchadnezzar was lifted up in pride - 19
God humbled him in his pride - 20-21
Deposed him from his throne, took his glory
Driven away from humans
Became like a beast - ate grass with them

3. Daniel points finger at Belshazzar - 22-23
You knew this but did not humble your heart
You have lifted up yourself against the Lord
Desecrated vessels set apart for God's Temple
Praised the gods made by men
Have not glorified God, who gives you life
4. Daniel identifies the hand - 24
This is God's hand & His message to you

V. Prophetic Message - 5:25-31

1. The writing is interpreted - 25-28
Mene, Mene - "Numbered, numbered"
Days of the kingdom are numbered
Tekel - "Weighed"
In God's balances you are found lacking
Upharsin - "Divided into pieces"
Kingdom will be taken, given to Medes and Persians
2. King persists, giving honor to Daniel - 29
Honor is hollow in light of the prediction
3. King slain & Kingdom conquered - 30, 31
Belshazzar is slain that night
History records what happened
Darius' army diverted the river above the city
Entered city in river bed that ran under the wall
Darius the Mede becomes king over Babylon
Babylonian empire becomes Medo-Persian empire