

RUSSELL SANDERS

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DANIEL THE MAN – LESSON 11

THE FALL OF BABYLON

In Daniel 5:1-6 we saw how troubled Babylonian King Belshazzar was when the fingers of a hand (not a human hand) wrote a mysterious message on the wall of the palace hall where he was throwing a huge party. The drunken revelers were drinking from the sanctified holy vessels taken from the Temple in Jerusalem.

The writing was ***“MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.”*** It was a language unknown to him, and he was scared witless. He called in all his wisemen, astrologers, soothsayers, (fortune tellers) and Chaldean advisors. Nobody could tell him what the writing meant. The story is told in Daniel 5:7-31.

The queen mother came to him and told him of a man in ***whom “the wisdom of the gods was found”*** (vs. 11) namely Daniel. The King had Daniel brought in, inquired of him about the matter and promised riches and rulership if he could tell the meaning of this.

Daniel reminded him of the story of how his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar was brought down and humbled because of his pride. He told Belshazzar in vs. 22-23, ***“thou...hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this. But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven and...brought the vessels of His house...”*** and defiled them.

Here is the meaning of the handwriting explained in 5:26-28:

***MENE: God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.***

***TEKEL: Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.***

***PERES: Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.***

“Numbered” meant the number of his days as King was finished.

“Weighed in the balances” meant judgment for the eternal hereafter.

“Found Wanting” meant the evil outweighed the good on the eternal scales of judgment.

Finally, the kingdom of Babylon is falling to a new Medo-Persian empire.

The city of Babylon which had been considered impregnable and virtually eternal fell that same night as a Persian army took the city. Belshazzar died. Darius the Mede took over rulership. Babylon fell without a fight. The physical city of Babylon (in modern Iraq) never again gained prominence in the world. However, what it represented has enormous prophetic significance spoken about in Revelation as “Mystery Babylon” that will have an ungodly world-wide influence relative to our end times.

Tomorrow we will look at the “aftermath” and Daniel’s role as the Medo-Persian empire takes over.