



Nebuchadnezzar's Humbling — This section seems to have been written by Nebuchadnezzar, as an official declaration, and incorporated into Daniel's book.

We are given the personal testimony of a great world ruler. Note the following: (1) He was the *head of gold* in the image; (2) see Dan 5:18-19; (3) God restored him despite his attitude; (4) he seems to have repented after this; (5) Daniel was greatly sorrowed at the meaning of this dream (4:19).

Could such a thing have *really* happened to Nebuchadnezzar? With God's control and power,

yes it could! Is this any more difficult than creation, than raising the dead, or any other miracle?

Was Nebuchadnezzar made "right with God" after this? *We don't know.* He certainly seems to have been humbled & recognized God's power. God had a separate system for Gentiles than for the Jews, and he overlooked ignorance (Acts 17:30), but he still expected men to recognize and worship him. What he says after his humbling is true; where he stood after his humbling is only conjecture.

Babylon was indeed a great city! It is reported by Herodotus that the walls were 14 miles long on each side; 300' tall; 25' wide; and had a 35' deep foundation. There were 250 Sentinel towers that were 450' high. There was a second wall inside the outer wall. The city was surrounded by a wide, deep moat, with a drawbridge that was retracted at night, and ferries that only ran in the daytime. The city itself was grand. The hanging gardens are considered one of the 7 Wonders of the ancient world. Streets were paved with large stone slabs. Grand temples were throughout the city. This was all largely accomplished under the direction of Nebuchadnezzar.



Belshazzar's destruction — One of the strongest criticisms of the book of Daniel *had* been that there was no historical record of a Babylonian king named Belshazzar (see above.) However, more recent records from findings show a "Bel-shar-usus" who was the son of Nabonidus; and that Nabonidus entrusted his kingdom to his son while he spent around 10 yrs in Arabia. (See question 9.)

In case you're doubting... Herodotus (who recorded this history in the mid 5th century BC) did not record Belshazzar *at all*. This is why Daniel was for so long criticized. **BUT**— If Daniel was actually written by a 2nd century Jew, how could he have known this lost historical information???

Belshazzar clearly was not the son of Nebuchadnezzar, as Daniel refers to him (5:2,11,18,22.) *Does this prove Daniel's inaccuracy?* There is indication from historians that: **(a)** Nabonidus may have married Nebuchadnezzar's widow in order to legitimize his claim to the throne (see 5:10-12) since he took it by force; **(b)** Nabonidus married Nitocris, the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar; **(c)** Belshazzar may have been an adopted son of Nebuchadnezzar.

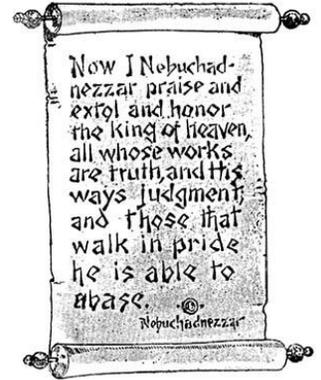
Who was Darius the Mede?

Tune in Next Class!

Babylon Falls! This event is recorded not only by Daniel but also by the historians Herodotus & Xenophon. Babylon had been under a long siege by Cyrus, king of Persia. Babylon's walls were so wide chariots could drive on top; the Euphrates ran through the city, under its walls, providing water; they had stored 20 years of supplies. They were secure!!? But the Medo-Persian army had dug a diverting channel away from the Euphrates, to a nearby lake. The night of the banquet recorded in Daniel 5, October, 539 BC, the diverting canal was connected, leaving an empty river bed under the city walls. The army came under the walls, and Babylon was taken.

Lesson 4 Questions

1. Who seems to have written chapter 4?
2. Describe Nebuchadnezzar's dream.
3. What differences do you see between this dream and the manner in which it was interpreted, and his dream of chapter 2?
4. What impact did the meaning of the dream have on Daniel, and why?
5. What was the meaning of the dream, & how was it fulfilled?



6. How can we be guilty of the same thing as 4:30?
7. How does 4:36 support the theme of God being in control?
8. How is the historical record of Belshazzar being "co-ruler" with his father Nabonidus supported by Dan 5:16 & 29?
9. What was the physical impact of the vision on Belshazzar?
10. Did Daniel hesitate to explain the meaning? Why or why not? (Compare this to question 4!)

11. Daniel had accepted the role of authority Nebuchadnezzar had bestowed upon him (2:48-49). Why do you suppose Daniel responded as he did in 5:17 to Belshazzar?
12. A. What reason was given in 5:18-22 that Belshazzar should have known better?
- B. How can we be guilty of this same mistake?



13. What was the writing on the wall, and what did it mean?

14. What reason in 5:22-23 seems to be given for the final fall of Babylon?

15. With what part of the image of chapter 2 does Daniel 5:30-31 correlate?

Recognize the progression of a theme that appears to have to some degree been recognized by Nebuchadnezzar, but *certainly* is here for us to see. The king recognizes the power of God in the individual Daniel (ch 2); he then sees God's ability to nullify his own decisions & power (ch 3); he further sees that God truly chooses who is & who is not in power (ch 4:25) – *which proves God's control as in the dream of chapter 2* – and we see that dream begin to be fulfilled with the change of power to Medo-Persia (ch 5).