



The Party's Over

Daniel 5

Background

- Nebuchadnezzar died, 562 BC; decline
- Evil-Merodach (2 K.25); 2 year reign
- Neriglissar murdered Evil-M., 560; 4 years
- Labashi-Marduk, a child, ruled 2 mo.;
beaten to death
- A conspirator, Nabonidus, ruled 17 years;
married Nitocris, Nebu. daughter
- Belshazzar, co-regent more than ½
- Cyrus . . . came to Babylon (539-538 BC)

The Words on the Wall

- **MENE**: weight of 50 shekels; mina, equal to 1¼ lbs.; from m^enah, to number, to reckon
- **TEKEL**: shekel; from t^eqal, to weigh. God weighed; you came up short.
1 Sm.2:3
- **UPHARSIN** (28: PERES)

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P R S – half mina; from p^eras, to break in to, divide; given to M-Persia.

1. Daniel 5 is history

- Nabonidus Chronicle:
 - Nabonidus returns to Babylon for new year festival; almost certainly 17th year; Cyrus is closing in.
 - Nabonidus flees
 - Army of Cyrus enters Babylon without a battle.
- Herodotus / Cyropedia

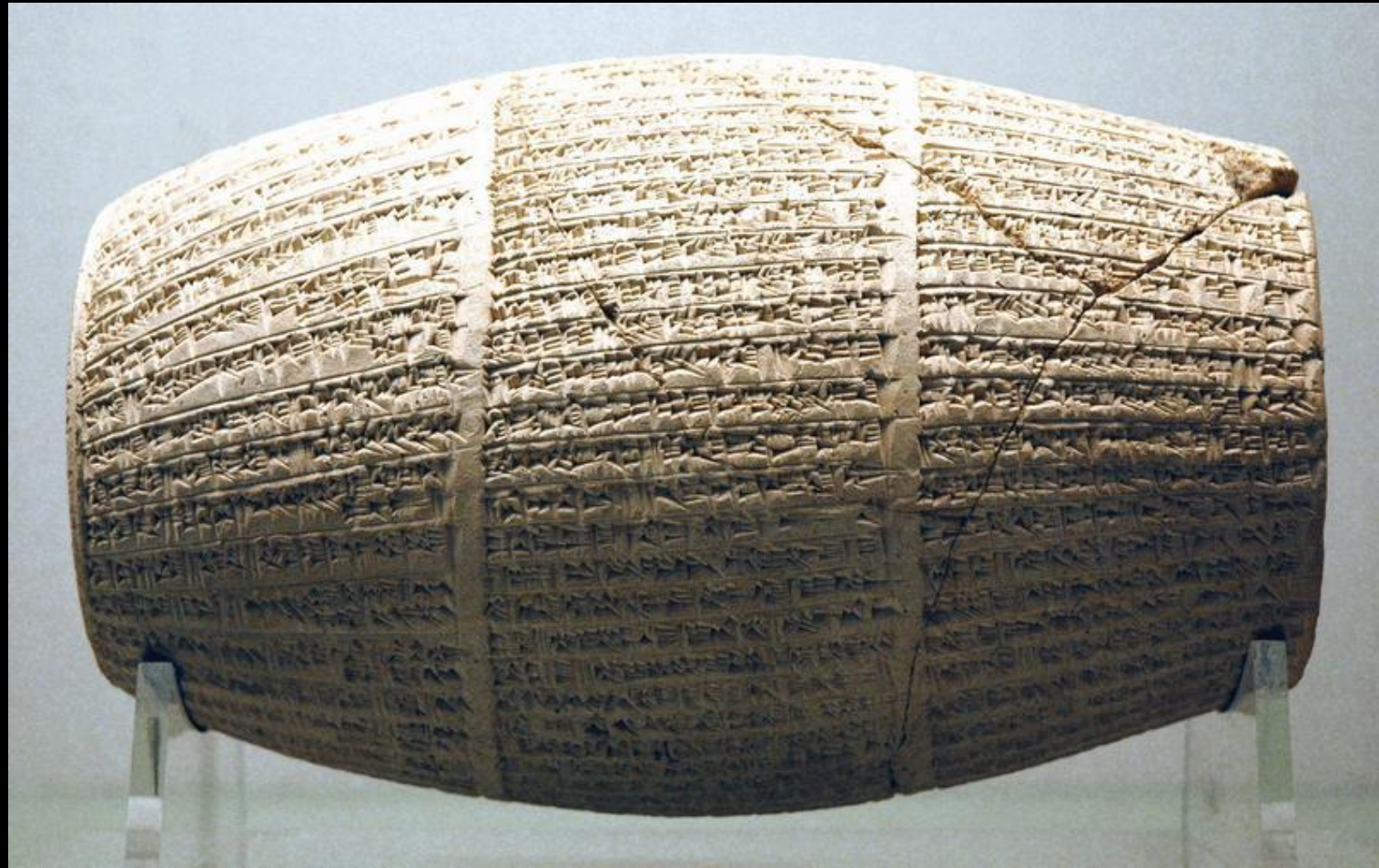
Tomb of Cyrus (Pasargadae Iran)



Cyrus Cylinder



Nabonidus Cylinder



2. Character studies

Belshazzar [Bel-shar-usur, God protect the king]

- Real person, 1. Nabonidus cylinders (1881): ‘prayer to moon-god to guard both him and his son, Belshazzar, from wrong doing’ – British Museum
 - Frequently named on contract tables; crown prince, acted as regent . . .
 - Nabonidus campaigned in Arabia as long as ten years . . . Entrusted kingship to Belshazzar

2. Character studies

Belshazzar

- Real person, 1.
- Worldly, 1. Pr.31:4; Ec.10:17
- Irreverent, 3-4. 1 Thes.4:1-4
- Idolater, 4. In spite of signs...
(Dn.1-6)

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- Unprepared, 6-9.
 - Why not rejoice at writing?
 - Gn.3; Gn.44; Mk,6, etc.

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- Irreverent, 3-4. 1 Thes.4:1-4
- Idolater, 4. In spite of signs...
- Unprepared, 6-9.
- Condescending, 11-13. Mk.6:3
- Secular, 13-14. No use for Daniel...
- Sentenced, 26-30. Cf. 4:27

2. Character studies

Wise men, 7-8 –the agony of defeat

- Chap.1: outdone

- Chap.2-4: failures

- Chap.5: could not predict most important event in Babylonian history – the limitations of secular wisdom

2. Character studies

Queen, 10-12 –faith in Daniel, not God

- Praised him for rescuing kings in tight spot

- Admits he has truth but does not seek it for herself

2. Character studies

Daniel –recognizes Father's handwriting, gives its meaning, is certain of His care

- Steadfast even to old age
- Self-denying (not covetous, 17)
- Sound preaching, 18-24

2. Character studies

God –

- All powerful. Used Cyrus...
- Longsuffering. Ps.9:17; Pr.14:34
- Revealed Himself to peoples, 5.
- Judge of Universe, 24-28
 - MENE: our days are numbered
 - TEKEL: now is trial...
 - UPHARSIN: separation, 2 Th.1:9