

in the kingdom". He called in all the wise men, and none of them could read it. And then we read that the queen mother said, "There is a man who in the days of Nebuchadnezzar was very prominent. This man, named Daniel, was wonderful at explaining difficult problems. Call him. I think he can explain it". And so the king called in Daniel. And the king said to Daniel, "If you can read the writing (vs. 16), and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom". And Daniel told him what it meant: it meant, "You are weighed in the balances and found wanting; your kingdom is to be divided and given to the Medes and Persians". And then (vs. 29) is one of the most astounding verses in the Bible,- it is a very ancient version, there is nothing modern about it. Just listen to it. "Then commanded Belshazar to clothe Daniel with scarlet and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom". You tell any message of doom like that to a modern ruler, and see if he will put a chain of gold around your neck and clothe you in scarlet and make you the third ruler in the kingdom. This man Belshazar was an honorable man, he stood by his promises, more than most moderns would. Well, verse 30 says that night Belshazar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain and the Medes and the Persians took the kingdom.

A very interesting story! But when we began to discover material from Babylon, we found that the king of Babylon in the days of the destruction of Babylon was not called Belshazar, he was called Nabonitus, and we found Nabonitus didn't die when the city was taken,- he lived on for a time - the Persians allowed him to live out the rest of his life, and he spent his time studying archaeology (laughter). Well, it doesn't fit. Well, naturally, if somebody made up this story in the time of the Maccabees to encourage, as they say, the almost wiped-out Jews to fight valiantly