

We read that all the king's wisemen came in but they were unable to read the writing or make known the interpretation. The king was much upset by this. However, the queen mother came in and told him of something that had occurred while he was very young. She told him that in the days of Nebuchadnezzar there had been a man in the kingdom who was particularly capable in solving difficult problems. This man's name was Daniel. She felt quite sure Daniel could read the writing and tell what it meant. So we read that Daniel, who was evidently living in retirement at this time, was brought in before the king. Verse 16 tells us that the king said to him, Now if thou canst read the writing and make known to me the interpretation thereof thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

As we read in vv. 25-28 Daniel proceeded to tell the king what the writing meant. God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it. Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting. Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians. This is all in v. 29, a very strange verse indeed. Let's imagine that someone nowadays were to tell some great dictator that there was a divine statement that his kingdom was to be finished, that he was to be weighed in the balances and found wanting, it was to be divided and given to his enemies. Do you think that he would be rewarded? Even Hitler, Stalin, Mao, Castro, Sucharto, Nkrumah or some other modern dictator if he had given such a promise we can be sure that he would want to make it an excuse to put the man in prison and punish him for having dared to make such a statement. Belshazzar however, seems to have been a man of a different kind. He was actually a man of his word. We read in v. 29: Then commanded Belshazzar and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the 3rd ruler in the kingdom.