

the kingdom who had been very prominent in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. But he was now living in retirement and she said Daniel was able to solve great mysteries in the days of Neb. Call him and he'll show the interpretation.

They called Daniel. And the king said to him (v.16) If thou canst read the writing and make known to me the interpretation, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet and have a chain of gold about thy neck and be the third ruler in the kingdom. I think Daniel was already able to read the writing, and saw that all these gifts would not do him any good. He knew what the writing was. Whether that was the reason or some other, we find in v.17 Daniel said, Let thy gifts be to thyself and thy rewards to another, yet I will read the writing to the king and make known to him the interpretation.

He goes on to show how ~~Mehxxxxx~~ Belshazzar has not followed the Lord but how he has followed the gods of brass, ~~x~~ iron, wood and stone and so he says, This is God's Word to him. V. 26, "God has numbered thy kingdom and finished it. Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting. Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians. Then v. 29 is one of the strangest verses in history.

Can you imagine a man today, a dictator, with someone telling him his kingdom is going to be destroyed and saying to that man, I'm going to give you a reward for telling me what it means. I'm sure any of our dictators today would throw the man in prison, and say keep him there on bread and water until he finds out how utterly wrong ~~his~~ he is in making this criticism of me.

Evidently Belshazzar was a man of more honorable type of character because he fulfilled his promise. 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 third ruler in the kingdom. However the next verse tells us that in that night was Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans slain. The Medes and Persians conquered the kingdom as Daniel had predicted back in v. 28.

This is a very interesting and striking about. It is an account of events of which we have no other record outside the Bible. It mentions a man of whom we have no further evidence outside the Bible. So we looked forward with some interest to getting light on Belshazzar ~~and~~ when we began making excavations in Babylon. In Babylon although there is very little stone in that area, so they don't have stone inscriptions as in Egypt, they have a great many contract tablets. There were those who used to say there was no writing in early days.

But we find as early as the day of Hammurabi, king of Babylon, that Hammurabi put up a law code in the public square. He said on it these are the law which are put up here so that anyone who questions whether he is being justly treated can come and read the laws and see what his rights are. That was done about the time of Abraham in Babylon. Today if you want to know what the law is in Philadelphia, you go and consult a lawyer, and he hunts through a