

(b) Two sources, Berossus (quoted by Eusebius) and Abydenus, reported that Nabopolassar's son, Nebuchadnezzar, married the daughter of "the Median [unnamed] king, her name being Amytis per Berossus or Amuhia per Abydenus" (*Camb.* v. III, p.212). *Cambridge* accepts Astyages as Amytis' father (v. III, King's List). One school has considered Amytis may have been Cyaxares I's daughter (*Aid* p. 1128).⁴

(c) Per cuneiform tablets of Nebuchadnezzar's "8th year," one Nabu-naid/Nabonidus, was "over the city." "He was the son of Nabu-balatsu-ikbi who he called *rubu emga*, 'wise prince' (*Camb.* v. III, p. 218).

(d) "[Amel-Marduk's] sister had married...Neriglissar, the son of Bel-shuma-ishkun. His [Neriglissar's] name appears on contracts as early as the ninth year of Nebuchadnezzar (about 596 b.c.), so that by the time Amel-Marduk came to the throne Neriglissar must have been well past middle-age...[he had] already been...in the operations against [king] Zedekiah [of Judah]..." [And, after Jerusalem was breached, "in came all the rulers of the king of Babylon and sat in the middle of the gate: Neriglissar, etc...." (*Jeremiah* 39:3).]

"Neriglissar suddenly led a revolution...and Amel-Marduk was killed." "Neriglissar ...even re-captured from Gutium [Gobryas' province] a statue [of a goddess]" (*Camb.* v. III, pp. 217, 218, 223).

[Amel-Marduk]"Evilmerodach...had a plot laid against him by Neriglissar, his sister's husband" (*Josephus Against Apion*, I.20).

Neriglissar is referred to as Amel-Marduk's "brother" rather than "brother-in-law" in the *Loeb Xenophon*, Appendix II.

(e) "[One] Assyrian monarch [--Neriglissar?] was slain" in the Cyrus II-led battle at the "first Assyrian camp" (*Xenophon* IV.ii.3).

(f) "Neriglissar's son, Laborosoarchod [Labashi-Marduk], obtained the kingdom, though he was but a child, and kept it nine months" (*Josephus Against Apion*, I. 20).

(g) "[T]he priests succeeded in raising...revolt against [Neriglissar's] son [Labashi-Marduk], whom they killed, and, in turn, supplanted by Nabonidus" (*Camb.* v.III, p. 208). "...Nabu-na'id (Nabonidus) was elected to the throne shortly after the revolution" (*Camb.* v. III, p. 218). A business tablet from the first year of Nabonidus mentions a "Belshazzar," but not with the words, "son of the king" (*Camb.* v. III, p. 219).

(h) (1) "Labosordacus...continued...in all but nine months; and when he was dead, [the kingdom] came to Baltasar, who by the Babylonians was called Naboandelus; against him did Cyrus...make war."⁵ Per Josephus, it was "Baltasar/Naboandelus" who, "when he was besieged in Babylon...saw a hand proceed" and write on the wall. (*Josephus AJ*, X.xi. 2). "Balthasar, his [Nebuchadnezzar's] son" (*Baruch* 1:11).

(2) "Belshazzar...son of Nebuchadnezzar;" "Nebuchadnezzar [his] father" (*Daniel* (5:2; 5:11). A second Nebuchadnezzar daughter has been postulated that would make "Belshazzar" a son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar, to explain *Daniel's* references to

⁴ Among Nebuchadnezzar's many projects, Josephus reports that "He also erected what was called a pensile paradise [the hanging gardens], because his wife was desirous to have things like her own country, she having been bred up in the palaces of Media" (*AJ*, X.xi.1).

⁵ The *Josephus* referenced in this work adds the following editorial note: "It is here remarkable that Josephus, without the knowledge of Ptolemy's canon, should call the same king whom he himself here...[like *Baruch* and *Daniel*] styles Beltazar, or Belshazzar, from the Babylonian god Bel, Naboandelus also, and in the first book against Apion, sect. 19, vol. iii., from the same citation out of Berosus, Nabonnedon from the Babylonian god Nabo or Nebo. This last is not remote from the original pronunciation itself in Ptolemy's canon, Nabonadius; for both the place of this king in that canon, as the last of the Assyrian or Babylonian kings, and the number of years of his reign, seventeen, the same in both demonstrate that it is one and the same king that is meant by all. ... But then what Josephus's present copies say presently, sec. 4, that it was only within no long time after the hand-writing on the wall that Baltasar was slain, does not so well agree with our copies of Daniel, which say it was the same night." (*AJ*, X.XI.2 footnote.)

Nebuchadnezzar as “Belshazzar’s”/ [Baltasar’s?/ Naboandelus’?] father and “Belshazzar” as Nebuchadnezzar’s “son.” Another theory is that *Daniel* used “father” in the sense of “grandfather.”

(3) The expedition of Cyrus was undertaken against the son of this princess [Nitocris], who [which son] bore the same name as his father, Labynetus, and was the king of the Assyrians.” *Herodotus* 1:188.

(4) A. A contract tablet taken as dated to Nabonidus II’s fifth year cites Belshazzar as a “son of the king” (*Camb.* v. III, p. 219).

B. “The king” at Babylon the night of its entry by Cyrus’ forces was the prince son--son of the “old”⁶ king-- who killed Gobryas’ son; the “king” replied to the message Gobryas sent into the city, “I do not regret that I killed your son.....” (Belshazzar was old enough to have been that earlier murderous prince-son.)

C. “And when Gadatas and his men saw the gates open they dashed in pursuit of the others as they fled back into the palace, and dealing blows right and left they came into the presence of the king; and they found him already risen with dagger in his hand” (*Xenophon* VII.v.29). “And Gadatas and Gobryas and their followers overpowered him; and those about the king perished also” (VII.V.30).

D. “In that night was killed Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans” (*Daniel* 5:30).

E. “Now, after a little while, both himself [“King Baltasar”] and the city were taken by Cyrus...for it was Baltasar, under whom Babylon was taken, when he had reigned seventeen years.” (*Josephus AJ*, X.xi.4) Ptolemy’s canon assigned Nabonidus 17 years. If Josephus here correctly meant the commonly-accepted “Belshazzar,” the ‘accepted’ chronology would need to be adjusted about two years to allow for “Belshazzar’s” co-regency to extend to 17 years from the commonly-reached 15 years of 553 to 538 b.c. [refer to part (C)(2) below].

F. “And when day dawned and those in possession of the citadels discovered that the city was taken and the king slain, they surrendered the citadels, too” (*Xenophon* VII.v.33).

G. The “Cyrus/Nabonidus Chronicle” [see part (C)(4) here] states that Nabonidus was arrested in Babylon “afterwards...when he returned....”

H. Then, “On the night of the 11th day of Marcheshvan, Gobryas [who, when a vassal of the “old king,” had suffered the death of his own son at the hands of the “old king’s” son] against...[*lacunae*]...he killed the son of the king.” (*Cyrus/Nabonidus Chronicle*). It has been theorized that the missing words were to the effect, “against *the wishes of Cyrus.*”

J. Possibility exists that Gobryas, not satisfied with the death of ?the once-prince, then-king (“Belshazzar”?), who had killed his son, killed another, unidentified prince-son (“Belshazzar” was old enough to have sons of his own).

I. Tablets indicate that Cyrus gave Carmania to King Nabonidus, to rule. (*Camb.* v. III, p. 224)

C. EXPLORATION OF ISSUES:

- The ‘Assyrian’ Kings “snarl.”
- Was Neriglissar the monarch slain at the First Assyrian Camp battle?
- Identity of the Queen Mother called to Belshazzar’s Feast.
- *Daniel* Chronology.

(1) Considerations.

(a) Logic appears to be on the side of two Labynetuses/Naboniduses, one of whom became prince by marrying Nitocris, mediated the Media/Lydia treaty in 585 b.c., became a king after Labashi-Marduk, and fathered a son who bore his name, a Nabonidus II. In such case it would be Nabonidus I who, as said, mediated the Media/Lydia treaty in 585 b.c., and Nabonidus II, as king under whom the Babylonians were bound to Lydia and

⁶ Nabonidus’ age would qualify him for such a reference--refer to part (C)(1) here, while it also is possible that by “old” was intended “former.”

Croesus--thus in accord with Herodotus' statement, "the Babylonians under their King Labynetus" looked for assistance (c. 555 b.c.), and also in keeping with king Nabonidus [II] referring to his father as the "wise prince." If so, "Nabu-balatsu-ikbi" of the tablet cited at (B) (c) above would need to be an alternate name for Nabonidus I.

(b) It further can be postulated (a) that it was Neriglissar that was slain in the battle at the first Assyrian camp and to whom Gobryas referred as the "old" king; and (b) that Gobryas' statement, "that young fellow who has just come to the throne," meant Labashi-Marduk, given the lapse of but six years for both reigns *vis-a-vis* the time consumed, by all of Cyrus' prior actions plus preparations to enter Babylon.

(c) The following words have survived on an ancient memorial which appears scribed on behalf of the mother of king Nabonidus (blank spaces indicate *lacunae*, missing parts):

" the king of Assyria whose I was born: under Ashurbanipal, etillu-ilani, his son ssar, 43 years under Nebuchadnezzar 4 years under Neriglissar, rs of his godhead, his clouded face to my prayers, the angry command o the temple e'hul-hul, the temple, his heart's delight the le, Sin, the king of said : Nabonidus, the king of Babylon, the son make en in the temple e'-hul-hul! I care obeyed the orders which the king of the gods had pronounced . I did see myself Nabonidus the king of Babylon, the offspring of my womb, reinstated completely the forgotten rites of Sin."

Further along, the woman of the memorial credits Sin for her long life, "lasting from the time of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, to the sixth year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, the son of my womb for 104 happy years."

(d) Herodotus, in his writing about princess Nitocris (she who earlier had caused construction of major defensive works around Babylon, in anticipation of Median assaults [see sub-part (3), Ancestry of Nitocris]), did not say that Nitocris still was living at the time of the Babylon conquest. Herodotus reported only that it was her son against whom Cyrus II had marched. If the Nitocris of whom Herodotus wrote was the woman of the memorial, she could not have been present at Belshazzar's feast, in that she died apparently some 12 years before ("in the sixth year of Nabonidus").

(e) The timetable allows that the queen mother summoned to "Belshazzar's" feast could have been Amytis, the Median aunt of Cyrus II. That queen mother nowhere is referred to as "Belshazzar's" mother. (Possibility exists also that Amytis was mother of other Nebuchadnezzar sons; *Daniel* states, "the king...and his wives" already were present before said queen was called. (5.2; italics supplied.)

C. (2) (a) Explorative Timetable With Regard to the Within Issues.⁸

*Suggested
Year B.C./B.C.E.*

*Suggested
Year B.C./B.C.E.*

654 Suggested date of birth of the woman of the memorial
--Nitocris? If so,
? Princess Nitocris could have wed Labynetus/ Nabonidus I.
608 Date at which a second Labynetus/Nabonidus II
could have been born to Nitocris, in her early to mid-
forties. Such son would have been about 70 years old
at the time Cyrus took Babylon.

620 Estimated date of birth of Astyages.

616 Cyaxares I-----allied with -----Nabopolassar

605 Astyages would have been 15 years old.

605 Nebuchadnezzar became king at Babylon.

600 Amytis could have been born when Astyages was 20.

⁷ The situation at the Babylon court could have been similar to Xerxes I's later household (and, half-millennium later, to Herod the Great's), *i.e.* two opposed queen-mother camps--in this instance, the 'Assyrian/Babylonian' and the 'Median/Babylonian.'

⁸ Refer also to Calendar Year Comparison Timeline in Appendix 2D,

Suggested
Year B.C./B.C.E.

585 Astyages ascended the Median throne;
He would have been age 35.

539/38 Cyrus took Babylon and its court.
Per the *Nabonidus Chronicle*, "The harine lay down before him." Amytis would have been 62 or 61 years old. If Cyrus II did receive her with the Babylonian harem [see Nabonidus Chronicle, C(4)], that might underly the editorial remark at *Xenophon* VIII.v.28—that, after taking Babylon, "[S]ome historians say that he [Cyrus] married his mother's sister. But that maid must certainly have been a very old maid."

⁹ Blank.

Suggested
Year B.C./B.C.E.

- 598/97 Third year of vassalage of king Jehoiakim of Judah; Nebuchadnezzar took certain sons of Judah into exile, including Daniel. (*Daniel* 1:1, 6)
- 597 One Nabu-na'id/Nabonidus [!?] was "over the city [of Babylon]" in Nebuchadnezzar's 8th year (per cuneiform tablet).
- 596/95 [?] "Second year" of the reign [over Jerusalem?] of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel (who was called "Belteshazzar" by Nebuchadnezzar) interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream. (*Daniel* 2:1, 19ff.)
- ? At a second, unspecified time Daniel interpreted another Nebuchadnezzar dream. Nebuchadnezzar then made Daniel "great...and ruler over all the province of Babylon and Chief Prefect over all the wise men of Babylon." (*Daniel* 2:49)
- 586 Nergal-sha-rezer/Neriglissar sat with other Babylonian princes at Jerusalem's gate, after the fall of the city.
- 585 *This date is fixed by an eclipse*: "Labynetus the Babylonian" mediated peace between Medes and Lydians. (An older Labynetus/Nabonidus I, at this point, would have been in his mid- to late-forties if in his twenties when/if a Nabonidus II was born.)
- ? Nebuchadnezzar married Amytis.
- 562 End of Nebuchadnezzar; Amel-Marduk succeeded as Babylon's king.
- 560 Neriglissar disposed of brother-in-law Amel-Marduk and took the Babylon throne.
- 560 A "Belshazzar" is mentioned as "chief officer of the king" on a tablet of Neriglissar's accession year.
- 556/55 An "Assyrian monarch" (Neriglissar?) was slain at "first" Assyrian camp battle.
Assassination of Labashi-Marduk, Neriglissar's son.
"Nabonidus" [!/?/!/?] took Babylon's throne.
A business tablet of the first year of "Nabonidus" mentions a "Belshazzar" but with the title, "son of the king."
- 553 A cuneiform text of the third year of "Nabonidus" [!/?/!/?] says, in part, he "entrusted a camp to his eldest, his firstborn son: the troops of the land he sent with him. He freed his hand,...entrusted the kingship to him. Then he himself undertook a distant campaign;...toward Tema in the midst of the Westland he set his face." (*Aid* p. 211)
- 553 First year of "Belshazzar" (as co-regent at Babylon), Daniel had a dream.... (*Daniel* 7:1)
- 550 Third year of the reign of "Belshazzar:" Daniel had a vision; after Daniel's distress passed, he "arose and did business the king's." (*Daniel* 8:1)⁹
- 550 The mother of "Nabonidus" [!/?/!/?] died at age 104 ("sixth year of Nabonidus").
- c. 550 Fifth year of Nabonidus [!/?/!/?], a "Belshazzar" was named as "son of the king" in a contract tablet. (*Camb.* v.
- 546 Croesus of Lydia looked for assistance to "the Babylonians under their [then-] king Labynetus/[Nabonidus I?/II?]," which assistance did not materialize.

539/38 "Nabonidus" returned to Babylon and was arrested.
 [If a Nabonidus II had been born c. 608, he here
 would have been some 70 years old.]
 c. 535 Third year of Cyrus [at Babylon]: Daniel had a
 revelation. (*Daniel* 10:1).
 c. 522 First year of Darius [I] the Mede, Daniel stood as a
 supporter for him.

C. (2) (b) Speculative Calculations.

	Nabonidus" Appearances		"Belshazzar" and Daniel	
	If only I	If a II	Years Derivable	
Possible birth date	626		Suggested date of birth	611
Possible birth date		608	Daniel captured at estimated age 13/14	598/97
			Daniel reared "three years" before coming before Nebuchadnezzar (at age 17/16?)	595
"Over the city" of Babylon	597		[Birth of Darius I, 584--"Darius the Mede took the kingdom when a son 62 years." <i>Daniel</i> 5:30.]	
Mediated peace	585		"Belshazzar" mentioned on a tablet	560
"Officer of the king"	560	560	"Belshazzar" mentioned on a tablet	556
Took throne	556	556	"Belshazzar" year 1	553
			Daniel dreamed (age 58?)	553
			"Belshazzar" year 3	550
			Daniel had a vision (age 61?)	550
Croesus looked for aid	546	546		
Cyrus II took Babylon	538	538	"Belshazzar" killed? <i>This would have been (560 - 538 => 22 years after his first mention on a tablet.</i> ¹⁰	538
<i>Projected age of "Nabonidus.:"</i>			Year 3 of Cyrus II, Daniel had a revelation <i>Daniel would have been (611 - 535 => 76 years old.</i>	535
626 - 538 =	88		Year 1 of Darius I, Daniel stood as his supporter. <i>Daniel would have been (611 - 522 => 89 years old.</i>	522
608 - 538 =		70		

(1) Daniel Supplementary Notes.

Nebuchadnezzar took into custody, in addition to Daniel, three other young offspring from Judah's royal house--Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, who Nebuchadnezzar renamed, respectively, as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. No ages at capture are given.

A first appearance of a youthful Daniel in exile may be in the apocryphal *History of Susanna*.¹¹ A later appearance of Daniel in events during a friendship with the conqueror, Cyrus II, are recounted in the also-apocryphal *Bel and the Dragon*, wherein Daniel and Cyrus are presented in discourse as to whether the Babylonian Bel was a "living" god. Paraphrasing a portion of that text, Cyrus II asked Daniel, "You don't think so? But see how much He eats and drinks every day." Daniel replied, "Don't be fooled. This image, nothing but clay inside and brass outside, never ate or drank anything!"

King Cyrus summoned the priests, who were "threescore and ten, beside wives and children." On pain of death either for them or Daniel, Cyrus demanded to know who, if *not* Bel,

¹⁰ "Belshazzar" (of an age to be a chief officer in 560 b.c.) could have had children of his own before 538 b.c.

¹¹ See Appendix 3B, I, *History of Susanna*.

was consuming "these expences." The priests assured Cyrus it was the god, and for proof proposed that Cyrus, himself, set out the meat and wine and seal the sanctuary door shut with his signet. Unknown to the priests, Daniel had the sanctuary floor strewn with ashes. The priests entered the sanctuary by night, as they secretly always had by a hidden entrance underneath Bel's table; and it was they who emptied the food and wine vessels. When Cyrus personally opened the door the next day, saw that the offerings were gone, and began to hail Bel, Daniel held him back with a cautioning laugh: "Mark the footsteps in the ashes!"

Daniel was given a similar challenge relative to a dragon god-image of brass. Cyrus II permitted Daniel to prove a claim that he could slay the dragon "without sword or staff." Daniel stuffed the image with a seething mixture of pitch, fat and hair until it burst.

Cyrus abandoned Bel, finally, and put the Babylonian priests to death. Indignant subordinates of Cyrus rose up and alleged that he, the King, "was becoming a Jew." Nonetheless, Daniel rose to become one of the presidential triumvirate that shared administration of 120 scattered "satraps" (protectorates) of the Persian realm.

A third reported 'trial' of Daniel is reported in the canon, in the presence of Darius I--an attempted 'legal' entrapment devised by Daniel's foes in Persia's government. Daniel was charged with breaking, by his personal prayers, an edict that king Darius had been gulled into signing as a purported means of establishing himself in his new reign. The edict had ordered that, for 30 days, no one could "make any petition to any god or man," other than king Darius. (Neither the canon nor apocryphal report states exactly how Daniel escaped being attacked by the lions in the den into which he was placed; only that food was provided to them by one Habbucuc.)

C. (3) Ancestry of Nitocris: Queen Sammu-rabat/Semiramis of Assyria.

Herodotus was moved to mention that of all the sovereigns who ruled over Babylon "and lent their aid to the building of its walls and the adornment of its temples...two were women...the earlier, called Semiramis, held the throne *five generations* before the later princess.... [T]he later of the two queens [was] Nitocris, a wiser princess than her predecessor." (1.184-85; italics supplied)

As *Cambridge* reports, "The government of Assyria from 811 to 808 was actually conducted by the queen-mother, Sammu-ramat.... On a stele found in a corner of the wall of the city of Ashur...her name is recorded as the wife of Shamshi-Adad, the mother of [King] Adad-nirari, the daughter-in-law of Shalmaneser."

(a) Explorative Timeline.

811-808 b.c./b.c.e.

Sammu-rabat/Semiramis served as regent for an infant son.

/			
?	<i>Generation one</i>	of Herodotus' 5 generations	Mid-700's b.c.?
/			
?	<i>Generation two</i>	" "	to end of 700's b.c.?
/			
?	<i>Generation three</i>	" "	to mid-600's b.c.?
/			
?	<i>Generation four</i>	" "	to latter part of 600's b.c.?
/		Assurbanipal dead?--	
/		"Assyrian sources cease" c. 639.	

/	Emergence of Nabopolassar dynasty.	
/	<u>Nabopolassar reign commenced</u> ¹²	626
/		/
/	Medes took Nineveh, 14th yr. Nabopolassar	612
/		/
<u>Nitocris</u>	<i>Generation five</i> from Semiramis	/
	Nitocris caused truly formidable developments at and surrounding Babylon, especially “defensive” works—causing the river to take a highly circuitous course that hindered advance of foes and creating piers and removeable bridgeworks between the two portions of Babylon city that were divided by the river—which bridges were up during the day for business but down at night.	/
	“Nitocris...observing the great power of the Medes, who had taken so large a number of cities, and among them Nineveh, and expecting to be attacked in her turn, made all possible exertions to increase the defences of her empire.” (<i>Herodotus</i> , 1:185.)	/
		/
	<u>Nebuchadnezzar reign commenced</u> ¹³	605

C. (4) “Cyrus-Nabonidus Chronicle”/”Nabu-naid Chronicle”/”The Annalistic Tablet of Cyrus.”

This tablet’s Babylonian cuneiform has been considered to be a copy of an earlier document, in that the *style* appears to date it some two centuries later. The text also has been taken to be Persian-slanted ‘propaganda,’ because it glorifies Cyrus II while presenting “Nabonidus” disparagingly. Nonetheless, its contents have been considered reliable and offer the most complete cuneiform record of the fall of Babylon.

Column 1, line 8 of the inscription states that Nabonidus had entrusted the kingship to his “son” but lacks the son’s name.

Two renderings of the tablet’s details related to the taking of Babylon city are as follows:

“On the 14th day Sippar was taken without battle. Nabonidus fled. On the 16th day, Gobryas, the governor of Gutium, and the troops of Cyrus entered Babylon without battle. Nabonidus, because of his delay, was taken prisoner in Babylon. Until the end of the month, the shields of Gutium surrounded the gates of Esagila. No weapons were brought into Esagila and the other temples, and no standard was advanced. On the third day of Marcheshvan Cyrus entered Babylon. The harine lay down before him. Peace was established for the city. Cyrus proclaimed peace to all Babylon. He appointed Gobryas, his governor, governor in Babylon.... On the night of the 11th day of Marcheshvan, Gobryas against...[*lacunae*]...he killed the son of the king.”¹⁴

“[Year missing]¹⁵...in the month of Tashritu, when Cyrus attacked the army of Akkad in Opis on the Tigris, the inhabitants of Akkad revolted [to Cyrus] but he (*Nabonidus*) massacred the confused inhabitants. The 14th day, Sippar was

¹² A reign of 21 years per deducted common chronology.

¹³ A reign of 43 years per memorial described below.

¹⁴ *Cambridge*.

¹⁵ “17th year” is supplied by some scholars.

seized without battle. Nabonidus fled. The 16th day Gobryas (*Ugbaru*), the governor of Gutium, and the army of Cyrus entered Babylon without battle. Afterwards Nabonidus was arrested in Babylon when he returned...[*lacunae*]. In the month of Arahshammu, the third day, Cyrus entered Babylon, green twigs were spread in front of him--the state of 'Peace' (*sulmu*) was imposed upon the city."¹⁶

¹⁶ James B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (1955), p. 306, as quoted in *Aid*, p. 1197.