

----- Belshazzar years -----

3449b AM, 4159 JP, 555 BC

913. After Laborosoarchodus, who was Nebuchadnezzar's grandson by his daughter, was disposed of by his subjects for his acts of villainy, Nebuchadnezzar's grandson by Evilmerodach succeeded Laborosoarchodus. Berosus called him Nabonidus, but Herodotus called him Labynetus, while Abydenus referred to him as Nabannidochus and Daniel as Belshazzar or Baltazar. (Some historians think Belshazzar was the son of Evilmerodach based on Daniel {#Da 5:7}, where Belshazzar stated he would make anyone who interpreted the handwriting on the wall the third ruler in the kingdom. This implied that he was only the second ruler under his father. However, since this king had so many names, we will never know for sure. Also, the queen was second in authority after the king, hence Daniel would be third. {See note on 3466b AM. <<938>>}) He reigned seventeen years, according to the third book of the Chaldean History by Berosus. {*Josephus, Apion, l. 1. c. 20. (150) 1:223} {Ptolemy, Canon of Kings} [L140]

3451 AM, 4161 JP, 553 BC

916. In the third year of Belshazzar, Daniel had a vision of a ram and a he-goat, which foreshadowed the destruction of

the Persian Empire by Alexander the Great and the great misery which Antiochus would bring upon the people of God.

3465b AM, 4175 JP, 539 BC

934. The next year Cyrus marched to Babylon. Here Cyrus defeated Belshazzar, or Nabonidus. The Chaldeans retreated into the city and resolved to endure the siege, which they took lightly for two reasons. {*Herodotus, l. 1. c. 190. 1:237} {#Jer 51:27,28,30} First, they had more than twenty years of provisions in Babylon. Secondly, they thought there were many in Cyrus' army who favoured the Chaldeans more than over the Persians. {*Herodotus, l. 1. c. 190. 1:237} {*Xenophon, Cyropaedia, l. 7. c. 5. s. 13,14. 6:267}

3466b AM, 4176 JP, 538 BC

936. When Cyrus had spent much time in this work with little to show for it, he finally made a ditch from the river to that vast lake, about forty to fifty miles wide, which Belshazzar's mother, Nicotris, had ordered to be dug. Then he opened the mouths of this and another of various ditches which he had recently built about the city, and let the river flow into them. In this way he made the channel, which was not more than four hundred yards wide, passable for his men to enter into the city. {*Herodotus, l. 1. c. 190,191. 1:237,239}

{*Xenophon, Cyropaedia, l. 7. c. 5. s. 15-17. 6:267,269} {#Jer 50:38 51:32,36}

937. Cyrus, with his army, went through the water gates in the wall and got into the city on a festival day, while all the men were banqueting. {*Herodotus, l. 1. c. 190,191. 1:237239} {*Xenophon, Cyropaedia, l. 7. c. 5. s. 26. 6:271} {#Jer 51:39,57} So vast was that city that, as the inhabitants reported, when the people on its outskirts were surprised and taken by the enemy, those who lived in the heart of the city never heard of it. {*Herodotus, l. 1. c. 191. 1:239} [L145] Jeremiah alluded to this when he said:

"post upon post and messenger upon messenger shall run to tell the king of Babylon that all the outskirts of the city were possessed by the enemies." {#Jer 51:31} [E101]

938. When Belshazzar and all his nobles were feasting, he ordered his servants to bring all the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar his father, or grandfather, (for he was his son's son or his son. We do not know which. {#Jer 27:7}) had brought away from Jerusalem. When they glorified the king's idols and reproached the true God, God sent a hand to write on the wall of the room where Belshazzar sat drinking. It wrote the number of years which the Babylonian empire was to last and that it had now been

weighed in the balance and was found wanting, for which reason it was to be transferred to the Medes. This hand of God also declared what was to happen to Belshazzar. When his wise men of Chaldea could not read the writing, his queen advised him to send for Daniel, who came and read the writing and interpreted it for him. For his efforts, he was publicly proclaimed the third ruler in the kingdom, after the king and the queen. {#Da 5:1-31} Since the king's wives are said to have been present at the banquet, {#Da 5:2,3} and the queen to have come in afterward, {#Da 5:10} this must be understood to be speaking of the queen mother, Nicotris. She was the mother of this last king of Babylon, as we have already shown from Herodotus.

939. In the very same night of this banquet, Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, was killed by the soldiers of Gobryas and Gadneas, {#Da 5:30} {*Xenophon, Cyropaedia, l. 7. c. 5. s. 30. 6:273} and so the Babylonian kingdom came to an end, just as it had been predicted, {#Isa 13:1-14:32 21:1-17 43:1-28 46:1-13 Hab 2:1-20 Jer 25:1-38 50:1-51:64} and the empire was transferred to the Medes and Persians. {#Da 5:21 6:8,12,15}