

**LXX • Daniel** 4 <sup>1</sup> In the eighteenth year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar said ...

**Nabonidus Chronicle** (ca. 539 B.C.) Column 2 • Seventh year: The king (i.e. Nabonidus, stayed) in Tema; the crown prince, his officials and his army (were) in Akkad. The king did not come to Babylon [for the ceremonies of the month of Nisanu]; the (image of the) god Nebo did not come to Babylon, the (image of the) god Bel did not go out (of Esagila in procession), the fest[ival of the New Year was omitted] ...

Ninth year: Nabonidus, the king, (stayed) in Tema; the crown prince, the officials and the army (were) in Akkad. The king did not come to Babylon for the (ceremony of the) month of Nisanu; the god Nebo did not come to Babylon, the god Bel did not go out (of Esagila in procession), the festival of the New Year was omitted. ...

Tenth year: The king (stayed) in Tema; the crown prince, his officials and his army (were) in Akkad. The king did not come to Babylon for the (ceremonies of the) month Nisanu, Nebo did not come to Babylon, Bel did not go out (of Esagila in procession), the festival of the New Year was omitted

Eleventh year: The king (stayed) in Tema....

**Verse Account of Nabonidus** (ca. 539 B.C.) Column 1, lines 5–8 • As to Nabonidus, his protective deity became hostile to him. And he, the former favorite of the gods is now seized by misfortunes. Against the will of the gods he performed an unholy action, he thought out something worthless: he had made the image of a deity which nobody had ever seen in this country, he introduced it into the temple, he placed it on a pedestal; he called it by the name of Moon. It is adorned with a necklace of lapis lazuli, crowned with a tiara, its appearance is that of the eclipsed moon, the gesture of its hand is like that of the god Lugal-*[unintelligible]*, its head of hair reaches to the pedestal, and in front of it are placed the Storm Dragon and the Wild Bull. When he worshipped it, its appearance became like that of a demon crowned with a tiara....

Column 2, lines 5–8 • After he had obtained what he desired, a work of utter deceit, had built this abomination, a work of unholiness – when the third year was about to begin – he entrusted the camp (?) to his oldest son, his first born, the troops in the country he ordered under his command. He let everything go, entrusted the kingship to him, and, himself, he started out for a long journey. The military forces of Akkad marching with him, he turned to Tema deep in the west. He started out the expedition on a path leading to a distant region. When he arrived there, he killed in battle the prince of Tema, slaughtered the flocks of those who dwell in the city as well as in the countryside. And he, himself, took residence in Tema, the forces of Akkad were also stationed there. He made the town beautiful, built there a palace like the palace in Babylon. He also built walls for the fortification of the town and he surrounded the town with sentinels.

Column 4 • [...] the king is insane [...]

Column 6, lines 1–2 • [...] for the inhabitants of Babylon, Cyrus declared the state of peace. His troops he kept away from Ekur. Big cattle he slaughtered with the ax, he slaughtered many aslu-sheep, incense he put on the censer, the regular offerings for the Lord of Lords he ordered increased, he constantly prayed to the gods, prostrated on his face. To act righteously is dear to his heart. To repair the city of Babylon he conceived the idea and he himself took up hoe, spade and water basket and began to complete the wall of Babylon. The original plan of Nebuchadnezzar the inhabitants executed with a willing heart.

**The Prayer of Nabonidus** (4QPrNab ar, 75–50 B.C.) Section 1, frags. 1–3, lines 1–8 • The words of the prayer that King Nabonidus of [Baby]lon, [the great] king prayed [when he was smitten] with a serious skin disease by a decree of G[o]d in Teman: [“I, Nabonidus, by a serious disease] was smitten (or “driven off”) for seven years and wh[en] G[od ...] and my sin was forgiven by him. A diviner, a Judean fr[om the exiles came to me and said,] ‘Write a declaration to give honor and exalt[ation] to the name of G[od Most High.]’ So I wrote as follows:] ‘I was smitten with a ser[ious] skin disease in Teman [by a decree of God Most High.] For seven years I had bee[n] praying [before] the gods of silver and gold, [bronze, iron,] wood, stone, and clay because [I thought] that [they were] gods.

Section 2, frag. 4, lines 1–2 • I had a dream (or “I was healed”) [...] from it he made to pass.

**Daniel 4** <sup>1</sup>King Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you! <sup>2</sup>It has seemed good to me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God has wrought toward me.

**Daniel 2** <sup>46</sup> Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and did homage to Daniel, and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him. <sup>47</sup> The king said to Daniel, “Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery.”

**Daniel** 4 <sup>4</sup>I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and prospering in my palace. <sup>5</sup>I had a dream which made me afraid; as I lay in bed the fancies and the visions of my head alarmed me. <sup>6</sup>Therefore I made a decree that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. <sup>7</sup>Then the magicians, the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers came in; and I told them the dream, but they could not make known to me its interpretation. <sup>8</sup>At last Daniel came in before me—he who was named Belteshazzar after the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods—and I told him the dream, saying, <sup>9</sup>“O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you and that no mystery is difficult for you, here is the dream which I saw; tell me its interpretation. <sup>10</sup>The visions of my head as I lay in bed were these: I saw, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth; and its height was great. <sup>11</sup>The tree grew and became strong, and its top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the end of the whole earth. <sup>12</sup>Its leaves were fair and its fruit abundant, and in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, and the birds of the air dwelt in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it.

**Daniel 4** <sup>13</sup>“I saw in the visions of my head as I lay in bed, and behold, a watcher, a holy one, came down from heaven. <sup>14</sup>He cried aloud and said thus, ‘Hew down the tree and cut off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit; let the beasts flee from under it and the birds from its branches. <sup>15</sup>But leave the stump of its roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, amid the tender grass of the field. Let him be wet with the dew of heaven; let his lot be with the beasts in the grass of the earth; <sup>16</sup>let his mind be changed from a man’s, and let a beast’s mind be given to him; and let seven times pass over him. <sup>17</sup>The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men, and gives it to whom he will, and sets over it the lowliest of men.’ <sup>18</sup>This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. And you, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation, because all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation, but you are able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in you.”

**LXX • Daniel 4 •** In the eighteenth year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar said,  
“I was living at peace in my home  
and prospering on my throne.  
I saw a dream, and I was alarmed,  
and fear fell upon me.  
I was sleeping, and lo,  
a tall tree was growing on the earth.  
Its appearance was huge, and there was no other like it.  
Its branches were about thirty stadia (3½ miles) long,  
and all the animals of the earth found shade under it,  
and the birds of the air hatched their brood in it.  
Its fruit was abundant and good,  
and it sustained all living creatures.  
And its appearance was great.  
Its crown came close to heaven,  
and its span to the clouds, filling the area under heaven.  
The sun and the moon dwelled in it and illuminated the whole earth.  
I continued looking in my sleep; lo, an angel was sent in power out of heaven. And he called and said:  
‘Cut it down, and destroy it,  
for it has been decreed by the Most High to uproot and render it useless.’  
And thus he said: ‘Spare one of its roots in the ground  
so that he may feed on grass like an ox  
with the animals of the earth in the mountains,  
and his body may be changed from the dew of heaven,  
and he may graze with them for seven years  
until he acknowledges  
that the Lord of heaven has authority over everything  
which is in heaven and which is on the earth  
and does with them whatever he wishes.’  
It was cut down before me in one day,  
and its destruction was in one hour of the day.  
And its branches were given to every wind,  
and it was dragged and thrown away.  
He ate grass with the animals of the earth.  
And he was delivered into prison and was bound by them with shackles and bronze manacles.  
I marveled exceedingly at all these things, and my sleep escaped from my eyes” (NETS 4:1–14a).

**Daniel 4** <sup>19</sup> Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was dismayed for a moment, and his thoughts alarmed him. The king said, "Belteshazzar, let not the dream or the interpretation alarm you." Belteshazzar answered, "My lord, may the dream be for those who hate you and its interpretation for your enemies!" <sup>20</sup> The tree you saw, which grew and became strong, so that its top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the end of the whole earth; <sup>21</sup> whose leaves were fair and its fruit abundant, and in which was food for all; under which beasts of the field found shade, and in whose branches the birds of the air dwelt— <sup>22</sup> it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong. Your greatness has grown and reaches to heaven, and your dominion to the ends of the earth. <sup>23</sup> And whereas the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Hew down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump of its roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field; and let him be wet with the dew of heaven; and let his lot be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him'; <sup>24</sup> this is the interpretation, O king: It is a decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king, <sup>25</sup> that you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and you shall be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men, and gives it to whom he will. <sup>26</sup> And as it was commanded to leave the stump of the roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be sure for you from the time that you know that Heaven rules. <sup>27</sup> Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you; break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed, that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your tranquillity."

**Theodoret of Cyrus**, *Commentary on Daniel* (ca. A.D. 433) 4:27 • Now, while some commentators claim the "seven times" are seven years, others say three and a half. The divine Scripture, in fact, divides the year not into four seasons but into two more generic parts, winter and summer; so seven divisions of that kind amount to three and a half years. You will spend such a length of time in misfortune.

**St. John Chrysostom**, *Homilies on the Powers of Demons* (ca. A.D. 395) 2.6 • Do you wish me to speak of the ways of repentance? They are many and various and different, and all lead to heaven.... A fourth way is almsgiving. For Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, when he had come to all kinds of evil and had entered on all impiety, "O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you; redeem your sins by almsgiving and your iniquities by compassion to the poor" (Daniel 4:27). What could be compared with this compassion? After countless sins, after so many transgressions, he is promised that he will be reconciled with him whom he has had conflict with if only he will show kindness to his own fellow servants.... So we have shown you five ways to repentance: first the confession of sins, next the forgiveness of our neighbor's sins, third that which comes of prayer, fourth that which comes of almsgiving, fifth that which comes of humility. So don't be lazy, but walk in this day by day.

**Daniel 4** <sup>28</sup> All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>29</sup> At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, <sup>30</sup> and the king said, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?" <sup>31</sup> While the words were still in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you, <sup>32</sup> and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; and you shall be made to eat grass like an ox; and seven times shall pass over you, until you have learned that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will." <sup>33</sup> Immediately the word was fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among men, and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers, and his nails were like birds' claws.

**Encyclopedia Britannica**, “George III, king of Great Britain” (Accessed 2023) In the crises of his reign he frequently talked of abdication; but in 1788 it was announced that it was his reason that had fled its throne.

The stresses endured by this hard-working man seemed sufficient to account for his violent breakdown. Twentieth-century medical investigation, in fact, suggested that the king had an inherited defect in his metabolism known as porphyria..... The porphyria diagnosis, however, is not universally accepted by medical opinion.

The king’s incapacity produced a political storm. But while Pitt and Fox battled over the powers that the prince of Wales should enjoy as regent, the king suddenly recovered in 1789.



The aged King George III, engraving by Henry Meyer (1817)

**Mekhlita de-Rabbi Ishmael** (ca. A.D. 300) Shirata 6 on Exod 15:7 • Thou hast shown Thyself exceedingly great against those who rose up against Thee.... Against Nebuchadnezzar and all his multitude. For it is said: “And Thou saidst in thy heart: ‘I will ascend unto heaven’ ” (Isa 14:13). Nebuchadnezzar said: “I will make me a little cloud and will dwell in it,” as it is said: “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds” (14:14). Said God to him: “You wanted to separate yourself from men, in the end men will separate themselves from you,” as it is said: “... and thou shalt be driven from men ...” (Dan 4:25).—What does it say? “All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar” (4:28).

**Isaiah** 14 <sup>3</sup> When the Lord has given you rest from your pain and turmoil and the hard service with which you were made to serve, <sup>4</sup> you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon:

“How the oppressor has ceased, the insolent fury ceased!

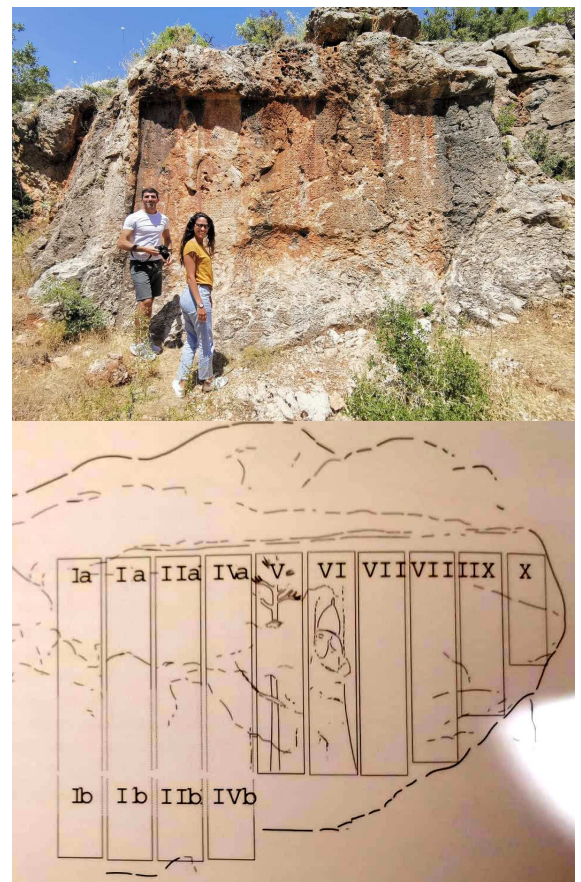
<sup>5</sup> The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked,  
the scepter of rulers....

<sup>8</sup> The cypresses rejoice at you,  
the cedars of Lebanon, saying,  
‘Since you were laid low,  
no hewer comes up against us.’ ”

**Wadi-Brisa Inscription** (Wednesday, March 10, 387)

Column 9 • At that time, the Lebanon, the [Cedar] Mountain, the luxurious forest of Marduk, the smell of which is sweet, the hi[gh] cedars of which, (its) pro[duct], another god [*has not desired*, which] no other king has fe[lled] ... my *nâbû* Marduk [had desired] as a fitting adornment for the palace of the *ruler* of heaven and earth. (Trusting) in the power of my lords Nebo and Marduk, I (Nebuchadnezzar) organized [my army] for a[n expedition] to the Lebanon. I made that country happy by eradicating its enemy below and above.... What no former king had done (I achieved): I cut through steep mountains, I split rocks, opened passages and (thus) I constructed a straight road for the (transport of the) cedars. I made the Arahtu flo[at] (down) and carry to Marduk, my king, mighty cedars, high and strong, of precious beauty and of excellent dark quality, the abundant yield of the Lebanon, as (if they be) reed stalks (carried by) the river.

**LXX • Daniel** 4 <sup>19</sup> As for that tree being raised up and approaching heaven, and its trunk touching the clouds: You, O king, have been exalted over all humanity that is on the face of all the earth. Your heart was raised up in arrogance and power with regard to the holy one and his angels. Your deeds were seen, how you desolated the house of the living God, on the occasion of the sins of the holy people (tr. Collins).



**Daniel 4** <sup>34</sup> At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives for ever;

for his dominion is an everlasting dominion,  
and his kingdom endures from generation to generation;

<sup>35</sup> all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing;  
and he does according to his will in the host of heaven  
and among the inhabitants of the earth;  
and none can stay his hand  
or say to him, "What doest thou?"

<sup>36</sup> At the same time my reason returned to me; and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me. My counselors and my lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me. <sup>37</sup> Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven; for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to abase.

**St. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel* (A.D. 407) 4:34 •** Had he not raised his eyes toward heaven, he would not have regained his former wits.

**St. Ephrem the Syrian, *Hymns on Paradise* (ca A.D. 360) 13.4–6 •**

The king of Babylon resembled  
Adam king of the universe:  
both rose up against the one Lord  
and were brought low;  
He made them outlaws,  
casting them afar.  
Who can fail to weep,  
seeing that these free-born kings  
preferred slavery  
and servitude.  
Blessed is He who released us  
so that His image might no longer be in  
bondage.

David wept for Adam,  
at how he fell  
from that royal abode  
to the abode of wild animals (Ps 49:12).  
Because he went astray through a beast  
he became like the beasts:  
He ate, together with them  
as a result of the curse,  
grass and roots,  
and he died, becoming their peer.  
Blessed is He who set him apart  
from the wild animals again.

In that king [Nebuchadnezzar]  
did God depict Adam:  
since he provoked God by his exercise of  
kingship,  
God stripped him of that kingship.  
The Just One was angry and cast him out  
into the region of wild beasts;  
he dwelt there with them  
in the wilderness  
and only when he repented did he return  
to his former abode and kingship.  
Blessed is He who has thus taught us to  
repent  
so that we too may return to Paradise.

**Daniel 5** <sup>1</sup> King Belshazzar made a great feast (LXX adds “on the day of the dedication of his palace”) for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in front of the thousand.

<sup>2</sup> Belshazzar, when he tasted the wine, commanded that the vessels of gold and of silver which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the Temple in Jerusalem be brought, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. <sup>3</sup> Then they brought in the golden and silver vessels which had been taken out of the Temple, the House of God in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. <sup>4</sup> They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

**Daniel 1** <sup>1</sup> Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. <sup>2</sup> And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god.

**Ehulhul Stela** (ca. 542 B.C.) Column 4 • After [Neriglissar’s] days had become full and he had started out on the journey of (human) destiny his son Labashi-Marduk, a minor (who) had not (yet) learned how to behave, sat down on the royal throne against the intentions of the gods [...]

Column 5 • They carried me into the palace and all prostrated themselves to my feet, they kissed my feet greeting me again and again as king. (Thus) I was elevated to rule the country by the order of my lord Marduk and (therefore) I shall obtain whatever I desire—there shall be no rival of mine! I am the real executor of the wills of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar, my royal predecessors. Their armies are entrusted to me, I shall not treat carelessly their orders and I am (anxious) to please them. [...]

Column 6 • In the same dream, when my royal predecessor Nebuchadnezzar and one attendant (appeared) standing on a chariot, the attendant said to Nebuchadnezzar: “Do speak to Nabonidus, that he should report to you the dream he has seen.” Nebuchadnezzar listened to him and said to me: “Tell me what good (signs) you have seen.” (And) I answered him, saying: “In my dream I beheld with joy the Great Star, the moon and Marduk (i.e., Jupiter) high up on the sky and it (the Great Star) called me by my name” (*ANET* 309–310).

**2 Chronicles 28** <sup>1</sup> Ahaz ... did not do what was right in the eyes of the LORD, like his father David....

**Daniel 5** <sup>5</sup> Immediately the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace, opposite the lampstand; and the king saw the hand as it wrote. <sup>6</sup> Then the king’s color changed, and his thoughts alarmed him; his limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together. <sup>7</sup> The king cried aloud to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers. The king said to the wise men of Babylon, “Whoever reads this writing, and shows me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.” <sup>8</sup> Then all the king’s wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or make known to the king the interpretation. <sup>9</sup> Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, and his color changed; and his lords were perplexed.

<sup>10</sup> The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banqueting hall; and the queen said, “O king, live for ever! Let not your thoughts alarm you or your color change. <sup>11</sup> There is in your kingdom a man in whom is the spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him, and King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and astrologers, <sup>12</sup> because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation.”

**St. Jerome**, *Comm. Dan.* 5:10 • Josephus says she was Belshazzar's grandmother, whereas Origen says she was his mother. She therefore knew about previous events of which the king was ignorant. So much for Porphyry's far-fetched [interpretation], who fancies that she was the king's wife and makes fun of the fact that she knows more than her husband does.

**Herodotus**, *Histories* (ca. 430 B.C.) 1.185–186, 188 • Nitocris ... left such monuments as I shall record.... First she dealt with the river Euphrates, which flows through the middle of her city; this had before been straight; but by digging canals higher up she made the river so crooked that its course now passes thrice by one of the Assyrian villages; the village which is so approached by the Euphrates is called Ardericca.... Her purpose in making the river to wind and turning the basin into a marsh was this—that the current might be slower by reason of the many windings that broke its force, and that the passages to Babylon might be crooked ... in that part of the country where are the passes and the shortest road from Media, that the Medes might not mix with her people and learn of her affairs.

So she made the deep river her protection; and from this work grew another which she added to it. Her city was divided into two portions by the river which flowed through the center. Whenever in the days of the former rulers one would pass over from one part to the other, he must cross in a boat; and this, as I suppose, was troublesome. But the queen provided also for this ... she turned the course of the river,... and the former channel being now dry ... she laid across it square-hewn logs.... Nitocris brought the Euphrates back to its former channel ... and her citizens had a bridge ready for them....

Cyrus, then, marched against Nitocris' son....

**Raymond Philip Dougherty**, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar: A Study of the Closing Events of the Neo-Babylonian Empire* (1929) pp. 193–194 • *The fact that Nebuchadrezzar is referred to as the father of Belshazzar* is one of the main features of the fifth chapter of Daniel. This should be interpreted with the following facts in mind. Babylonian texts and Greek data indicate that Nabonidus' ancestry and early life fitted him for marriage with a daughter of Nebuchadrezzar. Such connection with the reigning dynasty may be regarded as explaining Nabonidus' accession to the throne in the most satisfactory way. There are intimations in cuneiform inscriptions that Nabonidus considered himself in thorough accord with the house of Nebuchadrezzar. The queen who steps upon the stage in Daniel 5:10 is conversant with things that occurred in the court of Nebuchadrezzar. Her tone of address shows that she was not the wife of Belshazzar, for her solicitude appears to have been that of a mother. It has been shown that the consort of Nabonidus was the queen whom Herodotus calls Nitocris. The possibility and to some extent the probability that Nitocris was a daughter of Nebuchadrezzar has been dealt with at length in a previous chapter. If the inferences which have been drawn are valid, Belshazzar was a grandson of Nebuchadrezzar. Should this prove to have been the relationship which existed between the two, one need not be surprised that the fifth chapter of Daniel calls Nebuchadrezzar the father instead of the grandfather of Belshazzar, as this is entirely in harmony with Semitic usage under such circumstances. Of course it is impossible to know with exactness what was in the mind of the ancient author, but his reference to Nebuchadrezzar as the father of Belshazzar cannot be regarded as scientifically-established error.

**Daniel 5** <sup>13</sup> Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king said to Daniel, "You are that Daniel, one of the exiles of Judah, whom the king my father brought from Judah. <sup>14</sup> I have heard of you that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. <sup>15</sup> Now the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought in before me to read this writing and make known to me its interpretation; but they could not show the interpretation of the matter. <sup>16</sup> But I have heard that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

**Daniel 5** <sup>17</sup> Then Daniel answered before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing to the king and make known to him the interpretation. <sup>18</sup> O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father kingship and greatness and glory and majesty; <sup>19</sup> and because of the greatness that he gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him; whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; whom he would he raised up, and whom he would he put down. <sup>20</sup> But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and his glory was taken from him; <sup>21</sup> he was driven from among men, and his mind was made like that of a beast, and his dwelling was with the wild asses; he was fed grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, until he knew that the Most High God rules the kingdom of men, and sets over it whom he will. <sup>22</sup> And you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this, <sup>23</sup> but you have lifted up yourself against the Lord of heaven; and the vessels of his house have been brought in before you, and you and your lords, your wives, and your concubines have drunk wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or know, but the God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways, you have not honored.

<sup>24</sup> "Then from his presence the hand was sent, and this writing was inscribed. <sup>25</sup> And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN. <sup>26</sup> This is the interpretation of the matter: MENE, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; <sup>27</sup> TEKEL, you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting; <sup>28</sup> PERES, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

<sup>29</sup> Then Belshazzar commanded, and Daniel was clothed with purple, a chain of gold was put about his neck, and proclamation was made concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

<sup>30</sup> That very night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain. <sup>31</sup> And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

**Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*** (ca. 370 B.C.) 7.5.17, 20–30 • Cyrus gave orders to his Persian colonels, infantry, and cavalry. ... "My friends," said he ... "To arms! and with the help of the gods I will lead you on. And do you, Gadatas and Gobryas, show the streets, for you are familiar with them. And when we get inside the walls, lead us by the quickest route to the royal palace."

"Aye," said Gobryas and his staff, "in view of the revelry, it would not be at all surprising if the gates leading to the palace were open, for all the city is feasting this night. Still, we shall find a guard before the gates, for one is always posted there."

"We must lose no time then," said Cyrus. "Forward, that we may catch the men as unprepared as we can."

When these words were spoken, they advanced. And of those they met on the way, some fell by their swords, some fled back into their houses, some shouted to them; and Gobryas and his men shouted back to them, as if they were fellow-revelers. They advanced as fast as they could and were soon at the palace. And Gobryas and Gadatas and their troops found the gates leading to the palace locked, and those who had been appointed to attack the guard fell upon them as they were drinking by a blazing fire, and without waiting they dealt with them as foes. But, as a noise and tumult ensued, those within heard the uproar, and at the king's command to see what the matter was, some of them opened the gates and ran out. And when Gadatas and his men saw the gates open they dashed in, pursuing 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 his dagger in his hand. And Gadatas and Gobryas and their followers overpowered him; and those about the king perished also, one where he had sought some shelter, another while running away, another while actually trying to defend himself with whatever he could.