

EXPLANATORY NOTES WILL FOLLOW THIS CHAPTER, AFTERWARDS...

Chapter 3
*Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus,
Of their Possible Connection to Lucifer*

*As lightening his glance was bright,
As all who saw him did swear;
No knight could have the might,
All thought, his bold strikes to bear.
– Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,
Author unknown, circa AD 1400*

Not only do I see lucifer as to being an ancient, mortal king of BC times (*and, not some spirit-Being called the devil*), but also, I do not see this lucifer as to being Adam, either. That is, first man Adam from the book of Genesis – as many others contend. One of the main clues that many of them use (if not *the* main clue) is this statement, here:

Isaiah 14:12a

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, **son of the morning!**...

That is, calling this lucifer the *son of the morning*. A title that could certainly insinuate that this man was very powerful, and special. Then, in turn, connecting such an idea to the “second” Adam: *Jesus* (as Paul so calls Him a second Adam in **1st Corinthians 15:45**), who is the bright and morning star:

Revelation 22:16b

...I am the root and the offspring of David, **and the bright and morning star.**

Therefore, as many say, first Adam was the *son of the morning* [Adam being referenced as such in Isaiah 14], and Jesus (the second Adam – of the New Testament) was the *bright and morning star* – some even going as far as to say that lucifer *was* Jesus, because the *definition* of lucifer denotes such:

Lucifer, hêylêl (hay-lale’), H1966, Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary: From H1984 (in the sense of brightness); the morning star: - lucifer (Total KJV occurrences: 1).

However, that’s where the larger comparisons actually stop. But, is, as many see it, good enough to build an entire case; then they’ll connect smaller hints and clues along the way to further their beliefs. That is, that lucifer was first man Adam, and that these verses in Isaiah were a “look back” to those early days of Genesis (but, also, too – *as we’ll actually get into in the next chapter* – many folks continue to connect lucifer/Adam to the King of Tyrus from the book of Ezekiel as well) . . . Such a position, however, does not explain how and why Adam was also known as the *king of Babylon* in Isaiah’s book – unless we can say, *spiritually speaking* (and, as I had already suggested in an *Explanatory Note* from the last chapter, called: “*The king of Babylon...*”), that the title was only an allegorical way of saying *king of Confusion*. But, there are other problems with lucifer being Adam, and

of Isaiah's possible comparison, because lucifer's not the only story told in Isaiah as to being a monarch to a kingdom, or a nation, that would fall. Lucifer's story is only the beginning of the tellings of several nation's follies, and of their fall, too (see **Isaiah 14:28-29a** [Philistines]; **Isaiah 15:1** [Moab]; **Isaiah 17:1** [Damascus]; **Isaiah 18:1** [Ethiopia]; and **Isaiah 19:1** [Egypt]); which not only were NOT nations that were contemporaries with first man Adam in Genesis, but such passages about these other nations can certainly bring us right back from the world of mystery and spiritual insights unto simpler historical situations instead, because these can't all be metaphorical stories of satan, and/or Adam. And, why spiritualize the first story about a fallen nation, or mysterious king, and then naturalize the rest of them as actual historical events? . . . Not only, but to seriously understand lucifer, and of whom he may have been in history (*if, again, he wasn't either Adam or satan*), we'd do ourselves a huge favor by trying to comprehend the meaning behind chapter 13 of Isaiah before we can even try and tackle lucifer's story in chapter 14 – since, assuredly, chapter 14 is simply a continuance of 13's beginning . . . But, before attempting to do so, allow me to add one last thought, that even if a person were bent upon "spiritualizing" chapters 13 and 14 of Isaiah (that is, in a way that either depicts a future that's beyond our own time, or even depicts, in great symbolisms, either Adam's story or the devil's story), in that we can't naturalize them into a history lesson about the historic city of Babylon, and of its devastating fate from a natural war, then at least consider that, in many cases, before we can even have a spiritually understood event, a natural counterpart could certainly have happened beforehand. We'll actually see logic to this thought when we discover, as we carry on, that the nation who would destroy Babylon during the BC times, was actually named by Isaiah in chapter 13 of his book – of which nation, who was referenced in actual history, really did destroy that nation . . . So, with that last thought, let's begin our investigation with the first warning to Babylon, and of its inevitable destruction:

Isaiah 13:1

The burden of Babylon,*²⁰ which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

Now, this verse sets-up a prophetic warning to the actual city of Babylon (*and "perhaps" not to some mystical "king of Confusion"*), that a literal war would commence against them in their future, and that they will utterly be destroyed; for (and, as I've just mentioned), the nation as to whom would destroy them, the Medes, is actually named as their conquerors:

Isaiah 13:17a

Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them...^{*21}

Which statement actually makes our connection to either Adam or satan harder to explain – for, how are the Medes (an actual nation itself) connected to them?

John Gill's Exposition of the Bible: This explains who are meant [in Isaiah 13:3; that is, the Medes] by the sanctified and mighty ones...

Isaiah 13:3

I have commanded my **sanctified ones**, I have also called my **mighty ones** for mine anger, *even* them that rejoice in my highness.*²²

John Gill continued... *The Medes were a people that descended from Medai, one of the sons of Japheth, Genesis 10:2, as Josephus observes; under these the Persians are included, though they are only mentioned, because **Cyrus** was sent by Cyaxares king of Media [i.e. Darius] on this expedition against Babylon, and was made by him general of the Medes, and acted as such under him; and when Babylon was taken, and Belshazzar slain, Darius the Median took the kingdom [**Daniel 5:31**]*²³... Now these are mentioned by name **some hundreds of years before the thing came to pass** [i.e. a war that was prophesied about here, first, in Isaiah; but, which came to pass nearly 200 years later], as Cyrus their general in **Isaiah 45:1** which is a strong proof of the truth of prophecy, and of divine revelation; and, whatever might be the moving causes of this expedition, the affair was of God...*

Isaiah 45:1a

Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to **Cyrus**, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him...

John Gill continued... *It was he [God] that put it into the hearts of the Medes, and stirred up their spirits to make war against Babylon; and though God is not the author of sin, yet he not only suffered the things to be done before and after mentioned, but in his providence ordered them as just punishments on a sinful people.*

The passages in chapter 13 of Isaiah actually say nothing of either the devil or first man Adam (of which a read-through would show), but were discourses that would affect the actual, historical city of Babylon in the future – as John Gill and others had already pointed out in their commentary quotes concerning King Cyrus' actual mention hundreds of years before he was even born (again, in **Isaiah 45:1a**). This incredible prophesy (for, unlike many other prophesies about other people) *actually calls the person by name*. This is very hard to get around:

Isaiah 45:1a

Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus... [**3-4**] And I will give thee [Cyrus – as we see from verse 1] the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, **which call thee by thy name**, am the God of Israel. **For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.**

For Jacob's sake? Yes, for it will be Cyrus of whom will give freedom to the Israeli captives of Babylon, of whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken thereto many years before (**2 Kings 24:10-17**; **Ezra 5:12**). Not only so, and connecting Cyrus' war-time actions with the story of lucifer (**Isaiah 14:4-12**), it would be Cyrus of whom marched upon the gates of Babylon, and destroyed that nation forever within only a single night of flawless victory*²⁴ – just as Babylon was promised to fall to a conquering army in chapter 13 and 14 of Isaiah.

Isaiah 13:4-5

The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together [the Persians and Medes]: the LORD of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, *even* the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land [to destroy the Babylon that once was, for it to be no more].

In fact, and speaking of the gates of the city of Babylon, and of how history informs us that they were accidentally opened up by Babylon's own servants/soldiers,*²⁵ we see this verse as a . . . *mere coincidence?*

Isaiah 45:2

I will go before thee [Cyrus, in the battle against Babylon], and make the crooked places straight [clear the path for him to proceed in this flawless victory]: **I will break in pieces the GATES of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron.***²⁶

...it was not then too difficult for the joined forces of the Medes and Persians to enter thereto and storm the palace of the Babylonian king – who, at that time, was Belshazzar, grandson of the great Nebuchadnezzar – whom the Bible, instead, claims was Nebuchadnezzar's *son*.

Daniel 5:2a

Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels **which his father Nebuchadnezzar** had taken out of the temple which *was* in Jerusalem...

Daniel 5:11b

...Nebuchadnezzar thy [Belshazzar's] father, the king...

But, as archaeology (*and well deciphered history*) explains,*²⁷ it was his father in the same way that David was a father to all his descendants.

Matthew 1:20b

...behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him [Joseph, the step-father of Jesus] in a dream, saying, **Joseph, thou son of David**, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

Matthew 9:27

And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, **Thou Son of David**, have mercy on us.

Etc...

That is, in picking a great man to name as the father of his descendants; so, in that case, the Bible made no mistake in calling Nebuchadnezzar Belshazzar's father – even though, technically, he was his grandson.

Now, even though I also believe in fulfillments of many of Isaiah's words in futuristic events, I can't say that we should see these things (spoken of by Isaiah concerning Babylon's fate, and of lucifer's involvement in being its king) for our own times as opposed to them being fulfilled within an Old Testament setting – especially when the Bible actually named the man (*again, Cyrus* – and, even in the same book: Isaiah), who just so happened to have ended the reign of the natural Babylonian kings by its conquering. And, not only so, but he, as was promised, had set the Israeli captives free . . . Are we to believe, therefore, that by Isaiah naming the actual man who would do this futuristic event, to be only a coincidence? *Compare these:*

Isaiah 14:1a (*just before speaking on lucifer in verse 4, and of actually calling him lucifer in verse 12*)

For the LORD **will have mercy on Jacob**, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land...

Isaiah 45:4a

For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee [Cyrus] by thy name...

To do what? Again, to set them at liberty from Babylonian rule.

Isaiah 14:3

And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee [the Israelites] rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve.

To serve whom? Again, the king of Babylon; for, so does the passages continue...

Isaiah 14:4-8

That thou shalt take up this proverb against **the king of Babylon** [lucifer], and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! [your oppressions against nations – and, especially the Israelites, have ceased] the golden city ceased! [The city of Babylon is no more! *Why?* Because Cyrus marches to your gates for its utter destruction] The LORD hath broken the staff of the wicked, *and* the sceptre of the rulers [Babylonian rulers are no more!]. He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, *and* none hindereth. The whole earth is at rest, *and* is quiet: they break forth into singing. Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, *and* the cedars of Lebanon, *saying*, Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.

And, just who is this king of Babylon who's at fault? And, who is this king who will fall?

Isaiah 14:12-17

How art thou fallen from heaven, O **Lucifer**, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of

the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, *and* consider thee, *saying, Is this the MAN that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?*

Are we actually switching gears here, and are now going from an actual prophecy against the wicked nation and kings of Babylon (historically speaking), and are now talking about a very spiritual matter, concerning either the devil or first man Adam? Nay, friends; but, we are continuing to speak against that wicked nation, and that wicked Babylonian king . . . *But, what king?* King Lucifer? Could lucifer actually have been his real, actual name? Do we remember how I spoke on this matter in the last chapter? . . . As we plod along, and I continue building this case, I'm actually seeing "lucifer" more as a *title* given exclusively by God to that man rather than being his actual name. And, not only, but it seems to becoming more and more obvious that this king was either Nebuchadnezzar or his grandson Belshazzar – as we had actually seen named by past commentators in our last chapter. Or, perhaps (and, more to the point), a combination of both of those two men. That is, the "kingship" in general of Babylon, and of such oppressors, their kings, of that same family. Especially do we see this in the ruler-ships of our two mentioned names; for, under the grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, atrocities were already committed – *though, he finally admitted to the power of our God:*

Daniel 4:34-35

And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? [37] Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

But, what of Belshazzar, the grandson? *Well, he was no more than a little punk who got too big for his britches!*

Daniel 5:1-4

Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. **Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which *was* in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein.** Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which *was* at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. **They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.**

This incident of his actually triggered the horrid fate of the natural kingdom of Babylon (not being the only bad thing that he had done – but, was simply, the final straw!); for,

and as it says next in those verses in Daniel, “*the handwriting was on the wall!*” – as is a popular saying these days, indicating that the end is here. Well, for Belshazzar, that was literally true, because it had actually, and literally, happened to him – and, on the same night; for, as we’ve already seen, he was slain.

Daniel 5:5

In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

Far from being an easy thing to witness, the incident had shaken the king so badly, this is what had happened next:

Daniel 5:6

Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

The reason I’m bringing this up is because of what Jeremiah had also said about him, and concerning the very hour that the bad news was sprung upon him about the approaching armies of the Medes and Persians:

Jeremiah 50:43

The king of Babylon [Belshazzar] hath heard the report of them [i.e. of the army that would take him out – as we can see from verses 41-42 of Jeremiah 50 – and told to him in **Daniel 5:28**], and **his** [Belshazzar's] **hands waxed feeble** [you need to remember this also!]: anguish took hold of him, **and pangs as of a woman in travail**.

It may actually not mean much to many folks, but I personally am reading this passage (i.e. “and pangs [came upon him] as of a woman in travail”) as to him being very overcome with fear. And, though this may not have any “spiritual” or special meaning to it – as I actually do take many passages in the Bible with similar sayings (again, “pangs as of a woman in travail”) as to being spiritually understood, as I’ve actually cover and mention in other of my books – we actually, and incredibly, see similar language being used in chapter 13 of Isaiah: the chapter just before lucifer is spoken on, and of when it was talking of the fate of that wicked nation:

Isaiah 13:7-8

Therefore shall all hands be faint [as we saw from **Jeremiah 50:43b**: “hands waxed feeble”], and every man's heart shall melt: And they shall be afraid: **pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth** [again, from **Jeremiah 50:43c**]: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces *shall be* as flames.

Or, is all such comparisons, once again, simply coincidental? *Well, how many coincidences do we need to read and compare before such things actually become a reality to us?*

When reading and considering the events of chapter 13 of Isaiah, there's no denying that it uses "end time" language therein, causing many folks to see such events in *our* own future. For instance:

Isaiah 13:9-11

Behold, **the day of the LORD** cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: **the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.** And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

However, one may want to reconsider such words as to being, not just "*end of the entire world*" language, but just "end time" language in general . . . What do I mean? . . . Let's consider that when Babylon finally fell, by the hands of the Medes and Persians, and at the hands of general Cyrus, that it was certainly the end times for that nation; for, it would *never* recover its former glory. And, we should even consider something personal to our own lives in all of this, that when we personally, physically die, that's the end of the world for us, too. And, even if such words of mine may seem a far-stretch for many to consider, I still have to ask why we must view *every single* instance in the Bible, which mentions the end times, as to being the end of this physical planet way-off into the future? Many times before I had brought-up this next verse, and of the obvious understanding that we must gain from it:

Hebrews 9:26b

...but now once in the **end of the world** hath he [Jesus] appeared to put away sin **by the sacrifice of himself** [on the cross].

That no matter how one may want to interpret the words and verses above and below this one in Hebrews, this sentence still stands as a testimony that the biblical phrase: "*end of the world*" does NOT have to always mean the end of the planet earth. Obviously, we are seeing this particular verse saying: "*the end of the Old Testament world.*" For, one had to disappear whilst the New began to commence.

Hebrews 8:13

In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away.

If this is really so (that is, the phrase "*end of the world*" does not have to always indicate this actual planet – as the proper deciphering of the sentence in **Hebrews 9:26b** demands for us to admit), then why can't we say that in other places of the Bible when it mentions the end of the world, or the end times, etc., that it's not always meaning the end of the natural planet; but, of an *era of time* that has come to an absolute close for either a particular person, or a particular nation? Surely, with the closing of the Old Testament, and with the opening of the New (*not a small event, at all!*), we should understand that Bible-language insists that we not take everything in the Written Word so literal. If we do, then why don't we start cutting off our own hands? Since, that is, the Bible says for us to do in certain places, and in certain situations:

Matthew 5:30

And if thy right hand offend thee, **cut it off**, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Why aren't we seeing maimed people taking that verse so literal? Certainly, we should all know that Jesus no more meant for us to literally cut off our actual limbs anymore than He wants for us to believe in an actual, literal hell – of which is supposed to be stuck in the middle of the literal earth.

Certainly, my point is to say that just because we see “end time” language in Isaiah chapter 13, that it doesn't prove that we have to take those verses' fulfillment way-off into our own future; but – *and, just as Isaiah himself does* – it fulfills things in the more immediate future, within only a few hundred years of his writings when he actually names Cyrus as the victor, and actually names a nation's army as the conquerors of Babylon – the Medes. Again, is it just a mere coincidence that Isaiah calls the conquerors of Babylon the Medes in **Isaiah 13:17**, and that Cyrus just so happened to be the leader of the army of Medes, who both conquered and put an actual end to the Babylonian nation? If we do call this a coincidence (and, that these passages aren't concerning a literal nation in BC times, and of their fate), then we'd surely have to start naming off other incidences of what the passages in Isaiah 13 and 14 *could* mean. You know, like saying that it concerns first man Adam or Satan. But, as I've already pointed out, there's not too many connectors to help us decide those things (other than connecting the morning star with both Lucifer and Jesus – or, even with the first Adam); and, as far as throwing in Ezekiel into the mix (with the king of Tyrus, and of his sojourning in the actual Garden of Eden) as any further proof of all that, we'll actually see that theory crumble, too (*one sentence at a time*), in the next, upcoming chapter.

But, in conclusion here, to this current chapter (*before running on over to Tyrus*), let's seriously consider Lucifer, in chapter 14 of Isaiah, as to have been the one conquered by Darius and Cyrus, in their war to defeat and destroy old Babylon for good. We may be tempted, therefore – *and if this is really the case* – to so name Lucifer by his actual, historical name – Belshazzar! – the “man” of whom was defeated by the wrath of God through the hands of the Medes and Persians.

Daniel 5:18-28 (*Daniel speaking to Belshazzar*)

O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy [grand] father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling *was* with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and *that* he appointeth over it whomsoever he will. And thou his [grand] son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine

heart, though thou knewest all this; But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house [the Temple] before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose *are* all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written. And this *is* the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This *is* the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it [the days of it are numbered, and are at an end]. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting [you lack being a king – or, even being a proper human being!]. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Isaiah 14:12-22

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, *and* consider thee, *saying*, *Is* this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; *That* made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; *that* opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, *even* all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, *and as* the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet. Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, *and* slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned. Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers; that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities. **For I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the LORD.**

Explanatory Notes for Chapter 3 *Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus, Of their Possible Connection to Lucifer*

***20. The burden of Babylon...** Once again, this type of announcement (“The burden of Babylon”) is very similar to the warnings of others nations in the chapters to come in Isaiah – the first even being in the same chapter with lucifer’s story:

Isaiah 14:28a

In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden. Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina [Philistines]...

Isaiah 15:1a

The burden of Moab...

Continued on the next page...

Isaiah 17:1a

The burden of Damascus...

Isaiah 18:1

Woe to the land shadowing with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia.

Isaiah 19:1a

The burden of Egypt...

21. *I will stir up the Medes against them... As we plod along, we'll discover why the Medes are so named as the conquerors here; and, too, of why the Persians (who had joined them in that conquest) were not named at that time (i.e. from **Isaiah 13:17a**). But, the reason is actually simple. King Darius of the Medes, the head of the enterprise and the king to advance upon Babylon for its utter destruction away from King Belshazzar – the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar – was the only one given credit in **Daniel 5:31** (that is, again, King Darius). However, and as we'll also see coming up, Darius' general, his younger nephew Cyrus the Great of Persia (who was under Darius' orders at that time), was the real victor and mastermind of the exploit, who had the conquering know-how and ingenuity to take down Babylon (Darius leaving it all in his hands to do); and who would, just afterward, be made co-ruler (an equal king) by Darius – up to half of his domain. And, then (not too long after that), would completely take-over after Darius had left the scene. Therefore, and as we'll also notice, this is why Cyrus is named as the conquering hero of the exploit in other areas of the Bible, and of why Darius is given credit here and in Daniel 5:31 – since, again, he was the head of the enterprise.

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible: *This is one of the places [Isaiah 13:17] in which the prophet specified, "by name," the instrument of the wrath of God. Cyrus himself is subsequently mentioned (in Isaiah 44:28; Isaiah 45:1) as the agent by which God would accomplish his purposes. It is remarkable, also, that 'the Medes' are mentioned here many years before they became a separate and independent nation. It was elsewhere predicted that the Medes would be employed in this siege of Babylon; thus, in Isaiah 21:2 – 'Go up, O Elam (that is, Persia), besiege, O Media;' Jeremiah 51:11 – 'Jehovah hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, for his device is against Babylon to destroy it.' Media was a country east of Assyria, which is supposed to have been populated by the descendants of Madai, son of Japheth, Genesis 10:2. Ancient Media extended on the west and south of the Caspian Sea, from Armenia, on the north, to Faristan or Persia proper, on the south.*

22. *Even them that rejoice in my highness... Here, we're not seeing folks worshipping and serving God. That's not what's meant by "rejoicing in His highness." I am seeing this more as to saying that they would be more than happy to do God's will – which is to destroy the nation of Babylon. We see similar language later-on in Isaiah's 45th chapter when speaking of king Cyrus of the Persians. Firstly, the scriptures admit that Cyrus was not a Godly man. That is, in serving our God (*but only, it must be understood, at first, before He marched upon Babylon*):

Isaiah 45:4

For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee [Cyrus, from verse 1] by thy name: I have surnamed thee, **though thou hast not known me.**

Not only did God ordain Cyrus to destroy Babylon, as the general of the Persian and Mede armies (for, as history tells us, Cyrus the Persian was the real warrior prince that King

Darius the Mede was not; for, it was a joint-effort between the two to conquer Babylon: **Daniel 5:28** “Thy kingdom [speaking to Belshazzar of Babylonia] is divided, and given to the **Medes AND Persians**”), but God – and despite Cyrus not knowing God at the time he invaded Babylon – God still called him thus:

Isaiah 44:28a

That saith [that is, God saith] of **Cyrus, *He is my shepherd***,* and shall perform all my pleasure... [**45:1a**] Thus saith the LORD **to his anointed, to Cyrus...**

Showing us that God can certainly ordain the ungodly (*even anoint the ungodly*) to do His will. Though (and, as the scriptures also informs us), he actually did do God’s bidding, anyway, when he knew Him not – *unwittingly, that is!* And, what I meant by that last statement is that he did God’s will unknowingly when he invaded Babylon; but then, later-on, he did God’s will *knowingly* when he rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem (**2nd Chronicles 36:22-23**; and **Isaiah 44:28b**). All this is certainly similar to how God called the invading Medes (led by general Cyrus, and also by King Darius – *whom we’ll learn a little more about in just a moment*), in **Isaiah 13:3**, “His sanctified and mighty ones,” and those that rejoice in His highness.

***Cyrus, He is my shepherd...** This statement is not to be confused with pastors or preachers of the word of God; neither of Jesus who’s the Great Shepherd; but is to be understood as a chosen leader who not only set the captive children of Israel free from the iron-grip of the Babylonians, but also that he led them to their own land to rebuild the Temple that had previously been destroyed. The reason that “general” Cyrus (the Persian prince) is mentioned here (that is, in **Isaiah 44:28** and **45:1**), and *not* King Darius – who’s actually named as the invading conqueror of Babylon in **Daniel 5:31** “Darius the Median took the kingdom” – is because Cyrus, the real warrior-hero who had planned and led the whole invasion, had allowed Darius, his older uncle whom he respected very much, to gain the glory for the whole enterprise. Darius also felt mutual regard for his nephew, and had divided all his kingdom with Cyrus, who eventually took it all over anyway. Therefore, this war, which had destroyed the old Babylon forever, was a joint-effort between Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian.

***23. Cyrus was sent by Cyaxares king of Media ... against Babylon ... made by him general of the Medes ... Darius the Median took the kingdom...**

John Gill’s Exposition of the Bible: Darius was Cyaxares the son of Astyages, and uncle of Cyrus; he is called the Median, to distinguish him from another Darius the Persian, that came after (**Ezra 4:5**); the same [Darius the Mede] took the kingdom of Babylon from Cyrus who conquered it; he took it with his [Cyrus’] consent, [Darius] being the senior prince and his uncle. Darius reigned not long, but two years; and not alone, but Cyrus with him, though he [Darius] is only mentioned [i.e. in **Daniel 5:31**, as the conqueror].

Adam Clarke The Medes and Persians were confederates in the war; the former under Darius, the latter under Cyrus. Both princes are supposed to have been present at the taking of this city [Babylon]. Mandane, daughter of Astyages, was mother of Cyrus, and sister to Cyaxares.

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary: Darius the Median – that is, Cyaxares II, the son and successor of Astyages, 569-536 BC. Though Koresh, or Cyrus, was leader of the assault, yet all was done in the name of Darius; therefore, he alone is

mentioned here [again, in **Daniel 5:31**]; but **Daniel 6:28** shows Daniel was not ignorant of Cyrus' share in the capture of Babylon:

Daniel 6:28

So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, **AND** in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary: *Darius the Mede took the kingdom in partnership with, and by the consent of, Cyrus, who had conquered it, **Daniel 5:31**. They were partners in war and conquest, and so they were in dominion, **Daniel 6:28**. Notice is taken of his [Darius'] age, that he was now sixty-two years old [again, from **Daniel 5:31**], for which reason Cyrus, who was his nephew, gave him the precedence.*

***24. A single night of flawless victory...** On the very night that King Belshazzar of Babylon had heard his prophecy of doom by Daniel (in chapter 5 of Daniel), he was also slain, and the city was defeated by very little resistance from the Babylonians – who, most of which, were drunk and carried away with mirth and merriment (**Daniel 5:1**) – so being their carelessness in thinking themselves invincible to any invading army. This was a war that did not take days upon end to fulfill, but was completed on the very night that Daniel prophesied of Belshazzar's doom:

Daniel 5:28-31

PERES [says Daniel, finishing his interpretation of the handwriting on the wall for king Belshazzar]; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. 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. In that [same] night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median [under Cyrus' leadership of the army] took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old [Darius was 62 years old at the time].

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylon#Persian>

_conquest: *In 539 BC, the Neo-Babylonian Empire fell to Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, with a military engagement known as the Battle of Opis. Babylon's walls were considered impenetrable. The only way into the city was through one of its many gates or through the Euphrates River. Metal grates were installed underwater, allowing the river to flow through the city walls while preventing intrusion. The Persians devised a plan to enter the city via the river. During a Babylonian national feast, Cyrus' troops upstream diverted the Euphrates River, allowing Cyrus' soldiers to enter the city through the lowered water. The Persian army conquered the outlying areas of the city while the majority of Babylonians at the city center were unaware of the breach.*

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible: *The account which **Xenophon*** (in "**Cyropaedia**"** vii. s.) gives of the taking of Babylon, and of the death of the king – though without mentioning his name, agrees so well with the statement here, that it may be regarded as a strong confirmation of its correctness. After describing the preparation made to take the city by draining off the waters of the Euphrates, so as to leave the channel dry beneath the walls for the army of Cyrus, and after recording the charge which Cyrus gave to his generals Gadatas and Gobryas, he adds, "And indeed those who were with Gobryas said that it would not be wonderful if the gates of the palace should be found open [i.e. "wouldn't it be great if the gates were open?"]", "as the whole city that night seemed to be given up to revelry." He then says that as they passed on, after entering the city, "of those whom they encountered, part being smitten died, part fled again back, and part raised a clamor. But those who were with Gobryas also raised a*

clamor as if they also joined in the revelry, and going as fast as they could, they came soon to the palace of the king. But those who were with Gobryas and Gadatas being arrayed, found the gates of the palace closed, but those who were appointed to go against the guard of the palace fell upon them when drinking before a great light, and were quickly engaged with them in hostile combat. Then a cry arose, and they who were within having asked the cause of the tumult, the king commanded them to see what the affair was, **and some of them rushing out opened the gates**. As they who were with Gadatas saw the gates open, they rushed in, and pursuing those who attempted to return, and smiting them, they came to the king, and they found him standing with a drawn sabre [sword]. And those who were with Gadatas and Gobryas overpowered him, and those who were with him were slain – one opposing, and one fleeing, and one seeking his safety in the best way he could. And Cyrus sent certain of his horsemen away, and commanded that they should put to death those whom they found out of their dwellings, but that those who were in their houses, and could speak the Syriac language, should be suffered to remain, but that whosoever should be found without should be put to death. “These things they did. But Gadatas and Gobryas came up; and first they rendered thanks to the gods because they had taken vengeance on the impious king [Belshazzar]. Then they kissed the hands and feet of Cyrus, weeping with joy and rejoicing. When it was day, and they who had the watch over the towers learned that the city was taken, and “that the king was dead,” they also surrendered the towers.” These extracts from Xenophon abundantly confirm what is here said in Daniel respecting the death of the king...

***Xenophon...**

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenophon>: Athenian-born soldier, historian, and student of Socrates.

****Cyropaedia...**

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyropaedia>:

The Cyropaedia, sometimes spelled Cyropedia, is a partly fictional biography of Cyrus the Great, the founder of the Achaemenid Empire, the first Persian Empire. It was written around 370 BC by Xenophon.

The Biblical Illustrator: This night [which we see in **Daniel 5:1** “Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand”] began with a grand festival—a royal banquet. Perhaps, amidst the riot of the talk and jestings of that season, many a contemptuous joke was passed as to the futilities of all invading projects. They were the great nation, their city the great city, their armies the great armies—none like them; yet at this very hour, Cyrus, the officer of eternal justice, was at their door. Thus it was then, as it often has been, that, at the moment men cry peace and safety, that moment destruction arrives ... Let me ask you to consider the extreme minuteness of the prophecies with regard to Babylon, made one hundred and fifty years before they were accomplished. It was predicted (**Isaiah 45:1**) that Cyrus, the king of Persia, should be its conqueror; and this was fulfilled, for it was the Persian troops, commanded by Cyrus, who captured the city. It was predicted (**Isaiah 44:27**) that the river Euphrates should be dried up before the city was taken; and this was fulfilled when the soldiers of Cyrus, with incredible labour, diverted it from its course, and thus “laid a snare for Babylon.” It was predicted (**Isaiah 45:1**) that, when the city was taken, its “gates should not be shut”; and this was fulfilled, for the historian records that had the gates leading from the river to the city been shut, the Persians would have been inclosed

in a net, from which they could never have escaped. It was predicted (**Jeremiah 1:24**) that on the night of the capture the Babylonians would be given up to intemperance: “I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware thou art found and also caught” **Jeremiah 51:57**) — “And I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her captains and her rulers, and her mighty men; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake”; and this was fulfilled, for Cyrus selected the occasion of a great festival for entering the city; and **Herodotus***** (as quoted by Dr. Keith) relates that the inhabitants were given up to revelling and dancing—that the guards were drinking before the palace when the Persians rushed upon and slew them, and that the monarch and the princes and the captains were slain at a feast.

*****Herodotus...**

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herodotus>:

Herodotus, born in circa 484 BC and died in circa 425 BC at the approximate age of 60 years, was an ancient Greek writer, geographer, and historian (considered by many as to being the very first writer of history – known to them as the *father of history*) had written about Cyrus in his book “*The Histories*.”

***25. History informs us that they were accidentally opened up by Babylon’s own servants/soldiers...** As not only seen in our *Explanatory Note* from commentator Albert Barnes (of which *Note* was entitled: “A single night of flawless victory...,” and who, in turn, was quoting the ancient writer Xenophon from 370 BC), we can also consider the following quote from John Gill – who also quotes Xenophon:

John Gill’s Exposition of the Bible: *Belshazzar was slain by Gadates and Gobryas [deserters of Babylon], who led Cyrus’s army up the river Euphrates into the city of Babylon, its course being turned; the inhabitants of which being revelling and rioting, and the gates open, these men went up to the king’s palace; the doors of which being opened by the king’s orders to know what was the matter, they rushed in, and finding him standing up with his sword drawn in his own defence, they fell upon him, and slew him, and all about him, as Xenophon (c) relates; and this was the same night the feast was, and the handwriting was seen, read, and interpreted [Daniel chapter 5]. This was after a reign of seventeen years; for so Josephus says (d), that Baltasar or Belshazzar, in whose reign Babylon was taken, reigned seventeen years.*

***26. I will break in pieces the GATES of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron...**

John Gill: *I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron; with which the brasen gates were barred: in the wall that surrounded Babylon there were a hundred gates, all made of solid brass, twenty five on each side of the square; which, no doubt, are here referred to [in **Isaiah 45:2**]; which could not hinder the entrance of Cyrus into the city, and the taking of it.*

***27. As archaeology and well deciphered history explains...**

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary: *His father Nebuchadnezzar — that is, his forefather. So [similar to:] “Jesus ... the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matthew 1:1). Daniel does not say that the other kings mentioned in other writers did not reign between Belshazzar and Nebuchadnezzar, namely, Evil-merodach (Jeremiah*

52:31), Neriglissar, his brother-in-law, and Laborasoarchod (nine months). Berosus makes Nabonidus, the last king, to have been one of the people, raised to the throne by an insurrection. As the inscriptions show that Belshazzar was distinct from, and joint king with him [i.e. with Nabonidus (or, Nabonedus), his actual father], this is not at variance with Daniel, whose statement that Belshazzar was son (grandson) of Nebuchadnezzar is corroborated by Jeremiah (**Jeremiah 27:7** "And all nations shall serve him [Nebuchadnezzar – see verse 6], and his son [Nabonidus], and his son's son [Belshazzar], until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him."). Their joint, yet independent, testimony, as contemporaries [again, father and son: Nabonidus and Belshazzar], and having the best means of information, is more trustworthy than any of the heathen historians, if there were a discrepancy. Evil-merodach [whom some equate with being Nabonidus], son of Nebuchadnezzar (according to Berosus), reigned but a short time (one or two years), having, in consequence of his bad government, been dethroned by a plot of Neriglissar, his sister's husband; hence Daniel does not mention him. At the elevation of Nabonidus as supreme king, Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, was doubtless suffered to be subordinate king and successor, in order to conciliate the legitimate party. Thus the seeming discrepancy becomes a confirmation of genuineness when cleared up, for the real harmony must have been undesigned.

Easton's Bible Dictionary: The absence of the name of Belshazzar on the monuments was long regarded as an argument against the genuineness of the Book of Daniel. In 1854 Sir Henry Rawlinson found an inscription of **Nabonidus** which referred to his eldest son [i.e. Belshazzar]. Quite recently, however, the side of a ravine undermined by heavy rains fell at Hillah, a suburb of Babylon. A number of huge, coarse earthenware vases were laid bare. These were filled with tablets, the receipts and contracts of a firm of Babylonian bankers, which showed that Belshazzar had a household, with secretaries and stewards. One was dated in the third year of the king Marduk-sar-uzur. As Marduk-sar-uzur was another name for Baal, this Marduk-sar-uzur was found to be the Belshazzar of Scripture.

Fausset's Bible Dictionary: The inscription at Umqeer (Ur of the Chaldees), read by Sir H. Rawlinson, strews that **Nabonedus** admitted his son Belshazzar into a share of the kingdom ... Nabonedus, defeated by Cyrus in the field, fled to Borsippa, and survived. Belshazzar fell in the last assault of Babylon. Xenophon calls the last king of Babylon "impious," and illustrates his cruelty by the fact that he killed a courtier for having struck down the game in hunting before him, and unmanned Gadates a courtier at a banquet, because one of the king's courtiers praised him as handsome.

END OF CHAPTER 3

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