

perhaps it was passed down to him and gotten confused in the passing but he had the name Belshazzar instead of the name Nabonidus. It's a little hard to think how Nabonidus could get twisted around until it would become Belshazzar.

However, not everyone was satisfied with this conclusion. One was Prof. Pinches of the British Museum. Pinches says that time after time we find that when the Bible and our knowledge seem to disagree, we get more knowledge and we find the Bible was correct after all. Let's investigate further. So he went into the archives of the British Museum and gathered together as many as he could find of contracts and other documents of that sort that were dated in the reign of King Nabonidus, and began to read them with care.

Reading Babylonian documents is something that takes time. They are not printed. They are script. Not script like we write script. They are made with a stylus that presses in, and the ordinary document is not nearly as clear as a royal inscription or something like that. Babylonian is almost as bad as English to read! Any Babylonian sign has anywhere from 3 to 17 possible meanings. You often have to decide what the meaning is in the light of context.

Like in English. You look at the letter "o", and it may be pronounced oh, or ah, or uh, or even ih. English is bad. I mentioned that once and somebody said to me, I don't believe it; the letter "o" is never pronounced "ih" in English; that's the letter "i". I said it is in one word. He said, I don't think I've ever heard the word. I said it's a very common word. He said, What is it? I said, Women. He had heard that word!

Most of us don't realize how terribly confusing English writing has become. Babylonian writing was the same way, only worse. We have 26 letters, whereas they had over 300 different signs, so there is that much confusion to come in.

Pinches read quite a number of these tablets. As he went on he found one that had the very name Belshazzar in it. He said, At least there was somebody named Belshazzar who lived in the reign of Nabonidus, and he came to a tablet which said a certain man had rented a house for 3 years as agent for Belshazzar the king's son. This tied Belshazzar up with Nabonidus and with the royal family. It made it look as if this wasn't quite so bad in its historical background as it appeared at first sight.

At that point Prof. Dougherty of Yale U. took over the investigation. He went on and read more of the tablets and other records from the time of Nabonidus. Dougherty wrote the results of his ~~xxx~~ research in a book which appeared in the series of books called Yale Oriental Researches. A book he called Nabonidus and Belshazzar. In that he gave all the evidence he could find from the time of Nabonidus that would bear on the situation. He showed, and proved conclusively as is accepted by all scholars today that Nabonidus during the latter years of his reign went to Tema, an oasis in the Arabian desert, and spent his time in retirement there and in scholarly studies. He left his son Belshazzar as actual ruler with the responsibility for the conduct of the nation and as commander in chief of the army. Belshazzar was made co-king along with Nabonidus.