

Well, that's the story we read, and up until a few years ago it seemed like a pretty good presentation/ of a great historical event. But then we began to discover documents from Babylonia, and in these documents we found that the last king of Babylon was not called Belshazzar; he was called Nabonidus. And he wasn't killed the night that Babylon was taken. He was allowed to live on for a few years, and given a pension, and spent the rest of his life studying archaeology. And so that doesn't quite fit, does it? In fact we didn't find the name of Belsazzar in any of those tabl/ets. And that just exactly fit with the idea that this was written 400 years, when they'd forgotten all about Belsazzar. But you know not everybody was willing to accept that. There was an Englishman named Professor Pinches (sp?) working in the British Museum who said, "I have found that when an error seems to have been found in the Bible it just means we don't have enough facts. You get the remaining facts, and usually it is explained, and you see the Bible wasn't (in error)" He said, "I want to get all the evidence, not just what we have now." And so he went into the place where they had the tablets in the British Museum. Now in ancient Babylon the business was all written up ~~on~~ on clay tablets. And these little clay tablets, about the size of a cake of Ivory soap, have very small writing on them made with a stylus that presses in, makes a wedge-shaped mark, so they call it ~~ewe~~ cuneiform writing. And we have hundreds of thousandd of those, that have been dug up in the very cities of Babylonia. A few of them are literary texts: legends, myths, some historical documents; those have been copied and studied. And in those we found Nabonidus told about; we found no name Belsazzar. But thousands of them are business documents, and those they left until later, when they (had) read the historical texts, and so on. And then gradually we are getting into these business documents, some of which are just long lists, and things, but many of which prove to be very interesting. And so Professor Pinciy (sp?) said, "I'm going to go into the British Museum and find every tablet I can that is dated in the reign of Nabonidus; and see whether I can find out anything about this Belsazzar."