

of Babylonia in 538 B.C.

His son, Belshazar was associated with him as king for a long period. Nebonidus lived in retirement, leaving his son, Belshazar in Babylon to reign as acting king.

The story of the increase of our knowledge about Belshazar is one of the most interesting episodes in the whole field of Biblical research. The very mention of Belshazar not so long ago was regarded as unhistorical. Today it is seen that the retention of the true facts about him in the Book of Daniel and the promise of making Daniel the third ruler in the kingdom, Nebonidus being the first, Belshazar the second, gives a remarkably true picture of events just as they occurred and a picture which would have been hard to compose even a short time after the events described. We shall look at this a little more in detail later.

The new Babylonian period comes to an end with the conquest of Babylonia by the Persians. Cyrus, a leader who arose in a little province in northwestern Elam, succeeded in getting entire control of Persia and Media and in conquering all Mesopotamia. He tried to bind to himself the many peoples which he had conquered and allowed those whom the Assyrians and Babylonians had removed from their homes to return to them.

We have thus accounts in the cuneiform, showing the historicity of the proclamation recorded in the Old Testament allowing the Jews to return to their home land.

There are many biblical contacts with the Persian period and some extremely interesting corroboration of the biblical narrative. The Old Testament ends during the Persian period which lasted until the conquests of Alexander the Great.

The Babylonian and Sumerian records contain accounts of a creation and record great exploits of their alleged earliest kings.