

vision to the Magi who had the gift of interpreting dreams, and who gave its meaning to him, whereas he became greatly terrified . . . Learning that she was now with child and her time for giving birth was near, he sent Mandane away to Persia. When she arrived there, he put a guard over her, with plans to kill the child after she gave birth (*see Isaiah 45:10-13); for when the Magi had interpreted the vision they told him that the son of his daughter would reign over Asia instead of him. To keep this from happening, immediately following the birth of Cyrus, Astyages sent for Harpagus, a man of his own house and a faithful Mede, to whom he trusted all his affairs, and addressed him saying . . . "Harpagus, take the son born of my daughter Mandane, and steal him away to your house and slay him there. Then bury him as you see fit." When Harpagus had reluctantly agreed, the child was given into his hands, wrapped in the swaddling cloth of death, and he weeping went quickly to his home . . . speaking, "My hands will not carry out his will, nor do I want any part of this murder . . . After he had said this, he sent a messenger to bring back a man named Mitrdates, one of the **shepherds** . . . Coming quickly at his request, the shepherd arrived and Harpagus said to him "Astyages commands you to take this child into the wildest part of the hills, and there abandon him, that he should die a sudden death. And he told me to tell you, that if you do not kill the boy, but allow him to escape, you will be put to the death by the most painful of methods. I myself have been given orders to make sure the child dies."

At this command the herdsman took the child into his arms, and traveled back the way he had come till he reached his flocks . . . **With this the shepherd uncovered the infant**, and showed him to his wife, who, when she saw how fine and beautiful the child was, broke down into tears, and falling at her husbands knees, begged him not to kill the babe; . . . so the child, whom he was commanded to

destroy, was handed over to his wife . . . ”

Thus, Cyrus was raised early to be a shepherd fulfilling God's word to Isaiah.

The second part of Isaiah's prophecy states that Cyrus would **declare Jerusalem and the temple to be rebuilt**. According to the Bible, King Cyrus of Persia along with his ally, Darius the Mede, invaded the Empire of Babylon bringing its downfall.

The following is an account from King Cyrus which was found inscribed on a clay barrel now on display in the British Museum. He mentions how he conquered Babylon, returned exiles to their former lands, returned the articles of worship to the sacred cities and commanded that the temples where they worshiped should be rebuilt. The Inscription reads:

“The number of men in his army were so great, resembling that of water in a river, which could not be counted, marched forward, their weapons stashed away. Without engaging the enemy, he was able to enter Babylon without causing any damage to the city. Into my hands, Nabonidus was delivered, the king who did not worship him . . . **“To the sacred cities located on the other side of the Tigris river, I sent back to the ruins of their holy places, the articles which were used in their sanctuaries. I also allowed to return to their homes the former citizens of the land, . . . I also made an effort to repair their dwelling places.”**

The next prophecy confirmed by history is found in Isaiah 44:27: “Who says to the deep. Be dry! **And I will dry up your rivers.**’

And Isaiah 45:1-2 which says: “Thus says the LORD to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held; **To subdue nations before him and**

loose the armor of kings, To open before him the double doors, So that the gates will not be shut. 'I will go before you and make the crooked places straight; **I will break in pieces the gates of bronze.**

The fulfillment of these prophecies are confirmed by the historian Herodotus who wrote: "The land of Assyria possesses a great number of cities, the strongest and most well known being **Babylon**, . . . The following is a description of the place: . . . Along the edges of the top wall, they built single room structures each facing one another, leaving enough space between them to turn a four-horse chariot. **A hundred gates, all of brass, with bronze lintels and side-posts** make up the circuit of the wall . . . The city is divided into two sections by the river running through it. This river is known as the Euphrates, a wide, deep, and very swift stream, which begins in Armenia, and ends at the Erythraean sea . . . At the rivers entry points are low gates in the fence that flank the stream, which are similar in design to the **great gates in the outer wall, made of brass, and which open toward the water** . . .

Cyrus marched in the direction of Babylon and came to the banks of the Gyndes, a river which starts in the Matienian mountains and flows through the land of the Dardanians, and discharges into the Tigris river. The Tigris then continues to flow past the city of Opis, and empties into the Erythraean sea. Since the Gyndes could only be crossed by boat, Cyrus stopped at the river. One of his favorite white horses, which went along on his march, bolted off and tried to cross the river by itself, galloping into the water the horse was taken hold of by the current which swept him downstream and plunged him to his death. Cyrus became furious with rage **and vowed to break the river's strength**, saying that future generations would be able to cross it without getting their knees wet . . . His plans to attack Babylon were now put on hold, and He divided his troops into two

regiments. With the use of ropes he began to mark off areas on each side of the Gyndes, leading off from it in all directions, one hundred and eighty planned trenches per side. He then commanded his forces to dig opposite one another on both banks. His threat to break the river soon became reality with the assistance of a great a number of workers. But it came at a cost, the whole summer season was now lost.

Having defeated the river Gyndes, by diverting it into three hundred and sixty channels, Cyrus waited for next spring to march against Babylon. A short distance outside of the city wall, the Babylonians army was waiting for him. A battle then ensued, in which the Persian king defeated the Babylonians, who then withdrew into their fortress. Here they shut themselves up, and made fun of his siege, for they had prepared against his attack by storing up food within the city that would last for many years; for when they saw **Cyrus conquering nation after nation**, they were convinced that he would never stop, and that sooner or later he would try to overpower them.

Now Cyrus did not know how to proceed, for many days had passed and he made little progress in conquering the city. Finally, either someone suggested a plan of action, or he himself came up with the idea, which he proceeded to follow. Placing a regiment of his troops at the spot where the river enters the city, and another group at the back where the river exits. He ordered them to march into the city as soon as the river became shallow enough for them to forge. He and his army then withdrew back to the place where Nitocris dug the lake for the river, proceeding to do exactly what she had done in the past; he diverted the Euphrates by a canal into the old lake bed, which was now a marsh. The river began to lower to such a level that it was now possible to cross. At this moment, the Persian army that was left behind at Babylon entered the stream, whose level reached midway up a man's thigh, and

they marched into the city. **Had the Babylonians been aware of what Cyrus was up to, or had seen their danger, they could have kept the Persians from entering the city and would have destroyed his army; for they could have closed all the street-gates which overlooked the river,** and from atop the walls along both sides of the waterway, would have caught their enemy off-guard in a trap. But fortunately for the Persians, their attack was a surprise and they were able to capture the city. Because the city was so large, the citizens located in the central part of town were not aware what had taken place, even though the outer areas of the city had already fallen, **for they were engaged in a festival of dancing and revelry.** This was the account of how Babylon was first conquered.

The account of Herodotus thus verifies that God allowed Cyrus to subdue many nations before him, dry up the mighty waters and enter Babylon's open gates of bronze, all while Belshazzar, their prince, was throwing what would be his last party just as recorded in Daniel chapter 5.

**LIKE CYRUS,
BELIEVERS ARE CHOSEN BEFOREHAND
NOT TO BUILD A TEMPLE OUT OF STONE
BUT TO FORM A LIVING TEMPLE**

Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, **having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself,** according to the good pleasure of His will. Ephesians 1:4-5

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because

it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1 Corinthians 3:11-16

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