



HOW DARIUS THE MEDE WAS DELETED FROM HISTORY AND WHO DID IT

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In the previous issue of *Bible and Spade*, a double tragedy was recounted for Belshazzar, the sub-king who was reigning in Babylon while his father, King Nabonidus, was busy digging up old temples and worshipping the moon god Sin in the Arabian desert.¹ The first tragedy for Belshazzar was his being slain on the night of a feast, as described both in the book of Daniel and in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*. The *Cyropaedia*'s account (7.5.15–30) relates details about his death and who it was that killed him. The *Cyropaedia*'s information in these matters is not found in the biblical text, but it is in harmony with it. The second tragedy for Belshazzar was having his name deleted in the rewrite of history undertaken by the Persians. The rewrite, or false narrative, was so successful that from the time of Herodotus (fifth century BC) until the 19th century AD the only known sources that preserved Belshazzar's name were the book of Daniel and sources derived from it. This fact (not opinion) has rightfully been interpreted by conservative Bible scholars as firm evidence for the sixth-century BC composition of the book of Daniel.

The reason for expunging Belshazzar's name was that his known active worship of Marduk, Babylon's chief god, could not be reconciled with the Persian party line that it was Marduk's will that Cyrus should rule in Babylon instead of Belshazzar's father, Nabonidus, who had neglected Marduk. This narrative, however, ran into difficulties when considering Belshazzar and his devotion to Marduk. The solution: omit both Belshazzar's name and any mention of his role as ruler in Babylon at the end of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. Cyrus himself must have been the instigator of this policy, because the earliest instance of it is found in the Cyrus Cylinder, which he commissioned sometime between the takeover of Babylon in 539 BC and his death in 530.

DARIUS THE MEDE IS ALSO DELETED FROM HISTORY

The present study will show that the same propagandistic rewriting of history was applied to the Darius of the book of Daniel. In this case, however, the propaganda has been even more successful than it was in the case of Belshazzar. Skeptical scholarship asserts either that Daniel's Darius never existed, or that events related to him in the book of Daniel represent a confused remembrance of Darius I Hystaspes, who reigned from 522 to 486 BC. For example, John J. Collins says: "No such person as Darius the Mede is known to have existed apart from the narrative of Daniel. The Babylonian Empire did not fall to the Medes but to the Persians."² Carol Newsom makes a similar remark: "The figure of Darius the Mede has posed an interpretive puzzle since antiquity because his existence cannot be reconciled with other historical sources."³



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Left: Front and back of the inscribed 9" x 4" barrel-shaped cuneiform proclamation known as the Cyrus Cylinder. It is apparently the earliest example of the Persian rewrite of history that sought to minimize or even eliminate the roles of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, and Cyaxares II / Darius the Mede, king of the Medes, in the conquest that ended the Neo-Babylonian Empire. It was commissioned by Cyrus sometime between 537 BC and his death in 530 BC.

This agreement of an extra-biblical source with the Bible regarding King Darius presents a problem to commentators who advocate that the book of Daniel or major parts of it were written in the second century BC. In order to explain away this verification of the Bible, various critics have held that the Darius mentioned by Berossus was Darius I Hystaspes. In this regard it is curious that those who readily dismiss the biblical statements about Darius as unhistorical nevertheless accept as a factual datum the statement of Berossus, displaying an unscholarly unwillingness to give the Bible the same level of credence they accept for other ancient texts. Thus Paul-Alain Beaulieu, whom many would regard as the chief authority on Nabonidus and events related to his reign, maintains that Berossus's statement refers to Darius Hystaspes.⁸

However, in contradiction to the skeptical scholarship just quoted, there were ancient sources independent of the Bible that remembered Darius's name. One such source was Berossus, a Chaldean who flourished in the early third century BC. It is thought that the source of Berossus's information was the trove of cuneiform records found in the Esagila temple of Babylon.⁴ Berossus's work survives only in extracts recorded by later authors, who themselves were quoting abridgements of Berossus by Alexander Polyhistor and Abydenus. The relevant passage from Berossus is found in Josephus (*Against Apion* 1.153⁵) and in the Armenian translation of Eusebius's *Chronicle*.

The Josephus passage deals with the defeat of Nabonidus by Cyrus, after which Nabonidus "was humanely treated by Cyrus, who dismissed him from Babylonia, but gave him Carmania for his residence."⁶ The extract in Eusebius agrees with Josephus's citation of Berossus but goes further by including the following sentence from Berossus's account: "(But) Darius the king took away some of his [Nabonidus's] province for himself."⁷ This King Darius who took some of the province of Carmania for himself, thus overriding the disposition of Cyrus, must have been the highest ruler of the kingdom. That he had such a position—one higher than that of Cyrus—is in agreement with the narrative of Daniel 6, where only someone who held supreme authority could have issued a command that no one could pray to any god or king but to himself for thirty days. Berossus therefore verifies that there was a Darius who reigned supremely right after the fall of Babylon to the Medes and Persians.

There are various problems with this explanation. One difficulty is that Daniel 5:31 gives the age of Darius as about 62 at the takeover of Babylon in 539 BC, whereas Darius Hystaspes was a young man of about 28 when he assumed the kingship in 522 BC, 17 years later.⁹ Another problem is that Darius Hystaspes was a Persian, not a Mede. Critics might dismiss both of these issues because they arise based on a conflict with biblical texts, and such critics have a prejudice against taking as historical any statement of the Bible unless it can be verified by an independent source. But such a dismissal would not explain why the biblical author would have given the wrong nationality and wrong age for Darius "the Mede" if this character was a mistaken memory of the youthful Darius Hystaspes, a Persian. Another problem for the critics who maintain that the Darius of the book of Daniel was a mistaken remembrance of Darius Hystaspes is that extra-biblical inscriptions indicate that Nabonidus would have been about 105 years of age in 522 BC, the very earliest date in which Darius Hystaspes could have dispossessed him from Carmania if Berossus's Darius is taken to be Darius Hystaspes.¹⁰ Such an advanced age for Nabonidus, requisite to synchronize him with Darius Hystaspes, is possible but extremely unlikely. These considerations show the folly of attempts to explain away Darius the Mede as a distorted memory of Darius Hystaspes; in actuality, Berossus must have been writing about a King Darius who reigned before Darius Hystaspes.

There is another source independent of the Bible that also speaks of a King Darius before Darius Hystaspes. Valerius Harpocration, who wrote in the second century AD, was

associated with the Great Library at Alexandria and thus would have had access to ancient works that were lost when the library was burned. Harpocration wrote the following regarding the daric (a coin): “Darics are not named, as most suppose, after Darius the father of Xerxes [Darius I Hystaspes], but after a certain other more ancient king.”¹¹ Harpocration’s reference to a King Darius who lived before Darius Hystaspes was cited by two of the great German Bible commentators of the 19th century: E. W. Hengstenberg, in his *Dissertations on the Genuineness of Daniel*,¹² and C. F. Keil, in his Daniel commentary in the Keil and Delitzsch series.¹³ The critics have never dealt adequately with this additional attestation of a King Darius earlier than Darius Hystaspes, for whom the most obvious identification is Daniel’s Darius the Mede. An article I wrote along with Steven D. Anderson in 2016 that deals more extensively with the citations from Berossus and Harpocration concludes with these words:

The combined testimony of Harpocration and Berossus therefore witnesses to the existence of a Median king whose role, timing, and authority correspond exactly to the role, timing, and authority of Daniel’s Darius.... The existence of these two references should lead writers to reconsider the common assertion that Darius the Mede is not recognized by any ancient source outside of the book of Daniel and works that depend on it.¹⁴

ATTEMPTS TO IDENTIFY DARIUS THE MEDE WITH OTHER HISTORICAL FIGURES

We have seen that three ancient authors—Daniel, Berossus, and Harpocration—knew of a Darius who preceded Darius Hystaspes. Daniel and Berossus specifically connected the reign of this earlier Darius with the end of the Neo-Babylonian Empire in 539 BC. This prompts an inquiry into whether Darius could have been known to other ancient historians under a different name, since monarchs of the time had both a birth name and a throne name, the throne name being adopted when regency was assumed. Because of this well-known practice, writers both ancient and modern have attempted to identify Darius with various individuals who were prominent in the history of Babylon around 539 BC. The literature associated with this effort is vast and will only be briefly summarized in what follows. The four candidates that will be discussed (others that are less credible will be ignored) are (1) Ugbaru (Greek *Gobryas*), governor of Gutium; (2) Gubaru, governor of Babylon; (3) Cyrus; and (4) Cyaxares II, king of Media. The following analysis will point out difficulties with the first three options and explain why Cyaxares II meets all the requisite criteria.

In Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* (4.6.1–2), Gobryas is introduced as a Babylonian (“Assyrian” in Xenophon’s terminology) and as governor of Gutium who defected from his Babylonian overlord and joined the Medes and Persians because of wrongs done to him by the young king of Babylon.¹⁵ *Gobryas*

is the Greek form of Akkadian *Ugbaru* or *Gubaru*. The first strike against identifying Gobryas with Darius the Mede is therefore that, according to Xenophon, he was not a Mede but an Assyrian (= Babylonian). The second difficulty with this identification is that the Babylonian Chronicle relates that Ugbaru (Xenophon’s *Gobryas*) was instrumental as a commander under Cyrus in the taking of Babylon on Tishri 16 (October 12), 539 BC, but that he died 25 days later, on the 11th of Heshvan (November 6).¹⁶ Daniel’s Darius, however, must have been on the throne on Nisan 1 (March 24) of 538 BC in order for him to have a “year one” assigned to him in Daniel 9:1.¹⁷ A final strike against identifying Gobryas/Ugbaru with Daniel’s Darius is that even if he could have been governor of Babylon for 25 days after the taking of the city, he would not have had the authority to issue a command that no prayer could be made to any king or god for thirty days except to himself, as specified in Daniel 6:7–9. Neither could Ugbaru have had the authority to write “to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth” to “make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel” (Dn 6:25, 6:26). Only someone who was the supreme authority in the land could have issued such commands. Ugbaru could not have done this, because he was under the authority of Cyrus (and of the real Darius the Mede; see below). With all these strikes against identifying Gobryas/Ugbaru as Darius the Mede, it is strange that this position still finds advocates.

Recognizing some of these difficulties in the Ugbaru = Darius equation, John Whitcomb hypothesized that Darius was another name for a governor of Babylon named Gubaru, whom he distinguished from Ugbaru, governor of Gutium.¹⁸ However, the only contract texts that recognized the years of governorship for this Gubaru are from 534 to 524 BC.¹⁹ This time frame does not match the reign of Daniel’s Darius, which began at the fall of Babylon in late 539 BC and ended sometime before the first full year of Cyrus, which began in Nisan of 537.²⁰ In addition to this dating problem, the same problem of lacking supreme authority that was discussed for Ugbaru, governor of Gutium, would apply to Gubaru, governor of Babylon. Because of these difficulties, Whitcomb’s identification is now quite universally discarded.

The third identification, that *Darius* was the second name of Cyrus the Great, is at least as old as Theodotion and the Septuagint translation of Daniel, which translations read “Cyrus” in place of “Darius” in Daniel 11:1. This theory became rather popular among evangelicals after it was advocated by the noted Assyriologist Donald Wiseman.²¹ It depends on translating the *waw*-connective of Daniel 6:28 as “even” or “that is” rather than the more common “and.” With this approach, 6:28 could be translated as “Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius, even [or “that is”] the reign of Cyrus the Persian.” A major problem with this interpretation is the difficulty of describing Cyrus as a Mede. Although his mother was a Median princess, royal lineage at the time was traced through



Above: The staircases at Persepolis, built a few decades after the fall of Babylon in 539 BC, show various nations bringing tribute to the Persians and their kings Darius Hystaspes and Xerxes. The Medes are not among the tribute-bearers as would be expected if the Persian propaganda line that was produced for a Babylonian audience was true. In addition, the Persepolis staircase shown here depicts alternating figures of Persian and Median dignitaries with no distinction of status, contrary to the false narrative presented by Herodotus that said that the Persians had made slaves of the Medes several years before the fall of Babylon. The Persian nobles are shown with their distinctive feathered headdress, alternating with the differently-dressed Median nobles. The Persepolis staircase represents concrete evidence in favor of Xenophon's depiction of the relations of Persians and Medes, a depiction that is consistent with the references in the book of Daniel to Darius as king of the Medes and Cyrus as king

of the Persians, with no hostility between them. It is unfortunate that, despite evidences like this, the consensus of modern historians follows the narrative of Herodotus and the Persian propaganda line rather than the overview of Median-Persian relations given by Xenophon, an overview that is consistent with events related in the book of Daniel.

Left: Artist's conception of Cyrus the Great. Cyrus the Great (born ca. 575 BC; died 530 BC) was the Persian general and king who led the armies that captured Babylon in 539 BC, thus putting an end to the Neo-Babylonian Empire. He was a great propagandist, an art that, according to Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (1.6.27), he learned from his father, Cambyses I. Cyrus took his father's advice to heart as he initiated a rewriting of history to exalt his own name, disparage Nabonidus, and remove the names of both Belshazzar, king of Babylon, and Cyaxares II / Darius, king of Media, from history. This propaganda line, the earliest known example of which is found in the Cyrus Cylinder, was successful for over 2,400 years for Belshazzar. It was shown to be a distortion of history when cuneiform texts were deciphered in the late 1800s naming Belshazzar and saying that his father Nabonidus had entrusted the kingship of Babylon to him. Following the death of Cyaxares II (Darius the Mede), in order to downplay or even conceal the role of the Medes, whom the Babylonians hated, in the conquest of Babylon, Cyrus and his successors produced the false narrative that the Medes had been made subject to the Persians several years prior to the capture of Babylon. This deception is contradicted by the Harran Stela, the staircases at Persepolis, and the book of Daniel, yet it is accepted by the majority of current historians and by Bible commentators who write from an anti-supernatural standpoint.





Panorama photo by Georgios Giannopoulos (Ggia) 2010/Wikimedia Commons

Above: The ruins of Persepolis. The city was founded by Darius I (Darius the Great) in 518 BC and expanded upon by Xerxes (486–465 BC) and his son Artaxerxes I (465–424 BC). The citadel complex was an extraordinary undertaking, with over 77 square miles of elaborate architecture and advanced methods of construction that showcased artistic styles and materials from the different lands of the empire. Influences from the Assyrians, Hittites, and Egyptians are evident. The sprawling compound included administrative buildings as well as ceremonial halls and residential palaces. During the conquest by Alexander the Great in 331 BC, Persepolis was looted, much of the statuary and artwork was destroyed, and the buildings were burned.

1. The Harem of Xerxes (sometimes called the Queen's Quarters) had two wings and a stairway that connected to the Palace of Xerxes. Today, a large portion of the Harem has been rebuilt and is dedicated to the Persepolis Museum.
2. The Palace of Xerxes was twice as large as that of Darius I.
3. The Palace of Darius I had a western entrance added by Ochus Artaxerxes III (358–338 BC).

4. The Apadana, a great central hall that had a roof supported by rows of columns (hypostyle architecture) and could potentially receive up to 10,000 guests at once. The northern staircase was the official access to the terrace. The eastern staircase (under the modern canopy structure) and northern staircase both displayed elaborate reliefs that included dignitaries, Persian nobles, spear-bearing guards, satraps (governors), and delegations of people bearing gifts and depicted in recognizable apparel and headdress from the subject lands of the empire. The courtiers ushering guests into the audience of the king are depicted in alternating Median and Persian apparel, signifying the unification of the two nations.
5. The Gate of All Nations, also known as the Gates of Xerxes.
6. The Unfinished Gate was a project most likely started by Ochus Artaxerxes III, who reigned 358–338 BC.
7. Garrison Quarters.
8. The Throne Hall, or Hall of a Hundred Columns, with a grand entrance on the north side, was built during the reigns of Xerxes and Artaxerxes I.

the father, and in all contemporary records Cyrus identifies himself as a Persian and a descendant of Persian kings. Cyrus's Persian lineage is difficult to reconcile with how Daniel 9:1 identifies Darius as being "by descent a Mede," as well as with the apparent distinction in measuring by the third year of Cyrus in Daniel 10:1 and by a year of Darius before that in 11:1.

Another difficulty that is often overlooked is that the Median Darius was "about 62 years of age" when Babylon fell (Dn 5:31), whereas in the *Cyropaedia*, Cyrus appears to be about 28 years of age when the Persian and Median forces under his command defeat Lydia in 547 BC, making him about 36 at the fall of Babylon.²² Even more germane is a reference in a contemporaneous document, the Dream Text of Nabonidus, which was produced by the court of Cyrus, in which Cyrus is called a "young servant" of Marduk at the time of the fall of Babylon.²³

The next section will present the many correlations between Daniel's Darius and the Median king Cyaxares II who is featured prominently in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*. Xenophon presents Cyaxares II as the (maternal) uncle of Cyrus—a detail that is in general agreement with Cyaxares/Darius being about 62 and Cyrus being about 36 when their forces captured Babylon. The identification of Darius with Cyaxares might be called the classical identification of Darius the Mede. It was advocated by Josephus in the first century AD²⁴ and was favored by Jerome in the third century.²⁵ Later famous scholars who held this opinion were John Calvin in the 16th century, James Ussher in the 17th, and Charles Rollin and William Lowth in the 18th.²⁶ Nineteenth-century advocates included Adam Clarke, Thomas Hartwell Horne, Wilhelm Gesenius, Humphrey Prideaux, E. W. Hengstenberg, C. F. Keil in the

9. The Treasury complex is part of the oldest building phase under Darius I and was an important symbol of power and wealth. Two archives of small clay tablets, known as the Fortification Tablets and the Treasury Tablets, were discovered during excavations in the 1930s by archaeologists from the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. The tablets cover a time period from 500 to 458 BC and give insight into Persian economic systems and the responsibilities of the chief financial officer, his deputies, and the chief of the treasury.

Right: A long bronze trumpet from approximately 500 BC discovered at Persepolis and on display at the on-site museum. The use of trumpets was important in military operations and also for ceremonial purposes.



Payam Jahangiri 2013/Wikimedia Commons

Below: The palace of Darius the Great as viewed from the east.



Keil and Delitzsch commentary, and Otto Zöckler in Lange's commentary.²⁷ When comparing the resemblances between Darius and Cyaxares, shown just below, it is easy to see why so many able commentators held to this identification.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN XENOPHON'S CYAXARES II AND DANIEL'S DARIUS

- Both were kings of Media (*Cyr.* 1.5.2; *Dn* 5:31, 6:28).
- Both were on the throne when Babylon fell to the combined forces of Media, Persia, and their allies in October of 539 BC (*Cyr.* 8.5.17–20; *Dn* 5:31).
- Both were the supreme authority over the Medes, Persians, and Babylonians at the time of Babylon's fall, even having suzerainty over Cyrus, king of Persia (*Cyr.* 8.5.17–20; *Dn* 5:28, 5:31, 9:1). If Cyaxares II and Darius the Mede were not identical as the same historical personage, then it would be hard to understand why both the *Cyropaedia* and the Bible indicate that, for a short period after the fall of Babylon, a Median king, and not Cyrus, was the supreme ruler over Babylon. By far the best explanation for this similarity between Xenophon's Cyaxares and Daniel's Darius is that there was a real Median king, Cyaxares II, who held supreme authority in 539 BC, and that his throne name was Darius.
- The book of Daniel indicates only a short reign for Darius the Mede (*Dn* 5:31, 9:1, 10:1, 11:1). A note in the *Cyropaedia* (8.7.1) suggests that Cyaxares died within two years after the fall of Babylon. A study by William H. Shea supports this.²⁸ Shea documented 32 cuneiform contract texts dating from the time of Cyrus's entry into Babylon

(October 29, 539 BC) to December 4, 538 BC. In only one of these documents is Cyrus called “King of Babylon”; all the others refer to him as “King of Lands.” After December 4 of 538 and until Cyrus’s death in 530, however, Cyrus is generally given both titles. This information implies that someone else held the important title “King of Babylon” for a little over a year after the capture of Babylon but died in October or November of 537. This timing agrees with both the *Cyropaedia* concerning Cyaxares and the book of Daniel concerning Darius the Mede.

- Cyaxares had a “violent and unreasonable” temper (*Cyr.* 4.5.9). Daniel’s Darius showed an unrestrained and unreasonable anger when he commanded that not just Daniel’s accusers but also their whole families be cast to the lions after Daniel’s night in the lions’ den (Dn 6:24).
- Cyaxares was vainglorious, as was Daniel’s Darius. Xenophon presents instances where Cyaxares put on an ostentatious display or showed that he expected adulation from his subjects.²⁹ Darius exhibited a similar temperament when he signed a decree that no prayer could be made to any god or king but to himself for 30 days (Dn 6:5–9), thus expecting an adoration that would recognize him as the most exalted person in the land—even temporarily more exalted than the traditional gods.

A further consideration of the *Cyropaedia*’s portrayal of Cyaxares strengthens the case for his identification as Daniel’s Darius. At various places in the *Cyropaedia*, Cyaxares exhibits drastic mood swings—from euphoria to depression and then back again. An example of this is when, after the initial victory of the Medes and Persians over the Babylonians, Cyaxares was “busily engaged in making merry” rather than engaged in planning to press the advantage (4.1.13). On the same day, he consented to Cyrus’s request that any Median soldiers who volunteered could accompany Cyrus’s troops to pursue the Babylonian stragglers. The next day, when Cyaxares recovered from his drunkenness and saw that most of his Medes had accompanied Cyrus, his mood changed. “In keeping with his reputation for being violent and unreasonable” (4.5.9), he sent an emissary after Cyrus, demanding that the Medes with Cyrus come back. Cyrus delayed the emissary, and when Cyaxares caught up with him and saw the army, which was now augmented by the Hyrcanians and Armenians whom Cyrus, by diplomacy and threats, had acquired, he again became morose and jealous, so that he would not return Cyrus’s welcoming kiss (5.5.6). By careful diplomatic speaking, Cyrus was able to pacify him, and the next day Cyaxares “came out in gorgeous attire and seated himself on a Median throne” (6.1.6), with a clear expectation of the adulation of his Median and Persian subjects.

No reader, ancient or modern, would think that every action and every speech of Cyaxares as recounted in the *Cyropaedia* is historically factual in all details. Greek literati would have known that any lengthy speech in the *Cyropaedia*

was an opportunity for Xenophon to display his rhetorical skills, a highly valued art at that time. They would have been more concerned with Xenophon’s rhetorical artistry than with any consideration that exact words were being reported. Nevertheless, the general picture that Xenophon gives of the character of Cyaxares—this ruler’s propensity to switch from euphoria to depression and then back again and his lack of self-control—is quite consistent with a specific malady known to modern medical science. As I previously put it in an article on Cyaxares,

The mood swings of Cyaxares characterize what is called in modern terms a bipolar behavioral disorder. No ancient writer would have been aware of such a diagnosis. This suggests that Xenophon’s informants in the time of Artaxerxes II may have passed on a fairly true-to-life portrait of an individual who suffered from this affliction.³⁰

If this diagnosis is correct, it helps explain the irrational behavior of Darius the Mede (a.k.a. Cyaxares) in Daniel 6. As mentioned above, Darius was persuaded by his counselors to issue a decree that in all the kingdoms under his control, no one was to pray to any god or king but to him for 30 days. The folly of this command is obvious: it would have caused resentment among the common people who were accustomed to making petitions to their favorite gods or goddesses, and the priestly caste would have resented the usurpation of their roles and authority. How could Darius be so shortsighted as to comply with such a request? Apparently his counselors were aware of a weakness in the character of their ruler: when it came to his opinion of himself and his powers, he was prone to delusional thoughts such as accompany, in modern terms, bipolar disorder. The thought of temporarily exercising the powers of the gods might appeal to someone afflicted with this malady, so that Darius acceding to his counselors’ requests would put him in the manic state of the-god-who-answers-prayers. The character of Cyaxares as portrayed in the *Cyropaedia* therefore provides insight into why Cyaxares/Darius agreed to the irrational and shortsighted decree.

These similarities of royal status (king of the Medes), timing of reign over Babylon, and temperament between Xenophon’s Cyaxares and Daniel’s Darius explain why 1,800 years of scholarship, from Josephus until the great conservative commentators of the 19th century, identified the Cyaxares of Xenophon with Daniel’s (and Berossus’s, and Harpocration’s) Darius. These eminent writers were not mindlessly quoting each other regarding this identification. They had observed the similarity of circumstances, timing, and personality for the two characters, prompting Keil to write, “The account given by Xenophon regarding Cyaxares so fully agrees with the narrative of Daniel regarding Darius the Mede, that, as Hitzig confesses, ‘the identity of the two is beyond a doubt.’”³¹

WHY IS THIS IDENTIFICATION REJECTED BY CURRENT SCHOLARSHIP?

The above information about Cyaxares is taken from Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*. Xenophon had spent time as a mercenary in Persia, an experience related in his most famous work, the *Anabasis*. During this time he would have learned many of the traditions regarding the individuals involved in the victory of the Medes and Persians over the Babylonians. Xenophon relates that the king of the Medes at the time of Babylon's fall, Cyaxares (II), was the son of the Median king Astyages and brother of Mandane, the mother of Cyrus the Great (*Cyr.* 1.2.1). Astyages, in turn, was the son of Cyaxares I, so that Xenophon's Cyaxares was named after his grandfather. In a similar way, Cyrus the Great was named after his grandfather Cyrus I, and Cyrus the Great's son Cambyses (II) was named after his grandfather, Cambyses I, king of Persia. According to Xenophon, Cambyses I and his son Cyrus II (the Great), kings of Persia, were both under the suzerainty of the Median king Astyages, and, after the death of Astyages, under the suzerainty of Cyaxares II (*Cyr.* 1.5.2). Xenophon relates that immediately after the capture of Babylon, Cyrus prepared a palace there for his uncle, Cyaxares II (*Cyr.* 8.5.17–20). Cyaxares, in response, gave his daughter in marriage to Cyrus, with the kingdom of Media being the dowry because Cyaxares had no legitimate male heir. Xenophon's portrayal of the suzerainty of the Medes over the Persians explains why, in the book of Daniel (5:28, 6:8, 6:12, 6:15), it is "the Medes and (the) Persians," whereas later, in the time of Esther, it is "the Persians and the Medes" (Est 1:19). Xenophon's hierarchy also explains how Darius, in Daniel 6, could issue commands that could only come from the highest authority in the empire.

All of this is rejected by the majority of current scholarship, which instead prefers Herodotus's narrative of the fall of the Babylonian Empire. For Herodotus, there was no Cyaxares II; Astyages had no male heir (*Hist.* 1.109.3). Whereas Xenophon portrays nothing but warm affection between Cyrus the Great and his maternal grandfather, Astyages, Herodotus has Cyrus usurping the throne from him in 559 BC (*Hist.* 1.125.1–1.130.1, 1.214.3), after which Astyages was confined to his palace and Cyrus made the Medes "slaves instead of masters and the Persians, who were the slaves, are now the masters of the Medes" (*Hist.* 1.129.4).³² Regarding the lack of credibility of Herodotus's account of Cyrus's early years and his relation with Astyages, Edwin Yamauchi writes, "Herodotus knew of four versions of Cyrus's youth (1.107–30). These legendary accounts have been compared with the stories of the rise of Sargon of Agade (twenty-third century B.C.) and with the account of Romulus, the founder of Rome (eighth century B.C.)."³³ In Herodotus, the princess Mandane marries a Persian commoner named Cambyses, and when a child is about to be born, the jealous Astyages, warned in a dream that his Persian grandson would take over the kingdom, sends a hired man to see that the child is killed (1.107–108). Cyrus is rescued from

this plot by the deception of the poor couple that had been given the direct responsibility of killing the child (1.109–13).

Various findings from archaeology contradict Herodotus's story. In cuneiform records, Cyrus stated that he was the son of Cambyses (I), who was the son of Cyrus (I), son of Teispes—all kings of Persia—whereas Herodotus relates that Cyrus the Great's father Cambyses was a commoner. The bas-reliefs of the great staircase at Persepolis, a structure that Darius Hystaspes began building and his son Xerxes completed, show Persian and Median nobles dressed in their finery and conversing with each other, with no apparent distinction of rank or status between them. This cannot be reconciled with Herodotus's statement that, in the time of Cyrus (decades before Xerxes), the Persians made slaves of the Medes. Additional information in favor of Xenophon over Herodotus is that while Xenophon has quite a bit to say about Gobryas, governor of Gutium, and his role in the takeover of Babylon, Herodotus knows nothing of this important figure, whose existence and whose activities in the events of 539 BC are verified by the Babylonian Chronicle. All these considerations are consistent with 1,800 years of scholarship that preferred Xenophon over Herodotus for reconstructing the history of the Medes and Persians. All are consistent with identifying Daniel's Darius the Mede with the Cyaxares II who figures so prominently in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*.

The reason why the modern consensus prefers Herodotus over Xenophon, despite the ways just listed in which Xenophon has proved to be more accurate than Herodotus, is that various cuneiform records that were unearthed and translated in the late 1800s make no mention of the supremacy of the Medes over the Persians at the time of Babylon's fall. However, more recent scholarship has recognized that the unearthed records (though not all of them, as will be shown below) were the product of Persian propaganda, produced after the fall of Babylon with the motive of exalting the role of Cyrus and the Persians while downplaying the role and questioning the existence of the armies of Media and their king. Some scholars are inclined to give new appreciation for the historicity of much of the *Cyropaedia*, at the same time recognizing the deviousness of the Persian propaganda. These scholars include Steven Hirsch and R. J. van der Spek.³⁴ Hirsch says, "The real Cyrus was a master of propaganda, as can be seen from the Cyrus Cylinder, the Babylonian verse chronicle of Nabonidus' fall, and the stories of Cyrus' merciful treatment of conquered kings, all no doubt propagated with Cyrus' encouragement or active participation."³⁵ Van der Spek: "Cyrus was very successful in his propaganda and modern historiography is still influenced by it."³⁶ Xenophon himself provides a warning about Persian propaganda when he has Cyrus's father, Cambyses I, communicating to Cyrus the necessity of a general (or statesman) to use deceit: "The man who proposes to do that [overcome his enemies] must be designing and cunning, wily and deceitful, a thief and a robber" (*Cyr.* 1.6.27).

Van der Spek has an interesting insight into one aspect of Cyrus's duplicity when he writes, "One might ask why there is no reference to any Persian god in the Cyrus Cylinder.... The answer is that the Cyrus Cylinder was intended for Babylonian usage and conformed to local religion and practices."³⁷ This idea explains why, as recorded in 2 Chronicles 36:23 and Ezra 1:2, Cyrus practiced a similar accommodation to local belief when he wrote, "The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem." (Obviously, Cyrus was not a true worshipper of the LORD, for in Isaiah 45:4, the LORD speaks of Cyrus as follows: "I call you by your name..., though you do not know me.")

We have already seen the success of Persian propaganda in the case of Belshazzar. For hundreds of years his existence was denied and biblical events related to him were relegated to pious fiction. But even Hirsch and Van der Spek did not realize the full extent of Persian revisionism. Neither author recognized that the Persian narrative also erased from its history the existence of Cyaxares II and, along with that, the role that the Medes and their king played in the conquest of Babylon. The task of bringing all this to light fell to Steven D. Anderson, whose PhD dissertation at Dallas Theological Seminary (2014) researched the 1,800 years of scholarship that identified Daniel's Darius with Xenophon's Cyaxares.³⁸ Anderson's research has been used extensively in the present article. Anderson provided the reason for the Persian erasure of Cyaxares, similar to the erasure of Belshazzar that is now admitted by historians: Cyaxares was erased because he was a Median, and the Medes were regarded by the Babylonians as the hated enemy. After the conquest, Cyrus wanted to present himself as a liberator, not as a conqueror—the same deception practiced by many modern dictators. To accomplish this, he downplayed the role of the Medes in the conquest, even saying in the Cyrus Cylinder that "he made the Gutti country and all the Manda-hordes [Medes] bow in submission to his (i.e. Cyrus') feet."³⁹ According to the *Cyropaedia* (4.6.1–11), the land of Gutti was not conquered by Cyrus; the governor of the Gutians, Gobryas, voluntarily submitted to the Persians because of the wrongs done to him by Belshazzar. Hirsch suggests that the submission of the Medes to Cyrus was similar and identifies their so-called "submission" as the incident when a great part of the Median army volunteered to serve under Cyrus in pursuit of the recently defeated Babylonians, as described earlier.⁴⁰

THE HARRAN STELA

Other cuneiform records, not from the Persian court, were unearthed that relate to the end of the Babylonian Empire. Although having their own propagandistic ends, these records do not perpetrate the Persian misrepresentation of the relations between the Medes and Persians and their kings. Most germane in this regard is the Harran Stela. This stela is recognized as a genuine text of Nabonidus, written, according to Beaulieu,



Above: The Harran Stela was commissioned by Nabonidus in the last years of his reign, within three years or less of the capture of Babylon in 539 BC. In it, Nabonidus identifies his chief enemies as the Medes, Arabs, and Egyptians, and their hostile kings. There is no mention of the Persians because they would have been considered as being under the suzerainty of the Medes and their king. According to the consensus that follows the Persian propaganda narrative, the Persians had been dominant over the Medes for several years before this and in 542–539 BC there was no Median king, directly contrary to what Nabonidus says. Nabonidus surely knew his enemies and where the kingship of Media and Persia resided. The Harran Stela is therefore consistent with Xenophon's portrayal of the relations between the Medes and their king and the Babylonians, and also with the book of Daniel, which has a Median king, Darius, reigning over Medes and Persians and then over the Babylonians in 539 BC. The Harran Stela is such a stumbling block to the majority of current scholars that they quite universally ignore its implications, since accepting those implications would require a major worldview revision. The easier path is to ignore the Harran Stela and continue in the Persian propaganda line that there was no independent Median kingdom in the period from 542 to 539 BC.

in the latter part of his reign, probably in the 14th or 15th year (i.e., 542–540 BC).⁴¹ This was three years or less before Nabonidus and his son Belshazzar would see their kingdom fall to the Medes and Persians and their allies. In this text, Nabonidus mentions in passing that his principal enemies at the time were “the king of Egypt, the Medes and the land of the Arabs.”⁴² There is no mention of a Persian king; Cyrus or his father, Cambyses I, would have been included as part of the Median enemy. Nabonidus, as ruler of the Babylonians, was surely well informed about who his enemies were. In his view, the Medes were the dominant force at the time, not the Persians. If the Medes were over the Persians at that time, as Nabonidus recognized, then there surely would have been a Median king who ruled over both Medes and Persians. Xenophon provides the given name of the Median king: Cyaxares; the book of Daniel gives his throne name: Darius. The book of Daniel also provides information about this Median king that is entirely consistent, in both timing and personal characteristics, with the picture of Cyaxares II that the *Cyropaedia* presents. The Harran Stela therefore gives the coup de grâce to the Persian rewrite of history, a false narrative that was followed by Herodotus and that unfortunately is followed by the consensus of modern historians, even Hirsch and Van der Spek, despite their otherwise perceptive insights. When the Persian deceptions are recognized, there emerges a picture of Median-Persian relations in the latter half of the sixth century BC that is consistent with both Xenophon and the book of Daniel. Thus, archaeologically-based evidence shows that the biblical book was composed in the sixth century BC by someone who was well acquainted with the history of the time.

CONCLUSION

We are seeing the outworking of a drama that has extended through 2,500 years of history. During that time, there were (and are) two contending scenarios defining the power players in events related to the fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. For much of that time (from Josephus in the first century AD to the great conservative commentators of the 19th century), the outline of events found in Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* was accepted as reflecting the true relations between Media, Persia, and Babylon. Xenophon’s basic picture was found to be consistent with information in the book of Daniel that portrays a Median king who held the highest position of power, ruling over Medes, Persians, and Babylonians for a short time after the fall of Babylon in 539 BC. It was only when Persian propaganda texts were unearthed and deciphered that scholarly opinion switched to favor the narrative found in Herodotus’s *Histories*, where the Medes become slaves to the Persians several years before Babylon’s fall. Such an understanding, based as it was on texts that have more recently been recognized as being Persian propaganda, was never able to explain the references in Berossus and Harpocration that indicate a King Darius before Darius Hystaspes. Nor could it explain why in various particulars such as the parentage of Cyrus, Herodotus was clearly wrong

and Xenophon was right. Although some scholars (Hirsch and Van der Spek were mentioned) began to realize that the Persian cuneiform documents were state-sponsored propaganda designed to minimize or even eliminate the role of the Medes in the conquest of Babylon, the work of Anderson has provided the true perspective, thus giving new credibility to the earlier view that favored Xenophon over Herodotus. Anderson’s research has already found an able defender in J. Paul Tanner, who, in his comprehensive and well-researched commentary on Daniel, summarizes Anderson’s conclusion as follows:

Scholars such as S. D. Anderson, having carefully reviewed all the data, have concluded that the claim that Cyrus overthrew Astyages and became king of Media-Persia well before the fall of Babylon (as Herodotus maintained) is inaccurate. Instead, Xenophon’s viewpoint is more reliable: Cyrus did not conquer and rule the Medes prior to Babylon’s fall but that the two powers combined their forces for mutual benefit and that the Medes were ruled by Astyages’ son, Cyaxares II. Once Babylon was conquered, the rule of Babylon was entrusted to Cyaxares II,...known in Daniel as “Darius the Mede.”⁴³

We should be under no delusion that commentators who *a priori* rule out predictive prophecy will choose to abandon the deception of the Persian propaganda. Forsaking that narrative would be to admit that the findings of archaeology and the right interpretation of ancient texts have, once again, shown the accuracy and integrity of the Bible in historical matters. To admit that the historical accuracy of the book of Daniel shows that it was written in the sixth century BC would undermine the presupposition, held by many critics, that the Bible cannot contain truly predictive prophecy. Rather than accept such a consequence and the major revisions of worldview it might require, many will take the easier route of continuing to prefer the deceptions of Persian propaganda initiated by no less a person than Cyrus the Great.



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Endnotes for *How Darius the Mede Was Deleted from History and Who Did It*

Summer/Fall 2022 *Bible and Spade*

Notes

¹ Rodger C. Young, “How Belshazzar Was Deleted from History and Who Did It,” *Bible and Spade* 35, no. 2 (Spring 2022): 21–28.

² John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 30.

³ Carol A. Newsom, *Daniel: A Commentary*, with Brennan W. Breed, The Old Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 191.

⁴ Paul-Alain Beaulieu, *The Reign of Nabonidus, King of Babylon 556–539 B.C.*, Yale Near Eastern Researches 10 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 88; Gerald P. Verbrugghe and John M. Wickersham, *Berosos and Manetho, Introduced and Translated: Native Traditions in Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 15–24.

⁵ Or 1.20 in Whiston’s translation (William Whiston, trans., *Josephus: The Complete Works* [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998], 936–37).

⁶ H. St. John Thackeray, trans., *The Life, Against Apion*, vol. 1 of *Josephus*, 8 vols., Loeb Classical Library (New York: Putnam, 1926), 223.

⁷ Josef Karst, *Die Chronik: Aus dem Armenischen übersetzt mit textkritischem Commentar*, vol. 5 of *Eusebius Werke*, Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte 20 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1911), 246.

⁸ Beaulieu, *Reign of Nabonidus*, 231. Rowley also tentatively held this position (H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires in the Book of Daniel: A Historical Study of Contemporary Theories* [Cardiff: University of Wales Press Board, 1935], 46).

⁹ Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, with a forward by Donald J. Wiseman (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990), 138, citing A. T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 107.

¹⁰ Raymond Philip Dougherty, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar: A Study of the Closing Events of the Neo-Babylonian Empire*, Yale Oriental Series, Researches 15 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1929), 32–33.

¹¹ Valerius Harpocration, *Harpocration: Lexeis of the Ten Orators*, ed. John J. Keaney (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1991), Δ 5, Δαρείος, as translated in Steven D. Anderson, “Darius the Mede: A Reappraisal” (PhD Dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 2014), 157, https://www.academia.edu/9787699/Darius_the_Mede_A_Reappraisal.

¹² E. W. Hengstenberg, *Dissertations on the Genuineness of Daniel and the Integrity of Zechariah*, trans. B. P. Pratten, and *A Dissertation on the History and Prophecies of Balaam*, trans. J. E. Ryland (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1848), 42.

¹³ C. F. Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, trans. M. G. Easton, from German, vol. 3 in *Ezekiel, Daniel: Three Volumes in One*, by C. F. Keil, vol. 9 of *Commentary on the Old Testament: In Ten Volumes*, by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 199–200 n. 2.

¹⁴ Steven D. Anderson and Rodger C. Young, “The Remembrance of Daniel’s Darius the Mede in Berosus and Harpocration,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 173 (July–September 2016): 323, <http://www.rcyoung.org/articles/darius.html>.

¹⁵ All quotations of the *Cyropaedia* in this article are from Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, trans. Walter Miller, 2 vols., Loeb Classical Library 51 and 52 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914). For online full texts, see <https://ryanfb.github.io/loebolus-data/L051.pdf> and <https://ryanfb.github.io/loebolus-data/L052.pdf>.

¹⁶ The Nabonidus Chronicle, from James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, third edition with supplement (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 306b. Hereafter *ANET*.

¹⁷ Both Babylonia and Persia used accession reckoning for the reigns of their kings, so that “year one,” or the first year of a king, did not begin until the Nisan 1 following the king’s taking office at some time in the preceding year.

¹⁸ John C. Whitcomb Jr., *Darius the Mede: A Study in Historical Identification* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 5ff.

¹⁹ Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel*, Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2008), 292 n. 5. Whitcomb (*Darius the Mede*, 15) cites the Nabonidus Chronicle, Column III, line 20 (ANET, 306b) as identifying this governor as active in the days immediately following the fall of Babylon, but the “Gubaru” at this place in the text is probably just an alternate spelling for the Ugbaru mentioned five lines earlier and two lines later, since the cuneiform signs for “ug” and “gu” are similar.

²⁰ Cyrus began to reign on the death of Darius in late 538 BC, so that his “year one,” according to the Persian custom of measuring years, began in Nisan of 537 and his fourth year began in Nisan of 535. See my explanatory box in the previous issue of *Bible and Spade*: “When Were Cyrus’s Years One and Three?,” *Bible and Spade* 35, no. 2 (Spring 2022): 20.

²¹ D. J. Wiseman, “Some Historical Problems in the Book of Daniel,” in *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, ed. D. J. Wiseman (London: Tyndale, 1965), 12–18.

²² For an examination of how the *Cyropaedia* supports Cyrus’s age as about 28 in 547 BC and 36 in 539 BC, see Rodger C. Young, “Xenophon’s Cyaxares: Uncle of Cyrus, Friend of Daniel,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 64, no. 2 (2021): 272–73, <http://www.rcyoung.org/articles/Cyaxares.html>.

²³ Beaulieu, *Reign of Nabonidus*, 108.

²⁴ *Antiquities* 10.248 (or 10.11.4 in Whiston’s translation): “Darius, who with his relative Cyrus put an end to the Babylonian sovereignty, was in his sixty-second year when he took Babylon; he was a son of Astyages but was called by another name among the Greeks” (Ralph Marcus, trans., *Jewish Antiquities*, Books IX–XI, vol. 6 of *Josephus*, 9 vols., Loeb Classical Library [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958], 295). The only Greek historian who is known to explicitly refer to a son of Astyages is Xenophon, so the “other name” that Josephus did not supply was very likely Cyaxares. Had Josephus filled in the name, it would have done much to lessen the assurance of those who confidently assert that both Darius the Mede and Cyaxares II are fictitious characters.

²⁵ Jerome, *S. Hieronymi Presbyteri Opera: Pars I: Opera Exegetica 5: Commentariorum in Daniele Libri III <IV>*, Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina, vol. 75A (Turnholti: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1964), 820–21, 829.

²⁶ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Daniel*, trans. Thomas Meyers, 2 vols., vols. 24–25 of *Calvin’s Commentaries*, 45 vols. (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1852–53; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 1:347–48; James Ussher, *The Annals of the World*, revised and updated by Larry Pierce and Marion Pierce (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2003), 117a (originally published in 1658 in London); Charles Rollin, *Ancient History*, 2 vols. (Cincinnati: Applegate, 1858), 1:179b (originally published in French in 12 volumes, 1730–38); William Lowth, *A Commentary upon the Prophecy of Daniel, and the Twelve Minor Prophets*, 2 vols. (London, 1726), 1:52.

²⁷ Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 4, *Isaiah to Malachi* (New York, 1843), 588; Thomas Hartwell Horne, *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, 8th ed., 4 vols. (Edinburgh, 1839; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970), 4:213; Wilhelm Gesenius, *Thesaurus Philologicus Criticus Linguae Hebraeae et Chaldaeae Veteris Testamenti*, vol. 1 of 3, 8 – v, 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1835), 349–50; Humphrey Prideaux, *An Historical Connection of the Old and New Testaments: Comprising the History of the Jews and Neighboring Nations, from the Decline of the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel to the Time of Christ*, 3rd ed., with notes, analyses, and introductory review by J. Talboys Wheeler, 2 vols. (London: Tegg, 1877), 1:106–12; Hengstenberg, *Dissertations*, 40–43; Keil, *Book of Daniel*, 192–200; Otto Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel: Theologically and Homiletically Expounded*, trans. and ed. James Strong, in *Ezekiel, Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, vol. 7 of John Peter Lange, *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal and Homiletical*, ed. and trans. Philip Schaff, 12 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1960), 35–36.

²⁸ William H. Shea, “An Unrecognized Vassal King of Babylon in the Early Achaemenid Period,” pt. 3, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 10, no. 1 (1972): 112–13. Shea’s whole article is available online at <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/auss/vol10/iss1/4>.

²⁹ Cyr. 2.4.1–5, 5.5.6–10, 6.1.1, 6. Henry Dakyns’s translation of the *Cyropaedia* is available online at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2085/2085-h/2085-h.htm>.

³⁰ Young, “Xenophon’s Cyaxares,” 274–75.

³¹ Keil, *Book of Daniel*, 198. Keil references Ferdinand Hitzig, author of *Das Buch Daniel* (Leipzig, 1850).

³² A. D. Godley, trans., *Herodotus*, vol. 1 of 4, *Books I and II*, Loeb Classical Library (New York: Putnam, 1920), 169, <http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/lookupid?key=olbp71364>.

³³ *Persia and the Bible*, 80.

³⁴ Steven W. Hirsch, “1001 Iranian Nights: History and Fiction in Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*” in *The Greek Historians: Literature and History; Papers Presented to A.E. Raubitschek*, ed. Michael Jameson (Saratoga, CA: ANMA Libri, 1985), 65–85; Steven W. Hirsch, *The Friendship of the Barbarians: Xenophon and the Persian Empire* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1985); R. J. van der Spek, “Cyrus the Great, Exiles, and Foreign Gods: A Comparison of Assyrian and Persian Policies on Subject Nations” in *Extraction & Control: Studies in Honor of Matthew W. Stolper*, ed. Michael Kozuh et al., *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* 68 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2014), 233–64.

³⁵ *Friendship of the Barbarians*, 177 n. 69. Hirsch is summarizing Max Mallowan, “Cyrus the Great (558–529 B.C.),” *Iran* (British Institute of Persian Studies) 10 (1972): 10–11.

³⁶ “Cyrus the Great,” 260.

³⁷ 254.

³⁸ “Darius the Mede: A Reappraisal.” The dissertation was expanded by Anderson into a self-published book, available at Amazon.com.

³⁹ *ANET* 315b.

⁴⁰ *Friendship of the Barbarians*, 81.

⁴¹ Beaulieu, *Reign of Nabonidus*, 32.

⁴² *ANET*, 526b.

⁴³ J. Paul Tanner, *Daniel*, *Evangelical Exegetical Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020), 57–58.

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