

During his reign, Nebuchadrezzar had conquered Jerusalem and destroyed it. He had tried to maintain it as a subject territory, but the men whom he placed as kings, persisted in conspiring against him and eventually he decided that the best thing to do was to destroy the place which was consequently a center of rebellion.

We have noticed from the proper names which are mentioned in the biblical account of the events of the destruction. After a reign of 43 years, he died in 561 B.C. His son, Amel-Marduk who is called Evil-Merodach in 2d Kings, 25,27, succeeded him. After three years he was assassinated and his brother-in-law, Neriglissar, who is the Nergal-sharezer whom we have already noticed, now became king and reigned till his death, four years later. His young son ruled something less than a year and was then deposed and Nabonidus, a Babylonian of priestly descent was installed in his place. He reigned from 555 to 538 when the Persians conquered Babylon and put an end to the Neo Babylonian Period.

The Book of Daniel describes some of the events of this transition. It speaks of the king as Belshezzar. Formerly, it was regarded as an evidence of error in the Book of Daniel that Belshezzar should be the name given to the last king of Babylon since it was known that Nabonidus had been the last king before the Persian conquest. We had writings by Cyrus the Persian conqueror and also by Nabonidus, the Babylonian king, testifying to the fact. Unless the Book of Daniel was a story written long after the events described by someone who was unfamiliar with the actual situation how could it come about that Belshezzar should be named as the last king of Babylon and described in a way which would not possibly fit Nabonidus? Then there was found a prayer of Nabonidus, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ for Belshezzar, his first-born son and a contract from the 5th year of Nabonidus, telling us that