

Cyrus the Great and Prophecy

Cyrus - A celebrated conqueror, and the founder of the [Persian](#) Empire. He comes forth in a line of monarchs who ruled in [Susiana](#). According to [Herodotus](#), he was the son of Mandani, daughter of [Astyages](#), king of the [Medes](#). The father of [Cyrus](#) was the [Persian Cambyses](#). It having been foretold that Mandani's son would become the lord of all [Asia](#), [Astyages](#) attempted to destroy the infant, and delivered it to [Harpagus](#), his attendant, to kill. [Harpagus](#), however, fearing the anger of Mandani, gave the child to a herdsman, one [Mitrdates](#), who reared the young [Cyrus](#) as his own son, under the name of Agradates. When ten years of age, the true parentage of the boy was accidentally discovered by [Astyages](#), who, after punishing [Harpagus](#) with great barbarity, sent [Cyrus](#) to his parents in [Persia](#). When the young prince grew up, he headed a revolt against [Astyages](#), who had become unpopular by his tyranny, and defeated him in battle (B.C. 559). The [Medes](#) then accepted [Cyrus](#) as their king.

He had not been long seated on the throne when his dominions were invaded by [Croesus](#), king of [Lydia](#), the issue of which contest was so fatal to the latter. (See [Croesus](#).) The conquest of [Lydia](#) established the [Persian](#) monarchy on a firm foundation, and [Cyrus](#) was now called away to the East by vast designs and by the threats of a distant and formidable enemy. [Babylon](#) still remained an independent city in the heart of his empire, and to reduce it was his first and most pressing care. On another side he was tempted by the wealth and weakness of [Egypt](#), while his northern frontier was disturbed and endangered by the fierce barbarians who ranged over the plains that stretch from the skirts of the Indian [Caucasus](#) to the Caspian. Until these last should be subdued or humbled his Eastern

provinces could never enjoy peace or safety. These objects demanded his own presence; the subjugation of the Asiatic [Greeks](#), as a less urgent and less difficult enterprise, he committed to his lieutenants. While the latter, therefore, were executing his commands in the West, he was himself enlarging and strengthening his power in the East. After completing the subjugation of the nations west of the [Euphrates](#), he marched upon [Babylon](#) (q.v.), which he took. The account of this conquest, as described by [Herodotus](#), is given in the article [Babylon](#). Recent archaeological discoveries, however, tend to discredit his narrative. A tabletinscription found at [Babylon](#) states that [Cyrus](#), "king of Elam," took Sippara and [Babylon](#) "without fighting." This took place in B.C. 538. See Sayce, *Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments* ([London](#), 1883); and his *Introduction to Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther* (2d ed. [London](#), 1887).

Harry Thurston Peck, *Harpers Dictionary of Classical Antiquities* (1898)

Known as a very benevolent king who allowed religious freedom to all his conquered subjects, in contrast to previous rulers (such as Nebuchadnesser.)

580 BC – Born
558 BC – Succeeds Cambyses I as king of Persia
559-549 BC – Overthrew Astyages the king of Media
546 BC – Conquers Croesus the king of the Lydian empire
538 BC – Takes Babylon
529 BC - Dies

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Isaiah 44:28-45:4-6

28 That saith of **Cyrus**, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even **saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.**

Timing of Isaiah:

150 years later ----->>>>

3403 AH / 639 BC (722 Ptolemy) – Hezekiah sole king of Judah

3429 AH / 613 BC (696 Ptolemy) – Hezekiah dies

45:1 ¶ Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and **I will loose the loins of kings,**

to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

2 I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: **I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:**

3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, **that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.**

4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, **I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.**

5 ¶ I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else, *there is* no God beside me: **I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:**

6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none beside me. I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else.”

2 Chronicles 36:22-23

22 ¶ Now in the **first year of Cyrus king of Persia**, that the word of the LORD *spoken* by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that **he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing**, saying, ²³ Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath **the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.**

3586 AH / 456 BC (539 Ptolemy) – The Fall of Babylon

3589 AH / 453 BC (536 Ptolemy) – Cyrus sole ruler of Persia / Command by Cyrus to rebuild Jerusalem

Daniel 5:6

Then **the king's countenance was changed**, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the **joints of his loins were loosed**, and his knees smote one against another.

(Heroditus' account): "On the top, along the edges of the wall, they constructed buildings of a single chamber facing one to another, leaving between them room for a four-horse chariot to turn. In the circuit of the wall are a hundred **gates, all of brass**, with bronze lintels and side-posts. . . The city is divided into two portions by the river, which runs through the midst of it. This river is the Euphrates, a broad, deep, swift stream, which rises in Armenia, and empties itself into the Erythraean Sea.

"At the rivers end of these cross streets are **low gates** in the fence that skirts the stream, which are, like the great gates in the outer wall, **all of brass, and open towards the water**"

Battle fought outside Babylon, Persians win, Babylonians go inside the walls with plenty of stores. Cyrus diverts the river and sends his troops in the riverbed at night. Defeats Babylonian guards & welcomed as a hero by the people.

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[Babylon](#) was probably in the zenith of its glory and dominion just before the death of Nebuchadnezzar. [p.178]

The fall of [Babylon](#), before the victorious arms of [Cyrus](#), occurred B.C. 538. The height and strength of the walls had long baffled every effort of the invader. Having understood, at length, that on a certain day, then near approaching, a great annual festival was to be kept at [Babylon](#), when it was customary for the Babylonians to spend the night in revelling and drunkenness, he thought this a fit opportunity for executing a scheme which he had planned. This was no other than to surprise the city by turning the course of the river--a mode of capture of which the Babylonians, who looked upon the river as one of their greatest protections, had not the smallest apprehension.

Accordingly, on the night of the feast, he sent a party of his men to the head of the canal, which led to the great lake made by Nebuchadnezzar to receive the waters of the [Euphrates](#) while he was facing the banks of the river with walls of brick and bitumen. This party had directions, as soon as it was dark, to commence breaking down the great bank or dam which kept the waters of the river in their place, and separated them from the canal above mentioned; while [Cyrus](#), in the meantime, dividing the rest of his army, stationed one part at the place where the river entered the city, and the other where it came out, with orders to enter the channel of the river as soon as they should find it fordable. This happened by midnight; for, by cutting down the bank leading to the great lake, and making, besides, openings into the trenches which, in the course of the two years' siege, had been dug around the city, the river was so drained of its water that it became nearly dry. When the army of [Cyrus](#) entered the

channel from their respective stations on each side of the city, they rushed on ward towards the centre of the place; and finding the gates leading towards the river left open in the drunkenness and negligence of the night, they entered them, and met by concert at the palace before any alarm had been given; here the guards, partaking, no doubt, in the negligence and disorder of the night, were surprised and killed. Soon after, the soldiers of [Cyrus](#), having killed the guard, and meeting with no resistance, advanced towards the banqueting-hall, where they encountered Belshazzar, the ill-fated monarch, and slew him, with his armed followers. See, however, [Cyrus](#), p. 460.

Harry Thurston Peck, *Harpers Dictionary of Classical Antiquities* (1898)

See also:

<http://www.bible-prophecy.net/articles/a2pws.htm>

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Daniel 1:21

“ And Daniel continued *even* unto the first year of king Cyrus.”

Daniel 6:28

“ So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.”

2 Chronicles 36:22-23

“²² ¶ Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD *spoken* by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying, ²³ Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. Who *is there* among you of all his people? The LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up.”

Ezra 1:1-4

“¹ ¶ Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying, ² Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. ³ Who *is there* among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he *is* the God,) which *is* in Jerusalem. ⁴ And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that *is* in Jerusalem.”

Isaiah 45:20-25

“²⁰ ¶ Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that* cannot save.

²¹ Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and *there is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me.

²² Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else. ²³ I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

²⁴ Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

²⁵ In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”

Daniel 10:1

“ In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing *was* true, but the time appointed *was* long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.”