



## A HISTORY OF THE BABYLONIANS AND ASSYRIANS

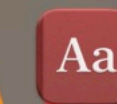
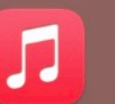
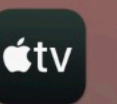
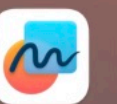
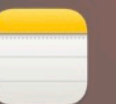
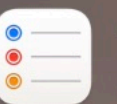
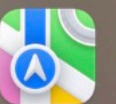
rendering it comparatively easy for other nations to proceed with the superstructure... It was from the east, not from Egypt, that Greece derived her architecture, her sculpture, her science, her philosophy, her mathematical knowledge, in a word, her intellectual life. And Babylon was the source to which the entire stream of eastern civilization may be traced. It is scarcely too much to say that, but for Babylon, real civilization might not even yet have dawned upon the earth" (Gt. Mon., III. pp. 75 t.).

305. Upon the people of Israel, too, Babylon left her mark. Though mistress of their state and its destroyer, she could not rule their spirits. Their prophets looked forward to her fall and rejoiced. To them, the image of all material prosperity, she was set over against

that higher ideal of victorious suffering, of spiritual achievement, the triumph of which in their vision was sure. Thus pictured by them, Babylon has lived on in the imagination of Christendom as the supreme symbol of the rich, the cruel, the lustful, the enemy of saints, the Antichrist, destined to destruction. Who shall say that, thus seeing, these prophets did not behold clearly the vital weakness of that ancient civilization in her, its embodiment? With all her glory Babylon was of the earth and is fallen; Jerusalem, which is from above, abideth forever.

## IV. THE FALL OF BABYLON

306. The conspiracy which placed Nabuna'id upon the



A HISTORY OF THE BABYLONIANS AND ASSYRIANS

throne (555-539 B.C.) seems to have involved a transfer of emphasis in the politics of the state. Nabuna'id was not a Kaldean but a Babylonian noble, son of a prince, Nabu-balatsu-iqbi. In his long stele inscription, to which reference has already been made (sect. 288), he declares his purpose to conduct affairs after the example of Nebuchadrezzar and Nabupaluçur. In fact, his rather numerous inscriptions present him not only as a devout worshipper of the gods and a restorer of temples, but also as a vigorous and zealous defender of the imperial authority. The empire stood intact within its old limits when he came into possession of it, and in the first years of his reign he paid no little attention to the maintenance of his authority in the west. In the badly

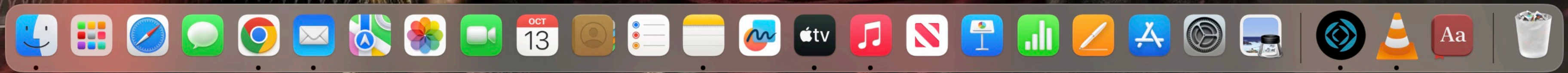
broken first column of his so-called Annals, references made to Hamath and the mountains of Amanus, in connection with military movements, indicate that he was active in Syria, and fragments of Menander suggest that in his reign dynastic troubles in Tyre led to his setting, first, Merbaal (555-552 B.C.), and then Hirom III. (551-532 B.C.), both hostages at his court, upon the Tyrian throne. The impulse to these western expeditions may have been given by the new relations to the Manda (Medes) which the last years had induced, and which may now be described in some detail.

307. During the lifetime of Nebuchadrezzar the alliance with the Manda (Medes) had remained firm, although to Cyaxares had succeeded (about 584 B.C.)

## A HISTORY OF THE BABYLONIANS AND ASSYRIANS

his son Ishtuvegu (Astyages). The rapid changes which followed upon the death of the great Kaldean monarch, and particularly the transference of the succession from the Kaldean to the Babylonian line, in the person of Nabuna'id, seem to have been the occasion of estrangement between the two peoples. Nabuna'id asserts that in the beginning of his reign the Manda had been in possession of northern Mesopotamia and were encamped about Haran. But one of those sudden reversals of supremacy not uncommon in the beginnings of great empires had taken place in Media. Among the communities that acknowledged the sway of Astyages was the province of Anshan in northern Elam, occupied by the Persians under their hereditary

chieftains of the house of Teispes. The king of Anshan during these years, a certain Cyrus, raised a rebellion against his suzerain (about 553 B.C.) which resulted in the downfall of Astyages and the supremacy of Cyrus and the Persians (550 B.C.). During these troubles the movement of Astyages against Babylonia was given up, and Nabuna'id reports that by 553 B.C. there were no Manda about Haran. He also dwells with satisfaction upon the overthrow of Astyages by Cyrus, king of Anshan, as a divine intervention in his own favor. The way was open for him to send an expedition not only to Haran to rebuild the temple there, but to advance farther into the west. He was doubtless gratified that inner troubles were breaking up the Median Empire,

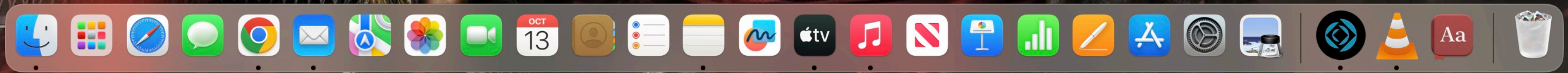


## A HISTORY OF THE BABYLONIANS AND ASSYRIANS

as had so often been the case among the loose agglomerations of peoples in the northern mountains, and he felt that henceforth neither their friendship nor their enmity was particularly significant, little dreaming that within two decades the young conqueror would be knocking at his own gates. The career of Cyrus is one of the marvels of antiquity. His victory over his Median suzerain was not merely the substitution of one dynasty for another, nor was it followed by internecine wars in which the fresh and vigorous peoples of the north were crippled. With consummate statesmanship the young king united all elements, inspired them with a common spirit, and out of a kingdom in which tribes and peoples had been joined in loose confederation about a common

overlord, he built the solid foundations of the Medo-Persian Empire.

308. The immunity from hostile complications with the Medes, enjoyed by Nabuna'id during the years that followed, he improved by pursuing those works of peace in which his prototype Nebuchadnezzar had gained such renown. With the details of such building operations his inscriptions are filled. The peculiar delight which they represent him as feeling in these works and the unique method which he adopted in the prosecution of them have led scholars to regard him as a political weakling, a cultured dilettante, an archaeological virtuoso, to whom the discovery of an ancient foundation stone was more significant than the conduct of the state



### A HISTORY OF THE BABYLONIANS AND ASSYRIANS

or the defence of the empire. Further knowledge has proved the accusation unjust, although the facts on which it was based are evident enough. In his zeal for the reconstruction of temples he was not satisfied with clearing off the superficial rubbish of the mound, but must dig down through the successive layers of ruins, until the original foundation had been reached and the inscription of the first builder had been uncovered. Reference has already been made to the value of the data which he thus published (sect. 40) for the construction of a Babylonian chronology. A passage may be here given from an inscription, illustrative at once of his devout piety and his archaeological perseverance and of its scientific value for modern scholars:

For Shamash, the judge of heaven and earth, E-bab-bara, his temple which is in Sippar, which Nebuchadrezzar, a former king, had rebuilt, after searching for its platform-foundation without finding it — that house he rebuilt, but in forty-five years its walls had fallen in. I became anxious and humble; I was alarmed and much troubled. When I had brought out Shamash from within it and made him take residence in another house, I pulled that house down and made search for its old platform-foundation; and I dug to a depth of eighteen cubits, and Shamash, the great lord of E-babbara, the temple, the dwelling well pleasing to him, permitted me to behold the platform-foundation of Naram Sin, the son of Sargon, which during a

### A HISTORY OF THE BABYLONIANS AND ASSYRIANS

period of thirty-two hundred years no king among my predecessors had seen. In the month Tishrit, in a favorable month, on an auspicious day, revealed to me by Shamash and Adad in a vision, with silver, gold, costly and precious stones, products of the forest, sweet-smelling cedars, amid joy and rejoicing, I raised its brick-work — not an inch inward or outward — upon the platform-foundation of Naram Sin, the son of Sargon. I laid in rows five thousand large cedars for its roof; I set up in its doorways high doors of cedar...

I took the hands of Shamash, my lord, and with joy and rejoicing I made him take up a residence therein well pleasing to him. I found the inscription written in the name of Naram Sin, the son of Sargon, and I did not alter

it. I anointed it with oil, offered sacrifices, placed it with my inscription, and restored it to its place (Nab. Cyl. II. 47 ff.).

He claims thus to have reconstructed, besides this temple of Shamash in Sippar, that of Anunit, also in Sippar, that of Sin in Haran, the temple E-ul-bar in Agade, the tower and other shrines in Ur and the Shamash temple at Larsam.

309. It was not to be expected that in a hot-bed of intrigue such as Babylon was at this time, the various activities of Nabuna'id were pursued with a successful harmonization of all factions. With Nebuchadrezzar as example, he sought to maintain the empire, while at the same time he honored the gods; but in both respects

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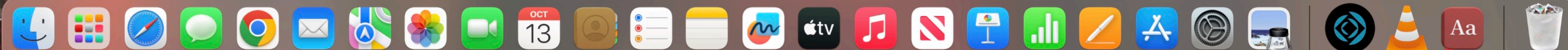
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## A HISTORY OF THE BABYLONIANS AND ASSYRIANS

he appears to have failed. He called himself "patron of Esagila and Ezida," temples of Marduk and Nabu in Babylon and Borsippa; he gave rich gifts to these deities; yet his rearing of temples to other gods, and especially the attention paid to Shamash, the sun-god, are thought to have arrayed against him the priests of Babylon, as though he were planning to put that deity in the place of pre-eminence given by Nebuchadrezzar to Marduk and Nabu. Nor may his hardly concealed satisfaction at the victory of Cyrus over Astyages have pleased those who remembered Nebuchadrezzar's alliance with Media. He certainly left the conqueror unmolested, if indeed, as some think, he did not give him aid in his rebellion, — a policy which, however shrewd, was not acceptable to

the Kaldeans. Thus difficulties were inevitable. A hint of the situation is given in the Annals, where, beginning with the seventh year of the king (549 B.C.), it is said that he "was in Tema; the son of the king, the nobles and his soldiers in Akkad. (The king for Nisan) did not come to Babylon. Nabu did not come to Babylon; Bel was not brought forth." In other words, the usual yearly ceremonial, by which a king renewed his royal authority in "taking the hands of Bel" in Babylon, did not take place. The same omission is chronicled in effect for the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh years (548-545 B.C.), and may have continued, though the breaking of the Annals at this point permits no positive statement. It is difficult to understand how he could have maintained













### A HISTORY OF THE BABYLONIANS AND ASSYRIANS

kissed his feet. He called himself by the old familiar titles — "Cyrus, king of the world, the great king, the powerful king, the king of Babylon, the king of Shumer and Akkad, the king of the four quarters of the world,... whose reign Bel and Nabu love, whose sovereignty they longed for in the desire of their hearts." But the words are empty echoes of a vanishing past. It was, in fact, a new master of the nations, who stood upon the ruins of the mighty Semitic communities that for millenniums had ruled the world. A man of another race, to whom the

valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates was no longer the centre of human power and human civilization, whose ideals of the divine and the human world were formed under other skies, and whose empire stretched far away beyond the boundaries of Assyria in its fairest splendor, was henceforth to direct the destinies of the peoples, whose leadership of human history has been followed from its dawn to its setting. A new force had come to its own, and another chapter of human progress began.