

## CONTRACT-TABLETS RELATING TO BELSHAZZAR

TRANSLATED BY THE EDITOR

THE three contracts which follow are among the numerous cuneiform documents of the same class the publication of which we owe to the indefatigable labours of Dr Strassmaier. They are published in his *Babylonische Texte: Inschriften von Nabonidus*, i., iii., Nos. 184, 581, and 688, and are interesting on account of their references to Belshazzar, the eldest son of Nabonidos, whose name is written in Babylonian Bilu-sarra-utsur, "O Bel, defend the king." It is especially curious to learn from one of them that the heir-apparent to the throne had to conform to the same legal obligations as the meanest of his subjects. Security was exacted by him for the payment of a debt, a portion of the security being a house inhabited by a Persian. As Persian slaves are mentioned in other deeds of the period it is possible that the Persian in question was a slave. At all events the notice of him proves that there were Persians living in Babylon before the conquest of the country by Cyrus. The third document, it will be observed, is dated six years before the overthrow of Nabonidos and the entrance of Cyrus into Babylon.

## CONTRACT-TABLETS RELATING TO BELSHAZZAR

### No. I

A HOUSE belonging to Nebo-akhi-iddin, the son of Sulâ, the son of Egibi, which adjoins the house of Bel-nadin, the son of Rimut, the son of the *soldier* (?)<sup>1</sup> has been handed over (by Nebo-akhi-iddin) for 3 years to Nebo-yukin-akhi the secretary<sup>2</sup> of Belshazzar, the son of the king, for 1½ manehs of silver, sub-letting of the house being forbidden, as well as interest on the money. (Nebo-yukin-akhi) undertakes to plant trees and repair the house.<sup>3</sup> At the expiration of the 3 years Nebo-akhi-iddin shall repay the money, namely 1½ manehs, to Nebo-yukin-akhi, and Nebo-yukin-akhi shall quit the house in the presence of Nebo-akhi-iddin. The witnesses (are) Kabtiya, the son of Tabnêa, the son of Egibi; Tabik-zira, the son of Nergal-yusallim, the son of Sin-karabi-isime; Nebo-zira-ibni, the son of Ardia; and the priest Bel-akhi-basa, the son of Nebo-baladhsu-iqbi. (Dated) Babylon, the 21st day of Nisan, the 5th year of Nabonidos king of Babylon.<sup>4</sup>

### No. II

The sum of 20 manehs of silver for wool, the property of Belshazzar, the son of the king, which has been handed

<sup>1</sup> *Kiki*; in the account of the Deluge (l. 169) Bel is called *gurad kiki*, "the warrior of the *kiki*."

<sup>2</sup> *Amel'sipiri*. In the reign of Darius we hear of a certain Ablâ, who was "royal prince and secretary to the princes of the new palace."

<sup>3</sup> That is to say, to keep the garden and house in order.

<sup>4</sup> B. C. 551.

over to Iddin-Merodach, the son of Basâ, the son of Nur-Sin, through the agency of Nebo-tsabit the steward of the house<sup>1</sup> of Belshazzar, the son of the king, and the secretaries of the son of the king. In the month Adar, of the 11th year (of Nabonidos), he gives the money, namely 20 manehs. The house of . . . the Persian<sup>2</sup> and all his property in town and country shall be the security of Belshazzar, the son of the king, until he shall pay in full the money aforesaid. The money which he shall (meanwhile) make upon [the property] (?),<sup>3</sup> he shall pay as interest. Witnessed by Bel-iddin, the son of Rimut, the son of the *soldier* (?); Etilpi, the son of . . . the son of the father of the house; Nadin, the son of Merodach-[sum-utsur], the son of the superintendent of the works; Nergal-yusallim, the son of Merodach-[edir], the son of Gasura; Merodach-natsir, the son of Samas- . . . , the son of Dabibi; and the priest Bel-akhi-iddin, the son of Nebo-baladhsu-iqbi. (Dated) BABYLON, the 20th day of the month . . . , the 11th year of Nabonidos king [of BABYLON].<sup>4</sup>

## No. III

One maneh 16 shekels of silver capital and interest, the property<sup>5</sup> of Nebo-tsabit-idâ, the steward of the house of Belshazzar, the son of the king, which (he owes) to Bel-iddina, the son of Bel-sum-iskun, the son of Sin-tabni, and the seed grown in sight of the chief gates (of BABYLON) which has been taken as security (for it). The money, namely 1 maneh 16 shekels, Nebo-tsabit-idâ, by the agency of Itti-Merodach-baladhu, the son of Nebo-akhi-iddin, the son of Egibi, has presented to Bel-iddina. The witnesses (are) Nebo-iddina, the son of Rimutu, the son of Kikî;<sup>6</sup> Bel-iddina, the son of Bel-sum-iskun, the son of Sin-tabni; Nebo-zira-esir, the son of Ina-essu-edir, the son of the

<sup>1</sup> *Rab-bitî.*<sup>2</sup> *Par'su.*<sup>3</sup> Literally "the money as much as upon [the property] he shall *fill up* (?)." Perhaps we should read *isabsû*, "he shall acquire," instead of *imir-sû*.<sup>4</sup> B.C. 545.<sup>5</sup> Read *rasutu*.<sup>6</sup> Written here as a proper name.

*Umuk*; <sup>1</sup> Nadinu, the son of Merodach-iddin-akhi; Nergal-yusallim, the priest, the son of Merodach-edir, the son of Gasura. (Dated) at BABYLON, the 27th day of the second Adar, <sup>2</sup> the 12th year of Nabonidos king of BABYLON. <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An officer who seems to have had something to do with the beginning of the year.

<sup>2</sup> The intercalary month Ve-Adar.

<sup>3</sup> B.C. 544.



THE KINGS OF ARARAT (BIAINAS OR VAN):—

	B.C.
The earlier dynasty ends with Arame.	. cir. 857-840
1. Sarduris I, the son of Lutipris, founds the city of Dhuspas (Van) and the later dynasty . . . . .	840
2. Ispuinis, "the settler," his son . . . . .	?
Ispuinis and his son Menuas together . . . . .	?
3. Menuas alone . . . . .	?
4. Argistis I, his son . . . . .	780
5. Sarduris II, his son . . . . .	?
6. Ru'sas I, called Ur'sa by the Assyrians . . . . .	730
7. Argistis II . . . . .	715
8. Erimenas, his son . . . . .	?
9. Ru'sas II, his son . . . . .	660
10. Sarduris III . . . . .	645
Ararat conquered by Media . . . . .	610 (?)

## THE KINGS OF PERSIA :—

	B.C.	
1. Akhæmenês (Hakhâmanish) . . . . .	—	
2. Teispes (Chaispaish), his son. He conquers Susiania and rules in Anzan . . . . .	cir. 600	
{	3. Ariaramnês (Ariyârâmna), son of Teispes, in Persia . . . . .	—
	3. Kyros I (Kuras), son of Teispes, in Anzan . . . . .	—
{	4. Arsamês (Arshâma), son of Ariaramnês, in Persia . . . . .	—
	4. Kambysês I (Kamujiya), son of Kyros, in Anzan . . . . .	—
5. Kyros II, or Agradatês, son of Kambysês, in Anzan. He conquers Media, and founds the Persian empire . . . . .	550	
6. Kambysês II, his son . . . . .	529	
7. Gomatês (Gaumata) the Magian, the pseudo-Bardes or Smerdis, usurps the throne for seven months . . . . .	521	
8. Dareios (Dârayavaush), son of Hystaspês (Vishtâspa) and grandson of Arsamês . . . . .	521	
9. Xerxes I (Khshayârshâ), his son . . . . .	485	
10. Artaxerxês I (Artakshatra) Longimanus, his son . . . . .	465	
11. Xerxes II, his son, for 2 months . . . . .	425	

	B.C.
12. Sogdianos, his half-brother, for 7 months . . .	425
13. Dareios II Nothos (Okhos), his brother <sup>1</sup> . . .	424
14. Artaxerxes II Mnêmôn, his son <sup>1</sup> . . .	405
Revolt of Kyros the younger . . . . .	401
15. Okhos (Uvasu), son of Artaxerxes . . . . .	362
16. Arsês his son . . . . .	339
17. Dareios III Kodomannos . . . . .	336
Conquered by Alexander . . . . .	330

<sup>1</sup> A cuneiform tablet, however, gives the length of the reigns of Dareios II, and Artaxerxes II, as respectively 29 and 36 years.

END OF VOL. III





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