

The Fall of Babylon

Daniel 5

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are needed to see this picture.

In October 539 B.C. Cyrus the Great of Persia conquered Babylon. The Bible records in the Book of Daniel the fifth chapter about the “**Handwriting on the Wall**” where Belshazzar who had been ruling in Babylon on behalf of his father Nabonidus, saw handwriting on his palace wall during a feast, which **Daniel** the Hebrew interpreted as the **end of the Babylonian Empire. Belshazzar was defeated by Cyrus that very night.**

Herodotus, *Histories* 1.189-191

The [Histories](#) by the Greek researcher [Herodotus](#) of Halicarnassus (fifth century BC) are the world's first historical study. The account of the Fall of [Babylon](#) - which is here presented in the translation by George Rawlinson- proves beyond all reasonable doubt that Cyrus entered [Babylonia](#) by diverting the Euphrates River and took the ancient city with little resistance.

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(1.189—1.191) Cyrus was now reduced to great perplexity, as time went on and he made no progress against the place. In this distress either some one made the suggestion to him, or he bethought himself of a plan, which he proceeded to put in execution. He placed a portion of his army at the point where the river enters the city, and another body at the back of the place where it issues forth, with orders to march into the town by the bed of the stream, as soon as the water became shallow enough: he then himself drew off with the unwarlike portion of his host, and made for the place where [*legendary former queen*] Nitocris dug the basin for the river, where he did exactly what she had done formerly: he turned the [Euphrates](#) by a canal into the basin, which was then a marsh, on which the river sank to such an extent that the natural bed of the stream became fordable.

Hereupon the Persians who had been left for the purpose at Babylon by the, river-side, entered the stream, which had now sunk so as to reach about midway up a man's thigh, and thus got into the town. Had the Babylonians been apprised of what Cyrus was about, or had they noticed their danger, they would never have allowed the Persians to enter the city, but would have destroyed them utterly; for they would have made fast all the street gates which gave upon the river, and mounting upon the walls along both sides of the stream, would so have caught the enemy, as it were, in a trap. But, as it was, the Persians came upon them by surprise and so took the city. Owing to the vast size of the place, the inhabitants of the central parts (as the residents at Babylon declare) long after the outer portions of the town were taken, knew nothing of what had chanced, but as they were engaged in a festival, continued dancing and reveling until they learnt the capture but too certainly. Such, then, were the circumstances of the first taking of Babylon.

http://www.livius.org/ct-cz/cyrus_I/babylon07.html