

The Chronology of King Cyrus's Life and
The Proof His Uncle Cyaxares II Really Existed

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INTRODUCTION:

In the 2nd century AD, the three most recognized “true historians” were “Thucydides, Herodotus, and Xenophon” (Lucian. *Hist. Conscr.* 2). Never has there existed a time in known history when either Herodotus or Xenophon's books were not received as true history, any more than Thucydides. Whether it required the constant employment of official Greek or Roman scribes to copy these gigantic books by hand, or whether after the fall of the western Roman Empire in AD 476 pious monks, as first instructed by Cassiodorus, were employed to copy these texts in monasteries for the next thousand years, or whether 16th century Protestant Reformers were gathering the manuscripts together to be printed printing presses in centers, such as Paris or Geneva, both Herodotus and Xenophon never have ceased to be recognized by subsequent historians as true historical records until the most recent of years, when the course of historical interpretation drastically changed. My goal in the following pages is to prove that both Herodotus and Xenophon are as trustworthy as their fame has made them out to be concerning their separate biographic narrations of King Cyrus the Great and the latter's biographic narration of his maternal uncle Cyaxares II, who is mentioned in the book of Daniel as Darius the Mede.

The traditional story of how Herodotus became famous was passed down to us by Lucian. In such tradition, Herodotus allegedly read his histories in the temple hall during the Olympic Games and became more famous than the winning athletes (Lucian. *Her. I*). According to the 6th century historian Marcellinus, Thucydides was a child present in the crowd and became emotional at the reading of *The Persian Wars*. Herodotus saw Thucydides weeping and declared

to his father, “Your son’s nature has a real sentiment for learning,” (Marcell. *Bio. Thuc.* 54 & Freese, 1920, p. 60). Having heard how well Herodotus described the true virtues and vices of the past, Thucydides was inspired to write his own history of true events (Lucian *Hist. Conscr.* 42). Xenophon was subsequently inspired by both Herodotus and Thucydides. After the death of Thucydides, his daughter gave the unfinished work to Xenophon to edit and finish (Plut. *Cim.* 4 & Xen. *Hell.* 1.1). The tradition is that Xenophon published Thucydides’ works, without which, his fame never would have reached the same potential (Dio. Laert. *Xen.* 1.54). Altogether, Herodotus was immediately followed by Thucydides, and Thucydides was immediately followed by Xenophon. The three true historians all knew of each other, and the latter finished the formers’ works. For over 2,000 years, it used to be universally accepted that Xenophon wrote a trustworthy biography of King Cyrus, which provided true details that had been lacking in Herodotus’ book I, just as Xenophon provided extensions of Plato’s *Apology* and Thucydides’ eight books of history. In the days of the Roman Empire, Xenophon used to be viewed as a “just historian” who wrote accurate information of historical events (Lucian *Hist. Conscr.* 39). The abovementioned triad of “Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon” were then universally accepted as “the best historians” ever to have composed books (Lucian *Hist. Conscr.* 54).

In the past century, a debate has risen among scholars as to which author most accurately told the biography of King Cyrus: Herodotus or Xenophon. Instead of finding harmony between the two, scholars were seemingly required to pick sides. To accept them both as completely compatible historical accounts was not thought possible anymore. To find harmony among supposed contradictions was not even attempted. Now the majority of modern classicists side with Herodotus for a small section, which is backed up by cuneiform inscriptions, which date to the 6th century BC, throwing out the childhood story and most of the rest of the biography of

King Cyrus as apparent fiction (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305). Due to the figure of Cyaxares II, who is now interpreted by scholars as a fictional character, Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* is almost entirely viewed as historic fictional (if we even are allowed to use the term *historic fictional* anachronistically). Traditionally, Jews and Christians had recognized Cyaxares II as the Biblical Darius the Mede (Yoma 10a:10, Joseph. *AJ.* 10.246), who is said to have thrown Daniel in the lion's den for praying three times a day to the Biblical monotheistic God (Daniel 6). Cyaxares II is now viewed as an entirely fictional character, whom Xenophon merely pulled out of his own hat, along with Darius the Mede, since until 1956, scholars could not find any cuneiform backing whatsoever to validate the king of Media (Hirsch, 1985, p. 62). Even after 1956, Hirsch, who was the most sympathetic recent scholar to Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, neglected to include the Harran Stele as evidence for a historic king of Media after 550 BC. In his bibliography at the end of *The Friendship of the Barbarians* Hirsch referenced only the earlier 2nd edition of Pritchard's *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (abbreviated *AENET*), published in 1955 (Hirsch, 1985, p. 204). In the 3rd edition of *ANET*, Pritchard referenced Gadd, Röllig, or Tadmor who had published translations of the Harran Stele in English and German subsequent to his last edition (Pritchard, 1969, p. 562). Hirsch could have known about the Harran Stele by these other three authors or from Pritchard's 3rd edition, but unfortunately his information was limited enough to exclude all four of these available sources. If only Hirsch would have had a copy of the 3rd edition of Pritchard's *AENET*, published in 1969, he could have found the newly added inclusion of the Harran Stele, which supports a historic king of Media during the time when Darius the Mede is said to have reigned alongside Cyrus (Pritchard, 1969, p. 562). But neither Hirsch nor any other modern scholar (so far as I could tell) has used the Harran Stele as evidence to support a historic Cyaxares II until Anderson published his dissertation. In

2014, Anderson argued that the king of Media mentioned in the Harran Stele was in fact Darius the Mede, aka Cyaxares II. If Anderson's argument holds, the Harran Stele, dated to 542-540 BC, is the oldest mention in cuneiform of Cyaxares II, the King of Media, also called Darius, who reigned alongside Cyrus (Anderson, 2014, pp. 94-95).

Without the cuneiform backing, modern Bible scholars had chosen to claim that the Biblical Darius the Mede never existed (Sparks, 1946, p. 46), which idea I intend to prove stems from the 12th book in a 15-volume series called *Adversus Christianos* ("Against the Christians") which was written by Porphyry, a famous 3rd century Neoplatonic philosopher. Nearly a century ago, Rowley, one of the leading scholars of the Old Testament, boasted, "Every 'critic' is not a Porphyry" when claiming his superior knowledge, which he classified as "critical orthodoxy" opposed to "anti-critical orthodoxy" which had proceeded him (Rowley, 1934, preface & p.1). Ironically, even though he did not want to idolize a heretic as the basis of support, Rowley plainly stated elsewhere, "The oldest advocate of this view of whom we have any knowledge is Porphyry" (Rowley 1934, p. 139). Whether Rowley liked it or not, Porphyry's heretical idea truly was the basis for the modern rejection of Daniel's historicity along with the historicity of Darius the Mede. Porphyry's entire series of 15 volumes was first banned by Emperor Constantine prior to the Arian Controversy and eventually obliterated from the Roman Empire under Theodosius II in AD 435 under the punishment of death to anyone who refused to burn the erroneous books (Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 1.9.). From what we know about the "Porphyrian heresies," the books did not include any detailed denial of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* as being historical. Nevertheless, I do believe that Porphyry is the root of modern scholarship's denial of Cyaxares II's historicity, since Daniel's Darius the Mede is also viewed as mythical at the present. In *Adversus Christianos* Porphyry only rejected Daniel's 6th century date of

composition, resetting the composition to the mid-2nd century BC. Porphyry claimed that Daniel was originally composed in Greek. The idea of Daniel being composed after the Maccabean Era was wiped clean from the Roman Empire under Theodosius II, but in the most recent years has returned only slightly bearing a new form. First came the rejection of Daniel's 6th century BC composition (Rowley, 1934, pp. 1-5). From there, with Daniel's account not viewed as trustworthy, the eventual modern scholarly rejection of a historical Cyaxares II was the inevitable result (Rowley, 1934, p. 41). If Daniel's book is historical, Xenophon also is historical. If one is knocked down, the other one falls over easily. Without Daniel's book being viewed as historical, a modern consensus has developed for both Xenophon's Cyaxares II and Daniel's Darius the Mede to be viewed as equally fictitious characters, not even based on a historical figure but entirely imaginative in the eyes of modern scholarship. On the contrary, if scholars would merely date Daniel to the 6th century BC, as I will give reasons enough to allow, and accept the Biblical documentation as historical, the account of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* would easily be able to be accepted as historical as well, since they both agree about the duality of Darius/Cyaxares II the Mede and Cyrus the Persian co-reigning for a period of several years. From these two witnesses, the truth of the historical past then could be rediscovered as it used to be viewed once upon a time until most recently.

The Biblical account of Daniel and Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* have only one cuneiform inscription, the Harran Stele, to support the historicity of Darius the Mede, i.e., Cyaxares II, as formerly mentioned. The name of the king is not explicitly mentioned. The Harran Stele merely speaks of an unnamed king of the Medes (Sumerian: *lugal ma-da-a-a*), who was an enemy of Nabonidus (Shaudig, 2001, p. 490). Since the name is not given, a scholarly guess is required to figure out which king was mentioned on the stele. We can at least conclude from this one

inscription that there was a historical king of Media when the inscription was written between the 13th and 15th year of Nabonidus, approximately 542-540 BC (Beaulieu, 1989, p. 32). By this time, King Cyrus had already conquered his grandfather Astyages's throne about a decade ago. The king of Media here could not have been Astyages since it is too late by roughly 8 to 10 years. The king also could not have been Cyrus since, in the Babylonian chronicles, he is regularly called "King of Anshan", never "King of Media" (Pritchard, 1989, p. 305). According to Anderson and myself, Cyaxares II, aka Darius the Mede, is the only historical figure who matches the description perfectly for being the precise king of Media mentioned in the Harran Stele as *lugal ma-da-a-a* in Sumerian (Anderson, 2014, pp. 94-95).

Herein will the synthesis be shown between Xenophon, Herodotus, the Harran Stele, the Nabonidus Chronicles, the Cyrus Cylinder, and Daniel, how they could all be true, historical narratives with the only necessity being the acceptance of my theory that Darius the Mede was a bastard child. Even though King Cyrus and Darius had a co-reigning of sorts, King Cyrus is the only one of these two kings ever called by the term "legitimate king" on a barrel, which dates to the 6th century BC (Pritchard, 1969, p. 316). Many other kings of Babylon and Assyria besides Cyrus the Great carried the title of "legitimate king", including Tiglath-Pileser I, Shalmaneser, Adad-Nirari, Esarhaddon, Ashurbanipal, and Antiochus the Great (Pritchard, 1969, pp. 274, 276, 281, 289, 297, 316, 317). The fact that the name of Cyaxares II, aka Darius the Mede, is both missing from the inscriptions as well as being placed before the phrase "legitimate king" (as was customary) leads me to question *only* his legitimacy, not his entire existence. According to Strabo, Median kings were required to have at least 5 wives and usually had many more women as concubines in their harem (Strab. 13.11.11). According to *The Encyclopædia Iranica*, the Median children born by royal concubines were classified as "*nothoi*," i.e., "bastards" in

Greek terminology (Yarshater, 2012). The later Persian king Artaxerxes II is known to have begotten 115 illegitimate sons through concubines and only 3 sons via legal wives (Justin. *Epit.* 10.1). My theory is that Cyaxares II, aka Darius the Mede, was a bastard from one of Astyages' concubines, opposed to a legitimate son born of one of his 5 wives (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2). No other textual evidence exists for Cyaxares II's alleged illegitimacy besides the lack of a given mother provided by Xenophon and his name lacking from both Herodotus and preserved Akkadian and Sumerian tablets. I do not pretend to have a historian or Church Father who ever made such a claim. If they did, I have not found any quotes or references which specifically declare, "Cyaxares was a bastard," but they never claim a mother figure either. *The Bastard Child Theory* will be presented in order to give scholars the possibility of accepting both the Biblical account of Daniel and Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* as true history as the Early Church had done (Hieron. *Com. Dan.* 5:1), rather than tossing out the majority of these major works purely as fiction, as is commonly practiced even in the most elite seminaries thanks to the backing of scholars in the past century (Rowley, 1934, pp. 37-43).

INFORMATION TODAY VS. BACK THEN:

On February 19, 1789, Sir William Jones delivered his 6th discourse, titled *On the Persians*, to the Asiatic Society. The first main issue, which was clear to Jones and necessary to bring to the table, is the quantity of preserved documentation today compared to what was readily available in the bygone eras. Besides what we know from Herodotus and Xenophon, we then had no other preserved historical documents from the Persian Empire of the 6th century BC. The reason for this, as Sir William Jones honestly recognized, was not the lack of contemporary Persian historians but merely the lack of continual preservation of such manuscripts as did once

exist (Jones, 1807, wks. vo. 1, p. 105). We have since discovered a few small inscriptions in cuneiform which date to the period of King Cyrus, including the Babylonian Chronicles on 45 fragmented slates (Pritchard, 1987, pp. 308-327) and the famous Cyrus Cylinder (Matthews, 2016, pp. 221-223). Besides these small inscriptions on clay, the overwhelming majority of what has been passed down to us stems from Greek and Roman historians at much later dates. The Greek authors, who we will examine, who lived the closest to the contemporary time period were Aeschylus, who lived from approximately 525 to 455 BC, Herodotus, who lived from approximately 484 to 425 BC, and Xenophon, who lived from approximately 431 to 355 B.C. Aeschylus was a playwright and performed his drama in Athens in 476 BC immediately after the Battle of Salamis. Both Herodotus and Xenophon were well informed historians. According to Jones, Xenophon undoubtedly would have spoken the Persian language fluently, like Themistocles whose skills reached native levels, in order to have been so close friends with Cyrus the Younger (Jones, 1807, wks. III, p. 412). We can say the same probability exists for Herodotus, who wrote about the Persian War and had been required to research into Persian history and politics. Herodotus and Xenophon both could have spoken the Persian language fluently. We have no reason to assume they only spoke Greek. We know that Xenophon went to Persia with Cyrus the Younger and mentioned the usage of interpreters for the Persian language (Xen. *An.* 1.8.1, 4.5.10, 4.5.34). We do not know to what extent Xenophon himself could speak or understand Persian. On the one hand, Xenophon could have been only semi-fluent and still needed help understanding difficult phrases, or on the other hand, he could have had very little understanding of Persian. What is definite is that Xenophon carried no handicap which could not have been overcome by his questioning natives for specification on anything which he was uncertain about and his ability to have direct translations into Greek for anything he should like

to know. In this way, whether or not Xenophon truly spoke or read Persian is irrelevant, because we at least know he had full access to good translators (Xen. *An.* 1.2.17, 1.8.12, 2.3.17, 4.2.18, 4.5.10, 4.5.34).

Cyrus the Younger was directly related to Cyrus the Great. It should be remembered that King Cyrus the Great was a 3rd cousin once removed to Darius the Great, who was Cyrus the Younger's great-great-grandfather. The family ties should not be neglected in composing an argument. Verbal tradition could have passed down stories by memory, father to son, for several generations. Also, we must not forget that they could write on multiple media, such as papyri, leather, wax, clay, and wood. Even though we do not possess the journals or official palace documents from the original era, the chance that Xenophon could have gained firsthand knowledge of King Cyrus the Great from Cyrus the Younger is more than only a small possibility, seeing he could have gained knowledge from verbal tradition or written documentation of various types, all of which are long gone. Xenophon most likely had access to some type of original documentation, such as journals, notes, palace records, etc., which helped him compose his magnum opus *Cyropaedia*, with or without the need of a private translator. To claim that Xenophon merely made up his magnum opus based on wild imagination does not only make one of our favorite students of Socrates into a liar, but this claim would also imply that the entire Greek and Roman population, and later Christian monks, were utterly incapable of differentiating between fact and fiction for blindly accepting this as legitimate history for several millennia. It also would make the Persians, now called Iranians, out to have been fools by never catching this historical error themselves in any surviving documentation between Alexander the Great and the present day and finally needing modern scholars from the west to correct their age-old traditional understanding of Persian history (Hirsch, 1985, p. 5).

When Alexander the Great defeated Darius III at the Battle of Gaugamela in 331 BC, the continued possibility of Persians and Greeks intermixing was strengthened. For the next few hundred years, the Persians would have been able to read and access Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* in the original Greek and critique his work if necessary. If they could have proven Xenophon out to have been a liar or a fool, no doubt some Persian somewhere at some time would have composed a book or poem or song to poke fun at his erroneous history. On the contrary, we do not find major questioning of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* for another 2,000+ years. According to Sir William Jones, the Persian records available in the 18th century, which he had access to, matched Herodotus and Xenophon's descriptions of King Cyrus precisely. "It is utterly incredible, that two different princes of Persia," writes Jones, "should each have been born in a foreign and hostile territory; should each have been doomed to death in his infancy by his maternal grandfather in consequence of portentous dreams, real or invented; should have been saved by the remorse of his destined murderer, and should each, after a similar education among herdsmen, as the son of a herdsmen, have found means to revisit his paternal kingdom, and having delivered it, after a long and triumphant war, from the tyrant, who had invaded it, should have restored it to the summit of power and magnificence" (Jones, 1807, wrk. vo. I, p. 106). Jones was under no impression that Herodotus was writing fantasy, even though he does that the story is so extraordinary that it can seem hard for a person to consider legitimate history. To such a doubter, Jones gives an alternative position. Even if the childhood account of Cyrus never happened, it should be agreed upon unanimously that there was a single hero named Cyrus among the Greeks, whose description of historical events matches precisely with the Persian's own record of a past king named *Caikhosrau* (Jones, 1807, wrk. vo. I, p. 107). In more recent years, Hirsch noted that as recently as the late 20th century Iranologists "have [still] long treated

the *Cyropaedia* and Xenophon's other works as historical," even though Hirsch himself believed that the Iranians had been erroneous for holding such a viewpoint which goes against present European scholarship (Hirsch, 1985, p. 5). These two drastically opposed views exist. Either the accounts of Herodotus and Xenophon are true, as the Persians themselves have continuously believed along with the Greek and Romans throughout the ages, or the childhood account of Herodotus is utterly false (Avery, 1972, pp. 529-546) along with much, if not all, of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* as current European and western scholarship has determined (Stadter, 1991, pp. 461-471).

CYRUS AS A BABY THROUGH 10 YRS. OLD | 600 to 590 B.C.

In order to provide a chronological synthesis, I advocate for starting with the historicity of Herodotus's account of Cyrus's birth up to 10 years old (Hdt. 1.108.1-1.122.3). Modern western scholars have deemed Herodotus's account fake by using his own words to say that there were three other accounts which were spoken of, one of which was probably true instead of the one Herodotus narrated (Avery, 1972, p. 530). In these scholars' eyes there never was a Harpagus who ate the flesh of his own son, but rather these stories were related by Herodotus in order to tell a *relative truth*, namely, that Cyrus gave freedom to the Persians (p. 531). In the Roman Empire, Sallust admitted that humans tend to disbelieve anything too extraordinary beyond their own idea of reality (Sall. *Cat.* 3.2). Nevertheless, even Sallust himself referred back to the good old days in the Persian Empire as true history and expected his audience's familiarity with Herodotus and Xenophon (Sall. *Cat.* 2.1-2.6). In order to counter Avery's argument of some "relatively" true history (if truth is capable of relativism), we must remember that Herodotus claimed that the Persians themselves validated the story which Herodotus tells to be simply *true*,

not *relatively true*. Herodotus wrote, “I mean then to be guided in what I write by some of the Persians who desire not to make a fine tale of the story of Cyrus but to tell the truth, though there are no less than threefold other accounts of Cyrus which I could give” (Hdt. 1.95b). According to Abbot, the three separate accounts need not to be guessed since they have been severally preserved by Herodotus as first, Nicolaus who represents Ctesias as second, and Deinon alongside Trogus as the third (Abbot, 1881, pp. 363-364). Herodotus claimed that Astyages had a dream, wherein his daughter urinated so much that it flooded all of Asia (Hdt. 1.107). In Nicolaus’s fragment 65, Argosten the mother of Cyrus went into the Temple and dreamed herself that she urinated so much that the flood filled all of Asia (Abbot, 1881, p. 344 & Dindorfius, 1870, p. 51). According to Trogus and Justin, on top of Astyages having a dream, Cyrus too has a dream of significance unmentioned elsewhere (Justin. *Epit.* 1.6.1). From such comparison, we find dreams in all three of the separate accounts. Even though there are different narrations, some varying so much, we do not find any narration without the supernatural dreams in the beginning, besides Xenophon who starts his narration of Cyrus already at age 12. For a modern scholar to use Herodotus’s words of there having been three different storylines of Cyrus’s birth and from there to assume that one of those storylines had no supernatural events is merely presumption. As already mentioned, the Persians, and modern Iranians have a similar narration as Herodotus in their own archives, which speaks of a portentous dream, validating Herodotus as a true historian (Jones, 1807, wrk. vo. I, p. 106). Jones had examined the Persian records in the 18th century and Hirsch later noted that the 20th century Iranologists remained unchanged in their traditional understanding of the historical past (Hirsch, 1985, p. 5). We will hold to the traditional narrative in my hypothetical chronology. It could be said that Herodotus did not know the difference between his own butt hole and a hole in the ground (pardon my French!), like these modern

western scholars seem to claim. But with closer examination we can find proof of Herodotus's truthfulness. Certainly, Herodotus stated that the Persians themselves gave him that narrative (Hdt. 1.95b) and we have already mentioned how similar the Persians archives are to Herodotus, showing Herodotus to have been honest and in no way deceptive.

We may play the devil's advocate and conclude that it was certainly possible for Herodotus to have swapped fiction for truth. According to St. Photius the Great, Ctesias of Cnidus, the 4th century Persian physician, had called Herodotus a liar and "inventor of fables" (Freese, 1920, p. 92). We can go down the pathway of Ctesias and echo his claim that Herodotus was a liar, but that path leads to very rocky ground because Ctesias was recognized throughout history as a fraud himself. In the 2nd century AD, Lucian thought of no better historian other than Ctesias of Cnidus to laugh at, when depicting a fraudulent historian in the genuine guise of truth, who was over the top in methods of deception (Lucian. *Hist. Conscr.* 1). Barker recently remarked in regard to Ctesias, "His unreliability makes Herodotus seem a model of accuracy" (Barker, 2005, p. 9). If we believe that *the Father of History* actually had his head on straight and at least tried to use common sense to pick the truth over the fiction, then we must ascribe validity to Herodotus's entire childhood story of Cyrus. For a modern scholar to pick only the blank storyline from Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* and then throw out the entire narration of Herodotus is more on the line of cherry picking than logical analysis. Only by establishing the validity of the childhood story with Harpagus being forced to eat the flesh of his own son (Hdt. 1.119) does the following Battle of 550 BC even make sense that Harpagus would cut open a hare and send a message to Cyrus for him to revolt against the Medes and establish a Persian superiority (Hdt. 1.123, 1.80).

Xenophon never claims that Herodotus wrote anything falsely. Perhaps Xenophon never mentioned Herodotus by name either, but neither did he mention Thucydides. Xenophon continued authors of importance with extra historical narrative. From my analysis, I believe that Xenophon wrote most of his tomes as sequels to other authors' works. In the introduction to *Hellenica*, Xenophon never mentioned Thucydides by name, yet all scholars believe that his intention was to continue Thucydides' last book (Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.1). From his own works, we find narration by Xenophon, describing how he is adding extra information upon other narratives of the same topic (Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.1-10). Xenophon added the parts of Socrates' *Apologia*, which Plato forgot to mention (Xen. *Ap.* 1.1). Xenophon and Plato's accounts are capable of synthesis as I will elaborate later on.

In my proposed chronology, we will accept the narrative of Cyrus's first ten years from Herodotus as historical and move on to Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* to check whether that too can also be viewed as historical at the same time. Similarities between different stories need to be carefully analyzed without jumping to irrational conclusions. The comparison could be made to the story of Romulus and Remus and how Cyrus's rediscovering his identity as the long-lost prince closely parallels to Herodotus (Livy 1.4.1-1.5.7). Many scholars would doubt that either of these stories are true merely because of the similarities between the two narratives. But let us logically analyze the situation. Just because $x + y = 7$ does not mean that $a + b$ cannot also equate 7 as well. Rene Descartes might roll over in his grave if he were told that the majority of modern scholars had forgotten basic Algebra, let alone basic logic (Descartes, 1637, pp. 107-142). "Logic!" wrote C.S. Lewis, "Why don't they teach logic at these schools?" (Lewis, 1950, p. 48). If Bob works at McDonalds, that does not refute the fact that Jim also works at McDonalds. Both Bob and Jim can work at the same or different McDonalds. Better yet, if Bob gets fired from said

McDonalds because he was late for work, Jim could get fired for the same reason without the need to conclude that Bob and Jim never worked at McDonalds and possibly did not even exist. Such statements would be illogical and completely ridiculous.

Let us examine two other similar stories found in Exodus and Livy where we find Moses floating in a basket similarly to Romulus and Remus floating in a basket (Exodus 2:1-6, Livy 1.4.1-7). Moses lived approximately 700+ years prior to the founding of Rome. We cannot say that Amulius's servant had no possibility of ever hearing the story of Moses when the servant thought up the idea of floating her twins in a basket in the Tiber (Livy 1.4.1, Plut. *Rom.* 3.4). According to Clement of Alexandria, the stories of the Exodus had spread throughout the surrounding regions through prior translations than the Greek Septuagint (Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 1.22). The fact that the lady who raised the twin boys was nicknamed *Lupa* ["*bitch*" / "*she-wolf*"] also does not mean that there is no historical background of Cyrus's caretaker, called *Cyno* in Greek, *Spako* in Median, merely because she also was called by a similar name for a *she-wolf* (Livy 1.4.7, Hdt. 1.110 & 1.122). Livy declared that the reason for her nickname *Lupa* ["*bitch*" / "*she-wolf*"] arose because she was a promiscuous lady (Livy 1.4.7). Plutarch agreed with Livy and elaborated that the Latins called all such promiscuous women by *lupa* (Plut. *Vit. Rom.* 4.3). With this type of comparison, we could just as logically conclude that every single promiscuous lady who gets nicknamed *bitch* in English should be thought of as imaginary, legendary, or mythical on account of the similarity between our English word *bitch* and Livy's Latin nickname *Lupa* for Laurentia and Herodotus's nickname *Spako*. Are all *bitches* legendary? Or can we have multiple ladies with the same vulgar nickname? Or is only one baby allowed to be floated down a river? Why was Moses not in a basket with his twin brother? Obviously, not all of the stories are similar but only share certain similarities. Also, it can be noted that Pharaoh's daughter is not

called a *bitch* in Exodus any more than Cyrus is said to have floated down any river in his baby basket (Exodus 2:5-6, Hdt. 1.113). Furthermore, in Justin's *Epitome*, another similar story is relayed how Habis too was suckled by a she-wolf after floating down a river in a vessel (Justin. *Epit.* 44.4.1-14). Here Justin looked at the similarity between the narrative of Habis and the stories of Romulus & Remus and King Cyrus the Great. Justin declared that such similarity proved that all three were historical truths and should be believed without any doubts (Justin. *Epit.* 44.4.12). Thus, Justin concluded the exact opposite of today's scholar taking the stories as fact over fiction and expected his audience to conclude the same as him without any questions asked. Justin believed all these stories were historical truths.

Let us examine yet two other similar stories found in Judges 21 and Livy 1.9-16. The Biblical narration speaks of the tribe of Benjamin in danger of extinction after a great slaughter among their tribe (Judges 21:6), after which, they celebrate a Feast of the Lord in Shiloh (Judges 21:19), and have the young men snatch the young virgins and make them become their wives (Judges 21:21). The Roman storyline has a similar plot. First there was a need for wives among Romulus's men (Livy 1.9.1), then there was a celebration to Neptune (Livy 1.9.6-7), and finally a snatching away of the Sabine virgins (Liv. 1.9.11). According to Clement of Alexandria, apart from the Exodus story, translations of the rest of Jewish history were conducted before the time of King Cyrus the Great and were readily available for neighboring realms to read and examine (Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 1.22). Although we do not have any preservation of these more ancient translations of the Hebrew Bible, we cannot deny based on the lack of evidence that they could not have been translated or could not have existed and Clement of Alexandria possibly was speaking of legitimate historical records. Personally, I will believe that Clement of Alexandria was correct since he had access to the Library of Alexandria in the 2nd century AD, which housed

hundreds of thousands of historical records of the past empires and realms, mostly which have lost as will be presently discussed. My personal belief on how these accounts are so similar is that Romulus was most likely familiar with the history of the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel, had read a translation of Judges, and likely based his actions upon a Biblical pattern as recommended by the Roman senate (Livy 1.9.2). If not Romulus himself, one of the men in the senate would have been familiar with the Biblical narrative. We should keep in mind the chronological order of events and understand that if we accept that Romulus was a true historical figure, as I believe he was, Isaiah and Hosea were prophesying during this time in the Kingdom of Judah, the tomb of Semiramis, queen of Nineveh, had recently been sealed with the mysterious treasure (Hdt. 1.187), Jonah had most recently preached to the Ninevites, who subsequently had repented (Jonah 1:1), and King Lear was king of England (Geof. *His. Brit.* 2.15). For all these stories to parallel to such precise details leads me to trust them all as historical. I have faith in textual congruence.

Let the skeptic remain in doubt concerning the existence of Romulus, King Lear, possibly even Isaiah and Hosea, with the conclusion that these are all legendary characters based on imagination. Pyrrho, the first Greek skeptic philosopher, taught, “And likewise everywhere nothing exists according to the truth, but instead according to the law and custom which men make” (Diog. Laert. *Vit.* 9.61). For the skeptic, Herodotus tells a narration concerning King Cyrus, which is too good to be true and thus had to be lying. Let the skeptic quote our beloved Henry Ford’s embarrassing decree, “History is more or less bunk” (Wheeler, 1918, p. 6). Huxley no better prophesied of our modern scholarship back a century ago when he looked ahead and foresaw the wise scholars right now who claim that much of the historical records of the Persian Empire are as imaginative as King Lear (Huxley, 1932, pp. 34-35). For myself, I just accept the

traditional interpretation of the said historical records like everyone used to do, even in the days of Henry Ford. When running for senate in Michigan, Henry Ford famously continued, “We don't want tradition. We want to live in the present, and the only history that is worth a tinker's damn is the history that we make today” (Wheeler, 1918, p. 6). Wheeler, his 3rd party rival for senate, then compared his words to a man walking around naked in public, without any underwear or bathrobe (stark naked), needing to hide behind a barrel (Wheeler, 1918, p. 6). Was Wheeler trying to mimic Aristophanes? Only God knows. That was during World War I and such public vulgarity was accepted in the Chicago Tribune. Today’s scholarship is much less crude and tries to be nice. Instead of calling Ford names or saying he is running around naked, almost everywhere from Oxford to Harvard, Cambridge to Yale, the naked declaration is published abroad, “We don’t want tradition” ironically enough without any embarrassment attached. Teachers such as Carpenter have tried to counter such imbalance, at least expecting shame to follow their actions. But the entire educational system at the moment ignores the desperate cries for a return to tradition.

Carpenter wrote, “If you were an administrator running a school with 2,200 screaming barbarians and their children on your hands or an officeholder running for reelection, which would you rather have running your classrooms: maverick geniuses informed by so-called "great men" from long ago and far away, or compliant mediocrities meeting preset standards? Damn right you would” (Carpenter, 2007, p. 87). But our current educators would not consider themselves or their students barbarians. We are *homo sapiens sapiens*. Forget the ancient proverb, “A monkey is always a monkey, even if he has birth-tokens of gold” (Lucian *Ind.* 4). Monkey has evolved passed the olden days and now has no shame of nakedness with the arrival of the Übermensch (Nietzsche, 1891, p. 9). The present society in the United States of America

might compare themselves to the Persians who were ashamed to urinate in public (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.2.16) because Americans too have indoor toilets, unlike so many 3rd world countries. The Persians were supposedly ashamed even for males to view each other naked, a shame which has most recently become widespread among the current Generation Z youth (Hdt. 1.10). Americans do not urinate in public, and God knows that no high schooler or college student would dare shower or swim naked with the boys anymore (Rubin, 1996, Chicago Tribune). A century and a half ago, Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry could be portrayed in realistic fiction as roaming the woods in the nude for days without end (Clemens, 1884, p. 153). The two boys were said to be around 13- or 14-year-olds without any embarrassment of being in the nude like the Spartan children of old (Clemens, 1884, p. 128). But today, instead of swimming in the buff like Tom Sawyer (Clemens, 1876, pp. 152-153), our teenagers are ashamed to be seen showering naked by another peer the same age (Rubin, 1996, Chicago Tribune). Thus, we have become civilized in a different way and changed the definition of what it means *to be civilized* to match our own barbarous actions. We may safely say that we are not like those barbarian Persians even though we act like them in the abovementioned ways. What a paradox! We act like the barbarians of the past, yet somehow mysteriously we are not barbarians. There must be a way to determine what *civilization* truly means. How else without the Greeks? Might we say that Xenophon and Herodotus were not even telling the truth about what actually happened? Were the Persians actually urinating on every street corner in public view and bathing naked together in the rivers together? Our modern scholars might as easily declare that we hold evidence to the contrary due to the simple fact that Herodotus and Xenophon agree that the reverse was true. But if Herodotus and Xenophon told *lies* (or might I call them *relative truths*), maybe the Persians actually had sexual intercourse openly in public like some of the later renegade cynics and the Greeks were

merely too embarrassed ever to mention it. Without any faith in the historians' truthfulness, there is no way to tell.

CYRUS AS A BOY | AGED 12 TO 14 | 588-586 B.C.

I trust that the childhood narration of both Herodotus and Xenophon are true historical accounts of a physical child named Cyrus. Herodotus begins the narration (Hdt. 1.107-123). Switching the viewpoint, I would take my reader from Herodotus to Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.3.1), where Cyrus is now 12 years old, showing that it would be possible to believe in the historicity of both childhood narratives without picking sides. I advocate that the passage reading, "Such was the education that Cyrus received until he was twelve years old," indicated that Cyrus received the previously mentioned Persian education between the ages of 10 and 12, but not prior to 10 years old due to Herodotus's account of prior to 10. In this way, we find that Cyrus truly was schooled in the Persian schools of justice for 2 years. Before that, even though Cyrus did not attend the Persian schools, Cyrus still had a similar upbringing to allow him to be the king of his play-world and establish his own play-court (Hdt. 1.114-115) similar to the Persian school system described by Xenophon (*Cyrop.* 1.2.6). There should not be any problem with harmonizing the chronology of Xenophon and Herodotus here, since both statements can be true, that he was in Persia and had a Persian education and also that he was on the farm with the cowherd for 10 years and did not have any formal education. The only contradiction which could be brought up would be Xenophon's statement that the boys were not allowed to join the Persian school system if they did not begin at the beginning with the rest of their peers (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.2.15). If we assume that Xenophon was aware that his readers would be familiar with Herodotus already, we can assume that the reader would understand that Cyrus

was able to have an exception to the normal Persian rules on the matter, since he was with the cowherd for the first 10 years and only had been in Persia for 2 years. Xenophon begins the narration of Cyrus visiting his grandfather at 12 years old by stating, “Until he was twelve years old or more, Cyrus was brought up in the manner we have described,” which can be taken quite literally and historically as long as we keep in mind that he was only in Persia for 2 years, from 10 to 12 years old.

In this way, Diogenes Laertius is correct by stating that Plato and Xenophon merely seem to be at odds with each other, since Xenophon wrote a book called *The Education of Cyrus*, aka *Cyropaedia*, and Plato states that Cyrus received no complete education (Diog. Laert. 3.34). By further examination of both authors, we do not find a true contradiction, but more of a simple paradox. Plato’s *Laws* reads, “παιδείας δὲ ὀρθῆς οὐχ ἥφθαι τὸ παράπαν” / “[Cyrus] had not gained the entirety of a true education” (Plat. Leg. 694c). If we take this literally, we can harmonize the statement with Herodotus’s account of Cyrus being with the cowherd for 10 years and then moving to Persia for 2 years. Plato does not state that Cyrus did not have any education at all, but only that his education was not τὸ παράπαν (*the entirety*) παιδείας ὀρθῆς (*of a right education*), meaning that his education was not the typical Persian education which began at 5 years old and continued for 26 or 27 years uninterrupted (Hdt. 1.136 & Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.2.8). We find another reference to Cyrus’s education later on in the narrative when Cambyses recaps his son’s education (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.6.20). This means that Xenophon was most certainly serious about Cyrus’s Persian legitimate education, but we cannot say that it is impossible to line up with Herodotus since we have already mentioned the possibility of 2 years from 10 to 12 years old, that Cyrus could have had a true Persian education which was legitimate enough to count by both standards of having one by Xenophon and not having one by Plato. Harmony is easier to see

rather than any discord after comparing these known facts about chronology. Sir William Jones, when writing *The History of the Persian Language*, understood both Herodotus and Xenophon's depictions of Persians education as literal and accurate portrayals of true history (Jones, 1807, wks. vol. III, pp. 410-411). I too believe in the validity of both Herodotus and Xenophon's account.

ASTYAGES BECOMES KING OF MEDIA | AFTER ECLIPSE | MAY 28th, 585 BC

A casual reader of Herodotus assumes that Astyages was already the sole king of Media when Cyrus was born in 600 BC. Most readers neglect to imagine Cyaxares I, the father of Astyages, still alive and reigning at that time since he is not explicitly mentioned in Cyrus's birth narrative (Hdt. 1.107-130). The truth of the matter is that Cyaxares I was a very, very old man, probably pushing 80 or 90, at least, since his son Astyages was also "an old man" at the time of Cyrus' birth (Hdt. 1.109).

We know that Cyaxares I was still alive in 600 BC due to the following calculations. We can backtrack from Astyages' 35 years to calculate when his father reigned. Astyages was overthrown in 550/549 BC according to the 6th year of Nabonidus in the Nabonidus Chronicle (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305). According to Herodotus, Astyages reigned 35 years (Hdt. 1.130). Backtracking from 550 BC, we subtract 35 years to find the start of Astyages' reign was in 585 BC. Since the 6th year of Nabonidus started in the spring of 550 BC and ended in the spring of 549 BC, we can find an approximation for Astyages' reign beginning between 585 BC and 584 BC. His father Cyaxares I reigned, according to Herodotus, for 40 years, which would have been from 625/624 to 585/584 BC (Hdt. 1.107).

Herodotus also mentioned the solar eclipse, which occurred in the 6th year of the war between Alyattes and Cyaxares I, after he was forced to eat the boy (Hdt. 1.74). Pliny the Elder confirmed that the eclipse of Thales occurred in the 4th year of the 48th Olympiad, which equates to 585 BC (Plin. *HN*. 2.9 [aka 2.12]). The eclipse was later confirmed and precisely dated by Sir Isaac Newton to May 28th, 585 BC (Watson, 1885, p. 131). With the previous date of 585 BC being calculated backwards from 550/549 BC based on the Nabonidus Chronicle, we now have a second solid date to use in order to verify our 53-year chronology of Astyages' reign, beginning in 585/584 BC and ending in 550/549 BC. The year of the solar eclipse must have been the last year of Cyaxares I's reign, which immediately preceded the start of Astyages' reign.

In the 2nd century AD, Clement of Alexandria approximated the eclipse of Thales to "about 50th Olympiad", without any specific date or time given (Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 1.15). Clement must have been estimating slightly off, but not much, only about 5 years. In the 3rd century, Solinus approximated more closely to the 49th Olympiad, August 584 to July 583 BC, which he says was "604 years after Troy was captured" (Solin. 15). Solinus's dates here for the fall of Troy match well Eratosthenes' date of 1187 BC for the fall of Troy, as Clement of Alexandria provided (Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 1.21). Solinus was only one year off by Sir Isaac Newton's precision of May 28th, 585 BC matching the event. From the above Roman and Greek sources, as listed by Watson alongside Sir Isaac Newton's date, we can be confident that the eclipse of Thales truly happened on May 28th, 585 BC as described in Herodotus 1.74 (Watson, 1885, p. 131). According to NASA's website the same total solar eclipse is given the Gregorian date of May 28th, 584 BC since they included a zero between 1 BC and 1 AD, which is not customarily practiced for chronological purposes (NASA, website). With this in mind, our 585

BC is the same as NASA's 584 BC since they add a year zero and we do not. No concern needs to be given to this apparent discrepancy, since it disappears with closer examination.

Thus, Astyages ascended to the throne of Media, finally becoming king of Media, sometime between spring 585 BC and spring 584 BC. Nebuchadnezzar had reigned 20 years. Cyrus was 15 years old at the same time his grandfather became king, after being prince almost as long as Charles III of Britain in most recent years.

Xenophon tells us, "But when he [Cyrus] was about fifteen years of age, it chanced that the young Prince of Assyria [possibly Belshazzar], who was about to marry a wife, planned a hunting-party of his own, in honour of the bridal" (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.4.16). I would advocate that date for this storyline in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* is roughly the same time, either right before or after, the final Fall of Nineveh in 585/584 BC preceded by the death of Cyaxares I, Cyrus's great-grandfather (Hdt. 1.107). Watson concluded that the Overthrow of the Scyths, spoken of by Herodotus, must have been in 584 BC (Watson, 1885, p. 124). I will accept the date with an approximation of up to a year of variation, between 585 and 584 BC. Cyaxares I most likely conquered Nineveh immediately after the May 28th, 585 BC total solar eclipse --- max one year later, but more likely from the eclipse to his subsequent death was only several days, weeks, or months, in order to allow Astyages to have 35 years to reign between then and 550/549 BC.

We compare the narrative of Xenophon with Herodotus and find harmony. In Xenophon's account, we find Astyages envious of Cyrus after his military victory over the Assyrians. Xenophon wrote, "The countenance of his grandfather [Astyages] grew stern at the sight of him [Cyrus]" (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.4.24). The flow of the narrative makes more sense when we realize that Astyages was not yet sole king of Media at this time, but only co-reigning with his father as prince or king under the authority of his father Cyaxares I.

In Herodotus, Astyages is called by the term “king” in 600 BC once by Harpagus when Cyrus is born (Hdt. 1.107-113). At the same time, Cyaxares I is still called by the term “king” immediately in the line before (Hdt. 1.103). Later, Herodotus uses the term “king” for Astyages when Cyrus was 10 years old in 590 BC (Hdt. 1.119). If our chronology is accurate that the 6th year of the battle between Alyattes and Cyaxares I ended in May 585 BC, we can conclude that the 1st year of the battle between Lydia and Media occurred in approximately 591/590 BC (Hdt. 1.16). Thus, the Scythians fed Cyaxares I the flesh of a Median pupil prior to Astyages feeding Harpagus the flesh of his own son by up to a year or so (Hdt. 1.73 & 1.119).

As difficult as it is for many modern historians to vouch for the historicity of Harpagus eating the flesh of his own son, the narrative does make sense when we view the story to have happened while his father Cyaxares I was still alive and had only recently begun to fight with Alyattes and the Scythians over the same type of cannibalism. The 28-years of Scythian dominance was 613/612-585/584 BC (Hdt. 1.106). During these years, Sardanapalus was king of Nineveh as a Scythian king (Watson, 1885, pp. 124-125). Although many scholars today view Sardanapalus just as imaginary as Cyaxares II since the Babylonian Chronicles do not speak of him, the Eusebius *Chronicon* makes room for Sardanapalus as a Scythian king, who spoke and wrote in a different language, which was reason enough for no mention to be made on any tablets from Nineveh at that time in cuneiform writing (Eus. *Chron. Arm.* Pars 1. p. 100).

We thus conclude that Astyages became sole king of Media after the death of his father Cyaxares in approximately 585/584 BC and sent Cyrus to Persia to live with his parents around the same time, uniting the accounts of Herodotus and Xenophon in chronological order (Hdt. 1.107 & Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.1).

According to the Septuagint numbers, Tobias was 127 years old when he died in Ecbatana, Media after hearing the news of the destruction of Nineveh (Tobit 14:15, LXX). From this, we can date Tobias's birth-year to approximately 712-711 BC, which would allow enough time for his father Tobit to have been captured in 722 BC as a young man roughly ten years prior to his birth (Tobit 1:9). In the Latin text, we find Tobias only lived to 117 years old. That would date his birth to 702-701 BC, which seems to be slightly too late, since Sargon II had already died by then. We would have to allow the narration of Tobit chapter 1 to be told out of chronological order for the Latin reading to be correct, but that is not hard to permit the Greek reading to be correct since Tobit 1:15 jumps from Shalmaneser's death in 722 to Sennacherib's succession in 705 BC. We must believe that the birth of his son Tobias was between the death of Shalmaneser and prior to the succession of Sennacherib for the numbers to work out properly.

The timeframe of 585/584 BC also matches Josephus's calculation that Nineveh was destroyed 115 years after Nahum prophesied, which would date the book of Nahum to 700/699 BC reasonably enough (Joseph. *AJ.* 9.11.3). Josephus also could have been starting his count before the 28 years of Scythian control, which would place the book of Nahum several decades earlier. Either way, the numbers match up and no major issue is found with Biblical, Babylonian, or Greek chronology to match up and harmonize.

Thus, Cyaxares I of Media and Tobias son of Tobit both died in 585/584 BC shortly after the final destruction of Nineveh. Subsequently, Astyages mounted the throne of his father and reigned for the next 35 years. Cyaxares II and Cyrus were both princes at this time.

CYAXARES II, AKA DARIUS THE MEDE | A BASTARD CHILD:

When Cyrus was 12 years old in 588/587 BC, the first reference for his mother's brother Cyaxares II occurs in Xenophon without much of an introduction to the new character (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.4.12). Altogether Xenophon mentions Cyaxares by name 145 times (by my own calculations) and calls him uncle 12 times in his magnum opus. Besides Cyrus himself, who is mentioned by name 955 times, Cyaxares is the second main character of *Cyropaedia*. Gobryas is mentioned 83 times. Croesus is mentioned 45 times. Astyages is only mentioned 43 times by name. Tigranes the Armenian prince is mentioned 35 times. His father Cambyses is mentioned only 12 times by name, and his mother Mandane is mentioned merely 4 times. Using these examples for comparing the quantity of names mentioned in *Cyropaedia*, we can tell that Cyaxares II is quite important. By far, the most mentioned name besides Cyrus himself is his uncle's name Cyaxares II. We should not assume that his character is fictional unless we prove this to be true beyond any reason to doubt. In this way, I would like to take Hirsch's work a step further. Instead of taking his stance that they are not so different as is commonly made out (Hirsch, 1985, p. 82). My theory is that Herodotus and Xenophon are completely compatible as I will continue to argue.

Cyaxares II has been viewed by many modern scholars as an imaginary uncle in order to harmonize the statement Herodotus made when he wrote that Harpagus said, "Astyages is old, and has no male issue" (Hdt. 1.109). Let me pose a better explanation instead of declaring Cyaxares II to be imagination. Let us call Cyaxares II a bastard. What we do know about Cyaxares II from *Cyropaedia* is that Xenophon never tells us his mother's name. Cyaxares II is frequently called other titles. He is called "son of Astyages" (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2), which tells us who his father was. We cannot assume that he had a different father. From Cyrus's perspective

we read that Cyaxares II was “the brother of his mother” (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.4.12 & 1.5.2), which tells us they share at least one parent. From Cyaxares’ perspective we read him calling Cyrus “my sister’s son” (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.4 & 2.4.5). The very first reference calls him almost every imagined title except one which would include a maternal figure or wife of king Astyages.

According to Median custom, Astyages was required to have at least 5 wives in his harem along with his many concubines (Strab. 13.11.11). We do not know the name of all of his wives or concubines. We know from Herodotus that Astyages married Aryenis the daughter of Alyattes (Hdt. 1.74). Aryenis and Croesus would have been siblings. If Aryenis was the mother of Cyaxares II, it would seem very likely that Xenophon or Herodotus would have mentioned it in his narrative and possibly even tied in the relationship to Croesus being a maternal uncle. Nevertheless, the likelihood of Aryenis being the mother of Cyaxares II is very slim due to chronology issues. In Herodotus, a solar eclipse is mentioned just prior to Alyattes handing his daughter in marriage to Astyages (Hdt. 1.7.4) According to Watson, the solar eclipse was dated by Sir Isaac Newton and other astronomers to May 28th, 585 BC (Watson, 1885, p. 131). On the contrary, Cyaxares II is never introduced as bearing any royal title of prince or heir to the throne in *Cyropaedia* book I before Astyages dies. With this in mind, it would be logical to believe that Cyaxares was a half-sister to Mandane and illegitimate child of Astyages the king of Media. Herodotus speaks of the Persian custom never permitting a bastard to rule as king but does not explicitly say that a Median bastard had never been on the throne (Hdt. 3.2.2). If Cyaxares II was a Median bastard prince, then Harpagus would have been correct to describe the old king without any *legitimate* son, even though he had an *illegitimate* one who may have been a child or even young adult at the time of Cyrus’s birth (Hdt. 1.109). The possibility exists as well that Cyaxares I was the “old king” whom the cowherd spoke of (Hdt. 1.109). If so, Astyages might have been a

bastard of Cyaxares I, since he too does not have a known mother. We will use the theory of Cyaxares II being a bastard as a more realistic reason for why on the one hand, Herodotus ignored his character entirely, and why on the other hand, Xenophon names him 145+ times without ever telling us his mother's name. Even though it could be interesting to dive into the possibility of Astyages too being a bastard, the simple mention is all that is necessary for now.

Let us conclude that Cyaxares and Darius are equal names/titles. Here is some simple logic. Auchincloss discovered that Cyaxares I (the grandfather) was called *Ahasuerus* in Tobit (Tobit 14:15) and Darius the Great (the cousin) was called *Ahasuerus* in Ezra (4:5-7, 4:24). Let us use variables x and y , making *Cyaxares* to be variable x and *Darius* variable y . If *Ahasuerus* is akin to the number 7, then both $x = 7$ and $y = 7$. Since both x and y equal 7, x must equal y , and y must equal x . From such a logical equation, Auchincloss calculated that *Cyaxares* and *Darius* were different titles for the same *Ahasuerus* and thus Cyaxares II and Darius the Mede also were the same person. A logical scholar would not deny the basic algebra. But Rowley not only thought the entire thing was stupid, but supposed his reader was equally as incompetent to follow his lead. For Rowley supposed that Auchincloss's equation would only lead to the conclusion that "all Persian names are identical, and we may as well call any one by any name we happen to fancy at the moment" (Rowley, 1934, p. 39). If we use Rowley's logic, we could also conclude that algebra is useless because all letters could be said to equal all numbers. If Rowley is correct, Rene Descartes was stupid and Sir Isaac Newton was a fool for thinking algebra and mathematics had any place in this world, because the above equation is truly logical, even if erroneous in the end.

According to Watson, "Cy" simply means "king" and "Axares" is the same name as the Biblical "Ahasuerus" (Watson, 1885, p. 179). That being the case, according to Watson,

“Cyaxares” literally means “king Ahasuerus” and parallels Tobit, where Nabopolassar and Ahasuerus destroy Nineveh (Tobit 14:15). The Ahasuerus in Tobit, who destroyed Nineveh alongside Nabopolassar, parallels with the Cyaxares I in Herodotus (Hdt. 1.16, 1.74-75, 1.103-106). Esther’s references to “Ahasuerus” is traditionally recognized to have been Artaxerxes I and is called Artaxerxes in the Septuagint. Watson’s synthesis, undoubtedly, is more satisfactory than the above logic puzzle of Auchincloss, even though both might have glimpses of a bigger picture.

CYRUS THE TEENAGE PRINCE OF PERSIA | AGE 15-40 | 585-560 B.C.

Next, let us keep the chronological order of our text in *Cyropaedia* until Cyrus was 15 or 16 years old and went on a hunting spree with his uncle and grandfather, winning a military victory against the Assyrians and ending up afterwards being called home to Persia (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.3.1 to 1.5.1). The passage states, "Now when Cyrus had returned, as before narrated, he is said to have spent one more year in the class of boys in Persia. " If we follow the story chronologically, Xenophon tells us that Cyrus was back in Persia for another year. After that, I would advocate for his turning 16 or 17 years of age, when he finished his schooling with the kids (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.2.8), to be the same time as Herodotus's claim of adulthood in the paragraph immediately following where we left off previously (Hdt. 1.122.3). I suggest that Herodotus skipped over the years which Xenophon claims to fill, which were between 12 and 16. Xenophon filled in the missing years in his magnum opus but did not retell anything already narrated thoroughly by Herodotus since he assumed his audience was already familiar with the storyline. The above synthesis, which harmonized Herodotus and Xenophon’s works, agrees precisely with the Persians’ own archives as we mentioned above (Jones, 1807, wrk. vo. I, p. 106).

CYRUS THE SOLE KING OF PERSIA | AGE 40 | 559 BC

Cambyes passed the crown to Cyrus, his son, in 558/559 B.C. Cyrus was 40 years old. His father would have been anywhere from 60 to 70 years old at the time. To determine when Cyrus became king, we have only used Cicero's chronology to give us the year. According to Cicero, Cyrus the Great lived to 70 years of age, became king at age 40, and reigned for a total of 30 years (Cic. *Div.* 1.23.46). The necessity is to make Cyrus king of Persia in 558 or 559 BC, which would match the correct time of both Herodotus who specified a little less than 30 years and Cicero who rounded up to 30 years (Hdt. 1.214 & Cic. *Div.* 1.23.46). Everyone knows that the glass can be viewed as half empty and half full simultaneously. In my opinion, the reign of Cyrus was probably between 29 and 30 years, which would have given Herodotus the reason for his claim as well as Cicero the reason for his claim. Some scholars claim that 558/559 BC was the year that Cyrus took his grandfather's throne in Media (Ausinchloss, 1905, p. 96), but since the Nabonidus Chronicle dates the Persian Revolt to the 6th year of Nabonidus, which parallels with 550 BC (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305), the safest thing for me as an honest historian to do is to leave these two dates separate and assume that no mistake was made on either end. Cicero claimed that Cyrus was 40 years old when he became king, but king of what? Cicero was correct that Cyrus became king at age 40. Cyrus mounted his father's throne in Persia at age 40. But there was 9 years between his mounting the Persian throne and taking over the Median Empire. According to the Nabonidus Chronicle, Cyrus was already called "king of Anshan" prior to his war against Astyages (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305). Cyrus was then 49 years old in 550 BC when he took over his grandfather's throne of Media and presumably allowed his uncle to be a placeholder for a while, either slightly before or after Astyages' eventual death. We could

assume that his father Cambyses simply had died in 558/559 BC and the crown was passed to him. But we do not have any historical text which speaks of the death of Cambyses specifically and in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, Cambyses, as an old man, has a lengthy discussion with his son Cyrus, chronologically placed after the Persian Revolt of 550 BC and subsequent death of Astyages 550-540 BC (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.6.1-46). Thus, instead of claiming that Cambyses died in 558/559, we should only assume that his age was the factor which changed the title from prince to king for Cyrus. From this analysis, the storyline of Herodotus and Xenophon are harmonized with the Nabonidus Chronicle without any deviation from Cicero's numbers (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305, Hdt. 1.214, Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.6.1-46, & Cic. *Div.* 1.23.46).

According to Nicolaus of Damascus, Cyrus made his father the satrap of Persia and mother first among the women of Persia (Abbot, 1881, p. 345 & Dindorfius, 1870, p. 52). In short, I will allege that Mitrdates the cowherd was given this position. The narration would not make sense to give his biological father Cambyses the satrapy of Persia, when he was already the king of Persia, I believe that it's more likely that this father is Mitrdates the cowherd (Hdt. 1.10, 1.121). In the text of Ctesias, the father of Cyrus is called *Atrdates*, which is just as close to Herodotus's *Mitrdates* as *Astyages* is to Ctesias's *Astyias* (Freese, 1920, p. 92).

Mitrdates the cowherd also could be the same historical figure as Mithradates (מִתְרַדָּת) in the book of Ezra, who was the treasurer, under Cyrus, in charge of handing out the money to the Jews to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem in 539 BC (Ezra 1:6). Since Nicolaus of Damacus wrote about his surrogate parents, Atrdates (Mitrdates) and Argoste (Spako) being extremely wealthy and in charge of Persian politic decisions, the dots can easily be connected to at least believe that there is a possibility that the Biblical Mithradates in Ezra is the same as Herodotus's cowherd. Even if these are two different individuals, it is at least very odd that two random men have such

a similar name connected with the same King Cyrus the Great. The possibility exists that these two men might have been the same individual.

CYRUS THE SOLE KING OF MEDIA | AGE 49 | 550 B.C.

After Cyrus lived in Persia for the next few decades and eventually became king of Persia, the narration continues in Herodotus's text (Hdt. 1.123.1) and tells the story of how Harpagus sent Cyrus the hare with the message inside and took over his grandfather's Median Empire (Hdt. 1.23.1 to 1.130.1). I would first organize the story found in Herodotus, which parallels to 550 BC (Hdt. 1.130). We get the precise date of 550 BC from the Nabonidus Chronicle, which reads, "[In the 6th year, Astyages] called up his troops and marched against Cyrus, king of Anshan, in order to meet [him in battle] The army of Ishtumegu [Astyages] revolted against him and in fetters they delivered him] to Cyrus. Cyrus (marched) against the country Agamtanu; the royal residence (he seized); silver, gold, (other) valuables . . . of the country Agamtanu he took as booty and brought (them) to Anshan. The valuables of [...]" (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305).

In both Herodotus and Justin's *Epitome*, Harpagus sent Cyrus a message, placed inside a hare, along with nets to disguise the plot under the cover of hunting (Hdt. 1.123 & Justin. *Epit.* 1.5.8-10). According to Nicolaus of Damascus, prior to the Persian Revolt, Cyrus was informed by his mother that she had dreamed before he was born that she urinated so much so, as to fill all of Asia with the great stream of liquid (Abbot, 1881, p. 344-345 & Dindorfius, 1870, p. 51-52). Her recollection of the dream in Nicolaus of Damascus is different than Herodotus who claimed that Astyages had the dream (Hdt. 1.107). The possibility exists that both Astyages and his daughter had similar dreams. If not, one or the other probably had the dream. But since the

dream is a common occurrence among differing narratives, the most probable is that someone had the dream about the young lady urinating a flood. Nicolaus of Damascus provided some extra information, which I find exceptionally interesting, given that we are supporting the book of Daniel as historical alongside Herodotus and Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*. Nicolaus of Damascus recalled how the father of Cyrus asked advice from the Chaldeans in Babylon concerning the interpretation of his wife's dream. "Cyrus," the story goes, "sent for the most skilled of them and laid the dream before him," (Abbot, 1881, p. 344 & Dindorfius, 1870, p. 52). Note carefully how the Babylonian wiseman here is called "the most skilled" (ὁ λογιώτατος). That very wiseman responded to him that the dream signified fortune in his future and the most honored place in Asia as his possession. At first the description could seem outlandish and imaginary. One with a true imagination might even be so bold as to think that Daniel the Prophet was right here in Ctesias's *Persica* --- unnamed, called "the most skilled," "the interpreter of the dream," etc. Why not Daniel himself? The description of Nicolaus of Damascus leads an honest historian to believe that there was a single man in Babylon, who was classified as the #1 top wiseman skilled in interpreting dreams. If the details of such an interpreter of dreams were fabrication, random chance should not have portrayed such a historical figure better to match the description of Daniel who was in charge over all the wisemen in Babylon (Daniel 2:48). Furthermore, if Nicolaus of Damascus was fabricating his narration purposely based on the book of Daniel, it is likely he would have connected the dots more directly in the text for all the Jewish readers of his day and age.

Nowhere in Nicolaus of Damascus or St. Photios the Great's work do we find the connection made that the Babylonian was Daniel. If the two figures were the same, Herod's friend Nicolaus would have mentioned it. If not Nicolaus of Damascus, St. Photios the Great for

sure could have connected the dots. The reader is only given clues leading him to think the interpreter might have been Daniel (Abbot, 1881, p. 345, Dindorfius, 1870, p. 52, Daniel 5:12). For me, I might be bold enough to believe in a historical Daniel who lived in Babylon in the 6th century BC. But I am not so crazy or presumptuous as to claim that we found a historical Daniel in Ctesias's *Persica*. The biggest reason is that we find the Babylonian murdered by Oebares (Abbot, 1881, p. 346 & Dindorfius, 1870, pp. 55-56). Unless a person wants to try to argue that there was a historical Daniel who died in 550 BC, married and never having been thrown in the Lion's Den, the point is useless to argue for the two figures to be the same person. Obviously, they are similar but not the same individual. In my thesis, I conjecture that the Babylonian in *Persica* was a student of Daniel, ethnically Jewish like Daniel, and kept the same Jewish customs as Daniel as I will presently argue. We can tell that the Babylonian was Jewish from the levirate marriage described after his death (Abbot, 1881, p. 348). Our text reads, "after the death of her husband, she married that man's brother" (Dindorfius, 1870, p. 57). The text seems to describe levirate marriage, which was a Jewish custom, where a woman would marry the brother of her deceased husband, only permissible if the woman was childless (Deuteronomy 25:5-10). From the text alone, we can find clues to believe that the Babylonian was Jewish and married to a young Jewish wife. As far as our sources go, no scholar would guess that Daniel was young or married in 550 BC. As far as we know, Daniel was old, single at this time, and probably a eunuch. Thus, I advocate for the historicity of the Babylonian "interpreter of the dream" with the idea that he probably was Jewish and student under Daniel the Prophet. The fame that Daniel had earned by interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream many years prior to 550 BC (Daniel 2) would have been enough to lead Cyrus's father (either biological or the cowherd) to send word to Babylon, an enemy land, and request the interpretation from the most skilled wiseman in

Babylon (Abbot, 1881, pp. 344-345). On top of the historicity of Daniel 2 and Nebuchadnezzar's dream, if we can accept the historicity of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and *The Burning Fiery Furnace* on top of that (Daniel 3), their fame no doubtedly would have been spread abroad outside of the Babylonian territory into the Persian and Median country as well (Daniel 3:29).

It should be remembered that Nicolaus of Damascus was personal friends with Herod the Great, with whom he studied philosophy, rhetoric, oratory, and history (Dindorfius, 1870, pp. 139-140). According to Athenaeus, Nicolaus of Damascus was under the persuasion of the Peripatetic School of Philosophy, founded by Aristotle (Ath. 6.249a). In his autobiography, Nicolaus of Damascus compared his accomplishment of writing 144 books to Hercules and his 12 labors (Dindorfius, 1870, p. 140). Nicolaus might have relied on Ctesias for much of his work on Cyrus, but we cannot tell exactly to what extent since the original *Persica* is lost. One example of the supposed differences between Ctesias and Nicolaus of Damascus exist in the fate of Astyages. According to St. Photios the Great, Ctesias wrote that Astyages died by starving to death all alone (Freese, 1920, p. 94). In opposition to that, Nicolaus of Damascus agrees with Herodotus about Astyages survival after the Persian Revolt and speaks of his becoming a satrap of the Barcanians (Abbot, 1881, p. 354). We might never know how much of Ctesias survives in Nicolaus of Damascus. Case to point, let us not assume that Ctesias's *Persica* is any more readily available than one of Livy's lost histories.

According to Nicolaus of Damascus, prior to overthrowing the Median Empire, Cyrus was sent as a messenger to the Cadusians to request the peaceful surrender of their satrap Onaphernes. While he passed along the borders of the Cadusians, Cyrus recalled how Arbaces (his great-grandfather Cyaxares I) had subdued the Ninevites with an army no stronger than his own. With this in his mind, Cyrus met a man named Oebares who had been whipped and carried

dung in a basket (Abbot, 1881, p. 315 & Dindorfius, 1870, p. 53). Cyrus asked the most skilled interpreter of dreams from Babylon what such experience portended. We will keep in mind our conjecture that this skilled interpreter of dreams was a student of Daniel the Prophet (not Daniel himself). From the narrative of Nicolaus of Damascus, Cyrus and the Babylonian communicate back and forth concerning the dream, which his mother told him, as well as the man carrying dung in a basket. The wiseman seems to be on the journey with Cyrus, as the text reads; the Babylonian was present with Cyrus to assure him that “dominion and power” were symbolized by the dung in the basket (Abbot, 1881, p. 346). Cyrus assured him that if he became king, he would give him a great reward. If such a Babylonian was the historical figure of Daniel himself, we could learn that Cyrus and Daniel were in communication for over a decade at least before the Fall of Babylon in 539 B.C. If the Babylonian were a student of Daniel, the connection between Cyrus and Daniel would still be made, only less presumptuously and more cautiously. If the Babylonian were Daniel himself, Daniel’s future placement as ranking #1 among the 3 presidents of the Median-Persian Empire in Daniel 6:3 might match perfectly with the fulfillment of Cyrus’s promise to “the Babylonian, who was better acquainted than others with the will of heaven” (Abbot, 1881, p. 345). But if the Babylonian was a student of Daniel and not Daniel himself, the connection can still be made. We only have to believe that Daniel’s #1 ranked student was just as good as him at interpreting dreams.

The Persian Revolt of 550 BC is backed up by the Nabonidus Chronicle, specifying, “The army of Ishtumegu [aka Astyages] revolted against him [Cyrus] and in fetters they [the Medes] delivered him [Astyages] to Cyrus.” (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305). The preceding narrative of Cyrus at age 15 winning a military victory and being called home by his father Cambyses also ties in with the reasoning behind Harpagus sending Cyrus the hare (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.4.23-25). Since

Cyrus already showed military leadership skills at a young age, Harpagus had good reason to believe that he could overthrow his grandfather's Median Empire. If, as the modern European scholars suppose, Herodotus was using a fable to prove a point, claiming it to be true, it would have been handy for a Greek or Persian historian to have mentioned this in the 4th or 5th century BC.

Such an antithetical historian could have been Ctesias if we truly wanted to find the devil's advocate. Most of his works have been lost and only exist through fragments through Justin, Nicolaus of Damascus, and St. Photios the Great. Nevertheless, as far as I know, there are not any fragments of Ctesias or cuneiform inscriptions which declare, "Harpagus never ate his son's flesh and Cyaxares never existed." Ctesias might have included a character named Oebares (also spelled Soebaris) who seemed to replace the character of Harpagus for being the leader who assisted in overthrowing the Medes. It is fair to say that Ctesias probably did not mention a historical Harpagus in his *Persica*. But instead of claiming that either Harpagus or Oebares (Soebaris) had to be fictional characters, we could take the route which Justin took via Trogus and synthesis the two. There could have been two historical figures: Harpagus who led the Medes and Oebares (Soebaris) who led the Persians to victory over Astyages (Justin. *Epit.* 1.6.1-1.7.1). Yet even if such fragments or inscriptions were discovered, which explicitly claimed that no Harpagus ever existed, we could still imagine the possibility of sarcasm and deny the validity, nonetheless. But without any denial of a Harpagus, there should be no reason to doubt the existence of the man, who most likely really did eat the flesh of his own son. According to Justin's *Epitome*, we find both a historical Harpagus who led the Medes and historical Oebares, here called Soebaris, who led the Persians to victory in 550 BC (Justin. *Epit.*

1.5.8-1.6.17). No account better used Herodotus and Ctesias than Justin's *Epitome*, which most likely merely summarized the lost works of Trogus.

In the end of the Persian Revolt, our sources agree that Astyages was left alive. Herodotus claimed that Astyages was alive (Hdt. 1.130). In Nicolaus of Damascus, Astyages is made satrap of the Barcanians and allowed to live afterward (Abbot, 1881, p. 354). We don't find Astyages dead until Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* comes along (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2). As I continue through the history in chronological order, we will assume that Astyages remained alive and allow a gap between *Cyrop.* 1.5.1 and 1.5.2 as mentioned elsewhere.

Herodotus tells us clearly that Astyages was kept alive and only later died in Media at some point after the battle (Hdt. 1.130). In our chronology, we will keep the scholarly date of 550 BC for Cyrus's overthrow of the Median Empire, since it matches the Nabonidus Chronicle (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305). The beginning of Cyrus's reign will be 9 years prior, in 559 BC, when he became the King of Persia, since it matches with Herodotus' final statement concerning Cyrus reigning for a total of 30 years minus a little less than a year (Hdt. 1.214.3). Clement of Alexandria's approximation of Cyrus's reign matches the 30-year period of Herodotus, where Cyrus reigned from spring 559 BC to December of 530 BC, as most scholars agree (Clem. *Strom.* 1.14). We will conclude that Astyages must have remained alive for up to 11 years after first overthrow the Medes from 550 to 539 BC. Most likely Astyages only lived for a fraction of those 11 years. Instead of pretending that Herodotus and Xenophon are at odds, and one or both accounts are fictional, we can harmonize them with this hypothesis. Herodotus tells of Astyages living in peace after 550 BC (Hdt. 1.130) and Xenophon continues the narrative after his final passing away approximately 5 to 10 years later (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2). During this interval Cyrus was the dominant figure, and Cyaxares was not on the throne but probably played a type of side

role. We have to imply a gap between Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.1, which ends with Cyrus around age 49 in 550 BC and Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2 which steps ahead as much as 11 years into the future to approximately 539 BC. The 11 years between these two dates are filled in by Herodotus's narrative, which started with the Persian overthrow of the Medes in 550 BC (Hdt. 1.123-130) and moved on in nonchronological order to 547 BC with Croesus on the pyre and the first overthrow of Ionia (Hdt. 1.80-92).

Even though much of Nicolaus of Damascus cannot be verified from other historical sources, there is one quote specifically backed up by the Akkadian tablets. Nicolaus of Damascus related, "The treasures of Astyages [...] were brought to Pasargadae under the care of Oebares" (Abbot, 1881, p. 353). The Nabonidus Chronicle backs up this statement with affirmation, "The royal residence (he seized); silver, gold, (other) valuables . . . of the country Agamtanu [Astyages] he [Cyrus the Great] took as booty and brought (them) to Anshan [Pasargadae]. The valuables of . . ." (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305). Nicolaus of Damascus wrote a few sentences later in the same section, "Then Cyrus gained possession of Ecbatana" (Abbot, 1881, p. 353). The Nabonidus Chronicle stated in the previous sentence, "Cyrus (marched) against the country Agamtanu [Ecbatana]" (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305). It might be presumptuous to assume the accuracy of more or less of the rest of Nicolaus of Damascus based on these two accurate parallels found in the Nabonidus Chronicle. Nicolaus was not an idiot, as we know from his friendship with Herod the Great and how they used to study Aristotle together (Dindorfius, 1870, p. 140, Frag. 134-135). Nicolaus of Damascus then stated that Cyrus made Astyages the satrap of Barcania (Abbot, 1881, p. 354). There is no other backing for this besides St. Photios the Great's abbreviation of Ctesias (Freese, 1920, p. 94). Besides these two later historians, Astyages is said to have been somewhere in Media where he subsequently died (Hdt. 1.130 & Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2).

Only from the Armenian side of the world do we find a tale, where Tigran, the king of Armenia, pierced Astyages with a spear, thus ending his life (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.28.8-9).

CROESUS, AGE 49, ON THE PYRE | CYRUS AGE 53 | 547 BC

At the First Battle of Sardis in 547 BC, Cyrus fought against Croesus. We know this follows the previous battle chronologically, since Harpagus was next to Cyrus on the battlefield as a military leader, described as having given him counsel for the battle plans (Hdt. 1.80). The battle lasted only 14 days (Hdt. 1.84). Although he had sent for help from the Spartans, the Babylonian, and the Egyptians, the battle was lost before any aid arrived (Hdt. 1.77). We notice that Herodotus does not speak of Cyrus killing Croesus but rather letting him live (Hdt. 1.88-1.91). We also find the phrase “And this is the story of Croesus' rule, and of the first overthrow of Ionia” (Hdt. 1.91), which seems to indicate that there was a second overthrow of Ionia at a later date, which the reader eventually finds out to be with Pactyes (Hdt. 1.154). The first overthrow mentioned here would have been in 547 BC, but the second overthrow happens at a later date and parallels Xenophon’s account in 539 BC (Xen. *Cyrop.* 7.3.10-11), as we will mention further down.

As for Croesus, both Herodotus and Xenophon agree with the narration that Croesus remained alive after the First Battle of Sardis in 547 BC. In Xenophon we find Croesus recapping at a later date what Herodotus explained in detail (Hdt. 1.80-94). “So I thought,” says Croesus, “and in truth so long as I was at peace, I had no fault to find with my lot after my son's death; but when the Assyrian persuaded me to march against you I encountered every danger. Yet I was saved, I came to no harm” (Xen. *Cyrop.* 6.2.22). From Xenophon we find the parallel in Herodotus both to the death of Croesus’ son Atys preceding the First Battle of Sardis by two

years (Hdt. 1.46) and also the continual survival of Croesus after the event with the pyre (Hdt. 1.86).

The first Lydian revolt matches perfectly with 547 BC, based on the Nabonidus Chronicle placing the event in the 9th year of his reign after his mother's death (Pritchard, 1969, p. 306). Cyrus would have been around 53 years old according to Cicero or at least 29 to 30 years old according to Herodotus. Croesus would have been an old man in his 60's or 70's.

The Nabonidus Chronicle reads, "In the month of Nisanu, Cyrus, king of Persia, called up his army and crossed the Tigris below the town Arbela. In the month Aiaru [he marched] against the country Ly[dia] . . . killed its king [Croesus], took his possessions, put (there) a garrison of his own. Afterwards, his garrison as well as the king [Croesus] remained there."

It should be noted that the Nabonidus Chronicle both says that Cyrus "killed its king" Croesus and "the king remained there" both of which seem to contradict each other. How can Croesus be killed and yet remain alive after the pyre? This contradiction seems to match Herodotus's narrative where Croesus was both burned on the pyre and survived after the fact (Hdt. 1.86-87). Diodorus Siculus also recalled the preservation of Croesus after the pyre and stated that Croesus was given a position of honor in Cyrus's council of wisemen (Diod. Sic. 9.34).

The cuneiform above declares, "[Cyrus] took his [Croesus's] possessions." In the same way, Herodotus wrote more elaborately describing even the reply which he gave. "Nay," Croesus answered, "not my city, nor my possessions; for I have no longer any share of all this; it is your wealth that they are ravishing" (Hdt. 1.88). Harmony exists between Herodotus and the Nabonidus Chronicle without any need to claim one superior to the other.

The Greek historian Diodorus Siculus and the Roman historian Pompeius Trogus apparently relied on a harmony of both Herodotus and Xenophon without claiming that one or the other was fiction. He relied on Ctesias of Cnidus as well for his work (Diod. Sic. 2.32.4). Unfortunately, we neither possess the full original Greek text of book IX of Diodorus Siculus, nor do we possess the unabridged version of Pompeius Trogus, but rather we can rely on fragments of the former and an *Epitome* of the later. The same goes for Ctesias's *Persica*, which we only know through the writings of Herod the Great's friend Nicolaus of Damascus and our most venerable St. Photios the Great. Diodorus Siculus relied on Herodotus for a great portion of his work, Ctesias for other parts, in addition to Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*.

One example can be given by Croesus's oracular statements. Herodotus narrated Croesus's Delphian oracular reply about a mule becoming lord of the Medians before he would be defeated (Hdt. 1.55). Xenophon narrated the oracle about Croesus being told "know thyself" so that he could become happy (Xen. *Cyrop.* 7.2.20). Diodorus Siculus mentioned both Herodotus's oracle about the mule (Diod. Sic. 9.31) as well as Xenophon's oracle about "know thyself" (Diod. Sic. 9.10.1). Although connected to Chilon in the narrative and never explicitly stated that Croesus had been also told "know thyself", we do find the same language used by Herodotus and Xenophon used by Diodorus Siculus synthesized while describing Croesus and the pyre, which in my opinion, shows that Herodotus and Xenophon were both used with most likely several other available histories in the 1st century BC in order for Diodorus Siculus to compose his magna opera (Diod. Sic. 9.10.16).

The Roman historian Pompeius Trogus also used both Herodotus and Xenophon. Pompeius Trogus first retells Herodotus 1.123-130 in Latin for the narration of Cyrus's birth and overthrow of the Medes (Just. *Epit.* 1.4-1.6). Note carefully that Pompeius Trogus does not

chime in that there is any possibility of Herodotus's childhood account being fictional. The assumption, during Emperor Augustus, was that Herodotus was a reliable source for historical information by the Romans in the same way we have shown among the Greeks. We find the same assumption of authenticity in Pompeius Trogus's rendering of Xenophon's chronology as legitimate as we do in Diodorus Siculus. We next find the account as described by Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, namely the second overthrow of the Lydians, chronologically placed after 539 BC and the fall of Babylon (Just. *Epit.* 1.7). Obviously, in the fuller account, Croesus was conquered twice, since in the abridged version we find only the second overthrow mentioned explicitly with the Latin phrase, "quibus iterum victis" [by whom he conquered again] (Just. *Epit.* 1.7.12).

Although contemporary western scholars would side with only Herodotus and claim that Xenophon's account is imaginary, I will side with Pompeius Trogus (and additionally Justin) by attempting to find harmony among the apparent contradictions. Another possibility for harmonization is that two different Lydian/Ionian revolts may have occurred between the initial capture of Croesus in 547 BC and the fall of Sardis in 539 BC. Possibly there were several leaders who took charge instead of Croesus and both Herodotus and Xenophon are only abbreviating a fuller picture of what took place. In that way, there could have been two or more Ionian revolts after the first one. If so, there are no contradictions between the texts. Only one author relates the first part of the narrative, and the other author relates the second part. Neither of these Ionian revolts should be confused with the later Ionian Revolt of 499-493 BC under King Darius the Great (Hdt. 5.97-6.42). Those Ionian Revolts are certainly much later as Herodotus recalls and most historians would not question.

The harmony between King Cyrus's metaphor and the New Testament also must not be overlooked. According to Herodotus, since he had offered terms to the Ionians and they refused,

King Cyrus compared them to fish to whom he played his flute, and they did not dance (Hdt. 1.141). In the New Testament, Jesus Christ referred back to Herodotus' analogue, assuming its common knowledge even to children when he declared that his cousin John was "Elijah which was for to come," (Matthew 11:14). Little children used to sit in the agora shouting a common expression in their play-world, "We piped to you and you did not dance; we mourned to you and ye have not wept" (Matthew 11:16-17, Luke 7:32). Today kids might say, "I was trying to be nice the first time but you didn't listen to me." From this connection between Herodotus and the New Testament, we find 1st century reassurance that in the Roman Empire children were taught Herodotus as fact and used expressions based on that common knowledge. Josephus mentioned that even slaves in Judea who wanted to read Greek historians "could choose to" learn to read them (Joseph. *AJ.* 20.11.3). In his speech to the Jewish population, King Agrippa II mentioned the following battles from Herodotus, books 6-9, as common knowledge (Joseph. *BJ.* 2.16.4): the Battle of Marathon (Hdt. 6.94-140), the Battle of Thermopylae (Hdt. 7.175-239), the Battle of Salamis (Hdt. 8.40-96) and Platea (Hdt. 9.1-89). With the above details, we can conclude that Jewish children in the 1st century AD would have read Herodotus in school and played "King Cyrus" in their make-believe world. The average person was familiar with Herodotus and Xenophon. No one chose sides between one or the other. In the Roman Empire, the common person viewed both Herodotus and Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* as historical facts.

Thus, we can piece together the narration as follows. First, Cyrus took over the Median throne when he was at the very minimum age 16 or 17 years old as described by Herodotus (Hdt. 1.123-130). We are quoting the minimum since Herodotus and Xenophon are not very clear on how old Cyrus was during each historical event. Cyrus was some unspecified age older than our minimum possible age of 16 to 17. We don't know until we allow Cicero to give us assistance.

According to Cicero's chronology, Cyrus was 40 years old when he became king of Persia after his father's death and 49 years old when he overtook his grandfather's throne in Media (Cic. *Div.* 1.23.46). If Cicero's dates were accurate, as we have no alternative dates to compare with, we can conclude that the birth of Cyrus would have been in 600 BC. On the contrary, if Cicero's dates were inaccurate, by taking 550 BC and subtracting 16 or 17 years of age, the age the children finish their schooling with the children around 16 to 17 years of age and join the young men, we can arrive at an alternatively late date for Cyrus's birth, i.e., 567 BC (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.2.8). The dating of Cicero would have made him several decades older than otherwise would have been presumed based on intuition alone (Cic. *Div.* 1.23.46). Thus, Cyrus next captured Croesus the king of Lydia around age 53 in 547 BC according to Cicero, or at least 25 to 26 years of age according to Herodotus (Hdt. 1.77-1.91) since he had graduated from the 10-year-period of being with the young men (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.2.9). From there, Cyrus kept the Persian dominance until he was approximately 60 (at least 27 to 30 years old) when his grandfather Astyages finally died in Media no later than 540/539 BC (Hdt. 1.130 & Xen. *Cyrop.* 5.2). Xenophon wrote, "For Cyrus had by this time completed his ten years among the young men," (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.4). Without a careful reading, it would be easy to conclude that Cyrus was only right then and there turning 26 to 27 years old. But Xenophon most likely is relating this information, not because he was 26 in 539 BC, but rather since he skipped over several decades and now arrives at a time period where Cyrus is much older than he had been in the chapters and verses immediately preceding Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.1. Cyrus would have been at least 45-50 years old after the gap and probably as old as Cicero's date of 60 when the text continued on. This is another piece of textual evidence to support the gap theory between Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.1 and 1.5.2 as I have already proposed.

CYAXARES II AND CYRUS CO-REIGN

With the 1956 discovery of the Harran Stele, which dates to the 13th to 15th year of Nabonidus, which is roughly 542-540 BC, scholars can now sigh in relief that there is cuneiform evidence to support a historicity of a king of the Medes after the Persian Revolt of 550 BC (Anderson, 2014, pp. 94-95). The king of the Medes, mentioned on the Harran Stele in Sumerian as *lugal ma-da-a-a*, fits no other historical character than Xenophon's Cyaxares II, called Darius the Mede in the Biblical text, who would have been pushing sixty years old at the time of the cuneiform inscription.

The Biblical book of Daniel is the second primary source which speaks of a historic Darius the Mede, who was king alongside Cyrus the Persian (Daniel 6:28). The night of October 11th, 539 BC, Daniel interpreted the Writing on the Wall, saying, "PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" (Daniel 5:28). After Cyrus and Darius take control over Babylon, the following narrative speaks of "the law of the Medes and Persians" (Daniel 6:8), which is in agreement with Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, where "the laws of the Persians" are distinct from the laws of the Medes (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.2.2-3, 8.5.25). All of these and more show from a traditional Biblical viewpoint that the Bible is the most credible source for the proof of a true historical Darius the Mede. But since modern scholars have a different opinion, we will examine additional historical documents to further argue our thesis.

The second oldest historical reference apart from the Bible which speaks of the Median King who was the son of Astyages is found in Aeschylus's *The Persians*, first performed in Athens in 472 BC. Kindly note that Aeschylus's parents were alive during Cyrus the Great's

lifetime and his information most likely was fairly accurate since it was staged in front of all the Athenians as public entertainment.

Lines 765-768 read as follows:

Μῆδος γὰρ ἦν ὁ πρῶτος ἡγεμὼν στρατοῦ:
ἄλλος δ' ἐκείνου παῖς τόδ' ἔργον ἥνυσεν:
φρένες γὰρ αὐτοῦ θυμὸν ὠκοστροφούν.
τρίτος δ' ἀπ' αὐτοῦ Κῦρος, εὐδαίμων ἀνὴρ, (Aesch. *Pers.* 765-769).

They are translated by Herbert W. Smyth as follows:

“For Medus [Astyages] was first to be the leader of its host;
and another, his son [Cyxares II], completed his work since wisdom ruled his spirit.
Third, after him, Cyrus, blessed in good fortune,
came to the throne and established peace for all his people” (Aesch. *Pers.* 765-769).

These words were spoken by the actor who played the ghost of Darius the Great, recalling the history from the first Medo-Persian ruler of the Empire. According to Herodotus, Astyages was the first to marry off his Median princess Mandane to a Persian prince Cambyses I (Hdt. 1.107). The first Mede in Aeschylus's *The Persians*, translated above as Medus, was most likely speaking of Astyages and the son most likely was Cyxares II as my added brackets are indicating. An alternative view could be that the first Mede was Cyxares I and the son was Astyages. Two views exist on this. The reader must judge for himself based on a consensus between this and the other texts to determine who these unnamed kings are who proceeded Cyrus as #3. From Aeschylus alone, we only know that there was a father and son king of Media who proceeded Cyrus the Great.

The prophecy of Daniel 11:1-2 logically preceded the above play of Aeschylus. Here we find Darius the Mede followed by 3 Persian kings and a 4th who meets the description of Xerxes. According to Newton's commentary on Daniel (brackets and italics are Newton's), "There the Angel tells *Daniel*, that *he stood up to strengthen Darius the Mede, and that there should stand up yet three kings in Persia* [Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius Hystaspis] and the fourth [Xerxes] shall be far richer than they all: and by his wealth through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia" (Newton, 1733, p. 124 & p. 169). With the modern assumption that Darius the Mede never existed, there would not have been a prophecy to include both Darius the Mede and Darius Hystaspis in the same verse. Obviously, the author of the book of Daniel, whether we believe the prophecy or not, had known of the existence of an older Darius the Mede, who lived and reigned during "the third year of Cyrus king of Persia" (Daniel 10:1). Thus, from these top three primary sources, the Harran Stele (dated to 540 BC), the book of Daniel (traditionally dated to approx. 530 BC), and Aeschylus (472 BC), we find the historical evidence of a historical Darius the Mede, also called Cyaxares II after his grandfather.

The next primary source we have to support a historic Cyaxares II is Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*. Thus, let us continue to retell the narrative. With the final death of Astyages in Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2 between 550 BC and 540/539 BC, we see several things occur. First, Cyaxares II seized/took the throne from Cyrus, even though in our thesis he had no legitimate claim to it as we have discussed (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2). With the back story of Cyrus already holding a claim to the Median throne for several decades, as described by Herodotus (Hdt. 1.130). We can interpret the next phrase in Xenophon which reads "he took the kingdom" not as though he took the kingdom from his deceased father, but from rather from Cyrus his nephew, who was actually acting in the place of king of both the Medes and Persians for quite some time. It might be of

importance to compare the original Greek wording of the section of Herodotus where Gyges *took* (ἔσχε) the Lydian throne and the section of Xenophon where Cyaxares II *took* (ἔσχε) the Median throne. Both sections use the Greek word ἔσχε which commonly means *to have, handle, or hold*, but in the proper context can also mean *to seize, take, capture, etc.* according to the Liddel & Scotts Lexicon to indicate that the kingdom was taken by force as with Gyges the Lydian (compare Hdt. 1.12 & 1.13 to Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2).

My proposed recreation of the chronology differs only slightly from Auchincloss, who claimed, “A very strong attachment was formed with the latter [Cyaxares II] so that in after years when Cyrus deposed his grandfather, in B.C. 558, he [Cyrus] made his uncle the king of Media” (Auchincloss, 1905, p. 96). I will allow the possibility of Cyaxares II mounting a Median throne before the actual death of Astyages between 550 and 540 BC, but since the text in Xenophon literally reads as though the grandfather dies and then afterwards Cyaxares II mounted the throne, I would rather interpret the narration as literally as possible without mixing around any chronological details (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.1). I also disagree with Auchincloss’s date of 558 BC for Cyrus’s takeover of his grandfather’s Median throne and prefer my date of 550/549 BC.

According to the Nabonidus Chronicles, Cyrus took over Astyages’ Median kingdom in the 6th year of his reign, which parallels 550/549 BC (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305). Hence, I date Cyrus’s overthrow to match the Nabonidus Chronicles exactly. The cuneiform tablet here is a form of stability for my chronology. Auchincloss had used only Herodotus’ 29 years and assumed that Herodotus started the count when Cyrus became king of Media (Auchincloss, 1905, p. 96). My synthesis of Herodotus and the Nabonidus Chronicle retains Herodotus’s numbers. The beginning date still starts in 558/559 BC. But instead of that date being when Cyrus became the king of Media, I believe that the date was when his father Cambyses was

simply too old and wanted to pass on the crown, making Cyrus the new king of Persia, which matches exactly with the Nabonidus Chronicles (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305).

Once the old Astyages finally died a natural (or unnatural) death, Cyaxares II claimed the throne of the Medes instead of Cyrus (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2). In this way, the book of Daniel describes a dual kingship of “Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian” (Daniel 6:28). Both characters were truly kings, but the precision of who was king over what extent seems to be unclear. The Apocryphal chapter 14 of Daniel mentioned a peaceful transition from Astyages passing away to Cyrus succeeding to the kingdom of his grandfather (Daniel 14:1). For both the Bible to agree from chapter to chapter with itself and for Herodotus to agree with Xenophon, we need to view Cyaxares II (Darius the Mede) as co-reigning to a certain extent with Cyrus for a short interval after Astyages passes away. In this way, my own thesis of the co-reigning of the two kings agrees with Clement of Alexandria and St. Jerome by harmonizing these accounts (Clem. *Strom.* 1.14). St. Jerome also mentioned how the Prophet Isaiah had spoken of a two-horsed chariot, of an ass and of a camel, (Isaiah 21:7) which implied the duality of a Persian king and Median king together (Hieron. *Com. Dan.* 5:1, p. 518). Nevertheless, just as St. Jerome mentioned that other notable authorities have other opinions, I readily admit that my own opinion is not the only possibility even for the most educated of scholars to consider as we will later discuss (Hieron. *Com. Dan.* 5:1, p. 518). Alternative ideas for how the accounts fit together only work with assuming inaccuracies and deceptive methods of historical narration. From the way I have pieced the narrative together, I assume that the historians in the past were honest and had factual information to work with. If we piece together the total storyline with these assumptions of honesty, then we only have small inconsistencies to work with, but all our major issues seem to disappear.

As for Astyages, the reader does not have the information to know exactly when Astyages died or how old Cyrus was at this point. From Herodotus, we find that Cyrus had matured into manhood without any specific age given (Hdt. 1.123). The maturing into manhood could have been referring to his turning 20 or older, since Herodotus speaks of Persians attending school from 5 to 20 years of age (Hdt. 1.136). By comparing Herodotus's ages of Persian children's maturing into adulthood to Xenophon's account, we discover that there are two different approximate graduations, one for kids being at age 16 to 17, and the other for young adults being 10 years later, roughly age 26 or 27+ years old (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.4). The question of exactly how old Cyrus was during 550 BC remains unclear by using Herodotus and Xenophon's text alone. Without any additional aid from later sources, we know Cyrus was at least 17 years old from the context of having matured somewhat recently into a man (Hdt. 1.123). For the sake of approximation, we will conclude for the thesis that Cyrus was *at least* 17 years old in 550 BC and based on this *terminus ad quem* calculate his birth year no later than 567 BC. In the Roman Era, Cicero later stated that Cyrus the Great lived to 70 years of age, became king at age 40, and reigned for a total of 30 years (Cic. *Div.* 1.23.46). If Cicero's dates were accurately passed down to him, Cyrus would have been born in roughly 600 BC. For a skeptic, Cyrus could have been born anywhere between 567 BC and 600 BC without any major problems with chronology other than his age being younger than Cicero's claim of 40 years old in 559 BC when he mounted his father's throne in Persia and 49 years old in 550 BC when he took over his grandfather's throne of Media. Thus, we will continue to describe the remaining storyline in chronological order.

The fate of Astyages is somewhat confused among historical records. According to Herodotus, Astyages was kept in the house of Cyrus until he died (Hdt. 1.130). According to Nicolaus of Damascus, after a decided victory over the Median Empire, Cyrus made Astyages

the satrap of the Barcanians (Abbot, 1881, p. 534). In St. Photios the Great's synopsis of Ctesias, we find the story of Oebares taking Astyages to a desolate area and causing the old man to die from hunger and thirst (Freese, 1920, p. 94). In Mosis Chorenensis's *History of Armenia*, the Armenian King Tigran stabbed Astyages with a spear which pierced his lungs and killed him (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.28.8). First, I would like to imagine the possibility of all of these separate storylines possibly having some truth to them. The amount of various tales leads most to question all of them as potential fables. Let me throw out the possibility of harmony. Perhaps, King Cyrus of Persia overthrew his grandfather's Median Empire in 550 BC like we all agree, then Astyages remained alive "in the house of Cyrus" (Hdt. 1.30) as Herodotus says, with the new job of "satrap of Barcania" like Nicolaus of Damascus says in Libya. Perhaps, Oebares was in the process of starving the poor old man to death in the African desert when the Armenian King Tigran took a spear out and stabbed him. Or perhaps, King Tigran stabbed Astyages first and then Oebares led him into the African desert to starve to death afterward. If both Oebares and Tigran wanted full credit, when each deserved partial credit, there is a chance that both narratives stem from historical fact. Even though Nicolaus of Damascus does not speak of the death of Astyages as St. Photios the Great does, the two historians do share a common theme where Astyages lived his last days "the Barcanians" in Libya, which most likely comes from Ctesias's lost *Persica* (Freese, 1920, p. 94). If we claim that one of the accounts is false information, most likely that would be Ctesias, since, as far as we know from other sources, Libya was not conquered by the Persians with an established satrapy until Darius the Great between 525 and 500 BC (Hdt. 4.160-2-5). With the information present in Ctesias, if his narrative is sound, Libya was conquered sooner than 525 BC by the Medes and had a satrap over Barcania in the early to mid-6th century. The seat for the satrap might have been Ecbatana in

Media, since the historical records for such a Libyan satrapy are non-existent. If Astyages had been titled “satrap of Barcania” and yet lived in Media, the storyline of both sides may have been speaking of true historical events. We do not know from the limited amount of historical records how much accuracy exists to Ctesias when his account is the sole source of information.

The story of King Tigran piercing Astyages with a spear is dramatic and matches the narration of Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* book 3 quite well by giving a cause for the king’s rebellion (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.28.8 & Xen. *Cyrop.* 3.1.1). The backstory has survived by no other historian other than “The Father of Armenia History,” who wrote *The History of Armenia*. In the 5th century AD, Mosis Chorenensis wrote that Astyages had married Tigranuhi (Latinized “Tigrania”), the sister of the king of Armenia (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.23.7). Accordingly, Astyages’ relationship with Tigrania was somewhat suspicious since Astyages had wanted both to be close to Tigran and also be able to kill him if necessary (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.23.8). Cyrus had a true friendship with Tigran, opposed to his grandfather’s paradoxical love/hate relationship (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.24.1-2). Astyages had nightmares concerning his relationship with Tigran (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.24.1). Astyages has a prophetic dream which he interprets to symbolize the king of Armenia taking over his throne (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.25.1-8). Astyages plots to assassinate his friend either with poison or the sword by means of bribery (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.26.1-3). At such time, Astyages sent a message to the king of Armenia requesting to marry his sister and promising that she would be ranked the queen of queens and most important of his wives (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.27.1-3). Most likely since the Median kings “are not permitted to have less than five” (Strab. *Geo.* 13.11.11), Astyages tried to manipulate his new wife into helping him murder Tigran, but the queen tells Tigran through a secret messenger (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.28.4). Then Astyages spilled the beans, telling Tigran all his

wicked plots, and opens war against Armenia (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.28.5). During such war, Tigran killed Astyages with a spear (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.28.8-9). Thus, Astyages was slain by the king of Armenia, which made way for Xenophon's opening screen, "In the course of time, Astyages died in Media" (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2). This backstory lines up perfectly with Xenophon's narration in book 2, where Cyaxares II first assumed that the Armenian army would be allied with their Medo-Persian army (Xen. *Cyrop.* 2.1.6), but then the reader finds the Armenians in revolt at the beginning of the third book (Xen. *Cyrop.* 3.1.1). My theory is that due to political upheaval there was a period of uncertainty concerning ties and authority after the death of Astyages.

The approximate range from 550 to 540 BC is the estimated date for the above narrative can be gleaned from the phrase "Medo-Persae consilium" which I quote for my thesis in the Latin translation since I do not speak or read Armenian (Choren. *Hist. Armen.* 1.28.3). The first important thing to learn is that there was a counsel of both the Medes and Persians, which indicates that at this time Cyrus was king of Persia and his uncle Cyaxares II was king of Media in a dual reigning of mutual friendship. The grandfather was no longer the sole king of Media as he once was but rather a hostage in submission to his grandson Cyrus the Great (Hdt. 1.130).

Xenophon described the king of Assyria, who I take to have been Nabonidus, recently having conquered Arabia (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2). From the Nabonidus Chronicle and other tablets, scholars have noted the Teima Period, when Nabonidus moved to Teima in Arabia from approximately the 6th to 17th year of his reign without returning to Babylon (Beaulieu, 1989, pp. 149-151). During this time of absence, Belshazzar assumed the title of king of Babylon (Beaulieu, 1989, p. 185). Thus, we can date the death of Astyages to approximately the same time as otherwise being between 550 and 539 BC. So, perhaps there is no point in mentioning

the superfluous information. The important element to gain from the abovementioned connections is that we find harmony between Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* and the Nabonidus Chronicle. Both historical sources match each other well.

Next, we find that the Assyrians allied with Croesus the king of Lydia and several other neighboring realms (Xen. *Cyrop.* 2.1.4, 3.1.33, 3.2.3, 3.3.29, 4.1.8). Croesus must have been alive and presumably have been allowed to reign as a subordinate ruler under Cyrus in the same way the Armenian king was granted a subordinate rule in book 3 (Xen. *Cyrop.* 3.1.27).

According to St. Photios the Great, Ctesias wrote that, after his release, Croesus was given charge of the city of Barene, which was located near the Median capitol, along with "an army of 5,000 horsemen and 10,000 pelests, javelin-throwers, and archers" (Freese, 1920, p. 93). We might not be able to call this a client kingdom or satrapy yet, since those terms are used for later setups. But we can find clues to lead us to believe that Ctesias continued to speak of Croesus alive after the pyre and not only alive but with an army of men.

Nevertheless, something similar to the satrapy seems to be indicated by what we read about Cyrus leaving leaders like the King of Armenia on his throne underneath his own authority (Xen. *Cyrop.* 3.1.21). Sometime after the death of Astyages, Croesus the Lydian decided to revolt for a second time with Pactyes at the lead (Hdt. 1.154, Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2, 2.1.4). We will trust both Herodotus and Xenophon as legitimate historical accounts in the same way that Pompeius Trogus and Justin used a harmony of them both put together (Just. *Epit.* 1.7.1-13). Herodotus and Xenophon match fairly well but not precisely in regard to the Lydian revolt. The biggest contradiction here is that Herodotus calls the replacement ruler of Lydia "Tabalus, a Persian" and the treasurer "Pactyes, a Lydian" (Hdt. 1.153) whereas Xenophon calls the leader of the second revolt "Croesus himself along with a Greek and a Mede" (Xen. *Cyrop.* 6.3.11). These

leaders either had shared nationalities, like Cyrus being half Persian and half Median, or there were more leaders than the two mentioned, or one or more of the descriptions is erroneously attributed to the figure. In Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, we read that Croesus was leading a force of 10,000 horsemen and more than 40,000 pelasts and bowmen (Xen. *Cyrop.* 2.1.4). If the numbers are accurate in both historical accounts of Xenophon and St. Photios the Great, we can assume that the additional men numbered in Xenophon included Lydian troops, led by a Greek, Persian, or Mede in 539 BC (Xen. *Cyrop.* 7.3.10-11),

Since we learn that the Persians and Medes are fewer than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the horsemen and only have about $\frac{1}{2}$ as many foot soldiers, there was no choice but for Cyrus to keep his status of charge over the Persians and allow Cyaxares II to seize power over the throne of Media, whether or not he was pressured into it by his uncle or if his uncle had merely been a type of lord protector and/or advisor to the boy without any real hostility (Xen. *Cyrop.* 2.1.6). Cyrus and his uncle seem to get along pretty well throughout the narrative. So, this dual reigning seems to have been more or less mutually decided upon, rather than a full blown out seizure of Cyrus's authority of king of the Medes.

In book 1, Cambyses speaks of the need to be viewed as wiser than one's fellowman in order to become a good leader (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.6.23). In this same way, it is altogether possible that Cyrus allowed his uncle to lead the Median army and have a dual kingship because of how much respect Cyrus had for his uncle, even as a child, and how much respect his uncle mutually had for him, even teasing him at the age of 12 with the words, "Do as thou wilt; for even now thou seemest to be our king (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.4.9).

There is no power struggle mentioned between Cyrus and Cyaxares II, until Book 5, where they have a short emotional power struggle and then resolve it by kissing each other in the

end, which indicates that the dualistic aspect of their mutual reign was not argumentative but cooperative (Xen. *Cyrop.* 5.5.6-37). They get along so well that we should view Cyaxares II as a bastard king who is not trying to oust Cyrus from his throne. For this reason, Cyrus took charge of the Median and Persian army in all his glory, although Cyaxares II was being recognized as the King of Media (Xen. *Cyrop.* 5.5.6).

Xenophon later demonstrates the extreme agreeableness of Cyaxares II by relating the story of Cyrus accepting the invitation to marry his own daughter after the conquest of Babylon (Xen. *Cyrop.* 8.5.17-28). Considering these things, we can harmonize Herodotus's neglecting his character with Xenophon's inclusion thereof. Since Cyaxares II was a bastard, Herodotus skipped over him completely. But since he was a very important part of the story, Xenophon recalls his character and gives us all the hints we need to find out that he was illegitimate to the throne but carried out some aspect of a royal figure alongside Cyrus for several years.

Cyropaedia books 4-5 speak of an Assyrian general, named Gobryas, who helped King Cyrus and King Cyaxares II to conquer Babylon in the siege of 12 October 539 BC. Some modern Bible scholars have argued that this Gobryas was the same historical figure as Darius the Mede in the book of Daniel (Wilson, 1906, p. 88). We will discuss the known parallels and reject such comparison. Our claim will continue to be that Cyaxares II is the Biblical Darius.

THE BABYLONIAN INVASON | CYRUS AGE 61 & CYAXARES II AGE 62 | 539 BC

The fall of Babylon has been dated by scholars to 12 October 539 BC. We will assume the 16th of Tishritu is correct based on the Nabonidus Chronicle (Pritchard, 1969, p. 304). In the book of Daniel we read, "Belshazzar the king made a great feast" (Daniel 5:1a). The same festival was mentioned by Herodotus (Hdt. 1.191) just like Xenophon mentioned in his magnum

opus several decades later (Xen. *Cyrop.* 7.5.15). This Great Feast was the 12th and final day of the second *Akītu* Fall Festival, regularly celebrated in the 7th month (Parpola, 1993, p. 253). The harmony of these 3 separate accounts and the strengthens the possibility that they are speaking of the same exact historical event. Both Herodotus and Xenophon speak of the passageway through the river by digging trenches to drain the water to a lower level which merely reached the thigh (Hdt. 1.191 & Xen. *Cyrop.* 8.5.15-16).

The Writing on the Wall by the hand of God happened the night of October 11th, 539 B.C. and is only recorded in the book of Daniel (Daniel 5:5). Belshazzar was present in Babylon without his father in the palace according to the Biblical narrative. According to the Nabonidus Chronicle the same storyline is told, “The 14th day [of Tishritu], Sippar was seized without battle. Nabonidus fled” (Pritchard, 1969, p. 306). In Josephus’s quotation of Berossus’s *Babylonica* we read, “In the 17th year of his reign, Cyrus advanced from Persia with a large army, and, after subjugating the rest of the kingdom, marched upon Babylonia. Apprised of his coming, Nabonidus fled with his followers, and shut himself up in the town of Borsippa” (Joseph. *Ap.* 151-152). Thus, we know from the harmony between the Nabonidus Chronicle, Berossus, and the Bible that Nabonidus was not present in Babylon during the Fall of Babylon on the 16th of Tishritu, since the aforementioned text says that “Nabonidus fled” two days prior. No contradiction exists between the Nabonidus Chronicle, Berossus, and the Biblical text. Instead, harmony exists between them. In the Bible, we find that Belshazzar was present the night before the Fall of Babylon, but no mention of his father is given in the Biblical text (Daniel 5:1-30). Daniel 5 mentioned also a queen in the palace of Babylon, whom according to St. Jerome, Josephus had thought to have been Belshazzar’s grandmother “avia”, which Origen later corrected to “mater” his mother (Joseph. *AJ.* 10.11.2 & Hieron. *Com. Dan.* 5:10). In the first

century AD, Josephus used the Greek word ἡ μάμμη [“mommy”] in his text, which according to Liddell and Scott originally was defined as “mother” and later became commonly used for “grandmother.” In this way, Josephus might have meant the former definition and Origen’s correction was only updated the vernacular of his day. No need to throw Josephus under the bus since his vocabulary word ἡ μάμμη [“mommy”] could have been interpreted as either mom or grandmother. Josephus admittedly could have gotten some information incorrect concerning the genealogy of the Neo-Babylonian Dynasty, but let us closely examine before calling Josephus a poor scholar. In his *Antiquities*, Josephus called Belshazzar by an additional name ὁ Ναβοάνδηλος, *Naboandelos*, which could be thought to have been the name of his father Nabonidus in Greek (Joseph. *AJ.* 10.11.2). The name of Nabonidus was spelled differently though in Greek and used by Josephus himself in *Against Apion*, when he quoted Berossus’s 3rd book, which is now lost. I advocate for Josephus’s nickname Ναβοάνδηλος, *Naboandelos*, to have been a different name from Nabonidus altogether, since we find the Greek spelling of ὁ Ναβόννηδος, *Nabonnedos*, in Josephus’s quotation of Berossus referring to Nabonidus the father of Belshazzar (Joseph. *Ap.* 150-153), which clearly is a different name than ὁ Ναβοάνδηλος, *Nabonnedos* who was Belshazzar’s other name according to Josephus (Joseph. *AJ.* 10.231). Although Ναβοάνδηλος, *Naboandelos* and Ναβόννηδος, *Nabonnedos* are similar to each other, they are not spelled exactly the same. Josephus was not incompetent enough to mix up the characters in his own books. Josephus spelled the two names differently. On the contrary, later historians have assumed that Josephus made a mistake. But the error was on the part of the latter’s ignorant interpretation of Josephus, not the former. We must not blame Josephus himself for a mistake which he did not make.

In the 13th century, Gregorius Bar Hebraeus, a medieval Syrian historian, mistakenly claimed that Darius the Mede was called Nabonidus. “Darius Medus.” We expect to find something relating to Cyaxares II, but instead the text continues. “Appellant illum Graeci Nabonidem” (Gregorius, 1663, p. 52). This careless mistake most likely stemmed from a mindless reading of Eusebius’s *Chronicon*, where in the Armenian translation, the phrase, “But Darius took some of the province for himself,” is followed by, “So, Nabonidus passed the rest of his life and died in the land” (Karst, 1911, p. 20). The poor reader thought Darius and Nabonidus were the same person, but they obviously were not. We can forgive the 13th century Syrian for reading these together and assuming that Darius and Nabonidus were the same dude. But Josephus needs no apology. Josephus had his head on straight. From the Nabonidus Chronicle we find both a crowned prince and Nabonidus being two separate individuals, just like Josephus demonstrated. Mistakes around Nabonidus are easy to understand without checking the Babylonian records. Josephus quoted Berossus 3rd book both in his *Antiquities* and *Against Apion*. So, Josephus made no mistakes which were that blatant like mixing up characters. The same thing goes with the queen Nitocris, mother of Belshazzar, who is sometimes mixed up with Amytis the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar and sister of Astyages (Burstein, 1975, p. 25). Josephus used the word ἡ μάμμη which could have meant either lady, Nitocris or Amytis. We find in the Nabonidus Chronicle the record of the death of Nabonidus’s mother Amytis, dated on “Nisanu 5th in the 9th year of his reign”, which parallels 547/546 B.C. (Pritchard, 1969, p. 306). Josephus’s ἡ μάμμη [“mommy”] must have referred to the “mommy” who was mother instead of grandmother. Origen’s assessment, as stated by St. Jerome, that the queen in Daniel was the mother and not grandmother matches the Nabonidus Chronicle perfectly, since the mother was still alive at this time, whereas the grandmother had passed away a decade prior (Hieron. *Com.*

Dan. 5:10). Herodotus even calls Belshazzar by the matronymic title “son of Nitocris” to signify the royal ties with his mother who was the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar and possibly also the proximity of his mother living at the palace with him. Herodotus wrote, “Cyrus, then, marched against Nitocris' son who inherited the name of his father Labynetus [aka “Nabonidus”] and the sovereignty of Assyria.” (Hdt. 1.188). Even George F. Handel had believed that Nitocris was the queen in Daniel chapter 5 in his oratorio called *Belshazzar* (Handel, 1733). The heretic Porphyry, on the other hand, had mistakenly assumed that the queen in Daniel was Belshazzar’s wife and had poked fun at the wife for supposedly knowing more than her husband (Hieron. *Com. Dan.* 5:10). A quick mental note should be taken in regard to Porphyry’s error and St. Jerome’s kind correction, which helps support my thesis that Daniel’s account is historical and dates to the 6th century BC, regardless of Porphyry’s erroneous claims. It should also be kindly accepted that Josephus’s characters match Cuneiform and other historical records perfectly. With such a record of accuracy, we should easily accept his connectoin between Darius the Mede and Cyaxares II in the following text.

Josephus wrote, “For it was Baltasar, under whom Babylon was taken; when he had reigned seventeen years. And this is the end of the posterity of King Nebuchadnezzar, as history informs us. But when Babylon was taken by Darius; and when he, with his kinsman Cyrus, had put an end to the dominion of the Babylonians, he was sixty two years old. He was the son of Astyages: and had another name among the Greeks” (Joseph. AJ. 10.11.4).

With Josephus being taken as reliable, “the other name among the Greek” obviously was Cyaxares II, as Xenophon clearly showed. To assume any “son of Astyages” would be impossible. To paraphrase Herodotus’s claim with the blanket statement that “Astyages had no son” only brings further problems if we are trying to prove that Cyaxares II, aka Darius the

Mede, was a fictional character in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*. Let us examine the literal translation of Herodotus. After Harpagus gave the baby to the cowherd, the cowherd told his wife, "Ἀστυάγης μὲν ἐστὶ γέρον καὶ ἄπαις ἔρσενος γόνου" ["Asyages is an old man and is without male issue"] (Hdt. 1.109). The easy way to harmony the cowherd's statement is to hold to *The Bastard Child Theory* and claim that Cyaxares II had a mother who was either a concubine or slave, etc. Since he was only royal from his father's side of the family, Cyaxares II is always called by his patronymic throughout Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.5.2), opposed to a king such as Belshazzar whom Herodotus called by his matronymic since it was through his mother, not father, he was related to Nebuchadnezzar (Hdt. 1.188).

Xenophon related how Gobryas and Gadatas find their way through the gates of Babylon along with Cyrus and his troops (Xen. *Cyrop.* 7.5.27-32). The Nabonidus Chronicle confirms the historicity of Gobryas. "The 16th day, Gobryas (Ugbaru) the governor of Gutium and the army of Cyrus entered Babylon without battle" (Pritchard, 1969, p. 306). The miraculous entrance through the main gates of Babylon parallels perfectly with the prophecy in Isaiah, which reads, "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;" (Isaiah 45:1). This prophecy parallels to what we read as legitimate history in Herodotus and Xenophon.

After the city of Babylon was breached, Xenophon tells us, "The king is slain" (Xen. *Cyrop.* 7.5.33) and "Cyrus took possession of the citadel" (Xen. *Cyrop.* 7.5.34). Xenophon's statement here compares precisely to the book of Daniel, where we read, "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain" (Daniel 6:30). Nabonidus was not slain but kept alive according to the Nabonidus Chronicle, "Afterwards Nabonidus was arrested in Babylon

when he returned (there)” (Pritchard, 1969, p. 306). Harmony is found between these accounts, which clearly describe Nabonidus remaining alive after the Fall of Babylon and his son Belshazzar getting slain “that night” as Daniel and Xenophon both describe (Daniel 6:30 & Xen. *Cyrop.* 7.5.34).

According to the Nabonidus Chronicle, “Afterwards Nabonidus was arrested in Babylon when he returned (there)” (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305). Josephus’ quote from Berossus book 3 parallels, “Cyrus proceeded to Borsippa to besiege Nabonidus. The latter surrendering without waiting for investment, was humanely treated by Cyrus, who dismissed him from Babylonia, but gave him Carmania for his residence. There Nabonidus spent the remainder of his life and died” (Joseph. Ap. 152-153). The location of Borsippa is not specified as where Nabonidus fled to in the Nabonidus Chronicle, but we do find the location of Borsippa mentioned, “[Seventeenth year:] Nebo [went] from Borsippa for the procession of [Bel. ..] [the king] entered the temple E.tur.kalam.ma , in the t[emple] . . . (partly unintelligible)” (Pritchard, 1969, p. 305). The harmony between the Nabonidus Chronicle and Berossus’s *Babyloniaca* should not be surprising.

In the Bible, the next ruler over Babylon was said to have been “Darius the Mede,” who replaced Belshazzar as the king in the palace at Babylon (Daniel 5:31 & 6:1). These remarks also parallel exactly to Xenophon’s location of Cyaxares II being housed in a palace in Babylon (Xen. *Cyrop.* 8.5.17). Xenophon also speaks of how Cyrus trusted eunuchs as his bodyguard (Xen. *Cyrop.* 7.5.60-65), which might parallel with Daniel becoming well esteemed by Darius the Mede and given a high rank (Daniel 6:3). The end of the story of Daniel and the Lions’ Den finishes with the date being “during the reign of Darius and Cyrus the Persian”, which again showed the mutual aspect of Cyaxares II and Cyrus both co-reigning as we have examined in

Xenophon's account (Daniel 6:28). Besides Josephus (Joseph. *AJ.* 10.11.4), the co-ruling of Cyrus and Cyaxares II is later attested by Clement of Alexandria and St. Jerome in the Early Church (Clem. *Strom.* 1.14 & Hieron. *Com. Dan.* 5:1).

In the Bible, the prophet Isaiah foretold a Cyrus who would "subdue nations" and "open doors" (Isaiah 44:28 to 45:3). The later Jewish historian Josephus estimated the timeframe between Isaiah's oral prophecy and the destruction of Solomon's Temple in 587 BC to have been a total of 140 years (Joseph. *AJ.* 11.1.2). With that in mind, Christians and Jews have the ability to marvel at the power of God to have accurately told the future before it happened.

According to Josephus, the fact that Biblical prophecy can be verified by Jewish chronicles like these shows that the "Epicureans are in an error" since they believed that there is no deity who controls the elements of the universe (Joseph. *AJ.* 10.11.7). The chance that these prophecies were made up at a later date and then backdated, as several modern scholars are pushing, would make Josephus out to have been a liar or an ignorant fool, neither of which position we will even investigate at the moment for lack of time or interest. Instead, just as Josephus declared to his reader, we will allow that "if any one is inclined to another opinion about them, let him enjoy his different sentiments without any blame from me" (Joseph. *AJ.* 10.11.7).

CONCLUSION:

The above narration of Cyrus and his uncle Cyaxares II, aka Darius the Mede, has been represented by taking the historical documentation which is available today and assuming that the Biblical book of Daniel, Herodotus, and Xenophon's accounts are all telling the truth, in agreement with the Babylonian, Persian, Syrian, Armenian, Greek, and Roman secular historians

throughout the ages, as well as Early Church Fathers and later 17th through 19th century historians.

I believe that Herodotus and Xenophon accurately wrote individually abridged historical narrations concerning the Persian Empire based on true events which literally happened. I take it for granted that they could tell the truth apart from fiction as good, if not possibly better, than all modern Classics scholars in the world today who do not have access to the same quantity of books in the Library of Alexandria, which was available for Greeks and Romans to read and examine. The monastic scribes carefully chose the best of the Classical Library to save for the future. Without such remains, none of our history would be known to the extent available today.

I also believe that the text of the book of Daniel which we have today closely matches the original compositions, although we must examine the layers of Aramaic in the current textual standards as well as the different readings of Greek in the Septuagint which have been passed down to us. The assumption which I make is that the book of Daniel was literally written by Daniel himself or a contemporary scribe in the 6th century BC in Imperial Aramaic. Then in the 3rd century BC, under Demetrius Phalerum, the book was translated into Greek by Jewish scribes. From there, both the Imperial Aramaic was updated into Middle Aramaic and the Classical Greek was later retranslated into updated Greek in the second and third century AD by Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodosius. From St. Jerome's *Commentary On Daniel* and Latin translation of Origen's *Hexapla* we can be very certain about the original text.

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