Finding Belteshazzar, the Daniel of the Bible

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Abstract: There is a man named *Innin-šar-usur* in the archives of Erech that dates to the time of Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus.[1] The "ININ" part of his name is The goddess of Uruk, who was known by many names in the Neo-Babylonian times.[2] When one substitutes one of her names, "Belti-*', for "INNIN", his name then becomes Belteshazzar, which is the name Daniel was given when he got to Babylon[3]. *Innin-šar-usur* shares a grandfather with a person who can be shown to be Shadrach, one of Daniel's known friends[4], and he lived in the right time period and place to be the Daniel of the Bible. There is no other contradictory information known about this man that prevents him from being Daniel, and he has four positive, identifying characteristics that match Daniel. Therefore, until other information proves otherwise, this man could be the Daniel of the Bible, recorded as his Babylonian name of Belteshazzar.

Preface: I have been praying for twenty years that Daniel would be found in the Babylonian records. I am very thankful and grateful that God answered my prayer, and has helped me find Daniel this year as both his Belteshazzar name, and his own name in the archives of Babylon. Because of Exodus 23:13[5], I will not fully spell out the names of the Babylonian gods or goddesses in this paper. If a logogram is used, then I will quote the logogram, because it is usually not pronounced the way it is written. If the reader wishes to know the full names of the deities, the references are given where the names are spelled out fully.

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[1] See Daugherty, Raymond Phillip, "*Archives From Erech Time of Nebuchadrezzar and Nabonidus",* which can be accessed as a pdf file here: : http://etana.org/sites/default/files/coretexts/20281.pdf page 43.

[2] For a discussion about INNIN, see Heffron, http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/amgg/listofdeities/inanaitar/   . To see that the goddess of Uruk had multiple names during the Neo-Babylonian times, see page 77 in the pdf version, or 128 in the original paper of Paul-Alain Beaulieu's paper "The Pantheon of Uruk During Neo-Babylonian Period" found here: https://ia801408.us.archive.org/19/items/ThePantheonOfUrukDuringTheNeo-BabylonianPeriod/ThePantheonOfUrukDuring.pdf

[3] See Daniel 1:1-7 here: https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+1%3A1-7&version=KJV

[4] See Daniel 1:7 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+1%3A7&version=KJV , Daniel 4:8 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+4%3A8&version=KJV and Daniel 5:12 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+5%3A12&version=KJV

[5] See Exodus 23:13 here: https://mobile.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+23%3A13&version=KJV

I.   INNIN = Goddess of Uruk = Belti-*
Beltiya = Generic Goddess

In the book *Archives From Erech: Time of Nebuchadrezzar and Nabonidus*[6], by Raymond Philip Daugherty, there is a collection of cuneiform tablets from Gaucher College that mention the name *Innin-šar-usur.*[7]   According to the website "Ancient Mesopotamian Gods and Goddesses,[8]" the cuneiform logogram INNIN represents the goddess of Uruk. This goddess was known by at least four other names through the time of the Neo-Babylonian Empire[9]. Therefore, since a logogram does not need to sound like it is spelled[10], and since this goddess had more than one name in use during the time period that this man was alive, it is just as valid to translate this man's name into any of the goddess' other names. One of her names was Belti-*.[11]

 It seems that the term "Beltiya" meant "My Lady", and was a generic name for a goddess[12]. It was also a specific name for the Goddess of Uruk, but was becoming slightly archaic[13] when Daniel got to Babylon in the 20th year of Nabopolassar.

II.   Innin-šarru-uṣur = Belti-šarru-uṣur = Belteshazzar

Therefore, by substitution, the name Innin-šarru-uṣur could also be translated as Belti-šarru-uṣur. Several other Babylonian names ending in "šarru-uṣur" are

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[6] Daugherty, Raymond Phillip, "*Archives From Erech",* which can be accessed as a pdf file here: :
http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/amgg/listofdeities/inanaitar/
http://etana.org/sites/default/files/coretexts/20281.pdf
[7] See Daugherty, p. 43.
[8] See the page for ININ here: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/amgg/listofdeities/inanaitar/
[9] See page 77 in the pdf version, or 128 in the original paper of Paul-Alain Beaulieu's paper "The Pantheon of Uruk During Neo-Babylonian Period" found here:
https://ia801408.us.archive.org/19/items/ThePantheonOfUrukDuringTheNeo-babylonianPeriod/ThePantheonOfUrukDuring.pdf
[10] For example the logogram LUGAL is pronounced "sharru". See footnote 14.
[11] I will not write out the full name of this goddess by her real name, because of Exodus 23:13 "And in all things that I have said unto you be circumspect: and make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth." To see this goddess' full name, look on page 78 (128) of Paul-Alain Beaulieu's paper "The Pantheon of Uruk During Neo-Babylonian Period", found here:
https://ia801408.us.archive.org/19/items/ThePantheonOfUrukDuringTheNeo-babylonianPeriod/ThePantheonOfUrukDuring.pdf
[12] See "Beltiya" http://godfinder.org/index.html?q=Akkadian
[13] See footnote 9. The Goddess' "Belti*- " name was prominent in the early years of Nabopolassar, but was pretty well discarded by the 6th year of his reign. Daniel got to Babylon in Nabopolassar's 20th year. Therefore, people still knew this goddess by the Belti*-name, but it was becoming archaic.

represented in the Bible with the ending "shazzar[14]". When we apply this same transformation to "Belti-šarru-uṣur", we get Belteshazzar, exactly matching the Biblical account of Daniel's Babylonian name[15]. Therefore, the man recorded as Innin-šarru-uṣur above could be the Belteshazzar, or Daniel, of the Bible.

III.   Another Case of Substitution of This Goddess' Name

There is another case of a substitution of the names of this goddess in another person in this same archive. In the index of names, a man named M*duka is the father of these people: *Gimillu, Ibni-Innina,* and *Ibni-Is*tar.*[16] It appears that this man had three children, but he probably really only had two children: Gimillu and Ibni-Goddess of Uruk. In one document, Ibni must have been called "Ibni-Innina", and in another document he was called "Ibni-Is*tar". Otherwise, Gimillu would have a "brother Ibni", and his "other brother Ibni". The best explanation of this situation, is that the names of the goddess of Uruk were substituted freely during this time, and not that Gimillu had two brothers with nearly identical names.

IV.   Daniel Recorded His Babylonian Name as Belteshazzar

When Daniel got to Babylon, the chief of the eunuchs changed Daniel's name to Belteshazzar.[17] The form of the name we see in the Bible is either the generic name for "Goddess", or a specific name of the goddess of Uruk, with the last

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[14]I am citing Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Nergalsharezer.   For Nebuchadnezzar, see Daniel 1:1 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+1%3A1&version=KJV. His name in the Babylonian records is *Nabû-kudurri-uṣur.* See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebuchadnezzar_II For Belshazzar, see Daniel 5:1 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+5%3A1&version=KJV His name in the Babylonian records is *dBel-sar-usur* . See Dougherty, "Archives From Erech", p. 37 http://etana.org/sites/default/files/coretexts/20281.pdf   For Nergalsharezer, see Jeremiah 39:3 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+39%3A3&version=KJV . His name in the Babylonian records is U.GAR-LUGAL-u-sar, which is the logogram of his name. See Da Riva, Rocio, "Nebuchadnezzar's Prism", https://www.academia.edu/2110205/_Nebuchadnezzar_IIs_Prism_E%C5%9E_7834_a_new_edition_Zeitschrift_f%C3%BCr_Assyriologie_und_Vorderasiatische_Arch%C3%A4ologie   page 213. The logogram LUGAL is pronounced "sharru". See Syllabary Ea 07, line 101 here: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt/signlists/pager . Scroll to page 3, and then find the link to Ea 07.

[15] See Daniel 1:7 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+1%3A7&version=KJV , Daniel 4:8 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+4%3A8&version=KJV and Daniel 5:12 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+5%3A12&version=KJV

[16] See page 46 in "Archives of Erech" here: http://etana.org/sites/default/files/coretexts/20281.pdf   If Ibni-Innina is a girl, perhaps this is Mordecai and Esther? The father would be Mordecai, (M*-duka) and the daughter would be Esther (Ibni-Ish*tar). Esther 2:5-7 here: https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Esther+2%3A5-7&version=NKJV to see that Mordecai adopted his cousin, and treated her as his own daughter.

[17] See Daniel 1:7 https://mobile.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+1%3A7&version=KJV

syllable cut off. Daniel may have preferred to refer to himself as this modified, generic form, which also was a real, but slightly archaic name for this goddess, rather than saying the goddess' current, more popular name directly; because in Exodus 23:13, his own God had prohibited him from saying the false gods' names[18]. This verse is also why I do not spell out the names of the gods and goddess fully, either. Therefore, if Daniel used a generic form of "Goddess-shazzar" to refer to himself, and that was what he recorded in the Bible, he could communicate his name in good conscience without saying the goddess' current name. This would be equivalent to saying his name was "Tissue-shazzar", instead of "Kleenex-shazzar". People would understand both terms to mean the same thing, with one being a brand name of the other generic form of the item.   This gives us a reason that we may find Daniel in the Babylonian record with a different name than what is recorded in the Bible. These documents may have required him to use his legal name, or one of the current forms of this goddess' name. For example, when I write a personal letter, I sign my name as my informal name of "Shelley", but when I sign my checks, I am "Rochelle".

V.   Confirmation By Time Period, Place, and Peers

As confirmation of this assignment of Innin-šarru-uṣur to Belteshazzar, or Daniel, the time period for the records from Erech in the book are correct for this man to be Daniel. Daniel got to Babylon in the 20th year of Nabopolassar[19] and was active in the Babylonian and Persian governments through the first year of Cyrus.[20] The records of Innin-šarru-uṣur are from the time of Nebuchadnezzar through Nabonidus.

These records were found in Erech (Uruk), a major city of the Neo-Babylonian Empire[21]. It is reasonable that Daniel would have done business in this city over the course of the nearly 70 years he was in Babylon. Therefore, the place matches for Innin-šarru-uṣur to be Daniel.

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[18] See footnote 5 or https://mobile.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+23%3A13&version=KJV
[19] See Houser, Rochelle A. "How the Babylonian Chronicles ABC 4 and ABC 5 Establish Bible Prophesy and Events in Daniel, II Kings, II Chronicles, Esther, and Jeremiah" p. 11 https://www.academia.edu/33530603/How_the_Babylonian_Chronicles_ABC_4_and_ABC_5_Establish_Bible_Prophesy_and_Events_in_Daniel_II_Kings_II_Chronicles_Esther_and_Jeremiah
[20] See Daniel 1:21 here: https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+1%3A21&version=KJV
[21] See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uruk

Also, when we look at the family connections of Innin-šarru-uṣur, we see that he had the same grandfather as Shadrach[22], one of Daniel's known friends.[23] From this index of the archives of Erech, then, we can surmise that Daniel and Shadrach were either brothers or cousins.

IV. Conclusion

In conclusion, the man named *Innin-*š*ar-usur* in the archives of Erech has a name that matches Daniel's Babylonian name when the goddess' name that is recorded is substituted with one of her other known names.   The goddess' name that is recorded in the Bible as Daniel's Babylonian name is not only a specific name for the Goddess of Uruk, but also is a generic name for any goddess. We know a reason why Daniel would have preferred the generic form of this goddess' name over a specific one, and thus there is an additional rational for a substitution in the goddess' names, to match what is recorded in the Bible.   It is reasonable that Daniel would have done business in Erech, so the place matches. The time period is the same, and *Innin-*š*ar-usur* is related to a person who can be shown to be one of the same peers and associates as the Daniel of the Bible. There is no contradictory information known yet about this man that would prevent him from being the Daniel of the Bible. With three identifying characteristics being a minimum to make a positive identification, we can therefore say that a man named Belteshazzar has been found in the Babylonian records, and he is most likely the Daniel of the Bible. Daniel was a real person, and the details about his name change and at least one of his friends are confirmed until proven otherwise. My forthcoming paper will show that Daniel is in also in the Babylonian records as his own name.

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[22] See Dougherty, p 42. The entry for *Gimil-dNa-na-a* shows that he was the grandfather of Innin-šarru-uṣur and M*duk-šum-iddin, which can be shown to be the Babylonian name for Hananiah, or Shadrach. (Houser, forthcoming). A short derivation is here, but the full discussion is forthcoming. The Jews were not supposed to say the names of the false gods. See Exodus 23:13.
https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+23%3A13&version=KJV So, they used corrupted forms of the god names. To get Shadrack from this name, the "šum" part of his name has a "sh" sound. Then shorten the "iddin" to "ad" to form "Shad". Now, take the ending for the false god "M*rduk, to get the "rack" for the Shadrach name. His other records confirm that he is the Shadrach of the Bible. You can also think of this as his familiar "nickname" that Daniel called him, instead of his formal name. For example, my name is Rochelle Annette Helzerman Houser, but my familiar name that everyone calls me is Shelley. In the same way, "M*duk-šum-iddin can be shortened and made into the nickname "Shadrach." The full proof is coming in another paper later.
[23] See Daniel 1:7 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+1%3A7&version=KJV and Daniel 2:49 https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+2%3A49&version=KJV

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