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1) And when Mandane was married to Cambyses, in the first year Astyages saw another vision. It seemed to him that from the womb of this daughter a vine grew, and this vine overspread the whole of Asia. Having seen this vision and delivered it to the interpreters of dreams, he sent for his daughter, being then with child, to come from the land of the Persians. And when she had come he kept watch over her, desiring to destroy that which should be born of her; for the Magian interpreters of dreams signified to him that the offspring of his daughter should be king in his room. Astyages then desiring to guard against this, when Cyrus was born, called Harpagos, a man who was of kin near him and whom he trusted above all the other Medes, and had made him manager of all his affairs; and to him he said as follows: "Neglect not by any means, Harpagos, the matter which I shall lay upon thee to do, and beware lest thou set me aside, and choosing the advantage of others instead, bring thyself afterwards to destruction. Take the child which Mandane bore, and carry it to thy house and slay it; and afterwards bury it in whatsoever manner thou thyself desirest." To this he made answer: "O king, never yet in any past time didst thou discern in me an offence against thee, and I keep watch over myself also with a view to the time that comes after, that I may not commit any error towards thee. If it is indeed thy pleasure that this should so be done, my service at least must be fitly rendered."

Herodotus 1.108

(*Greek historian 484-425 bce)

2) Xerxes being thus desirous to make the expedition, there came to him after this a third vision in his sleep, which the Magians, when they heard it, explained to have reference to the dominion of the whole Earth and to mean that all men should be subject to him; and the vision was this:--Xerxes thought that he had been crowned with a wreath of an olive-branch and that the shoots growing from the olive- tree covered the whole Earth; and after that, the wreath, placed as it was about his head, disappeared. When the Magians had thus interpreted the vision, forthwith every man of the Persians who had been assembled together departed to his own province and was zealous by all means to perform the commands, desiring each one to receive for himself the gifts which had been proposed: and thus Xerxes was gathering his army together, searching every region of the continent.

Herodotus 7.19

3) The origin of this God Serapis has not hitherto been made generally known by our writers. The Egyptian priests give this account. While Ptolemy, the first Macedonian king who consolidated the power of Egypt, was setting up in the newly-built city of Alexandria fortifications, temples, and rites of worship, there appeared to him in his sleep a youth of singular beauty and more than human stature, who counselled the monarch to send his most trusty friends to Pontus, and fetch his effigy from that country. This, he said, would bring prosperity to the realm, and great and illustrious would be the city which gave it a reception. At the same moment he saw the youth ascend to heaven in a blaze of fire. Roused by so significant and strange an appearance, Ptolemy disclosed the vision of the night to the Egyptian priests, whose business it is to understand such matters. As they knew but little of Pontus or of foreign countries, he enquired of Timotheus, an Athenian, one of the family of the Eumolpids, whom he had invited from Eleusis to preside over the sacred rites, what this worship was, and who was the deity. Timotheus, questioning persons who had found their way to Pontus, learnt that there was there a city Sinope, and near it a temple, which, according to an old tradition of the neighbourhood, was sacred to the infernal Jupiter, for there also stood

close at hand a female figure, to which many gave the name of Proserpine. Ptolemy, however, with the true disposition of a despot, though prone to alarm, was, when the feeling of security returned, more intent on pleasures than on religious matters; and he began by degrees to neglect the affair, and to turn his thoughts to other concerns, till at length the same apparition, but now more terrible and peremptory, denounced ruin against the king and his realm, unless his bidding were performed. Ptolemy then gave directions that an embassy should be despatched with presents to king Scydrothemis, who at that time ruled the people of Sinope, and instructed them, when they were on the point of sailing, to consult the Pythian Apollo. Their voyage was prosperous, and the response of the oracle was clear. The God bade them go and carry back with them the image of his father, but leave that of his sister behind.

Tacitus – The Histories 4.83

(*Senator and historian of Roman Empire 56-120 ce)

4) For being assigned to the service of the gods they pass their whole life in philosophy, having the greatest glory in astrology. They pay much attention also to soothsaying making predictions concerning future events, and purifications, and sacrifices with various kinds of incantations they attempt to bring about the avoidance of evil and the accomplishment of good. They have experience also in divination by birds and who the interpretation of dreams and omens.

Diodorus Siculus comparing Chaldeans to the priests of Egypt

(*Greek historian known from writing the monumental “Universal Bibliotheca Historica” between 60-30 bce)

5) “Tale Of Court Contest” (* W Lee Humphreys- A Lifestyle for Diaspora)

- 1- A person of lower status is called before a person of higher status to answer difficult question or to solve a problem requiring insight.
- 2- The person of higher status poses the problem, which no one seems capable of solving.
- 3- The person of lower status solves the problem.
- 4- That person is rewarded for answering.

6) “Sons of lawlessness came out from Israel and misled many, saying, ‘Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles around us, for since we separated from them many evil things have found us’”

(1 Macc 1:11).

These were authorized by the king to “observe the ordinances of the Gentiles,” which included building a gymnasium in Jerusalem “according to the custom of the Gentiles,” removing the marks of circumcision, and abandoning “the holy covenant”

(1 Macc 1:13–15a)

“They were yoked to the Gentiles and sold to do evil”

(1 Macc 1:15b)

“Even many from Israel acquiesced to his worship and sacrificed to idols and profaned the Sabbath”

(1 Macc 1:43)

