



Appendix "A"



The History of Babylon the Great

The term "**Babylon**" brings to mind symbolic images of evil, sin, and wickedness. Likewise, it brings to mind the vivid images conveyed by John the Beloved in the Book of Revelation. In fact, the term has been so commonly used for symbolic

Revelation 17:5

And upon her forehead was a name written, **MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**

purposes that many don't even relate it to the actual city that existed so long ago. The forgotten city, which lies as piles of stone and earth hills in the middle east, was one the mightiest cities on the face of the earth. The current ruins lie in close proximity to the

modern city of "Hilla" or "Al-Hilla", which is actually built from bricks scavenged from the ancient city. Understanding the history and surroundings of the ancient city of Babylon helps us to understand many of the meanings associated with its use as a symbol, as well as understanding much of the Book of Ezekiel.

The History of the City of Babylon is in many respects vague and incomplete at best. Due to the fact that Babylon was one of the more ancient cities in the world, and existed during what many feel was the time that writing was created, there is not much documentation as to its existence and history. We have limited records and legends that historians have pieced together to give somewhat of a history for the great city. Most Babylonian Dates, especially those older than 1,000 BC are estimates or approximations and should be treated as such. This creates problems when attempting to establish chronological tables.

Babylon is the modern name for a city whose ruins lie in modern day Iraq, some 55 miles (90 kilometers) south of Baghdad. Biblically it is referred to as "**Babel**", meaning the "Gate of God". In Akkadian, the early language of the Babylonians, it was called "**Bab-ilm**". The Sumerians, who occupied Babylon from time to time, called Babylon, "**Kadingirra**", while the Greeks called it "**βαβυλων**" (Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon, D.J. Wiseman, page 44).

The very first inhabitants of the city of Babylon came through the children of Noah. After the flood, which took place approximately 2,417 BC (some chronological

tables place the flood much earlier), the children of Noah were told to multiply and replenish the earth. They were instructed to follow the laws of God and prosper in the land that the Lord God had blessed them with. We know via the Bible record that through the lineage of Ham, Noah's son, the city of Babylon, or Babel as it was then called, was first established. W. Cleon Skousen wrote, the "...first settlement by Noah and his sons was in the 'East' and would appear to have been in Media", present day Iran, "or the Eastern side of the Mesopotamian Valley. Therefore when Nimrod and some of the other people became restless the path of migration was toward the west" (*The First 2,000 Years*, W. Cleon Skousen, page 230). This led them to the plains of Shinar (Shinar is often thought to be Sumer or central Mesopotamia) sometime between 2,417 BC and 2,240 BC. It was then that the descendants of Noah built the famous city of Babel or Babylon.

Moses recorded this fact when he wrote the book of Genesis. He recorded the following.

*"Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood...And the sons of Ham; Cush...And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. And the beginning of his kingdom was **Babel**, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city (Genesis 10)."*

Another interesting fact is that the people of Babel "were led by a descendant of Cain named Nimrod" (*The First 2,000 Years*, W. Cleon Skousen, page 229). Nimrod's grandfather, Ham, the son of Noah, had taken a descendant of Cain, Egyptus, as a wife. This denied Ham's lineage the priesthood of God and cursed them with the curse given to Cain and his posterity. This might explain the rebelliousness of his descendants. The descendants of Ham followed a very unrighteous path in life, with Nimrod setting the pace. In the apocryphal book of Jasher we read,

"And Cush the son of Ham, the son of Noah, took a wife in those days, in his old age, and she bare a son, and they called his name Nimrod, saying, At the time the sons of men again began to rebel and transgress against God, and the child grew up, and his father loved him exceedingly, for he was the son of his old age. And the garments of skin which God made for Adam and his wife, when they went out of the garden, were given to Cush. For after the death of Adam and his wife, the garments were given to Enoch, the son of Jared, and when Enoch was taken up to God, he gave them to Methuselah, his son. And at the death of Methuselah, Noah took them and brought them to the ark, and they were with him until he went out of the ark. And in going out, Ham stole those garments from Noah his father, and he took them and hid them from his brothers. And when Ham begat his first born Cush, he gave him the garments in secret,

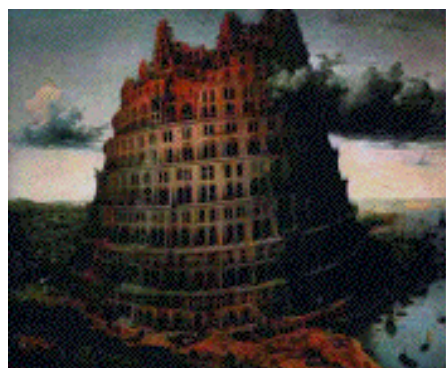
and they were with Cush many days. And Cush also concealed them from his sons and brothers, and when Cush had begotten Nimrod, he gave him those garments through his love for him, and Nimrod grew up, and when he was twenty years old he put on those garments. And Nimrod became strong when he put on the garments, and God gave him might and strength, and he was a mighty hunter in the earth, yea, he was a mighty hunter in the field, and he hunted the animals and he built altars, and he offered upon them the animals before the Lord. And Nimrod strengthened himself, and he rose up from amongst his brethren, and he fought the battles of his brethren against all their enemies round about. And the Lord delivered all the enemies of his brethren in his hands, and God prospered him from time to time in his battles, and he reigned upon earth...he advised with his counselors to build a city for his palace to build a city for his palace, and they did so. And they found a large valley opposite to the east, and they built him a large and extensive city, and Nimrod called the name of the city that he built Shinar...And all nations and tongues heard his fame, and they gathered themselves to him, and they bowed down to the earth, and they brought him offerings, and he became their lord and king, and they dwelt with him in his city of Shinar, and Nimrod reigned in the earth over all the sons of Noah, and they were all under his power and counsel. And all the earth was of one tongue and words of union, but Nimrod did not go in the ways of the Lord, and he was more wicked than all the men that were before him, from the days of the flood until those days. And he made gods of wood and stone, and he bowed down to them, and he rebelled against the Lord, and taught all his subjects and the people of the earth his wicked ways...and they said to each other, Come let us build ourselves a city and in it a strong tower, and its top reaching heaven, and we will make ourselves famed, so that we may reign upon the whole world, in order that the evil of our enemies may cease from us, that we may reign mighty over them...and they went to seek an extensive piece of ground to build their city and the tower, and they sought the whole earth and they found none like one valley at the east of the land Shinar, about two days' walk, and they journeyed there and they dwelt there. And they began to make bricks and burn fires to build the city and the tower that they had imagined to complete. And the building of the tower was unto them a transgression and a sin, and they began to build it, and whilst they were building against the Lord God of Heaven, they imagined in their hearts to war against him and to ascend into heaven... And when they were building they built themselves a great city and a very high and strong tower; and on account of it's height the mortar and bricks did not reach the builders in their ascent to it, until



Statue
Idol
Rabu

those who went up had completed year, and after that, they reached to the builders and gave them the mortar and the bricks; thus it was done daily.

And behold those ascended and others descended the whole day; and if a brick should fall from their hands and get broken, they would all



weep over it, and if a man fell and died, none of them would look at him...And they built the tower and the city, and they did this thing daily until many days and years were elapsed. And God said to the seventy angels who stood foremost before him, to those who were near to him saying, Come let us descend and confuse their tongues, that one man shall not understand the language of his

neighbor, and they did so unto them. And from that day following, they forgot each man his neighbor's tongue, and they could not understand to speak in one tongue, and when the builder took from the hands of his neighbor lime or stone which he did not order, the builder would cast it away and throw it upon his neighbor and he would die... And they ceased building the city and the tower; therefore he called that that place Babel, for there the Lord confounded the language of the whole earth; behold it was at the east of the land Shinar. And as to the tower which the sons of men built, the earth opened it's mouth and swallowed up one third part thereof, and a fire also descended from heaven and burned another third, and the other third is left to this day, and it is of that part which was aloft, and its circumference is three days' walk. And many of the sons of men died in that tower, a people without number...And Nimrod son of Cush was still in the land of Shinar, and he reigned over it and dwelt there, and he built cities in the land of Shinar... And he called the first Babel, saying, Because the Lord there confounded the languages of the whole earth...And Nimrod dwelt in Babel, and there he renewed his reign over the rest of his subjects, and he reigned securely, and the subjects and princes of Nimrod called his name Amraphel, saying that at the tower his princes and men fell through his means. And notwithstanding this, Nimrod did not return to the Lord, and he continued in wickedness and teaching wickedness to the sons of men; and Mardon, his son, was worse than his father..." (The Book of Jasher, Published by J.H. Parry & Company in Salt Lake City Utah, 1887, pages 15-25).

The Biblical accounting of this same story is far less detailed, though it's truthfulness is probably much more accepted since it is not categorized as an apocryphal writing. As the Bible accounts, the God of Heaven was angered that his children would attempt to build a tower to reach heaven, even though the results would have been futile.

Rather than live the laws that would have let them enter heaven legitimately; the children of man thought it would be much easier to enter heaven by sneaking in so to speak. In His anger, God destroyed the tower, and changed the languages of man so that man could no longer communicate with each other as one great society, but rather as smaller social groups. The Bible records the following.

“And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth (Genesis 11:1-9).”

From the account in the Book of Jasher, as well as an understanding of ancient Babylonian temple worship, one can easily be led to formulate an interesting theory. It is suspected that a major portion of Gods anger with the children of men, with regards to the Tower of Babel, was idolatry. The following explanation could be offered; the Babylonians throughout ancient history built great towers that they called ziggurats. These ziggurats were usually named after a Babylonian God or referred to as towers that reached from the earth to the heaven (or something to that respect). At the top of each tower the Babylonians usually built a temple, symbolizing heaven. In this temple they placed their god, in the form of a statue or similar structure. The great ziggurat in Babylon housed the Babylonian god Marduk, who supposedly warred with other gods in Heaven, and by defeating them obtained high stature among the gods (Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon, D.J. Wiseman, pages 68-69). Babylonians often named children with names having the prefix “mar” in honor of the great god of Babylon. The Tower of Babel, built by Nimrod, was built to reach the heavens. His people, according to the Book of Jasher hoped to war against the God of Heaven. Nimrod named his son “Mar”don (The Book of Jasher 7:48). These coincidences lead one to believe that there was more to the story than just building a tower to heaven. In fact, this would have been

the first recorded use of idolatry since the creation of Adam. One could imagine the results would have been highly discouraging to God, since he had just renewed the earth through the flood.

The passage in the Bible and the accounting in the Book of Jasher would indicate that the first King of Babylon was the great-grandson of Noah, Nimrod (The Book of Jasher, Chapter 7). On the other hand, Babylonian records indicate that the first King that ruled Babylon was a man known as Gilgamesh. It is proposed that Nimrod and Gilgamesh are one and the same person, even though their names differ between records. The name Nimrod is translated from the Hebrew word meaning rebellion, and is not a Sumerian or Akkadian word. It is speculated that the name Nimrod is but a description or title given to the man “Gilgamesh” by the Jews. The word “rebellion” is quite fitting for Gilgamesh, since, if Nimrod were indeed Gilgamesh, it was Nimrod that organized the building of the great tower of Babel (Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization, A. Leo Oppenheim, pages 266, 417). There can be an obvious discrepancy in this theory if one were to evaluate chronological tables as listed below, however, it should be noted that Babylonian dates as well as Biblical dating prior to 1,000 BC are highly speculative.

Biblical & Babylonian Chronology Table

Born	Bible History	Died	Start of Reign	Babylonian History	End of Reign
4000 BC	Adam	3070 BC			
3870 BC	Seth	2958 BC			
3765 BC	Enos	2860 BC			
3656 BC	Cainan	2746 BC			
3566 BC	Mahalail	2581 BC			
3496 B.C	Jared	2534 BC			
3431 BC	Enoch	3066 BC*			
3269 BC	Methuselah	2300 BC			
3164 BC	Lamech	2387 BC			
3017 BC	Noah	2067 BC			
2517 BC	Ham	?	?	Gilgamesh	≈ 2700 BC
2417 BC	Flood	2417 BC			
?	Cush	?			
?	Nimrod	?			
2375 BC	Birth of Babylon	2375 BC			
2350 BC	Tower of Babel	2350 BC			
				Dynasty of Akkad	
			2334 BC	Sargon of Agade	2279 BC
			2278 BC	Rimush	2270 BC
			2269 BC	Manishtushu	2255 BC
2240 BC	Peleg	2031 BC	2254 BC	Naram Sin	2218 BC
2240 BC	The Great Division	2240 BC	2217 BC	Shar-kali-sharri	2193 BC
			2192 BC	Igigi	
				Nanium	
				Imi	
				Elul-dan	2190 BC
			2189 BC	Dudu	2169 BC
			2168 BC	Shu-Turul	2154 BC
			2153 BC	Gutians Rule, Chaos	2113 BC
				Third Dynasty of Ur, Ur III	
			2112 BC	Ur-Nammu	2095 BC
2069 BC	Terah	1924 BC	2094 BC	Shulgi	2047 BC

Biblical & Babylonian Chronology Table, Continued

Born or Occurred	Bible History	Died	Start of Reign	Babylonian History	End of Reign
			2046 BC	Amar-Sin	2038 BC
			2037 BC	Shu-Sin	2029 BC
			2028 BC	Ibbi-Sin	2004 BC
First Dynasty of Isin					
1999 BC	Abraham	1824 BC	2017 BC	Ishbi-Erra	1985 BC
			1984 BC	Shu-ilishu	1975 BC
			1974 BC	Iddin-Dagan	1954 BC
			1953 BC	Ishme-Dagan	1935 BC
1924 BC	Abraham leave Haran	1924 BC	1934 BC	Lipit-Eshtar	1924 BC
1924 BC	Terah Dies	1924 BC	1923 BC	Ur-Ninurta	1896 BC
1900 BC	Abrahamic Covenant	1900 BC			
1900 BC	Sodom Destroyed	1900 BC			
1899 BC	Isaac	1719 BC			
			1895 BC	Bur-Sin	1874 BC
First Dynasty of Babylon					
			1894 BC	Sumu-abum	1881 BC
1859 BC	Isaac Marries	1859 BC	1880 BC	Sumulael	1845 BC
1839 BC	Jacob	1692 BC	1844 BC	Sabium	1831 BC
			1830 BC	Apil-Sin	1813 BC
			1812 BC	Sin-muballit	1793 BC
1755 BC	Jacob Marries	1755 BC	1792 BC	Hammurabi	1750 BC
			1749 BC	Samsu-iluna	1712 BC
1709 BC	Jacob enters Egypt	1709 BC	1711 BC	Abi-eshuh	1684 BC
1692 BC	Jacob Dies	1692 BC			
			1683 BC	Ammi-ditana	1647 BC
			1646 BC	Ammi-saduqa	1626 BC
			1625 BC	Samsu-ditana	1595 BC
Kassite Dynasty					
1577 BC	Aaron	1454 BC			
1574 BC	Moses	1454 BC*	?	Agum II	≈ 1570 BC
1534 BC	Joshua	1424 BC	?	Burna-Buriash I	≈ 1510 BC
			* Translated		
1494 BC	Exodus from Egypt	1494 BC	?	Kashtiliashi III	≈ 1490 BC
1493 BC	Tabernacle Made	1493 BC			
1454 BC	Aaron Dies	1454 BC	?	Agum III	≈ 1465 BC
1454 BC	Moses Dies/Translated	1454 BC			
1424 BC	Joshua Dies	1424 BC	?	Kara-indash	≈ 1415 BC
			?	Kadashman-Harbe I	?
			?	Kurigalzu I	≈ 1390 BC
			?	Kadashman-Enlil I	≈ 1370 BC
			1359 BC	Burna-Buriash II	1333 BC
			1333 BC	Kara-hardash	1333 BC
			1333 BC	Nazi-Bugash	1333 BC
			1332 BC	Kurigalzu II	1308 BC
			1307 BC	Nazi-Maruttash	1282 BC
			1281 BC	Kadashman-Turgu	1264 BC
			1263 BC	Kadashman-Enlil II	1255 BC
1424 BC	Period of Many Kings & Wars with Neighboring Countries	1129 BC	1254 BC	Kudur-Enlil	1246 BC
			1245 BC	Shagarakti-Shuriash	1233 BC
			1232 BC	Kashtiliashu IV	1225 BC
			1225 BC	Tukulti-Ninurta	1225 BC
			1224 BC	Enlil-nadin-shumi	1224 BC
			1223 BC	Kadashman-Harbe II	1223 BC
			1222 BC	Adad-shuma-iddina	1217 BC
			1216 BC	Adad=shuma-usur	1187 BC
			1186 BC	Meli-Shipak	1172 BC
			1171 BC	Marduk-apla-iddina I	1159 BC

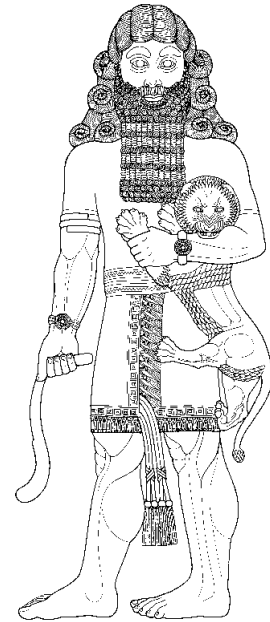
Biblical & Babylonian Chronology Table, Continued

Born or Date	Bible History	Died	Start of Reign	Babylonian History	End of Reign
			1158 BC	Zababa-shuma-iddina	1158 BC
			1157 BC	Enlil-nadina-ahi	1155 BC
Jsin JJ Dynasty					
			1157 BC	Marduk-kabit-ahheshu	1146 BC
			1139 BC	Itti-Marduk-balatu	1132 BC
1128 BC	Saul	1058 BC	1131 BC	Ninurta-nadin-shumi	1126 BC
			1125 BC	Nebuchadnezzar I	1104 BC
			1103 BC	Enlil-nadin-apli	1100 BC
1095 BC	King Saul Reigns	1063 BC	1099 BC	Marduk-nadin-ahhe	1082 BC
1088 BC	David	1015 BC			
1063 BC	Samuel anoints David	1063 BC	1081 BC	Marduk-shapik-zeri	1069 BC
			1068 BC	Adad-apla-iddina	1047 BC
			1046 BC	Marduk-ahhe-eriba	1046 BC
			1045 BC	Marduk-zer-x	1034 BC
			1033 BC	Nabushumu-libur	1026 BC
1015 BC	David Dies	1015 BC			
1015 BC	Solomon made King	1015 BC			
1012 BC	Solomon starts Temple	1012 BC			
1004 BC	Solomon starts Palace	1004 BC			
991 BC	Temple Finished	991 BC	1025 BC	Various Rulers, Period of Uncertainty	911 BC
991 BC	Palace Finished	991 BC			
975 BC	Death of Solomon	975 BC			
953 BC	Rehoboam King (Judah)	932 BC			
Assyrian Empire					
953 BC	Jeroboam King (Israel)	927 BC			
932 BC	Abijam (Judah)	929 BC			
929 BC	Asa (Judah)	873 BC			
927 BC	Nadan (Israel)	925 BC			
925 BC	Baasha (Israel)	901 BC			
901 BC	Elah (Israel)	899 BC	911 BC	Adad-nirari II	891 BC
899 BC	Zimri (Israel)	897 BC			
897 BC	Omri (Israel)	875 BC			
875 BC	Ahab (Israel)	853 BC	890 BC	Tukulti-Ninurta II	884 BC
873 BC	Elijah Prophesies	?			
873 BC	Jehoshaphat (Judah)	848 BC	883 BC	Assurnasipal II	859 BC
853 BC	Ahaziah (Israel)	851 BC			
851 BC	Obadiah Prophesies	?			
851 BC	Elisha Prophesies	?			
851 BC	Jehoram (Israel)	≈ 839 BC			
848 BC	Joram (Judah)	844 BC			
844 BC	Ahaziah (Judah)	843 BC			
843 BC	Athalian (Judah)	837 BC			
≈ 839 BC	Jehu (Israel)	≈ 800 BC			
837 BC	Joash (Judah)	797 BC	858 BC	Shalmaneser III	824 BC
≈ 800 BC	Jehoahaz (Israel)	798 BC	823 BC	Shamshi-Adad V	811 BC
798 BC	Jehoash (Israel)	790 BC			
797 BC	Amaziah (Judah)	792 BC			
792 BC	Amon Prophesies	?			
792 BC	Uzziah (Judah)	740 BC	810 BC	Adad-nirari III	783 BC
792 BC	Hosea Prophesies	?			
792 BC	Jonah Prophesies	?			
790 BC	Jeroboam II (Israel)	749 BC			
			782 BC	Shalmaneser IV	773 BC
			772 BC	Assur-dan III	755 BC
749 BC	Zechariah (Israel)	749 BC			
749 BC	Shallum (Israel)	748 BC			
748 BC	Menahem (Israel)	≈ 740's BC			

Biblical & Babylonian Chronology Table, Continued

Born or Date	Bible History	Died	Start of Reign	Babylonian History	End of Reign
≈ 740's BC	Pekahiah (Israel)	≈ 740's BC			
≈ 740's BC	Pekah (Israel)	733 BC	754 BC	Assur-nirari V	745 BC
740 BC	Jotham (Judah)	734 BC			
740 BC	Isaiah Prophesies	?			
734 BC	Ahaz (Judah)	728 BC			
733 BC	Hoshea (Israel)	722 BC			
728 BC	Hezekiah (Judah)	697 BC	744 BC	Tiglath-Pileser III	727 BC
722 BC	Micah Prophesies	?			
722 BC	Israel taken by Assyria	722 BC	726 BC	Shalmaneser V	722 BC
			721 BC	Sargon II	705 BC
697 BC	Manasseh (Judah)	642 BC	704 BC	Sennacherib	681 BC
			680 BC	Esarhaddon	669 BC
642 BC	Amon (Judah)	640 BC			
642 BC	Nahum Prophesies	642 BC			
640 BC	Josiah (Judah)	609 BC	668 BC	Assurbanipal	627 BC
628 BC	Jeremiah Prophesies	?			
632/606 BC	Ezekiel Born		626 BC	Assur-etel-ilani	623 BC
Neo-Babylonian Empire					
609 BC	Jehoahaz (Judah)		625 BC	Nabopolasser	605 BC
609 BC	Jehoiakim (Judah)	598 BC			
609 BC	Obadiah Prophesies	?			
606 BC	Babylon Invades Jeru.	606 BC			
606 BC	Daniel Taken Captive	606 BC			
600 BC	Lehi in Jerusalem	600 BC	604 BC	Nebuchadnezzar II	562 BC
598 BC	Babylon Invades Jeru.	598 BC			
598 BC	Zedekiah (Judah)	587 BC			
598 BC	Jehoiachin (Judah)	598 BC			
598 BC	Habakkuk prophesies	598 BC			
593 BC	Ezekiel's 1 st Vision	593 BC			
587 BC	Jerusalem Destroyed	587 BC			
			561 BC	Evil-Merodach	560 BC
			559 BC	Neriglissar	556 BC
			556 BC	Labashi-Marduk	556 BC
			555 BC	Nabonidus	539 BC
Achaemenid Empire					
537 BC	Jews Return Home	537 BC	538 BC	Cyrus II	530 BC
432 BC	Malachi Prophesies	?	529 BC	Other Kings	336 BC
			335 BC	Darius III	331 BC
Macedonian Empire					
			330 BC	Alexander the Great	323 BC
			323 BC	Philip Arrhidaeus	316 BC
			316 BC	Alexander IV	307 BC
Seleucid Empire					
			311 BC	Seleucus I Nicator	281 BC
0-3 AD	Christ	33-36 AD	281 BC	Other kings until	125 AD
96 AD	Apostasy	96 AD	125 AD	Babylon's Extinction	125 AD

By the time King Nebuchadnezzar II ruled Babylon, in approximately 600 BC, the Babylonians had lost the knowledge of the Gospel and the early history of the servants of God. Even though Noah had handed down this knowledge to his sons, the Babylonians had lost almost all of God's teachings. Yet, an ancient myth still exists that shows striking resemblance to father Noah and the Flood. The Myth, or as the Babylonians viewed it "their history", states that there was once a great and catastrophic flood on the earth. The "history" is written in the Epic of Gilgamesh which states that the great Babylonian hero Gilgamesh (shown to the right) journeyed to visit with a great man named 'Uta-napishtim' who with his family were the sole survivors of the Flood. According to the epic, the God Ea had secretly warned 'Uta-napishtim' in his sleep that a great flood was coming. Gilgamesh's purpose for visiting the man 'Uta-napishtim' was to find out how to obtain eternal life, which 'Uta-napishtim' had already obtained. After finding him, Gilgamesh was told that if he could stay awake for six days and seven nights he would obtain eternal life. Gilgamesh no sooner said that he could surely stay awake than a deep sleep fell over him. While he slept 'Uta-napishtim' and his wife baked loaves of bread. After sleeping the full six days and seven nights, Gilgamesh awoke to find many loaves of breads, some moldy and old through many degrees of freshness to a freshly baked loaf. This was a testimony to Gilgamesh that he had failed and he left in sorrow.



Gilgamesh

The story of 'Uta-napishtim' is obviously the adulterated remains of the spiritual accounting of Noah and his family. Though the Babylonian story isn't worth much in a spiritual sense, it does reinforce the idea that the descendants of Noah that once settled Babylon, were quite aware of Noah and the events surrounding his life (Peoples of the Past: Babylonians, H.W.F. Saggs, pages 108-112).

According to Babylonian chronology, Gilgamesh lived in approximately 2,700 BC which could have correspond with the lifetime of Noah since historians place his life from 3,017 BC to 2,067 BC. Once again, it should be noted the chronological tables prior to 1,000 BC are not as accurate as we would like.

As previously discussed, the city of Babylon is believed to be the site upon which early man attempted to circumvent the laws of heaven and build a tower that would rise to the heavens. The Babylonians misguided minds thought that this would allow them access to the dwellings of God without obtaining that great privilege through the plan that God outlined to the children of men. We know this great tower as the tower of Babel, presumably after the city of Babel or Babylon. It was built in approximately 2,350 BC. Many suppose that the Tower of Babel is the great Ziggurat that lay central in the 5th century Babylon. Others claim that it is the nearby ziggurat in Aqar Quf called DurKurigalzer or even the ziggurat in Borsippa called Birs Nimrod that lie on the site of the ancient Tower of Babel. Many suspect that the remains of the Tower of Babel are the northern mounds outside of the ruins of Babylon called Tell Babil. And yet there are

others who claim that none of these sights are the acclaimed site for the Tower of Babel (Babylon, Joan Oats, Pages 97-99).

It is believed that Babel was destroyed, and abandoned, or at the least was left with just a few inhabitants as the communication barrier drove the different groups to migrate to different areas of the earth. They congregated with people who spoke their same language. In fact, the Book of Jasher goes as far as to say that God destroyed all but a third of the great tower in the days of Nimrod (The Book of Jasher 9:37-39).

Following the great destruction of the Tower of Babel, and the confusing of the languages, another great event took place. Whether or not this event was a result of the wrath of God brought about by the building of the Tower or not is unsure. The event is known as the great dividing of the earth. Most suspect that the divisions in the continents came with the flood; however, it would appear that this was not the case. The brilliant scholar W. Cleon Skousen wrote, "...the dividing of the earth in the days of Peleg was the results of the sinking of the land in certain areas so that the sea could rush in from the Polar regions. Apparently, there was a sinking of the Pacific Floor...this event was of world shaking proportions and the prophets appear to have known that this marked the 'dividing' of the land. It was for that reason Peleg was given a name which meant 'Division' " (The First 2,000 Years, W. Cleon Skousen, page 233).

It is very difficult to place the time of the great division; however, we can say that it was after the destruction of the Tower of Babel, and it was during the days of Peleg. This leads many scholars to fairly accurate estimations. W. Cleon Skousen said, "We will therefore say for chronological convenience that the earth was divided approximately 2,240 BC" (The First 2,000 Years, W. Cleon Skousen, page 232).

It is unsure what effect the great division had on Babylon and the surrounding area; however, we can surmise that the result would have been almost catastrophic given the nature of the changes that would have taken place on the earth.

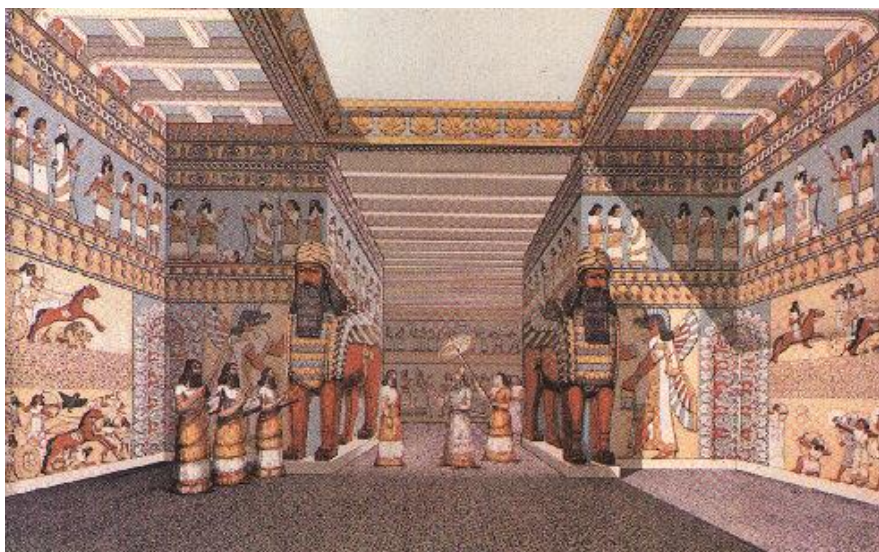
At this point in the history of Babylon, we are forced to make a huge transition from Biblical history to what you might call Babylonian or secular history. The Bible history follows more or less the lineage of Shem from this point on, while Babylonian history starts about this time. This leaves us with a foggy and unclear history of this time period. To add to the confusion, it is probably not to far fetch to assume that the great division left the world in somewhat of a commotion. Furthermore, it isn't to great of a stretch to suggest that Babylon might have even been utterly destroyed.

Not much is heard about Babel or Babylon until, in approximately 2,334 BC, a great King emerged in Mesopotamia. Sargon, who later became known as Sargon of Agade, established a kingdom in the area of the great Euphrates and Tigris rivers. Sargon built himself a capital from which to rule. He called this capital, Agade. Agade has since become lost to man; however, historians have gathered facts to show that Agade was built in close proximity to the then, according to historians, non-existent city of Babylon. Some would suggest that the city of Agade, is indeed Babylon, and was somehow renamed in later years, though this statement is unsubstantiated. Sargon of Agade "claims to have removed rubble or dust from a clay pit at Babylon and heaping it up near, or in front of Agade naming it Babylon" (Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon, D.J.



King Sargon
of Agade
(Akkad)

Wiseman, page 43), thus recreating the once great city. Though we don't know much about Babylon during Sargon's time, we do know that Sargon built and established much of what we have come to call the Babylonian culture. He built palaces, and cities in a manner that would be imitated for centuries. He also built ziggurats and worshipped gods that would stand in Babylon until its great fall. A future King of Babylonia who bore Sargon's name followed much the same architectural style as the Sargon of Agade. A modern artist has depicted Sargon II's Palace, as it might have looked based on ruins, ancient text, and the knowledge we have on the culture (Babylon, Joan Oats, pages 29-34).



Sargon's Palace

Source Unknown, obtained off the Internet

Sargon created the first empire, or Dynasty, in Babylonia recorded in secular history. Secular history says that prior to Sargon, the inhabitants in the area were nomadic and had no organized social structure. Sargon's Empire became known as the Agade or Akkad Dynasty, and ruled from approximately 2,334 BC to 2,154 BC. We won't attempt to cover all of the kings of the Agade Dynasty in this work, but we will touch on a few of the high lights of this time period as they effect the city of Babylon.

After the death of Sargon, the next accounting we have of the city of Babylon is during the reign of King Naram-sin. This accounting in the Weidner Chronicle reads,

“Naram-Sin destroyed the settlements of Babylon;
Twice (Marduk) brought against him the army of the Gutians.....
(Marduk) handed over his kingship to the army of the Gutians.”

(Peoples of the Past: Babylonians, H.W.F. Saggs, page 80)

It would appear that the Gutians, a nomadic mountain people from the east, had obtained control of the city of Babylon between Sargon of Agade and Naram-sin's reign. Naram-sin was the third king of the Agade Dynasty, and supposedly destroyed Babylon in

efforts to drive out the Gutians. Modern scholars are skeptical of the fact that Babylon existed at this time in any importance. One expert on Babylon writes, “*Naram-Sin certainly cannot have destroyed Babylon, since if it existed at all in his time, it would have been no more than a village*” (*People of the Past, Babylonians*, by H.W.F. Saggs, University of Oklahoma Press, page 80). He further states that “...*there is no mention of Babylon until the reign of Shar-kali-sharri (2,254-2,230 BC)*”, the fourth king of the Agade Dynasty, “*when it was of no more than minor importance*” (*People of the Past, Babylonians*, by H.W.F. Saggs, University of Oklahoma Press, page 97).



King Naram-Sin

Naram-sin lived from 2,254 BC to 2,218 BC and was the last undisputed king of the Agade dynasty started by Sargon. Naram-sin was overthrown through economical decay of the Empire and raids by the Gutians. There were several recorded kings after him; however, their rule and power over the Empire is questionable. The period is considered by most experts in the secular community to be the birth time of Babylon (Babylon, Joan Oats, pages 35-36).

Historians cannot truly pinpoint the period in time in which the city of Babylon came to be. They believe that it was non-existent in 2,334 BC and by

1,894 BC the Amorite Dynasty, sometimes called the first Babylonian Dynasty (2,003 BC to 1,595 BC), was ruling their kingdom from the city of Babylon, forming the hypothesis that it was settled between 2,334 BC and 1,894 BC.

Though the Gutians were partly responsible for the fall of the Empire, which left the country open for new rulers, the Gutians were not able to establish an Empire relative to the great Empires that have ruled Mesopotamia during the centuries. The Gutians fell shortly after economic factors in the region become stable. Once this happened, the people once again stood behind an Empire (Babylon, Joan Oats, pages 29-38) (*People of the Past, Babylonians*, by H.W.F. Saggs, University of Oklahoma Press, page 81).

The next Empire that ruled over Babylon, and Mesopotamia for that fact, was the Third Dynasty of Ur. The Third Dynasty of Ur ruled over Babylon from 2,112 BC to 2,004 BC. During this Dynasty, or Empire, King Shulgi ruled from 2,094 BC to 2,047 BC. It was during his reign that Mesopotamia became centralized and began to form into a state of order. Shulgi divided the empire into small states with capitals and governors. By the time of Shulgi’s reign, Babylon had progressed enough in size and stature to become a capital and receive a governor (*People of the Past, Babylonians*, by H.W.F. Saggs, University of Oklahoma Press, page 90). This change could very well have been brought about by changes in the geological make up in the area. “*At the end of the third millennium, the Euphrates, whose main channel had previously ran down the middle of the land through Nippur, shifted its main bed westward. Babylon was now at the north end of the main stream of the Euphrates, and this gave it increased importance, both commercially and strategically*” (*People of the Past, Babylonians*, by H.W.F. Saggs, University of Oklahoma Press, page 97).” Though Babylon’s importance had grown tremendously, it still wasn’t considered a city of grandeur during the Ur III Dynasty.

At the end of the Ur III Dynasty, Babylonia felt the pressure of a constantly advancing Amorite Empire from the western desert. It is during this time that Babylon began to develop defenses such as large city walls, watch towers, and outposts. At the end of the Empire there appears to have been extreme famine and inflation. Prices are said to have risen 60 times that of normal prices. Such economic hardships brought about unrest and upheaval among the inhabitants of Babylonia. Under such conditions, the Amorites found success. Once they breached the outer perimeter of the country, they found little or no opposition within the country. The last king of the Ur III Dynasty, King Ibbi-Sin, held himself securely for an estimated 25 years in Ur, until the Elamites (a people an area in modern day Iran) along with the Gutians, and a number of other smaller factions finally toppled the city and took the king captive into Elam.

Somehow during the major unrest of the Ur III closure, none of the invading groups ended up with Babylonia. One of King Ibbi-Sin's key military figures, in charge of all of his northern troops, a man named Ishbu-Erra, took control of all of northern Babylonia sometime before the fall of Ur. He established Isin as his capital and founded what was to be the next Dynasty or Empire in Babylonia, which we call the first Dynasty of Isin after its capital. After the fall of Ur, he successfully drove out the Elamites and recaptured the rest of the former Empire. Though not without a hitch, a few of the city-states in the south retained their states as smaller joint Empires, especially the city-state of Larsa. Larsa and Isin existed in a predominately peaceful co-existence. Though there were occasional skirmishes, the two Empires competed economically rather than militarily (People of the Past, Babylonians, by H.W.F. Saggs, University of Oklahoma Press, pages 91-94).

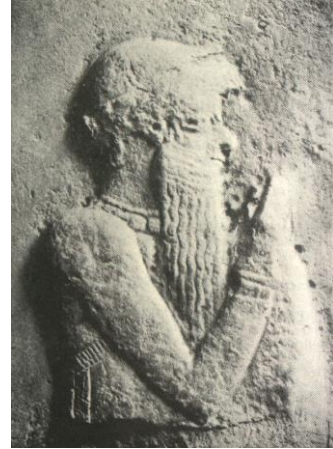
The Isin I Dynasty ruled Babylon and Babylonia from approximately 2,003 BC to 1,894 BC. The Empire was known for its fairness and good handling of its citizens. The Empire actually relieved many of its citizens of tax burdens. Consequently, the citizens were well pleased with the rulers of the Empire. The inhabitants are said to have advanced socially and economical.

In 1,894 BC a local ruler of Babylon, an Amorite named Sumu-Abum came to power. It would appear that he claimed the city-state for his own, co-existing with both the Isin and Larsa Empires. The details of such an event are unclear. As time went on, it appeared that the Isin and Larsa Empires began to collapse. Consequently, over fifteen city-states claimed independence. Sumu-Abum fortified Babylon with great city walls and defenses, showing signs of instability in the region (People of the Past, Babylonians, by H.W.F. Saggs, University of Oklahoma Press, pages 95-96).

The First Babylonian Dynasty, or the Amorite Dynasty as it is sometimes called, came to power after the smaller fragmented Empires began to reunite under larger regimes until they finally formed an empire that controlled all of Mesopotamia. The Dynasty was at its greatest under its founder King Hammerabi (sometimes spelt 'Hammerapi'). He organized the Empire with laws and justice, which the people of the empire found quite appealing relative to the rule that they had been accustomed to during times of instability. King Hammerabi established Babylon as the Capital of his Empire which he himself ruled from 1,792 BC to 1,750 BC. He initiated an extensive building program to beautify Babylon and strengthen her defenses as well as many other Babylonian cities. King Hammerabi is probably best known as a lawgiver, comparable in

the secular world to Moses. For the first part of his reign, he spent most of his time developing laws and implementing a system of justice rather than expanding the Babylonian borders. It was only after he established his legal system that he developed Babylonia as a world power.

The picture below is a stele made during the Hammerabi reign, and is thought to have stood in the temple of Marduk in Babylon Proper. The top of the stele depicts King Hammerabi engaged in prayer before the sun god Shamash, who was considered the god of justice. The stele consists of 49 columns of carved cuneiform script that represent the laws of Hammerabi's Babylonia. The following are examples of just a few of the 282 recorded laws that were written on the stele under King Hammerabi (The Ancient Near East, Volume 1: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures, James B. Pritchard, pages 138-167).



Stone Carving of King Hammurabi

- #1 **"If a seignior accused another seignior and brought a charge of murder against him, but has not proved it, his accuse shall be put to death.**
- #55 **"If a seignior, upon opening his canal for irrigation, became so lazy that he has let the water ravage a field adjoining his, he shall measure out grain on the basis of those adjoining his."**
- #105 **"If the trader has been careless and so has not obtained a sealed receipt for the money which he paid to the merchant, the money with no sealed receipt may not be credited to the account."**
- #153 **"If a seignior's wife has brought about the death of her husband because of another man, they shall impale that woman on stakes."**
- #195 **"If a son has struck his father, they shall cut off his hand"**
- #282 **"If a male slave has said to his master, 'You are not my master,' his master shall prove him to be his slave and cut off his ear."**



After King Hammerabi's death, the Empire he built begin to decline. Babylonia became subject to raids and internal upheavals. In 1,733 BC, the Kassites attacked Babylonia in one of their first attempts to conquer the empire. Though this attempt failed, future attempts proved quite successful. After the Kassite attack, Babylonia continued to experience dissension and upheaval. The Empire slowly reduced in size as fragments broke away into their own states. The Sealand Empire broke away with the southern section of Mesopotamia, reducing the empire significantly. In 1,595 BC, the Empire that Hammerabi built finally fell. The Hittites attacked Babylon on what appeared to be a looting raid. They invaded the city, took many of the city treasures, presumably

killed the Royal Family, leaving Babylonia without government, and took the statue of Marduk (Marduk was the city god of Babylon).

The Hittite raid left the Babylonian Empire open to the Sealand Dynasty who had already taken the southern kingdom. The Sealand Empire ruled for a short time until the Kassites took over the entire Babylonian Empire. The Kassites have been determined to be a people from the Zargos of an unknown ethnicity. The Zargos are the mountain ranges just east of Babylon. We do not have too many details about their rise over Babylonia; however, they enjoyed one of the longest rules in the history of Babylon and Babylonia. The Kassite Dynasty lasted through 36 kings and 576 years of which 440 years encompassed Babylon and the Babylonian Empire. Babylon was ruled over by the Kassites from 1,595 BC to 1,157 BC.

The Kassite reign was prosperous for the Babylonians. The Kassites respected the religions and views of their new citizens. They even retrieved the statue of Marduk from the Hittites and restored it to the temple of Marduk.

Like empires before, the Kassite Empire crumbled primarily due to economical instability in the region. From around 1,200 BC to as late as 900 BC the conditions in Europe and Asia Minor were that of drought and famine. This caused a large influx of Armenian and other immigrants into Mesopotamia. With a large, unexpected population growth, the economic condition became so poor that unrest occurred throughout the land. The Empire began to crumble with the Elamites taking control of the northern region of Babylonia, and the southern region existing in a fragmented state until finally a new Empire arose. The Elamites had participated in many raids on the Empire, including one upon Babylon that resulted in the loss of the statue of Marduk, and major destruction of the city (Babylon, Joan Oats, pages 83-106).

The Second Isin Empire was the next Empire to arise. It is not sure where the monarchy of Isin II came from, though it is speculated that they started in the town Isin from the name of their Dynasty. The Isin Empire's capital city was none other than Babylon. The Isin II Dynasty ruled Babylonia from approximately 1,156 BC to 1,025 BC. During this time period another great Babylonian king arose, Nebuchadnezzar I. Nebuchadnezzar I did much to try to stabilize the Empire. First, he invaded the Elamite Empire seeking revenge for the invasions and destruction that took place during the previous Empire. His success in driving out and subduing the Elamites boosted the moral throughout the Empire. He retrieved the statue of Marduk, and restored the temples of Babylon and throughout the region. He instigated a building program that lent promise to the Empire; however, the effects and burdens of the immigration from the Armenians were still felt.

Long after Nebuchadnezzar I, the Isin Empire fell. Details of its fall are uncertain. Unfortunately, the entire time period from approximately 1,200 BC to 900 BC is vague and cloudy. Probably due to the social and economical challenges of immigration and the struggling economy, records were not kept and maintained as they had been previously.

We suppose that the Isin Empire fell for the same reason that other Empires fell during this time: economical instability. The time following the Isin Empire saw many kings' rise and fall. The Assyrian Empire to the North began a slow rise to power, though surrounded by instability. The immigrants began to become more and more a part of the Babylonian society. Armenians were assimilated into the culture; however, many of them

remained in tribes causing friction and tension between the natives and themselves. As late as 770 BC, we can read in ancient tablets of Babylonian Kings driving Armenians out of their cities. Over 40 Armenian tribes can be accounted for in the Mesopotamia region.

Though the Armenians were great in number and posed a threat to the Babylonian way of life, they never became a threat militarily or politically. Supposedly, the Armenian tribes could never unite sufficiently to form any kind of united power (Babylon, Joan Oats, pages 107-114).

The Armenians were not without benefit to the Babylonians, though most Babylonians probably didn't realize this. They brought with them a formidable skill in trading which the Babylonians had always desired, and though they had made progress in trade they had nowhere near the skill of the Armenians. With the Armenian trade skills and knowledge, Babylonia began to see things like ivory, gold and fine furniture that had been scarce in the land.

By the 900's BC, the Assyrian Empire was formidable in Northern Mesopotamia. The Assyrians had existed for many, many years, but it wasn't until now that they began to truly rise as a world power. They began to expand their Empire in many directions, including south into Babylonia.

In 878 BC, we read for the first time, in secular history, of a group of people in Southern Babylonia called the Chaldeans, or "*Kaldu*". We have no evidence or information as to their origin, though some suppose that they were Armenian ancestors. There are strong arguments against this theory. Biblical history speaks of the Chaldeans as early as the third millennium BC. In the Book of Genesis we read,

"And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there" (Genesis 11:31).

The Chaldeans were primarily nomadic tribal groups that herded cattle, although there is some evidence that they were not necessarily nomadic. Some of the tribes were known to have cultivated and farmed date palms. Unlike the Armenians, the Chaldeans eventually assimilated into Babylonian society, and accepted the Babylonian culture; however, they still retained their tribal identity and tribal loyalty (Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization, A. Leo Oppenheim, pages 160-161).

The Chaldeans were the proverbial thorn in the Assyrian's side. They generally controlled areas in southern Babylonia surrounding the Euphrates River, which were vital to the Assyrian trade. The Chaldean tribes had Kings, probably holding the title of "Shiekh", that from time to time ruled areas of southern Babylonia, including the city of Babylon. This posed a significant threat to the sovereignty of the Assyrian Monarchy. The Chaldeans also created political unrest, rallying support against the Assyrians, questioning and disputing the Assyrian Kings right to the throne, and disrupting trade routes.

The Assyrians began campaigning against the Chaldeans with little success. They managed to capture several Chaldean Kings, but the results were far from suppressing the

Chaldean efforts. Throughout the Assyrian occupation of Babylonia, they periodically lost control of areas of Babylonia to the Chaldeans (Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization, A. Leo Oppenheim, pages 162-163).

The city of Babylon had become a city of great importance and significance strategically during the Assyrian occupation of Babylonia. Of this period, the Greek Historian Herodotus wrote that “*Assyria possesses a vast number of great cities, whereof the most renowned and strongest at this time was Babylon, whither, after the fall of Nineveh, the seat of government had been removed*” (*The History – Herodotus, Translated by David Grene, Pages 119, Book 1, Section 190*). Given this fact, and the fact that Babylon was the gateway to trade with the south, it is understandable that the Assyrians wanted to control Babylon and all of Babylonia. In approximately 705 BC, the Assyrian King Sennacherib, who is best known for his conquering of the Northern Kingdoms of Israel, and the capture of the ten tribes, started to rule. He took an aged old approach to controlling Babylonia. He placed a puppet King (Governor), of Babylonian descent, over Babylonia; however, he shortly abandoned this approach in order to place his own son, the crowned prince, over the region. Sennacherib’s son ruled Babylonia from Babylon. Several years later, his son was murdered, presumably by the Chaldeans.

In approximately 689 BC, Sennacherib besieged Babylon with horrifying fury, in what is presumed to be revenge for his son’s death. He invaded Babylon burning everything that would burn, taking away the city’s treasures, including the statue of Marduk, and destroying many of the temples and places of beauty within the city.

The years following the ransacking of Babylon were very suppressed for the Babylonians and the Chaldeans. Though they still rebelled when given the chance, the yoke of Assyrian occupation was great. Heavy taxes were imposed, and the Assyrians took advantage of the Babylonians at any given chance.

The Assyrian oppression finally led the Chaldeans to a full-out revolt. Seeing the strength of the Assyrians beginning to weaken by raids from the Medians, a people from the area of present day northern Iran, the Chaldeans under the leadership of a Chaldean named Nabopolassar approached the Medians to form an alliance against Assyria. This alliance proved strong enough to topple the Assyrian Empire. The result was the Medians gaining the northern part of Mesopotamia known as Assyria, and the Chaldeans gaining the southern part of Mesopotamia known as Babylonia. The final Babylonian Empire came to power in approximately 625 BC. This Empire was the great Babylonian Empire or as it is called the Neo-Babylonian Empire, under which King Nebuchadnezzar II, son of Nabopolassar, ruled. A more detailed outline of this Empire can be read in **Appendix B, “Nebuchadnezzar II, King of Babylonia”** which follows this appendix. Babylon reached its highest splendor during this Empire. It is this Babylon that Ezekiel experienced, and it’s this Babylon that we will describe hereafter.

After the Nebuchadnezzar II died, in 562 BC, the Empire ran steadily down hill. His son Evil-Marduk (often spelt Amel-Marduk) followed Nebuchadnezzar II on the Babylonian throne. Evil Marduk was far from accepted by the Babylonians. He was viewed as unfair and had little respect for the law. The Babylonians soon revolted against the king and his life was taken in 559 BC. It is suspected that Neriglissar, Evil-Marduk’s brother-in-law and former general to Nebuchadnezzar II, murdered him to gain the throne. Whatever the case may be, Neriglissar was crowned the next King of Babylonia.

Neriglissar ruled Babylonia from 559 BC to 556 BC when he died under circumstances that are unsure. His young son, Labashi-Marduk followed him on the throne; however, the citizens and leaders of Babylonia met his ascension to the throne with such great opposition that he was removed only three months into his rule. The next ruler on the throne had no royal claim to the throne. In fact, it is unsure how he managed to fall into the position of King, though many suspect that his mother Adda-Guppi had something to do with his ascension as she supposedly had royal ties to the then extinct Assyrian Monarchy. His name was Nabonibus (Babylon, Joan Oats, pages 115-135).

Between the death of Nebuchadnezzar II and the rise of Nabonibus, the unrest and lack of supported leadership contributed to inflationary conditions throughout Babylon and the entire region. Prices in Babylon are said to have increased by 50% between 560 BC and 550 BC. This caused increased financial burdens on the entire country (Babylon, Joan Oats, page 133).

Nabonibus took the Babylonian throne and then added to the economical problems of Babylonia. Nabonibus continued the elaborate building program that Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar II had started. The only difference was that the country was not in financial position to support such a program. The heavy taxes needed to support aggressive building programs was untimely.

To further complicate the unrest within Babylonia, Nabonibus did something that puzzles experts to this very day. In approximately 552 BC, Nabonibus left the capital city, Babylon, and placed his son Belshazzar as the regent of all of Babylonia. The King then ventured, with at least a portion of his army, to the desert Oasis of Taima in northwest Arabia where he resided for an approximated 10 years. Why he did this is unsure. Nabonibus himself wrote, *"I hid myself afar from my city of Babylon...ten years to my city Babylon I went not in"* (Babylon, Joan Oats, page 133). Many suspect that Nabonibus' departure and voluntary exile was related to the prophecy given by Daniel regarding Nebuchadnezzar. In the fourth chapter of Daniel we read,

"And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws" (Daniel 4:32-33).

Most experts interpret this scriptural passage to mean that Nebuchadnezzar was prophesied to contract a condition that would attack his nervous system to the extent that he would be forced, probably due to pride, to leave the country for over seven years until the condition was lifted from him. Others suspect that the name Nabonibus was the original name in this prophecy and that over the course of time translators mistakenly put Nebuchadnezzar's name in his place. If this were the case, it could be theorized that Nabonibus' exodus was a result of this prophecy. Whatever the case, Nabonibus returned to Babylon after his ten year vacancy in as vague a manner as he left. We have basically no record stating how or why he returned; though some speculate it was due to the threat

of the Persian Empire expanding its borders. Ancient records indicate that the Babylonians were not pleased with Nabonibus' rule, but there is no indication of revolution or revolt, leading one to believe that the conditions under Nabonibus were not entirely bad (Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon, D.J. Wiseman, pages 104-107).

Despite the erratic rulership of the previous decade, the inhabitants of Babylon were still lulled into a large sense of false security given the strength of the Empire and the massive defenses of the city. Their arrogance was a key part of their destruction. By the 540's BC, the Achaemenid or Persian Empire had arisen as a world power. The King, Cyrus II, had set his sights on Babylonia as part of the expansion of his Empire. In fact, Cyrus II was devouring up countries so quickly that there were few that thought they would escape his arm. He himself marched upon Babylon, though its capture was of no small matter. The Historian Herodotus writes,

“...After this threat he gave over his campaign against Babylon and divided his army into two. He drew lines, mapping out one hundred and eighty canals along each bank of the Gyndes and running in all directions, and he drew up his army along the lines, where he bade them dig. There was a great mass of men working, and the task went ahead; yet they spent all summer on it before they finished working right where they were. When Cyrus had thus punished the Gyndes by dividing it into three hundred and sixty channels and the first signs of the second spring had dawned, he drove again against Babylon. The Babylonians came out against him and stood their ground. When his advance brought him near the city, the Babylonians joined battle but were worsed and were driven back within the city. Not inasmuch as they had known Cyrus, from before this, as one never at rest, and as they saw him attacking every nation alike, they had stored up provisions ahead of time, enough for many years. So now they made no account of the siege, and Cyrus was at his wits' end, as the time grew longer and longer and his business was no whit advanced. Whether it was on the advice of someone else in his difficulty or from his own understanding of what needed to be done, this is what he did. He stationed his main army on the river where it enters the town and some other troops behind the town, where the river issues forth; and he bade his men, when they saw the stream becoming fordable, to enter the city by the river bed...he directed the river by a canal into the lake, which had become a marsh, and so the river sunk...When this happened, the Persians, who for this very purpose were stationed along the stream, entered Babylon by the riverbed when the Euphrates had sunk till it reached but to the

middle of a man's thigh. If the Babylonians had had any foreknowledge or understanding of what Cyrus was at, they would have allowed the Persians to come inside and then have utterly destroyed them; for if they had closed all the gates down to the river and themselves mounted on the top of the drywalls that stretched along the banks of the river, they would have caught the Persians as in a trap" (The History - Herodotus, translated by David Grene, Pages 119-120, Book 1, Section 190-191).

The Persian Empire controlled Babylon and, for that matter, all of Babylonia. They did what no other country for hundreds, even thousands, of years could do; put an end to Babylonia as a power. The Babylonian Empire would never again arise, nor would it truly stand under its own rule. Though the city had inhabitants for several centuries to come, the splendor and might of the city had fallen. Indeed the words of the familiar song, "Babylon the great has fallen, God shall all her towers o'er throw" (*Israel, Israel God is Calling, Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Hymn #7, Text by Richard Smyth, Music by Charles C. Converse*) came true despite the might of man. Once the Persians took Babylon, they dismantled much of the splendor that was present in the city. Today, the ruins lie as testimony of its great fall.

The Persian King boasted that he liberated the Babylonians and gave them newfound freedom; however, history shows that the conditions that existed in Babylonia only worsened. Inflationary conditions that could easily be classified as terrible became obscene. From the year 560 BC to the year 485 BC, prices rose 200% in Babylonia. The once great Empire that for centuries maintained its identity by assimilating other races into their own culture would now be assimilated into the Persian culture. The Persian Empire was the beginning of the total destruction of the Babylonian culture and race (Babylon, Joan Oats, page 133).

Following the Persians, the Babylonians felt the crippling rule of the Greeks under Alexander the Great and his successors. The Greeks gave the city of Babylon its final and fatal blow. They destroyed and pillaged what little greatness that was left in the once great city. After the Greeks, Babylon was under the jurisdiction of other kingdoms; however, the city itself was of no significance. By 125 AD, it is recorded that travelers passing through viewed the city as but ruins of uninhabited earth. When Babylon was discovered in our era it was difficult to even see that the site was ever inhabited (Babylon, James Wellard, page 197).