

Key EVENTS and DATES in BABYLONIAN HISTORY

From 1938 to 539

This summary covers the history of Babylonia from the death of Amraphel in 1938 to the fall of the Babylonian Empire at the hands of the Persian and Median armies in the year 539. This material is based on Volume I of Dr. Hoeh's Compendium of World History and his lectures on this portion of ancient history from the Ambassador College World History classes in November, 1963.

It is not widely realized — but Abraham had a great impact on the history of Mesopotamia in the year 1938 B.C.!

In 1938 Shinar or Sumeria, in southern Mesopotamia, was dominated by the city of Erech or Uruk — the famous First Dynasty of Erech. This dynasty had boasted such world-famous rulers as Cush, Nimrod, and Horus! Following the death of Horus or Gilgamesh in 1968, his son Amraphel took over for 30 years. But Amraphel's reign was cut short in 1938!

ASSYRIAN EMPIRE SMASHED IN 1938

The story is in Genesis 14. The opening verse reveals a great Assyrian Empire in the days of Abraham under four great rulers — Amraphel, Arioch, Chedorlaomer, and Tidal. Each of the four was in control of a certain segment of this great realm.

Amraphel, as already stated, was the successor of his father, Horus or Gilgamesh, the son of Semiramis. He controlled southern Mesopotamia or Shinar from the city of Erech. The years of his reign are 1968-38. Shinar was his portion of the Assyrian realm.

Arioch is mentioned next in Genesis 14:1. He ruled from the city of Ellasar. Ellasar is the city of Asar or Asshur! So this king was in control of northern Mesopotamia. His period of rule is also the 30 years from 1968-38.

Chedorlaomer is the third king listed. He was king of Elam in this period. Elam was the area east of Shinar. The exact dates of his reign are not known.

Tidal is the last king mentioned. He ruled over the area now called Asia Minor or Anatolia! Notice in Genesis 14:1 that Tidal is called "king of nations." The Hebrew word for "nations" is goyim. This is a reference to Asia Minor because this area of the Near East, in that day, was composed of a variety of peoples. The history of ancient Asia Minor is the story of continuous attempts to unite the warring nations of the region into a loose confederacy. In the period up to 1938 Tidal was the ruler of this confederacy. He was an Assyrian king and general ruling over several different nations and peoples.

Notice then! The Assyrian realm in the time of Abraham stretched from Elam and Shinar through northern Mesopotamia and into Asia Minor! But even beyond that, it extended into Europe because Assyrians had migrated there as early as 2142! How vast the ancient Assyrian Empire actually was has never been fully realized!

Now read the story in Genesis 14. The Assyrians had held the Canaanite rulers in subjection for 12 years (verse 4) — the period 1952 to 1940. But in 1939 the Canaanites rebelled and in 1938 the four Assyrian leaders and their armies came into the region to put down this rebellion (verse 5). They were successful in defeating the five Canaanite kings — but they made the mistake of kidnapping Lot, Abraham's ^{NEPHEW}!

Actually God wanted this to happen because Abraham was to be His instrument in halting the proud Assyrians! The story is told in verse 12 through 16. Abraham, with 318 trained retainers, pursued the Assyrians, caught up with them at Dan and slew them in the region between Dan and Damascus! The four greatest Assyrian rulers of Assyria in that day were all slaughtered in one night!

The Assyrian army was, of course, much larger than Abraham's group of 318! Abraham could not have accomplished this astounding success without the help of God. The whole picture of this time implies that the Assyrians were imposing one government and one religion which would have stamped out all knowledge of God in the world! And they would have — but God, through the instrumentality of His servant, Abraham, put an end to it! The Assyrians of that day were gaining too much power. God used Abraham to cut them down to size!

There is a parallel in our day: God has ^{used} Britain and America, in the First and Second World Wars, to put a stop to what otherwise would have resulted in complete control of the world by Fascism, the Assyrian Empire in modern times!

Assyria, then, met crushing disaster in 1938. It took over a century to restore the Assyrian realm to the status of a major power again. The story of both ancient and modern Assyria is one of crashing defeats and seemingly miraculous returns to power — and its greatest triumph and final collapse lies just a few years ahead!

FEW FACTS FOR THE PERIOD 1938 TO 1657

To return to the story of Babylonia. After the defeat of Assyria in 1938 the history of Babylonia or southern Mesopotamia is practically unknown till the time of Lugal-Zaggisi (1657-1632). For a period of almost three centuries no important historical events have come to light for this part of the ancient world. The ancient records have been lost. If important events had taken place which had an impact, those with whom God was working, more would have been preserved. But since this period has no actual relationship to a greater understanding of the Bible it is not necessary to ^{know} the details. In terms of chronology all the necessary facts about the starting and ending dates of dynasties are available.

The dynasty of Hamazi is a typical example in this period. It began at a very early time in the year 2137. This is the year that Semiramis returned to Egypt 30 years after the death of Nimrod. Though she returned to Egypt her re-appearance there also had an influence in Mesopotamia and Shinar. Her fame covered the entire civilized world. The implication is that, in Egypt, there was a gradual return to power during the 30 years by those who supported her. Then, by 2137, she decided that she would have sufficient support that she could dare to appear in public once more in Egypt. Thus the Dynasty of Hamazi had a connection with the return to power of Semiramis or Ishtar in Egypt. This dynasty, as well as Erech II which followed it, were dated according to "the Era of Ishtar." It was commonplace to date reigns in the "Era of Ishtar." (See pages 255-6 of Volume I of the Compendium.)

Hamazi continued till 1777 — a total of 360 years. Chronologically the total duration of this lengthy dynasty is known. But internally — within this dynasty — no lengths of reign are known. They have not been preserved. The name of only one king is still extant — Hadanish — but the duration of his reign is unknown. What is more, the location of the city of Hamazi itself has never been found!

The point is this: Here is an apparently great dynasty which lasts for nearly four centuries — but practically nothing is known about it! This is a prime illustration, then, of how meager records are for this time in Babylonian history.

Archaeologically speaking, Egypt presented far less difficulty than Mesopotamia. The story of Egypt's past is not buried as it has been in Mesopotamia. In Egypt the tombs and pyramids of the pharaohs have protected the relics of the past and these artifacts are readily available to the archaeologist. But Mesopotamia is different. In this region there are literally hundreds and hundreds of mounds (called tells) beneath which are to be found the remains of towns and cities. In order to find what is under these mounds the archaeologist must excavate them. This excavation is an extensive and expensive project often entailing hundreds of workers, years of time, and thousands of dollars! Thus no individual person can afford to dig up the past in these areas. Archaeological excavation requires the financing of a large university or similar institution which can ^{procure} the necessary funds. Consequently, because of the expense involved, relatively little is known about Mesopotamia as a whole. Fortunately the work of such men as Layard (Nineveh), Wooley (Ur), and Langdon (Kish) has proved very profitable. But ^{many} secrets still lie below the soil of the Near East. However, it should be emphasized that enough facts have been preserved or uncovered which make it possible to restore the chronology of ancient times since the Flood. All needed facts are available. But many names, events, and other details are still unknown.

THE YEAR 1828

To repeat: There are very few facts known in the history of Babylonia for the period 1938 to 1657. However, a little is known about the year 1828. In 1828 "the Assyrian kings succeeded in the Babylonian Empire, and thenceforth Babylonia and Chaldea became a part of the Assyrian Empire" — page 237 of Jackson's Chronological Antiquities. From this it is seen that the Assyrians came to some prominence again 110 years after their defeat in Palestine at the hands of God and Abraham. But no further details are known.

The year 1828 also witnessed the defeat of the city and Dynasty of Erech by the city of Ur. In other words, the First Dynasty of Erech was succeeded by Ur I in that year. The famous First Dynasty of Erech was greatly weakened by the death of Amraphel in 1938. Nevertheless it continued under six additional relatively unimportant and little known kings till the year 1828. But at that juncture the dynasty completely ceased and was succeeded by the kingship of Ur.

THE FIRST DYNASTY OF UR

The First Dynasty of Ur consisted of four kings and spanned the years from 1828 to 1657. (The year 1657 marks the rise of Lugal-Zaggisi). These rulers were Mes-Ame-padda (1828-1748), Mes-kiag-Nunna (1748-1718), Elulu (1718-1693), and Balulu (1693-1657). The last two names are pronounced A-loo-loo and Bah-loo-loo! All four ^{are} Sumerian names but the last two strike one as heavily African!

This king list is illustrative of the fact that the early Sumerians were Hamitic and Cushite peoples who have since migrated to Africa! The language termed "Sumerian" by scholars was actually the language of the family of Ham living in this part of the world at this time. A German Catholic scholar did a study in the 1930's showing that Sumerian has a direct relationship to the Bantu languages of the Cushites of East Africa! This writer pointed out that many words in modern Bantu have plainly been derived from the ancient Sumerian.

An additional proof of this is that the Assyrians commonly spoke of people who lived in Sumeria as "black heads." This expression was not exclusively a description of their hair but it implied black men!

Though Erech's domination passed to Ur in a local sense in 1828 there were other kings on the scene in Shinar. Little is known about their activities but their existence should be noted. There were kings from the city of Kish — Dynasty II of Kish — though names of individual kings and their reigns have not been preserved. There was also a line of Chaldean kings. At this early time the Chaldeans were a tribal rather than a city folk and so are not designated as reigning from any particular city. Finally there was the Dynasty of Hamazi which has already been discussed.

Just exactly what peoples lived in Shinar at this time is not known. However it is possible to gain a partial picture at least. Obviously the cities or larger towns must have been composed of many kinds of people: There were certainly Hamitic folk of more than one family, there were Elamites, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Armenian (Aramaic) businessmen, and others. In short, the cities were a mass of confused population — which would be fitting, typical of Babylon, the originating point of chaos!

The big cities in the United States today are a prime example of this. New York is not a typical American city! If the Irish, the Germans, the Jews, the Poles, the Greeks, the Negroes, and the Puerto Ricans were removed, there would be no New York! One-third of the population of our greatest city is Jewish — and the remainder is mainly a variety of Gentiles! Washington D.C., the nation's capitol, has far more Negroes living within it percentagewise than in any other major American city. The case of Chicago is similar. The foreign element tends to gather in the cities. Such is the case today and it was the same in ancient Babylonia.

CHAPTER 2

Queen Ku-Baba and Family

In 1748 an unusual ruler appeared on the scene in Babylonia. This ruler was a woman — the famous Queen Ku-Baba! She ruled for 100 years — 1748-1648 — certainly a lengthy reign but not impossible for that day. Her century-long reign comprises the entirety of the Third Dynasty of Kish. A year before she died, as we shall see, the famous Lugal-Zaggisi was to bring tragedy into her life.

The family background of Queen Ku-Baba is unknown. No document has been found to reveal who her husband or father was. It is known that at one time she had been a wine merchant. It has been suggested that her title might better have been "bar maid" than "queen" and that she could properly be characterized as "a Rahab of Shinar!" It is more than likely that she did her best

to emulate the notorious Ishtar or Semiramis in gaining political prominence. Whatever the case, Ku-Baba was a famous woman.

Little is known of her reign until the year 1680. Prior to this year the aging Queen had gained unusual reputation for her "pious deeds" during the time of the reign of King Puzur-Sahan of Akshak, a dynasty which had also begun in 1748. As a result of these deeds, when Puzur-Sahan died in 1680, the son of Ku-Baba came to royal estate. His name was Puzur-Sin. His acquisition of a throne commenced the Fourth Dynasty of Kish which paralleled the last years of his mother's reign. Puzur-Sin ruled for 25 years -- 1680 - 1655.

The year 1657, two years before the end of the reign of Puzur-Sin, two important events took place in Shinar. First, the Dynasty of Awan commenced in the region of Elam. Second -- and of greater significance for the present story -- 1657 witnessed the beginning of the reign of Lugal-Zaggisi, in Erech!

In 1655 the son of Puzur-Sin and the grandson of Ku-Baba, Ur-Zababa, ascended the throne of Kish. His reign was to end in tragedy only six short years later. However, during his brief reign he had, as his cupbearer, a young ^{Assyrian} ~~Assyrian~~ who was destined to become world-famous. His name was Sargon. He would become Sargon the Great of Akkad!

Now here is something important to understand for the events about to be discussed: The present Dynasty of Kish, though not an Assyrian dynasty proper, did have a very definite relationship to Assyria. It owed its prominence to the fact that it had Assyrian backing and support. Kish had an alliance with Assyria! Queen Ku-Baba probably had much to do with bringing this alliance into existence. And she named her son Puzur-Sin. "Puzur" is a common Assyrian name. An example is the later Assyrian king named Puzur-Assur. The name "Sargon" is also an Assyrian name. ~~EXCEPT FOR~~ ^{OTHER} Sargon the Great, who is associated with Akkad, all ^{other} rulers named Sargon are from Assyria.

LUGAL-ZAGGISI AND THE YEAR 1649

And now for the fateful year of 1649! In the winter of 1650-1649 the armies of the Assyrian Empire attacked India in an attempt to expand the Assyrian realm toward the east. Due to an apparently miraculous intervention by God through the use of weather they met a crushing defeat! This had significant effects on political conditions back in Mesopotamia!

Lugal-Zaggisi, remember, had ascended the throne of Erech (Uruk) in 1657. Now, in 1649, when word was received that Assyria's armies had been crushed in India, he saw his opportunity. Assyria was seriously weakened and could no longer support its confederate, the Fourth Dynasty of Kish and its king, Ur-Zababa, grandson of Queen Ku-baba. Lugal-Zaggisi attacked Kish, conquered the city, and Ur-Zababa was slain! The inhabitants were sent into exile! And, in addition to all this, there is archaeological evidence of a flood layer at the city of Kish which indicates that Lugal-Zaggisi and his forces actually opened the Euphrates River and caused it to flow over the city so it would be flooded and rendered uninhabitable!

The situation in Shinar: Assyria had met crushing defeat. Ur-Zababa of Kish IV was dead. The inhabitants of Kish had become a band of "Displaced Persons." Kish had been submerged by a man-made flood! Lugal-Zaggisi was in practically uncontested control of the region. And, one year later, in 1648, Queen Ku-Bababa died thus ending her reign of 100 long years! Such was the series of events in the action-packed year of 1649!

King Lugal-Zaggisi deserves some close attention at this crucial juncture. He reigned for 25 years — from 1657 to 1632. His reign comprises the entire Third Dynasty of Erech (as shown on the chart). In the standard high school ancient history text Lugal-Zaggisi is always the first ruler mentioned as being important in the history of Babylonia. One junior high text of recent printing presents this discussion of him:

...The first great military conqueror whose name appears in the historical record as Lugal-Zaggisi ...who conquered all the other cities in the lower valley. His conquests were spectacular in his own day, but seem rather small to us now. At its height, his great empire was only about the size of New Hampshire. Later, Lugal-Zaggisi was defeated and captured by another ambitious king, Sargon of Akkad. (See pages 40-41 of Long Ago in the Old World by Cassidy and Southworth, Columbus, Ohio, 1964.)

Lugal-Zaggisi ascended the throne in 1657. Eight years later he had become the dominant ruler of Sumeria or Shinar. But in 17 more years his reign was to end. How this occurred is the next part of the account.

Sargon of Akkad

During his short reign of six years Ur-Zababa had as his cupbearer a young Assyrian named Sargon. Sargon was destined to become one of the most famous rulers of his era! It should be pointed out that a "cupbearer" does more than serve a king wine. One who, cupbearer came directly into the king's presence often and thus knew most of the major affairs and problems of the realm. Actually he was a confidant and advisor of the ruler whom he served. In the Bible it is recorded that Nehemiah was the cupbearer of King Artaxerxes (Nehemiah 1:11). Thus the position of cupbearer was one of significant importance and only a very able individual could be entrusted with it.

Recall the events of 1649. Ur-Zababa, grandson of Queen Ku-Baba and her only heir, was slain in the attack under Lugal-Zaggisi. Consequently Ku-Baba outlived her grandson and was without someone to succeed her. She found it necessary to adopt someone in place of her heir now dead. Her choice was the young, popular, and able cupbearer, Sargon! Thus when Sargon later declared that he had a legal right to political power due to this adoption he was not just making a false, trumped-up political claim. His claim was, in fact, a real one. The chronological facts for this period, when properly restored, prove this. This is why the records also state that Sargon was "King of Kish" as well as Akkad!

Note this also: Years later, after gaining power in 1632, it is recorded that Sargon restored the displaced inhabitants of Kish to their estates: "Sargon, king of Agade, ... king of Kish.... restored Kish, he ordered them to take again possession of their city" (Pritchard's Ancient Near Eastern Texts, p. 267). This information fills in, then, the early background of Sargon and explains why he was on friendly terms with the people of Kish. The royal family of Kish, Queen Ku-Baba and king Ur-Zababa, had helped him lay the political foundations for later greatness.

During the period of 1648 (in which year Ku-Baba made him her adopted heir) to 1632 — a space of 16 short years — Sargon was at work preparing to establish himself as king and ruler. Then, ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ 1632, he had marshalled enough power to be able to overthrow Erech and defeat Lugal-Zaggisi, the destroyer of Kish! *THE DATE 1632 IS THE ACCESSION YEAR OF SARGON.*

Thus 1632¹⁶³² was a pivotal year in the history of Babylonia. It marked the end of the reign of Lugal-Zaggisi and the commencement of the 55-year reign of Sargon. The rise of Sargon, who was an Assyrian, also actually signifies the return of Assyrian domination in this area. The year 1649 had witnessed the loss of domination by Assyria due to the defeat in India and the sudden assault of Lugal-Zaggisi who temporarily dominated Shinar. But now the royal Assyrian line of Sumer, represented by Sargon (an Assyrian name which never appears anywhere later except in Assyrian king lists), returns to power in Southern Mesopotamia in 1632 after a 16-year interruption.

In 1632, then, the political power passed from Lugal-Zaggisi and the city of Erech to Akkad and Sargon. The greatest name in Babylonian history in this period is unquestionably that of Sargon. He is usually spoken of as Sargon "the Great." This was not an exaggeration. He reigned for 55 long and eventful years from 1632 to 1577. (This correct dating proves Sargon to be a contemporary of Moses' father, Amram. See Exodus 6:20. Moses was born in 1567.)

Quite a bit has been learned about Sargon and his conquests. After defeating Lugal-Zaggisi he conquered all of Sumer to the Persian gulf, in which he "washed his weapons." He then extended his domain in all directions, subjugating Elam to the east and conquering the western regions along the upper Euphrates to the Mediterranean. According to his own inscriptions Sargon reached the Amanus and Taurus mountains and there are indications that his domain reached into Anatolia. As a result the new capital, Akkad, became the center of a vast empire, where ships brought riches from distant countries across the Persian gulf and up the river.

But, in addition to this, there are definite indications that Sargon had an extensive realm which extended to areas far removed from the Middle East! Two famous journeys are recorded for Sargon: At one time he made a trip west to the "Western Sea" and did not return from over the waters until three years later. Another time he made a trip to the "Eastern Sea" and did not return until seven years had elapsed! Now if Sargon only went over the Mediterranean and the Persian gulf he certainly spent an unusual length of time on board ship for such comparatively short voyages! What the evidence actually points out is that Sargon sailed over the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans to the New World!

Here are some interesting factors in relation to this: The Peruvian Indians, as proved by Dr. Hoeh in Volume II of the Compendium, actually preserved their history back to the Tower of Babel! Now, in the period shortly after 1600, their ancient king list records the coming to power of a new line of kings with the title of "Amauta," a word signifying a priest or Magian. In other words this period, exactly in the time of Sargon, witnessed the origin of what could be called the Magian religion — or the religion of the Middle East — in the New World among the Indians of Peru! Right in the time of the greatness of Sargon a definite impact from the Middle East alters the type of rulership among the Peruvians!

The first major blow to the Akkadian domination of Mesopotamia and the Near East took place in 1535, the twentieth year of the reign of Naram-sin. In that year a people from the east called the Gutti, led by Erridupizir, invaded the land of Shinar. They did not completely take control of the realm of Naram-sin but neither could he drive them out of the country. This is substantiated by the fact that Erridupizir usurped the titles of Naram-sin. He claimed to be as great a conqueror as Naram-sin was! The Gutti are never presented as ruling from any particular city. Their initial attack, then, in 1535 was successful and enabled them to make inroads into Mesopotamia. But a few short decades their increased efforts were to meet with even greater success!

The ultimate disaster of Naram-Sin struck his kingdom in 1500 — the second and most successful attack of the Gutti hordes! Naram-Sin was toppled from power. The Gutti destroyed the area of Akkad. A year later, in 1499, Naram-Sin was dead. He had lived long enough to see his empire collapse. His successor, Sharkalisharri (1499-1475), came to a greatly weakened throne. The name Sharkalisharri means "king of all kings" but this was an idle boast! The greatness of Akkad had passed forever!

The Gutti Dynasty lasted till 1410. Apparently this dynasty was the dominant one in Shinar during this period of almost a century's duration. But it was by no means the only one. The successors of Naram-Sin in Akkad had a limited rule in the north. The Second Dynasty of Ur (1535-1427) was also in existence, as well as the Dynasty of Awan in Elam in the east.

Then also, in 1472 the Fourth Dynasty of Erech came into being. Here is the background: Sharkalisharri ruled till 1475 in Akkad. But the three years after 1475 are characterized in a note in the Akkadian king list with the phrase "3 years of confusion." Three kings are listed for the three years of 1475-1472 — Igigi, Nanum, and Inl — followed by a fourth, Dudu (1472-51)! Clearly there is a marked change in the kind of rulers who came to leadership in this once-great dynasty! During this period it became proverbial to ask: "Who was king? Who was not?"

During this period of weakness, upheaval, and uncertainty a rival dynasty arose at Erech — the Fourth Dynasty of Erech. The initial year of this new dynasty is 1472 — exactly the same year as the last of the three years of confusion in the weakening Dynasty of Akkad! The rise of Erech IV, then, began in 1472. It reached its fullest power in 1436 when the Dynasty of Akkad finally died out completely.

THE COLLAPSE OF THE GUTI AND REVIVAL OF ASSYRIA

Recall, now, that since 1535 the Gutti had been terrorizing and oppressing much of Shinar. But their day of political reckoning was finally to come! In 1410 a ruler named Utuhegal came to power in Erech. His brief reign of seven years — 1410-1403 — constitutes the entire brief Dynasty V of Erech. Utuhegal was able to muster enough power to achieve something that would assure him lasting fame. He was able to overthrow the Gutti, those foreigners who had dominated the land for 125 years since 1535! The year 1410 marks the end of the Gutti Dynasty — thanks to Utuhegal!

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There are some important facts and factors to have in mind about Assyria at this point. This whole period of confusion in Shinar from 1472 onward during the time of Israel IV and V is paralleled with the period of the Judges in Israel. (The Israelites had come into Canaan in 1447 under Joshua.) Here is the point: This confusion in Shinar made it possible for the Assyrians to rise to a degree of prominence again. It is a general principle of history that a period of confusion always precedes a return to power of some people or nation. In this period it was Assyria reviving once again. This revival is clearly reflected in the history of Israel in the Book of Judges: The oppression of Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia (Judges 3:8) took place in 1400 and lasted for eight years! (The last part of his name -- rishathaim -- means "double-wickedness!" In other words, he was called "Chushan of double-wickedness.") This evil "King of Mesopotamia" could be none other than an Assyrian ruler since no one in Babylonia was powerful enough to make attacks into Canaan at this time.

But also remember this: The defeat of the Assyrians by Abraham in 1938 had been so successful that, apart from this brief period after 1400, the Assyrians were never able to overcome Israel in all the centuries from 1938 to 718! During all this time the Assyrians were making attempts to rise to ultimate power but God never allowed them to achieve it. Finally God allowed them to rise to such power that He could use them as His military instrument to punish the northern ten tribes of Israel and take them into captivity. This was the pinnacle of Assyrian power -- the period of the century and one-half up to 612. And just at the time of its greatest success it also met its most disastrous collapse at the hands of the Babylonians and Medes in 612! The story of Assyrian history is the story of successive rises and falls.

CHAPTER THREE

To return to the story of Babylonia. From this time forward, down to the fall of Nineveh, Assyria was the dominant power in Mesopotamia except for a short time during the reign of Hammurabi. Babylonia was second-rate in contrast to the predominance of Assyria.

In the year 1403 the predominant power in Shinar passed from Uruk to the city of Ur. Here are the events: Utuhegal had appointed an official (called an ensi) to be director over the city of Ur. But this official, Ur-Nammu, was disloyal. He revolted, overthrew his overlord, Utuhegal, the conqueror of the Gutis, and established his rule and dynasty at the city of Ur. The year 1403, then, marked the beginning of the Third Dynasty of Ur. It lasted for 117 years down to 1286.

During its period of over a century, the Third Dynasty of Ur was the leading dynasty in the area of Shinar. But it was by no means the only one. There were contemporary dynasties at Awan in Elam, Adab, and Mari.

After the reign of Ur-Nammu (1403-1385), the founder of the dynasty, there were four other rulers. The last of these was Ibbi-Sin who reigned for 25 years, 1311-1286. During his reign the leadership of Ur crumbled! Business documents recovered by archaeology show that there was famine in Ur, prices rose, and the government had to buy grain at high prices from different regions. To add to the problems of Ibbi-Sin, two former city governors usurped authority and made themselves independent kings, Naplanum (1306-1285) in Larsa and Ishbi-Irra (1301-1268) in Isin.

The final blow to Ibbi-Sin came in 1286. In that year there was an attack from the east out of Elam. The Elamites conquered Ur. Ibbi-Sin was carried captive to Elam -- the Third Dynasty of Ur had become history!

A VITAL ~~CONCEALS~~ chronological matter may appropriately be discussed at this point. It ~~conceals~~ the fact that the Fourth Dynasty of Kish was resurrected in 1291 during the reigns of Ishbi-Irra and Ibbi-Sin. Remember that Ur-Zababa of Kish IV had been slain in the attack on Kish by Lugal-Zaggisi in 1649. From that year onward, for over 3½ centuries, the Fourth Dynasty of Kish lay dormant. The family lived on but did not enjoy royal status. But in 1291 Usiwatar ascended the throne of Kish and reigned for seven years. This was, in effect, the "resurrection" to royal authority of the family that had begun centuries before with the famous Queen Ku-Baba! This second and final phase of Kish IV lasted till 1255 when the dynasty ended completely.

The fact that one king list for Kish IV assigns 400 years to Ur-Zababa while another gives him a mere 6 (which is how long he reigned -- 1655-1649) has caused no end of consternation to historians. They label the records for Kish IV as "corrupt" and "worthless." But actually the answer to these seemingly irreconcilable accounts is very simple.

The mysterious "400 years" actually covers the period from 1655 to 1255 -- that is, from the beginning of the reign of Ur-Zababa to the end of the dynasty as a whole. The actual break in the dynasty extends from 1649 (the death of Ur-Zababa) to 1291 when Usiwatar came to power, a period of 358 years. Therefore the "400 years" is actually an era which represents a gap during which there were no kings in this dynasty. The family continued but did not have ~~political~~ authority. Thus there is a 358 year break in the continuity of this dynasty which the scribes rounded off to a convenient figure of 400 years. At the end of the 358 years the old royal family of Kish once more was restored to the throne.

The key to dating the last part of Kish IV is a ruler named Shu-ilishu. In the Dynasty of Isin Ishbi-Irra (1301-1268), the first ruler of the dynasty, was followed by Shu-ilishu for ten years (1268-1258). It is known, of course, that Ishbi-Irra was contemporary with Ibbi-Sin, the last ruler of Ur III which has already been discussed. This synchronism makes Isin I dateable. Therefore it is known when Shu-ilushu ruled in Isin I. But here is the point: Among the last several rulers of Kish IV is a king named Shu-ilushu. This is the same individual! Shu-ilishu ruled in both Kish IV and Isin I! This major chronological "link" makes it possible to date the latter years of the resurrected Kish IV. The fact that Shu-ilushu is listed in both dynasties clears up the mystery of the 400 years. The 400 years begin in the days of Queen Ku-Baba and Ur-Zababa and end in the time of Shu-ilishu! The reign of Shu-ilishu is the clue which makes possible the proper placement of the mysterious Fourth Dynasty of Kish in the history of Babylonia. The end of Kish IV is contemporary with the beginning of Isin I!

Isin, Larsa, and Babylon

With the establishment^{of} Naplanum in Larsa and Ishbi-Irra in Isin a new stage was reached in the confused history of Babylonia. From the time of the captivity of Ibbi-Sin of Ur III in 1286 to the rise of Babylon to real power in 1077 -- a period of over two centuries -- Shinar was split into a northern kingdom dominated by Isin and a southern kingdom ruled by Larsa. As far as

all present knowledge is concerned, there were no ruling dynasties from any other cities until the rise of Babylon in 1174. This period, then, has been labeled the Isin-Larsa period.

How did these two dynasties arise? The answer is the repetition of an old story: They arose during a period of struggle. This struggle, as already summarized, was between Ur III's last ruler, Ibbi-Sin, and the Elamites who attacked from the east. Ibbi-Sin was finally carried captive in 1236 which marked the end of Ur III. This left the two dynasties of Isin and Larsa which had begun in 1301 and 1306 respectively.

Isin and Larsa continued for 112 years down to 1774 as the only two cities in Shinar from which there were ruling dynasties. But, then, in the year of 1174, the First Dynasty of Babylon arose!

Babylon is universally considered to be one of the greatest of ancient cities -- and yet there was no dynasty of kings ruling from it until as late as 1174! The First Dynasty of Babylon -- the dynasty which Hammurabi made famous -- was the first actual line of kings to rule from this famous city. In other words, from the time of Cush and Nimrod and the building of the city and tower of Babel (which turned out to be a failure!) till the reign of Sumu-abum (1174-1160), the first king of Babylon, there were no political rulers exercising control from Babylon. For 1080 years -- 2254 to 1174 -- there were no kings in Babylon proper. It was not a city-state as other Sumerian cities were. Babylon had existed prior to this only as a religious center.

What made it possible for a new dynasty to arise in Babylon in 1174? The answer lies in Assyrian history. Assyria was the next-door neighbor of Babylonia in the Fertile Crescent. In 1174, at the city of Assur, king Assur-dugal was ruling. But in this his sixth year -- 1174-1173 -- chaos struck the city! This is clearly reflected in the Assyrian king list for this period: It is recorded that in this last year of Assur-dugal no less than six kings occupied the throne! In the list, each of them is described as "son of a nobody" -- indicating they were non-royalty!

Clearly this was a time of strife and confusion -- internal disruption! A major revolution exploded in Assyria! Only such a major upheaval as this could make it possible for a rival power to rise in the city of Babylon. This event allowed Sumu-abum to ascend the throne at Babylon and commence its first dynasty of political overlords. In another century this line was to be the dominant dynasty in Shinar!

From 1174 forward, then, there were three powerful dynasties in existence in Babylonia -- Isin, Larsa, and Babylon. As an advance summary of what took place here is what happened between these political rivals: Rim-Sin, the last ruler of Larsa, was able to defeat Isin and thus bring the greater part of Shinar under his control. But he, in turn, was defeated by the well-known Hammurabi of Babylon who was able to unite the whole area under his rule.

Here, in more detail, is the story of this three-cornered struggle between Isin, Larsa, and Babylon. Down to 1077 none of the three dynasties was able to muster an attack against the others. But then the struggle began. The stage became set through the rise of three rulers. Rim-sin of Larsa came to the throne in 1103. Damiq-ilushu came to power in Isin five years later in 1098. And, in 1092, Sin-muballit (father of Hammurabi) became king at Babylon.

The key events from 1077 onward may be summarized in a series of four major attacks: Babylon initially overcame Isin but, two short years later (1075), Larsa conquered Isin and drove out the Babylonians. Eight years later, however, Babylon had grown strong enough to recapture Isin. Finally, 23 years after that, Babylon, under Hammurabi, was able to conquer Larsa. Thus, in the long struggle which covered some 35 years, Babylon came out the victor.

The first of the four major attacks of the 35-year struggle took place in the year 1077-76. In that year Sin-muballit of Babylon attacked Isin and Damiq-ilushu and made them submit to his overlordship. Sin-muballit, however, allowed Damiq-ilushu to remain in the city of Isin.

Sin-muballit's dominion over Isin was short-lived. In the calendar year 1075-74 the second major attack was perpetrated. Rim-sin, not to be outdone, launched an attack from Larsa against Isin and the military occupation of Sin-muballit. The military blow was a complete success! The Babylonians were driven out, Damiq-ilushu fled to the Sealand (where he ruled till 1050), and Rim-sin incorporated the fallen city into his realm ~~and~~ the mid-point of his 61-year reign.

Hammurabi

Though the forces of Sin-muballit had been driven from Isin before the armed might of Rim-sin, Babylon was only just beginning its rise to power! In 1072 an important event took place. This was the year in which the famous Hammurabi began a joint reign of ten years with his father, Sin-muballit. This also marked the beginning of ^{his ENTIRE REIGN} of 55 years down to 1017. (Note that the famous rulers of the Akkadian Dynasty, Sargon and Naram-sin, also reigned for 55 years each.) Hammurabi ^{AN AKKADIAN} was to be the first ruler since the days of Sargon and Naram-sin to build an empire which reached outside of Lower Mesopotamia!

By the year 1066 Babylon, under the joint leadership of Sin-muballit and Hammurabi, had grown in strength to the extent that it was ready to challenge the power of Rim-sin. In this year Babylon attacked Isin, recaptured the city, and drove out the forces of Rim-sin. Larsa, under Rim-sin, had passed its peak and was now on the decline!

Finally, in 1043-42, the inevitable took place. In this, the 29th year of the reign of Hammurabi, the forces of Babylon attacked and defeated the city of Larsa and its aged king, Rim-sin. The dynasty of Larsa passed out of existence! Babylon, under the ambitious Hammurabi, had become the dominant power in Shinar.

But this was not the end of Hammurabi's triumphs. He was actually able to defeat Assyria and annex it into his expanding realm the very next year after the fall of Larsa (1041)! The domination of Babylonia over Assyria continued for 50 years down to 991. In addition, Hammurabi also subjugated Mari and the well-know Zimri-Lim (pp. 46-50 in Werner Keller, The Bible as History). For the last two decades of his 55-year reign, then, Hammurabi ruled over a kingdom that extended from the Persian gulf to Mari and Assur and eastward to the Zagros Mountains — but he could not overcome the power of Israel in Palestine in the reign of David (1052-1012)!

One of the most amazing facts brought forth by the true reconstruction of ancient history is that Hammurabi was contemporary with Saul and David! Historians have invariably placed him centuries earlier. Shortly after archaeologists uncovered the history of this period it was the common practice to conclude that Hammurabi was the Amraphel of the Bible (Genesis 14). Today it is no longer believed that he was a contemporary of Abraham. The old theory has been replaced by confusion! Historians now, depending on which of three or four chronological schemes they prefer, date Hammurabi anywhere from the 17th back to the 19th century B.C.! The Britannica states that his reign began about 1800. In other words, Hammurabi is placed at least eight centuries too early by all Bible-rejecting historians!

Historians conclude that the confusion about the dating of Hammurabi is not important. But the matter takes on great significance when it is realized that historians like to believe that Moses fashioned the Ten Commandments after the famous law code of Hammurabi! This makes it vital to know if Hammurabi lived before or after Moses! The true restoration of history, based upon the chronological limits assigned by the Bible, proves that Hammurabi lived **FOUR CENTURIES** after Moses! If anyone was influenced by a previous law it was Hammurabi not the other way around!

There is clear and positive proof that Hammurabi and his successors lived during the time of the greatness of Israel. In the days of Hammurabi's son, Samsu-iluna (1029-991), and his grandson, Abi-eshuh (991-963), Babylon was famous for its proverbial literature — literature written in the form of the Biblical Proverbs. The reason for this is obvious: In the days of Solomon (1012-972) the culture of Israel dominated the world! This is clearly emphasized in I Kings 10: 24: "And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart." The writing of wisdom literature, then, in Mesopotamia, was the result of the direct influence of Solomon's Empire on surrounding cultures. Egypt reflects ^{the} same literary features during this identical period! As we might expect, historians have assumed that this kind of literature long antedated Solomon who simply revived it by copying from his ancient predecessors!

Moses and Solomon did not need the help of the Babylonians. Just the opposite was true!

The reign of Hammurabi is regarded as the "classical age" of ancient Babylonia. Hammurabi's correspondence gives the impression of a shrewd politician and an able administrator who took careful pains to maintain a good government. Letters to his governors contained precise instructions for the enforcement of order and justice. His famous law code was compiled in the later years of his reign. This long list of laws was inscribed on a diorite stele discovered at Susa (Shushan), where the Elamites had carried it at a later time. Other copies of this law code have also been found on clay tablets. However, Hammurabi's law was not the first codification known from ancient Mesopotamia. Fragments of a Sumerian code of King Ur-Nammu of Ur have been found as well as a code of laws of King Lipit-Ishtar of Isin.

A large number of legal and economic documents from this period provide a good picture of the way of life. Trade flourished. The economy was based on private property and enterprise. As for religion: When Babylon rose to the status of capital of a large realm its city-god, Marduk, also rose in prominence! Marduk became the supreme god who replaced the old Sumerian god Enlil as head of the pantheon.

After Hammurabi, the First Dynasty of Babylon continued in unbroken father-son sequence through five more rules down to 879. All five reigns were at least 21 years in length. However, these kings were not able to maintain Hammurabi's empire although the cultural and economic life of Babylonia went on along the same lines he had developed. Then, in 879, a foreign^{INVASION} brought this famous dynasty to its close.

The Sealand Dynasty

The story of the year 1075 in Babylonia has already been told: This is the year in which Rim-Sin of Larsa overthrew the city and First Dynasty of Isin and drove out its last king, Damiq-ilushu. But this was not the end of the reign of Damiq-ilushu! He fled to the Sealand where he was also recognized as king and where he continued to rule for 25 more years down to 1050! They Dynasty of the Sealand continued through eight other rulers down to the year 846. It was contemporary with Hammurabi and Babylon I.

Where was the "Sealand?" The Bible mentions this area of the Near East in Isaiah 21:1 with the expression "the desert of the sea." It could also be called "the wilderness of the sea" or "the wilderness of the sealand." This extensive area was the desert region extending from southern Shinar down into southeastern Arabia adjoining the lower edge of the Persian gulf. It was an extension of the region of Babylonia which bordered on the sea and thus derived its name.

The fact that the Damiq-ilushu of Isin is the same person as the first ruler of the Sealand Dynasty proves that Sealand I is contemporary with Babylon I. Historians recognize that this is true although formerly they theorized that Sealand I followed Babylon I.

The Sealand Dynasty had a royal house comprising two different branches. The second branch included a king named Ilum-ilum who ruled 60 years — 1016-956. Notice the last part of the name — -ilum. This is just a Sumerian form of Elohim! Elohim is the word translated "God" in Genesis 1:1. In other words, here was a Babylonian king who applied to himself one of the names or attributes of God! Such is the vanity and arrogance of pagan rulers!

In the year 846 the Sealand Dynasty was overthrown by the Kassites (a warring Cushite dynasty from the east which lasted 1022-660) in a famous war which included Assyria and other peoples of Mesopotamia.

Second Dynasty of Isin

The end of Hammurabi's famous dynasty, Babylon I, in 879 brought to prominence a new line of kings from the city of Isin. This dynasty — also often referred to as the Pashe Dynasty — exercised government both from Isin and from the famous city of Babylon. At this time in ancient history Babylon played a role in Mesopotamia similar to that of Thebes in Egypt: Both cities were regarded as the political and religious capitals of their respective regions.

Of special note in Isin II is its fourth ruler, Nebuchadnezzar I (847-825). He was a predecessor of the Nebuchadnezzar of the Bible. The Nebuchadnezzar of the Book of Daniel, then, was actually Nebuchadnezzar II.

Historians mistakenly assume that the Second Dynasty of Isin followed the Kassite rule in Mesopotamia. Actually these two dynasties were parallel or contemporaneous. This is proven by the fact that the kings of Isin recorded several wars with the Kassites. And the Kassites applied the epithet "destroyer of the Kassites" to Nebuchadnezzar I due to his wars with them.

Three Small Dynasties Between 747 and 700

The year 747 marks the commencement of the famous Second Dynasty of Babylon, the very last dynasty in the history of ancient Babylonia. ^c It includes the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II. But before telling the story of this long list of rulers three other brief dynasties must be accounted for — Sealand II, Bazu, and Elam.

Sealand II lasted for a brief 21 years from 747 to 726 under three kings, none of whom are famous. Then, in 726, the Sealand Dynasty was displaced by kings from the House of Bazu. The Bazu Dynasty continued for 20 years down to 706. It also included just three kings with long and unfamiliar names (for example, E-ulmash-shakin-shuni!).

The year 706 was a crucial one in the history of Mesopotamia. It witnessed an invasion of Elamites into the land of Akkad under the leadership of king Marbiti-apal-usur. His reign of 6 years — 706 to 700 — comprises the entire duration of the brief but tempestuous Elamite Dynasty which, for at least part of this period, exercised authority at Babylon. The Elamites joined with the Chaldeans and Babylonians in revolting against the domination of Assyria. These six years of Elamite attack are also the last six of the reign of Shalmaneser III ("the Great") who ruled 735-700. In the ancient Assyrian record (limnu canon) each of these six years is marked by the word "revolt!" The Assyrian Empire was less than a century away from its final collapse! This period of upheaval in Mesopotamia is clearly reflected in the days of Merodach-baladan and Sargon, kings who make up part of Babylon II, who will be discussed shortly.

This Elamite incursion made possible the final rebellion of the Medes against their Assyrian overlords in 700! The Medes had been a subservient people since 1958 B.C.! In 816 they had revolted and gained much progress toward ultimate triumph. But they had to wait till 700 to make their final and complete break. Then, in 612, they assisted the Chaldeans in the final overthrow of Assyria. Finally, in 539, they reached the pinnacle of their power when they joined with the Persians to overthrow the great Babylonian Empire in the days of Daniel.

CHAPTER 4

Babylon II — the Last Dynasty of Ancient Babylonia

In the year 747 the Second Dynasty of Babylon began. This year marks the beginning of what is called the "Era of Nabonassar" — named after the first of a new series of kings, native and foreign, who ruled at Babylon. From 747 onward the history of ancient Babylonia is chronologically correct! Through all succeeding centuries the reigns of Babylonian rulers from 747 on down have been known and available to the public. Dates before this year remain in controversy among Bible-rejecting historians. The classic account of these later kings of Babylonia is the famous Canon of Ptolemy. (READ PAGES 288-89 OF VOLUME I OF THE COMPENDIUM)

First some general observations about this dynasty. Babylon II continued from over two centuries — 747 to 539 — from the reign of Nabonassar to the Persian conquest. During the first 47 years of its duration there were other dynasties, the three just discussed — Sealand II, Bazu, and Elamite. But from 700 on there were no other dynasties in Babylonia! This line from the city of Babylon was the only one in existence! The general concept to bear in mind is that the nearer one comes to the end of ancient Babylonian history the less dynasties there will be in existence. By way of contrast: In the year 1450 there were some six recorded dynasties in existence in this area of the ancient world. In the year 699 (with the exception of the Kassites) there was only one! The rulers of Babylon II succeeded in bringing all of the Babylonian city-states under their domination. No other dynasties were able to rise to power in the region. In the over-all history of Babylonia — the land of political and racial confusion — this is the exception, not the rule!

And now for the names and events in the history of Babylon II: Nabonassar (747-733), the first ruler in the list, acknowledged the supremacy of Assyria and the powerful Tiglath-pileser III. Nabonassar was able to keep matters under control during his reign but, after his death in 733, revolts and dynastic struggles broke forth. One ruler, Nabu-nadinzer, was able to hold the throne for two short years to 731 but his power was limited. The next ruler, Ukinzer, was able to wrest the throne in 731, but his period of royal power was also short-lived. — due to the intervention of Tiglath-pileser.

NABONASSAR AND SUCCESSORS

Tiglath-pileser III, to say the least, viewed the chaotic events in Babylonia with disfavor! In 729, during the third year of the reign of Ukinzer, he attacked Babylon! He seized the city and made himself king of Babylon under the name Pulu (Pul in the Bible). ^{See Chron. 5:28} With this conquest the two kingdoms of Assyria and Babylonia were united in a personal union under Tiglath-pileser III. But this union was not to exist very long in peace and harmony. The reign of Pul ended in 726.

TIGLATH-PILESER III (Am)

The successor of Tiglath-pileser III was his son, Shalmaneser V, who reigned for only five years, 726-21. Here, then, was another Assyrian ruler who also occupied the throne of Babylonia. His Babylonian throne name was Ululai! It would be impossible to guess that Shalmaneser and Ululai were names for the same individual — but this fact has been proven historically! This shows to what extent names in ancient history which are very dissimilar can actually be names for the same person.

SHALMANESER V

Historians hold the erroneous idea that this Shalmaneser V was the Assyrian king who conducted the siege of Samaria in 721-718 and carried Israel captive. (II K. 17) But this is impossible because Shalmaneser V was already dead when this event took place! He died late in 722 in the last year of his brief reign. The Shalmaneser of the Bible who conducted the siege in Israel was Shalmaneser III ("the Great") who ruled out of Calah, a suburb of Nineveh. Shalmaneser V is listed among the rulers from Nineveh itself. Historians think that Shalmaneser the Great lived in the time of Ahab I of Israel (915-893) — but actually he was the contemporary of Shalmaneser V in the time of Israel's captivity! (See pages 297-301 of Volume I of the Compendium.) As in Egypt and Babylonia, there were parallel reigns in ancient Assyria also!

TWO CONTEMPORARY SHALMANESERS

Now to return to the story of the Kings of Babylon: For seven years — 729-22 — from the time Tiglath-pileser III captured Babylon till the death of Shalmaneser V, the Assyrians kept Babylonia in subjection. But in 721 the Babylonians, along with the Kassites and others, were able to revolt against the Assyrians. Merodach-baladan, a Chaldean, made himself king in defiance of Assyria!

MERODACH-BALADAN

The kingship of Merodach-baladan was not to go unchallenged. In the year 721, the same year he came to the throne in Babylon, Sargon II ascended the throne of Assyria at Nineveh. While Shalmaneser the Great was carrying out God's will in the punishment of sinful Israel (721-718) Sargon was making plans to bring Babylon back into the Assyrian fold. In 719 he attacked Babylonia but the Elamites, allies of Merodach-baladan, defeated his forces and Babylon remained unpanicked! The reign of Merodach-baladan continued for ten more years to 709.

Merodach-baladan is one of the few Babylonian kings mentioned in the Bible. In the second last year of his reign (710) ^{his 6th year} he paid a visit to Hezekiah, king of Judah (724-695). This famous visit is recorded in Isaiah 39. This is the occasion on which Hezekiah naively showed the Babylonians all the treasures in his realm. Why was Merodach-baladan so interested in courting the favor of the King of Judah? Because he had heard of the great things God had done for Hezekiah! Read the miraculous events recorded in Isaiah 38! Merodach-baladan certainly wanted the assistance of a ruler who enjoyed so much divine favor. He needed all the allies he could get against the ever-present threat of Assyrian invasion and conquest!

The friendliness of Hezekiah did not help the cause of Merodach-baladan! For 12 years he had been able to hold out against Assyria -- but in 709 the vacation ended! In this year Sargon II mustered his forces, invaded Babylon again, and overthrew the Babylonian king. Merodach-baladan fled to Elam! Sargon took over the throne of Babylon.

Sargon reigned over Babylonia for five years, 709-704. He punished the Chaldean tribes for rebelling but he did not destroy Babylon or other cities. Rather, he took the role of restorer. He called himself "king of Sumor and Akkad" but only took the title of "governor" of Babylon. He celebrated the new year festival in Babylon and did much in the rebuilding of that city and other Babylonian towns.

The reign of Sargon was cut short. He lost his life on a campaign in Persia in 704. His son Sennacherib, who had reigned jointly with him prior to this date, began his sole rule at Nineveh.

At this point in the Babylonian king list the years 704-702 are listed as "two kingless years." With the death of Sargon trouble was again boiling in Babylonia! Here are the events: Merodach-baladan, who had fled to Elam in 709, seized power again in 703 with the aid of the Elamites! But nine short months later the powerful Sennacherib defeated the combined forces of the Babylonians, Chaldeans, and Elamites -- and again Merodach-baladan was forced to flee for his life! Sennacherib put a man of his choice on the throne of Babylonia -- Bel-ibni.

The reign of Bel-ibni, the Assyrian appointee, was destined to be short -- just three years, 702-699! In 699 the Babylonians revolted. Sennacherib immediately put down the revolt and placed his own son, Assur-nadin-shum, on the throne of Babylon. The reign of Assur-nadin-shum covered the six years from 699-693.

During the reign of his son, Sennacherib decided to punish the Elamites for the help they had provided the Babylonian insurgents. For this purpose he had ships built in Assyria and Syria which he manned with Phoenician and Ionian sailors. These sailed down the Euphrates and Tigris for an attack on Elam from the Persian gulf. In 693 Sennacherib and his forces landed in Elam and looted several towns. But the Elamites were equal to the occasion! They hurried to the rear of the Assyrian attack, occupied Babylonia, captured Assur-nadin-shum, and put a man of their choice on the throne, Mergal-ushezib!

Nergal-ushezib continued on the throne of Babylon for just one year, 693-692. He was succeeded by a Chaldean, Mischezib-Marduk, who endured for four chaotic years till 688.

During these years the war with Assyria proceeded with varying success. But then, in 688, Sennacherib conquered Babylon! This famous Assyrian ruler, ^{however,} was not content with conquest alone. He decided to punish the city severely: The statue of the god Marduk was taken to Assur, Babylon was looted and completely destroyed, and then flooded by a diversion of the river Euphrates! For the rest of Sennacherib's reign the city remained a wasteland! For eight years then — from 688 to 680 — the famous city of Babylon was kingless and uninhabited. For all practical purposes it was non-existent!

BABYLON
DESOLATE
FOR 8
YEARS

The "kidnapping" of the god Marduk and the destruction of Babylon was regarded by many as a grave sin! When, in 681, Sennacherib was murdered by his own sons (II Kings 19:37) it was concluded by pagan observers that the gods had taken vengeance upon him for his deeds!

The dead king was followed by his son, Essarhaddon, who ruled for 13 years (680-667). He is listed in the Second Dynasty of Babylon as Assur-akh-iddin. His length of reign in both Nineveh and Babylon is the same period of 13 years. He did not follow his father's policy in relation to Babylon. He immediately began to rebuild the city. He also did much in the way of restoring temples in other Babylonian cities. Like Sargon (709-704), he only used the title of "governor of Babylon" for himself. Essarhaddon died in 667 while on the way to Egypt to put down a revolt there. (Egypt had been conquered by Assyria in 670.)

The next ruler on the throne of Babylon was the elder son of Essarhaddon, Shamash-shum-ukin. (A younger son, Assur-banipal, 668-626, meanwhile, ascended the throne at Nineveh.) Shamash-shum-ukin carried on a comparatively long reign of twenty years, 667-647. In the year 651, however, he took a drastic and daring step which was to prove fatal! He attempted to challenge the supremacy of Assyria and his younger brother, Assur-banipal! He made this revolt because he felt he had the support to carry it off successfully — the backing of the Egyptians, the Elamites, and Aramaean and Arab tribes. But his calculations proved incorrect. The fighting went on for four years. ^{Then} in 647, Assur-banipal conquered Babylon, Shamash-shumukin died in the conflagration, and a man by the name of Kandalanu was appointed king in his place!

BROTHER
AGAINST
BROTHER

Kandalanu, the Assyrian appointee, enjoyed a reign of 22 years down to 625. He was the last Assyrian ruler — either conquering king or Assyrian appointee — to sit upon the throne of Babylon! Thirteen years after his death the Assyrian Empire was no more!

SUMMARY

It is time to review the king list for Babylon II down through Kandalanu. Of the fourteen rulers who held the throne between the years 747 and 625, eight were Assyrian kings or rulers appointed by Assyrian kings, five were Babylonian, and one was Elamite. This shows the close inter-relationship between Assyria and Babylon during these 122 years, with Assyria enjoying the political supremacy for at least 85 of them.

Note this major point: Babylonia had in most of its previous history, been composed of many warring city-states and was not unified. But now, in its last years, largely due to the influence of Assyria, the land of political confusion had become UNIFIED under just one dynasty — Babylon! This Assyrian-inspired unity actually resulted in the down-fall of Assyria! It enabled the Babylonians to marshal the strength necessary to gain the victory over the crumbling Assyrian Empire!

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF ASSYRIA SUMMARIZED

The events leading to the ultimate collapse of Assyria began in the year 705. In that year the Medes, following the death of Sardanapalus III (725-705), successfully completed a second revolt against the Assyrians! The initial revolt had occurred in 816, but not until 700 were all the Medes completely freed from Assyrian domination.

SENIRAMIS
II DEFEATED
IN INDIA

The next great blow to Assyrian strength came in 660. In that year Seniramis III (699-657) — the self-styled reincarnation of the original Seniramis — personally led Assyrian troops to the borders of India! The Assyrians were attempting to spread their domination far to the east of Mesopotamia. But a great catastrophe befell the marauding Assyrian host, ^{ON THE BANKS OF THE INDUS RIVER.} God, in some supernatural manner, intervened in the weather! The tide was turned against the Assyrians — the hordes of the Queen were annihilated! She fled almost alone from the battle scene. Three years later, with power and influence gone, her 42-year reign ended. This disaster in India was one from which Assyria never recovered.

From 659 to 621 it was all down hill for Assyria as the empire gradually disintegrated. Plagues ravaged the Mesopotamian homeland — revolt flared from one end of the empire to the other! Then, in 621, a final revolt in Calah brought the Calah Dynasty of Assyrian kings to an end. And finally, of course, in 612 Nineveh fell to the Medes and Chaldeans marking the official end of the Assyrian Empire! Briefly, then, this is the picture of the descending fortunes of haughty Assyria.

CHAPTER 5THE NEO-BABYLONIAN EMPIRE

With this background for Assyria in mind, we may proceed with the story of the final rise and fall of Babylonia. The fifteenth ruler in the Babylonian king list is Nabopolassar (625-604), the father of Nebuchadnezzar the Great. It was during the reign of Nabopolassar, as the subsequent story will show, that the Assyrian Empire breathed its last! The reign of Nabopolassar begins what historians call the Neo-Chaldean or Neo-Babylonian Empire. This period from 625 to 539 encompasses the reigns of the last five rulers of ancient Shinar, all of them Babylonian, which may actually be viewed as a dynasty distinct from the previous fourteen rulers in the king list designated Babylon II. Those 87 years mark the last period of flourishing of Babylonia.

in 625

After the death of Kandallanu, the ruler appointed by Assur-banipal, anarchy existed in Babylonia! Assyria tried to bring the Babylonians under control but had only temporary success. Out of the struggle Nabopolassar emerged to establish himself as king in Babylon. The years following 625 were filled with wars between Assyria and Nabopolassar, during which border regions were taken and retaken. The Assyrians, however, were engaged in a losing struggle.

Median army

A second enemy of Assyria was the / under the leadership of King Cyaxeres I (624-584). The Assyrian king, Sin-sarra-ish-kun (622-612), was able to hold Cyaxeres off for several years but could not drive his forces away. The Assyrian military no longer enjoyed the overwhelming superiority it had in the past!

INTERVENTION
OF THE
MEDES

The year 616 marked the beginning of the end for Assyria. In that year Nabopolassar marched up the Euphrates and Khabur valleys, defeated the Assyrians near Haran, and exacted tribute from them. In this situation the Assyrians concluded an alliance with Egypt but it proved useless. Then, in 614, the Medes besieged and conquered Assur which, along with Nineveh and Calah, was one of the three royal cities of Assyria. Nabopolassar came with his army to help the Medes but arrived only after the city had been taken. However, at this time Nabopolassar and Cyaxeres made a formal treaty of alliance. The doom of Assyria was sealed!

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V-20

The fighting continued for the next two years. Then, in 612, both the Medes and the Chaldeans baseiged Nineveh! The city fell in the month of August. Calah had collapsed in 621; Assur was taken in 614; and now Nineveh, the third and last royal city of Assyria, had been conquered. It was looted and completely destroyed, never again to be rebuilt! The prophecy of Nahum describes the crashing fall of Nineveh! (Recall that the city of Nineveh was regarded as fictional until archaeology uncovered it in 1845, providing a great proof of the historical accuracy of the Bible!)

The last vestiges of Assyrian power sputtered on for a few more years. Assur-uballit II (612-608) set up a final Assyrian reign in Haran far to the west of Nineveh. But in 609 Nabopolassar was able to take Haran, forcing Assur-uballit to flee. In 608 Assur-uballit attempted to retake Haran with the aid of the Egyptians but was unsuccessful. After this event he disappeared from history! Thus, after the fall of Nineveh in 612, the fall of Haran in 609, and Assur-uballit's failure at reconquest in 608, Assyria ceased to exist!

The Assyrian Empire was divided between the Babylonians and the Medes: northern Assyria and Anatolia were taken by the Medes while the south became part of Babylonia.

THE REIGN OF NEBUCHADNEZZER

Nabopolassar, by successful military conquest, was thus able to elevate Babylonia to the position of top power in the Near East. In the latter years of his eventful reign he was ably assisted by his famous son, Nebuchadnezzar. During the years 607 and 606 they continued fighting the Egyptian army that had aided Assur-uballit, the battles taking place in the region of Syria. In the year 605 ^{ACTUALLY} Nebuchadnezzar continued the campaigns against the Egyptians after Nabopolassar returned home to Babylon. ~~In 604~~ ⁶⁰⁵ the crown prince defeated the Egyptians in the famous battle of Carchemish. ⁶⁰³ The remnants of the Egyptian army were pursued and annihilated near Hamath on the Orontes and, after this event, Nebuchadnezzar was eventually able to conquer all of Syria.

In August of 604 Nabopolassar died and Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon to officially become his successor. The reign of Nebuchadnezzar spanned 43 years from 604 to 561, ~~and marked~~ the peak of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. The main events during this time may be listed as follows:

1. The Babylonian captivity of the Jews.
2. The 13-year seige of Tyre.
3. The conquest of Egypt.
4. The seven years of Nebuchadnezzar's insanity.

The captivity of the Jews may be summarized as follows: Between 604 and 585 Nebuchadnezzar made war with the Kingdom of Judah. The Jews were not successful in any of their battles with the Babylonians. In the first years of this war, Nebuchadnezzar carried away the majority of the Jews from Judah to Babylon. The group which included the prophet Daniel was taken in 604 (Daniel 1:1-2). Jehoiachin, his family, entire staff, and all the leaders of Judah were taken in 596 (II Kings 24:10-16). At the end of the war, in 587-585, Jerusalem was baseiged and taken, Zedekiah was captured and his eyes put out, and all the Jews, except those under Gedaliah, were finally carried to Babylon! Read the story in II Kings 25. And even those under Gedaliah finally fled Palestine. This was a complete captivity!

After the captivity of Judah was complete Nebuchadnezzar systematically turned his attention to that famous commercial city of the ancient world -- Tyre in Phoenicia! He besieged this great city for thirteen long years from 585 to 573. Finally he was able to take part of the city -- that part of the city located on the shore of the mainland. The population of the city, however, fled to the other part of Tyre which was situated on an island just half a mile off shore. They fortified this island part of the city and Nebuchadnezzar was never able to capture it. It was not until 332 that Alexander was able to conquer Tyre completely. Read pages 4-14 of the booklet "The Proof of the BIBLE" which explains in clear detail the prophetic fate of this famous city!

By the year 573 Nebuchadnezzar was in control, ^{of} practically the entire Near East! Babylonia and Assyria were his, he had taken over Syria, Judah and Palestine had come under his power -- a great empire! But Egypt still remained. This famous ancient nation was next on the conquest list!

Nebuchadnezzar's Egyptian campaign began in 570 with the great king personally present at the front. The first skirmishes met with such brilliant success, however, that the king left the campaign in the hands of his able generals while he returned home to Babylon. The conquest of Egypt took just three full years -- 570-567. In the calendar year of 567-566 the destruction of Egypt was complete! Pharaoh Amasis was sent into exile to the island of Cyprus, the Egyptian people were deported from their homeland.

This was followed by the famous 40 years' desolation as prophesied about the year 570 by the prophet Ezekiel, chapters 29 and 30. The 40 years covered the period 567-527. During this time God sent a terrible drought on East Africa. Rainfall ceased. No water flowed in the Nile! The land was so parched and dry that wild beasts could not survive there! Egypt was absolutely and completely desolate -- a non-existent nation, for all practical purposes! The prophecies of the Bible had again been fulfilled! This event marked the eclipse of Africa. From this time forward Africa has been a backward nation on the world scene!

Nebuchadnezzar had returned home before the Egyptian campaign was over. And he did not continue on the throne to see it completed. His reign was interrupted. Nebuchadnezzar became insane!

The story is told in Daniel 4. Prophecy was again to be fulfilled! The events in verses 4 through 27 apparently took place in the year 574 after the siege of Tyre and before the attack of Egypt commenced. Daniel interpreted the astonishing and horrible dream Nebuchadnezzar had, telling him that he would be insane for seven years till he learned "that the most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will!" (verse 25). Daniel completed his inspired interpretation by telling the king to repent of his ways! Notice this point in verse 27.

But, of course, things were going too well for this world ruler to change his ways. In 570, as already recounted, he began his military campaign against Egypt. It was so successful that by the end of the year he had returned home: "At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king...said, 'Is not this great Babylon, that I have built...by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?'" (verses 29-30). Obviously Nebuchadnezzar was not giving God any credit for his successes at this point!

2520
 -539
 1981
 +1
 1982
 -7 (7 YEARS OF HIS INSANITY
 -- 569-562 BC)

} TIMES OF GENTILES ?

Suddenly, at that very moment, the fulfillment of the prophecy came upon Nebuchadnezzar (verses 31-33)! He lost his mind! For seven years the greatest ruler in the world became like an untamed beast. He ate grass, his hair grew long, his fingernails became like birds' claws!

Actually Nebuchadnezzar was a type of all Gentile rulers. His seven years of insanity illustrated the seven times (2520 years) of Gentile rule from his day till the return of Christ. Jesus called this period the "times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). It includes the four great world ruling empires (Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek, and Roman) and the seven revivals of the Roman Empire. The Gentile rulers throughout history have behaved like beasts because they have constantly made war! They have not repented or acknowledged the power and dominion of God. But Christ will change this when He returns!

And Nebuchadnezzar did realize the power and greatness of God after he regained his senses. Notice verses 1-3 and 34-37 of Daniel 4. These sections show that Nebuchadnezzar was reporting his experiences to all the world after his period of insanity ended (562). He did come to recognize the rulership of God and he rendered Him praise and honor! This pictures the ultimate surrender of Gentile rulers to the rulership of the Almighty God at the end of the "times of the Gentiles."

The period of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar was 604-561. This span of time includes the seven years' insanity — 569-562. Thus for seven years someone had to rule Babylonia in his place. Specifically who this was is not recorded. Notice also that the Bible account of Nebuchadnezzar ends with the conclusion of Daniel 4. Chapter five picks up twenty-two years later in the reign of Nabonidus and Belshazzar. Notice also that his reign is recorded as ending in 561, the year after he recovered his mind. Whether or not this is the year of his death is not known. However, it does not seem likely that he should die so soon after learning the great lesson he did. Nevertheless, at this point the story of the end of Nebuchadnezzar's life remains unknown.

To summarize: The reign of Nebuchadnezzar marked the pinnacle of the greatness of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. It was a period of prosperity, building, and resotation. Almost all the palaces and temples excavated by archaeologists in Babylon date from this time. In short, Nebuchadnezzar made Babylon the greatest city of the ancient world! He built the famous Ishtar Gate, with high towers on each side, decorated with figures of animals made from brightly colored, glazed tiles. Within this gate were erected tier after tier of roof-gardens filled with exotic trees and plants. These were the famous "Hanging Gardens of Babylon" — called by the Greeks one of the "Seven Wonders" of the ancient world! Bear in mind that this is the setting in which Daniel, the servant and prophet of God, lived and worked and wrote. Just as Joseph in Egypt, Daniel was placed by God at the focal point of world power in his day!

The Final Defeat of Babylonia

The reign of Nebuchadnezzar marked the peak of Babylonian power. But, with the end of his rule in 561, the record of history shows that the fall of ancient Babylonia was only 22 years away! History amply illustrates the point that leading nations are often at their greatest just before they collapse!

Babylon was to have three more rulers before the end in 539. The first of these last three kings was Anel-Marduk who is better known by the Biblical form of his name, Evil-merodach. His short reign of two years is dated 561-560. Nothing is known of his reign outside of the fact recorded in the Bible that he pardoned Jehoiachin and restored him to an honorable status (II Kings 25:27-30 -- that last four verses of the book).

Evil-Merodach was succeeded by his brother-in-law, another little-known king named Nergal-shar-usur. He reigned four years, 559-555. Archaeology has discovered a few things about Nergal-shar-usur including the fact that he conducted a military campaign in Cilicia. He is not mentioned in the Bible.

The ascent to the throne of the last Babylonian ruler illustrates the state of affairs that existed in this declining pagan realm. The lawful heir to the throne after Nergal-shar-usur was Labahi-Marduk, a minor. But he never lived to ascend the throne! He was assassinated in 555 and a usurper, Nabonidus, seized the throne!

Nabonidus, the final ruler in Babylonian history, reigned for 16½ years from 555 to 539. However, he was not the sole ruler of the realm in its last years. In his third year (552) he made his eldest son, Belshazzar, co-regent alongside him. This explains why Belshazzar is presented as the last king of Babylon in Daniel 5.

After installing his son as co-regent in Babylon, Nabonidus went to Arabia where he stayed for some 13 years. (Thus he was not present at the fall of Babylon when Belshazzar was killed, Daniel 5) In Arabia he captured Tema and established a lavish headquarters there which included a palace similar to the one in Babylon. He used Tema as a base of operations for further conquests in the Arabian peninsula.

With Nabonidus occupied in Arabia and Belshazzar at home in Babylon apparently unaware of the grave dangers that threatened the realm, the stage was set for the fall of Babylonia! Cyrus the Great, king of Persia (558-529), had been making great military conquests since the start of the reign of Nabonidus. By the fall of 539 he was ready to take Babylon!

The events relating to the capture of Babylon are recorded in the Bible in Daniel 5. The time setting is October of 539 B.C. Belshazzar and his lords -- a thousand of them -- were celebrating a great feast (verse 1). They blasphemously dared to use the sacred vessels of God that had been taken from the temple in Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 585 B.C. (verses 2-4)! The pagan merry-making, however, came to an abrupt halt (verse 5). God miraculously caused an inscription to be written on the wall foretelling the fall of Babylonia to the Medes and the Persians (verses 5, 25-28)! King Belshazzar was so terrified by this unnatural occurrence that his knees literally knocked together -- a profound manifestation of fear! This is what the psychologists would call a traumatic experience! The rest of the chapter goes on to explain how Daniel was called in to interpret the inscription. Verses 18-23 are significant: Daniel told Belshazzar he should have been better, that he should have learned the lessons of the experience of his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel told him, "You have not humbled your heart, therefore you ~~did~~ know all this!" (verse 22). Belshazzar had no excuse. He know that he would hold him responsible for his actions. He did not sin in ignorance!

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Daniel 5:30 records the fate of Belshazzar in concise terms: "In that night was Belshazzar . . . SLAIN!"

Other historical sources reveal how the Medo-Persian army took Babylon on that fateful night in history in October of 539 B.C. Xenophon, the Greek historian, recorded that when Cyrus the Great, king of Persia who was leading the army, reached Babylon in 539 he dug channels to divert the water of the Euphrates River which flowed under the gates of the city of Babylon! Then he and the Medo-Persian army carefully slipped down into the waterless river bed, crept quietly through the gates of the city, and rushed to the palace where the drunken feast was taking place. Upon reaching the palace where Belshazzar had seen the handwriting on the wall (apparently Belshazzar did not want to call off the feast and thus disappoint the thousand lords despite this miracle), they "burst in, and, pursuing those who fled, and dealing blows amongst them, came up to the king, and found him in a standing posture with his sword drawn...." Xenophon then wrote: "They mastered him!" Just as Daniel said, Belshazzar was slain!

One apparent problem should be explained in this connection. History records that Cyrus and his army took Babylon. Yet Daniel 5:31 states that Darius the Mede took the kingdom at the age of 72. Xenophon supplies the answer. After Babylon had succumbed to the Medo-Persian forces, Cyrus went to Media to visit his uncle, Darius (also called Cyaxeres). While there he requested that Darius occupy Babylon for a year while he (Cyrus) returned to Persia to see his father. So it was that during the year Cyrus was with his father in Persia, his uncle Darius was "made /temporary/ King over the realm of the Chaldeans" (Daniel 9:1). Then, a year after the battle, Cyrus the Persian led a victory march into conquered Babylon. (Read pages 307-311 of The Bible as History.)

The downfall of the Babylonian Empire in 539 marked the end of the seventy years of captivity of the Jews who had been carried away under Nebuchadnezzar. Cyrus, the king of Persia, as prophesied in Isaiah 45:1-4 some 200 years before, made it possible for the Jews to return to Palestine. He issued an edict that the captive Jews could return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple of God (II Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-2).

In October of 539, then, the last dynasty of ancient Babylon came to a halt. Nabonidus, the father of Belshazzar, had rushed to the scene from Arabia with his army after Cyrus had entered Babylon — but it was too late! He was easily defeated and his reign ended. The once-great Neo-Babylonian realm was absorbed into the Persian Empire!

Final Comments

Here are some vital points of information ^{CONCERNING} over-all history of Babylonia:

1) The kingly lines in Babylonia differed from those in Egypt in that the Babylonian rulers did not claim to be part of the same blood line. The Babylonian rulers did not care whether they were officially related to one another or not. Babylonian kings gained power through conquest. Intermarriage was not regarded as a necessary step in attaining royal status. In Egypt, the pharaohs were very concerned about the fact that they were the descendants of the "gods" — that is, related by blood to the original rulers Isis, Osiris (Semiramis and Nimrod), and Horus. Thus they clung to the tradition of having to intermarry

to acquire royal status. This procedure was not followed in Babylonia where a conglomeration of peoples lived.

2) In ancient times there were cities other than those from which we find dynasties recorded. Besides Kish, Erech, Ur, Awan, Isin, Larsa, Babylon and the others mentioned in these chapters, there were additional cities and towns in the area which have long since been lost. Only knowledge of those cities and dynasties necessary for understanding the overall history of the area has been preserved or uncovered.

3) Drawing an analogy with a modern situation will help us understand the situation in ancient Shinar: The wars that went on between Kish and Erech and Isin and Larsa may be compared to Monrovia warring with Arcadia or Pasadena fighting with Long Beach in the Los Angeles area! These were small city-states very close to one another and their comparatively petty struggles really did not have a world-wide impact.

4) A list of the key dynasties in Babylonia from 2254 to 539 helps clarify this portion of ancient history. The major dynasties were Erech I (2254-1828), Ur I (1828-1657), Erech II (1657-1632 — Lugal-Zaggisi), the great Dynasty of Akkad (1632-1436), the Gutti Dynasty (1535-1410), Erech V (1410-1403 — Utuhegal), Ur III (1403-1286), Isin I (1301-1075), Larsa (1306-1042), Babylon I (1174-879), Isin II (879-747), and Babylon II (747-539). These twelve dynasties were the dominant ones in their particular eras in Babylonia's history.

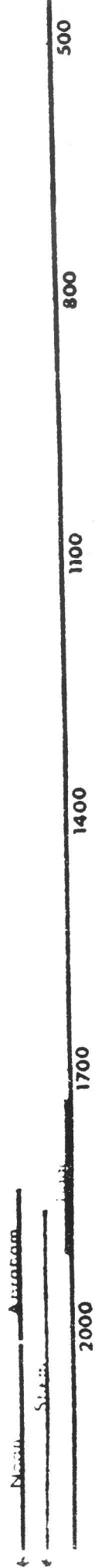
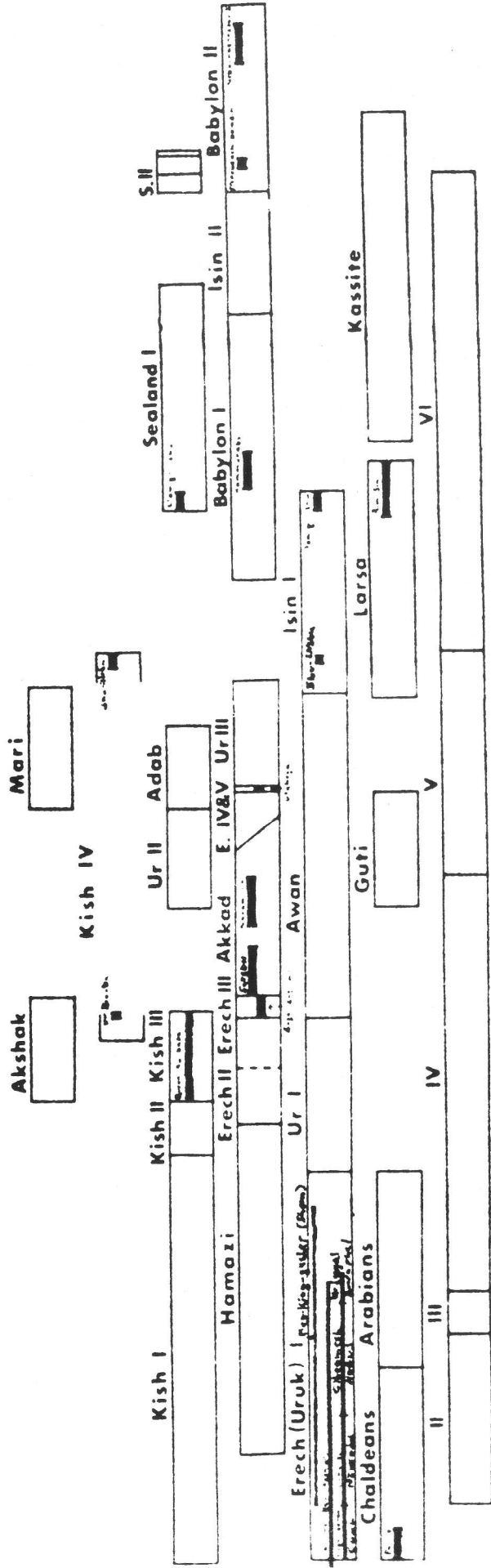
5) Italy of the 15th century is readily comparable to ancient Babylonia! A look at a map of Italy ^{1400's} shows that the area was divided into many independent city-states just like Shinar was — Savoy, Genoa, Milan, Venice, Florence, and others! And, just as in ancient Shinar, these city-state areas warred with each other. There was no unity — ^{ONE} city-state had the power to dominate the whole area. This was the same situation that had existed in southern Mesopotamia as the previous pages have shown.

6) Ancient Babylonia, then, may be compared to Italy in more recent history while Assyria may be equated with Germany! This is a key concept to bear in mind. Ancient Shinar, then, had the same impact on the world in its day as Italy has had in modern times — comparatively little! As in modern times, Assyria has had a much greater world influence. Italy has always played a more minor role. Shinar was a small area of the world that, for most of its history, was weak, divided, and confused. Outside of Sargon and the famous Akkadian Dynasty, none of the ancient city-states had any power and control to speak of beyond the area of southern Mesopotamia, BEFORE THE TIME OF NEBUCHADNEZZER.

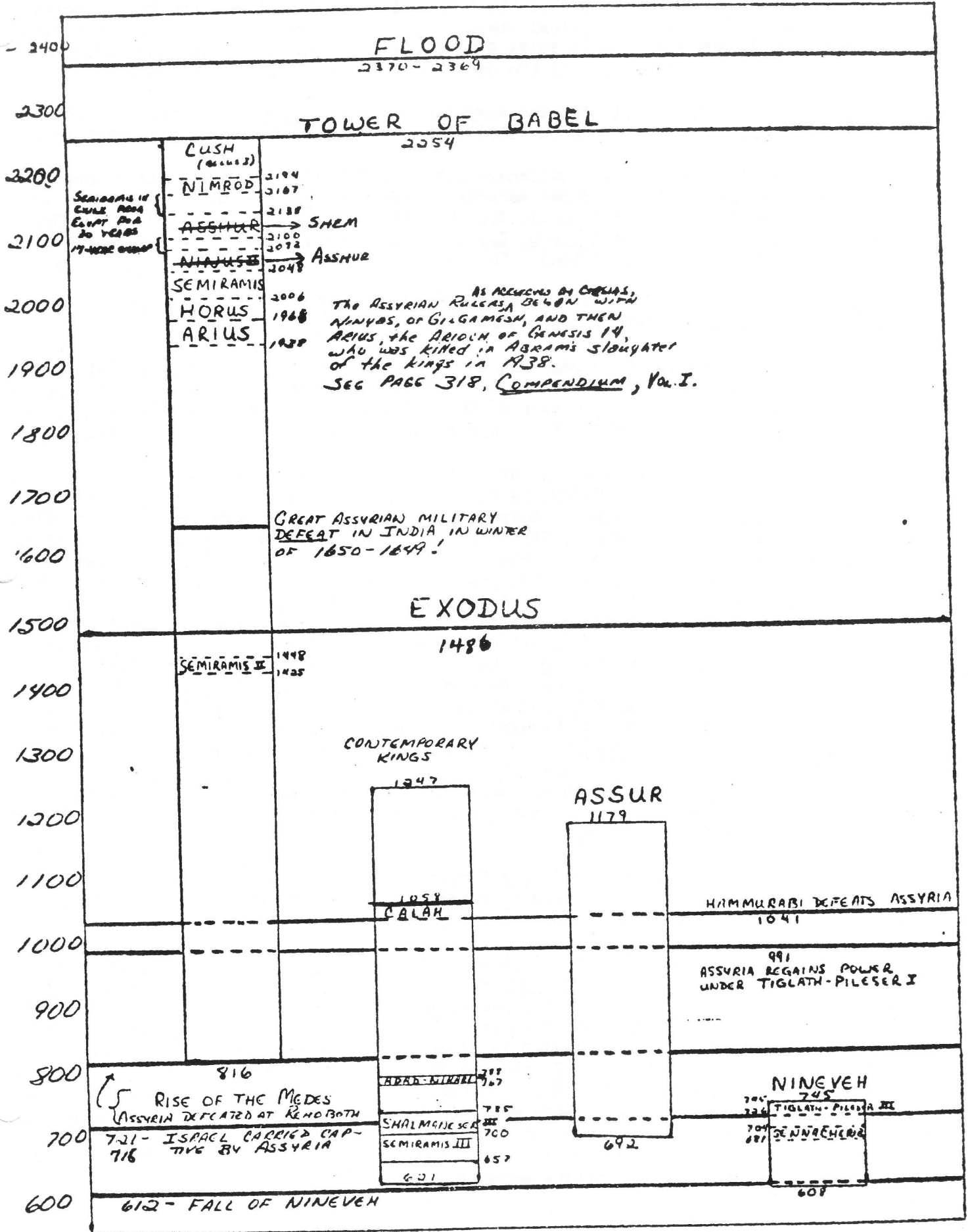
7) Compared to Israel, Egypt, and Assyria, Babylonia is the least important area in the history of the ancient world. Yet historians apparently know more about and spend more time studying Babylonia than its significance warrants. The title of a recent book illustrates this: The Greatness that was Babylon. The point is that Babylon (meaning Babylonia) had very little greatness. In the Bible God has very little to say about it except for the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Again the scholarly world illustrates its talent for misplaced emphasis!

Why study Babylonia at all? Simply because historians do spend so much time dealing with this area and because it is important to get the story chronologically oriented in relation to the Bible. But, when considering ancient history as a whole, the study of areas such as Egypt and Assyria is much more rewarding!

BABYLONIA



DYNASTIES OF ANCIENT ASSYRIA



Restoring the Chronology of Ancient Assyria in Seven Basic Steps

In Chapters 13 and 14 of volume one of the Compendium Dr. Hoeh has correctly restored the chronology of Assyria in 7 logical steps. These steps revolve around certain pivotal dates — 612 (608); 621; 692; 1058; 930; 1220; 2006; and then the dates 1179 and 1174-73 in relation to 1181 which is the ending date of the First Trojan War.

Step One: Page 296. This list of later Assyrian kings of Nineveh is correctly dated in all history books. It ends in 612 (or 608) with the fall of Nineveh (Assur-uballit II).

Step Two: In the section "Who was Shalmaneser?"—pp. 297-301—Dr. Hoeh establishes that Shalmaneser "the Great" (III) and Shalmaneser V were parallel and that the former lived (reigned) 735-700 B.C. From this point for the start of the list on pp. 301-302, Dr. Hoeh restores the dates of the Kings of Calah in the period 735-621. A revolt ended the Calah line in 621 (p. 302, bottom). This is only the last part of the Calah line.

Step Three: Pp. 303-304. This list gives the predecessors of Shalmaneser the Great all the way back to 1058, completing the entire list for the Calah line.

Step Four: The list for Calah on page 304 shows a shake-up in the year 930. This "break" in the long Assyrian king list (which is thought by historians to be consecutive) provides the starting point for the dating of the latter half of the Assur list (pp. 310-311). The line ended in 692 B.C. with a great war in Babylonia (page 311, bottom).

Step Five: This fifth step covers a great period of time from 2006 down to 816 B.C. The long list for this area (pp. 318-320) is from the classical writer, Ctesias (read pp. 316B to 318 carefully!). Apparently these kings ruled in Assur first and later in Nineveh. The list begins with Horus or Gilgamesh (Ninyas) and Arioch (Arius) who was slain by Abraham (Gen. 14). The two basic dates of 2006 and 1992 are already established from other sources, as well as 1968, the year of Horus' death. (The period from 2006 back to 2254 is covered in Chapter Two of vol. two of the Compendium—the rulers were Semiramis, Asshur, Shem, Nimrod and Cush going in reverse order back to 2254.) The line ends in 816 B.C. with the initial revolt of the Medes (p. 320, bottom). See page 329 for the relationship of the prophet Jonah to this period. All Assyria would have fallen at this time had not Nineveh repented! Be sure to note, on page 319, the date of 1448 for Semiramis II (Attosa). Balaam died in the year 1443-47 (Numbers 31:8) and she took over his religious office (he was the head of the Mystery Religion in that day). In 1428 she also came to a political office (toward the bottom of p. 319).

Notice now that Steps Six and Seven are based upon variant datings within this long list from Ctesias. In other words, this list serves as a "spring-board" in restoring the remainder of the Assyrian chronology.

Step Six: The brief list of "Contemporary Kings" on page 323 is established at its start in 1220 as explained on page 323—read it carefully. Then the ending date of 1058 is the starting date for the Calah line (back on page 303—Step Three above).

Step Seven: Here we restore the last list which is the first half of the Assur line (Step Four above). Using the six missing years as a link (bottom of p. 323) the period of revolt of 1174-1173 is established. Read page 324 carefully! Note that 1174 also marks the beginning of the First Dynasty of Babylon (refer back to page 281). Also notice—this is very important!—that 1174-1173 is right after the First Trojan War which ended in 1181. In this war the Greeks defeated the Trojans. The Assyrians, who were allies of Troy, were thus also defeated! This set-back caused a tremendous internal upheaval back home in Assyria resulting in this shake-up in the dynasties! The end of this portion of list for Assur (p. 326) ties in with the date 930 and Enlil-nasir II (look back at page 310). Thus all the rulers of ancient Assyria are logically dated by these many inter-locking and mutually supporting proofs!

The Decline and Fall of Assyria

The following chronological outline summarizes the descending fortunes of the ancient Assyrians from the time of the initial Median revolt to the fall of Nineveh.

(1) 816 — This date marks the initial revolt of the Medes against their Assyrian overlords. Diodorus Siculus records in detail how the Medes successfully overthrew the Assyrians in 816—the time of the prophet Jonah. One of the royal Assyrian capitals at that time was at Rehoboth on the Euphrates. There the Medes successfully attacked the person of the king, Thonos Concolerus (also known as Sardanapallus), slew him and his armed guards, and razed the city. Only the repentance of the Ninevites saved them from the Median ravages—see the Book of Jonah! (Note: Today the Medes are the Slavic peoples of Eastern Europe and Russia. Here in ancient times the Medes attacked the Assyrians. In modern times—1945—the Russians ravaged Berlin! History does repeat!)

Comment: In regard to the story that follows, it is important to realize that there were four royal cities in ancient Assyria. One of them, Rehoboth, already mentioned above, was on the Euphrates. The other three were on the Tigris: (1) Nineveh was the political center; (2) Calah, a suburb of Nineveh (also called Nimrud) was the military center; and (3) Asshur, named after the great deified ancestor of the Assyrians, was the religious center. Each had a dynasty of kings ruling in it, and each dynasty came to an end during the period of Assyria's decline.

— 718 — In this year the Assyrian captivity of the 10 tribes of Israel was completed; it was a progressive conquest which had gone on over the course of several decades. Now Assyria had fulfilled God's purpose, serving as His instrument to punish sinning Israel. From here on the decline of the ancient German Empire would be more rapid; upsets and reverses would occur more frequently!

(2) 710 — During the reign of Hezekiah the Assyrians under Sennacherib were about to capture Jerusalem — but a funny thing happened on the way to victory! One fine spring morning Sennacherib woke up to find his 185,000 soldiers dead!! The story is in II Kings 19 and Isaiah 37. (The Jewish tradition has it that this deed of the death angel took place on the Passover night paralleling events in ancient Egypt!) So here was another serious blow to Assyrian fortunes.

(3) 700 — In this year the Medes, following the death of Sardanapallus III "the Great," successfully completed a second revolt against the Assyrians. Not until this year were all the Medes completely free from Assyrian domination. Here is a little more background on the history of the Medes: The Greek historian Ctesias copied out of the annals in the Persian realm the ancient histories of Assyria and Media. He began his consecutive history with the last 38 years (2006-1968) of the reign of Gilgamesh or Ninyas. Ninyas was the Assyrian name of Gilgamesh; Horus was his Egyptian name. In his history Ctesias noted that the Assyrian power endured 1306 years before the time of the Median revolt. It was exactly 1306 years between 2006 and 700, the year the Medes obtained their freedom from the Assyrians—only to lose it again to their own rulers! But the liberated Medes now represented another serious threat to Assyrian power.

(4) 692 — This date witnessed the termination of the royal house of the city of Asshur which had arisen in 1179 shortly after the First Trojan War (1191-81). This dynastic line ceased in 692 when the last king, Enlil-ludur-usur, was killed in a battle with the Kassites in Babylonia. The year 692 witnessed a great war in Babylonia which also involved Sennacherib, the contemporary Assyrian king of Nineveh.

(5) 677 — In the Third Trojan War, completed in this year, the Greeks defeated the Trojans. The Assyrians traded in Asia Minor and held territory there. Because of their trading interests in the area, and due to the vital gateway location of Troy on the Hellespont, the Assyrians had a vital interest in this ancient fort-city. In fact, Asia Minor formed a key part of the greater Assyrian Empire west of Mesopotamia. When the Greeks attacked into Asia Minor, it became a real threat to Assyria. And when the Greeks won, Assyrian power was dealt a serious blow!

— 667 — Under the famous king Assur-banipal (668-626) the Assyrians enjoyed one final major conquest, the destruction of Egypt! Memphis was taken in 667 and Thebes fell in 663. Nevertheless, Assyria's decline continued.

(6) 660 — This date found the proud Assyrians attempting to conquer India. In this year Semiramis III (699-657), the self-styled reincarnation of the original Semiramis, led Assyrian troops to the Indian frontier. Diodorus of Sicily describes the battle in detail in his history of India. A great catastrophe befell the Assyrians! The troops of the Queen were annihilated! She fled almost alone from the battle scene. Three years later, with power and influence gone, her 42-year reign ended. This disaster in India was one from which Assyria never recovered!

(7) 621 — During the reigns of the last three kings in Calah (659-621) the Assyrian Empire gradually disintegrated. Plagues ravaged the homeland. Revolt flared throughout the length and breadth of the Empire. Then a final revolt in Calah in the last year of Assur-nirari V brought the downfall of the dynasty in the year 621. This is the very year that the Babylonian Canon records a revolt and a great victory over the Assyrian army. The end was near!

(8) 612 — The year 612 was fatal for Assyria. Both the Medes and the Chaldeans besieged Nineveh! The city fell in the month of August. It was looted and completely destroyed, never to be rebuilt! The prophecy of Nahum describes the crashing fall of Nineveh. The ancient Assyrian Empire was finished!