



Biblical People and Places

**Nebuchadnezzar: Who is
this king that God pursued?**

The History of Babylon



The History of Babylon



- Babylon is the famous city from Mesopotamia whose ruins lie in modern-day Iraq 59 miles southwest of Baghdad.
- Babylon is introduced in Genesis 11 at the Tower of Babel.
- The city is later developed by Hammurabi, the Hittite King who established the Law Code of the Land (1750 BC).
- The first city to reach 200,000.
- The city remained at the center of world events for 1500 years.

History of Babylon



Babylon became a city which was not only wondrous to behold but also a center for the arts and intellectual pursuits. Women enjoyed equal rights with men under Nebuchadnezzar's rule, schools and temples were plentiful and literacy, mathematics, the sciences, and craftsmanship flourished along with a tolerance of, and interest in, other gods of other faiths and the beliefs of other cultures.

Babylon of Daniel



Herodotus:

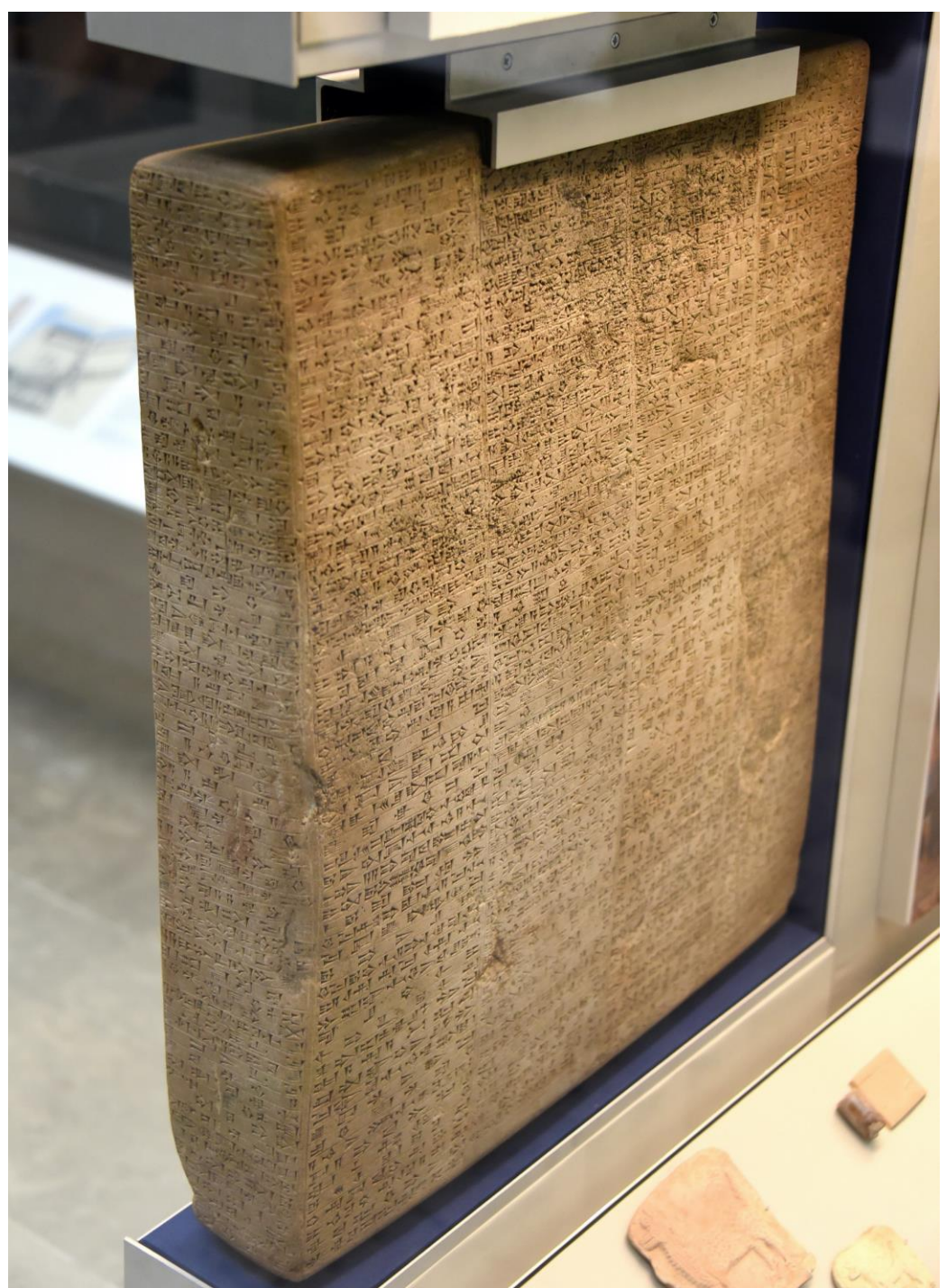
“The city stands on a broad plain, and is an exact square, a hundred and twenty stadia in length each way, so that the entire circuit is four hundred and eighty stadia. While such is its size, in magnificence there is no other city that approaches to it. It is surrounded, in the first place, by a broad and deep moat, full of water, behind which rises a wall fifty royal cubits in width and two hundred in height.”

Nebuchadnezzar

- Nebuchadnezzar II was born in 634 BC as the firstborn of a powerful Babylonian general.
- His name is actually Nabu-kudurru-usur (“Nabu, Preserve My First-Born Son”).
- Nebuchadnezzar was crowned king in 605 after defeating the Assyrians and Egyptians at Carchemish (605 BC).
- His legacy is marked by aggressive military expansion and substantial building projects.
- He reigned for 43 years (ages 30-72).

East Indian House Inscription

Royal inscriptions like the East India House Inscription were intended for public display or burial in the foundations of buildings. Unlike most cuneiform writing that was made in clay, foundation tablets like this were carved in stone and were more carefully articulated, the scribes clearly taking pride in the beauty and clarity of their engraving. This text was probably originally buried in the foundations of one of King Nebuchadnezzar's numerous constructions in Babylon between 604 and 562 BC.



East India House Inscription

"I am Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, the exalted prince, the favourite of the god Marduk, the beloved of the god Nabu, the arbiter, the possessor of wisdom, who reverences their lordship, the untiring governor who is constantly anxious for the maintenance of the shrines of Babylonia and Borsippa, the wise, the pious, the son of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon; To Marduk, my lord I make supplication; Oh eternal prince, lord of all being, guide in a straight path the king whom thou lovest and whose name thou hast proclaimed as was pleasing to thee. I am the prince, the favourite, the creature of thy hand. Thou hast created me and entrusted me with dominion over all people. According to thy favour lord, which thou dost bestow on all people, cause me to love thy exalted lordship. Create in my heart, the worship of your divinity, and grant whatever is pleasing to thee because thou hast my life; By thy command, merciful Marduk, may the temple I have built endure for all time and may I be satisfied with its splendour; in its midst may I attain old age, may I be sated with offspring; therein may I receive the heavy tribute of all mankind; from the horizon of heaven to the zenith, may I have no enemies; may my descendants live therein forever and rule over the people."

Nebuchadnezzar and Israel

1. 2 Kings 24:1 – Jehoiakim's rebellion and initial exile of the gifted (605 BC).
2. 2 Kings 24:10 – The second plunder of Jerusalem (598 BC). Gold and ten thousand leaders are removed.
3. 2 Kings 25:1 – The final plunder of Jerusalem (586 BC). City and temple are burned. Most Jews are taken captive.

Nebuchadnezzar and God

1. Historically, Nebuchadnezzar was completely committed to his god, Marduch.
2. Jeremiah 25:1-9 – Nebuchadnezzar is called the servant of the LORD (27:6; 43:10).
3. Jeremiah 27:6-11 – God tells all nations to submit to Nebuchadnezzar.
4. Jeremiah 43:8-13 – God calls on Nebuchadnezzar to punish Egypt (46:13-25).
5. Daniel 2:36-38 – God declares Nebuchadnezzar the "head of gold."

Nebuchadnezzar and God

1. Daniel 2:46-47 – Nebuchadnezzar recognizes the God of Daniel.
2. Daniel 3:28-29 – Nebuchadnezzar protects the worship of the God of the three.
3. Daniel 4 – Nebuchadnezzar personally responds to God.
 - There is ambiguity in the story. It raises questions of loyalty (vs. 8).
 - There are questions of individual belief. Did Nebuchadnezzar become a devoted follower of the God of Israel?

Lessons to be Learned

1. God is in control of all nations.
 - God uses pagan rulers to do His work.
 - God has access to the “throne room” of wicked kingdoms.
2. God is able to humble the proud.
3. God can redeem those who are “down and out” and those who are “up and in.”