

WORLD HISTORY READERS

Level 4-Ø

The Neo-Babylonian Empire

Kelly Daniels



Series Editor Rob Waring

Seed
Learning



Contents

Empires Come and Go	4
Babylon Rises Again	6
Babylon's Great King	8
The Wonders of Babylon	10
City Life	13
A New Empire Rises	15
Comprehension Questions	18
Glossary	19
World History Timeline	21

Empires Come and Go

When you think of great empires of the past, you probably think of Greece, Egypt, and Rome. All of these were certainly great empires of the past. But there were other empires of the Near East long ago that were also important.

The lands of the Near East changed hands many times among the ancient empires. The countries that are Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran had many different rulers. In fact, the empire of Babylon ruled part of these lands from around 1900-1600 BC.

One of the ancient kings of Babylon was Hammurabi. He wrote laws for the people to follow. These laws were recorded in stone, so we can still read them today. They are the famous laws of Hammurabi's Code.

After three hundred years, the ancient empire of Babylon fell. Then another empire, the Assyrian Empire, rose in power in the Near East.

The Assyrian Empire was very strong for a long time. But like all empires, it could not last forever. It came to an end around 600 BC when Babylon returned to power.

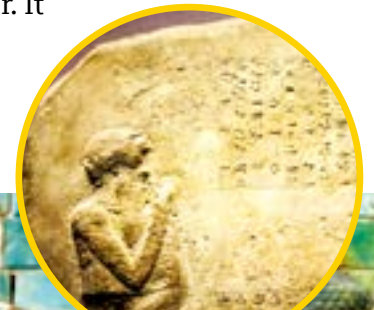
An old map showing the Near East, Middle East, and Far East



Assyrian warriors



Hammurabi's Code in the British Museum, London



Babylon Rises Again

At first, the Assyrians controlled the lands in the northern part of the Near East. Over time, they expanded their empire to the south and took control of the city of Babylon. Because the Assyrian Empire was so big, there were many kings across the empire. These kings ruled small parts of the empire, but they had to follow the orders of the empire's Assyrian king.

The Assyrian Empire grew and grew.



The writing on this ancient object has Nabopolassar's name on it.

In 626 BC, a new king took control in Babylon. His name was Nabopolassar, and he was tired of living under Assyrian rule.

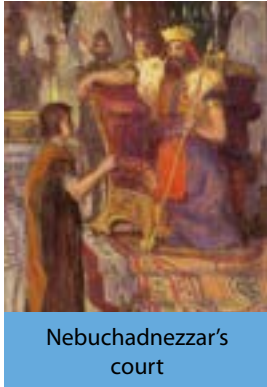
Nabopolassar led the people of Babylon in a war against Assyria, and he won! Then in 612 BC, he won an even bigger battle against Assyria. The Babylonian Empire was beginning to grow.

King Nabopolassar



A view of the ancient city of Babylon

Babylon's Great King



Nebuchadnezzar's court

In 605 BC, Nabopolassar's son became the next king of Babylon. His name was Nebuchadnezzar, and he was the most famous king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

Like his father,

Nebuchadnezzar was good at leading the people in war. He expanded Babylon's empire north and west. The Babylonian army usually moved people out of the new lands that were conquered as the empire grew. The Assyrians usually did this, too. The reason the king wanted to do this was to keep the people in fear. It also made it harder for people from the new land to get together again and fight against the king.



The empire was quite large!



The Burning of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar's Army painted by Juan de la Corte

One of the cities that Nebuchadnezzar took was Jerusalem. This was the most important city of the Jewish people in the Near East. When Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem in 586 BC, he ordered thousands of Jewish people there to move to Babylon where they lived as slaves. One young man at the time was named Daniel. This was the same Daniel who wrote one of the books of the Bible which tells about life in Babylon at the court of King Nebuchadnezzar.



A stone marking the boundary of Babylon's empire



The Neo-Babylonian Empire

Comprehension Questions

1. The lands of the Near East include...
 - (a) Iraq.
 - (b) Syria.
 - (c) Turkey.
 - (d) All of the above
2. Hammurabi is known for making...
 - (a) a set of laws.
 - (b) a temple of stone.
 - (c) the city of Babylon.
 - (d) All of the above
3. What did Nabopolassar do?
 - (a) Wrote a code
 - (b) Fought the Babylonians
 - (c) Fought the Assyrians
 - (d) Married a goddess
4. Who was Nebuchadnezzar?
 - (a) Assyria's last king
 - (b) A priest of Marduk
 - (c) Nabopolassar's son
 - (d) All of the above
5. Which famous city fell to Babylon in 586 BC?
 - (a) Rome
 - (b) Jerusalem
 - (c) Cairo
 - (d) Athens
6. Which wonder of Babylon was made of blue stone?
 - (a) Babylon's city wall
 - (b) The king's palace
 - (c) The Ishtar Gate
 - (d) The Temple of Marduk
7. The tallest thing found in Babylon was...
 - (a) the king's palace.
 - (b) the city wall.
 - (c) the Hanging Gardens.
 - (d) a ziggurat.
8. Which is true about the city of Babylon?
 - (a) It was not crowded.
 - (b) Houses there had no doors.
 - (c) No garbage was on the streets.
 - (d) It was very dirty.
9. Who was king of Babylon the longest?
 - (a) Nebuchadnezzar
 - (b) Amel Merodach
 - (c) Nabonidus
 - (d) Belshazzar
10. The Babylonian Empire fell to...
 - (a) the Assyrians.
 - (b) the Egyptians.
 - (c) the Persians.
 - (d) the Romans.

Glossary

- **ancient** very old
- **balcony** a place on the outside of a building above the first floor where a person can stand
- **battle** a big fight between two groups of soldiers
- **capture** to catch someone and make them your prisoner
- **clay** a kind of soil that can be shaped by hand when it is wet, used for pots, bricks, etc.
- **conquer** to take control of a country or defeat people in a war
- **empire** a group of countries ruled by one person or government
- **expand** to make larger and/or wider
- **faraway** very far; in the distance
- **goddess** a female god
- **legend** an old story people tell about a person or event
- **palace** a large home for a king or queen
- **priest** a person who can lead or perform religious ceremonies
- **slave** a person who is bought and owned by another person
- **temple** a place for religious worship and sacrifice
- **ziggurat** a temple built like a pyramid with a path for walking up and down that goes around the outside of the structure