

Assyrians, who had always had to maintain a constant warlike attitude in order to protect themselves from the mountain peoples in their district, declared their independence and refused to submit to the overlordship of the conquerors of Babylonia.

One of their kings succeeded in conquering Babylon and holding it for seven years. Another king, Tiglath-Pileser I., extended Assyrian power far to the west and to the north. After his reign, the Assyrian power declined.

When Babylonia succeeded in freeing itself from the mountain peoples it was in a state of weakness and for about 450 years, though often independent, was of little political importance. Thus we notice a time of general depression and weakness in Mesopotamia at about 1000 B.C. Assyria and Babylonia were both at their lowest ebb. Egypt also was at a very low point at this time.

It was the strategic time of all time for the rise of the great power of the empire of Solomon. No more fitting time could have been found for the establishment of a strong empire at Palestine than this very period to which the Bible ascribes David and Solomon as having established the glory of their kingdom.

It is extremely interesting now that we know the great events of ancient Oriental history, to see how the biblical events fit into its framework and background. Up to this time we have comparatively few contacts between the Old Testament and the history of Mesopotamia. There are many points here and there at which interesting connections may be traced, but they are hardly to be compared with the great overshadowing importance which Mesopotamia soon came to have in the period following.

We have noticed events that produced a strong military race in Assyria, far north of Babylonia. The next four hundred years witness the rise of this power to domination. The first great