

which succeeded in destroying the Assyrians was the army of the Babylonians who had always felt that their city was far superior to the cities of Assyria and had chafed under Assyrian domination and occasionally tried to throw it off. Now Babylon, the city of great culture and prestige takes over the political supremacy which Nineveh had held before. For about sixty years, this new Babylonian Empire endured. Its first great king was Nebuchadrezzar II who began to reign in 604. During his reign Jerusalem was conquered and destroyed and its leading people taken into exile. He rebuilt Babylon with great magnificence. The palaces, temples and walls of this period have been dug up by the German excavators under Koldewey. They show a city of great magnificence and beauty.

The procession street down which the great procession of the gods marched to the so-called Ishtar Gate, was decorated with enameled bricks, picturing various animals. It was a most imposing structure. The Germans have transported many of the materials in it to Berlin and reconstructed portions and set up the procession street and the Ishtar Gate in a large open room in the Berlin Museum. It is covered with glass above, so that the illusion of openness and largeness is given and one can easily imagine one's self in ancient Babylon.

Millions of bricks were put into the structures that Nebuchadrezzar constructed at Babylon. On each one of these bricks was stamped the cuneiform sign for Nebuchadrezzar's names and titles. After one sees these many bricks with his name appearing everywhere, there comes before us exactly the picture which is presented in the Bible in the Book of Daniel where Nebuchadrezzar is pictured as saying "From ^(5:10) this great Babylonia which I have built."

After the death of Nebuchadrezzar, there are a few short reigns, followed by the reign of Nabonidus who reigned until the fall