

his brother, but finally Babylon was completely at his mercy and Shamash-shum-ukin closed himself up in his palace and set fire to it. Assurbanipal then turned his attention to the allies of his unfaithful brother and defeated and punished them, one by one.

It is entirely probable that Manasseh was among those who were subdued at this time. In this situation, it would be entirely natural for Assurbanipal to take him to Babylon in order to display there the fate of those who rebelled against him, rather than to his own capital at Nineveh which had always remained faithful.

We have already observed the great part that Assurbanipal played in the cultural development of Nineveh. The vast library of cuneiform text which he founded, most of which is today in the British Museum is still one of our greatest sources of information about ancient Babylon and Assyria.

The annals of Assurbanipal which describe the events of his reign and tell of his victories over his enemies are preserved in excellent condition. They break off suddenly about eleven or twelve years before the time of his death. After this time, he probably devoted himself largely to his literary activities. He was very proud of his literary ability and always pictured himself with a stylus as a sign of his power at writing. The annals have a vivid flow and a dramatic power of illustration that makes them very interesting reading. His last days are wrapped in obscurity and we have little evidence regarding the events of the years immediately after his death.

In 1924, Mr. C.J. Gadd, assistant in the department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum, discovered among the mass of cuneiform tablets, a section of a tablet which threw considerable light upon this period. With its help, he was able to change the traditional date of the fall of Nineveh, 606 B.C. to 612 B.C.