

THE BABYLONIAN CIVILIZATION



Ancient Babylon

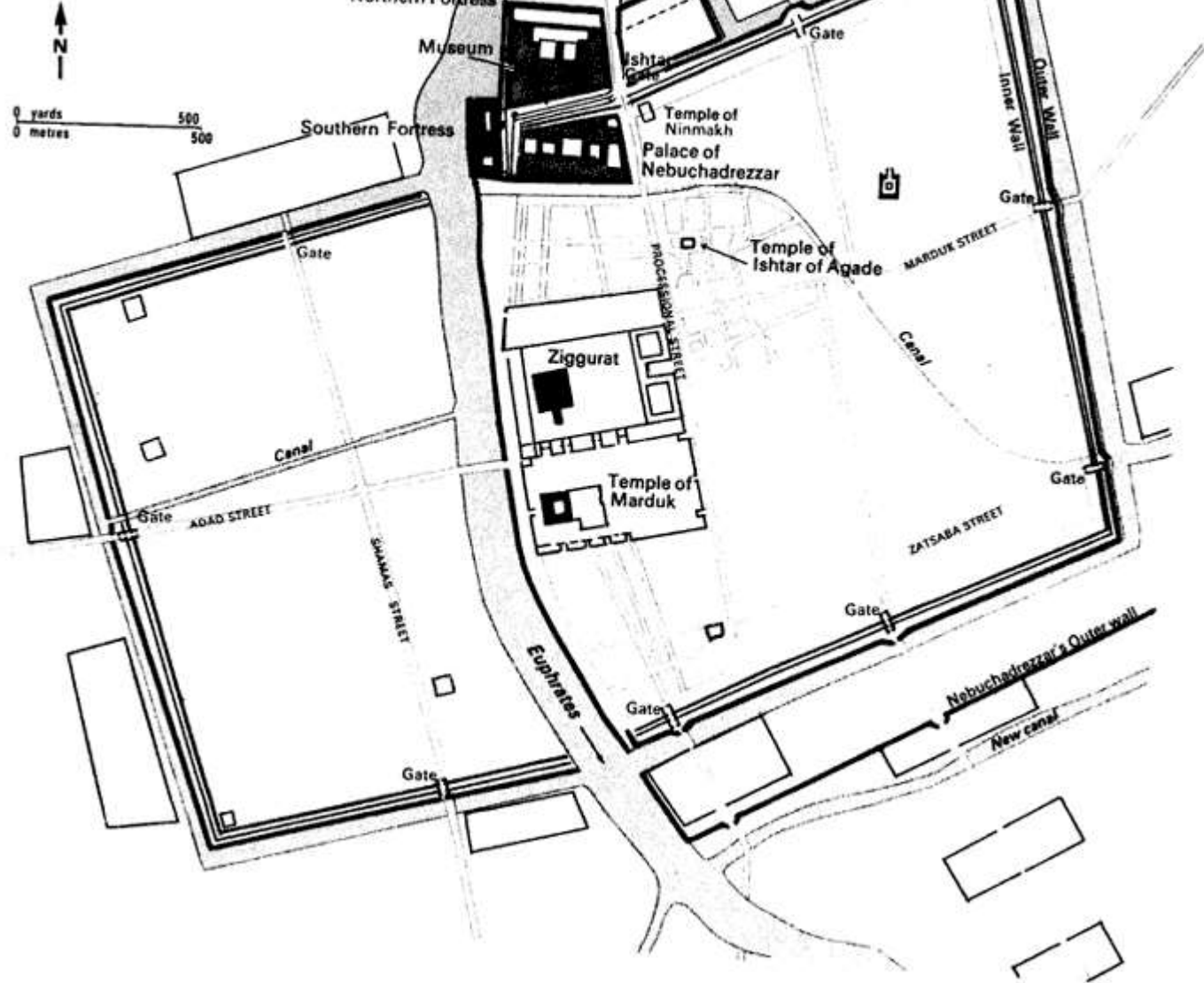
- ❑ The city of **Babylon** was the capital of the ancient land of Babylonia in **southern Mesopotamia**.
- ❑ It was situated on the Euphrates River about 50 miles south of modern Baghdad, just north of what is now the modern Iraqi town of al-Hillah.
- ❑ The **tremendous wealth and power of this city**, along with its monumental size and appearance, were certainly considered a **Biblical myth**, that is, until its foundations were unearthed and its riches substantiated during the 19th century.
- ❑ Archaeologists stood in awe as their discoveries revealed that certain stories in the Bible were an actual situation that had happened in time.

Ancient Babylon – Where was it?

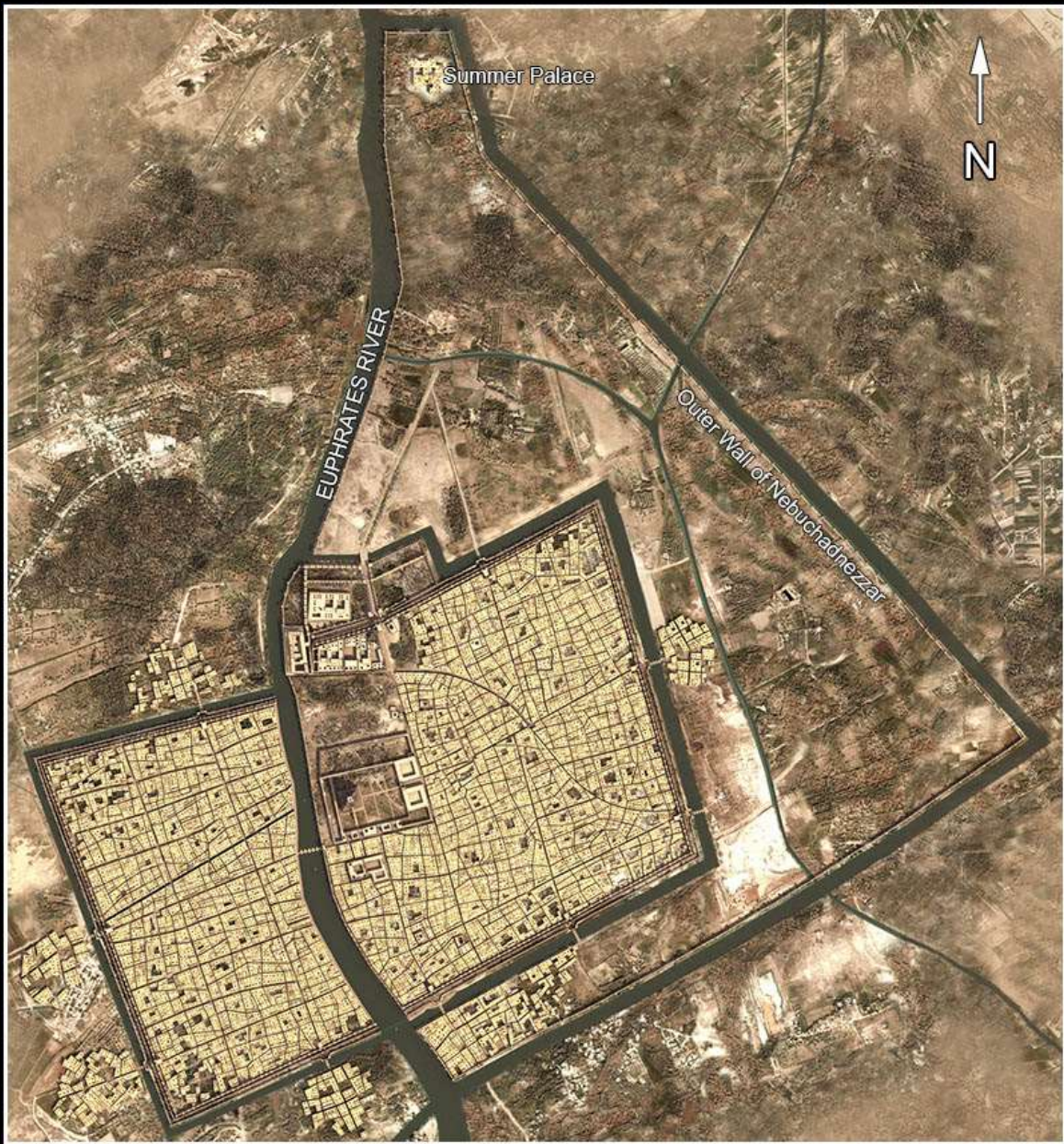
- ❑ Located in Mesopotamia between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers.
- ❑ Today, the remains of the city are spread out over a cluster of mounds located on the Euphrates about 60 miles southwest of Baghdad, Iraq.
- ❑ The river divided the city in two, with the old city to the east and a smaller new city to the west.
- ❑ Once the city was **rebuilt**, the name was changed to Babylonia.
- ❑ The **ground** is very fertile and produces wild **barley, chickpea, and sesame**. The marshlands produce an edible root that is equal in nutrition to barley. The land is also rich with **dates, apples, and other fruit as well as fish and birds**.



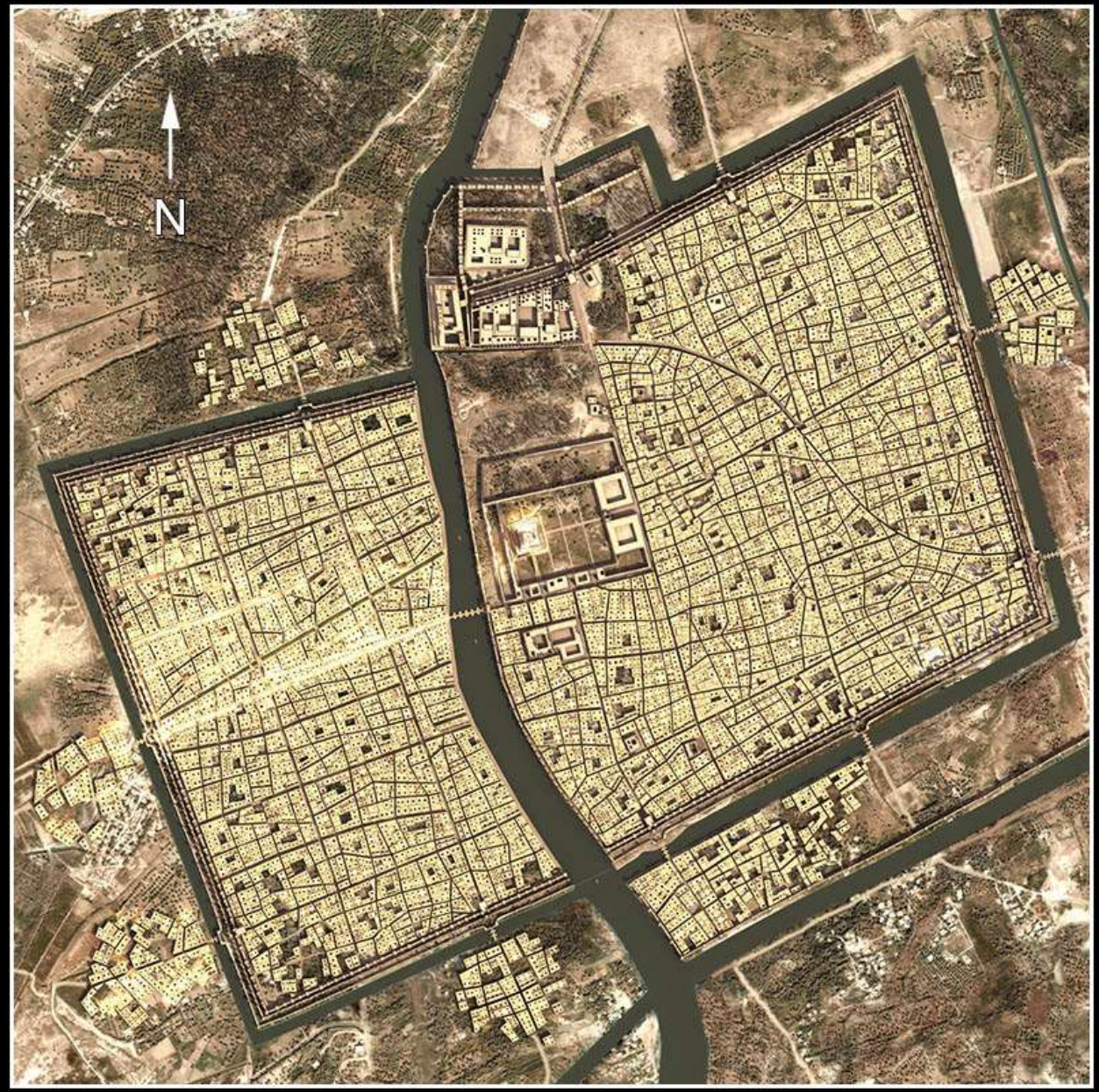
Babylon



MAP OF ANCIENT BABYLON



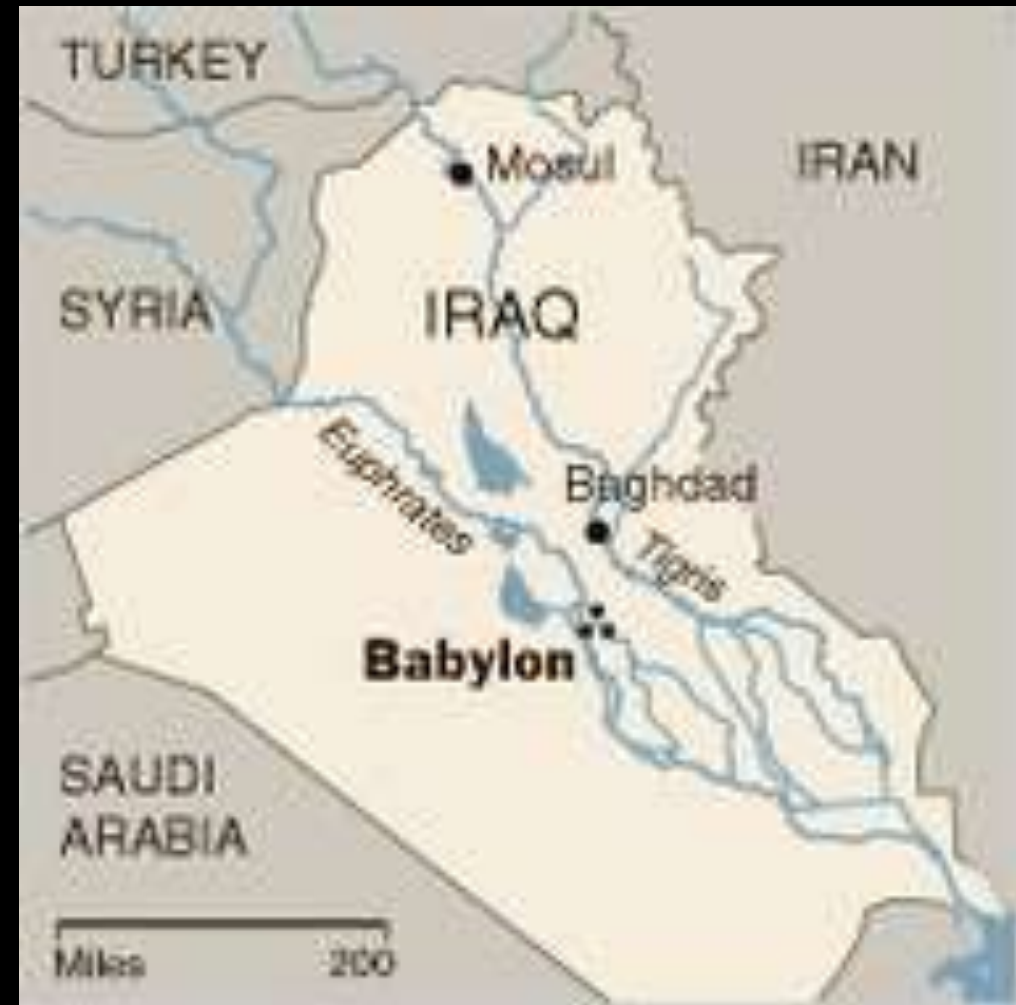
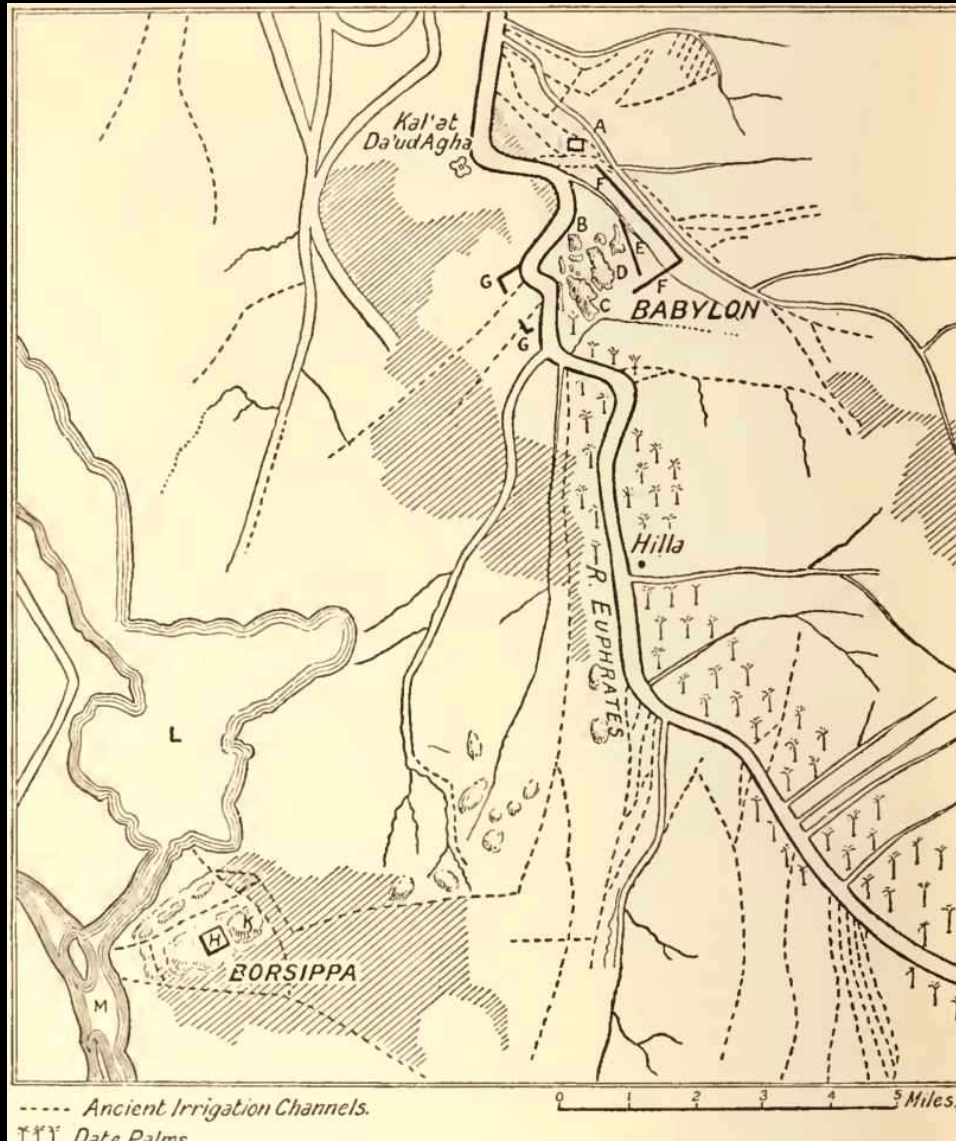
Key Plan of the City



Zoomed plan of the City

MAP OF THE
NEIGHBOURHOOD
OF BABYLON
AND BIRS-
NIMRUD.

- A : The mound Babil.
- B: The mound Kasr.
- C : The mound Amran-ibn-Ali.
- D: The mound Merkes.
- E : Inner City-wall of Babylon.
- F : Outer City-wall of Babylon.
- G: Ruins of western walls.
- H : Temple-tower of E-zida.
- K : Ruins of E-zida.
- L: Marsh.
- M : Hindiya Canal



Modern Day Iraq with
the position of Babylon



Map of the Ancient Near East

Source: Sir Barnister Fletcher (1986)

The Word "Babylon"– What does it mean?

Babylon is Akkadian "babilani" which means "the Gate of God(s)" and it became the capital of the land of Babylonia. The etymology of the name "Babe"l in the Bible means "confused" (Gen 11:9) and throughout the Bible, Babylon was a symbol of the confusion caused by godlessness. The name Babylon is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Babel.

TIMELINE

- ❑ 2100: Third dynasty of Ur forms extensive empire in Babylonia. Revival of the Sumerians as a political power
- ❑ 2100 :Ur , Early ziggurat built
- ❑ 2000 ;Southern Mesopotamia
- ❑ Ur and her empire collapses under the pressure of another group of people moving into Mesopotamia: the Amorites
- ❑ 2000 :Mesopotamia, Amorites move into Mesopotamia
- ❑ 2006–1894 :Babylonia ,Isin–Larsa period: when Isin and Larsa were the dominant cities
- ❑ 1792–60 :Babylon , Hammurabi rules
- ❑ 1763 : Larsa is overthrown by the Kassites

- ❑ 1757: Mari, Royal palace destroyed by the Babylonians
- ❑ 1415–1155 :Southern Mesopotamia, Kassite invaders rule Babylon and most of southern Mesopotamia.
- ❑ 612 : Assyria is defeated by the Medes and Babylonians

❑ 605–562 : Babylon ,
Nebuchadnezzar II rules



- ❑ 539 :Babylon ,The Achaemenid (Persian) empire captures Babylon

Rise to Power

- ❑ Babylonia was a long, narrow country about 40 miles wide at its widest point and having an **area** of about 8,000 square miles.
- ❑ It was bordered on the north by Assyria, on the east by Elam, on the south and west by the Arabian desert, and on the southeast by the Persian Gulf.
- ❑ Babylonia was founded as a kingdom around 1900 BC by Semitic Amorite barbarians who overran much of Canaan, Akkad, and Sumer one hundred years earlier.
- ❑ In 1792 BC the small kingdom was inherited by Hammurabi who ruled until 1750. During those 42 years, Hammurabi extended the kingdom to encompass all of Sumer to the east and Akkad to the north.
- ❑ He also defeated the barbarian Gutians in the Zagros Mountains to the northeast who had previously sacked Akkad.

Ancient Babylon– About their Base of Economy and Military force

- ❑ Irrigation and dikes controlled the waters of the Euphrates River, providing bountiful harvests of grain, vegetables, and fruit in normal years.
- ❑ These foods were supplemented by herds of sheep and some cattle.
- ❑ Traded food surpluses for raw materials like copper, gold, and wood, which they used to manufacture weapons, household objects, jewelry, and other items that could be traded.
- ❑ Hammurabi's army of the Old Empire made important use of chariots when these were first coming into use.
- ❑ Made extensive use of cavalry, especially mounted bowmen.
- ❑ Foot troops probably used iron weapons and wore iron helmets and some chain mail armor.

The Old Babylonian Period

- ❑ High point was reign of King Hammurabi (1792–1750 B.C.) united all of Mesopotamia through conquest. He was the sixth king of the first dynasty of Babylon.
- ❑ Main rivals consisted of Larsa, Eshunna, Mari and Shamshi-Adad I of Assyria (1813–1781 BC).
- ❑ He dealt with his enemies through diplomacy or military force.
- ❑ During reign government controlled economy and passed comprehensive laws called the Hammurabi Code





Hammurabi Code



- ❑ Code reinforced “An eye for an eye” mentality.
- ❑ Laws focused on property rights, slaves, children and women’s rights, murder, theft and marriage
- ❑ Punishment differed based on a person’s social class
- ❑ Laws were introduced for two main reasons
- ❑ To establish order in a land in constant conflict
- ❑ To represent a king’s beliefs of justice
- ❑ Several laws were written to protect the poor and powerless from abuse

Downfall of Babylon

- ❑ 1595 B.C. Hittites invaded Babylon and conqueror it.
- ❑ **Modified** Hammurabri's Code and made it more **lenient**.
- ❑ A large tribe called **Kassites** seized Mesopotamia (Babylon)
- ❑ During **rule of Kassites**, Babylon saw a period of **no growth**.



Ancient Ruins of Hammurabi's Throne



Neo-Babylonian Period

- ❑ Nebuchadnezzar II was the real genius and builder of Babylon.
- ❑ Of its 70 years in existence he ruled for 45 years.
- ❑ As the commander of Nabopolassar's armies he was unstoppable.
- ❑ He broke the power of Egypt at the battle of Carchemish and proved to be one of the mightiest monarchs of all time.
- ❑ Among the cities he invaded and plundered were Tyre, Moab, Ammon, Edom, and Jerusalem.

Contributions in Planning :

-In the form of a square, 14 miles on each side, and of enormous magnitude The brick wall was 56 miles long, 300 feet high, 25 feet thick with another wall 75 feet behind the first wall, and the wall extended 35 feet below the ground

The Ancient Near East
in 540 BC



-250 towers that were 450 feet high

-A wide and deep moat that encircled the city.

-The Euphrates River also flowed through the middle of the city. Ferry boats and a 1/2 mi. long bridge with drawbridges closed at night.

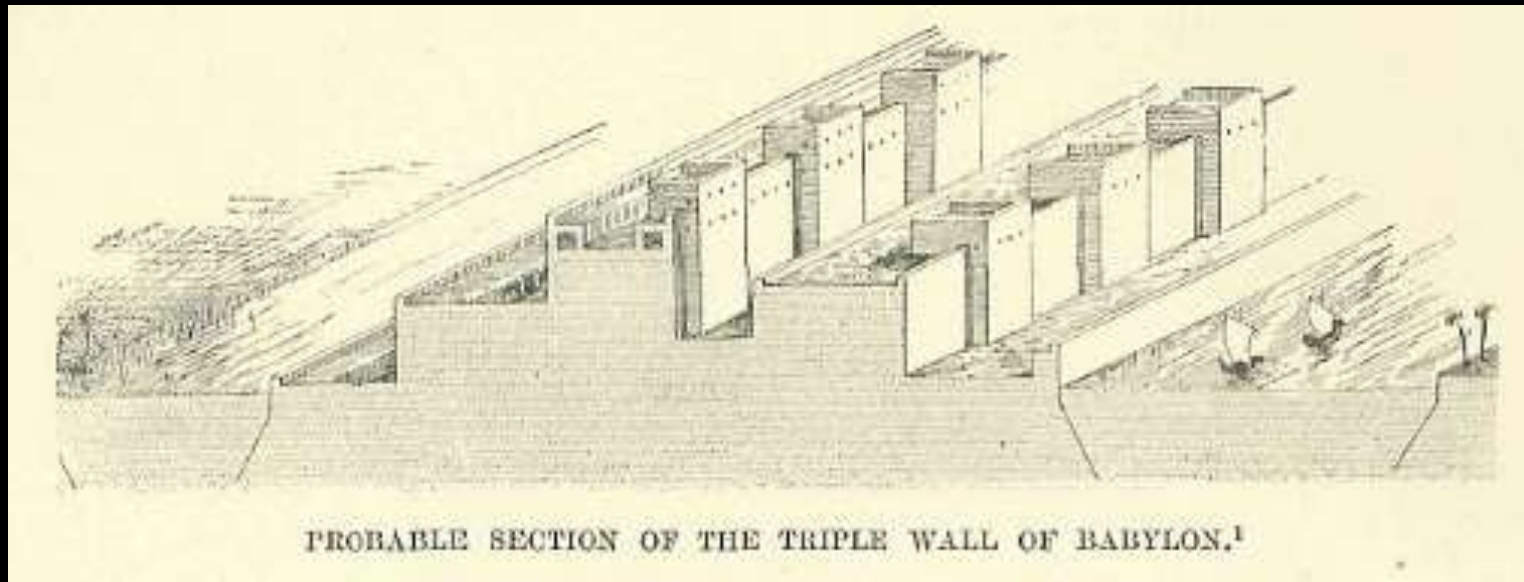
-"Hanging Gardens" with the water was raised from the river by hydraulic pumps.

-Eight massive gates that led to the inner city and 100 brass gates

-Streets were paved with stone slabs 3 feet square

-The great Tower (Ziggurat) and 53 temples including the "Great Temple of Marduk." 180 altars to Ishtar

-Nebuchadnezzar's palace was considered to be the most magnificent building ever erected on earth.



WALLS OF THE BABYLONIA

- ❑ Transforming the city of Babylon into an awe-inspiring wonder belongs to King Nebuchadnezzar II. He **built three walls** around Babylon at **heights of forty feet** and so broad at the top that chariots could race around them.
- ❑ **The Ishtar Gate** in the wall of Nebuchadnezzar II's Babylon was claimed by some to be **greater than any of the listed Wonders of the Ancient World**.
- ❑ The Greek historian **Herodotus** specifically **praised the walls** which he said were **56 miles (90 kilometres) long, 80 feet (24 metres) thick, and 320 feet (97 metres) high**.



Ancient walls of the
Babylon



Original walls of the Babylon





ISHTAR GATE



- ❑ Eighth gate to the inner city of Babylon.
- ❑ Claimed by some to be greater than any of the listed Wonders of the Ancient World.
- ❑ **Constructed** in about **575 BC** by order of King Nebuchadnezzar II on the **north side of the city**.
- ❑ Excavated in the early 20th century and a reconstruction using original bricks is now shown in the Pergamon Museum, Berlin.
- ❑ **Dedicated to the Babylonian goddess Ishtar**, the gate was constructed using glazed brick with alternating rows of bas-relief dragons and aurochs, symbolizing the gods Marduk.



Work on
the walls
of the
Ishtar
Gate





Images of
the
Procession
al Street

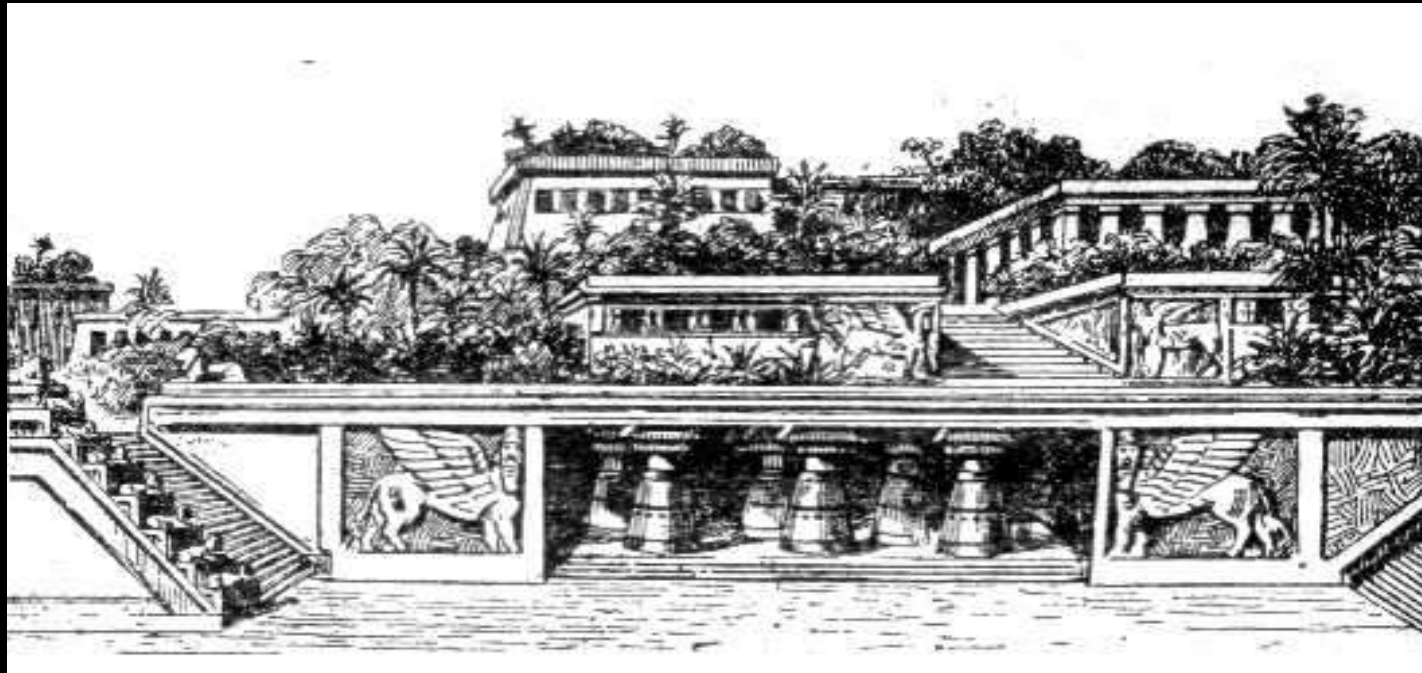


- ❑ The **roof** and **doors** of the gate were of cedar wood.
- ❑ The gate was covered in lapis lazuli, a deep-blue semi-precious due to its vibrancy.
- ❑ These **blue glazed bricks** give **jewel-like shine**.
- ❑ Through the gate ran the Processional Way, which was lined with walls showing about 120 lions, bulls, dragons and flowers on enameled yellow and black glazed bricks, symbolizing the goddess Ishtar.
- ❑ The **gate** itself **depicted** only gods and goddesses; these **included Ishtar, Adad and Marduk**.
- ❑ During celebrations of the New Year, statues of the deities were paraded through the gate.



THE HANGING GARDENS OF BABYLON

- ❑ The Hanging Gardens of Babylon were one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, and the only one whose location has not been definitely established.
- ❑ Distinctive feature of ancient Babylon.
- ❑ Built by King Nebuchadnezzar II in 600 BC, the gardens are believed to have been **a remarkable feat of engineering**: an ascending series of tiered gardens containing **all manner of trees, shrubs, and vines**.





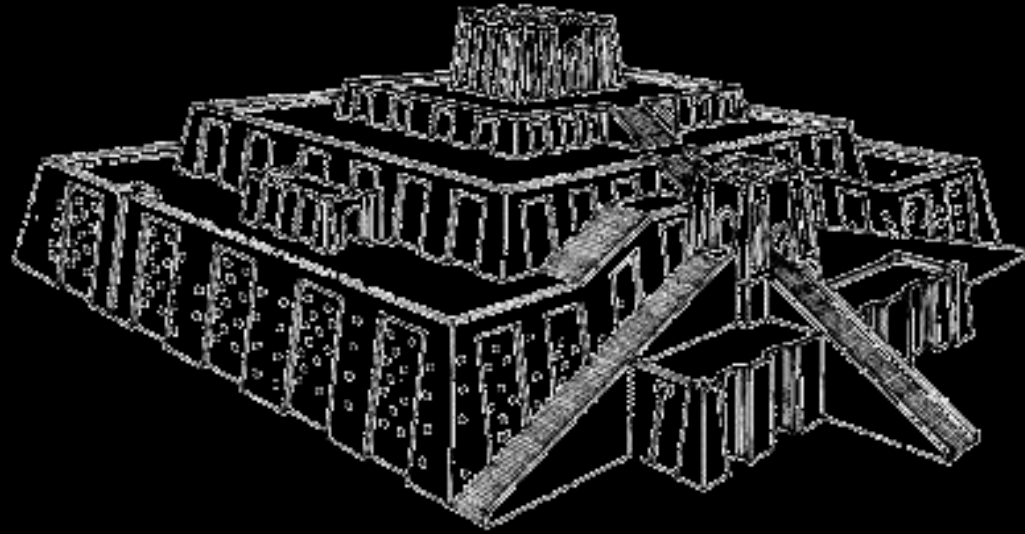
Ruins of
the
Hanging
Gardens
of
Babylon

- ❑ The gardens were said to have looked like a **large green mountain** constructed of **mud bricks**, rising from the center of the city.
- ❑ According to one legend, Nebuchadnezzar II **built** the Hanging Gardens **for his Median wife, Queen Amytis**, because she missed the green hills and valleys of her homeland.
- ❑ He also built a grand palace that came to be known as 'The Marvel of the Mankind'.
- ❑ Because of the **lack of evidence** it has been suggested that **the Hanging Gardens are purely mythical** and **If it did indeed exist, it was destroyed** sometime after the first century AD.

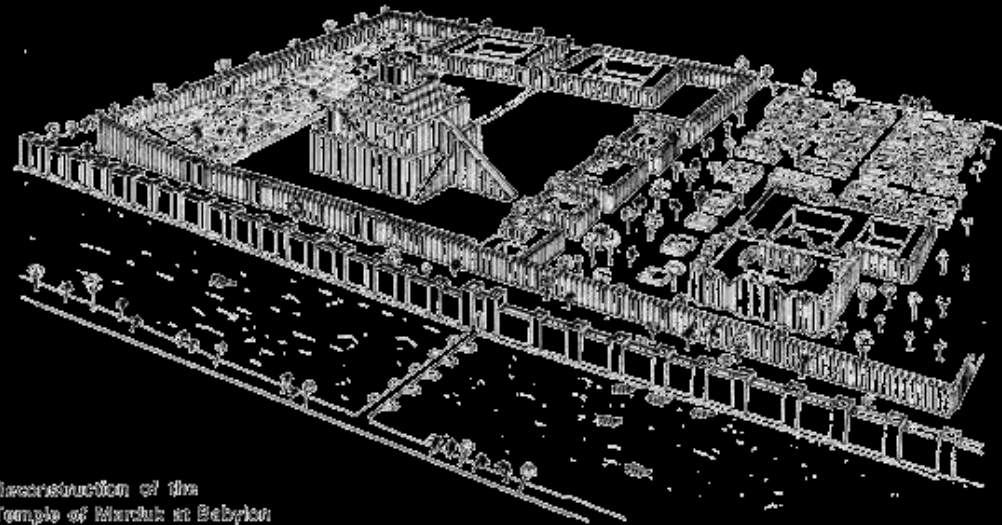


Ancient Babylonia – The ZIGURRATS

- ❑ One of the most important aspects of Babylonian religion and tradition
- ❑ Ziggurats were huge "stepped" structures with, on their summit, far above the ground, a temple.
- ❑ The same could be done on ground level but on top of the ziggurat they would be "nearer the god".
- ❑ Therefore the ziggurat was not just a religious center but also a center of civic pride.
- ❑ In the time of Hammurabi they would sometimes reach the height of 150 feet.
- ❑ Around the base, accommodation for priests.



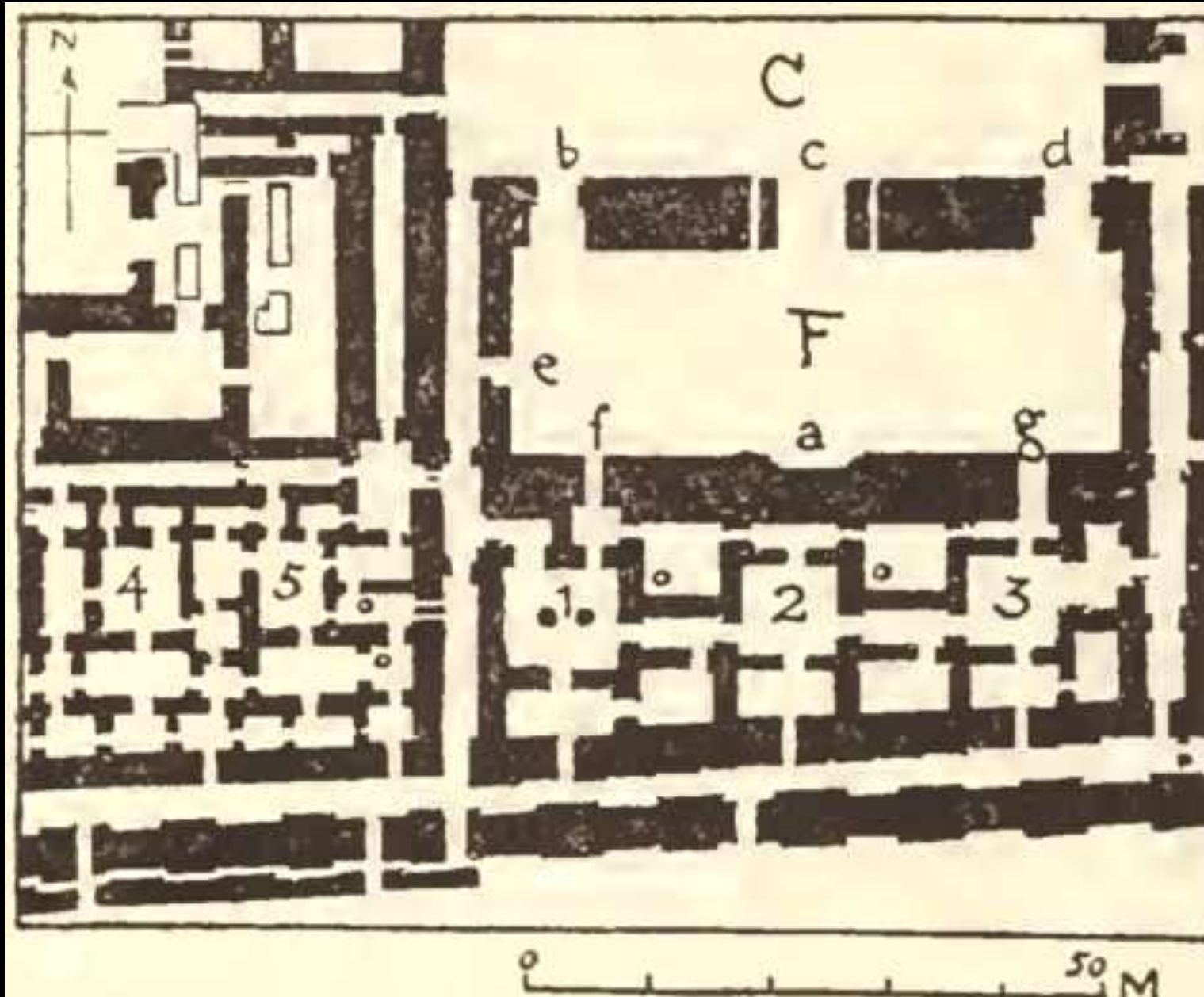
Reconstruction of the Ziggurat at Ur



Reconstruction of the Temple of Marduk at Babylon

HOUSES AND FARMS

- ❑ Houses made of **sun-dried bricks** .Inhabited by farmers and artisans.
- ❑ The **city streets –narrow, winding, and quite irregular**, with high, **windowless walls of houses on both sides**. The streets were **unpaved and undrained**.
- ❑ The **average house**– a small, one-story, mud-brick structure, consisting of several rooms grouped around a court. The house of a well-to-do –two-story brick dwelling of about a dozen rooms and was plastered and whitewashed both inside and out.
- ❑ The ground floor consisted of a reception room, kitchen, lavatory, servants' quarters, and, sometimes, even a private chapel. Furniture consisted of low tables, high-backed chairs, and beds with wooden frames. Household vessels were made of clay, stone, copper, and bronze, and baskets and chests of reed and wood.
- ❑ Floors and walls were adorned with **reed mats, skin rugs, and woolen hangings**.
- ❑ **Below the house** was often located a **mausoleum** in which the **family dead were buried**.
- ❑ Agriculture formed the economic base of Babylonian civilization with production of **barley, wheat, fruits, vegetables, with cattle and sheep** predominating.



Plan of the throne room of Nebuchadnezzar

C : Great Court.
F : Throne Room,
a : Recess in back-wall for throne,
b-d : Entrances to Throne Room from Court,
e-g : Entrances from side and back.
1-3 : Open courts, surrounded by rooms for the royal service.
4, 5 : Open courts in the south-east corner of the Private Palace.

Clockwise : Throne Room of
the Palace, The Lion of the
Babylon, The Palace
Courtyard, King
Nebudchanezzar Palace's
Aerial View



Legacy

- ❑ The **first Babylonian empire** is best known for the **Law Code** of King Hammurabi.
- ❑ The laws of Moses derive from Hammurabi's code.
- ❑ New Empire of Babylon was noted especially for its wealth and grandeur.
- ❑ This was reported in Old Testament accounts from the period of the Hebrew Babylonian Captivity and by the Greek historian Herodotus who visited the city.
- ❑ The most impressive features of the city were its walls, the Ishtar Gate, the ziggurat and temple to Marduk, the Processional Way, and the Hanging Gardens.



PRESENTED BY:

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