



## V. ASSYRIA

### A. Location – (See Assyrian Empire map)

1. Centered on upper Tigris
2. Extended from Mediterranean Sea to Persian Gulf
3. Reached greatest geographical extent during life time of Isaiah (c.700 BC)
4. An empire from about 1600BC to 600BC

### B. Major Cities

1. Ninevah
  - a. Located on the upper Tigris
  - b. Founding (Genesis 10:8-11)
  - c. Biblical mention (2 Kings 19:36; Jonah)
  - d. For years the capital of Assyria
  - e. Worshipped the goddess Ishtar
  - f. Comprised 1800 acres with 15 great gates in the time of Sennacherib
  - g. Setting for the book of Jonah
2. Asshur
3. Calah

### C. Principle Leaders

1. Tiglath Pileser I
  - a. c. 1000 BC
  - b. Conquered surrounding areas (including Babylon and Armenia) but did not annex them
2. Tiglath Pileser II
  - a. c.745 BC
  - b. Also called Pul (1 Chronicles 5:26)
  - c. Took tribute from Menahem (2 Kings 15:19-20)
  - d. Made partial captivity of Israel under Pekah (2 Kings 15:29)
  - e. Took tribute from Ahaz (2 Kings 16:5-10)
3. Shalmaneser
  - a. Reigned from 727 to 722BC
  - b. Hoshea refused to pay him tribute (2 Kings 17:35)
  - c. Beseiged and took Samaria (2Kings 17:1-6; 2 Kings 18:9-10)
  - d. Took Israel captive to the land of the Medes (2 Kings 17:6; 2 Kings 18:11-12)
4. Sargon II
  - a. Immediate successor of Shalmaneser
  - b. Mentioned in Isaiah 20:1



- c. Considered the most powerful Assyrian ruler
5. Sennacherib
  - a. Sargon's son
  - b. 705-681BC
  - c. Tried to take Judah during the time of Hezekiah (2 Kings 19:32-35)
  - d. Had 185,000 troops killed by the angel of the Lord (2 Kings 19:35)
  - e. Killed by sons upon returning home (2 Kings 19:36-37)
6. Assurbanipal
  - a. 668-630BC
  - b. Sennacherib's grandson
  - c. Took Egypt
  - d. Assyria declined after his death

#### D. Defeat of Assyria

1. Conquered by the Chaldeans, Medes and Persians
2. Retreated to Haran
3. Defeated by the Medes in the battle of Carchemish (605BC)

## VI. NEW BABYLONIAN EMPIRE – (See Babylonian Empire map)

### A. Introduction

1. Came into greatness under Nebuchadnezzar
2. A strong but brief empire

### B. Important Dates

1. Battle of Carchemish (605BC)
2. Fall of Jerusalem (587BC)
3. Fall of Babylon (539BC)

### C. Important Rulers

1. Nebuchadnezzar
  - a. Took Judah into captivity
  - b. Made the great image of Daniel 3
  - c. Called the golden head in Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 2:38)
2. Nabonidus – son of Nebuchadnezzar
3. Belshazzar
  - a. Said to be the son of Nebuchadnezzar in the Bible (Daniel 5:2,11) but his grandson in history. This is not problem since *father* and *son* as titles can skip generations in Biblical usage.



- b. He was ruling Babylon when it fell (Daniel 5)

#### D. Scriptural References

1. The extent of their rule (2 Kings 24:7)
2. The first deportation (2 Kings 24:11-16)
3. Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the taking of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 38:14-23)
4. Jerusalem besieged (2 Kings 25:1-10; Jeremiah 39:9)
5. The Book of Daniel

#### E. Capital City – Babylon

1. Location – on the plain of Shinar on the Euphrates River
2. Founding (Genesis 10:8-10; Genesis 11:1-10)
3. Religion
  - a. Temple of Ishtar
  - b. Ishtar Gate
  - c. Temple of Marduk or Bel
    - (1) Patron god of Babylon
    - (2) The sun god
    - (3) Jeremiah 51:44; 50:2
  - d. Had 53 temples and 180 altars to Ishtar
4. Appearance
  - a. Square-shaped; about 13 miles on each side
  - b. Euphrates river flowed through it
  - c. Two sets of walls

### VII. PERSIAN EMPIRE – (See Persian Empire map)

#### A. Important Dates

1. 539BC – Cyrus conquers Babylon
2. 330BC – Persia falls to Alexander the Great

#### B. Important Rulers

1. Cyrus II (the Great)
  - a. Conquered the Medes, Lydians and Babylonians
  - b. Called the Lord's anointed (Isaiah 44:28; Isaiah 45:1-4)
  - c. Decreed to restore Jews to homeland (Ezra 1:2-3)
2. Cambes II
  - a. Son of Cyrus
  - b. Conquered Egypt



3. Darius I (the Great) (Ezra 4:5)
  - a. His rule extended over two million square miles
  - b. He failed to conquer Greece
4. Xerxes I
  - a. 486-465BC
  - b. The Ahasuerus of Esther 1:1
  - c. Fought much with Greece
  - d. Assassinated in 465BC
  - e. Persian Empire declined after his reign
5. Darius III
  - a. Last Persian ruler
  - b. Fell to Alexander the Great in 330BC

C. Chief Cities – (See Old Testament World map)

1. Pasargadae
  - a. Chosen as capital by Cyrus II the Great
  - b. Located about 300 miles southeast of Shushan
2. Persepolis
  - a. Second great Persian capital
  - b. Chosen by Darius I the Great
  - c. Located in the mountains; administration was usually carried on in Shushan (Susa), Babylon or Ecbatana
3. Shushan (also called Susa)
  - a. 150 miles north of the Persian Gulf at the foot of the Zagros Mountains
  - b. Biblical references (Nehemiah 1:1; Esther 1:1-2; Esther 2:8; Esther 3:15; Daniel 8:2)
  - c. Significance
    - (1) One of the capitals of Persia
    - (2) A winter residence of many Persian kings
    - (3) The setting of the Book of Esther

I. SPECIAL NOTES:

A. Haran

1. Location
  - a. In northern Mesopotamia (Genesis 24:10)
  - b. On the Belikh River, 60 miles from its entrance into the Euphrates
  - c. Located in Padan-Aram (the field of Aram)
  - d. On the caravan route connecting Ninevah, Asshur and Babylon with Damascus, Tyre and Egypt.
2. Religion
  - a. Worshipped the moon god



- b. This matches the religion of Ur
- c. The images of Laban came from Haran (Genesis 31:19, 30; Genesis 35:2)
- 3. Biblical mention
  - a. Terah's death (Genesis 11:26-32; Acts 7:2-4)
  - b. Abram's departure (Genesis 12:4-5)
  - c. Jacob's flight (Genesis 27:43; Genesis 28:10)
  - d. Haran's destruction (2 Kings 19:12; Isaiah 37:12)

## B. The Hittites

- 1. Location – Asia Minor
- 2. Biblical mention
  - a. Hittites mentioned 47 times
  - b. Children of Heth mentioned 14 times (compare Genesis 26:34-35 with 27:46)
- 3. Origin – Heth – son of Canaan (Genesis 10:15)
- 4. Capital – Hattusa
- 5. Two kingdoms
  - a. Old Hittite Kingdom
    - (1) c.1600 to 1450BC
    - (2) At one time, controlled most of Asia Minor and Syria
    - (3) Now considered to be the third most powerful ancient Middle East power, behind Mesopotamia and Egypt
    - (4) Existed during the time of Egyptian bondage of the Israelites
  - b. New Hittite Kingdom
    - (1) c.1400 to 1200BC
    - (2) Existed during the time of the Judges