

by the fact that over a million bricks have been excavated, each of them stamped with the name and titles of Nebuchadnezzar the great king. It is therefore easy to picture him as described in Daniel 4.30, where he says, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built?"

The empire established by Nebuchadnezzar continued through a number of reigns (for list of the kings and their dates, see article Babylon). Its last king was named Nabonidus. Nabonidus associated his son Belshazzar with him as king, as stated in Daniel 5. Belshazzar was killed at the time of the Persian conquest of Babylon.

8. The Persian Period.

With the conquest of Babylon by the Persians, Mesopotamian independence ended. Cyrus the great, at first a subject king under the Medes, had established his supremacy over them and then had led the Medes and Persians on to conquer all of Asia Minor, and the regions around Babylon, then to conquer Babylon and put an end to the Babylonian empire. The speed of his conquest is vividly illustrated in the predictions in Daniel 8.3,4 (cf.v.20), and in Isaiah 41.2,3,25, and 45.1,2. Cyrus was succeeded by his son, Cambyses, who conquered Egypt. He was followed by another very great ruler, Darius I. The Persian control lasted over 200 years. It was a time of comparative peace and prosperity. Although the Persian kings ruled with an absolute despotism, they gave their people a large measure of individual freedom. It was, on the whole, an enlightened monarchy.

9. The Hellenistic Period.

As predicted in Daniel 8.5-8 (cf.v.21-22), Alexander the Great moved against the Persian Empire. In 331 B.C. he conquered Darius III and established his own domain over the whole region formerly held by the Persians. His early death resulted in struggles among his followers which ended in the division of