



Daniel 1:1–21

All these lands are watered by important rivers: Nile, Jordan, Euphrates and Tigris, and the region extends from the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea around the north of the Syrian Desert to the Persian Gulf.

These areas are in present-day Egypt, Israel, West Bank, Gaza strip, and Lebanon and parts of Jordan, Syria, Iraq, south-eastern Turkey and south-western Iran.



The route was along the rivers, so they had to walk maybe 1,700 miles.

The Oregon trail was 2,170 miles from Missouri River to Oregon, and people covered it in about four to six months on average.

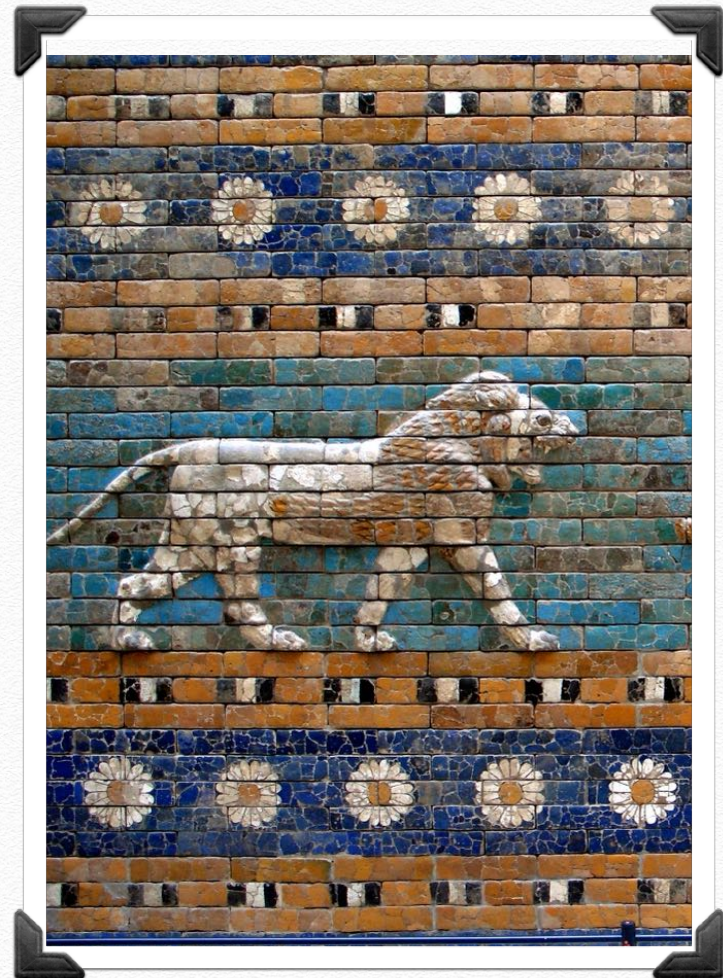






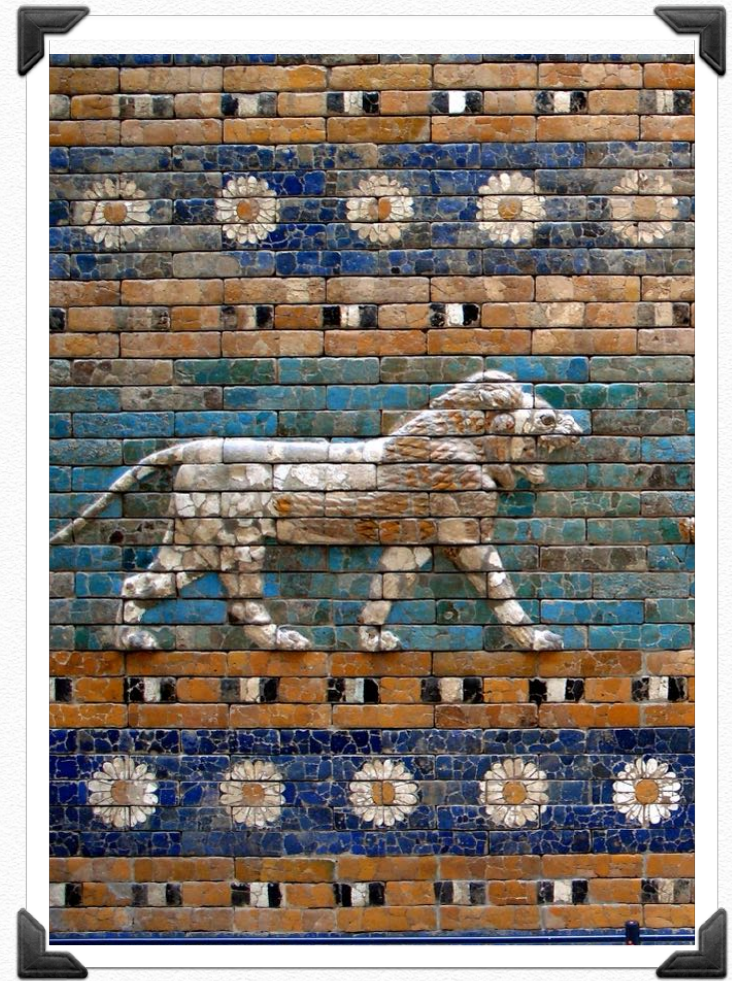
Nebuchadnezzar II

- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar II was king of Babylon for 43 years from 605 to 562 BC. He is written about in many ancient Babylonian documents, and he played a pivotal role in the fall of the Kingdom of Judah. As described in 2 Kings 24:1–25:26, Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah three times. The first invasion was in 605 BC, the first year of his reign. The second was in 597 BC, the eighth year of his reign and the third in 588–586 BC, when he destroyed Jerusalem and the temple.



Nebuchadnezzar II

- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar's involvement with the Kingdom of Judah is recorded in five Old Testament books—Second Kings, Second Chronicles, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. His name is found ninety-one times in the Hebrew (or Aramaic) text, spelled two different ways—with an “n” in Nebuchadnezzar and with an “r” in Nebuchadrezzar.



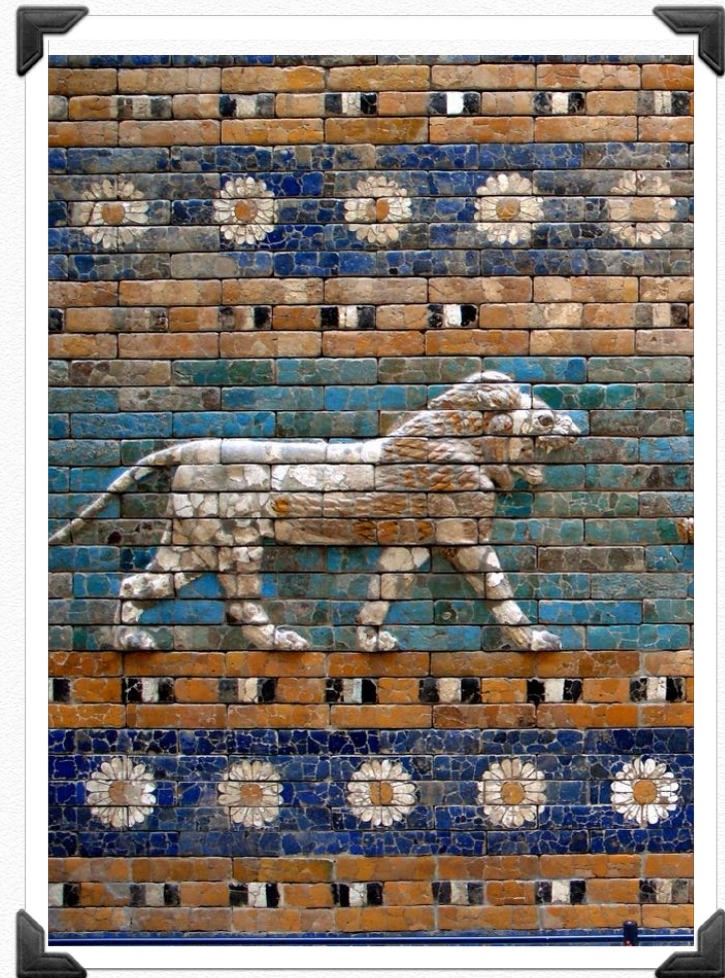
Nebuchadnezzar II

❖ His name written in cuneiform is:



❖ Nebuchadnezzar I was most likely his grandfather because his father was Nabopolassar.

❖ He is also known as Nebuchadnezzar the Great because of his military campaigns and because of the construction projects completed in Babylon during his reign.



- ❖ He rebuilt the palaces, temples, and a temple tower (ziggurat) of the city and added new buildings and fortifications.
- ❖ Four kings reigned after Nebuchadnezzar II before Belshazzar became king.
- ❖ Then Babylon fell to Darius and the Medo-Persian empire in 539 BC and later to Cyrus.
- ❖ It was during the first three years of Belshazzar that the great visions of Daniel 7 and 8 were given.

In each of the chief cities of Mesopotamia there stood one of these ziggurats or staged towers which dominate the lower mounds that were temples or palaces. They were great solid structures rising up tier upon tier, each stage smaller than the one below it, so that the whole had the effect of a stepped platform; stairways or sloping ramps led from the ground level to the summit. On the summit was set a little shrine dedicated to the city's patron god.



The temple tower of Ur

It stands at a height of approximately seventy feet and is a monument that stands out in the flat land.





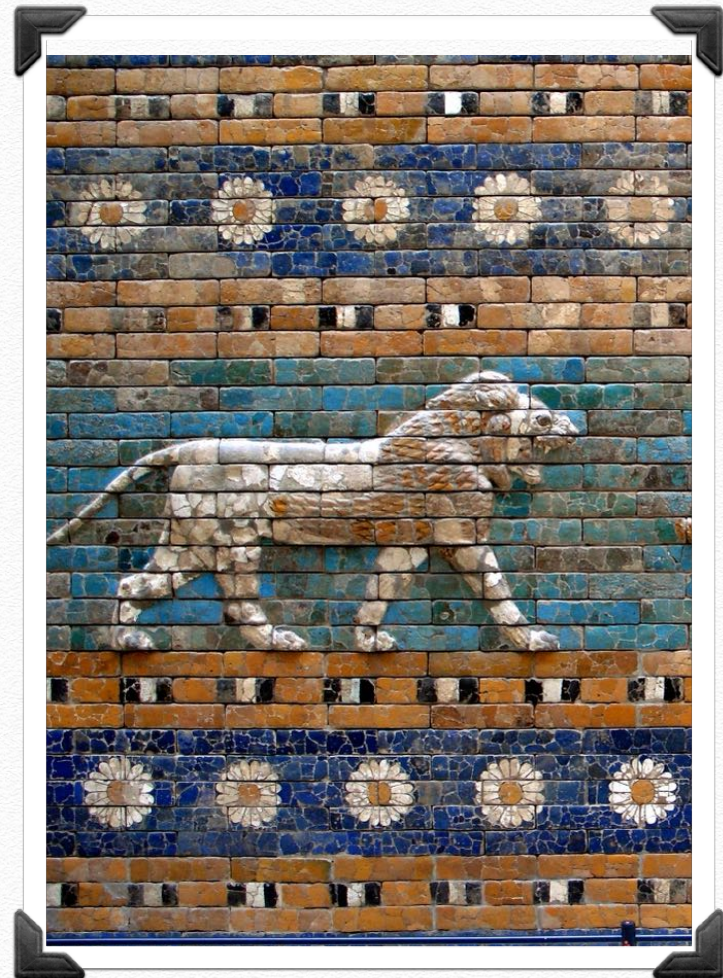
David Real

There are only four known images of King Nebuchadnezzar, most surviving in a poor state carved on the faces of cliffs in Lebanon. The best-preserved image is found on the Stele of Nebuchadnezzar II. It depicts a bearded Nebuchadnezzar dressed in his royal robe, wearing a conical crown, and holding a long staff. He is standing before a ziggurat, a tower dedicated to the Babylonian god, Marduk. The inscription itself describes the work Nebuchadnezzar undertook to complete the ziggurats at Babylon and Borsippa.

The image of the king on this stele is the best representation of King Nebuchadnezzar's appearance as Daniel would have seen him.

Daniel

- ❖ Daniel was taken to Babylon in 605 BC during the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar.
- ❖ During his third year in captivity, which was the second year of Nebuchadnezzar, he interpreted the king's dream of the image.



Daniel

- ❖ For some time he held a high position in Nebuchadnezzar's government (ch. 2:48) and became a trusted counselor of the king. Under Nebuchadnezzar's successors, Daniel's service is not revealed until the night of Babylon's fall, when he was called to interpret the mysterious handwriting on the wall (ch. 5). Shortly after this event he once more rose to a high position of honor and responsibility in the newly formed Persian Empire (ch. 6).



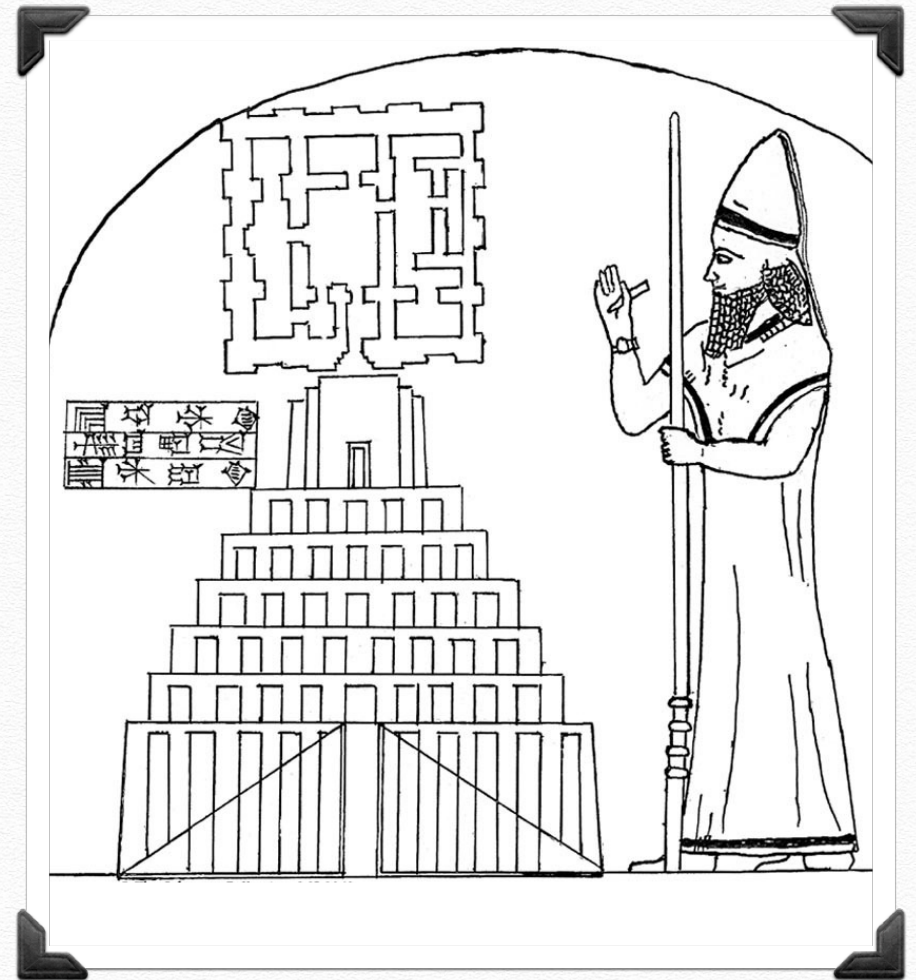
Daniel

- ❖ All the visions of Daniel recorded in chs. 7–12 were received during the last years of his life, the first one (ch. 7) in Belshazzar's 1st year (552 or possibly later), and the last one (chs. 10–12) in the third year of Cyrus, 536/35 BC. It was probably at this time, when Daniel was nearly 90 years of age, that he was commanded to conclude his book and seal it up (ch. 12:4, 13). For these reasons Daniel's extended prophetic ministry can be dated approximately from 603 to 535 BC.



Daniel

- ❖ Among the hundreds of manuscript fragments found in the first Qumrân cave are three from the book of Daniel containing parts of Daniel 1:10–17; 2:2–6; and 3:22–30.



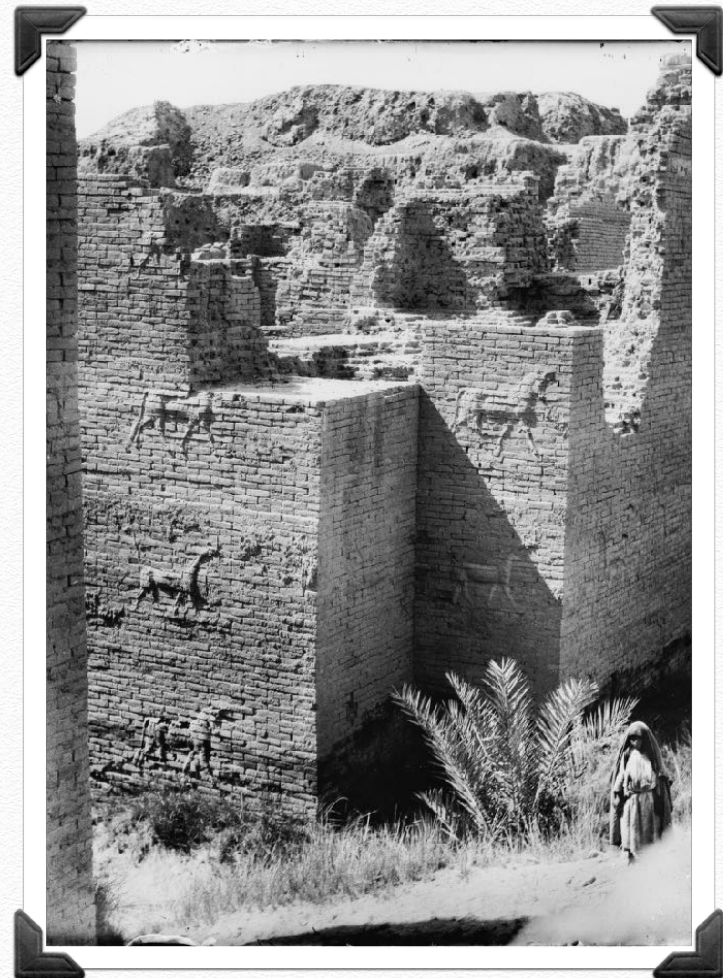
Daniel

- ❖ The book of Daniel is divided into two main parts—the record of certain historical events from the life of Daniel and his three friends and the record of two prophetic dreams of King Nebuchadnezzar, interpreted by Daniel, as well as the records of visions Daniel himself had received.



Daniel

- ❖ Daniel was taken captive during the reign of King **Jehoiakim**. Jehoiakim remained loyal to Babylon for a few years, but eventually sided with the pro-Egyptian party in Judah and rebelled. As a result the country suffered military invasions, its citizens lost their liberty and were taken into captivity, and Jehoiakim lost his life. His son, **Jehoiachin**, was his successor and after a brief reign of only three months saw the armies of Babylon return to Judah. He, together with thousands of citizens of Judah, went into captivity in 597 BC.



Daniel

- ❖ His successor, **Zedekiah**, apparently attempted to remain loyal to Babylon, but he was weak and vacillating and soon sided with Egypt and the anti-Babylonian sentiment of his chief advisers. As a result Nebuchadnezzar returned. For two and a half years the Babylonian armies ravaged Judah, took and destroyed the cities, including Jerusalem, the temple, and the palaces therein, and led the majority of the inhabitants of Judah into captivity in 586 BC.



- ❖ Daniel was taken captive during the reign of **Jehoiakim**. Judah lost its liberty, and the king lost his life.
- ❖ His son, **Jehoiachin**, was his successor and after a brief reign of only three months, the armies of Babylon returned. He, along with thousands of citizens of Judah, went into captivity in 597 BC.
- ❖ His successor was **Zedekiah**.

- ❖ Daniel was in Babylon during the later invasions and probably saw the Babylonian armies depart for their campaigns against his homeland and their victorious returns and the arrival of captured Jews. Among the captives were King **Jehoiachin** and his family (2 Kings 24:10–16) and later the blinded king **Zedekiah** (2 Kings 25:7).

- ❖ During these years Daniel and his three friends performed their duties as royal officers. After their educational training, they became members of group of wise men who served the king as advisers. It was as a wise man that Daniel explained to Nebuchadnezzar the dream of future empires (Dan. 2). As a result Daniel was appointed to a position of exceptionally high rank, which he seems to have held for many years.

From the comparative simplicity of their Judean home these youth of royal line were transported to the most magnificent of cities, to the court of its greatest monarch, and were singled out to be trained for the king's special service. Strong were the temptations surrounding them in that corrupt and luxurious court. The fact that they, the worshipers of Jehovah, were captives to Babylon; that the vessels of God's house had been placed in the temple of the gods of Babylon; that the king of Israel was himself a prisoner in the hands of the Babylonians, was boastfully cited by the victors as evidence that their religion and customs were superior to the religion and customs of the Hebrews. (*Ed 54.3*)

Under such circumstances, through the very humiliations that Israel's departure from His commandments had invited, God gave to Babylon evidence of His supremacy, of the holiness of His requirements, and of the sure result of obedience. And this testimony He gave, as alone it could be given, through those who still held fast their loyalty. (*Ed 54.3*)

To Daniel and his companions, at the very outset of their career, there came a decisive test. The direction that their food should be supplied from the royal table was an expression both of the king's favor and of his solicitude for their welfare. But a portion having been offered to idols, the food from the king's table was consecrated to idolatry; and **in partaking of the king's bounty these youth would be regarded as uniting in his homage to false gods.** In such homage loyalty to Jehovah forbade them to participate. **Nor dared they risk the enervating effect** of luxury and dissipation on physical, mental, and spiritual development. (*Ed 54.4*)

Daniel and his companions had been faithfully instructed in the principles of the word of God. **They had learned to sacrifice the earthly to the spiritual**, to seek the highest good. And they reaped the reward.

Their habits of temperance and their sense of responsibility as representatives of God called to noblest development the powers of body, mind, and soul. At the end of their training, in their examination with other candidates for the honors of the kingdom, there was "found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah." Daniel 1:19. (*Ed 55.1*)

The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.

But such a character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature—the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man. (*Ed 57.3, 4*)

The king did not compel the Hebrew youth to renounce their faith in favor of idolatry, but **he hoped to bring this about gradually**. By giving them names significant of idolatry, by bringing them daily into close association with idolatrous customs, and under the influence of the seductive rites of heathen worship, he hoped to induce them to renounce the religion of their nation and to unite with the worship of the Babylonians. (*PK 481.1*)

In the life of the true Christian there are no nonessentials; in the sight of Omnipotence every duty is important. The Lord measures with exactness every possibility for service. The unused capabilities are just as much brought into account as those that are used. We shall be judged by what we ought to have done, but did not accomplish because we did not use our powers to glorify God. (*PK 488.1*)

God brought Daniel and his associates into connection with the great men of Babylon, that in the midst of a nation of idolaters they might represent His character. How did they become fitted for a position of so great trust and honor? It was faithfulness in little things that gave complexion to their whole life. **They honored God in the smallest duties, as well as in the larger responsibilities.** (*PK 487.2*)

In acquiring the wisdom of the Babylonians, Daniel and his companions were far more successful than their fellow students; but their learning did not come by chance. They obtained their knowledge by the faithful use of their powers, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They placed themselves in connection with the Source of all wisdom, making the knowledge of God the foundation of their education. In faith they prayed for wisdom, and they lived their prayers. They placed themselves where God could bless them. (*PK 486.1*)

They avoided that which would weaken their powers, and improved every opportunity to become intelligent in all lines of learning. They followed the rules of life that could not fail to give them strength of intellect. They sought to acquire knowledge for one purpose—that they might honor God. They realized that in order to stand as representatives of true religion amid the false religions of heathenism they must have clearness of intellect and must perfect a Christian character. And God Himself was their teacher. Constantly praying, conscientiously studying, keeping in touch with the Unseen, they walked with God as did Enoch. (*PK 486.1*)

Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance, and a vigor of intellect that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet. (*MH 296.1*)

- ❖ Only four principal events during Nebuchadnezzar's reign are recorded in the book of Daniel: the **education** of the Jewish princes during the king's first three years of reign, the interpretation of **Nebuchadnezzar's dream** of the image, the dedication of the **image in the plain of Dura**, and Daniel's interpretation of **Nebuchadnezzar's dream**, announcing that the king would suffer madness for a period of seven years.

Of all of Nebuchadnezzar's building projects, perhaps the best known are the famous Ishtar Gate and Processional Way. While there were eight gates that served as entrances to the city of

Babylon, the Ishtar Gate was the primary thoroughfare, leading to the equally impressive Processional Way. The gate was constructed of baked, glazed bricks and depicted oxen and dragons in an alternating pattern. In an inscription discovered at the gate, Nebuchadnezzar boasts

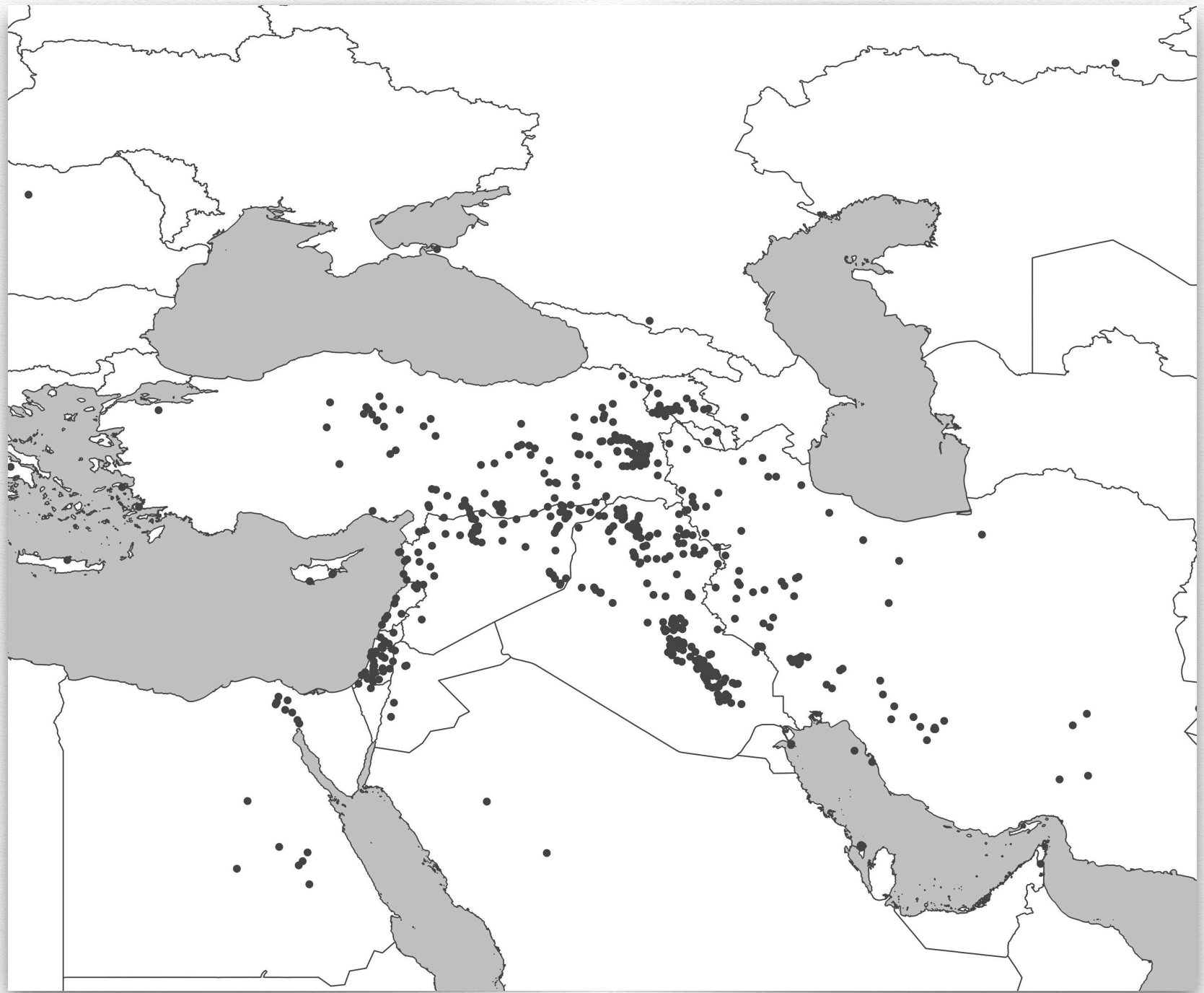




Inscription plaque







In the **third** year of the reign of Jehoiakim king
of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of
Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.
(Daniel 1:1)

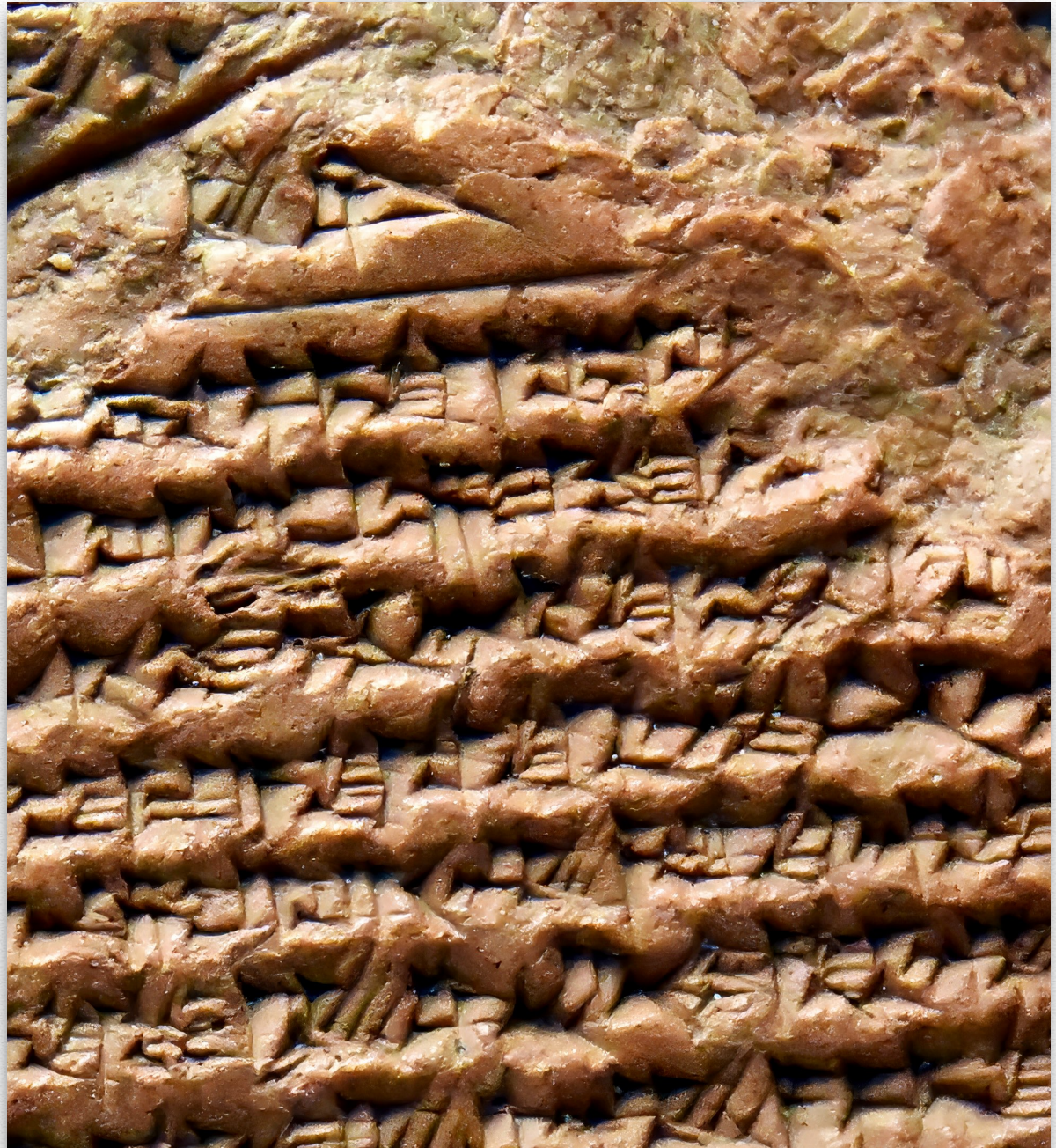
The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the **fourth** year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; (Jeremiah 25:1)



Discovered
1879

Nabonidus
Chronicle

Cuneiform







In 1854, J.G. Taylor found four cuneiform cylinders in the foundation of a ziggurat at Ur. These were deposited by Nabonidus; all four apparently have an identical inscription, in which Nabonidus mentions his son, Belshazzar in chapters 5, 7, 8 of Daniel.

Before the ancient systems of regnal reckonings were understood, Daniel 1:1 presented a seemingly insuperable problem because of the apparent contradiction with Jeremiah 25:1, but modern archeological discoveries have solved the historical and chronological difficulties on this point. We now have a harmonious pattern, and the integrity of the Bible has once more been vindicated.

A Babylonian cuneiform chronicle tells how, in his father's 21st year, Nebuchadnezzar defeated the Egyptians at Carchemish and subdued Palestine. Then, on hearing of his father's death, he hurried back to Babylon and ascended the throne. Later in his accession year and again in his year 1, he returned to the west and received tribute from the subject kings. This explains how Daniel could be taken captive in the third year of Jehoiakim, the year preceding the first year of Nebuchadnezzar.

❖ Daniel 1:1–21

Daniel 7—4 beasts

❖ Daniel 2:1–30

Daniel 7—Little horn and the Judgment

❖ Daniel 2:31–49

Daniel 8—The Judgment

❖ Daniel 3:1–30

Daniel 8—The Time of the Judgment

❖ Daniel 4:1–37

❖ Daniel 5:1–31

Daniel 9:1–27

❖ Daniel 6:1–28

The Time of the End