



*Historical Atlas by William R. Shepherd.*

The Neo-Babylonian Empire was launched in 625 B.C. when the Chaldean Nabopolassar took the throne. Within two decades he, in league with the Medes under Cyaxares, crushed the Assyrian armies. Under Nabopolassar's son, Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 B.C.), Babylon reached the pinnacle of world power. In the process Jerusalem and its Temple were destroyed and the Jewish people were deported from their national homeland. Nebuchadnezzar II was a builder and master administrator as well as conqueror. He constructed several palaces, a massive ziggurat with a temple to the god Marduk on top, and the famous hanging gardens, a wonder of the ancient world. The last Babylonian ruler Nabonidus (555-539 B.C.) retired to the Arabian city of Teima, leaving his son Belshazzar in charge as co-regent. Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. and established the Persian Empire.