

Give the
paragraph a
title

Structured Reading— Nebuchadnezzar

Summarise the
paragraph into a
sentence

Highlight the key information in the paragraph—never highlight more than 6 words at a time

Nebuchadnezzar took over all of the former regions of the Assyrian Empire and crushed whatever resistance he found. In 598/597 BCE he marched on the Kingdom of Judah in Canaan and destroyed its capital city of Jerusalem, sending the citizens of the city back to Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar then began huge building projects which developed and improved 13 of his cities completely, but he put the greatest effort into the most famous: Babylon. By 600 BCE, Babylon was so impressive it was felt to be the center of the world.

The great temples and monuments were improved and made accessible by new roads and special attention was given to the creation of the Processional Road for the Festival of the God Marduk. This road was 70 feet wide, and went through the beautiful Ishtar gate as it left the city.

Nebuchadnezzar built huge walls to surround and protect the city of Babylon. These walls were decorated with over 120 images of lions, dragons, bulls, and flowers in gold. Nebuchadnezzar II was especially proud of the Ishtar Gate and Processional Way. The walls of Babylon and the Ishtar Gate were considered so impressive that some ancient writers claimed they should have been included on the list of the Seven Wonders. Babylon was included on that list but for a different attraction: the Hanging Gardens.

The Hanging Gardens are the only one of the ancient Seven Wonders whose existence is disputed (argued over) because no archaeological evidence has been found of them and, further, the only known reports of them come from after Babylon's fall.

Although there is no doubt this is true – almost every ancient writer addresses Babylon with a tone of awe and reverence – it was not an opinion shared by all and, unfortunately for Babylon's reputation, those who did not would become the most widely-read source on the city: the Hebrew scribes responsible for the narratives of the Bible.