

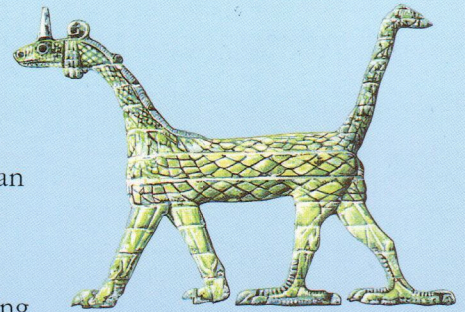
THE RISE OF BABYLON

After the fall of Ur, Amorites flooded into Mesopotamia's fertile lands. One group settled in a small state with its capital at Babylon, which means 'the gate of the gods'. These Amorites quickly adopted the culture and religion of their new home.

HAMMURABI'S EMPIRE

Around 1792BC, a young man called Hammurabi became King of Babylon. He was a brilliant soldier, and he expanded his territory to bring all of Sumer and Akkad under his rule. He became known as 'King of the Four Quarters' because it seemed to his subjects that his empire covered the whole world.

A stone head, thought to be a portrait of Hammurabi.



This dragon is a symbol of Marduk, made Babylon's chief god under Hammurabi.

Hammurabi was also a wise and efficient ruler. The people and land of a city had always been thought to belong to that city's patron god, but Hammurabi seized power for himself. However, he respected the traditions of his different peoples - Akkadians, Sumerians and Amorites.

He also laid down a set of laws for all the people of his empire. Amazingly, these laws still survive, engraved on a huge stone slab - or *stela*. Soon peace and prosperity returned to the region.



This map shows the Babylonian empire under Hammurabi.



INTERNET LINK

For a link to a website where you can examine Hammurabi's laws engraved on an ancient stela, go to www.usborne-quicklinks.com

