

No Such Thing as “Mystery Babylon”

Quit Calling it That!

The title “Mystery Babylon” is the result of an unwarranted capitalization of the word “Mystery” in Revelation 17:5 in the King James Bible. The New King James translators kept it in capital letters, but separated it from the title “Babylon the Great” by a comma. All other Bible translations [that I have seen so far] do not capitalize the word “Mystery” and do a better job at translating this verse. For example:

“And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: “Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth’s abominations.” [ESV]

“On her forehead was written a secret name: BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND DETESTABLE THINGS OF THE EARTH.” [ISV]

And on her forehead a name was written, a mystery: “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” [NASB95 & 2020]

It should never be referred to as “Mystery Babylon.” It should always be referred to as “Babylon the Great.” It is called Babylon the Great or a variation five additional times in the book of Revelation. It is never called “Mystery Babylon.”

- Revelation 14:8: “Babylon...that great city”
- Revelation 16:19 “great Babylon”
- Revelation 18:2 “Babylon the great”
- Revelation 18:10 “that great city Babylon”
- Revelation 18:21 “that great city Babylon”

What does the Greek word *mystērion* mean?

In BDAG, "The most comprehensive and authoritative Greek-English dictionary for the New Testament and early Christian writings." it states that *mystērion* is:

"the unmanifested or private counsel of God, (God's) secret, the secret thoughts, plans, and dispensations of God ... which are hidden fr. human reason, as well as fr. all other comprehension below the divine level, and await either fulfillment or revelation to those for whom they are intended..."

What does the Bible say about *mystērion*?

An important principle of Biblical interpretation is to let Scripture interpret Scripture. Paul tells us the definition of *mystērion* in several passages such as:

Colossians 1:26-27: *"Even the **mystery** which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this **mystery** among the Gentiles; which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory:**"*

Ephesians 3:3-6: *"How that by revelation he made known unto me the **mystery**; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the **mystery** of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by **the Spirit**; That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel...And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the **mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:***

Romans 16:25-26 *"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ,*

*according to the revelation of the **mystery**, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:*

Other passages to look at are 1 Cor. 2:7; and Colossians 1:26-27.

Some of the mysteries that were unknown until Paul revealed them:

Romans 11:25-26 " *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this **mystery**...that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*"

1 Corinthians 15:51 "Behold, I shew you a **mystery**; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." [The Rapture]

Ephesians 3:4-6 "(Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the **mystery** of Christ)...That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:"

Ephesians 5:30-32 "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great **mystery**: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." [Marriage is type of Christ and the Church]

Colossians 1:26-27 "Even the **mystery** which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this **mystery** among the Gentiles; which is **Christ in**

you, the hope of glory:

So, a mystery is something that is hidden/unknown until God chooses to reveal it through his holy prophets and apostles.

Mystery in Revelation 17:5

In Greek, there are three grammatical genders—male, female and neuter. The word *mystērion* is a neuter noun and is modifying the word “name” which is also neuter. The name is a mystery. For it to be “Mystery Babylon” the word “mystery” would have to be an adjective describing Babylon and would need to be in the same gender. However, “mystery” is neuter and “Babylon” is feminine.

The mystery of the name written on her forehead isn't just “Babylon.” The entire name written on her forehead is “Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the Earth”

In verse 7, the angel tells John that he will tell him *“the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.”*

The angel starts by revealing to him the mystery of the Beast that carries her. The majority is focused on the Beast—Revelation 17:8-14 & 16-17. There are two things he tells John about the woman who rides the beast. In verse 15, referring to verse one, the angel says *“The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.”* Then in verse 18, the angel says that *“the woman which thou sawest **is that great city**, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”*

The angel also reveals the interaction between the Woman and the Beast in verse 16 *“And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.”*

Why Does it Matter?

A number of Bible teachers use the word “mystery” as permission to spiritualize Babylon, or give it a mystical or symbolic meaning. But the Biblical definition of “*mystērion*” does not allow for that. It simply means something that had been hidden up to the point where it was revealed by God through the Angel in Revelation. It doesn’t give us the right to give a different interpretation than was given by God in the Scripture passage itself.

Updates on Babylon

I was going to write an article with all of the updates on Babylon; however, Dr. Andy Woods does such a good job on speaking about these, I’m going to just give you the links to the *Pastor’s Point of View* episodes which talk about them.

There are three recent ones that I think are significant. One that really caught my eye was the title of an article published in *Iraq Business News* from September 23, 2025, “**Prime Minister Mohammed Shiaa Al-Sudani has officially declared Babylon as the “Industrial Capital of Iraq,” marking a significant milestone in the country’s industrial development.**” [Emphasis mine]

Discussion regarding this article is in the following prophecy update. The update on Babylon starts around the 47.25 minute mark.

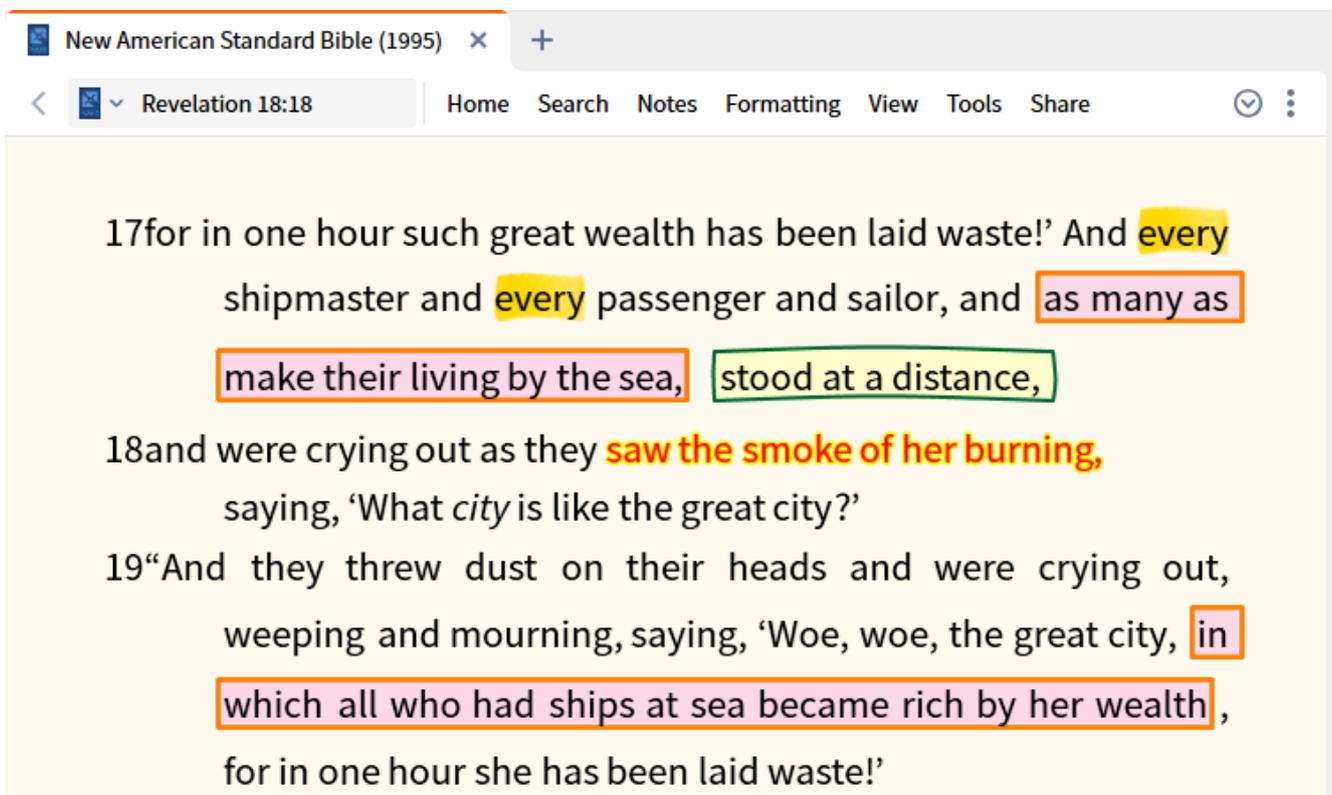
The update on Babylon on this one starts around the 2:30 minute mark:

The update on Babylon on this one starts around the 26:45 mark

Enjoy!

Does Babylon Need a Seaport?

Many Bible and prophecy teachers insist that “Babylon the Great” in Revelation 18 must have a seaport for verses 17-19 to be fulfilled.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title "New American Standard Bible (1995)". The address bar shows "Revelation 18:18". The page content displays the following text with various highlights:

17for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!’ And every shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea, stood at a distance,

18and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ‘What city is like the great city?’

19“And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth,’ for in one hour she has been laid waste!’

The primary argument given is that because it says the shipmasters, every passenger & sailors, and all who make their living by the sea stood at a distance and saw the smoke of her burning, of course they had to be in a seaport to do that, or at least close enough to see it happening.

Maybe a couple hundred years ago that would be the only possible way a person could conceive of this happening. However, we know that today, the entire world could see the smoke of her burning from any distance on a number of

different electronic devices—and in real time!

*“Woe, woe, the great city, in which **all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth.**”* Clearly, it isn't only talking about the people in the ships, but every one that was involved in the shipping business.

Notice it says **“Every** shipmaster, **all** the passengers & sailors, **all** who make their living by the sea. Think about that for a minute, so **all** of them from the whole Earth are in the Seaport at one time? No, because at any given time, ships would be all around the Earth. They would never be in or near the same seaport at the same time.

Let's look at the broader context:

Verses 17-18 don't stand by themselves, they literally stand with two other groups that are described first.

- The kings of the Earth
- The merchants of the Earth who stand along with every shipmaster, passenger, sailor and all those who trade by the sea are standing at a distance

The comparison chart shows that all three groups witnessed the same event from a distance:

Revelation 18:9-10

The Kings of the Earth

Committed acts of sexual immorality & lived luxuriously with her

Weep and Mourn over her

See the smoke of her burning

Standing at a Distance

Because of the fear of her torment

Woe, woe, the great city Babylon, the strong city!

For in ONE HOUR your judgment has come

Revelation 18:11-17a

Merchants of the Earth/ Merchants of these things

Became rich from her
No one buys their Cargo anymore

1. weep and mourn over her
2. weeping and mourning

—

Will stand at a Distance

Because of the fear of her torment

Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and ;scarlet, and adorned with gold, precious stones and pearls

For in ONE HOUR such great wealth has been laid waste

Revelation 18:17b - 19

Every shipmaster, Every passenger & sailor All who make their living by the Sea

Became rich from her prosperity

1. crying out, "What city is like the great city?"
2. threw dust on their heads, crying out, weeping and mourning

Saw the smoke of her burning

Stood at a Distance

—

Woe, woe, the great city in which ALL who had ships at sea became rich from her prosperity

For in ONE HOUR she has been laid waste

Notice the kings of the Earth and the merchants of the Earth were standing at a distance. They wouldn't usually be in ships in a seaport. The kings of the earth and the merchants of the Earth would be all around the world. Yet, all of them are said to be standing at a distance.

The immediate and broader context doesn't require a seaport and it would be impossible for all who are mentioned to be in the vicinity of Babylon the Great. This assumption was made without any supporting Biblical evidence. Babylon does not need a seaport for Revelation 18 to be fulfilled.

The Fall of Babylon vs. The Destruction of Babylon

Read first: Is the Destruction of Babylon a Literal Event?

There are two main views regarding the fulfillment of the prophecies regarding the City of Babylon. View one—which you will find in most Bible helps—is that it occurred when Babylon fell to Cyrus the Persian in 539 BC. This misconception has likely occurred because the details of the various passages describing the destruction of Babylon are either ignored, spiritualized, allegorized or the passages are not being studied in context and compared with each other. View two is that it is still a future event and will occur near the end of the Tribulation

Revelation is a unique book that can be hard to understand when studied in isolation from the rest of Scriptures. *“The Book of Revelation has no direct quotations from the Old Testament, but it has about 550 references back to the Old Testament. The majority of the things found in the first twenty chapters of the Book of Revelation are found elsewhere in the Old Testament. Only the last two chapters deal with things totally new.”* (Fruchtenbaum 10)

So the Old Testament is basically the code book, the key to unlocking the meaning of the book of Revelation. To determine whether or not the first view that the destruction of Babylon occurred when Cyrus took the City of Babylon is the correct view, we will compare the historical details with those in Scripture.

Has the destruction of Babylon been fulfilled in History?

Cyrus Conquers Babylon

The attack by Cyrus and his armies against the City of Babylon

was not a surprise attack, they knew of his relentless acts of aggression on nation after nation. The Babylonians had taken the precaution of storing enough provisions to last many years. When Cyrus approached Babylon, the Babylonian armies were in the field (outside of the city) waiting his approach and they ambushed him. But the Babylonians were defeated and forced to retreat. (Herodotus 1:190)

As the siege raged on, Cyrus was beginning to give up hope. Then, a plan was suggested (or, he thought of it himself) to station part of his forces at the point where the Euphrates flowed into the city. Another group were stationed at the opposite end where the river flows out. (191)

Herodotus describes what happened next.

When he came to the lake, Cyrus also did the same things which the queen of the Babylonians had done as regards the river and the lake; that is to say, he conducted the river by a channel into the lake, which was at that time a swamp, and so made the former course of the river passable by the sinking of the stream.

When this had been done in such a manner, the Persians who had been posted for this very purpose entered by the bed of the river Euphrates into Babylon, the stream having sunk so far that it reached about to the middle of a man's thigh. The Persians came upon them unexpectedly; and owing to the size of the city (so it is said by those who dwell there) after those about the extremities of the city had suffered capture, those Babylonians who dwelt in the middle did not know that they had been captured; but as they chanced to be holding a festival, they went on dancing and rejoicing during this time until they learnt the truth only too well. Babylon then had thus been taken for the first time.

Notice how Herodotus assumes the festival that they were holding was simply by chance. The Bible describes the

occasion of this festival in Daniel 5:1-2:

Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchanezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

While they were celebrating, they suddenly saw a disembodied hand writing on the wall of the palace over by a lightstand.

It said "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." Daniel was summoned to interpret it. "Mene" meant: God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. "Tekel" meant: Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting, and "Peres" meant: Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. (Upharsin and Peres are from the same root word.).

None of this was coincidence. Cyrus taking Babylon was God's judgment on Babylon. So Cyrus conquered Babylon without a battle, there was no destruction and no one was killed within the city.

This is verified by the cylinder or steel of Cyrus which is displayed in the British Museum in London.

Cylinder of Cyrus

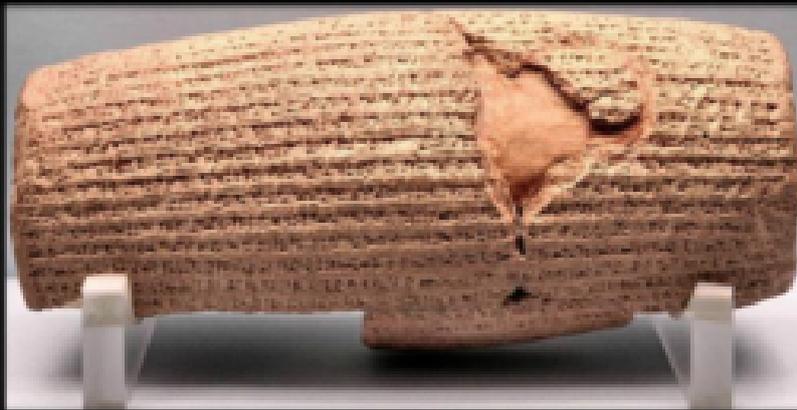


Fig. 8 Cylinder of Cyrus

The following is a translation of a section describing the invasion of Cyrus and his armies into Babylon, but ascribing his success to the god Marduk.

Marduk, the great lord, guardian of his people, looked with gladness upon his (Cyrus') good deeds and upright heart. He ordered him to go to his city Babylon. He set him on the road to Babylon and like a companion and a friend, he went at his side. His vast army, whose number, like water of the river, cannot be known, marched at his side fully armed.

He made him enter his city Babylon **WITHOUT fighting or battle**; he saved Babylon from hardship. He delivered Nabonidus, (Belshazzar's Father) the king who did not revere him, into his hands. All the people of Babylon, all the land of Sumer and Akkad, princes and governors bowed to him and kissed his feet. They rejoiced at his kingship and their faces shone.

So, did this fulfill the prophecy regarding the destruction of Babylon? The most important details we need to compare to are those related to the actual physical destruction of Babylon. So, let's compare them. Were the walls thrown down? (Jer. 50:15). Was the broadest wall of Babylon completely leveled? (Jer. 51:44, 58). Was its high gate set on fire? (Jer.

51:58); Were the bars of the gates broken? (Jer. 51:30). Did the pillars fall down? (Jer. 50:15). Were the buildings set on fire? (Jer. 51:30). Did Cyrus set fire to the city? (Jer. 50:32). Were the marshes burned with fire? (Jer. 51:32).

I think you will agree that none of these details were fulfilled when Cyrus conquered the city. Cyrus declared himself as the king of Babylon, and Babylon became the capital of the 9th Satrapy, which was the area of Babylonia in the South, and Athura in the North.

“I am Cyrus, King of the globe, great king, mighty king, King of Babylon...When I well disposed, entered Babylon, I had established the seat of government in the royal palace of the ruler, amidst jubilation and rejoicing. Marduk the great god, induced the magnanimous inhabitants of Babylon to love me, and I sought daily to worship him when my numerous soldiers in great numbers peacefully entered Babylon and moved about undisturbed in the midst of Babylon, I did not allow anyone to terrorize the people of the lands of Sumer and Akad.”

So, if the destruction of Babylon did not occur when Cyrus conquered it, what about Alexander the Great? As you will see, he ALSO conquered Babylon without a Battle! In fact, they welcomed Alexander with open arms and gifts!

Alexander the Great Conquers Babylon

Quintus Curtius Rufus who wrote from 41-54 AD described what happened next. *“Moving on to Babylon, Alexander was met by Mazaeus, who had taken refuge in the city after the battle. He came as a suppliant with his grown-up children to surrender himself and the city.”* (Rufus 5 1:17)

Mazaeus was *“an eminent man and a good soldier who had also won distinction in the recent battle.”* Alexander was pleased about this because his *“example was likely to induce the others to surrender.”* And he knew that taking the City of

Babylon by force would have been a "long, arduous task." So, Alexander gave him and his children a courteous welcome.

Not to be outdone by Mazaeus in paying his respects to Alexander, Bagophanes had carpeted the whole road with flowers and garlands and set up at intervals on both sides silver altars heaped not just with frankincense, but with all manner of perfumes.

Following him were his gifts—herds of cattle and horses, and lions, too, and leopards, carried along in cages. Next came the Magi chanting a song in their native fashion, and behind them were the Chaldeans, then the Babylonians, represented not only by priests but also by musicians equipped with their national instrument...At the rear came the Babylonian cavalry, their equipment and that of the horses suggesting extravagance rather than majesty.

The next day, Alexander entered the palace and inspect Darius' (III) furniture and treasure. Babylon at this time became at least a secondary capital for the Medo-Persian Empire.

Rufus then describes how Alexander inspected the wall which was "*constructed of small baked bricks and is cemented together with bitumen. The wall is thirty-two feet wide and it is said that two chariots meeting on it can safely pass each other.*" (Rufus 5 1:25). So, obviously, the wall was still in place and had not been destroyed.

Years later, at the end of his career, Alexander began "*by dredging operations...the construction of a harbor at Babylon.*" (Arrian 7:19) It was large enough for 1,000 warships and it was equipped with yards. A yard is "*a cylindrical spar, tapering to each end, slung across a ship's mast for a sail to hang from.*" The fact is, Alexander had ideas of settling the seaboard of the Persian Gulf and the off-shore islands, for he fancied it might become as prosperous a country as Phoenecia.

While the new warships were under construction and the work of

dredging the harbor proceeded, Alexander sailed from Babylon down the Euphrates to the river known as Pallacopas, about 100 miles down-stream from the city." So, he had not just planned a harbor, but had actually begun work on it.

After Alexander's death, his successors fought over the City of Babylon to the point that the residents fled. By the time the Parthian Empire rule in 141 BC, Babylon had been deserted and forgotten. The city steadily fell into ruin and never returned to its former greatness. In the Muslim conquest in 650 AD, whatever remained of Babylon was swept away and was eventually buried underneath the sand. (Ancient Babylon)

It is evident that the City of Babylon was never destroyed in the manner described in Scripture. Therefore, in order for it to be destroyed in the manner described, it must first be rebuilt!

There are additional details regarding the destruction of Babylon that necessitate a future destruction of Babylon. The first of which is that it occurs during the Day of the Lord which the so-called seven year tribulation period)

In every passage of the Scriptures that the term 'the Day of Jehovah' or the 'the Day of the Lord' is found, it is always and without exception a reference to the Tribulation period. While the phrase "that day" is used both negatively and positively and therefore many times it does apply to the Millennium, the phrase Day of Jehovah or Day of the Lord is always used negatively and never included the Millennial Kingdom. (Fruchtenbaum 173)

The prophecy in Isaiah 13:1 begins with "*A message that Amoz's son Isaiah received about Babylon.*" God then calls his sanctified ones and his mighty ones to prepare for battle. They come from a far country (the land of the North) to destroy the whole land.

"Wail out loud, because the Day of the Lord is near. It will

come like destruction from the Almighty!" And verse 9 *"Watch out! The Day of the Lord is coming—cruel, with wrath and fierce anger—to turn the entire inhabited earth into a evolution and to annihilate sinners from it."*

Verse 10 describes the final cataclysmic events *"The stars of heaven and the constellations shall not give their light. The sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not cause her light to shine."* Obviously, the Day of the Lord has not occurred yet, so the destruction of Babylon must occur in the future. Next, Israel is in the land and forgiven. Currently, Israel is in the land, but in unbelief, however, this will change near the end of the tribulation.

Jeremiah 50:15 states;

Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land...But I will bring back Israel to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan; His soul shall be satisfied on Mount Ephraim and Gilead. In those days, and in that time, sayeth the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought, but there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, but they shall not be found; for I will pardon those whom I preserve.

And thus as Romans states in 11:26 *"And so all Israel shall be saved."* The sins of the remnant will be pardoned. This only occurs during the last three days of the tribulation (Hosea 5:15, 6:1-2)

Jesus cannot come back until Israel confesses her national sin of rejection of the Messiah and pleads for him to return (Fruchtenbaum 331).

Next is the use of smart weapons, which did not exist in the past, and currently are not 100% accurate. At some point, though, certain weapons will be 100% accurate or at least will be with God's assistance.

Regarding the weapons of the multitudes of nations which will

come from the land of the North. Jeremiah 50:9 states that *"Their arrows will be like a skilled warrior; they won't miss their targets."* And as Chuck Missler has pointed out, it is the arrow itself that has the intelligence. This is something that can't be said of a traditional arrow. The Hebrew word "chets" is simply an arrow and in the Greek Septuagint, it is "bolis," a missile, arrow or javelin. Think about it, how would you describe a weapon that doesn't even exist yet? No one uses actual bows and arrows in modern warfare. But the concept of an arrow is still used. It could legitimately be ascribed as a projectile, and a bow is something that launches the projectile.

One of the most definitive statements that indicate that the destruction of Babylon is still a future event is Jeremiah 51:26 that makes it clear that the building materials will never be reused. *"And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate forever, saith the Lord."*

However, the original building materials HAVE been reused. In 1983, Saddam Hussein started rebuilding the City of Babylon on top of the old ruins. He built on the old bricks with new bricks of his own which he inscribed with: *"This was built by Saddam Hussein, son of Nebuchadnzzar, to glorify Iraq."* You can see in this photo where the original bricks are and where the new bricks were built directly on top of them.

King Nebuchadnezzar's Throne Room

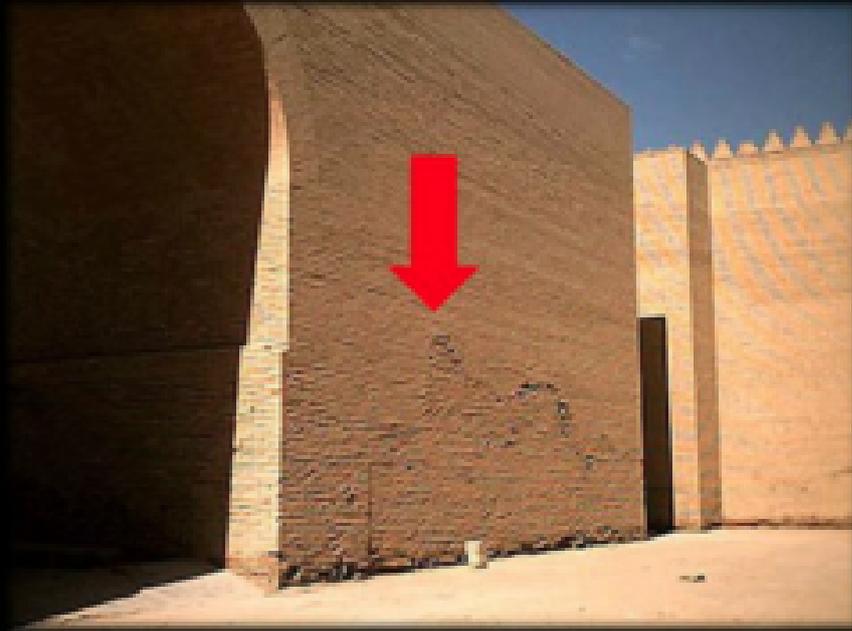


Fig. 17 Throne Room

The only conclusion can be that in order for this prophecy to be fulfilled, the City of Babylon must be rebuilt and become a major trade center (Rev. 19) in order to be destroyed in the manner described in Scripture.

Is the Destruction of Babylon a Literal Event?

Isaiah 13-14, Jeremiah 50-51 and Revelation 18 are the main passages in Scripture which contain the prophecies regarding the total destruction of Babylon. They give many details which will help us to identify the fulfillment and to determine whether this destruction has occurred in the past, or if it is yet to occur in the future.

I think you will see as we study these details, that the destruction of Babylon is *not* figurative, *not* symbolic and *not* allegorical. "Figurative language refers to any words that are used with a meaning other than their common, literal sense" (McQuilken 190).

Common examples of figures of speech often used in Scripture are –Simile, Metaphor, Metonymy, Synecdoche, etc. There may be figures of speech in the prophecies regarding the destruction of Babylon, but the entire prophecy isn't figurative, and the figures of speech still represent something actual.

"Symbols are one thing taken to represent something else, often a material object representing the intangible" (McQuilken 198). Many times, what each symbol represents is explicitly explained in the Scripture passages. Examples of prophecies that are explicitly symbolic are many of the visions in Zechariah such as Zechariah 5 and many of the visions in Revelation such as Revelation 17.

"Allegorical" means that it has hidden spiritual meaning that transcends the literal sense of the text. This makes the meaning subject to the person reading it who can make it mean

anything he or she chooses.

To understand the Isaiah, Jeremiah and Revelation passages, it's important to read all of them in context and keep the following in mind. Isaiah chapters 13-14 constitute one prophecy (until 14:23-32). Be sure to ignore the chapter breaks, because chapter breaks are man-made and not part of the original manuscripts. The entire prophecy is one unit which was given at one time. Also, within chapter 14, there is a "song" that Israel sings which is one unit within the overall prophecy (14:5-21) and should be considered as a whole.

The final verses 23-32, are a new prophecy regarding Philistia and may or may not be related to the Babylon prophecy.

Jeremiah 50-51 also constitutes one prophecy (until 51:59-64). Again, ignore the man-made chapter break. In chapter 51, verses 59-64 are a description of how Jeremiah wrote the prophecy of Babylon on one scroll, and it also describes what was to be done with the scroll. This further indicates that it was one prophecy given at one time.

Unlike the other passages, Revelation 17 & 18 *are* divided up correctly. They are two separate prophecies indicated by Revelation 18:1. "And after these things, I saw another angel come down from heaven..."

The focus in Chapter 17 is on the woman who is riding the beast which is thought to represent the overall religious system of Babylon. The rest of the chapter is regarding the beast she is riding on, which isn't Babylon. Revelation 17 is explicitly symbolic and the interpretation of the symbols are given in the chapter itself, so we will not be reviewing the information in that chapter. Chapter 18 is regarding the literal destruction of the city of Babylon

The three prophets of this event are Isaiah, who according to Isaiah 1:1 was a prophet of Israel during the time of King

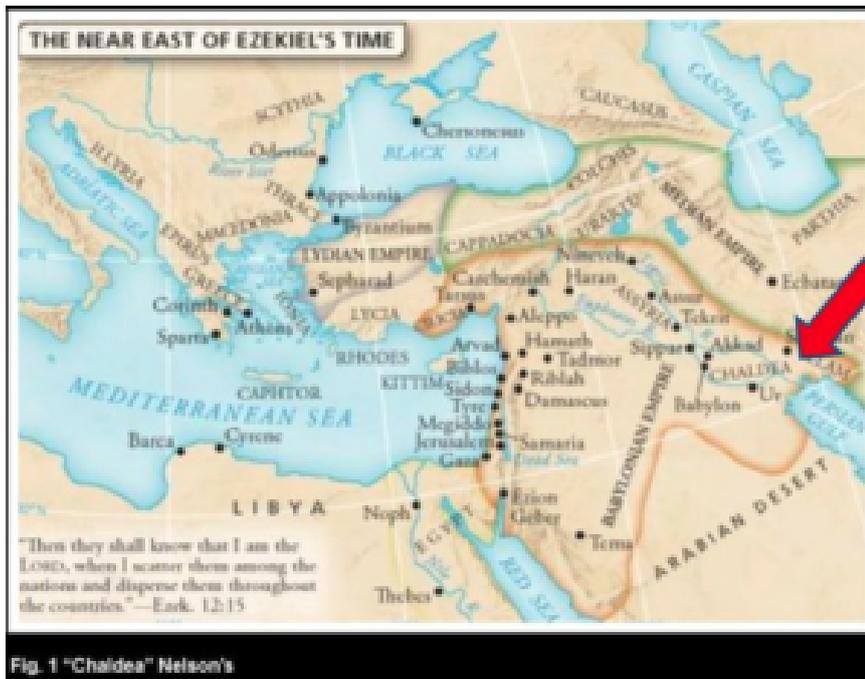
Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah; Jeremiah, who was a prophet from the days of King Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah according to Jeremiah 1:1-3; and, John the Apostle, who wrote the book of Revelation, lived from 6 to 100 AD, and wrote Revelation while on the island of Patmos, during the reign of Roman Emperor Domitian in Revelation 1:9.

We will see that the destruction of Babylon is a description of an actual, literal event. 1) It is the actual city of Babylon in the land of Chaldea; 2) there are actual nations & troops attacking from the literal North; 3) actual weapons being used to kill actual human beings by the invading troops; and, 4) there is actual physical destruction. Other details include 5) the suddenness of the destruction; 6) the actual results of the destruction; 7) and the purpose for the destruction.

1. The Destruction of the Actual City of Babylon in the Land of Chaldea.

The first point that is made abundantly clear is that it is referring to literal Babylon as indicated by the use of the variations of the phrase "Babylon, in the Land of Chaldea." If I were to tell you that I'm from Spokane in the land of Washington, you would know that I'm talking about the literal city of Spokane in the State of Washington. These passages are speaking of the literal city of Babylon in the land of Chaldea

The Jewish Encyclopedia states, "The land of the Chaldeans (Jer. xxiv. 5 et al.) is also a frequently occurring phrase. The Chaldean country, in the strict sense, lay in southern Babylonia, on the lower Euphrates and Tigris..." as shown here in the map of the Babylonian Empire.



“...But the name was extended by the Biblical writers to include the whole of Babylonia, after the Chaldean Nebuchadnezzar had established the new Babylonian empire and brought his people to world-wide fame.”

The phrase or variations of the phrase Babylon in the the land of the Chaldeans appears eight times altogether in the Jeremiah and Isaiah passages. It appears in the first verse of Jeremiah’s prophecy regarding Babylon where it says, “This is the message that the Lord spoke through the prophet Jeremiah about Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans.” (Jeremiah 50:1)

Here are the rest of the verses that use that phrase:

- **Babylon**, that jewel of kingdoms, the splendor and **pride of the Chaldeans** (Isaiah 13:19)
- Move away from **Babylon**, and go out of the **land of Chaldeans** (Jeremiah 50:8)
- The **Chaldeans** will become plunder (Jeremiah 50:10)
- Heavenly armies will be in the **land of Chaldeans** (Jeremiah 50:25)
- The slain will fall in the **land of Chaldea**, pierced through in the streets. (Jeremiah 51:4)

- Before your eyes, I'll repay **Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea** (Jeremiah 51:24)
- The sound of a cry is coming from **Babylon**, great destruction from the **land of the Chaldeans** (Jeremiah 51:54).

It is clear that this is speaking of a literal place being destroyed. There is no indication that it is meant to be taken figuratively.

Jeremiah 50:21 points out two specific places included in this destruction, they are Merathaim, which is in Southern Mesopotamia, and Pekod, which is a region in Southern Mesopotamia (Jer. 50:21). Both are in the same area as original Chaldea. All of these indicate that the destruction will come upon the literal Babylon in the land of Chaldea.

2. Actual Nations & Troops Attacking from the North

Next, we have actual nations and troops attacking from the North. Jeremiah 51:38 tells us that the Medes, including their governors, the prefects (a chief officer or government official who is responsible for a particular area in a country) and every land under their dominion will come against Babylon (Jeremiah 51:38).

Three Kingdoms under their dominion are specifically named—the Kingdom of Ararat (Armenia/Urartu), Kingdom of Mini (Iran, Part of Syria), Kingdom of Ashkenaz (Scythians/Russians) (Jer. 51:27). They were kingdoms that had been conquered and made vassel states by the Medes (known as the Kurds today) in the early 6th century (Notes 60). And Isaiah 13:17 makes it clear that they are *not* motivated by financial gain (Silver and Gold)

The troops attacking are mentioned in a number of places in the Jeremiah prophecy. They are called Troops (Jer. 50:14), Warriors (Jer. 50:30; Jer. 51:30, 56) and Soldiers (Jer. 51:14-15; Jer. 50:30, 32). These Nations are Attacking from or

out of the North (Isa. 14:31. Jer. 50:3, 9, 41, 51:4) and from afar (Jer. 50:26).

3. Actual Weapons Being Used to Kill Actual Human Beings.

The weapons which are specifically mentioned are:

- Bow (Jer. 51:3-4; 50:14, 42; Isa. 13:18)
- Arrows (Jer. 50:9, 14, 51:11)
- Spears (Jer. 50:41-42)
- Swords (Jer. 50:21)
- Fire and Smoke (Rv. 18:8-9, 18; Jer. 51:32, 58; Isa. 14:31)

Both Isaiah and Jeremiah indicate that actual human beings will be killed—bows dash the young men to pieces, no pity is shown to the unborn, and they will not spare the children (Isaiah 13:18) or the young men. The slain will fall in the land of Chaldea, pierced through in her streets (Jer. 51:3-4) and her warriors will fall in her streets. Her soldiers will be silenced in that day (Jer. 51:30)

4. Actual Physical Destruction

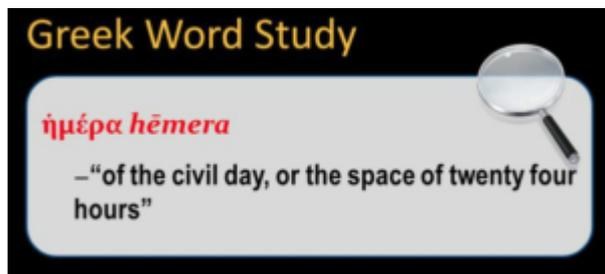
There is also actual physical destruction:

- Walls thrown down (Jer. 50:15)
- Broad wall of Babylon will be completely leveled (Jer. 51:44, 58)
- Its high gate set on fire (Jer. 51:58)
- The bars of the gates broken (Jer. 51:30)
- Pillars have fallen (Jer. 50:15)
- Buildings have fallen (Jer. 50:15)
- Set fire to the city (Jer. 50:32)
- Marshes burned with fire (Jer. 51:32)

5. Suddenness of the Destruction

Another detail given is the suddenness of the destruction. Revelation 18:8, 9, 17, and 19 all indicate a sudden

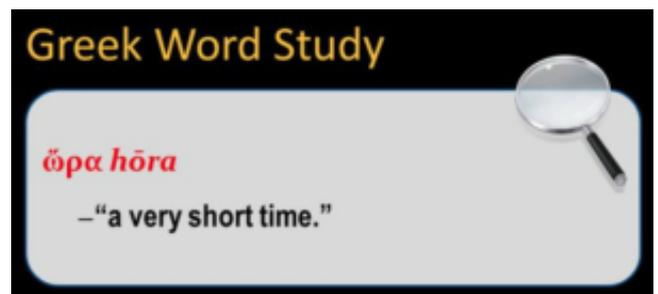
destruction and in Revelation 18:8, a voice speaking from heaven states that Babylon's destruction will come in a single day.



According to Theyer's Lexicon, "Heymera" in this case is being used "of the civil day, or the space of twenty four hours." So the voices literally say that Babylon will be destroyed within

one day's time.

All of the other verses are quoting the kings of the Earth who say that her destruction will come in a single hour. According to Thayer's Lexicon the Greek word "Hora" is being used to indicate a very short time.



One way or the other, this is not contradictory since something that happens in one hour also by definition happens within a single day, but it seems that the voice from Heaven is declaring it will occur in an actual day whereas the kings of the earth are just indicating that it occurs in a relatively short period of time. In addition, Jeremiah 51:8 states, *suddenly* Babylon fell and was shattered..."

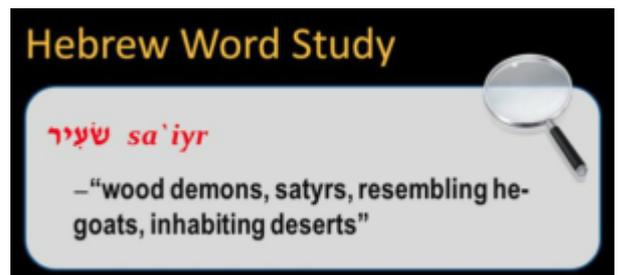
6. Results of the Destruction

The results of the destruction is described as being like Sodom and Gomorrah: (Jer. 50:40; Isa 13:19) in that it will never again be inhabited by human beings (Jer. 50:13; 51:29, 43), and it will become a home for unclean birds and certain other unclean beasts. It is important to understand that this

comparison with Sodom and Gomorrah does *not* include the method by which Sodom and Gomorrah was destroyed.

Isaiah 13:19-22 lists a number of creatures that will inhabit Babylon. "But desert beasts will lie down there, and their houses will be full of howling creatures; there, owls will dwell, and goat-demons will dance there. Hyenas will howl in its stronghold, and jackals will make their dens in its citadels."

One interesting creature is the goat demon, which is translated "satyrs" in the King James version and is defined in the Gesenius Hebrew Chaldea Lexicon as "Sa iyr" wood demons, satyrs, resembling he-goats, inhabiting deserts" (Gesenius)



Surprisingly, there will be some type of demonic entities. In Rev. 18:2 it states. "Fallen! Babylon the Great has fallen! She has become a home for demons. She is a prison for every unclean spirit, a prison for every unclean bird, and a prison for every unclean and hated beast."

Moving on to other details, Jeremiah 51:26 indicates that building materials will never be reused. "They won't get a cornerstone or a foundation stone from you, because you will be a wasteland forever, declares the Lord."

Other results of the destruction include that God will eliminate from Babylon her name and survivors, her offspring and descendants. (Isa. 14:22). The Chaldeans will come to plunder...she will become the least of the nations, a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert (Jer. 50:10-12)

Babylon will come a heap of ruins, a refuge for jackals, and a desolate place and an object of scorn (Jer. 51:36-38).

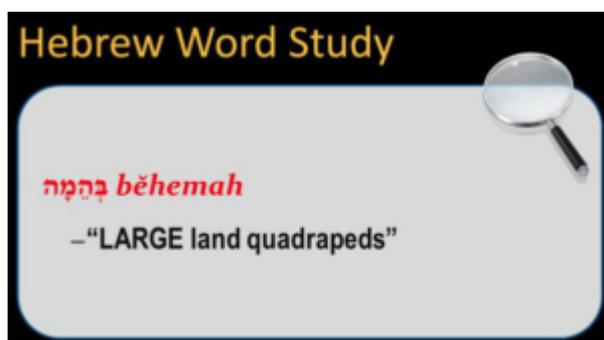
7. Purpose for the Destruction

The purpose for the destruction is that it is given as repayment for all the evil that Babylon did in Zion (Jer. 51:24); vengeance for His temple (Jer. 51:11); because she has behaved arrogantly against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel (Jer. 51:29-30); and because of the slain of Israel (Jer. 51:49)

The Scroll & the Stone

Jeremiah 51:60 states that Jeremiah wrote on a single scroll all the disasters that would come upon Babylon, all these things that were written about Babylon. Jeremiah told Seraiah, “When you come to Babylon, see that you read all these words, and say, Lord, you have declared about this place that you would destroy it so that there wouldn’t be an inhabitant in it, neither human nor animal, because it will be a wasteland forever.”

This declaration that “no animal will inhabit it,” seems to be a contradiction to the earlier description of possible animals inhabiting Babylon after the destruction. In the English language, the word “animal” would be understood to include the entire animal kingdom. This also corresponds to an earlier statement in the Jeremiah prophecy in Jer. 50:3, when it states that no one will live in it—both people and animals will wander off.



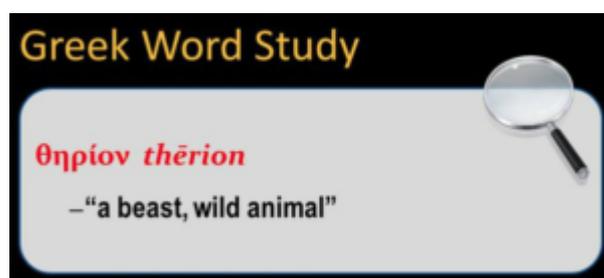
The Hebrew word translated “animals” in both of these passage is the same Hebrew word which is “Behemah” and can be translated—Beast, animal, cattle—as distinguished in the OT from birds, fish, an

reptiles.” This term refers to four-footed animals, especially cattle.

The Septuagint translates the Hebrew word with the Greek word "Ktenos" which has a very similar definition. "A beast; sp. of a beast of burden, used for four legged animals as opposed to fishes and birds—and the Genesis Hebrew Chaldea Lexion states that it refers to *large* land quadrupeds.

The Hebrew word "behemoth" is most likely only referring to large land quadrupeds, there is no contradiction to the idea of hyenas, jackals and other creatures still inhabiting Babylon.

Revelation 18:32 states that it will be a prison for every unclean and hated beast, but the Greek word translated "beast" isn't the same Greek word that was used to translate "Behemah"



in the Jeremiah passage. It is a different kind of beast. Therion is a beast, or a wild animal and it is the same word that is used to describe the Beast of Revelation.

Jeremiah continues in 51:61 "When you finish reading this scroll, tie a rock around it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates. Then say, "Babylon will sink like this and won't rise from the disaster that I'm bringing on her. Her people will be exhausted.

Revelation 18:16-17 gives a similar symbolic gesture, "Then a powerful angel picked up a stone that was like a large millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, the great city Babylon will be thrown down violently—and will never be found again.

Summary

The prophecies regarding the destruction of Babylon given in Isaiah 13-14, Jeremiah 50-51 and Revelation 18 give the following details:

Table I

Details of the Destruction of Babylon	Isa. 14-15	Jer. 50-51	Rev. 18
Actual Babylon in the Land of Chaldea / City of Babylon	X	X	X
Actual nations & troops attacking from the North	X	X	
Actual weapons used to kill actual human beings	X	X	X
Actual physical destruction	X	X	X
Never inhabited again by human beings		X	
Inhabited by certain unclean animals	X	X	X
Inhabited by demonic entities	X	X	X
Building Materials never to be reused		X	
Suddenness of the Destruction		X	X
Repayment for evil done in Zion		X	

The abundance of details makes it clear that this is describing an actual, literal event and it is not symbolic, allegorical or figurative. Anyone should be able to use these details to look for future fulfillment and also to look back in history to see if they have ever been fulfilled in the past.

[Watch the video presentation]