



May 06, 2022

The Fall of "Babylon the Great" continued...

Warm hellos friends, brethren, co-workers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God, from here on the Gulf Coast. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you all doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

Last week we ended with "What is this great city? Is it referring to only a particular city or perhaps a more extensive area? What means or ways will be used to accomplish this sudden destruction?" We examined the description of Babylon found in Revelation 18.

In Revelation 18 it's describing a sudden and catastrophic destruction! In history, when Cyrus took the ancient city of Babylon, the city was taken by surprise with little destruction to the city. However, eventually over time, hostile armies destroyed it and it fell into ruin as is seen today.

In these past destructions of Babylon, armies with swords, spears, and battering rams destroyed the city. It took time to accomplish this. The destruction of Babylon as described in Revelation 18 is described as taking place very quickly.

I have at times mused and pondered if nuclear weapons will be involved in the destruction, or will conventional weapons such a missiles and bombing by aircraft be used to accomplish such rapid and massive destruction?

We are told that "*Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!*" (v.2) If nuclear weapons will be used to destroy this Babylon, no literal birds or other creatures would be able to live at the contaminated location. Maybe the allusion to unclean and hated birds is metaphorical or symbolic?

An interesting comparison is used in Revelation 18:21: "*Then a mighty angel took*

up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore." It's like a heavy stone sinking out of sight to the bottom of the sea. The origin of this image is probably found in the Book of Jeremiah. *"So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that would come upon Babylon, all these words that are written against Babylon. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "When you arrive in Babylon and see it, and read all these words. . . Now it shall be, when you have finished reading this book, that you shall tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates. "Then you shall say, 'Thus Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her. And they shall be weary.'" (Jeremiah 51:60-61, 63-64)*

A question to consider is does the reference to Babylon in Revelation 18 refer to the religious system, a civil economic power, or both?

We find the comment, *"the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury"* (v.3) and also, *"And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore."* (v.11)

Then there's a long list of items that were shipped and traded. There is the use of the term "city" in reference to this Babylon. (v.10 *"that great city Babylon"* v.18 *"this great city"* v.21 *"the great city Babylon"*) There will likely be a city that will be the capital city of this kingdom. Over the years, various speculations about the identity of this city have suggested the literal ancient Babylon, Rome, New York City and even London as possible candidates. There's a clue found at the end of the chapter. *"And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth."* (v.24)

There is a similar description found in Revelation 17:6: *"I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. . ."* The woman is carried by a *"scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns."* (v.3) I believe we must look at and harmonize the prophecies of Daniel 2, Daniel 7, Daniel 8, Revelation 13, Revelation 17 and other related prophecies.

We continue to understand these prophecies to refer to the ancient Roman Empire and to the various resurrections of that Empire over the centuries, especially those that had a combination of church and state.

Many believe that the ten toes of the image of Daniel 2 represent 10 nations or kingdoms that will be associated with the end time world ruling kingdom. These 10 nations or entities are also represented by the ten horns of the beast of Revelation 17 which carries the woman or religious power. These ten will have power for only a short time and will be opposed the kingdom ruled by Christ. (vv.12-14)

The center of false religion will suffer destruction when these ten nations eventually turn against the religious power. *"And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled."* (Revelation 17:16-17)

Will the location of the headquarters of the ecclesiastical kingdom be the same as or different from the location of the center of civil and economic power?

The demolition of this false religious system is described also in Revelation 19.

"After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her. Again they said, "Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!" (vv.1-3)

There's much of this we simply do not understand completely. Some students of the Bible claim to, but we need to be careful to be absolute about all prophecy. It's interesting, but holds events that may or may not turn out exactly like we might want to focus on.

One thing is for sure, we look forward to the ridding the world of false religion

and to the time when "*the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*" (Habakkuk 2:14)

Arms up friends! Our prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Please do pray for us as well.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hoefker', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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