

# Introduction to Babylon: the Second of the Three Angels' Announcements

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*How It All Ends*

By James Townsend

**Bible Text:** Revelation 14:8; Revelation 17-18

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Now, Babylon, for those who aren't familiar with the history of it, comes from the word "babel" and remember the Tower of Babel. So way back in Genesis when we started learning about the Tower of Babel, and the tower that was built to the heavens that mankind thought he could take over, he could make his own way to heaven. I mean are there people like that today that believe they can get to heaven on their own? Well, they believed it back then, too, it's not a new concept, it's a really old concept. "I'll make my own way to heaven," and their particular version of it was I'm going to build a tower. And so they built a really tall tower, probably the tallest tower on earth at the time. And as they were building that tower, the people in that construction, just for a little bit of history background, even if we know the story it's good to review it in our minds, that what do we say when someone is just going on and on, well they're babbling. Well, that's where it came from, the Tower of Babel. I love etymology, where did the word come from? Well, it came from the Tower of Babel and Babel had a great city which we would call Babylon. A little spelling difference, but that's where it came from.

So here's what Babylon might have looked like. Kind of like the old Egyptian cities that you picture. I watch a lot of the old documentaries on the Pharaohs and the things like that. This would have been before them and still been a great city. The great word comes up again and again. Remember the great word. And in Greek that would be megas, so we'll get there, too.

All right, Revelation 14 verse 8. It says, "And there followed another angel." Going back to the first slide here, this is the second of three other angels. Now, I hope that doesn't confuse you because last week Pastor Bill talked about the second angel saying "Babylon is fallen. Is fallen that great city, because she made all the nations drink of the wine of wrath of her fornication."

So first of all, I think when it says Babylon that conjures up something up in your mind. You should immediately think Tower of Babel, confused languages. Why were the languages confused? Because God judged them. Why did God judge them? Because they thought they could get to heaven all by themselves.

Okay. So it's a godly people or an ungodly people? Ungodly, okay, that's the first thing we have to think. Babylon not good. Secondly, there are many cities that have been like Babylon throughout the years. There have been other ungodly cities. (...) That's more modern, definitely, but I was even thinking way before that, I mean we think about the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Sodom and Gomorrah was an evil city. Another bad civilization, not even just a city, a whole country, was Egypt. Egypt was so smart.

Well, is there a future new Babylon? Is there someday going to be a physical city that is Babylon, that we would call Babylon today or in the future? Well, I do believe there is going to be a future city, and I have a nice article here that Pastor Bill sent off to me and if anyone wants to come up and look after class or maybe I could run you a copy, talks about how there's a city, and I'm not going to give away my whole lesson yet, but there's a city that seems to be a lot like what Babylon will become. Or in other words, the city Babylon that's mentioned here in these Scriptures, if we look at the evidences of it, it appears to be like this certain city.

Now, there's been lots of theories about that. That city used to be Rome. Especially in the Middle Ages. Many people said that, "Well, Babylon someday will be Rome rebuilt." They just have to rebuild Rome and then it will be the new Babylon. Okay, there is some evidence that would lead you to think that. And for them back in Protestant days, they thought that, "Okay, it makes sense, especially if the new Babylon had already come by." But then we get into the preterist versus the futurist view. You know, do we believe Babylon is coming or do we believe it has already happened? Do we believe the tribulation has already happened or do we believe the tribulation is going to happen? I think we've given you a lot of evidence in this class the tribulation has not happened yet. So, I also would agree with that time line that we have that Babylon has not happened yet, at least not the one that we're speaking of here in 14 verse 8.

So, if you want to see that pamphlet afterward, I'll give you some evidences why it says the seven hills is one of the things that it has. Rome had seven hills, so it must have been Rome. Or was it a different city?

All right. Let's go back to the Scriptures here in Revelation 14:8, and let's break down pieces of it that might give us some evidence to what Babylon is this. Which Babylon could this be? Will the real Babylon please stand out? That great city, okay, great city comes from two words: megas and polis. Now, I don't speak Greek so I'm probably pronouncing it wrong, but at the same time, megas polis makes sense; big city, great city.

Well, where in the book of Revelation, other places, does it talk about a great city? Because that would definitely be the same Greek word and the same other Greek word that means great and city. Well, the first one is in chapter 11, verse 8. So, let's turn back a little bit here to chapter 11 verse 8 where it says, "And their dead bodies shall lie in the streets." They're talking about the two witnesses that I spoke of last time, which is really convenient because I just had to go back to my notes and find this. "Shall lie in the streets of that great city." The two witnesses are lying in the street of a great city.

Which great city? “Which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” Where was Jesus crucified? Jerusalem. So, Jesus was crucified in Jerusalem, but we could spiritually call Jerusalem Sodom. Again, they’re saying Sodom was a bad city, but it was a great city. Again, they’re saying it was like Egypt, it was really smart, had a lot of technology, but it was still morally corrupt. It was saying that God had taken his hand of protection off of Jerusalem, even though it was a great city.

So, where Jesus was crucified was Jerusalem. Does that mean that Babylon is Jerusalem? I don’t know. Let’s turn over to chapter 16 verse 19. The next time you see that word used besides in the verse that we just read with the great city, *megapolis*, is right in the third and fourth words of this verse. “And the great city was divided into three parts. And the cities of the nations fell and the great Babylon came in remembrance before God to give unto her her cup of wine of the fierceness of his wrath.” So, again, we see great city and Babylon and great Babylon kind of interchangeable. Okay, and we see great city, great Babylon, same city.

Turn ahead a little bit more to 17:18. It should be just one page over, 17:18. “And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” This Babylon is going to be kind of a powerful city. It will reign over the kings of the earth. In other words, it will be the center of all of rulership, all of political power. This is going to be an important city some day. Now, is there one city on all earth that runs the entire earth today? No, so I don’t think that we have this city yet. We don’t have a one-world government run from one city, but it does say that it reigns over the entire earth this city, whatever this city is.

Turn ahead again, 18:10. It might even be on the same page for you. Another mention of a great city, it’s translated “mighty” in this case, but it’s still *megapolis*. “Standing afar off for fear of torment saying, Alas, alas, the great city Babylon that mighty city!” So great city, *megapolis*, Babylon. So, Babylon is the great city, that mighty city, “for in one hour, thy judgment is come,” in one hour.

Now, I can’t extrapolate or pull away the one hour as you would think of it today right away. Normally I’d think, okay one hour is literal, and normally I take the Bible very literally. And then in that hour or in that day or even in that time period is when Babylon is going to be judged, so this great city is going to have some judgment come upon it. That’s more evidence. Sixteen, same chapter, “And saying Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!” Now this city appears to be decorated or in modern terms, it’s fashionable. So, this city is male or female, what would you say? Probably female if we’re referring to it in that sort of way. That’s important; we’ll come back to it. Remember this city is probably being referred to as a “her.” I mean, you think about guys, they always call my baby car and that kind of thing; it’s that kind of illustration. It’s her, this city, okay?

Next verse, 18. “And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, what city is like unto this great city!” Again, just another illustration of more people saying, “That was an awesome city, and we’re sad it’s burning in destruction.”

Verse 19, “And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein they made rich and all had ships in by the sea.” That’s another reference to how to get to it. Can you get to it by the sea? Hmm, that might be important later, I just caught that one. “By reason of her costliness, for in one hour she is made desolate.”

Verse 21. Skip a verse, or you can read it if you want, I’m not trying to hide anything. “And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great mill stone and cast it into the sea. Thus with violence shall the great city Babylon be thrown down and shall be found no more at all.” So, Babylon will be destroyed. Great city, great Babylon, synonymous.

Let’s look at a different passage now. We’ve referred to Babylon as like Sodom, like Egypt, like Jerusalem, or maybe even literally Jerusalem. One chapter over to 21 verse 10. Let’s see if that megas polis language is used again. Can we use megas polis and mean a different city? Or is it always going to be the same city? 21 verse 10, “And he carried me away in the spirit and to a great high mountain and showed me that great city.” That great city. Which one? Are we referring to one we’ve been talking about this whole book of Revelation? That great city, the holy Jerusalem. Which city is it? Jerusalem. Like Jerusalem? No. There’s an article there, it means “the one,” New Jerusalem or holy Jerusalem.

“Descending out of heaven from God.” Now, wait a second. If it’s a physical city on earth and it has great destruction, then how can another physical city be coming, descending out of heaven, called the New Jerusalem? Well, does God ever rebuild his city? I mean is Jerusalem considered part of God’s real estate? Well, of course. Jerusalem is where his chosen people have come from. Jesus was crucified in Jerusalem. But can we say modern Jerusalem today, the whole city is just full of honoring God? No. So how does God make his city, his real estate into a holy city? Well, he’s got destroy it; he’s got to have judgment upon it. I think that’s just some of the evidence that would make me think that this new city, this Jerusalem was indeed referred to as Babylon. A new Babylon. Well, okay maybe that’s not enough evidence for you. Let’s look at a little bit more.

The passage also gives us another clue that may lead us to what city are we talking about. So again I go to [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org), any time you want to go deep into a study, just do a word search. Now, where is this word used? What word is it in the Greek? How many times is it used within the same chapter? How many times is it used in the same book? Did John write John? Did John write first, second, third John? Okay. John. Okay, those are the ones we know for sure. We also believe he wrote a few other books, but look in those books, do they have anything to do with the words that John used? Because John’s probably going to use the same words that he used before. Well one of the words he used was “fornication.” In the Greek, porneia. He says, “They’ll drink of the wine of the

wrath of her fornication.” Well, obviously fornication is sexual immorality. It’s a sin that characterizes this city, because this city needs to be judged for its immorality.

Isaiah 3:8 and 9. Now, I know this goes all the way back to the Old Testament, but I want you to look at it with me for a second here just to kind of pull together a passage we already read. Remember how we read before that Jerusalem is like Sodom and is like Egypt. That was in Revelation we read that. So let’s see if there’s any other verses in the Bible that would compare Jerusalem to another city and this goes all the way back to Isaiah 3. So, if you can turn there with me, please. I want you to see it your own Bibles, so you know I’m not making it up. I made up a little bit of it, but no. Isaiah 3 verse 8. And my pages are stuck together. I don’t have it printed on the slides, so I have to peel them apart. Okay, they’re it is. Isaiah 3, and then starting in verse 8, it says, “For Jerusalem is ruined.” So, God would never destroy his precious city, would he? No, he ruined it once. “And Judah is fallen.” I like that word. That word comes up again later. “Because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory.” So, why would God destroy a city? Because they’re provoking him, they’re causing sin in their lives. He needs to judge them, he’s a just God. He doesn’t just bless people, he also has to curse. You’ll hear that in the message today. “The show of their countenance doth witness against them, and they declare their sin as,” what’s it say class? “Sodom.” Jerusalem, Sodom, same thing when they’re sinning and “they hide it not. Woe unto their soul, for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.” I normally think of reward like, “Yay, I got a reward. I’ve rewarded evil. Oooh. Oops.” I love the language of the Bible. It says, “You’ve rewarded evil to yourself. You have won the bad award.” And that’s what Jerusalem had. Jerusalem had done that in the past. I wonder if you could say it’s doing it again today.

Let’s go over to Ezekiel. Ezekiel has a lot to do with Revelation. There is a lot of prophecy in the book of Ezekiel. Ezekiel, Lamentations, Jeremiah, all that, right after it. Ezekiel 16 is where we’re headed. And I definitely know I am not going to get to the other chapters in the book Revelation. Do you see how much is packed into this one verse? I haven’t even got past that one verse yet. Ezekiel 16:26. And it says, “Thou hast also committed fornication.” Who? “With the Egyptians, thy neighbors great of flesh.” So, they’re known for their flesh problems. “And have increased in whoredoms to provoke me to anger.” Who’s me? God. God’s provoked to anger by whoredoms, by fornications against Egypt with Jerusalem, or in this case Israel, the whole country, because if you read the context there, this context is talking about Israel. Just a couple of verses ahead, it says verse 29, “Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan.” Canaan would include all those places like Jericho and the places that we’ve been studying in other classes or other church services. Canaan would be New Jerusalem, new Israel, unto Chaldea a whole group of land. “Yet, thou hast or thou wast not satisfied therewith.” You notice a lot of times, especially in those great societies like Babel or Babylon, they’re not satisfied.

I might have used this illustration before, so forgive me. They asked Bill Gates one day, who was at one time the richest man on earth, “What do you want? What could you possibly want when you are the richest man on earth?” And he said very simply, “More.”

How sad is that? That when you have it all, that's not good enough. It doesn't fill your God shaped hole in your life. God put it there and until he realizes that, which I hope he does someday, he will not be fulfilled.

All right, so that was 29. Turn all the way forward now; we're going to jump way ahead to Jude, right before the book Revelation. I'm not going to tell you a chapter. You have to find it on your own. Jude verse 5. I knew there'd be a few of you. Jude verse 5. "I will put you in remembrance." Now, does God need to remember like, "Oh, I forgot?" No, of course not, God knows everything. He is omnipotent, all powerful, but he's also omniscient. He can remember everything, he knows everything. But he's going to remember. Well then, how do you remember something you already know? Well you're going to bring it to the forefront of your mind and dwell on it. "I'm going to bring into remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not."

With every blessing there is a curse, with every curse there's a blessing. God is going to have to be just to judge those that deserve it while at the same time, he's going to spare the righteous. He's going to pull them out of the fire. Pastor said this morning, you'll hear it today if you haven't, that there's always people in the midst of this curse that God will bless. And Daniel is an example of that. Daniel in the lion's den, he was in captivity, he was a slave, yet he was blessed and this is the same idea. He said, "There were people in Israel that were persecuted in the land of Egypt," and I personally believe a lot of the pyramids and things like that were built by Israel, because the Egyptians didn't want to do it. They were rich, why did they have to do it? Why didn't they just make their slaves build it? And who were their slaves at the time? It was Israel. Israel was their slaves. So Israel probably actually built the pyramids, which is just another testament to God in my opinion.

Where were we? That was verse 5. "He destroyed them that believed not." There are people that believe not. "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under the darkness until the judgment of that great day." Great is megas, day is speaking of the day of the Lord. Megas day. "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah," there's a city we've heard of before, "and the cities about them in like manner giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh set forth an example in suffering, the vengeance of eternal fire." Well, what does that have to do with anything? Well, I just saw the words Egypt and Sodom and Gomorrah used in the same verse to describe a future thing. And Egypt, Sodom and Gomorrah have also been referred to in another passage that we read in chapter 11 of Revelation as Jerusalem.

Okay, last little bit of evidence here. If you don't believe me yet, I am not offended. It's okay. Let's look in the book of Revelation. Revelation 17 verse 2. This is the beginning of the bowl judgments here, this is where the whole Babylon story begins to unfold, but we're not going to read the whole story, we're just going to pick out passages here that might have some clue as to what was that great city, who was Babylon, who is going to Babylon. "With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication." Kings of all

the earth committed fornication, sin. “The inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” Female committing fornication, drunk with wine. Is that in our verse? Then look at verse 4, same chapter. “And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, and a golden cup full of her hand full of abominations and her filthiness of her fornication she held.” She was holding it. Did we hear anything about a decorated woman in purple and scarlet with pearls? Is that a verse we already read when we were talking about a great city?

Chapter 18, same page or one page over for you, verse 3. “For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich with the abundance of her delicacies.” Again, a great city we’re talking about here, Babylon, what it’s like. And we see the drinking of the wine of the wrath again. Verse 9, “And the kings of the earth have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her and shall bewail her and lament for her when they shall see the smoke of her burning.”

Chapter 19. Actually, I start in verse 1, “And after these things I heard a great voice and much people in heaven saying, ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and honor and power unto the Lord, our God!’” This is after the destruction of Babylon. “For true and righteous are his judgments, for he has judged the great whore, Babylon, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.” God does judge Babylon, and he judges this great city, and it’s not just a few verses later, let me go back, and he says in chapter 21 verse 10, he has a holy Jerusalem now, what appears to be in the same spot, coming down from heaven.

Jerusalem has seven hills. It wasn’t just Rome. Revelation 14:8 is just a preview of chapter 17 and 18 and it says, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great.” Back in Isaiah 21, you don’t have to turn there; this is an echo of something that’s happened before, because God does that. God gives examples of what he’s done in the past to tell you what he’s going to do in the future. Verse 9 says this, almost identical to the verse 14:8. It says, “And behold, here cometh the chariot of men with a couple of horsemen.” Men, horsemen, chariots, that all sounds like Revelation. And he answered and said, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.” God judged Babylon, the original historical Babylon. God judges Babylons throughout the ages. You can’t say Rome wasn’t a Babylon, it was. It was a horrible city. God judged it. The empire is gone. But what Holy Roman Empire is left? It doesn’t exist. Rome, the city exists.

16 verse 17 says, “And the seventh angel poured out his vial.” This would mean that it’s probably in the great tribulation if not at the end of the great tribulation. I was going to put up that map. I had it on the first screen of where we think these events are happening. It’s got to be happening near the end, because it’s the seventh angel pouring out her seventh vial into the air. It’s near the end.

“And there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne saying, It is done.” And it can’t be done before it starts. It’s done. “And there were voices and thunders and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake.” We studied that before. “Such as what was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so megas.” Great. Same word, megas. “And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations and fell; and great Babylon came into remembrance before God, and to give unto her cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.” Do you see what this is? It’s a story God’s been telling through the ages. He’s been telling about how the great city which in context here is Jerusalem and then in the same verse says the great Babylon. “My great city has become a great Babylon,” that’s what God is saying. “My people have left me.”

17 verse 1 says, “And there came one of the seven angels with the seven vials and talked with me, saying unto me, come hither, I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon the many waters.” Again it goes into the story of Babylon, what happened.