

Futurist Speculation on Identity of Babylon

Revelation 17—18

Babylon = Rome?			
Daniel’s 4 th Kingdom from which the Antichrist Comes is Rome	#1 Babylon #2 Persia #3 Greece #4 Rome	Head of Gold Chest/Arms of Silver Middle/Thighs of Bronze Legs of Iron	Lion with Eagles’ Wings Bear Leopard with Four Heads/Wings Beast with Ten Horns
Seven Mountains	“This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated” (17:9) Rome is known as a city of seven hills		
1 Peter 5:13	“She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings” (1 Pet. 5:13) Peter was writing from Rome		
Babylon = Babylon?			
Consistent Hermeneutic	Geographic locations in Revelation are literal unless otherwise specified (11:8). Consider, for example: Patmos, the seven churches, and Armageddon.		
Parallels with Jeremiah 50—51	There are numerous and undeniable allusions to Jeremiah 50—51, a passage about the fall of literal, historical Babylon. However, these and other prophecies about the destruction of Babylon were never fulfilled. They indicate a total and utter destruction of that city such that it will never again be inhabited. But the Persians assumed control over the city of Babylon relatively peacefully, certainly without this level of destruction, and the same is true for its conquest by Alexander the Great. Therefore, these unfulfilled prophecies must be fulfilled in a rebuilt and restored, literal Babylon in the Tribulation.		
Other links to literal Babylon	Revelation 18:5 states that her “sins are heaped as high as heaven,” likely alluding to the first mention of Babylon in the Bible, Genesis 11:4. Zechariah 5 speaks of iniquity and wickedness being carried to “the land of Shinar” (Zech. 5:11) Twice Revelation references “the great river Euphrates” (9:14; 16:12) on which Babylon was founded		

Babylon = Jerusalem?

<i>A Name of "Mystery"</i>	Babylon is referred to as "a name of mystery" (17:5), possibly pointed to it symbolic intent. See also Revelation 11:8 where Jerusalem "symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt."
<i>"The Great City"</i>	The first use of the title, "the great city" (11:8) indisputable refers to Jerusalem which, five verses later, is struck by an earthquake (11:13). This title's next appearance is in 16:19 where "the great city was split into three parts" by an earthquake. In this act of judgment, "God remembered Babylon the great" (16:19). The following two chapters concern "Babylon the great" (17:5; 18:2), called six times in these chapters "the great city" (17:18; 18:10, 16, 18, 19, 21).
<i>Jerusalem as a Prostitute</i>	Tribulation Babylon is called the "prostitute" (Rev. 17:1-2, 5) and the OT prophets condemned literal Jerusalem for whoring herself out to the nations and their gods (Jer. 2:1—3:11; Ezek. 16; 23; cf. Hosea 1—3)
<i>Jerusalem, the Beast, and the Second Coming</i>	One possible <u>reconstruction of tribulation events</u>: The seven-year tribulation will begin after the man of lawlessness is revealed (2 Thess. 2:3) by making a covenant with Israel (Dan. 9:27), possibly proclaiming himself to be their messiah (Matt. 24:5, 23-24; John 5:43) and rebuilding their temple and reinstituting animal sacrifice (Rev. 11:2). During the first half of the tribulation, the antichrist and the city of Jerusalem will mutually support one another (Rev. 17:3, 7), possibly serving as the capital of his world empire (Rev. 17:18). But at the midpoint of the tribulation, after three and a half years of preaching by the two witnesses (Rev. 11:3), the antichrist will break this covenant with Israel (Dan. 9:27), puts an end to their sacrifice (Dan. 12:11), and performs the abomination of desolation (Matt. 24:15), an action whereby he proclaims himself to be God (2 Thess. 2:4) and places an image of himself in the Jerusalem temple (Rev. 13:14-15), demanding worship. This antagonism will continue through the second half of the tribulation culminating in the antichrist's conspiracy with the ten horns to destroy Jerusalem (Rev. 17:16-17) which leads to the siege described in Zechariah (12:2; 14:1-2) and the second coming (Zech. 14:3-4)!
<i>Other links to literal Jerusalem</i>	Tribulation Babylon (17:6; 18:20, 24), like OT and first-century Jerusalem (Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:33) persecutes the saints The phrase "outside the city" in Rev. 14:20 is likely a reference to Jerusalem (see other NT references to "outside Jerusalem," Heb. 13:12), but the near antecedent for this city is "Babylon the great" in 14:8. Babylon's sentence, "repay her double for her deeds" (Rev. 18:6), may point back to Jeremiah 16:18 and 17:18 which describe judgment on Jerusalem Daniel's seventy weeks were specifically decreed "about your people and your holy city" to both "bring in everlasting righteousness" and also to "finish the transgression" (Dan. 9:24)