

THE FALL OF BABYLON

REVELATION 17:1-19:10

So John has finished his seven-cycle visions. And now he is going to close the book by focusing on three of the key themes that were revealed in the visions. The first is the Fall of Babylon, which becomes a type of any and every nation that will stand opposed to God and his Kingdom.

THE VISION OF THE HARLOT / 17:1-18



John is shown a vision of a beautiful woman. She's sitting on a red beast with 7 heads & 10 horns. She has a cup of full of idolatry and immorality. And she's drunk on the blood of the church.

The angel tells John what the vision represents. The red beast represents human rebellion against God. Together they make war against the Lamb and his people. The woman rules over the nations and kings of the world. But in the Lamb will conquer her and the beast.

WHAT DOES THIS VISION MEAN?

John is using images that would have connected this vision to the Roman Empire. John's first readers would have understood that Rome is the new Babylon. Their oppression of the church makes them the beastly nation.

References to Rome:

Built on Seven Hills (v9)
Succession of Kings (v10-12)
Unified Empire (v13)
World-wide Rule (v15)
Dominion Over Kings (v18)

SO THIS IS ALL JUST ABOUT ROME?

John is connecting Rome with Babylon but not exclusively. Drawing from Daniel 4 & 7, John is showing us that any nation that exalts itself to the place of God, often through military oppression and violence, becomes the beast.



Rome is just the next nation in a line of nations who have sought to take God's rightful rule over the world. But in the end the Lamb will conquer. Notice the difference between Daniel 7:21 and Revelation 17:14!

THE FALL OF THE HARLOT / 18:1-24

In chapter 18, John describes the Fall of Babylon not as a vision, but this time in the role of a prophet. This chapter reads much like the prophetic messages of Isaiah, Jeremiah, & Ezekiel and their judgments against wicked nations like those spoken over Babylon, Edom, and Tyre.

See Isaiah 13 & 47, Jeremiah 50–51, and Ezekiel 27–28

FALLEN IS BABYLON!

The first prophetic song declares the downfall of Babylon.
She has received what she deserves for leading the nations astray.

COME OUT OF BABYLON

The second prophetic song is call for Jesus' people to resist Babylon.
Babylon wants to be God, but Jesus' people worship the LORD alone.
This is the center of this section and is the church's call for faithfulness.

SONGS OF WOE

John then gives us three songs of woe over Babylon's destruction.
Kings, merchants, seafarers—all sings the destruction of the woman.
The chapter ends with a final song of woe over the fall of Babylon.

THE MARRIAGE SUPPER / 19:1-10

The response to the fall of Babylon comes from heaven.
God is praised for bringing judgment upon the harlot.
And all of creation is invited to praise God for his victory.

Then John hears the loud praise of the saints.
They are celebrating God's power to overthrow Babylon.
And the celebrating is described as a wedding feast.
The church is described as a bride made ready for Christ.
And he marriage supper of the Lamb comes at last!



PROLOGUE: WORSHIP GOD ALONE

The angel tells John that all invited to the Marriage Supper are blessed.
As John bows down to worship the angel, he is rebuked—worship God.
This section ends reminding us that the LORD alone deserves worship.