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## An Oracle Concerning Babylon

### 13:1 to 14:23

**An oracle concerning Babylon DIG: Since this is the Babylon of the Great Tribulation, what does this city symbolize that is timeless and bigger than itself? What characterizes this Babylon (13:11, 19; 14:13-14)? What should the Judeans have learned about God from this prophecy against such a powerful nation?**

**REFLECT: Where in our culture, and in your life, do you see the attitudes typified by Babylon? What do you learn about Ha'Shem's response to these attitudes from this prophecy? Does this change your actions?**

The first nation that he deals with, and the one he spends the most time on is **Babylon**. When we look at the entire book of **Isaiah** and **his** oracles against **Babylon**, sometimes **he** deals with **the near historical Babylon** of **his** own day (**21:1-10**), the one that was rising in power and would not reach its zenith for another hundred years. But sometimes **he** deals with **the far eschatological Babylon** of the end times, because the city of **Babylon** is to be rebuilt and become the capital of the antichrist. **The Babylon that Isaiah writes about in 13:1 to 14:23 is the Babylon of the Great Tribulation.**



How can we determine this? What criteria do we use in our interpretation? The most important criteria is the context. There are three rules of interpreting the Bible:

context, context, and context. Therefore, what clues, what verses, in this section set the context? In **13:6** it says: **Wail, for the Day of the LORD is near.** In **13:9** we read: **See, the day of the LORD is coming.** In **13:13** **Isaiah** writes: **Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of ADONAI-Tzva'ot, in the day of His burning anger.** We have to ask ourselves, did these things happen about a hundred years after **Isaiah** had died, or in the last days during the Great Tribulation? The **Day of the LORD** clearly sets the context as the Great Tribulation.

But there is more evidence. In **13:19** **God** tells us through the prophet **Isaiah** that **Babylon will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah.** And the very next verses, **13:20** through **22** describe a **Babylon** that **will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations.** This can *only* mean that **Babylon** will be destroyed at the end of the Great Tribulation and uninhabited during the thousand-year Millennial Kingdom. How can we say that? We can say that because the Medes and the Persians inhabited **Babylon** after its destruction. In fact, **Babylon** is inhabited today! But that is just in **Chapter 13.** There is another verse in **Chapter 14** that helps us set the context as well. In **14:2** **Isaiah** tells us that **the house of Isra'el will possess the Gentile nations as menservants and maidservants in the LORD's land. They will make captives of their captors and rule over their oppressors.** During the height of Solomon's reign, **Isra'el** was a very powerful country, as powerful as any in the world at that time. But they never possessed the Gentile nations. **Therefore, the context, especially the Day of the LORD, is clearly the Babylon of the Great Tribulation.**

Other prophets that had messages against **Babylon** would include **Lamentations 2:14; Jeremiah Chapters 50 and 51;** and **Nahum 1:1.** Besides these two chapters that we will take a look at, **Isaiah** prophesies against **Babylon** in **Isaiah 21:1-10** (there **he** deals with **the Babylon** of **his** own day); **43:14-15** (**the Babylonians** become fugitives); **46:1-2** (the gods of **Babylon** are judged); **47:1-15** (judgment against **Babylonian** occultism), and **48:15** and **20** (judgment on **Babylon**). **Jeremiah** also prophesies against **Babylon** in **Chapters 50** and **51** (the totality of **Babylon's** destruction). In **Zechariah 5:5-11** the rebuilt **Babylon** will become the economic capital of the world. The remaining references are in the book of **Revelation.** In **14:8** and **16:19** there is rejoicing over the fall of **Babylon.** In **17:1-18** the fall of religious **Babylon** is seen, whereas, in **18:1-24** the fall of political and economic **Babylon** is seen (see the commentary on **Revelation, to see link click [E](#) - The Fall of Commercial and Political Babylon**). But these



and other prophecies require the rebuilding of the city of **Babylon** to become the capital city of the antichrist. So there are many prophecies against **Babylon**, but the context determines which **Babylon** the author is talking about.

Our wise **God** has everything in control and will fulfill all **His** promises at the perfect time. Nothing that **the LORD** has ever promised will go unnoticed nor unfulfilled. We serve a wonder working **YHVH** who can be totally trusted to fulfill every promise!