

Why Babylon? Some Background Revelation 18:1 – 3

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Revelation 18:1–3

After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.” (NASB95)

What is it about Babylon? We just looked at the mid-tribulation destruction of the apostate religious institution of Babylon and witnessed the end game of all apostate and false religion – worship of the Dragon, Satan. All false religion and all apostasy are from the pit.

Now we see the city of Babylon pop up again. In fact, the term/city of Babylon shows up rather frequently in the scriptures. A simple search shows it popping up 294 times in 260 verses in the scriptures. Another city also shows up frequently in the scriptures too, Jerusalem. Again, a simple search shows that term/city showing up 813 times in 765 verses.

And there are alternative names used as well.

At the beginning of the story in Genesis, it is all about lies and false reality from the one in whose nature it is to lie. Jesus makes it clear to the religious leaders of Jerusalem just exactly who they were working for.

John 8:44

“You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” (ESV)

Those in his employ are still working today in religious circles and are firmly embedded everywhere the enemy seeks to have influence.

But why the name Babylon? How does this tie in from the beginning to the end?

The book of Revelation is the end of the story. It is a wrapping up of what has been discussed all throughout the scriptures and, as we saw with the destruction of the religious Babylon, also reflects the ending of sin and the resultant judgement of those institutions and peoples involved in it.

The idea is that these are institutions with a very long historical tail. One of the themes throughout the scripture has been the theme of two cities.

Revelation includes a tale of two cities: Babylon the prostitute versus New Jerusalem the bride. Babylon is decked with gold and pearls. The New Jerusalem is like a bride adorned for a husband. Her streets and the city itself is made of gold; the gates were pearls. All of this is the gift of God, coming down from God. The contrast between the two cities: The one who stays pure, who doesn't settle for the temporary gratification of the prostitute, is the one who will get to be the bride forever with the Lamb. (Keener 2016)

Babylon is Satan's capital, just as Jerusalem is God's capital, and we find this first Babylon was permitted under Nebuchadnezzar to destroy Jerusalem and its temple. (Newell 1935, 272)

The Old Testament has a lot to say about the destruction of this city and here is a news flash, only some of what has been prophesied has taken place at this point. There is more to come.

The final form of Babylon is the **literal city on the Euphrates**, rebuilt as Antichrist's capital of the last days, opposing Israel as God's earthly people who will have gathered back to their land (the Church of course, having been raptured), and opposing Jehovah's worship with the most powerful and enslaving form of idolatry that the world has ever known—the worship of the Beast and his image! (Newell 1935, 272)

Babylon will be rebuilt, or at least I think it will be. This is one of those topics where there are a lot of different opinions and any one of them or none of them could be right.

Babylon, or at least the false promises upheld by it, when you begin to trace it back historically, has its origins back in Genesis 4.

Genesis 10:8–12

“Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. Therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD.” The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech (Uruk, Iraq), Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city.” (ESV)

Babel was not originally in the location we know today as Babylon, it was in Eridu, south of the site of Babylon and closer to the Gulf. Shinar is Sumer, it is in Erech, also known as Uruk and today known as Iraq. And something else about Nimrod from the LXX

Genesis 10:8–12

“Cush fathered Nimrod. **He was the first to be a giant on the earth.** He was a mighty hunter before the Lord God; because of this they will say, “As Nimrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord.” And the beginning of his kingdom became Babylon and Erech and Accad and Calneh in the land of Shinar. From that land he went out to Assyria and built Nineveh and the city of Rehoboth and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; this is the great city.” (Lexham Press 2020, Gen 10:8-12)

Historically, the term Babylon has been attached to more than one location and it has also been used to refer to a region. Preterists believe Jerusalem was even referred to as Babylon here in Revelation, it is not.

Uruk. City in southern Babylonia, cult center of Anu and Ishtar; biblical Erech, modern Warka. (Roth, Hoffner and Michalowski 1997, 273)

Eridu. A city in southern Mesopotamia, seat of the god Enki (Akkadian Ea) and his temple Eabzu; the city to which kingship was said to first descend from heaven; modern Abu-Shahrēn. (Roth, Hoffner and Michalowski 1997, 269)

South of the Ur lay Eridu, or, in full, Guruduga, “the good city,” wherein, apparently, lay the earthly Paradise. This is identified with the present `Abu-shahreïn, and was the seat of Ea or Enki, god of the sea and of fertilizing streams. According to the tradition, it was there that the “dark vine” grew — a type, seemingly, of the tree of life. The later kings of Babylon sometimes bear the title “king of Eridu,” as though rulers of the domain of Paradise. (Orr 1999)

At Eridu, there have been some interesting archeological finds such as the remains of a temple to Enki.

There are 18 layers that have been found there.

The oldest levels of the E-abzu, a small structure less than ten feet square, date to the founding of the city around 5400 BC. (Gilbert 2017, Kindle Location 995)

Eabzu. “House of the Subterranean Waters (Abyss),” temple of the god Ea/Enki in Eridu. (Roth, Hoffner and Michalowski 1997, 268)

Enki. Sumerian god of subterranean waters, associated with magic and wisdom, whose main city was Eridu and whose temple there was Eabzu; Akkadian Ea. (Roth, Hoffner and Michalowski 1997, 269)

So, at Eridu, where Sumerians say kingship first came down; in other words, a government or empire. There is a temple, more correctly called a House of the Abyss to Ea / Enki. Enki is the god of the abyss.

Archaeology tells us the first iteration of this House of the Abyss is antediluvian – pre-flood.

In Sumerian mythology, Enki is one of the creators and organizers of the universe. Especially the creation of man is ascribed to him. Within Akkadian epic tradition he increasingly assumed the role of a trickster, whose advice saved gods and humans alike from seemingly hopeless situations. He was revered for instance, for saving the human race from total destruction by the deluge. As a patron deity of erudition and scholarship on the one hand, and incantations and purification rituals on the other, Ea became one of the supreme gods in the Mesopotamian pantheon. During the first millennium BCE most of his functions had already been transferred to his son →Marduk, the city god of Babylon, but Ea remained the ultimate source of wisdom and deep insight throughout Mesopotamian history. (Galter 1999, 126)

In the Bible, the sea is a place of the origin of chaos. Enki is the god of the sea. The god of chaos.

Even at the early date when the written history of Babylonia begins, the country had been united in various political organizations till some gods like Enlil and Enki (Ea) had become largely dissociated from their original habitations and had entered into various pantheons as **lord of the earth and of the deep**. (Barton 1902, 195)

Who is the originator of chaos in, lord of the earth and in charge of the abyss per the Bible?

Isaiah 14:12–15

“How you have fallen from heaven, Day Star, son of the Dawn! How you have been thrown down to earth, you who laid low the nation! You said in your heart, ‘I’ll ascend to heaven, above the stars of God. I’ll erect my throne; I’ll sit on the Mount of Assembly in the far reaches of the north; I’ll ascend above the tops of the clouds; I’ll make myself like the Most High.’ But you are brought down to join the dead, to the far reaches of the Pit.” (ISV)

2 Corinthians 4:3–4

“So if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are dying. In their case, the god of this world has blinded the minds of those who do not believe to keep them from seeing the light of the glorious gospel of the Messiah, who is the image of God.” (ISV)

Genesis 4:16–18

“So Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden. Cain had marital relations with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. **Cain was building a city, and he named the city after his son Enoch. To Enoch was born Irad**, and Irad was the father of Mehujael. Mehujael was the father of Methushael, and Methushael was the father of Lamech.” (NET)

The names and descriptions of many of Cain’s descendants continue this theme of cultural innovation. Cain’s building of a city ties in with his son Enoch. The Enoch of Cain’s line, distinct from the Enoch of Genesis 5, may originally have been tied to the Sumerian UNU(G), the name for the city of Uruk. If this is the case, then the association of Irad with the ancient Sumerian city of Eridu gains greater weight and supports the overall conclusion that the early part of the line of Cain was associated with two of the earliest cities known in Mesopotamia, both in archaeological excavations and in literature of the region. (Hess 2007, 143-144)

If that is the case, then the city of Eridu, was founded by Cain or his descendant who then established the first altar to the god of the abyss, the god of this world – Enki (Satan)

MARDUK [mä’r dük] (Akk. dAMAR.UTU “calf of the sun [?],” dMa-ru-du-uk-ku). The chief god of Babylon and later the state god of Babylonia; son of Ea (Enki). From obscure origins as a local deity perhaps at Eridu and then at Babylon, Marduk gained supremacy as creator god and chief of the pantheon, supplanting Enlil (and assuming his epithet, BEL) following Hammurabi’s political successes (ca. 1750 B.C.). In the biblical accounts his name is hebraized as Merodach (Jer. 50:2) and as such is compounded in the names Merodach-baladan and Evil-merodach (cf. Mordecai). (Myers 1987, 689)

Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta

In those days, there being no snakes, there being no scorpions, there being no hyenas, there being no lions, there being no dogs or wolves, there being no (thing) fearful or hair-raising, mankind had no opponents — in those days in the countries Subartu, Hamazi, bilingual Sumer being the great country of princely office, the region Uri being a country in which was what was appropriate, the country Mardu lying in safe pastures, (in) the (whole) compass of heaven and earth the people entrusted (to him) could address Enlil, verily, in but a single tongue. (Hallo and Younger 1997-, 547)

“Bring down for me the stones of their hills and mountains And build for me the great shrine, erect for me the great abode! For my sake, let them make illustrious the great abode, the abode of the gods! Let thus my power become evident in Kulab; Let the Abzu flourish like the holy mountain, Let Eridug scintillate like the hill ranges, For my sake, let them make shrine Abzu illustrious like silver in the lode! When I then sing in praise from the Abzu, When I then bring back the power from Eridug, When I am then dressed with the crown of lordship like a pure shrine, When I then don the holy crown of Unug-Kulab, May then the [mace-bearers?] of the great shrine escort me to the Gipar, And may the [mace-bearers?] of the Gipar escort me to the great shrine. The people will applaud and admire me, And the Sun will behold me with benevolence!” Thereupon the splendor in the sacred sky, the Lady who watches over the highland. The divine Lady who embellishes herself for Ama-ušumgalana, Inana, mistress of all the lands, Thus spoke to Enmerkar, son of the Sun: “Come Enmerkar, I shall advise you—let my advice be heeded!— (Vanstiphout and Cooper 2003, 59-61)

The story goes on “did Enki, lord of abundance, lord of effective command, did the lord of intelligence, the country’s clever one, did the leader of the gods, did the sagacious omen-revealed lord of Eridu estrange the tongues in their mouths as many as were put there. The tongues of men which were one.” (Hallo and Younger 1997-, 548)

So here is the background of Babylon, the city, the way of life, finally judged and destroyed personally by Jesus Christ in chapter 18.

The city of Eridu was founded by Cain's descendant and the first altar was more than likely constructed by him in that city around 5300 to 5000 BC.

Fast forward a couple of thousand years and Nimrod (Enmerkar) who was, per Sumerian legend, involved sexually with a god, Nanna also known as Inanna, the goddess of war and sex. About this...

Inanna is best known as the daughter of the moon god Nanna/Sîn and his wife Ningal and as the sister of Utu/Shamash, the sun god. In the Sumerian literary traditions reflecting fertility rituals, especially those rooted in Uruk, the goddess is depicted as the wife of various Dumuzi/→Tammuz figures, fertility gods who are the power for new life and growth. She is also the wife of An, the god of the sky. This latter association may be a late development, but it seems more likely that here is preserved an older tradition in which Inanna/Ishtar represents a variant of the earth: Ki ('earth'), the wife of An, or Ereshkigal ('mistress of the great earth'), the goddess of the netherworld who was the wife of An in his bull form, Gugalanna. The goddess Inanna/Ishtar seems to exhibit a greater variety of (perhaps inconsistent) traits and qualities than most other deities and plays a wide variety of roles. She is a goddess of sexual love and possesses strong powers of sexual attraction. In the fertility cult, she receives foodstuffs and appears to be the numen of the communal storehouse. In addition, Inanna/Ishtar is a rain-goddess who, like other storm gods, is also a war goddess and personifies the battle-line. She is also the patroness of prostitutes and other independent women as well as the goddess of the morning and evening star (Venus). (Abusch 1999, 452-453)

The goddess is the spouse and lover of the king with whom she participates in the ritual of the sacred marriage. She provides the king with economic blessings as well as power and victory in war. (Abusch 1999, 453)

She seems to encompass polar opposites: she is death and life, male and female, she is a female who does not nurture nor have a permanent partner, a sexual woman who is warlike and glories in aggression and destruction, etc. (Abusch 1999, 453)

Nimrod, who was or became a giant, was trying to reestablish what had taken place previously as a result of Genesis 6 and the descent of the watchers on Mount Hermon. He was personally involved with these fallen divine beings and was trying to reestablish a direct conduit for forbidden knowledge, giants, and everything else that had been a problem prior to the flood.

God stopped it in Genesis 11 by coming down and putting an end to the rebellion, dividing the languages, and forcing obedience to His command to fill the earth. He also assigned members of His divine council to oversee these nations, per Deuteronomy 32:8 – 9. They became corrupted and demanded to be worshipped.

Ishtar (Sumerian Inanna)

This goddess, the most popular of Mesopotamian deities, is characterized by paradox and conflict within her personality. As both virgin and prostitute she embodies within herself order and disorder. She is ambiguous, at times androgynous, and aggressive. She disrupts values and obscures the lines between gender roles. Sex, violence, storm, and fertility are all associated with her. (Walton 2018, 319)

Nimrod had tried to reestablish the pre-flood world of Genesis 6. He was most likely involved with fallen divine beings, especially one who had and continues to exhibit gender fluidity. God ended it.

But that fallen divine being continues to today still lying to everyone.

Each ziggurat was viewed as a channel of communication between the celestial and terrestrial domains—a meeting point between heaven and earth. A ziggurat was typically viewed as a “sacred mountain” and was “looked upon as the center of the universe,” or the “navel of the earth.” (Rhodes 2019, Kindle Location 1641)

Genesis 11:1–9

“And all the earth was one language, and there was one voice for all. And this happened when they moved from the east: they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they settled there. And a human said to their neighbor, “Come on, let’s make bricks and bake them in the fire.” And the brick turned into stone for them, and the clay was asphalt for them. And they said, “Come on, let’s build ourselves a city and a tower whose head will be as far as the heavens, and we will make a name for ourselves before we are scattered over the face of the whole earth.” And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the sons of humans built. And the Lord said, “Look, there is one race and one language of all, and they have begun to do this, and now they will not fail at all that they try to do. Come on, let’s go down there to confound their tongue, so that each of them will not understand their neighbor’s voice.” And the Lord scattered them from that place over the face of all the earth, and they stopped building the city and the tower. Because of this they called its name Confusion, because there the Lord confounded the language of all the earth, and from there the Lord God scattered them over the face of all the earth.” (Lexham Press 2020, Genesis 11:1-9)

Nimrod was working towards political, economic, and religious unity, but on his terms, not God’s terms.

Throughout history, that is what man has worked to do. Each empire shown by God to Nebuchadnezzar was an attempt to do that. Man thinks he can be successful in reestablishing what it is that our ancestors in Genesis 3 breached.

For close to 3 ½ years, the unholy trinity works to do that.

Here in chapter 18 of Revelation, we have the beginning of the end for these fallen divine beings as well as their offspring.

As we have seen, this is not a 3 ½ year old city, but a multiple thousand of years old idea, one which began in Genesis 3.

Genesis 3:4–5

“The serpent said to the woman, “You certainly will not die; for God knows that in the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened, and **you will be as gods** who know good and evil.”” (Lexham Press 2020, Genesis 3:4-5)

Based on this quick summary of the history of Babylon, knowing that the roots go back to Cain and the worship of the god of this earth, we understand why the final judgement of civil Babylon, just as with religious Babylon, is necessary.

Revelation 18:1–3

“After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.’” (NASB95)

John sees another angel now. This is one who is coming direct from the throne room and it is apparent that he only just left the presence of the Father and the Son because as Moses reflected the glory of God, this angel still reflects the glory of God.

The text tells us this is an angel with great authority, how John knows, other than the glory of God being reflected by the angel, is not told to us.

There is a contrast too, this angel has great authority, the beast though, has only derived authority given to it by the dragon (Revelation 13:2) and then allowed by God. There is a huge difference.

This angel is fully reflective of the glory of God. You take one look and you know he has come directly from the presence of God. The glory of God is so powerful it illumines the earth. When you consider the 5th bowl thrust the world into darkness, what a view.

Revelation 18:2

And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.” (NASB95)

I believe this is a rebuilt Babylon sitting on the Euphrates River just south of Baghdad.

But not only is Babylon to become the world political capital, it is also to become the world economic capital. (Fruchtenbaum 2003, 313)

The light from this angel will be probably the only visual thing seen in awhile, and the mighty voice of the angel lets us know it is another of those announcements that everyone on earth will hear. He will be seen, and he will be heard.

Why rebuild Babylon?

Zechariah 5:5–11

“Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, “Lift your eyes and see what this is that is going out.” And I said, “What is it?” He said, “This is the basket that is going out.” And he said, “This is their iniquity in all the land.” And behold, the leaden cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the basket! And he said, “This is Wickedness.” And he thrust her back into the basket, and thrust down the leaden weight on its opening. Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, two women coming forward! The wind was in their wings. They had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. **Then I said to the angel who talked with me, “Where are they taking the basket?” He said to me, “To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it. And when this is prepared, they will set the basket down there on its base.”**” (ESV)

This prediction of a future economic powerhouse is based in the same location of the Babylon that took Jerusalem captive. A preview of this upcoming destruction was provided to us by Isaiah and Jeremiah.

Isaiah 21:8–10

“Then the lookout shouted: “Upon a watchtower I stand, O Lord, continually by day, and I am stationed at my post throughout the night. Look! Here come riders, each man with a pair of horses!” They’re shouting out the answer: “Babylon has fallen, has fallen, and they have shattered all the images of her gods on the ground! O my downtrodden people, my wall! I’ll tell you what I have heard from the LORD of the Heavenly Armies, the God of Israel.”” (ISV)

Isaiah 13:19–22

“Babylon, that jewel of kingdoms, the splendor and pride of the Chaldeans, will be like Sodom and Gomorrah, when God overthrew them— It will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; no Bedouin will pitch his tent there; no shepherds will make their flocks lie down there. But desert beasts will lie down there, and their houses will be full of howling creatures; there owls will dwell, and goat-demons will dance there. Hyenas will howl in its strongholds, and jackals will make their dens in its citadels. Its time is close at hand, and its days will not be extended any further.” (ISV)

Jeremiah 50:38–40

“A drought against her waters. They’ll dry up. For it’s a land of idols, and they go mad over their terrifying images. Therefore the desert creatures along with hyenas will live there. They’ll live in it with ostriches, but people won’t live in it again. They won’t inhabit it from generation to generation. Just as when God overthrew Sodom, Gomorrah, and their neighbors,” declares the LORD, “so also no one will live there. No human being will reside in it.” (ISV)

Jeremiah 51:36–45

“Therefore this is what the LORD says: “Look, I’m going to argue your case and take vengeance for you. I’ll dry up her sea and make her fountain dry. Babylon will become a heap of ruins, a refuge for jackals, a desolate place and an object of scorn. They’ll roar together like young lions; they’ll growl like lion cubs. When they’re excited I’ll serve them their banquet, and make them drunk until they’re merry. They’ll sleep forever and won’t wake up,” declares the LORD. “I’ll bring them down like lambs for the slaughter, like rams with male goats.” “How Sheshak will be captured, and the prince of all the earth seized. How Babylon will become an object of horror among the nations! The sea will come up against Babylon, and she will be covered by wave upon wave. Her cities will become an object of horror, a dry land and a desert, a land in which no one lives, and through which no human being passes. I’ll punish Bel in Babylon, and I’ll make what he has swallowed come out of his mouth. The nations will no longer stream to him. Even the wall of Babylon will fall. “Come out of her, my people, flee for your lives from the LORD’s anger!” (ISV)

Contrary to popular opinion, that has not happened yet.

Revelation 18:2

“And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.” (NASB95)

So, in the midst of the 5th bowl, just prior to or at the same time as the move of a large land force, comes an angel, who everyone can see, and everyone can hear what he says. The announcement is not good news for current regime. We clearly see that the actions that the angel is announcing are those which take place with the 7th bowl being poured out.

The judgement that was promised in Revelation 14:8, and elsewhere in the Bible, now is taking place. We need to keep the overall game plan in the back of our minds. The method of flashback of flash forward communication that is taking place means we need to remain aware of the overall timeline of what is going on as this destruction takes place.

Situational Awareness

1. The armies of the world begin to gather
2. The Euphrates River dries up
3. Refugees flee from Babylon because of the warning
4. Commercial Babylon, the physical location on the Euphrates, is destroyed
5. The beast and his forces are not there but are in Israel and have launched an assault on Jerusalem
6. The beast and his forces move south to deliver the final solution to those Jews, the remnant who escaped 3 ½ years ago, he has been unable to get to so far.
7. As the beast moves south, the remnant, hearing from survivors from Jerusalem, as well as those who escaped from Babylon, realize that only Messiah can save them now and the nation as one prays.
8. Jesus Christ returns in power with His armies, and everyone sees it, to save His people.
9. Jesus wins
10. He descends, in victory, onto the Mount of Olives creating an entirely new region
11. A Jew now rules the world

12. Mopping up takes place and people are transported for the sheep and goat judgement
13. Old testament believers are resurrected as are those who were killed during the tribulation
14. The Millennial Temple is built
15. The sheep and goat judgement takes place
16. The Kingdom begins

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