

Figtreewatchers Podcast Episode 127: Babylon's Destruction Fulfilled in the Past or Yet Future?

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Episode Summary: Some believe that Babylon was completely destroyed in the past as a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, but is this really the case? In this episode we use Old and New Testament scripture as well as historical records to see if this view truly stands the test of time.

Episode Link:

<https://www.figtreewatchers.com/2023/03/04/figtreewatchers-podcast-episode-127-babylons-destruction-past-or-future/>

Babylon

[Expedition Bible](#) | Exploring Babylon and the Prophecies Against Her

Fast Facts from Babylon Rising by Ron Rhodes

- “The Bible references Babylon 280 times. The book of Revelation contains 404 and 44 deal specifically with Babylon. That’s 11% of the book of Revelation.”
- “While Jerusalem is the most often mentioned city in the Bible, Babylon is the second most often mentioned city. That means Babylon is an important city for us to know about.”
- “While Jerusalem literally means city of peace, Babylon means city of confusion and war.”
- “While Jerusalem is portrayed as God’s city, Babylon is portrayed as a demonic city.”
- “While Jerusalem is portrayed as a chaste bride, New Babylon is described as a great prostitute.”
- “While New Jerusalem is portrayed as an eternal city, New Babylon is portrayed as a temporal city by God Himself at the end of the 7 year tribulation. (Revelation 18:8)”

God’s people called out of her before destruction

- Jeremiah 51:6
- Jeremiah 51:45
- Revelation 18:4
- Daniel’s service in the Persian Empire:
 - Biblically speaking we read about the end of the Babylonian kingdom in Daniel 5 at the end of Belshazzar’s feast (Daniel 5:30-31). When we go to chapter 6 we

still see that Daniel still plays an important role in this location, in fact he's one of the 3 governors (Daniel 6:1-2).

- Towards the end of the chapter we're told that Daniel "prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian" (Daniel 6:28). This shows us that Daniel didn't flee the kingdom after it was overtaken by the Persians (as is noted in Jeremiah 51:6, Jeremiah 51:45, Revelation 18:4), instead he still served under the Media-Persian kingdom and prospered.

Babylon's Destruction will be Sudden

- Jeremiah 51:8
- Revelation 18:8-9

Babylon's Destruction Will be with Fire just like Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24, 28)

- Jeremiah 51:30-32
- Isaiah 13:19
- Revelation 17:16
- Revelation 18:9

No one will dwell there after its destruction: it will be uninhabited forever

- Jeremiah 50:39
- Jeremiah 51:26
- Isaiah 13:20
- Revelation 18:21-23

The Histories by Greek historian Herodotus

In his book, *The Histories*, 5th century Greek historian Herodotus - often called - "The World's First Historian" - wrote about how king Cyrus overtook Babylon in 539 BC:

- "Whether someone advised him in his difficulty, or whether he perceived for himself what to do, I do not know, but he did the following. [2] He posted his army at the place where the river goes into the city, and another part of it behind the city, where the river comes out of the city, and told his men to enter the city by the channel of the Euphrates when they saw it to be fordable."
- "Having disposed them and given this command, he himself marched away with those of his army who could not fight; [3] and when he came to the lake, **Cyrus dealt with it and with the river just as had the Babylonian queen: drawing off the river by a canal into the lake, which was a marsh, he made the stream sink until its former channel could be forded. [4] When this happened, the Persians who were posted with this objective made their way into Babylon by the channel of the Euphrates, which had now sunk to a depth of about the middle of a man's thigh.**"
- "[5] Now if the Babylonians had known beforehand or learned what Cyrus was up to, they would have let the Persians enter the city and have destroyed them utterly; for then they would have shut all the gates that opened on the river and mounted the walls that

ran along the river banks, and so caught their enemies in a trap. [6] **But as it was, the Persians took them unawares, and because of the great size of the city (those who dwell there say) those in the outer parts of it were overcome, but the inhabitants of the middle part knew nothing of it; all this time they were dancing and celebrating a holiday which happened to fall then, until they learned the truth only too well**”
(*The Histories*, pg 191).

The Cyrus Cylinder

Cyrus also commissioned an inscription to be made for him known as the “Cyrus Cylinder” which details (from his point of view) how he took Babylon. *The Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, edited by James Pritchard, is a compilation of historical, legal, mythological, liturgical, and secular texts from the ancient Near East that have been translated and compiled in one book for scholarly reference. In his book, the Cyrus Cylinder was also translated.

- **“Without any battle, he made him enter his town Babylon, sparing Babylon any calamity...All the inhabitants of Babylon as well as of the entire country of Sumer and Akkad, princes and governors (included), bowed to him (Cyrus) and kissed his feet, jubilant that he (had received) the kingship, and with shining faces...My numerous troops walked around in Babylon in peace, I did not allow anybody to terrorize (any place) of the [country of Sumer] and Akkad. I strove for peace in Babylon and in all his (other) sacred cities...”**
 - “I returned to (these) sacred cities on the other side of the Tigris, the sanctuaries of which have been ruins for a long time, the images which (used) to live therein and established for them permanent sanctuaries. I (also) gathered all their (former) inhabitants and returned (to them) their habitations. Furthermore, I resettled upon the command of Marduk, the great lord, all the gods of Sumer and Akkad whom Nabonidus has brought into Babylon to the anger of the lord of the gods, unharmed, in their (former) chapels, the places which make them happy.”
 - “May all the gods whom I have resettled in their sacred cities ask daily Bel and Nebo for a long life for me and may they recommend me (to him); to Marduk, my lord, they may say this: ‘Cyrus, the king who worships you, and Cambyses, his son, all of them I settled in a peaceful place...ducks and doves,...I endeavoured to fortify/repair their dwelling places...” (*The Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 315-16).
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Antiquities of the Jews by Flavius Josephus

Flavius Josephus was a 1st century Jewish-Roman historian who in his work, *Antiquities of the Jews*, (written around A.D. 93 or 94) helps us understand 1st century Babylon and those who lived there. He records that Jews in large numbers lived in Babylon during this time,

- *“But when Hyrcanus was brought into Parthia the king Phraates treated him after a very gentle manner, as having already learned of what an illustrious family he was; on which account he set him free from his bonds, and gave him a habitation at Babylon, where there were Jews in great numbers. These Jews honored Hyrcanus as their high priest and king, as did all the Jewish nation that dwelt as far as Euphrates; which respect was very much to his satisfaction,” (Antiquities of the Jews, 15.2.2).*

Current Events

Archaeology

- [Israel365News](#) | 2,500-year-old inscription bearing name of biblical King Ahasuerus’ father found in Israel | March 1st, 2023

Bible Prophecy

- [Harbinger’s Daily](#) | The Absence Of The Rapture—And Related Topics—From Our Churches Today, Is A Great Tragedy! | February 28th, 2023

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Encouraging Passages

- Titus 2:13
- James 5:7-8
- 2 Peter 3:10-13
- 1 John 3:2-3
- 2 Timothy 1:7
- Philippians 4:6-8

The Gospel Presentation

Revelation 19:10 tells us that the essence of bible prophecy is Jesus Christ. These things were revealed to us so that we ultimately believe in Christ (John 13:19). We've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Psalm 51:5, Romans 3:23). Because God is Holy he must judge sin. The penalty of this sin is death and ultimately the Lake of fire (Romans 6:23, Revelation 20:11-15). There's nothing we can do to save ourselves (Isaiah 64:6).

But God, in his love has provided a way to escape his wrath through Christ (John 3:16-18, John 14:6). Jesus paid for our sin penalty by taking God's wrath in our stead on the cross (Romans 5:8). He died for our sins, was buried, and rose again 3 days later (1 Corinthians 15:1-5).

You can accept this free gift of salvation by believing in Christ (Acts 16:30-31, Romans 6:23, Ephesians 2:8-9). Make sure you've made the right decision about Jesus today (2 Corinthians 6:2)! It will be the most important decision of your life, for eternal life.