

ALAS, BABYLON!

- **HEGEMONY:** Political or cultural dominance or authority over others. The hegemony of the popular kids over the other students means that they determine what is and is not cool. [<https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/hegemony>]
- **HEGEMONY:** The dominance of one group over another, often supported by legitimating norms and ideas. The term hegemony is today often used as shorthand to describe the relatively dominant position of a particular set of ideas and their associated tendency to become commonsensical and intuitive, thereby inhibiting the dissemination or even the articulation of alternative ideas.
- **HEGEMONY:** A preponderant influence or authority over others; the social, cultural, ideological, or economic influence exerted by a dominant group.
- Antichrist's alliance with the false religious system will not last. Eventually the ten horns (the ten kings who rule under Antichrist) and the beast (Antichrist himself) will come to hate the harlot. Having used the false religious system to help him gain control of the world, Antichrist will discard it. In his rampant megalomania, he will want the world to worship only him. He will also no doubt covet the vast wealth of the false religious system. Thus, he will turn on the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire. That graphic language of extreme violence is used to make clear that Antichrist and his henchmen will utterly and completely obliterate all vestiges of the false religious system. [*MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2000). Revelation 12–22 (p. 172). Chicago: Moody Press.*]
- The important point is that false religion, represented here by the harlot, is a murderer. It has killed millions of believers over the centuries. The history of the church has demonstrated that apostate Christianity is relentless in its persecution of those who hold to true faith in Jesus Christ. While the world becomes drunk with lust for her, the harlot becomes drunk with the blood of God's people. The vision was so appalling that when John saw her, he wondered greatly; expressing that he was confused, shocked, astonished, and frightened by the ghastly vision of such a contrastingly magnificent figure of the woman and such a deadly intent. [*Ibid.*]
- As they watch her burn, the leaders will cry out in anguish, "Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come." As the crown jewel of Antichrist's empire, Babylon will be a great city. And since it will have survived the devastating judgments of the Tribulation up to that point, the leaders will believe it to be a strong city. Thus, Babylon's swift destruction will shock and amaze them, and they will cry out to her in dismay, "For in one hour your judgment has come." The judgment on Babylon will happen rapidly, just as verse 8 predicted. [*Ibid.*]
- The list of events that will no longer take place in Babylon may seem almost anticlimactic and perhaps unnecessary to the reader. The styling of John's assessment perhaps underscores the picture of the total disruption of the social order. Not only is economic chaos introduced into the world with the fall of Babylon and the close of the tribulation, but all normalcy is taken from the earth with the overthrow of Babylon. For example, the musical events involving harpists, flutists, and trumpeters will never again be heard in Babylon. The guilds of workmen who plied their various trades will never again be found. The grinding of the millstones heard in many places in any ancient city will be gone, and even the twinkling light of a small lamp will never shine in Babylon again. The thoroughness of the destruction of Babylon involves not merely its economic foundation but even its most basic social life. This includes the voice of the bridegroom and the bride. Such joys and hopes are gone forever. [*Patterson, P. (2012). Revelation. (E. R. Clendenen, Ed.) (Vol. 39, p. 337). Nashville, TN: B&H.*]
- From the mouths of these earthly sovereigns come a lamentation, an agonizing dirge for the sudden contrast between the Babylon they once knew and the one they now behold. The NIV reads, "O Babylon, city of power!" The word translated "power" (is often rendered "strength." The contrast is between a city of strength and one reduced to helplessness in one hour. Doubtless the terror they sense and the dirge they sing spring from the realization that their own destiny follows in the wake of this final world empire. [*Ibid.*]
- 18:10 The kings are careful to distance themselves from the grim sight as they witness Babylon's burning ... As most would be, the kings of the earth are fascinated by the horrifying blaze. Yet they fear to come close, so they keep a safe distance. They are helpless to do anything to help the city and are probably afraid that the same thing will happen to them (Swete, Lee). This demonstrates that the burning of Babylon is not the ultimate end of history (Caird). The great fire does not hurt this group directly. Why they have assembled to witness this conflagration is unknown, but it could have been any number of motives. This precedes their assemblage for the final great conflict with the returning Warrior-King (16:14; 19:19). [*Thomas, R. L. (1995). Revelation 8-22: an exegetical commentary (pp. 328–329). Chicago: Moody Publishers.*]

(Isaiah 14:12–14 ESV) How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!

You said in your heart ...

1. **"I will** ascend to heaven; above the stars of God
2. **I will** set my throne on high;
3. **I will** sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;
4. **I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds;
5. **I will** make myself like the Most High."

(Also see Ezekiel 28:12-18.)