

Insights In Prophecy

Unlock The Ancient Mysteries Of Daniel & Revelation

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LESSON 27

Lesson 27

LAMENT OVER BABYLON: THE FINALITY OF JERUSALEM'S DEMISE

Read Revelation 18

- Learn Why The Blood Of The Prophets Seals Jerusalem's Demise
- The Three Woes Condemn The Great City

The beloved city Jerusalem, over four thousand years old, is holy to all three of the world's monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The history of each faith includes conquering the city at one time or another, and holding preeminence over the capital. Jerusalem remains a sacred destination for pilgrimages and prayers by all three religions.



The city abounds with holy symbols and fascinating buildings, including synagogues, churches and mosques; but, the spiritual center of the city is the Temple Mount. All three of the traditions have made use of the Temple Mount. This, in no small measure, explains why its story

has been one of strife, war and debate. Everything that happens in and around the Temple Mount and Western Wall, each piece of ground that is disturbed, each artifact that is dug up, stirs ancient hopes and spurs renewed resentment. With the unease shared particularly between Israelis and Arabs, Jerusalem's international attraction proves it to be a city of provocation and continued clashes.

The Temple Mount is the most sacred site in Judaism and epicenter of Bible prophecy and final events. These 36 acres are where the two Temples of Jewish history once stood, with growing hope for building the third Temple. The first was built by King Solomon in 957 B.C. to house the Ark of the Covenant, which safeguarded the Ten Commandments in a special room called "The Holy of Holies". For Muslims, Haram al-Sharif (Noble Sanctuary) is the third holiest site in Islam after Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia. On the Temple Mount complex, you'll find two Islamic structures—the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa Mosque. For Christians, the Temple Mount is significant because the second Temple located there was where Jesus often taught and prayed. Jerusalem is the focal point of His ministry, and the revered location of Messiah's death, resurrection and return.

However, the Scriptures expose Jerusalem's checkered history; when the Israelites obeyed Yahweh, the city was blessed and preserved, but other times when they rejected the prophets' counsel the city and Temple were overrun by Israel's enemies. In the previous lesson on Revelation 17, we solidified the *Great City, Babylon's* identity to be Jerusalem. Jesus warned of her destruction long ago when He told His disciples that not one stone would be left upon another (Matthew 24:1-2). In spite of Jerusalem's two historic calamities (586 B.C. and 70 A.D.), along with the many prophetic warnings about Jerusalem's end-time desolation throughout the Biblical Scriptures, few Bible students believe the warnings; only a minority link the derogatory names in the book of Revelation to Jerusalem. "Egypt" and "Sodom" are offensive titles assigned to the great city, where also our "LORD was crucified" (Revelation 11:7-9); and, where the two witnesses, Moses and Elijah, will also be martyred and left to rot in her streets. No matter what prophetic view you hold, we likely agree that at some point the old city must be destroyed in a fiery blaze before the New Jerusalem takes its place; there is no evidence for both, standing side by side, on the New Earth. Mystery Babylon will sadly meet her final doom—sooner than most imagine.

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A Brief History of Jerusalem

Source: Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 2007



King David made Jerusalem the capital of his kingdom and the religious center of the Jewish people in 1003 BCE. Some forty years later, his son Solomon built the Temple (the religious and national center of the people of Israel) and transformed the city into the prosperous capital of an empire extending from the Euphrates to Egypt. Exiled by Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BCE, who conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple, the Jews were allowed to return and rebuild the city and the Temple some 50 years later by the Persian King Cyrus.

Alexander the Great conquered Jerusalem in 332 BCE. The later desecration of the Temple and attempts to suppress Jewish religious identity under the Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV resulted in a revolt led by Judah Maccabee, who rededicated the Temple (164 BCE) and re-established Jewish independence under the Hasmonean dynasty. A century later, Pompey imposed Roman rule on Jerusalem. King Herod, installed as ruler of Judah by the Romans (37 - 4 BCE), established cultural institutions in Jerusalem, erected magnificent public buildings and refashioned the Temple into an edifice of splendor.

Jewish revolt against Rome broke out in 66 CE, as Roman rule after Herod's death became increasingly oppressive. In 70 CE, Roman legions under Titus conquered the city and destroyed the Temple. Jewish independence was briefly restored during the Bar Kochba revolt (132-135), but again the Romans prevailed. Jews were forbidden to enter the city, renamed Aelia Capitolina. After Byzantine conquest of the city (313), Jerusalem was transformed into a Christian center under Emperor Constantine, with the Church of the Holy Sepulcher the first of many grandiose structures built in the city. Muslim armies invaded the country in 634, and four years later Caliph Omar captured Jerusalem. Only during the reign of Abdul Malik, who built the Dome of the Rock (691), did Jerusalem briefly become the seat of a caliph.

The Crusaders conquered Jerusalem in 1099, massacred its Jewish and Muslim inhabitants, and established the city as the capital of the Crusader. Synagogues were destroyed, old churches were rebuilt and many mosques were turned into Christian shrines. Crusader rule over Jerusalem ended in 1187, when the city fell to Saladin. In 1247 Jerusalem fell once more to Egypt, now ruled by the Mamluks, until the conquest by the Ottoman Turks in 1517. Suleiman the Magnificent rebuilt the city walls (1537). After his death, the central authorities in Constantinople took little interest in Jerusalem and the city declined.

Jerusalem began to thrive once more in the latter half of the 19th century. Growing numbers of Jews returning to their land, waning Ottoman power and revitalized European interest in the Holy Land led to renewed development of Jerusalem. The British army led by General Allenby conquered Jerusalem in [November] 1917. From 1922 to 1948, Jerusalem was the administrative seat of the British authorities in the Land of Israel (Palestine), which had been entrusted to Great Britain by the League of Nations.

Upon termination of the British Mandate on May 14, 1948, and in accordance with the UN resolution of November 29, 1947, Israel proclaimed its independence, with Jerusalem as its capital. Opposing its establishment, the Arab countries launched an all-out assault on the new state, resulting in the 1948-49 War of Independence. The armistice lines drawn at the end of the war divided Jerusalem into two, with Jordan occupying the Old City and areas to the north and south, and Israel retaining the western and southern parts of the city.

When the Six-Day War broke out in June 1967 Israel contacted Jordan through the UN as well as the American Embassy, and made it clear that if Jordan refrained from attacking Israel, Israel would not attack Jordan. Nevertheless, the Jordanians attacked west Jerusalem and occupied the former High Commissioner's building. Following heavy fighting, the IDF recovered the compound and removed the Jordanian army from east Jerusalem, resulting in the reunification of the city. After the liberation of the city by the IDF, the walls dividing the city were torn down. Three weeks later, the Knesset enacted legislation unifying the city and extending Israeli sovereignty over the eastern part of the city.

The reunification of the city was also a fundamental moment in the history of religious tolerance, opening the city of Jerusalem to worshippers of all faiths, permitting Jews to return to the Western Wall and other holy sites, and allowing Israeli Muslims and Christians to visit those sacred places in eastern Jerusalem from which they too had been barred since 1948. One year later, in 1968, it was decided that the day marking the liberation and reunification of Jerusalem—28 Iyar according to the Jewish lunar calendar—would be a national holiday in Israel. On Jerusalem Day we celebrate the reunification of the city and the Jewish people's connection with Jerusalem throughout the ages.

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Almighty God has hidden the identity of the prostitute city until closer to the time when the wayward woman will meet her doom. The most descriptive title for this mysterious city in the book of Revelation, which in itself communicates secrecy, is found in Revelation 17:5.

"MYSTERY"
BABYLON THE GREAT
THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES
AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH

Although a mystery, two promises are given in the Word of God for those who are searching Daniel and Revelation for insight into this and other prophetic secrets: "None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand," Daniel 12:10; and, "Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near," Revelation 1:3. The wise, willing to take God at His word, will perceive the identity of secret Babylon, and her last-day apostasy. And, it is with sorrow that we must speak the truth on this matter. We are committed in this lesson series to find the truths in God's Word, even painful truths.

Babylon is not the city of Rome, as many surmise, although Catholicism's deceptions will accelerate in the last days; the focus of the Hebrew Scriptures is JERUSALEM. In fact, so great is Jerusalem's failure during the final days of human history that the whole chapter of the Revelation 18 Apocalypse is devoted to describing her fiery ruin. As noted, twice when God's people rejected the Holy One of Israel in the past, the Temple was burnt to the ground and the city ravaged. The false prophets boldly declared that Yahweh loved His people and city too much to allow her destruction. "'Peace, peace,' they say, when there is no peace," Jeremiah 6:14. As the chosen people through Abraham, the Israelites could not comprehend that God would judge His city, allowing the killing of His people, and destruction of the beautiful Sanctuary through the swords and fiery blaze of foreigners. Likewise, our modern generation will not believe that Jerusalem will fall in ruins, even though there are vibrant warnings. Today, Jerusalem sits on the brink of devastation that will change the landscape of the beloved city and the course of human history. At any moment, Jerusalem will suffer an epic earthquake resulting in loss of lives and massive ruins. The Temple Mount and structures will collapse in shambles, and daily worship at the Western Wall and Temple Mount will be taken away; then, the 1,290 counting days will begin. During the last half of *The Kingdom Calendar* counting periods the city will be partially rebuilt, but as the 1,290 days come to an end Israel's leadership will allow the False Shepherd onto the Temple Mount to set up his abomination. This will usher in the final and fiery desolation of Jerusalem.

1. John's attention turns to the Messenger who will descend down from Heaven with great authority. What is said of His power and glorious brilliance (18:1)? _____

The whole planet will be lit with His splendid radiance. The Sun of Righteousness will rise from the east with healing in His wings (Malachi 4:1-2). "The LORD God is a sun and shield," Psalm 84:11. Psalm 80:3-7 expresses Israel's cry for deliverance at the shining of Messiah's face: "Awaken Your might; come and save us. Restore us, O God; make Your face shine upon us, that we may be saved. O LORD God Almighty, how long will Your anger smolder against the prayers of Your people? You have fed them with the bread of tears; You have made them drink tears by the bowlful. You have made us a source of contention to our neighbors, and our enemies mock us. Restore us, O God Almighty; make Your face shine upon us, that we may be saved."

Psalm 94:1-2 continues the theme of Yeshua's glory on the Day of the LORD: "O LORD, the God who avenges, O God who avenges, shine forth. Rise up, O Judge of the earth; pay back to the proud what they

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deserve." Supernatural phenomena on earth and in the sky will accompany His arrival. With His brilliant glory too bright to peer into, He will illuminate Planet Earth that sits in darkness and despondency. Along with judgment of the wicked, His return is always associated with the light of salvation for His people (Luke 1:78, John 1:4, 9, John 12:46, 2 Peter 1:19, Revelation 2:28).

2. His voice is "mighty" and He "shouted" a taunting, exultant dirge over Babylon as though she had already fallen. How does this description compare to the Angel who John saw earlier "coming down to earth" in Revelation 10:1-3? _____

This Messenger we identified through the evidence of Scripture to be Michael in Revelation 10 (Lesson 17). At the time of Great Tribulation, the Messenger of the Covenant will stand for the protection of His people (Daniel 12:1-2), and will descend in wind and storm to visit the Abominator in the Sanctuary (Malachi 3:1-2), for judgment always begins with God's household (1 Peter 4:17). He will cry with deafening thunder around the globe, and breaking the darkness His glory will fill the eastern skies (Ezekiel 43:2-4, 7), although His countenance will not be seen; then, the Great Tribulation will commence.

Jeremiah adds these chilling words: "See, I am beginning to bring disaster on the city [Jerusalem] that bears My Name, and will you indeed go unpunished? You will not go unpunished, for I am calling down a sword upon all who live on the earth, declares the LORD Almighty. Now prophesy all these words against them and say to them: "The LORD will roar from on high; He will thunder from His holy dwelling and roar mightily against His land. He will shout like those who tread the grapes, shout against all who live on the earth. The tumult will resound to the ends of the earth, for the LORD will bring charges against the nations; He will bring judgment on all mankind and put the wicked to the sword," declares the LORD. This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Look! Disaster is spreading from nation to nation; a mighty storm is rising from the ends of the earth," Jeremiah 25:29-32.

3. What is the result of the Archangel's voice (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)? _____

While most commentators disassociate the Archangel's loud resurrection shout from the voice of Messiah, John 5:25 identifies the voice that gives life to dead bodies and scattered ashes: "a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live." The righteous dead in Christ will be raised first to be taken to Heaven during the short but Great Tribulation, before they return with Yeshua at the Great Day of the LORD (Day 1,335). On earth the 144,000, who are still alive and are left behind for the short duration that remains, must run for safety.

4. Babylon is about to fall. What messages does Heaven's Messenger shout to the righteous elect "who are still alive and are left" to flee from Mystery Babylon—Jerusalem (v. 2)? _____

Babylon the great is fallen in sin, which is an amplification of the angelic warning of Revelation 14:8— "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Israel's decision to allow Antichrist into the city and onto the Temple Mount in an intimate religious relationship to set up the abomination is spiritual fornication, and this choice brings disaster first to Jerusalem, then Israel, followed by the whole world of nations. Every sinner must drink from Jerusalem's cup of wrath.

5. The Hebrew prophets described a similar destruction in history, and again at the Day of Vengeance and Eternal Jubilee (Isaiah 13:19-22; 34:8-15). How? _____

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When the Wicked One is allowed to enter Jerusalem and onto the Temple Mount, he brings with him the demonic train of evil spirits. Once the blessed Holy City of God's Divine Presence, Jerusalem will become the habitation of devils. Her destruction will be sealed, and all that will remain is ruin and prickly thorns when the wrath of God is complete. No human will live there, or anywhere else on Planet Earth, after the plagues and Armageddon. Desolation will replace the once bustling cities. Jesus warned the unrepentant generation of His day, "When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation," Matthew 12:43-46.

In the meantime, Revelation 18:3 tells us the nations will become intoxicated by Jerusalem's relationship with Rome's pagan Christianity during the counting periods. The International City of Peace will be rich with financial resources and international aid, and through her conformity to Antichrist's plan the financial markets evidently rebound to some degree under global governance and domestic strategies.

6. What three groups are specifically identified as getting caught up in the united nation's agreement to follow the religious edicts of the Lawless One? _____

The three include all nations (worldwide population at large), the kings of the earth (politicians and statesmen around the globe) and merchants (businesspeople involved in employment and industry). The bottom line is "nearly everybody" on Planet Earth, while few in comparison will speak out against the popular views of those days.

7. Reading Revelation 18:4-6, what warning will be given to the elect through the Son of God? _____

The message will be given—Jerusalem must be deserted by all human inhabitants; the armies from the East are coming. Heaven exhorts all who will listen to leave the city in haste, unless they too share in her sins and fiery affliction (Jeremiah 51:45; 50:8; Isaiah 48:20; Mark 13:14-20). Those who are alive and remain must leave Babylon in haste, so that they will not be caught in her demise, when she receives double punishment (Isaiah 40:2).

8. Review the nine passages below. How do they compare to the historical warnings to Babylon of old, and Babylon (Jerusalem) of the last days? _____

~ Jeremiah 50:15, 29: "Shout against her on every side! She surrenders, her towers fall, her walls are torn down. Since this is the vengeance of the LORD, take vengeance on her; do to her as she has done to others... Summon archers against Babylon, all those who draw the bow. Encamp all around her; let no one escape. Repay her for her deeds; do to her as she has done. For she has defied the LORD, the Holy One of Israel."

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~ Jeremiah 51:6-9: "Flee from Babylon! Run for your lives! Do not be destroyed because of her sins. It is time for the LORD's vengeance; he will pay her what she deserves. Babylon was a gold cup in the LORD's hand; she made the whole earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore they have now gone mad. Babylon will suddenly fall and be broken. Wail over her! Get balm for her pain; perhaps she can be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she cannot be healed; let us leave her and each go to his own land, for her judgment reaches to the skies, it rises as high as the clouds."

~ Psalm 137:8: "O Daughter of Babylon, doomed to destruction, happy is He who repays you for what you have done to us."

~ Daniel 9:26: "After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the anointed one [Elijah] will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the Ruler [Antichrist] who will come will destroy the city [Jerusalem] and the Sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed."

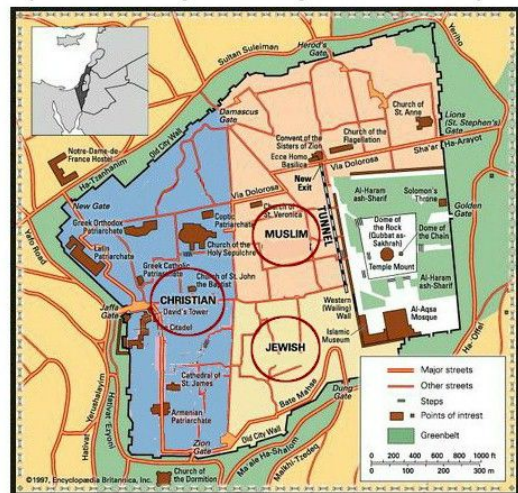
~ Matthew 24:16: "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."

~ Luke 21:20-22: "When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written."

~ 2 Corinthians 6:17: "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the LORD. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."

~ Revelation 16:17-21: "The Seventh Angel poured out His bowl into the air, and out of the Temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, "It is done!" Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the [global earth] quake. The great city [Jerusalem] split into three parts [dividing the three great religions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam], and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of His wrath. Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found. From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible."

The Three Religions of Jerusalem Will Be Permanently Split Apart When The City Is Divided By The Massive Earthquake



~ Revelation 17:4; 14:8: "The woman [Jerusalem] was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls" given her by her political/religious lovers. "She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries... A second angel followed and said, "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries."

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Figuratively speaking, Jerusalem—the pinnacle city will glorify herself; she will live in the luxury of donated wealth, military protection and a rebuilding plan as the days of counting progress, while other cities around the globe will collapse under catastrophes, strife, famine and disease during the appointed times.

9. What will Jerusalem's residents think in their hearts, according to Revelation 18:7? _____

She (her leaders) boasts in her heart with complete confidence of God's divine protection in spite of her turpitudes: "I sit as queen" exalted among the nations, "I am not a widow" my Husband still protects, "and I will never mourn" since I will live forever. Isaiah 47:7-9 adds, "You said, 'I will continue forever—the eternal queen!' But you did not consider these things or reflect on what might happen. Now then, listen, you wanton creature, lounging in your security and saying to yourself, 'I am, and there is none besides me. I will never be a widow or suffer the loss of children.' Both of these will overtake you in a moment, on a single day: loss of children and widowhood. They will come upon you in full measure, in spite of your many sorceries and all your potent spells."

10. How does the prophet Zephaniah describe Jerusalem's sins (2:15-3:4)? _____

11. What warning does Paul give Gentiles, especially those living at the end of the age, concerning the past sins of Israel (2 Corinthians 10:1-7, 11-12)? _____

Paul states that although the Israelites personally experienced the miracles of God, delivering them from Egypt—including the parting sea, and manna and water in the desert—this did not seal their safety. God was not pleased with their evil habits and idol worship, so the destroying angel visited them.



This is an example for those who pretend to follow God. Paul adds that these historical events "were written down as warnings to us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" The temptation to disregard God's Commandments in adoration of the Papal leader and his idolatry will be overwhelming. The masses will give into the fear of survival, trading the eternal for momentary food and shelter.

12. Isaiah stated that Babylon's destruction would come "on a single day." Compare this to Revelation 18:8. What type of judgment will God pass upon her? _____

God's judgment will not be prolonged. Her plagues will come in one day, including death, mourning, famine, and a blistering and consuming fire (Isaiah 10:16-18; Ezekiel 12:25; 13:10-16).

13. What purpose is Jerusalem destroyed in the context of the Eternal Jubilee and the declaration of rest (Jeremiah 50:34)? _____

The Land of Israel will have a long-deserved rest from sin and sinners. The Redeemer will recover His land and bring down the sinful city, along with all sinners around the globe. The ransom was paid in full with His own blood two thousand years ago. Yeshua will cry with loud voice and proclaim liberty; then the land

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will be brought to rest. Evil men will not listen to the prophets' warnings, but now they hear Messiah's doom.

Consider the first of three woes in this chapter described in Revelation 18:9-10. Jerusalem's downfall will come not only in one day, but in one hour. The whole world will mourn in sorrow; but particularly, the political leaders will cry out for their loss. The International City of Peace will have been their great hope for global unity. The nations invested their hope in the great city's acceptance of the Vatican ruler to give the world freedom from strife, but he will not save Jerusalem; rather, his actions will destroy her. So breathtaking will be her demise, that the nations will be "terrified at her torment, and they will stand far off" in abject fear, because of the obliteration of the city and mass destruction in Israel when God withdraws His hand of protection (Jeremiah 22:8-9; Jeremiah 50:46; Daniel 9:26; Luke 21:20).

14. How does Luke describe not only the upheaval and horror that will overtake Israel at the climax of time, but the whole world (21:25-26)? What does the prophet Zephaniah predict (1:2-9)? _____

Politicians & Financiers Mourn The Worldwide Economic Collapse

The statesmen mourn, and the global financiers join in the sorrow of Jerusalem's demise and the final collapse of the world's economies (Revelation 18:11-17) at the second woe. They cry like babies over the great city, which had been rebuilt and dressed with the beautiful Temple edifice, adorned with priceless golden vessels and the best investment of building stones money could buy, with fine linen and blue, purple and scarlet curtains. "In one hour such great wealth has been brought to ruin!" Like the quick fall of the stock market in a single day, so will the global marketplace be brought to a halt to cry and lament this terrible event; all this on the heels of their celebration just days earlier over the death of God's last two prophets (Revelation 11:10).

15. How does James describe the foolishness of greed, money and power at this future moment in time (5:1-6)? _____

16. What is James' counsel to the last-day victors (5:7-8)? _____

The Merchants Mourn While The Martyrs Rejoice

The final woe evokes sorrow over Jerusalem's demise, because of Jew's global influence over importing and exporting goods. The ancient sea captains, representing today's modern merchants, will join the capitalists and political leaders in weeping over the loss of Jerusalem (18:17-19). However, the righteous martyrs in Heaven rejoice over *God's sovereign judgment* of the great city for the recorded killing of His prophets and saints during her long history, and at the end of the two prophet's 1,260-day ministry. These faithful now celebrate God's judgment of Jerusalem for killing of God's "apostles"—those individuals whom Jesus personally called and sent out to enlarge the early groups of believers; and finally, for the cruelty dealt to the prophets whom God sent to Israel and the city over the course of human history, including Yeshua.

The shout is heard, "Rejoice over her, O Heaven! Rejoice, *saints* and *apostles* and *prophets*! God has judged her for the way she treated you," Revelation 18:20. Jubilation over the fall of Babylon will reach Heaven itself (Jeremiah 51:48; Isaiah 44:23). The great multitude of martyrs from all nationalities,

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whether common or renowned, will have triumphed over the Man of Lawlessness, his mark and image. To "rejoice" in the original language means to "keep festival," and no doubt Jerusalem's destruction will occur during the High Holy Days at the fall Festival season, as orchestrated by God.

Just before her demise, the innumerable multitude of all nations will be resurrected to life, escaping the Great Tribulation by being transported to stand before God's throne (Revelation 7:9, 14; 15:1-2); and, there to reign with Him (20:4). This large group of sacrificial victims, who will sacrifice their lives during the final trial (Daniel 7:9, 8:24; 11:33; Matthew 24:9; 2 Timothy 2:11-12), petition God as Abel's blood cried out from the ground (Genesis 4:10) with the probing question, "how long, Sovereign LORD... until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" Revelation 6:10-11. They were told just a little longer until the full count of the martyred victors is complete. Once raised and taken home, the throne room will be filled with this great multitude of overcomers; then, the angels will depart with the trumpet and vial judgments.

17. Yeshua warned Jerusalem, and the generation living in His day, about mistreating His servants (Matthew 23:34-39). How does His warning of punishment for future generations accumulate for the deaths of the righteous throughout the ages, especially if they too join in the killing of God's prophets and righteous ones? _____

Examples of Israel's apostasy to idolatry and killing of the prophets have been written in God's Word, as an example for those living in the last days. If such counsel is ignored (and sadly, it will be), the final generation is all the more responsible for the final wrath of God upon the beloved city for their disobedience and murders. Those who inhabit the city (Jew and Gentile alike) will not evade the anger of a jealous God during the Great Tribulation.

The Mighty Angel's Cry Against The Traitorous Wife

Angels play a significant role throughout the book of Revelation. Revelation 18:21-23 depicts the Mighty Angel whose responsibility it is to assure Jerusalem's desolation. He picks up a large boulder the size of a millstone and in divine anger pitches it into the sea as symbolic recognition that Babylon's fate is sealed. She will sink out of sight, lost in the depths (Jeremiah 51:62-64). The Messenger declares, "With such violence the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, never to be found again." Jesus earlier warned, "and if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck," Mark 9:42.



There is no choice; either the residents will flee from the city for their lives for the short but very destructive Great Tribulation or stay with stubborn pride and die in Jerusalem. With heart-felt sorrow we learn that talented musicians will never play instruments in her again. No workman of any trade will drive into her to deliver goods or open their doors for business. The churning echo of automobiles and machinery will never be heard again. Homes and businesses filled with lights of hope, denoting life and activity, will be extinguished forever. Not one lamp or candle will be lit again. Bar mitzvahs, bat mitzvahs and weddings will never be performed within her gates; never again a joyous celebration of laughter and glee. All that will remain is desolation and dead silence.

We must stand firm on God's prophetic warnings all the way to the end; otherwise, we may be taken in by her spell. The prophecies indicate that our neighbors, friends and relatives will likely forsake God's Law to

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earn food and shelter. The voices of many will tug at us to join them in their sin of idolatry, fornication and murder. If we do not enlist with them, betrayal may rise up in our own homes, churches, synagogues and neighborhoods (Matthew 24:10), and those closest to us may regretfully seek our demise. This is the treacherous reality of the last days.

18. Due to the magnitude of Jerusalem's sins, she will have to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, as did Sodom and Gomorrah long ago (Jude 7). How did Jeremiah predict a similar fate of desolation for Israel, because she would not listen to God's warnings in the past (7:33-34; 25:10)? _____

Revelation 18:24 offers this heart-wrenching commentary: In Jerusalem "is found the blood of prophets and of the saints, and of all who have been killed on the earth." This is the reason Jerusalem, as we know it today, could not be the seat of the majestic throne of God. Too much blood has been shed in the land—the blood of Yeshua, and the death of the God's saints and prophets at the hands of evil men and demons. This is confirmed in Jeremiah 19:3-4, 7-8; Lamentations 1:1, 8; and, Matthew 23:29-38. In Matthew's account, Jesus' spoke in disgust and condemnation of Jerusalem's religious leaders of His day for their denunciation of His prophets, and His own rejection and death on the cross He knew was forthcoming. This criticism far exceeds anything written in this lesson:

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. And you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Go ahead, then, and complete what your ancestors started! 'You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? Therefore, I am sending you prophets and sages and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Truly I tell you, all this will come on this generation. 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate.

If the religious and political leaders of modern Jerusalem would reject Antichrist, the Man of Sin, and keep him from the Temple Mount, and if they would sigh and cry for all the abominations of the wicked, the city might be spared. However, prophecy already proclaims her downfall; few citizens, politicians or religious leaders will believe the warnings of God's Word, because their minds will be set only on following the mysterious Leader of the nations, whom they believe God has sent to save mankind.

Lamentations 4:12-14 sums up the matter eloquently: "The kings of the earth did not believe, nor did any of the world's people, that enemies and foes could enter the gates of Jerusalem. But it happened because of the sins of her [false] prophets and the iniquities of her [beguiling] priests, who shed within her the blood of the righteous. Now they grope through the streets like men who are blind. They are so defiled with blood that no one dares to touch their garments." Israel's/Jerusalem's pattern of disobedience is well documented. Down through the centuries she has rejected the Laws of God and have been involved in acts of adultery and prostitution (Jeremiah 3:20; Hosea 2:13; 3:1). Prophets have not been able to stop her through either punishment or counsel; she persists on in detestable acts, climbing into bed with the political leaders instead of staying true to her Husband.

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It is said, “Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights in Israel is the most advanced in the Middle East and one of the most advanced in Asia. Same-sex sexual activity was legalized in 1988, although the former law against buggery had not been enforced since a court decision of 1963. Israel became the first in Asia to recognize unregistered cohabitation between same-sex couples, making it the only country in Asia to recognize any same-sex union thus far. Gays and lesbians are also allowed to serve openly in the military. Recent polls have indicated that most Israelis support same-sex marriage, despite some social conservatism. Tel Aviv has frequently been referred to by publishers as one of the gayest friendly cities in the world, famous for its annual Pride Parade and gay beach, earning it the nickname “the gay capital of the Middle East” by *Out* magazine,” Wikipedia (2016).

The unfaithful wife brings upon herself the sentence of death. Through the ages Jerusalem has murdered God’s prophets; then, adding insult she rejected her Husband-Messiah two thousand years ago and delighted in His death. However, because of His patience one last time God will send His two prophets—Moses and Elijah—to inform and warn her. Still the people won’t listen. Instead, most in Israel will join the world in celebration of the murder of God’s last two anointed ones, giving their full attention to the Pope. By their actions, Jerusalem’s doom will be sealed. Elohim will have no choice but to let her go; for, although He loved her deeply, she cannot live on while others suffer the flames of judgment that will fall upon every other city across the globe. Just as Jesus warned long ago, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate,” Matthew 23:37-38. In the last days, the two witnesses will issue this warning once again.

The doctrine of divine retribution was recorded by the ancient Bible writers, particularly in the Psalms, and John developed this theme in the book of Revelation into an apocalyptic triumph of the righteous over their enemies and persecutors. Once Jerusalem—the Mother of Prostitutes & Abominations is stoned at the hands of her political lovers, illustrated by the three woes of Revelation 18, Messiah will be released from His marital-covenant obligation to His rebellious wife. She will die a permanent death, never to be rebuilt; then, the door will be opened for the celestial wedding between the Bridegroom and the New Jerusalem—the beautiful Golden City, which will take the place of the wayward wife. Once earth’s Jerusalem is destroyed, the marriage festivities will begin in Heaven (Revelation 19:7-8; 21:2). The New Bride will be adorned when the overcomers enter her gates at the Sukkot celebration (Pt. 20) during the Great Tribulation. This joyous event will be covered in our next lesson.

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