

The figurative war between Jerusalem and Babylon

**But when you see Jerusalem surrounded
by armies, then recognize that her
desolation is near. Then those who are in
Judea must flee
to the mountains, and those who are in**

**the midst of the city must leave, and
those who are in the country must not
enter the city;**

Lk 21:20-21

Historical Jerusalem versus Babylon•

As the Babylonian empire rose, defeating Egypt, King Jehoiakim of the southern kingdom of Judah began paying tribute to Babylon in ~605 BC.

- When he tried to stop, King

Nebuchadnezzar attacked and conquered Jerusalem in 597 BC, plundering its riches and enslaving its people (2 Kgs 24:10-14).

- The destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon was prophesied by Jeremiah to last 70 years (Jer 25:9-11).

“Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,” declares the Lord, “and I will send to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them and make them a horror and a hissing, and an everlasting

desolation. Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years."

Jer 25:9-11

Figurative Jerusalem versus Babylon

- The prophecies of the Bible often use the names of cities or kingdoms figuratively to refer to the conflict

between God and His people and Satan and his people.

- **Symbols for God's people:**
Israel, Jerusalem, Judah, Zion, etc.
- **Symbols for God's enemies:**
Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Sodom, Tyre, Sidon, other gentile nations

You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will

**rise against nation, and kingdom
against kingdom, and in various places
there will be famines and earthquakes.**

**But all these things are merely the
beginning of birth pangs.**

Mt 24:6-8

Spiritual war and weapons

- In physical warfare, soldiers fight one another for territory using physical weapons. In spiritual war,

spirits who belong to God fight within flesh that belongs to God against spirits who belong to Satan within flesh that belongs to Satan (2 Cor 10:3-6).

- They fight over ownership of our hearts using spiritual weapons—words or doctrines (Eph 6:10-17). •
The most common weapons in the Bible—the rod or staff, the bow, and the sword—all represent words of judgment (Is 11:4, Ps 64:2-4, Mt 10:34, Heb 4:12).

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We

are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.

2 Cor 10:3-6

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual

forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Eph 6:10-17

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any

two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Heb 4:12

Prophecies about war at the 1st coming

- *Then the Lord said to me, "Out of the north the evil*

will break forth on all the inhabitants of the land. For, behold, I am calling all the families of the kingdoms of the north,” declares the Lord; “and they will come and they will set each one his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all its walls round about and against all the cities of Judah. I will pronounce My judgments on them concerning all their wickedness, whereby they have forsaken Me and have offered sacrifices to other gods, and worshiped the works of their own hands. (Jer 1:14-16)

Prophecies about the war at the 1st coming

- *Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts; your eyes will see Jerusalem, an undisturbed habitation, a tent which will not be folded; its stakes will never be pulled up, nor any of its cords be torn apart. (Is 33:20)*
- In some prophecies, Jerusalem is destroyed by enemies. Other prophecies say Jerusalem will never be destroyed. Which one is it?
- Jerusalem is a symbol for God's people and when one kingdom of God is destroyed, God creates a new one. This means the prophecies are not always talking about the same "Jerusalem."

War and weapons at the 1st coming

Jer 1:13-16

God

Babylon Pharisees

Satan



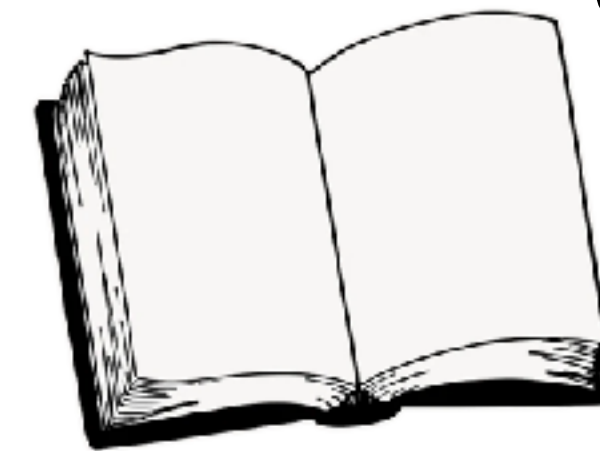
Apostasy

False

Battle 2 **Battle 1**

Mt 10:34

teachings



Jesus Open Book

Mt 3:7

Mt 11:11-12

Mt 17:12 **Mt 23:33**

Jerusalem



John the Baptist

Jn 16:33 Escape/Flee

Prophecies about war at the 2nd coming

- Jesus said war was coming and that not one stone would be left on another in Jerusalem at the time of the end (Mt 24:1-2, 4-7). He said Jerusalem would be surrounded by armies and desolated, but that we should flee to the mountains (Lk 21:20-21).
- Rv 12 also portrays a great war in heaven with God's forces fighting against and defeating the devil's forces (Rv 12:7-11).
- So, which is it? Is it Satan or God who wins?

War and weapons at the 2nd coming

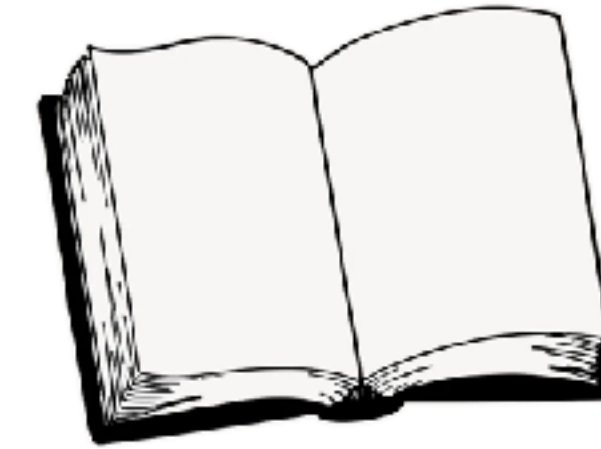
Babylon



Harlot + Beast **Satan**

Apostasy
teachings
Rv 13:5-7

False
Jesus



Male child who Open Book
overcomes

Battles

2, 3 Battle 1

Mt 24:22
70 y → 42 m

Jerusalem



7 stars/churches

Rv 12:7-11 Rv 18:2-4

Escape/Flee

Suffer hardship with me, as a

good soldier of Christ Jesus.

**No soldier in active service
entangles himself in the affairs
of everyday life, so that he
may please the one who
enlisted him as a soldier. 2 Tm**

2:3-4

**Although He was a Son, He
learned obedience from the
things which He suffered. And
having been made perfect, He
became to all those who obey
Him the source of eternal
salvation. Heb 5:8-9**

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

Jos 1:8-9

Summary and conclusion

- The prophecies of the Bible use physical warfare with bows and swords as a symbol for spiritual warfare using words as weapons.
- They also use the names of ancient places and kingdoms as symbols. Thus, the war between Jerusalem/Zion and Babylon refers to a war between God's people and Satan's people.
- But because Satan is a deceiver who pretends to be God, the prophesied forces of Satan typically think they are fighting for God rather than against Him.
- We can only discern truth from lies using the Bible's prophecies and their fulfillment.

Let's pray   