

Isaiah is not speaking of the literal Babylon but is using the term figuratively for the series of great powers which oppose the will of God. Babylon is only one member of this series, which reaches its climax in the powerful forces that will vigorously oppose God at the end of the age.

Thus the term "Babylon" here includes Babylon itself, but also includes far more. The actual Babylon is merely one example of what is meant here.

We shall run through the two chapters again, taking as our starting point the idea that the subject of the two chapters is not one particular kingdom, but that it includes the whole series of great powers that oppose God's will and God's plan.

The title (v. 1) is followed by four verses which vividly describe the assembling of great hosts, summoned to battle by the Lord Himself, "to destroy the whole land" (v. 5). This description goes far beyond anything that occurred in connection with the downfall of the literal Babylon. The passage summarizes the direction of God's forces all through the ages, but will find its true culmination in the great events at the end of this present age.

Isaiah 13:6-18: A Vivid Description of Upheaval and Turmoil

In this passage there is little that can be properly applied to the conquest of Babylon in the sixth century B. C., except for the fact that the Medes, who are mentioned by name in verse 17, were part of the force which conquered Babylon. The terminology of these verses goes far beyond anything that could properly be applied to the time when the city of Babylon was conquered by Cyrus the Persian and incorporated into his empire. This is a picture of great cosmic events when God's forces will completely destroy all opposition. Verses 10 and 13 suggest great upheavals in the universe itself. It is possible that some of these terms are used figuratively, but even then they would hardly fit the history of Belshazzar's defeat. The term, "the day of the Lord", is used twice, in verses 6 and 9, in describing a time when the land is to be made utterly desolate, and this does not fit with what happened after the Persian victory. After