

Isa. 13 - Understanding how to read Apocalyptic Language.

Apocalyptic literature is the use of dramatic and symbolic language usually expressing the idea that God is coming in judgment, particularly on a nation which must be determined by the specific passage that uses it. The most important thing to remember is that it is not meant to be taken literally!

Important Dates.

1. 612BC - The fall of Assyria (Nineveh is the capitol).
 - a. It was destroyed by Babylon.
 - b. The minor prophet Nahum spoke of its destruction. While it cannot be determined precisely, the evidence within the book tells us that Nahum wrote between 663-615BC. He didn't record it after it happened by predicted (or prophesied that it would happen!
2. 538BC – The fall of Babylon to the Medes and Persians.
 - a. Isaiah calls the king of Persia by name (Cyrus) at least 150 years before he was born!
 - b. You can see his name in Isa. 44:28 and again in 45:1.
 - c. Keep in mind, Isaiah prophesied between 740BC-680BC!

Passages that Speak of the Fall of Babylon, But with Different Types of Literature.

1. Jeremiah 25:1-12 – Literal Prophecy spoken in the year 605BC nearly 75 years before the fall of Babylon.
 - a. Jeremiah is prophesying of Babylon's fall but uses straight forward, literal language.
2. Daniel 5 – Daniel 5 records the literal history of the day Babylon fell to the Persian's and Medes in 538BC.
3. Isaiah 13 – Isaiah prophecies of the same fall of Babylon around the year 700BC. However, he employs apocalyptic language to describe it (Isa. 13:9-10).
4. Matthew 24 - Once we see how Isaiah, who was writing by the Holy Spirit, employs apocalyptic language to describe the fall of Babylon, we are now in a position to see how Jesus uses the same apocalyptic language to describe the fall of Jerusalem.
 - a. In Matthew 24:1-34 everything spoken is discussing the fall of Jerusalem, not the end of the world!!

Two Reasons We Can Know Jesus is Not Discussing the End of the World in Matthew 24:1-34?

1. Notice how many passages do not make sense if He were talking about the world ending (Mt. 24:15-20).
2. Notice the weight of Matthew 24:34 – EVERYTHING HE HAS JUST SPOKEN WOULD BE FULFILLED WITHIN THE GENERATION HE SPOKE TO. Spoken in 33AD – Fulfilled in 70AD (within that generation).