

## A Tale of Two Cities

“It was the best of times,  
it was the worst of times,  
it was the age of wisdom,  
it was the age of foolishness,  
it was the epoch of belief,  
it was the epoch of incredulity,  
it was the season of Light,  
it was the season of Darkness,  
it was the spring of hope,  
it was the winter of despair,

we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only” (*A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens).

In 1859, Charles Dickens wrote this about London and France before the French Revolution beginning in 1789. Two cities whose circumstances he claimed were so similar though separated by 70 years and a revolution that the reader might find it surprising. In fact, as I read Dickens’s summary, I can’t help but think those periods were very much like ours.

And that is exactly where we find ourselves at the end of Revelation. We see two cities: Babylon the Great (Revelation 17) and New Jerusalem (Revelation 21-22). Today, we debate did Babylon represent Jerusalem or Rome? That is a great academic discussion; however, if we want to see what Revelation has to offer us, we need to recognize the period described by these two cities is “so far like the present period.”

Of course, Revelation was written to an audience going through its own tribulation. That audience needed to know what would shortly take place, not some far distant future plan. Revelation is not a prophecy of our times. However, our time is becoming so much like theirs we increasingly need the same message.

I’m thankful that our modern Babylon has yet to start drinking the blood of the saints. However, can any of us deny America is increasingly anti-Christ? We are told we live in a post-Christian era. Not a day goes by on social media that some outcry against Christ and His church is made. Good is called evil, and evil good. The harlot grows in power and the kingdoms of the earth support her and grow wealthy because of her. She rides on the head of a powerful beast that seems unstoppable. And Christians are running scared.

But we need not be terrified by Babylon. What ancient enemy against Christ’s kingdom still stands? Egypt, though enslaving Israel eventually fell before her. Assyria and Babylon, though conquering for a time, were vanquished. Jerusalem was destroyed. Rome fell. Why would any modern Babylon fare better?

You may not be able to see it now. But be assured, in time we will hear, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!” And the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven will be as beautiful a bride as she has ever been, victorious, forever reigning, shining in the sun of God her light and the Lamb her lamp.

It is a tale of two cities, and it will be repeated until the end of time. I know which city will always ultimately come out on top. Which city will you be part of?