

far greater than even the overthrow of the Babylonian empire.

5. Sudden destruction

Chapter 13 quite definitely gives the impression that the overthrow of the defenders of Babylon results in the destruction of the city, and that it is consequently reduced to a condition of utter desolation. While it is not explicitly stated that the city is destroyed as a result of a great conquest, this is by far the most natural interpretation of the prediction. We read in verses 6-18 a vivid description of upheaval and turmoil, and then in verse 19ff. we have a picture of utter desolation, at a time when the city of Babylon will have become a wild and desolate spot inhabited only by doleful creatures and dragons. Historically this does not fit the conquest of Babylon by the Persians. When Cyrus, the Persian emperor, came into Babylon he represented himself as the deliverer of its people from tyranny. Daniel 6 describes Daniel as living in Babylon under the kingship of Darius the Mede after Cyrus had conquered the land and established Darius as his representative there. Thus Daniel pictures Babylon as continuing to be a great city. It contains no hint that any far-reaching destruction immediately followed the conquest of the city by the Medes. Actually, Babylon continued to be a great and important city for many centuries after the Persian conquest. It was only gradually that the city declined. Centuries later, as a result of the shifting of the course of the river and the moving of commerce to cities which were built later, the greater part of the city came to be simply a waste.

6. Predicted supremacy of Israel.

The greater part of these two chapters is devoted to describing God's victory over His enemies, but the three verses in the middle of the section (14:1-3) describe God's blessing upon Israel. Verses 1-2 read as follows: "For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.