

Supplemental Study

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REVELATION

OUR FINAL VICTORY

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The Collapse of Babylon

Revelation 18:1-24 (NKJV) – Bible passage [my explanatory notes]

1) The **Pride** of Babylon (**Rev. 18:1-5**)

¹ After these things [This verse transitions from religious Babylon of Ch. 17 to political and economic Babylon of Ch. 18.] I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. [This shows the majestic glory of God's holiness and His righteous judgment upon Babylon.]

² And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, [the repetition of "fallen" highlights the certainty of Babylon's judgment.] and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! [This reflects the desolation and spiritual corruption of this city.]

³ For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury." [Babylon's influence is global, corrupting nations, kings, and merchants through materialism and spiritual unfaithfulness. The "fornication" represents idolatry and greed.]

⁴ And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. [This verse reflects God's mercy, because God Himself warns His people to leave Babylon and avoid its judgment. This is like when God warned Lot and his family to leave before Sodom's destruction.]

⁵ For her sins have reached to heaven [Babylon's sins are monumental, spiritually reaching heaven.], and God has remembered her iniquities.

2) The **Punishment** of Babylon (**Rev. 18:6-8**)

⁶ Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. [Babylon's extravagant sin warrants double punishment. This reflects God's justice and the severity of the city's rebellion.]

⁷ In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.' [Babylon's pride and false sense of security is shattered by God's judgment.]

⁸ Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her. ["in one day" does not necessarily mean a literal 24-hour period but emphasizes the rapidity of her fall. Death, mourning, famine, and fire reflect the completeness of her devastation.]

3) The **Pain** of Babylon (**Rev. 18:9-19**)

A) The **Kings** Weep

⁹ "The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, [The kings' mourning is selfish, focused on the loss of wealth and luxury rather than repentance. The smoke symbolizes the permanence of Babylon's destruction.]

¹⁰ standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.' [The kings mourn from a distance, fearful of sharing in Babylon's fate. The "one hour" shows that God's judgment is swift and decisive.]

B) The Merchants Weep

¹¹ "And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore:
¹² merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble;
¹³ and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men. [The merchandise listed represents the excesses of Babylon's materialism, greed and moral corruption. The mention of "bodies and souls of men" points to slavery and the exploitation of human life, which were part of Babylon's corrupt system.]
¹⁴ The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all.
¹⁵ The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,
¹⁶ and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! [The merchants mourn because Babylon's destruction ends their trade and wealth. Their sorrow is purely selfish. They are not repenting for their sins.]

C) The Sailors Weep

¹⁷ For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.' Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance
¹⁸ and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What is like this great city?'
¹⁹ "They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.' [The sailors' mourning reflects the worldwide impact of Babylon's destruction. Their grief is selfish, focused on the loss of wealth and commerce. They, too, are not repentant.]

4) The Passing of Babylon (Rev. 18:20-24)

²⁰ "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!" [This celebrates the victory of God's justice. Babylon's destruction brings vindication for those oppressed or martyred by her.]
²¹ Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore. [The millstone is a vivid picture of Babylon's utter destruction. Just as a stone thrown into the sea vanishes, Babylon's influence is permanently gone.]
²² The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore. [The lack of music, craftsmen, and industry express the complete desolation of Babylon. All signs of life and productivity are gone.]
²³ The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. [the phrase "anymore" is a double negative in Greek: "No, not" or "No more at all" (KJV & ESV), for emphasis.]
²⁴ And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth." [Babylon's destruction is justified by her persecution of God's people.]

Applications for Today:

- 1) **Believers should remember to live "in the world" but not be "of the world"** (John 17:15-16). God's call to "come out of Babylon" (Revelation 18:4) applies today. We must live in this world, but we don't have to embrace the culture's values. Our home is heaven, and God's Word is our guide. (See 1 John 2:15-17)
- 2) **Beware of the grip of materialism and greed.** Babylon's destruction is a warning against trusting in wealth, power, and material possessions. The pursuit of "stuff" can intoxicate and seduce us, leading to misplaced priorities. Do we prioritize gold over God or money over the Master? (See Matthew 6:19-21)
- 3) **Trust the timing of God's justice.** This destruction was deserved. Heaven rejoices not over the death of sinners, but over the destruction of Satan's system that opposes God. We are also called to trust God's timing and not seek personal vengeance. Romans 12:19, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."