

A SERIES THROUGH THE REVELATION

Revelation 18 —BABYLON, NOT LONDON HAS FALLEN | 10.13.22

I. INTRODUCTION (Revelation 18:1-24)

- A. If we were to visualize Babylon in modern terms, it would look like London, or Paris, Berlin, Chicago, Tokyo, LA, or New York times much more and even then, we'd still come up short. This will be the greatest commercial city/culture that won't only dominate locally, but globally.
- B. Its merchandise will be of gold, silver, precious pearls, garments of purple, silk, scarlet and costly wools. It's a culture filling homes the world over with costly furniture of precious woods, brass, iron, and marble. It's a city with the greatest pastries, the most delicious meats, and the most expensive wines.
- C. It's a city whose markets are packed with cattle, sheep, and horses. A city whose wharves are piled with goods from the four corners of the earth, both coming and going. It's a culture where businessmen and women give their days and nights, scheming how to make more money, to enjoy more pleasure, amid ceaseless feasting.
- D. It's a culture of music, entertainment, and bright lights. A city where night never comes because of the electric illumination of neon screens that drowned out the darkness. But this "utopian" city is actually a prison, a cage for every unclean and hated bird, it's a habitation of devils, the seat of global occultism, it's the den of the beast, and the home of the mother of all harlots.
- E. But, within **Revelation 18**, there's four primary things that John wants his readers to know about the Great Harlot;
 - 1. It's A City Of Global Influence—It's a city that will reign over the kings of nations, and the inhabitants of the earth (**Rev. 17:2, 15; 18:3, 9-20**).
 - 2. It's A City Of Short-lived Glory—Although Babylon's reach is global, although her influence is beyond comprehension, it's only for a moment. Suddenly it will all collapse (**Rev. 18:8, 10, 14, 17, 19, 21**).
 - 3. It's A Counterfeit City—Babylon as a city/culture is a counterfeit earthly city that's being built to draw people away from the heavenly city that Jesus is building. The challenge is one will be visible, while the other one will be invisible.
 - 4. It's A City That Will Be Utterly Destroyed—Babylon, in all her pomp, glory, and splendor, will not only collapse, but it will collapse eternally, never to rise again (**Rev. 18:19, 21, 22, 23**).

II. THE FALL OF BABYLON (Revelation 18:1-8)

- A. Revelation **18:1-3** *"After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird. 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."*
 - 1. Once again, an angel comes down from heaven, beaming with the presence of God (**2nd Cor. 3:7-18**) and makes an authoritative statement about Babylon's fall. The angel's cry is echoing what was already prophesied previously (**Rev. 14:8**) that, *"...Babylon is fallen, is fallen..."*
 - 2. But this is always what's said of Babylon, that she's falling (**Isa. 21:9**). It's falling because it's a house/culture built on sand, on a faulty foundation that's unable to remain standing (**Matt. 7:24-29**).

3. What many will consider utopia, a paradise like state, a culture of tolerance, a highly advanced civilization, a mature people that are far above beggarly thinking, is actually called, “...a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird.”
 4. The fall of Babylon will prove that underneath the gold, purple, scarlet and precious jewels was a fully demonized harlot, and a pawn in the antichrist regime to steal from Jesus His beautiful bride.
 - a. All Nations Have Drunk Of The Wine Of The Wrath Of Her Fornication, The Kings Of The Earth Committed Fornication With Her—The wrath of her fornication is the pent up wrath of God towards the harlot, who’s encouraged the nations to worship the beast.
 1. Babylon is being judged justly because she has filled the earth with her fornication, with her idolatry deceiving many to join the regime. She’s lived in unrestrained debauchery, pulling the nations into it also.
- B. Revelation 18:4** “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.”
1. It’s clear two things are happening here; firstly, God’s family is being called to physically leave this city. But secondly, God’s family is being called to emotionally leave this city/culture. *Distance isn’t just in the body, but also in heart.*
 2. Look many people live in the metropolitan cities of the earth as pilgrims in their hearts. And there’s lots of other people who live in rural areas whose hearts are still caught up in the culture of the big cities.
 3. The Church is God’s answer to a corrupt city. The Church is made up of the family of God, the people of God, a place where God dwells, by way of His people gathering in His name.
 - a. The Church is a reflection, albeit a dim one, in light of the city of God, where will dwell in fullness among us. But it’s still a reflection, a place of integrity, a place of honesty, a place of truth, a place of true community, a place of true transformation.
 - b. This is God’s intention, that He would have a people, disciplined by Christ, living IN Babylon, but not OF Babylon.
- C. Revelation 18:5-7** “For her sins have reached to heave, and God has remembered her iniquities. Render to her just as she has rendered to you and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she mixed, mix double for her. 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 will not see sorrow.”
1. Her Sins Have Reached To Heaven, And God Has Remembered Her Iniquities—Does this remind you anything? The tower of Babel (**Gen. 11:4; Jer. 51:9**)? Babylon, with support from the beast has created a unified, global civilization that’s bent of disobeying God and ruling themselves.
 - a. Historically, when God remembers His people, He acts (**Ps. 105:8-11; 111:5-6; Ezek. 16:60**). But also, when He remembers sins, He also acts (**Ps. 109:14; Jer. 14:10; Hos. 8:13; 9:9**).
 2. In The Cup Which She Has Mixed, Mix Double For Her—Previously, she had a golden cup (**Rev. 17:4**) that she was serving to the nations, but now she is served by God’s cup, the full cup of His wrath (**Rev. 14:6-13; 15:1, 7; 16:1**). It’s not double as in excess, it’s double as in fullness.
 3. I Sit As Queen And Will Not See Sorrow—She’s so arrogant, she doesn’t think she will see death (**Acts 12:20-24**).
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D. **Revelation 18:8** “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 who judges her.”

1. Well here it is, the first of five statements in **Revelation 18** that assure us of Babylon’s soon and sudden fall (**Rev. 18:8, 10, 17, 19, 21**). It’s said, “...in one day...in one hour...in one hour...in one hour...like a great millstone thrown into the sea...”
2. The sudden collapse of Babylon will be a shock to the nations, but for the praying Church, it will come as no surprise. God’s family will have declared this prophecy for centuries, assuring the nations that this seemingly impenetrable, fortress like city/culture will suddenly crash.

III. THE WORLD MOURNS BABYLON’S FALL (Revelation 18:9-20)

A. **Revelation 18:9-11** “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, standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city! For in one hour your judgment has come. And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore...”

1. Well, here we learn that it’s not just Babylon that’s self-centered, and self-indulgent, but also everyone who has participated with Babylon. The kings of the earth are lamenting, but not over their sin or their participation with this evil system. They are just mad because they’ve lost their source of income, their quality of life.
2. Look, they’ve gladly participated with her, loved her, used her, got wealthy from her, but when her judgment comes, they stand at a distance, and not to give the family space. They just want the profits, but not the judgments. *But it doesn’t work that way.*
 - a. Their sorrow is solely in the fact that, “...no one buys their merchandise anymore...”

B. **Revelation 18:12-13** “...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 most precious wood, bronze, iron and marble; 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.”

1. It helps if we put these items into categories, just as they are listed;
 - a. Precious stones—Gold, silver, precious stones and pearls—Gold in their day was very costly. It was usually imported from either Spain or the Balkans.
 - b. Clothing which distinguished the wealthy—Fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet—Some of these fine linens would cost upwards of 7,000 denarius, which was day’s wages of about \$40 per day. Meaning that some of these garments cost around \$280,000. This is out of touch fashion, and clothing.
 - c. Costly articles of decoration—Scented wood, ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble—Some of this citron wood, could fetch around 2.5 million, or even as much as 5 million for a table.
 - d. Fragrances—Cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense
 - e. Foods—Wine, oil, fine flour and wheat—It was said that Vitellius (Vitaly-us) spent over \$20 million on food for lavish banquets.
 - f. Animals—Cattle, sheep, horses, chariots

g. Slaves—Bodies, and the souls of men—In John’s day it was estimated that around 10 million slaves were a part of the Roman Empire as a whole. At any given time, their society was made up of about 20% slaves. Whatever number this was historically, in the future it won’t be confined to a geographical location, it will be a global phenomenon.

1. Beloved, today, nobody can fathom a future time, in our “advanced”, “tolerant”, “sophisticated”, and “mature” society globally that we will be selling humans in a public market, but we will.

2. Grant R. Osborne asks the question, “*Which of these items is found in your home?*” –Grant R. Osborne, *The Revelation*, Pg. 647

a. *Asking this simple question helps us understand, it’s not just them, but us who also live this way.*

C. **Revelation 18:14** “The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all.

1. The Fruit That Your Soul Longed For Has Gone From You, And You Shall Find Them No More—The fruit is the luxuries mentioned in the previous verses. The desire of their soul was not for Christ, but for wealth, for status and more stuff. The idea is, the fruit your soul *lusted* for.

a. And look, this isn’t a downturned economy, it’s that they are gone forever, never to return. This is a warning to those that have invested their lives in this age, whatever it is we, or they are looking for, it’s never to be found again.

D. **Revelation 18:15-19** “The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 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! 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. And cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying; “What is like this great city?” And cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying; “What is like this great city?” 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.”

1. Well, it’s not just the kings, but the also the merchants who are standing at a distance, for fear of her torment, which is coming by way of the Lamb. Again, they want the merchandise, but they don’t want what comes along with it. They have no sympathy for the harlot, just sorrow for their own selfish concerns.

2. The Merchants Are Weeping And Wailing And Saying, The Great City That Was Clothed In Fine Linen, For In One Hour Such Great Riches Came To Nothing—Beloved, look at the shock, the awe, the sorrow and the loss. This great city has become a wasteland, it’s become worthless, good for nothing.

a. *Recently, a cargo ship sank in the mid-Atlantic, outside of Portugal carrying Porsches, Bentleys, Lamborghinis. It was carrying upwards of 4,000 vehicles, totaling close to \$155 million, now sitting close to 30,000 underwater.*

b. **James 5:1-6**—*Wowzers!*

3. Every Shipmaster, All Who Travel By Ship, Sailors, And As Many As Trade On The Sea, Stood At A Distance—This is the third group of mourners (previously it was the kings, and merchants), now it’s the captains, the deckhands, the passengers, and the investors who are mourning.

4. And They Cried Out Saying, What Is Like This Great City?—They are asking the question, “*Where is there another economy like this one, where is there another city like this one, where can you find something like this?*” It has the ring of **Revelation 13:4** when they said, “*Who is like the beast...who can fight him?*”
5. For In One Hour She Is Made Desolate—The word used her for desolate means *to be unfit for habitation, to be devoid of inhabitants*. Friends, this is in stark contrast to her once thriving streets and culture.
 - a. The once glorious, magnificent, and extravagant city is gone forever, never to return, sunk, suddenly, utterly destroyed.

E. **Revelation 18:20** “Rejoice over her, O heaven and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her.”

1. Well, this rejoicing is in stark contrast to the mourning that’s taking place in this chapter. The earth dwellers are in agony, while heaven is shouting because God has avenged on her the blood of His servants that was shed by her.
2. God’s recompense over His enemies takes a significant role in the Revelation (**Revelation 2:23; 6:9-11; 11:5, 18; 14:8, 10; 16:5-7; 18:20; 19:2; 20:12-13**). This isn’t a celebration of the judgment itself, but over the justice that God has served.
 - a. One commentator stated, “*This is a legal scene, and the Judge has issued His verdict, and the courtroom, those watching, those who’ve been adversely affected by this evil system are rejoicing that justice was served, that the right thing was done.*” Grant R. Osborne, *The Revelation*

IV. BABYLON’S TOTAL COLLAPSE (Revelation 18:21-24)

A. **Revelation 18:21** “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.”

1. This is the third and last time that “a”, or “the” mighty angel appears in the Revelation (**Rev. 5:2; 10:1-2; 18:21**).
2. Well, this millstone wasn’t the small one mentioned in **Matthew 24:41** where the women are grinding at the mill. This is the millstone from **Mark 9:42** that was so large, it had to be driven by a donkey (3,300 lbs.). Jeremiah prophesied this very thing, in **Jeremiah 51:63-64**.
3. It’s here we learn that Babylon will never be found again, but what specifically won’t be found again?

B. **Revelation 18:22-23** “The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists and trumpeters shall not be found 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 light of a lamp shall , 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.”

1. Music—The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters—Music and entertainment was something only available for high society, so this is an economic judgment. Jesus is saying, “*Your fancy nights out, your parties around music, your celebrity culture is coming to a crashing halt. It’s over. The expensive suits, exotic dresses, the fancy cars you came in, the expensive wine, the overpriced food that excluded 90% of society from eating there is over. It’s never to be found again.*”
 - a. What is a city without music, without it sounds. Any city without music would be desolate.
 2. Builders—No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you—What’s a city without a builder, a craftsman?
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3. Food—*The sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore*—Food has come to an end. The millstone that ground out the wheat has perished. The big millstone of the city, and the small millstone of the home has ceased.
 4. Normal Life—*The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore*—While the millstone was heard during the day, the light of the lamp was seen by night. This is the small lamp of the home. It's the normal existence of life, the normal patterns of life have ceased.
 5. Joy and Gladness—*The voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore*—The joy and gladness that's experienced at a wedding has ceased.
 - a. Beloved, the nations will never know, or experience the joy of a wedding again, while at the same time, in the following chapter, the Church will marry the Groom forever. Revelation 19 is split between the WEDDING and the WAR. While the earth will cease rejoicing forever, the Church will become the bride of Christ, forever.
- C. Well, God is judging Babylon for three primary reasons;
1. Economic oppression (*The merchants were the great men of the earth*)—This system has extracted all the resources from the earth, using slaves, sexual immorality, and luxury to dominate the nations.
 2. Sorcery—(*For by your sorcery all the nations were deceived*)—The idea is that they've gathered the globe through deceptive signs and wonders, through seduction, through false prophecies, which moved the nations to do things they would've never done apart from that demonic influence.
 3. Murder—(*In her was found the blood of the prophets, and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth*)—Babylon has murdered the saints (**Rev. 6:9-11; 7:14; 11:7; 13:7, 15; 14:13; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2**). But there are two groups here, saints and prophets, but also everyone else who was slain on the earth.
 - a. This is speaking about all those that died, both believer and non-believer at the hands of the empire, at the hands of Babylon and the beast. She's being held accountable, blood for blood.
- D. This is a tale of two cities, the city of God, and the city of man. Where will you dwell? In heaven, as a citizen of heaven, or a citizen of earth? Are we cultivating a vision for the age to come that will be much greater than the pull, the seduction, and allure of this city that satan is building?
- E. It's only when we see something brighter, better, and eternal that we are empowered to say no to what's dark, lesser, and temporal. A vision for the New Jerusalem will empower you to say no to Babylon.