

# Introduction

### **Revelation 16:17-21** ESV

<sup>17</sup> The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” <sup>18</sup> And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. <sup>19</sup> The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. <sup>20</sup> And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. <sup>21</sup> And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe.

We've been walking through the seven bowls. We've seen sores, blood, scorching heat, darkness, and the drying up of the Euphrates. We've watched people curse God instead of repenting. We've seen demonic spirits going out to gather the kings of the earth for battle.

Now we come to the seventh bowl.

And when this bowl is poured out, a voice from the throne says two words: "It is done."

Not "It is coming." Not "It will happen soon." It is done. Finished. Accomplished. Completed.

The judgment of God on the present world order is complete. The structures that held this age together are collapsing. Islands vanish. Mountains disappear. Cities fall. And at the center of it all is a name: Babylon the great.

This is the first time in the book of Revelation that Babylon is mentioned by name. But it won't be the last. In fact, the next two chapters—Revelation 17 and 18—are entirely devoted to the identity, character, and judgment of Babylon.

So tonight we're going to do two things. First, we're going to walk through the seventh bowl carefully, verse by verse. Then we're going to step back and ask the bigger question: Who or what is Babylon? Not just as a city in the ancient world, but as a spiritual reality, a system, a power that runs deeper than geography and politics.

This is going to be a longer lesson, but it needs to be. Because understanding Babylon is one of the keys to understanding the entire book of Revelation—and to

understanding the world we live in today.

## Verse 17: The Bowl Poured Into the Air

### **Revelation 16:17 ESV**

<sup>17</sup> The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!"

### **"Into the air"**

The first six bowls were poured on specific places: the earth, the sea, the rivers, the sun, the throne of the beast, and the Euphrates. Each one targeted something tangible.

The seventh bowl is poured into the air.

The air in Scripture, and especially in Paul's writings, is associated with the realm of spiritual powers. Ephesians 2:2 (ESV) describes the Satan as "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience."

The air is where we breathe. It's the atmosphere that surrounds us. And spiritually, it's the space where the unseen forces that influence and shape human systems operate.

When the seventh bowl is poured into the air, the judgment is not landing on one part of creation. It's landing on the entire sphere of spiritual and earthly rebellion. Everything held together under the Satan's system is now coming apart.

## **"A loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne"**

This voice is clearly God's. It comes from the throne, which is the center of divine authority in Revelation. And it comes from the temple, the place of God's presence.

The phrase "loud voice" is common in Revelation, especially at critical turning points. It signals divine speech, authoritative declaration, and unquestionable finality.

Earlier in the bowl sequence, we heard an angel say, "It is what they deserve!" (16:6). We heard the altar respond, "Yes, Lord God the Almighty, true and just are your judgments!" (16:7). Now we hear the voice of God Himself.

## **"It is done!"**

Greek: *Gegonen*. Perfect tense. Meaning it has been accomplished and its effects remain.

This is a significant statement.

It's similar to Jesus' words on the cross. In John 19:30 (ESV), just before He died, Jesus said, "*Tetelestai*"—"It is finished." The work of atonement, the payment for sin, was complete.

Here, the voice from the throne says, "*Gegonen*"—"It is done." The work of final judgment, the sentence on unrepentant rebellion, is complete.

Two declarations. One at the cross. One at the bowls.

At the cross, the penalty for sin was fully paid. Here, the punishment for unrepented sin is fully executed.

Both are acts of divine completion. Both come from the throne of God. Both mark the end of an age.

## **Application**

When God says, "It is done," there is no appeal, no delay, no reversal. The window of grace has closed. The time for repentance has passed. What remains is what was chosen.

This is a sobering reminder that history is not open-ended. There is a final moment. A last call. A concluding word.

And the good news is that before the seventh bowl falls, God

has sent His gospel into all the world. He has poured out His Spirit. He has called, invited, pleaded, warned. The fact that judgment comes does not mean God was silent beforehand. It means God was patient, and that patience came to an end.

2 Peter 3:9 (ESV) says, "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

But patience has limits. And when the limit is reached, the voice says, "It is done."

## Verse 18: Lightning, Thunder, and the Greatest Earthquake

### **Revelation 16:18** ESV

<sup>18</sup> And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake.

## **Theophany language**

This is classic theophany language (language used in the Old Testament to describe the presence and appearance of

God)

When God came down on Mount Sinai in Exodus 19:16–19 (ESV), there were "thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud... and a very loud trumpet blast... And Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the LORD had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly."

Psalm 18:7–15 (ESV) uses similar imagery to describe God coming in judgment: "Then the earth reeled and rocked; the foundations also of the mountains trembled... He sent out his arrows and scattered them; he flashed forth lightnings and routed them."

Lightning, thunder, and earthquake are not incidental details. They signal the direct presence and action of God. When these appear together in Revelation, it means God is acting personally, decisively, and visibly.

## **"Such as there had never been since man was on the earth"**

This is the greatest earthquake in human history. Not just the greatest recorded earthquake. The greatest that has ever happened since humans have existed.

The language is emphatic. It's meant to communicate total,

irreversible upheaval. The stable ground that people built their cities on, the foundations they trusted, the geography they mapped—all of it is shaking apart.

This points back to the prophetic word in Haggai 2:6–7 (ESV): "For thus says the LORD of hosts: Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land. And I will shake all nations."

Hebrews 12:26–27 (ESV) picks up that passage and applies it to the final shaking: "At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.' This phrase, 'Yet once more,' indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain."

What can be shaken will be shaken. What cannot be shaken is the kingdom of God.

## **Application**

We live in a world that feels solid. We build cities, economies, governments, technologies. We assume they will hold. We plan our lives around them.

Revelation 16:18 is a reminder that everything in this present age is temporary. It can all be shaken. It will all be

shaken.

The only thing that lasts is what is built on Christ. Matthew 7:24–27 (ESV) ends with the same principle. The house built on the rock stands. The house built on sand falls. The difference is not how impressive the house looks. It's what the house is built on.

If your security, identity, hope, or purpose is built on anything in this world—career, wealth, reputation, politics, health, relationships—it's built on sand. And when the shaking comes, it will not hold.

## Verse 19: The Great City and the Fall of Babylon

### **Revelation 16:19** ESV

<sup>19</sup> The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath.

### **"The great city was split into three parts"**

There's some debate about what "the great city" refers to here. In Revelation 11:8 (ESV), "the great city" is described as "where their Lord was crucified," which most interpreters take as Jerusalem. In Revelation 17:18 (ESV), "the woman

you saw is the great city that has rule over the kings of the earth," which clearly refers to Babylon.

It's possible that John is using "the great city" in a flexible way to refer to the center of worldly power and rebellion, which can take different forms in different contexts. Here, the splitting of the city in three may symbolize total, irreversible collapse and division.

Whatever the exact identity, the emphasis is clear: the center of human pride and rebellion is torn apart.

## **"And the cities of the nations fell"**

Not just one city. All of them. Every center of human civilization and power, every stronghold of rebellion, every city built without reference to God, all of them fall under the seventh bowl.

This is global. This is final. This is the end of the present world system.

## **"God remembered Babylon the great"**

In Scripture, when God "remembers," it doesn't mean He forgot and then recalled something. It means He acts on what He has held in mind.

Genesis 8:1 (ESV) says, "But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided." God acted to deliver Noah.

Exodus 2:24 (ESV) says, "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." God acted to deliver Israel.

Here, God remembers Babylon. Not to deliver her. To judge her.

Babylon has been on God's mind the whole time. Her sins, her pride, her seduction, her persecution of the saints, none of it was forgotten. And now, at the seventh bowl, God acts.

## **"To make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath"**

The image of the cup of God's wrath appears repeatedly in the Old Testament.

Psalm 75:8 (ESV): "For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup with foaming wine, well mixed, and he pours out from it, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs."

Jeremiah 25:15–16 (ESV): "Thus the LORD, the God of Israel,

said to me: 'Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. They shall drink and stagger and be crazed because of the sword that I am sending among them.'

Isaiah 51:17 (ESV): "Wake yourself, wake yourself, stand up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the LORD the cup of his wrath, who have drunk to the dregs the bowl, the cup of staggering."

The cup is a metaphor for judgment. Draining the cup (Drinking it to the dregs) means experiencing the full measure of God's wrath, with nothing held back.

Babylon made the nations drink from her cup of seduction and idolatry (Revelation 17:2; 18:3). Now God makes her drink from His cup of judgment. What she gave, she receives.

## **First mention of Babylon by name**

This is the first time Babylon is named in Revelation. But it won't be the last.

Revelation 14:8 (ESV) said, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality." That was an announcement of what would happen.

Here in chapter 16, it begins to happen.

And in chapters 17 and 18, we get the full vision: who she is, what she's done, and how she falls.

So before we move to verses 20–21, let's pause and do a deep dive into Babylon. Because if we don't understand Babylon, we won't understand what God is judging or why it matters to us.

## Who and What Is Babylon?

Babylon is not just a city. It's a system. A spirit. A seductive, idolatrous, persecuting power that runs through all of human history and will reach its fullness at the end of the age.

To understand Babylon in Revelation, we need to trace the theme through the entire Bible.

### **1. Babylon's Origin: Babel and the Tower (Genesis 11:1–9)**

**Read Genesis 11:1–4**

**Genesis 11:1–4** *ESV*

<sup>1</sup> Now the whole earth had one language and the same

words. <sup>2</sup> And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. <sup>3</sup> And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. <sup>4</sup> Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth."

## **The heart of Babel**

The people were not building a tower to worship God. They were building a tower to make a name for themselves.

This is the first recorded act of organized human rebellion after the flood. It's collective pride. It's humanity saying, "We don't need God. We will reach the heavens on our own. We will build our own unity, our own glory, our own security."

Notice the repeated phrase: "let us." Let us make bricks. Let us build a city. Let us make a name. It's the language of human autonomy and self-exaltation.

God's command in Genesis 9:1 (ESV) was, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." The people at Babel said, "No. We're going to stay in one place and make ourselves great."

## God's response (Genesis 11:5–9 ESV)

### Genesis 11:5–9 ESV

<sup>5</sup> And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. <sup>7</sup> Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech.” <sup>8</sup> So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. <sup>9</sup> Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

God did not destroy them. He confused their language and scattered them.

The name "Babel" comes from the Hebrew word *balal*, meaning "to confuse." But the people who lived there called it "Babylon," which in Akkadian means "gate of the gods."

They thought they were building a gateway to heaven. God called it confusion.

## Core themes of Babel that carry into Babylon

1. **Human pride and self-exaltation** – "Let us make a name for ourselves."
2. **Rebellion against God's authority** – Refusing His command to spread out and fill the earth.
3. **Unity against God** – Organized collective rebellion.
4. **Building without God** – Human achievement as a substitute for dependence on God.

These themes don't disappear after Genesis 11. They reappear every time a human empire rises in pride and opposition to God. And they reach their fullest expression in the Babylon of Revelation.

## **2. Babylon as a Historical Empire: The Neo-Babylonian Kingdom**

Centuries after Babel, the city of Babylon rose to become one of the greatest empires in the ancient world.

Under King Nebuchadnezzar II (reigned 605–562 BC), Babylon reached its peak. The city was massive, wealthy, and architecturally stunning. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon were considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

But more importantly for biblical history, Babylon was the empire that destroyed Jerusalem, burned the temple, and took the people of Judah into exile.

## **Nebuchadnezzar's pride (Daniel 4:30 ESV)**

### **Daniel 4:30 ESV**

<sup>30</sup> and the king answered and said, “Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?”

Nebuchadnezzar looked at the city and said, "I built this. For my glory."

Sound familiar? Same spirit as Babel.

And God's response was immediate. Daniel 4:31–33 (ESV):

### **Daniel 4:31–33 ESV**

<sup>31</sup> While the words were still in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, “O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you, <sup>32</sup> and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.” <sup>33</sup> Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from

among men and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers, and his nails were like birds' claws.

God humbled him. Drove him out into the field like an animal. Why? "Until you know that the Most High rules."

Babylon claimed ultimate power. God showed who really has it.

## **Belshazzar and the fall of Babylon (Daniel 5)**

Years later, Nebuchadnezzar's grandson Belshazzar threw a feast. He brought out the gold and silver vessels that had been taken from the temple in Jerusalem and used them to drink wine while praising the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone (Daniel 5:2–4).

This was sacrilege. This was mockery. This was Babylon at its most arrogant.

And then a hand appeared and wrote on the wall: *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin* (Daniel 5:25 ESV).

Daniel interpreted: "God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting; your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians" (Daniel 5:26–28 ESV).

That very night, Belshazzar was killed. Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians without a fight (Daniel 5:30–31).

Babylon the empire fell in one night. Just as Revelation 18:8 says Babylon the system will fall "in a single day."

## **Key themes from historical Babylon**

1. **Idolatry** – Worship of false gods and created things.
2. **Arrogance** – "I have built this. I am great."
3. **Oppression of God's people** – Destruction of the temple, exile of Judah.
4. **Sudden judgment** – Babylon falls in a night.

## **3. Babylon in the Prophets: A Symbol of Proud, Seductive World Power**

The prophets of the Old Testament spoke extensively about Babylon. And what's important is that their language often goes beyond describing a physical city. They describe Babylon in spiritual, symbolic, and cosmic terms.

### **Isaiah 13–14: Babylon's pride and fall**

Isaiah 13 begins with a prophecy against Babylon. But by chapter 14, the language shifts to something much deeper.

### **Isaiah 14:12–15 ESV**

<sup>12</sup> “How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! <sup>13</sup> You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; <sup>14</sup> I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ <sup>15</sup> But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit.

This passage is clearly about the king of Babylon. But the language—“fallen from heaven,” “I will make myself like the Most High”—points beyond a human king to a spiritual power behind the throne.

Many interpreters see this as a description of the Satan's original rebellion. Whether or not that's the primary meaning, the passage clearly shows that Babylon's pride mirrors satanic pride. The king of Babylon is acting out the same script: self-exaltation, rebellion against God, desire to be like God.

## **Isaiah 47: Babylon as a seductive queen**

Isaiah 47 personifies Babylon as a queen who says:

Isaiah 47:7–8 (ESV):

**Isaiah 47:7–8 ESV**

<sup>7</sup> You said, “I shall be mistress forever,” so that you did not lay these things to heart or remember their end. <sup>8</sup> Now therefore hear this, you lover of pleasures, who sit securely, who say in your heart, “I am, and there is no one besides me; I shall not sit as a widow or know the loss of children”:

Babylon is depicted as:

- A seductive woman.
- A lover of luxury and pleasure.
- Proud and self-secure.
- Claiming divinity ("I am, and there is no one besides me").

Sound familiar? This is exactly how Babylon is depicted in Revelation 17–18.

## **Jeremiah 50–51: The golden cup**

Jeremiah 51:7 (ESV):

**Jeremiah 51:7 ESV**

<sup>7</sup> Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD’s hand, making all

the earth drunken; the nations drank of her wine; therefore the nations went mad.

Babylon seduced the nations. She made them drunk. She led them into idolatry and madness.

And God's judgment:

Jeremiah 51:8 (ESV):

**Jeremiah 51:8 ESV**

<sup>8</sup> Suddenly Babylon has fallen and been broken; wail for her! Take balm for her pain; perhaps she may be healed.

Again, sudden judgment. Babylon falls in a moment.

And the call to God's people:

Jeremiah 51:45 (ESV):

**Jeremiah 51:45 ESV**

<sup>45</sup> "Go out of the midst of her, my people! Let every one save his life from the fierce anger of the LORD!

This is exactly what Revelation 18:4 (ESV) says: "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues."

The connection is deliberate. John is drawing directly from Jeremiah's prophecy and applying it to the final Babylon.

## Summary of Babylon in the Prophets

Babylon is:

- Proud and self-exalting.
- Seductive and intoxicating.
- A persecutor of God's people.
- Judged suddenly and totally.
- A picture of the world system energized by satanic pride.

## 4. Babylon in Revelation: The World System Energized by Spiritual Powers

Now we come to Revelation. And here, Babylon is not just a city in Mesopotamia. Babylon is a spiritual reality, a global system, a seductive power that draws the whole world into idolatry, immorality, and rebellion against God.

### Revelation 14:8 – The announcement

Revelation 14:8 (ESV):

#### Revelation 14:8 **ESV**

<sup>8</sup> Another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is

Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.”

This is the first mention of Babylon's fall in Revelation. It's an advance announcement. An angel proclaiming what will happen.

Notice the phrase: "made all nations drink." Babylon is not just sinful herself. She spreads her sin. She intoxicates. She seduces the nations into idolatry and immorality.

## **Revelation 17 – The woman and the beast**

Revelation 17 gives us the most detailed picture of Babylon in the entire Bible.

Revelation 17:1–6 (ESV):

### **Revelation 17:1–6** ESV

<sup>1</sup> Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters, <sup>2</sup> with whom the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of whose sexual immorality the dwellers on earth have become drunk.” <sup>3</sup> And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. <sup>4</sup> The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold

and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality. <sup>5</sup> And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: “Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth’s abominations.” <sup>6</sup> And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When I saw her, I marveled greatly.

## **Key details about Babylon in Revelation 17**

1. **She is a prostitute** – Spiritual adultery, seduction, unfaithfulness to God.
2. **She sits on many waters** – Revelation 17:15 explains this: "The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages." She has global influence.
3. **Kings commit immorality with her** – Political powers are seduced by her.
4. **She rides the beast** – She is connected to the satanic power structure described in Revelation 13. The beast carries her, empowers her, supports her.
5. **She is dressed in wealth** – Purple, scarlet, gold, jewels, pearls. She is beautiful, attractive, seductive.
6. **She holds a golden cup full of abominations** –

Outwardly beautiful, inwardly corrupt.

**7. She is drunk with the blood of the saints** – She persecutes and kills God's people.

**8. She is called "mother of prostitutes"** – She is the source, the original, the fountainhead of all idolatry and rebellion.

## **Revelation 17:18 – Her identity**

### **Revelation 17:18 ESV**

<sup>18</sup> And the woman that you saw is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth.”

Babylon is a city. But not just a physical location. She is a city that rules over the kings of the earth. She is a center of power, influence, seduction, and control.

Many interpreters in John's day would have thought immediately of Rome. Rome was the great city ruling the world. Rome demanded worship. Rome persecuted Christians. Rome was wealthy, seductive, and violent.

But Revelation is not just describing Rome. It's describing a pattern, a spirit, a system that existed before Rome and will continue after Rome. Babylon is the name for the world's organized rebellion against God, no matter what form it takes.

## **5. Babylon Today: What Does It Look Like?**

So if Babylon is more than a literal city—if it's a spiritual system, a seductive power, a global network of rebellion against God—what does it look like in our world today?

We need to be careful here. Revelation does not give us permission to point at a specific nation or city and say, "That's Babylon." But it does give us categories to recognize the spirit of Babylon wherever it shows up.

Here are the marks:

### **1. Idolatry – When created things become ultimate**

Babylon always offers substitutes for God. Wealth. Power. Sex. Success. Comfort. Technology. The state. The self.

Whenever something created is treated as ultimate, as the source of meaning, security, or satisfaction, that's the spirit of Babylon.

Romans 1:25 (ESV): "They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator."

Babylon is the system that makes that exchange normal,

attractive, and expected.

## **2. Seduction – The beauty that leads to corruption**

Babylon doesn't appear ugly. She's dressed in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold and jewels. She's attractive. Desirable. She promises pleasure, satisfaction, the good life.

But the cup in her hand is full of abominations.

The world's system doesn't advertise itself as evil. It advertises itself as fulfillment. But it delivers emptiness, addiction, and death.

Proverbs 7:21–23 (ESV) describes the seductress:

### **Proverbs 7:21–23** ESV

<sup>21</sup> With much seductive speech she persuades him; with her smooth talk she compels him. <sup>22</sup> All at once he follows her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a stag is caught fast <sup>23</sup> till an arrow pierces its liver; as a bird rushes into a snare; he does not know that it will cost him his life.

Babylon is seductive. And deadly.

## **3. Pride and self-exaltation – "I am, and there is no one besides me"**

This is the language of Babylon in Isaiah 47:8. And it's the

language of every system that declares itself autonomous, self-sufficient, and ultimate.

When a nation, a corporation, a movement, or an individual says, "We don't need God. We can build our own heaven. We can solve our own problems. We are the masters of our fate" —that's Babylon.

#### **4. Materialism and luxury – The worship of wealth**

Revelation 18 lists the cargo of Babylon in detail: gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth, scented wood, ivory, bronze, iron, marble, cinnamon, spice, incense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, chariots, and slaves—"that is, human souls" (Revelation 18:12–13 ESV).

Babylon traffics in everything. Including people. The system treats human beings as commodities.

And the focus is luxury. Excess. Indulgence. Comfort without concern for the cost to others or to the soul.

#### **5. Persecution of the saints – "Drunk with the blood of the martyrs"**

Babylon hates the people of God. She always has. She killed the prophets. She exiled the faithful. She fed Christians to

lions in Rome. She will continue to persecute those who refuse to bow to the beast.

Wherever the world's system demands ultimate allegiance and punishes those who give it to Christ instead, that's the spirit of Babylon.

## **6. Deception and sorcery – "All nations were deceived by your sorcery"**

Babylon doesn't just use force. She uses deception. She makes lies look like truth. She makes evil look good. She makes rebellion look like freedom.

2 Thessalonians 2:9–10 (ESV) describes the work of the lawless one:

### **2 Thessalonians 2:9–10 ESV**

<sup>9</sup> The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, <sup>10</sup> and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

Babylon's power is not just political or economic. It's spiritual. It's demonic. And it works through deception.

## **Summary: Babylon is the world's system energized by satanic pride**

Babylon is not one nation. It's the collective rebellion of humanity against God, organized into systems of power, wealth, and seduction, energized by spiritual forces of evil, and destined for sudden and total judgment.

It's been around since Genesis 11. It took form in empires like Assyria, Babylon, Greece, and Rome. It exists today in every structure, ideology, or culture that exalts itself against God, seduces people away from Him, and persecutes those who follow Him.

And Revelation says: God will judge it. Completely. Finally. In one day.

## Verses 20–21: The Final Collapse

### **Revelation 16:20–21 ESV**

<sup>20</sup> And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. <sup>21</sup> And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe.

**"Every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found"**

This is total geographic collapse. Islands disappear. Mountains vanish.

This echoes the language of Revelation 6:14 (ESV), at the opening of the sixth seal: "The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place."

Mountains and islands represent stability, permanence, things that don't move. But under the shaking of God's judgment, nothing is stable. Nothing is permanent. Everything that seemed solid melts away.

This is the language of the end of the present creation order. It's not tweaking or adjusting the world. It's the total dismantling of the stage on which human history has been played out.

Peter describes it this way in 2 Peter 3:10 (ESV):

**2 Peter 3:10 ESV**

<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

**"Great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each"**

This is not normal hail. This is catastrophic. Crushing.

Deadly.

The Old Testament background is the seventh plague in Egypt—hail (Exodus 9:18–26). But that hail was destructive to crops and livestock. This hail is aimed at people.

There's also an echo of Joshua 10:11 (ESV), where God threw down large hailstones from heaven on the enemies of Israel, and "there were more who died because of the hailstones than the sons of Israel killed with the sword."

Hail in Scripture is a weapon of divine judgment. It falls from above. It cannot be stopped. It crushes everything in its path.

**"And they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe"**

This is the third time in chapter 16 that people curse God (see also verses 9, 11).

Even under the most extreme, undeniable judgment, people still curse God.

This is the final, tragic confirmation that the issue is not the severity of the judgment. The issue is the hardness of the heart.

No amount of evidence. No amount of suffering. No amount

of visible demonstration of God's power will produce repentance in a heart that has been given over to rebellion.

Only grace can change a heart. And by the seventh bowl, the time for grace has ended. What remains is judgment.

## Application: Come Out of Her, My People

Revelation 18:4 (ESV) gives the clearest application of the entire Babylon theme:

### **Revelation 18:4** **ESV**

<sup>4</sup> Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues;

## **You cannot serve two masters**

Jesus said in Matthew 6:24 (ESV), "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

You cannot live with one foot in Babylon and one foot in the kingdom of God. Babylon demands total allegiance. So does Christ.

The call to "come out" is not a call to physical separation from the world. It's a call to spiritual separation. To refuse Babylon's values, Babylon's priorities, Babylon's seductions, and Babylon's gods.

## Where might Babylon show up in your life?

Ask yourself honestly:

- **What do I treat as ultimate?** What do I run to for security, identity, or satisfaction besides God?
- **What seduces me?** What promises fulfillment but delivers emptiness?
- **Where am I compromising?** Where am I bowing to the world's system to avoid conflict, rejection, or loss?
- **What am I building my life on?** Is it something that will stand when everything is shaken, or something that will collapse?

## The alternative: the New Jerusalem

Babylon is not the only city in Revelation. There's another one. The New Jerusalem. The bride. The holy city coming down from heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (Revelation 21:2).

Babylon is the prostitute. Jerusalem is the bride.

Babylon is seductive and corrupt. Jerusalem is pure and beautiful.

Babylon falls in one day. Jerusalem stands forever.

You belong to one or the other. And the choice you make now determines where you end up then.

## Conclusion

The seventh bowl is poured out. The voice from the throne says, "It is done."

The greatest earthquake in history shakes the earth. Islands vanish. Mountains disappear. Cities collapse. Babylon is remembered. The cup of God's wrath is poured out.

And even under hundred-pound hailstones, people curse God.

This is what the end of the age looks like for those who refuse to repent. Total collapse. Final judgment. No escape.

But there is another option. There is a door. There is a Savior. There is a voice calling, "Come out of her, my people."

If you hear that voice today, don't harden your heart. Don't wait. Don't assume there will always be more time.

Come out. Turn to Christ. Build your life on the rock that cannot be shaken.

Because the day is coming when the voice from the throne will say, "It is done."

And on that day, it will be too late to change sides.