

Revelation 18

The Fall of Commercial Babylon

A. Announcing the fall of Babylon.

1. Introduction: is this the same Babylon as is described in chapter 17?

In chapter 18, the context seems to indicate that Babylon here is viewed in its political and _____ character rather than its religious aspect.

Good scholars see the issue differently. Some point to two manifestations of Babylon, one religious and one commercial or material. Others see the two as one, both being judged at the _____ time.

Both are under the rule of Antichrist, and have ruling _____; both are filled with blasphemy; both hate the saints, and shed their blood; both are associates with kings in fornication; and both are under judgment and _____.

Mystery Babylon (Revelation 17)

- Symbol: Harlot _____.
- Identified with _____.
- Woman, whore, mother.
- Guilty of religious abominations.
- Destroyed by a political power that previous supported her.

Commercial Babylon (Revelation 18)

- Symbol: Great _____.
- Identified with a port city.
- Habitation, great city, marketplace.
- Guilty of _____ and self-indulgence.
- Destroyed by sudden act of God.

Religious Babylon of Revelation 17 is judged at the _____-point of the seven-year period of tribulation. Commercial Babylon is judged at the _____ of that period.

So it isn't strange at all to say, "Babylon is falling" and to mean it in _____ senses (religious Babylon and commercial Babylon) at two _____ times (the middle of the Great Tribulation and the end of the Great Tribulation).

2. Is Babylon of Revelation 18 a literal or symbolic city?

Some have thought it to be a future _____ Babylon on the Euphrates River in the Middle East. This is now a desolate desert in modern day Iraq.

Most likely, commercial Babylon is _____, like religious Babylon.

3. (1-3) Announcement of the glorious angel.

(1) After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. (2) 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! (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."

The announcement is made by another angel. Note four things about this angel. **First**, he is "_____" angel.

Second, that "he comes down from _____" points to the fact this judgment comes from God.

Third, he has "great _____."

Fourth, "the earth was illumined with his _____."

He announces that _____ is fallen, fallen and the phrase is "repeated like a solemn dirge of the damned.

In the second part of verse 2 we are told that Babylon is _____ to the core. This is stressed in three statements:

(1) "The dwelling place of _____"

(2) "A prison of every unclean _____"

(3) "and a prison of every unclean and hateful _____."

Babylon's sin was not only idolatry (referred to with the term fornication), but also pride, greed, and selfishly held _____.

In verse 3 a specific charge is made against Babylon concerning her _____ prostitution and intoxicating activity.

First, we are told _____ the nations are involved.

The world is already drunk and getting more so _____ day on materialism and the commercial mania of the times.

"Of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" is a reference to the _____ ideologies of Babylon, which will prostitute the divine institutions God has establish for man's protection like: volition, freedom, marriage and the family, and nationalism.

The last half of the verse speaks of both the _____ of the earth and the merchants.

"Sensuality" is the Greek word meaning "arrogant or unrestrained _____."

4. (4-5) A call to God's people to separate from Babylon.

(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. (5) For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities."

This great religious system still retains much _____ truth. There is enough truth there that, by the Spirit of God, someone can become saved, and some do even in that day. But _____ the appeal is made to come out of her

It is inconceivable that a child of God _____ be a part of religious Babylon (though elements may creep in).

In its primary interpretation this appeal will be addressed to those _____ who will be living in the Tribulation days and who like believers in every age will be tempted to compromise.

The warning is focused towards _____ who are in the position Lot was in while he lived in the city of Sodom. These are God's people in a place they shouldn't be, a place ripe for destruction.

The call to _____ from Babylon and the worldliness that it represents is a theme repeated frequently in the Scriptures.

The sins of commercial Babylon have piled up like a _____ - the tower of Babel.

God has _____ her iniquities: This is the destiny of the materialistic world, but towards believers, God says, *I will remember their sins no more* (Heb 8:12).

God's actions in history with Babylon teach us this system cannot escape—judgment _____ come. The principle is God does not _____ or forget sin.

5. (6-8) A call to those who will carry out Babylon's judgment.

(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. (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.' (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.

This is simply the _____ of retribution.

The _____ judgment of unbelievers does not come until the great white throne of Revelation 20

God will give Babylon _____ what she deserves.

Double restitution was required in the Old Testament in cases of _____ (Exo 22:4-9). This perhaps is a commentary on how Babylon has made her wealth - through dishonest dealings.

This passage presents a three-fold sin. First, _____-*indulgence* (lived luxuriously). Second, _____ (glorified herself... sits as a queen).

She lavishes luxuries upon herself and takes pride in the fact that she is a _____; she does not need help from anyone.

Third, avoidance of _____ (am no widow, and will not see sorrow). All these things are characteristic of worldliness and materialism.

A widow is one who mourns because of a _____.

They love her not for herself but for what they can _____ out of her.

The destruction of commercial Babylon will come _____ and with completeness (utterly burned with fire).

This stresses the fallacy of all _____ security

B. Lament for commercial Babylon.

1. (9-10) Lament of the kings.

(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, (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.'

There seems to be a _____ judgment from God at the end here.

This reaches out to _____ the other kings of the earth who are caught up in the web of the commercialism of the day.

The acts of _____ refers to their spiritual and political apostasy which rejects the divine standards of God and which accepts instead the materialism of commercial Babylon as well as its humanism.

The point is, when they see the object of their trust and the _____ of their happiness go up in smoke, they come unglued.

The time of this burning is the bowl or vial _____ at the end of the Tribulation, very close to the return of Jesus Christ.

So great is the heat and smoke of her burning that these kings must stand at a _____.

2. (11-17a) Lament of the merchants.

(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. (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! (17a) For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.'

Their business is ruined by the destruction of this _____.

This long list needs little explanation, except to note these are all _____, not necessities.

This destruction is very _____.

The profits of commercial Babylon have come through cruelly using _____.

Those who lived for the luxuries of commercial Babylon will be tormented their eternal _____ of those luxuries all the more: you shall find them no more at all.

3. (17b-19) Lament of the sea-captains.

(17b) 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.'

Little comment needs to be made on this, other than to notice that their sorrow at commercial Babylon's fall is _____.

Their grief is occasioned by the loss of their trade and from the luxury items that their trade provided, but not by their _____ for Babylon.

As mentioned, the merchants mourn not because they love the city, but because their _____ which is derived from the city and its system is now lost.

The Lord warned against such _____ of wealth in Matthew 6:19-21

C. Finale: The Acclaim of Heaven Over the Fall of Babylon.

In these verses we see a tremendous _____ and one that should strike a note of warning and alarm as we conduct our lives in a world that is already so dominated by the mental attitude of commercial Babylon.

The world weeps over the destruction of Babylon and the loss of its _____ luxuries.

By contrast, the _____ must come out of the system, that is, he must not be controlled by Satan's system, or by his own lust patterns.

So the kings, the merchants, and the mariners wail over the passing of Babylon, but heaven and its people _____ and find strength over the prospect of its fall.

1. (20) Call to the heavens and the people of God: rejoice!

(20) "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!"

Rather, we _____ in the righteous resolution God's judgment brings.

God's people are to find _____ in the prospects of Babylon's overthrow and in the actual occurrence when it is brought to pass at the end of the Tribulation.

"You saints(ESV, et al) and apostles and prophets" narrows the address. "Saints," literally "set apart ones," refers to _____ believers who, as those set apart positionally and experientially, are to have such a response to Babylon's fall. The "apostles and prophets" refer to those of the _____ church period, many of whom lost their lives to the Babylonian system.

Babylon has been the _____ of much misery and pain for the people of God, but they can rejoice because God has not forgotten His people nor Babylon's evil.

2. (21) An angel graphically shows Babylon's fall.

(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 great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore: Some day, this world system will _____ away, like a great stone falls to the bottom of the sea.

In his vision, John sees a mighty angel throw a stone, one like a great _____, into the sea. This picture is designed to portray the downfall of the great city and its system as:

- (1) _____. It will be sudden as when a stone falls into the sea, suddenly, with a splash.
- (2) _____, Catastrophic. Such a great stone (like a meteor) would cause tidal waves which move across land destroying everything in their path. The destruction of Babylon leads to the destruction of the rest of its system.
- (3) Complete, _____. Like a stone which is cast into the sea and sinks out of sight, so the destruction of Babylon will be so complete that it will be found no more, never to rise again. This is the primary emphasis. Babylon will be found no more, not in any form. This is stressed seven times in chapter 18.

3. (22-23) Babylon is left desolate and powerless.

(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. (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.

In graphic and poetic language, John describes how the industry and commerce of Babylon will come to an _____.

For by your sorcery all the nations were deceived: Sorcery is the Greek word *pharmakia*, which means, "to prepare _____." The lure of commercial Babylon is like a drug addiction, fed by deceptive advertising.

Verses 22 and 23a enlarge on the extent of the cessation of _____ and her activity which characterizes her life and luxurious living.

- (1) No more _____ and entertainers (vs. 22a).
- (2) No more _____.
- (3) No more grinding of _____.
- (4) The _____ will go out.
- (5) The merry voices of bride and bridegroom and their _____ parties will cease.

4. (24) The ultimate reason for commercial Babylon's judgment: She has killed the prophets and saints.

(24) *And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.”*

The blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth: The extent of this charge is an indication that this great city is _____ of the world system at large.

God takes the persecution of His people as a _____ offense. Those who attack His people really attack Him.

Saints are called to _____ themselves from that root error: the hunger for earthly glory and position obtained by religious devotion.

That is the reason this book is sent to the seven churches of Asia -- that they might _____ from the judgments God will bring on Babylon what is wrong with the practices they see around them throughout the church age.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.