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Revelation 18

(2019)

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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Revelation 18.

Topics.

- Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! and her luxurious living.
 - Her sins are heaped high as heaven, God has remembered her iniquities.
 - I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.
 - Alas! alas! you great city, Babylon! For your judgment has come.
 - The great city Babylon will be thrown down and found no more.
 - The voice of Bridegroom and Bride will be heard in you no more.
 - In her was found the blood of prophets, of saints, and all slain, on earth.
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A personal note: though I have always loved reading and studying the Scriptures and have now walked with Christ and in God's grace for around fifty years the following studies should not be taken to be dogmatic, inflexible or the final word on the matter since I am fully aware that my mind is limited by mortality and that greater understanding of God's revelation is continually becoming clearer before our eyes as we move closer to the time of Christ's glorious return in glory.

The previous chapter: began with one of the seven angels who had the seven-vial bowls of wrath showing John a great prostitute woman drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and written on her forehead a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations." The woman was sitting on a scarlet beast full of blasphemous names, that had seven heads and ten horns (kings), that was about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. The ten kings give their royal power to an eighth beast (the man of sin and lawlessness), and together they destroy the great prostitute woman and then make war against the Lord and he conquered them.

REVELATION 18:1-3

Fallen, Fallen is Babylon the Great! And Her Luxurious Living.

- **Revelation 18:1-3:** After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. ²And he called out with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt (cage in KJV) for every unclean and detestable beast. ³For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living."

When reading this book, it should always be kept in mind, that though it appears there is a general order of events, these are visions of the future that John is seeing and writing down in the present time, which means the symbolical representations may not always follow the exact chronological order. It is very likely that in some cases one event may

overlap another so that some are mixed together until the final-end, while others are interludes that give greater detail of events already seen or are inserted to give encouragement to the church during troublesome times, especially for those living during the final antichristian global empire. In chapter sixteen the seven angels are given the seven vial/bowls of wrath and pour all six out, and then we are told:

- 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!" ¹⁸And 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. ¹⁹The 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. ²⁰And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. ²¹And 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. (Rev. 16:17-21).

NOTE the focus of this chapter is Babylon (i.e., the world system), not Rome or the Papal Church, they are the focus of the previous chapter and her judgment is the focus of the following chapter.

The title, Babylon: embraces worldliness in extent and contents and is in Scripture often symbolized by the name of the famous ancient world city, Babylon. It is not necessary to suppose that this is the city of Rome or Babylon itself or that it is any other single city. This is not the goal or purpose of the representation. Rather the image symbolises the external breath, width and depth of the whole world; its internal and oppressive ungodly character; its corrupt global governments; its commerce and trade; its oppressive banking system of credit and interest and its luxuries and wealth. It is not to be taken as the literal city of Babylon or any other single city, but as a name that symbolises all these traits of the world. We are commanded to come out of this Babylon, but we are not commanded to go out of the world, meaning, though we are in the world, we are not to partake of the sins of the Great City of Babylon, such as:

- Involving ourselves in worldly religious, spiritual and mystical teachings contrary to the Gospel of Christ.
- Oppressing others to gain great wealth and riches and bathing ourselves in excessive self-indulgent luxurious living.
- Taking part in any form of sexual immorality (i.e., rape, orgies, prostituting oneself for financial gain, pedophilia, and using others for selfish sexual gratification and such like things.
- Allowing extreme pride and selfish ambition to be the motivating force in our lives and putting profit before integrity and honesty.
- Squandering excessive wealth on oneself without any thought for the poor and less fortunate and growing rich and famous upon the suffering of others.

The fact that the ancient city of Babylon was destroyed according to the prophetic word of the prophets, is a sure sign that the latter-day Babylon will also be utterly-destroyed as predicted here in the book of Revelation.

The angel cried mightily with a strong voice: (v2) to better understand the symbolism of Babylon it helps to view it as the world city. The strong language used here shows the great importance of what is about to be said. The overall collective character of the inhabitants of the world, especially it's merchants and those who trade, is as follows: -

- They are blinded by the god of this world and as such walk-in spiritual darkness.
- They look only on the material side of life seeking prosperous times, large wealth and developing and expanding resources.

- They love the pleasures of sin, the incitements to luxury, the prospects of gain and the abundance of the world's delicacies.
- The splendour, grandeur, structural wonders, the business of its cities and the many pleasures contained within them entice the eyes and passions of those who belong to the world, so much so that even the godly can be dazzled by their beauty.
- The strength of the world, its power, riches, enormous structures, global trade and the great wealth of its banking systems seem to be indestructible.

But, when the light of heaven shines upon the worlds, oppressions, wars for greed and power, corrupt governments and all its insidious abominations, unjust violence, lies, deceptions and such like things will be exposed. Her highest wisdom and most exalted intelligence will be brought low and her joyful songs will be heard no more. The words, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great," echoes the following words of Isaiah:

- Behold, here come riders, horsemen in pairs!" And he answered, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon; and all the carved images of her gods he has shattered to the ground." (Isaiah 21:9).

What Isaiah prophesied concerning the celebrated seat of the Babylonian Empire came to pass by the hand of Cyrus the King of Media Persia who God called His anointed shepherd (Isaiah 44:28), and said He would lead him by his right hand (Isaiah 45:1) and called Him by name (Isaiah 45:3) and said He would equip him (Isaiah 45:5). Now we have a future global Babylon (signifying the powers, governments and rulers of the world), who by the hand of God's true anointed shepherd the Lord Jesus Christ will be brought to utter ruin. Her fall was previously announced in chapter fourteen:

- 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." (Rev. 14:8).

But now her fall is not only declared at large, but also stated that after her fall she would be made a scene of desolation, as the ancient Babylon was, according to the predictions of Isaiah concerning it:

- Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the splendor and pomp of the Chaldeans, will be like Sodom and Gomorrah when God overthrew them. (Isaiah 13:19).

Like the Babylon of old the wickedness of this latter-day Babylon will be great, it will be totally devoid of the true God, and of His ways and His laws and full of all sorts of pagan religions and by her wealth and luxury drawn the inhabitants of the earth into her ungodly system. By merchandise, greed and oppression of the poor she has held the interest of multitudes and kept them living in her wealth. When this new Babylon fails it will be as the ruin of ancient Babylon, with one big difference, this new Babylon will not rise again, it will be utterly laid waste, as was Sodom and Gomorrah, never again to be inhabited. The fact that the ancient city of Babylon was destroyed according to the prophetic word of the prophets, is a sure sign that the latter-day Babylon will also be utterly-destroyed as predicted here in the book of Revelation.

She has become a dwelling place for demons: (v2) this maybe and allusion to the ancient belief that the demons inhabited abandoned cities, old ruins, and deserts.

A haunt (cage in KJV) for every unclean bird: (v2) the word translated cage is the same that is rendered hold. The idea is that those who are given over to the world, its luxuries, wealth indulgences and pleasures are bound by their own desires and lusts within it, as though they were in a cage and cannot escape. A warning is given here to all who expect mercy from God, that they should not give themselves over to this latter-day ungodly world system signified by the name Babylon.

Her Sins are High as Heaven, God has Remembered Her Iniquities.

- **Revelation 18:4-6:** 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; ⁵for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. ⁶Pay her back as she herself has paid back others, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed.

Her sins are heaped high as heaven: (v5) carries the following three ideas:

1. One after another, from generation to generation the collective sins of the world have formed a great tower that has reached up to heaven like the tower of Babel. It means that the sins themselves have touched the face of heaven. Sometimes the oppressed have thought that God had forgotten the voice of the enemy, but just because judgment is delayed does not mean God has forgotten. It could be said that we are at this present time living in the long day of grace and the long day of death.
2. That the sins of this mystical Babylon had become so prominent as to attract the attention of God:
 - We would have healed Babylon, but she was not healed. Forsake her, and let us go each to his own country, for her judgment has reached up to heaven and has been lifted-up even to the skies. (Jer. 51:9).
3. Her sins are heaped high as heaven, in the same way that Cain's murder of Abel came to God's attention:
 - The LORD said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. (Gen. 4:10).

God has remembered her iniquities: (v5) this does not mean that God forgets various sins at different times, but carries the idea that He is now ready to act accordingly.

Repay her double for her deeds: (v6) is not addressed to the faithful, or those who have suffered from her, but to the seven angels with the seven last plagues of the wrath of God (chapter sixteen). These are called upon to take vengeance and pour out God's judgment and wrath, on behalf of those who had suffered:

- Under the greed and oppression of governments and the oppressive global financial system.
- By wars fought to enhance the power of the super-rich and such like things.

The expression, "repay her double for her deeds," carries the idea of destruction and utter ruin so great that Babylon will never be able to rise again. It is, in contrast to a punishment that allows the one being punished to rise-up and continue in their way as God punished Israel, but not to utter destruction to never rise again.

I Sit as a Queen, I am no Widow, and Mourning I shall Never See.

- **Revelation 18:7-8:** As she glorified herself and lived in luxury, so give her a like measure of torment and mourning, since in her heart she says, 'I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.' ⁸For this reason her plagues will come in a single day, death and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her."

The thought of retribution carried on in this verse expresses the heartfelt cry of all who mourn over the destructive power of sin running rampant over the face of the earth and the suffering of the innocent in this world.

I sit as a queen; I am no widow: (v7) and will never see sorrow. The following verses show that these words are echoes of prophecies against ancient Babylon:

- You said, "I shall be mistress forever," so that you did not lay these things to heart or remember their end. ⁸Now 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": ⁹These two things shall come to you in a moment, in one day; the loss of children and widowhood shall come upon you in full measure, in spite of your many sorceries and the great power of your enchantments. (Isaiah 47:7-9).

And against Tyre:

- Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because your heart is proud, and you have said, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas,' yet you are but a man, and no god, though you make your heart like the heart of a god— (Ezekiel 28:2).

The expression, "I sit as a queen, I am no widow," signifies extreme pride, and pomp, and arrogant boasting; she has glorified herself and lived deliciously in all kinds of elegance, luxury, and indulgences. Many commentators suppose this to refer to the Papal Church, because of the statement, "I sit," but, this does not necessarily apply to the Papal Church especially when it is written that ancient Babylon said:

- I shall be mistress forever, so that you did not lay these things to heart or remember their end. ⁸Now 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." (Isaiah 47:7-9).

Here Babylon is pictured as a mistress sitting securely. The focus here is not the king of Babylon, but the entire populations of Babylon. It carries the idea that because of the power, might and grandeur of the city of Babylon the attitude of the inhabitants is such that they feel they are invincible from any dangers. It is also written that the prince of Tyre whose heart was proud said:

- I am a god, I sit in the seat of the gods, (Ezek. 28:2).

Here the king of Tyre pictures himself as sitting in the seat of the gods, both, of these instances are in the context of secular kingdoms and not religious churches. Though all secular countries and nations of all generations have within them various religions and spiritual movements, the focus of these verses is not upon churches and religion, but secular kingdoms. The entire focus of the previous chapter is upon the Papal Church of Rome and false and corrupted religion, and the judgment of the Papal Church and global false religion signified by the great prostitute woman full of abominations, is the focus of the first verses of the next chapter.

I am no widow: (v7) carries the idea she does not stand alone, many nations are in league with her, it is also an expression of prideful self-confident security.

Mourning I shall never see: (v7) this is suggestive of a self-confident delusional state where there is a total lack of fear, and an expression of absolute self-confident security, because one has such great power that they believe there is no king, ruler or nation that can overpower them.

REVELATION 18:9-19

Alas! Alas! You Great City, Babylon! For Your Judgment Has Come.

- **Revelation 18:9-19:** And the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning. ¹⁰They will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say, "Alas! Alas! You great city, you mighty city, Babylon! For in a single hour your judgment has come." ¹¹And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore, ¹²cargo of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth, all kinds of scented wood, all kinds of articles of ivory, all kinds of articles of costly wood, bronze, iron and marble, ¹³cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and slaves, that is, human souls. ¹⁴"The fruit for which your soul longed has gone from you, and all your delicacies and your splendors are lost to you, never to be found again!" ¹⁵ The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud, ¹⁶"Alas, alas, for the great city that was clothed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, with jewels, and with pearls! ¹⁷For in a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste." And all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off ¹⁸and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning, "What city was like the great city?" ¹⁹And they threw dust on their heads as they wept and mourned, crying out, "Alas, alas, for the great city where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth! For in a single hour she has been laid waste.

As we have already seen the city of Babylon here does not refer to the literal city of Babylon or even a single city of great power and wealth, but to the whole world and the global stock market, the banking system, the governments of the world and its commerce and trade. The spirit of antichrist is a worldly spirit, and the sorrow is worldly sorrow not godly sorrow, in that it is sorrow, for the loss of outward comforts, possessions and riches, not sorrow for who they have hurt especially God. For those who have gained magnificence, power and great riches the loss is harder to bear.

All the wealth, luxuries and grandeur, that prosperous traders gain, bring only temporal joy in this world, until trouble comes and all that they have set their heart and mind upon take up wings and fly away and the fruits their hearts lusted after, are departed from them, they are then left with deep mourning and only sorrow and the coffin the worm and eternal death await them. In contrast to this are the unsearchable riches of Christ; that no one can take and that will never fade and can never be lost and lead to eternal life and everlasting happiness. Those who lack the luxuries and wealth of this world but have the riches of Christ should always keep in mind that though poor in this world are rich in God's eyes and have eternal treasures stored up for them in heaven.

They will stand far off, in fear of her torment: (v10) those who had grown rich off the wealth of the world stand powerless to do anything to prevent the utter collapse of the world's global financial system. When this day comes every attempt to prevent it will be futile. Those who build their life on the things of this world, are building their life on sandy ground. The merchants of the earth recognise that this collapse is a judgement that has come upon the world's trading and commerce system (see following verses) and are fully aware that there is nothing they can do to prevent it. The expression, "they will stand far off, in fear of her torment," carries the idea that they will stand fearing just how bad this collapse will be.

Alas, alas, that great city Babylon: (v10) the lamentation here will be heard throughout every nation of the world, as it will come as the flood came in the days of Noah, when they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage and were totally unaware of it until the flood came and swept them all away. (Matt. 24:37-39). And as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, totally unaware that fire and sulfur was about to rain on them and destroy them all (Luke 17:28-29).

Likewise, this financial collapse will come in the same way, once it starts, it will quickly spread itself around the world, like a toxic contagious virus spreads itself through the body.

For in a single hour your judgment has come: (v10) the general idea here is, that, when the final ruin of the world's money system and the downfall of its kings, rulers, leaders and governments begin it will happen very quickly.

REVELATION 18:20-22

The Great City Babylon will be Thrown down and Found No More.

- **Revelation 18:20-22:** Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her!" ²¹Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence, and will be found no more; ²²and the sound of harpists and musicians, of flute players and trumpeters, will be heard in you no more, and a craftsman of any craft will be found in you no more, and the sound of the mill will be heard in you no more.

Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints, apostles and prophets: (v20) that which is a matter of mourning for those who love the world is a matter of rejoicing for those who love the things of heaven.

A mighty angel: (v21) the taking up of the stone and casting it into the waters is a symbol drawn from the following prophetic words that Jeremiah said to Seraiah:

- When you finish reading this book (containing all the disaster that should come upon Babylon), tie a stone to it and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates, ⁶⁴and say, "Thus shall Babylon sink, to rise no more, because of the disaster that I am bringing upon her, and they shall become exhausted." Thus far are the words of Jeremiah. (Jer. 51:63-64).

Jeremiah told Seraiah to tie the prophetic roll containing all the disaster that would come upon Babylon to a stone and cast them together into the Euphrates, prophetically symbolising the ruin of Babylon to rise no more. This of course firstly applies to ancient Babylon and it came to pass, proving that these prophetic words referring to the latter-day Babylon will also come to pass.

Babylon the great city will be thrown down with violence: (v7), the idea is, that when this crisis comes it will not be by a gentle and natural decline, but by force and all sorts of violence, perhaps by war, worldwide civil violence, some other major crisis or some foreign power. In Exodus, the Egyptian warriors and chariots in the Red Sea are pictured as sinking in the waters like a stone:

- The floods covered them; (Pharaoh's chariots) they went down into the depths like a stone. (Exod. 15:5).
- You blew with your wind; the sea covered them (Pharaoh's chariots); they sank like lead in the mighty waters. (Exod. 15:10).
- You divided the sea before them (Israel), so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land, and you cast their pursuers (Egypt's chariots), into the depths, as a stone into mighty waters. (Neh. 9:11).

The great beast who sat upon many waters and boasted, "I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see," (v7), will sink as a stone in muddy waters.

REVELATION 18:23

The Voice of Bridegroom and Bride will be Heard in You No More.

- **Revelation 18:23:** and the light of a lamp (candle in KJV) will shine in you no more, and the voice of bridegroom and bride will be heard in you no more, for your merchants were the great ones of the earth, and all nations were deceived by your sorcery.

The words, "the light of a lamp (candle in KJV) will shine in you no more," carries the idea of total desolation in that every light has been put out leaving the entire city lying in utter darkness. This can apply to the following two things:

1. The faithful church (the Bride) and the Lord Jesus Christ (the groom) and the Gospel, will be heard no more, since it is most likely the church is raptured prior to this utter destruction of Babylon and all it symbolises. For God has not destined us for wrath (1 Thess. 5:9), and this destruction is a result of one of the seven angels pouring out his vial/bowl of wrath, which bring about the destruction of all that is hostile toward God, toward Christ and his people, and prepares the way for Christ to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice joy and peace on earth.
2. The merry, cheerful and glad voices of laughter heard at marriage celebrations in the streets and of newly-married couples will be heard no more, since it will be a great time of sorrow grief and sadness in contrast to the laughter, joy and celebrations heard in the world prior to this utter-destruction.

Your merchants were the great ones of the earth: (v23) the great contrast is between the time when massive cargo ships sailed the oceans, crowds flooded the shopping centres and filled the streets, and now, the seas are empty, shopping centres vacant and the streets bare. The judgment falls upon the merchants for the following two reasons:

1. The merchants of the earth have gained their great wealth and global empires by oppressing workers and underpaying them, especially in third world countries.
2. Powerful mafia cartels, corrupt organisations and criminals for selfish profit are selling hallucinating drugs worldwide destroying the lives of millions amongst all nations.

All nations were deceived by your sorcery: (v23) the word sorceries, is from the Greek word (*pharmakeia and pharmakeus*). Pharmakeia means medication and by extension carries the idea of magic and witchcraft, while. Pharmakeus refers to a spell producing drug, and carries the idea of a poisoner. This does not refer to Papal Rome or any other religious organisation as some teach, since the focus of this chapter is upon the world symbolised by Babylon. It refers to the populations of the world being deceived by spell producing drugs which are rampant throughout every nation destroying hundreds of millions of innocent lives and to the world being corrupted by the billion-dollar global black-market trade in drugs. By extension, it can also refer to the lies and deceptions rulers, Politian's and global governments make and the vain things they promise to deceive those they rule over to gain their favour, so they can achieve their own selfish ambitious ungodly goals, plans and purposes.

REVELATION 18:24

In Her was Found the Blood of Prophets, the Saints, and the Slain.

- **Revelation 18:24:** And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on earth."

Saints: in this context comes from the Greek word, (*hagios*) meaning clean, sacred pure (morally or religious), innocent and modest. It does not refer to spirits in heaven, but to the faithful in Christ on earth.

Here again we see that this applies to the secular world and not just the Papal Church as the primary focus is upon all who have been slain on earth, not just those who belong to the church (though it does embrace them). Egypt, Tyre, Assyria, Babylon and Rome all persecuted and killed God's people. The blood shed by violence is not limited to Rome, or any other single city. It is of all these cities that Babylon is type. To better

understand the symbolism of Babylon it helps to view it as the world city that is founded upon the principals of all cities, especially violence, since it is one of the most common characters of all cities. In every generation cities have suffered wars and been filled with hostility, murders and violence of all kinds. The idea carried in this verse is that if God appointed a just inquiry into the ruins of the world, after it has been destroyed, to seek out the unjust wickedness and cruel injustice of the world the blood of hundreds of millions of innocent men and women who have been slain in bloody massacres and wars or killed by brutal violence and murders would be found crying for justice as the voice of Abel's blood was heard crying before the LORD from the ground. (Gen. 4:10). It is very apt that this chapter should end with the words, "in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints," (v24), since it prepares us for the following chapter which introduces us to the judgment of the great prostitute woman (great whore in KJV).

For further information concerning Babylon and its symbolism click or tap [Topics in Revelation](#) and select the title: Babylon.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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