

## **Fallen Babylon**

### ***Revelation 18***

#### I. Chapter 17 in relation to chapter 18

- A. Babylon is important in Revelation—1 in 10 verses have to do with Babylon.
- B. Babylon, a literal city and a world system.
- C. Chapter 17 = Spiritual Babylon; chapter 18 = Political economic Babylon.
- D. Babylon has influenced the world empires throughout history since Genesis.
- E. Influence of Babylonian gods:

<u>Babylonian</u>	<u>Greek</u>	<u>Roman</u>
Marduk	Zues	Jupiter
Ishtar (Gds of love)	Aphrodite	Venus
Enlil	Apollo	Zues

#### F. Chapter 17 recap.

1. Introduction of the harlot (Babylon) who rides the beast (antichrist)
  2. This harlot will influence the entire world (17:1).
  3. The entire world joins in with her sensuality—sin (17:2).
  4. She is associated with the rich and powerful (17:4).
  5. She will control the entire world (17:5).
  6. She is a murderer of Christian saints. (17:6)
  7. The beast will eventually destroy her (17:16-17).
- G. Two Babylons (Ch. 17 and ch.18)?
- H. The bottom line: God's judgement and wrath will fall on every person who embraces this wicked (Babylon, worldly) system and rejects Jesus Christ.

#### II. Chapter 18

- A. John sees another angel—like the angel in chapter 17.

1. The angels announces final judgement on Babylon )18:2).
  2. Babylon is left desolate.
- B. Three reasons for Babylon’s judgement (V.2).
1. Demonic involvement
  2. Corruption of nations.
  3. Corruption of world leaders.
- C. We must have our own eyes to the seduction of the world’s materialism.
1. Identity—Where do we get it? Jesus Christ? The world?
  2. Lack of responsibility—with the stewardship of the things of this world.
  3. Lack of contentment—Philippians 4:11-13.
- D. God calls believers out of the world system (Vs. 4-5)
- E. Babylon **glorifies herself** (V.7).
1. *“The greatest sin a person can commit is eclipsing the glory of God”*
  - 2.. The boasting of Babylon in her glory (V.7) see Isaiah 47:7-9.
- F. Babylon’s final judgement happens quickly: **“Woe, woe... in just one hour.”** (V.10).
- G. The kings, the merchants, lament—not over their sins, but their material losses (V. 9-17).
- H. When sinful lost man parties, heaven is angry, when sinful lost man laments, heaven is joyful (V. 20).
- I. Babylon’s final end (Vs. 21-23) As told in Jeremiah 51:60-64.
- III. What should we invest in?
- A. Peter tells us the entire world will eventually burn up (2 Peter 3:10).
- B. The Bible tells us only two things will survive:
1. The soul—goes on through eternity.
    - a. Invest in souls!
  2. The Word of God.
    - a. Isaiah 40:28 **The grass withers and the flower fades, but the Word of our God stands forever.**

## Fallen Babylon

### *Revelation 18*

I'm getting excited to where we are headed these next several weeks... this morning we will finally be out of the horrible judgements in Revelation (since chapter 6! August.)... I have to admit, I've had plenty and am ready to move on.... And moving on we are.

Next week is Palm Sunday and we will begin to focus on Passion Week...the events that took place the last week of Jesus Christ's life...specifically His "triumphal entry into Jerusalem...culminating the following week with Resurrection Sunday.

But it won't end there... the following week we will be back in Revelation... but the rest of Revelation is absolutely wonderful ... for the Christian... Jesus returns!...so after today nothing but good news!

Last week we looked at chapter 17...many of you were gone for good reasons so a quick recap of chapter 17...I think these two chapters go together [Stephen Langton, 1227ad, chapter divisions]

Both chapters 17 and 18 are about Babylon...this latter-day Babylon... interesting but Babylon is the most mentioned city in the Bible next to Jerusalem.

- There are about 404 verses in the book of Revelation... 42 of them are about or refer to Babylon...1 out of 10 verses.
- While there are many opinions about who what and where this Babylon is in Revelation... is it allegory?...is it a different city such as Rome or even Jerusalem?... is it a world system?... I believe it refers to the literal city of Babylon which is located 55 miles south of Baghdad on the Euphrates river in Iraq.

In chapter 17:18 refers to Babylon as **the great city**...I take that to mean it is the great city...Babylon is mentioned over 300 times in the Old Testament and all but one verse refers to a literal Babylon.

- While it is a literal city...in chapters 17 and 18 it is also...I believe a world system...

Babylon today is in ruins... the last time it was occupied as a city occurred after its fall to the Persians in 539BC...it hasn't been occupied for the last nearly 2000 years... You might remember that Sadaam Husain tried to rebuild Babylon...he called himself the "successor" to Nebuchadnezzar II... the Neo-Babylonian king. He envisioned himself as a modern reincarnation of Nebuchadnezzar...He spent millions recreating Babylon...never finished.

Saddam even had a coin minted with his picture on one side and Nebuchadnezzar's on the other.

The end time modern prophets of today were going crazy...*Babylon is being rebuilt the end is here!*" then Sadaam was caught and hanged (2006)...Babylon has never been rebuilt... if you study the Old Testament prophets... it seems as though there is going to be a rebuilding of this city in the last days...

So to recap where I am on this... I think Babylon here in chapters 17 and 18 is a literal city but also represents a world system... a world religious system and a political and economic system that emanates out of this city...Revelation 17 is referring to "spiritual Babylon"... Babylon as the center of false world religious system...

The world will merge all religions (except true Christianity)... And I think it is already happening...into a one world religious system...remember... the church I believe will have been removed... leaving a vacuum to be filled... and this Babylon will fill it...

Babylon becomes the center of this world religion... all religions coming together... It began way back in Genesis 11 when the generation after the flood rather than obeying God and dispersing throughout the world being fruitful and multiplying ...

All went to one place... the plain of Shinar... and built a tower "to heaven" for **a name for themselves**... the beginning of the world's religion... man centered religion.... And it has been emanating from that spirit of Babylon ever sense...

You see... ever since the tower of Babel...man's attempt to reach heaven his way... to make a name for themselves... when God scatters the Babylonians throughout the world... they take with them their humanist religion and materialism...

All the empires after the Babylonian empire carried on the Babylonian gods... just the names were changed

<b><u>Babylonian</u></b>	<b><u>Greek</u></b>	<b><u>Roman</u></b>
Marduk	Zues	Jupiter
Ishtar (Gds of love)	Aphrodite	Venus
Enlil	Apollo	Zues

And it didn't stop with the Roman empire... Babylon religion and philosophy has influenced every civilization since... even to this day!... because these two chapters are so interrelated... let's review a few highlights of chapter 17 [I'm not sure how conscious I was last week!]

- Chapter 17 introduces us to a woman... this woman represents this false world religion that rises on the back of the beasts (antichrist) and seduces the entire world... all nations. This woman is called the great harlot...or prostitute... and she "rides the beast"... they

work in tandem for a short time.

- We were told that this great harlot **sits on many waters** which refers to having global influence and impact.
- The entire world is made “drunk with the wine of her sexual immorality”...turning their hearts from truth and God towards this abomination soon to be identified as Babylon.
- 17:4 she is arrayed in purple and scarlet...she is associated with wealth and royalty
- 17:6 the harlot was **drunk with the blood of the saints**... a murderer of those who come to Christ during the tribulation....Babylon hates Christianity...hates God.
- 17:9,10 She sits on **seven mountains which are seven kings** or kingdoms- she is associated with a political system... Which is detailed out in chapter 18. (some think the seven mountains refer to the seven hills of Rome therefore this is talking about Rome... I think it is bigger than that... I think Rome is just a part of the system.
- 17:16-17 The beast and **Ten horns**—the ten horns are ten future kings which will help the beast gain power throughout the world... the beast and these ten powerful kings **will hate the harlot and bring her to ruin**... they will literally destroy the harlot...

All that is so that the Beast will have absolute rule... no longer will it be a federation of many religions and world views moving toward one... there will only be one... the beast's!...the beast will then be the exalted ruler and worshipped as the ONLY ONE...until the second coming of Jesus Christ..

Chapter seventeen is about the spiritual Babylon... now chapter 18 we are seeing “commercial Babylon”... Babylon being the center of the world political and economic system...a one world government....a very humanist materialistic economic system.

I should note that many Bible scholars think that there are two Babylons in chapters 17 and 18... the first Babylon in chapter 17 existed the first 3 ½ years of the tribulation period... it is the “religious” Babylon...at the end of the 3 ½ years.... It is destroyed... 17:16

**And the ten horns which you saw and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will lay waste to her and make her naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire...**

A new Babylon arrives...a geopolitical Babylon... reigns for the last 3 ½ years then is destroyed...there are some verses that is used for support of this view... for example the kings in chapter seventeen along with the beast devour the harlot, Babylon the Great...

But in chapter 18 in verse 9 it says **and the kings of the earth who committed sexual immorality and lived sensuously with her (Babylon) will cry and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning...**

Their conclusion is these are two different reactions from the kings... therefore two different Babylon's...I think they are two different sets of kings... chapter 18 kings are not mentioned as "ten kings"...just **kings of the earth...** so...

I think they are the same literal Babylon... I can support my position but I'm not going to. [time]

A rebuilt Babylon on in present day Iraq...it is called *a city* in this chapter five times...but it is also a world system that emanated out from this city... this city influences the entire world...it is the hub of the beast's eventual commercial empire...

Chapter 18 has been referred to as the eulogy of Babylon...specifically a eulogy of materialism...a "funeral" of humanity...the final death... the final funeral.

The world has always rejected God and His standards...The "Babylonian influence" has existed since Genesis and is still going strong!

The world has always favored man's ways over God's ways... last week I mentioned the concept that all people have a God placed, God shaped vacuum in them... a God shaped hole that only God can fill... but man tries to fill it with anything BUT God...mostly material things that bring pleasure...

1 John 2:16

**For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world....it is the Babylonian system.**

And what we see now is the final hurrah of this Babylonian system... final judgement from God...never to exist again...What I want us to see this morning is... even though this is in the future... **God's judgement and wrath will fall on every person who embraces this wicked system and rejects Jesus Christ.**

This is not just a future fate for a specific people... it is the fate of all who reject Jesus Christ and embrace this "Babylonian spirit"... this craving of false man centered religion and obsession with the materials of this world.

We need to pay attention!

**Read 18:1-8**

These verses are similar to what we saw in chapter 17... but now in the context of material wealth... so this begins with **another angel (1)**... some think this is a reference to Jesus but it is not... we learned this Greek word before...

John says **I saw another**... *another* is the Greek word *allos* which means *another of the same kind*... this is someone of the same kind... compared to who?... the angel in chapter 17... one of **the angels who have the seven bowls** (17:1).

So John meets up with another angel... not Jesus... and this angel announces that Babylon has fallen... (2) **Fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great**... now it is a wasteland... it is desolate... it thought it would remain forever... but now... look at it!

So whatever you think Babylon is... whatever this Babylonian system is... it's going to come to a final end... destroyed... obliterated... and just like in chapter 17... verse 3 tells us that all the nations of the world have become intoxicated with her wretched immoralities... specifically here her **materialism and greed**...

Right off we see four reasons God brings down Babylon:

**1. Demonic involvement**—(2) **she has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison for every unclean spirit**...

**2. Corruption of nations**—(3a) **For all the nations have drunk the wine of the wrath of her sexual immorality.**

**3. Corruption of world leaders**—(3b) **The kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality with her.**

**4. Corruption of the world's merchants**—(3c) **The merchants of the earth have become rich by the power of her sensuality**... in the final days of this current world... the world is going to be obsessed with this materialistic greed... this is not too hard to believe is it?

I can squint my eyes and see the potential of all four of these in our country... our culture today... we are not far from Babylon... especially when it comes to what we are seeing here regarding material things... nothing wrong with material things! Unless they become an obsession... a god.... The thing you try to fill that "God shaped hole" with.

Only God can fill that void that is in all of us... yet we try to fill it with everything else but God...

The two deep, deep desires of the unregenerate human heart would be ***to be your own god and to eat drink and be merry***

How and when does materialism and wealth become a problem... a spiritual problem with possible eternal irreparable damages and ramifications... three areas.

**1. Identity**—Our identity is to be in the Lord not our stuff...what happens when you lose your stuff?... are you destroyed? Is life over?

**2. Lack of responsibility**—As Christians we are called to live within our means...when we stray past our means we place ourselves under the debtor...enslaved... [Bible much to say about debt]...

- The average American has \$6715.00 in credit card debt (with the average interest rate of 22.3%)...why is that?...because we are living beyond our means... a responsibility problem.

**3. Lack of contentment**—We should be at peace and content with what we do have...  
Philippians 4:11-13 **I learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in abundance; in any and all things I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.**

If you can look at those three areas and say 1. *My identity is firmly placed on Jesus Christ...* 2. *I am responsible with living within my means* and 3. *I am content with whatever circumstances I'm in...* (all three are interrelated!)

Material things won't own you.... You own them... **only then can you use your material things...your wealth to the glory of God...** the problem is.... Most spend their lives acquiring and spending for the glory of themselves....

What made me even bring this up is because as I was reading chapter 18... it hit me that this Babylonian spirit has crept into the church ...it has crept into MY LIFE!...and the message of chapter 18 is it goes nowhere good!...it's all going to burn up!

This led me to search out some current statistics I found in a Los Angeles Times national survey.

- There are on the average, 300,000 items in the average American home.
- The average American home has tripled in size over the last 50 years...AND YET... 1 out of every 10 Americans rent off site storage units! Storage units are the fastest growing segment of the real estate industry for the last four decades!
- The United States has upward to 50,714 storage facilities, more than three times as many Starbucks.
- Currently there is 7.3 sq.ft. feet of storage space available for every man, woman and child in this nation. It is possible for every American to stand under the roofing of self-storage units all at the same time.
- 25% of households that have two car garages do not have any room to park one car. 32% only have room for one vehicle.
- 3.1 % of the world's children live in the United States, but they own 40% of the toys produced globally.

- The average American woman... owns 30 complete outfits... 1 for every day of the month... in 1930, it was 9. The average American throws away 69 lb.s of clothing per year.
- Americans spend more on shoes, jewelry and watches than they do on higher education.

When we talk about Babylon... we think... *That's far into the future...* We have some Babylon right here!...

#### Read verse 4

This is a call for those people who have come to Christ during the tribulation period to not get sucked into Babylon!...

#### Read verse 5

*Get away! Get out!* This world system goes nowhere good!...in fact... she is going to pay for her sins. This is not just a plea to those in the last of this time of tribulation... it is for us as well... judgement is coming for sins **piled high!**

Isaiah 52:11

**11 Depart, depart, go out from there, touch nothing unclean; Go out of the midst of her, purify yourselves, You who carry the vessels of the Lord.**

#### Read verses 6- 7

Final Judgement is crashing down on Babylon from God for her piled high unrepented sins... *Lex Taliones*...Justice in proportion to the offense... **to the degree that she glorified herself**

What Babylon is doing is glorifying herself... self-glorification...*“The greatest sin a person can commit is eclipsing the glory of God”* Taking unto oneself the glory that only God deserves...

Isaiah 42:8 **I am the Lord, that is My name: I will not give my glory to another, nor My praise to graven images.**

Daniel 4:30 (Nebuchadnezzar)

The king reflected and said “is this not Babylon the Great, which **I myself** have built as a royal residence by the might of **my** power and for the glory of **my** majesty?

4:31

**While the word was in the kings mouth, a voice came from heaven saying, “king Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you,**

God is opposed to the proud... God is sovereign over all things...He gives grace to the humble.

**(7) To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously...**

**Sensuously** = to live for the wanton pleasures of the world... the basic desires of the sin nature... living a life that excludes the creator of the universe... yet this is what most of the world believes and is doing...

1 Timothy 5:6

**But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead... even while she lives.**

Babylon says (7)... **I sit as a queen and I am not a widow...** direct quote.

Isaiah 47:7 - 47:8 God is speaking to Babylon... "Queen Babylon"

**7 Yet you said, 'I will be a queen forever.'  
These things you did not put on your heart  
Nor remember the outcome of them.**

**8 "So now, hear this, you sensual one, One who is living for the wanton pleasures of the world  
Who sits securely,  
Who says in your heart,  
'I am, and there is no one besides me.  
I will not sit as a widow,  
Nor know loss of children.'**

Oh yeah?...God says...

**9 But these two things will come on you suddenly in one day:  
Loss of children and widowhood.  
They will come on you in full measure  
In spite of your many sorceries,  
In spite of the great might of your spells.**

Do you see the attitude of the world?... the Babylonian spirit?... *I'm in control... I am in power... I will eat drink and be merry forever!*...Jesus addressed this attitude in a parable in Luke 12 :16-21

**And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man was very productive.17 And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?'18 Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry."**

If we stopped the story there we would think...this guy's got it made... he has so much wealth.. it keeps multiplying more and more...He would be on the cover of Forbes magazine... all he has to do now is take it easy, eat drink and be merry!

**20 But God said to him, 'You fool! This *very* night your soul is required of you; and *now* who will own what you prepared?'21 So is the one who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."**

Babylon thought she would live forever... that the wealth... the material pleasures of life... the partying will go on and on and on... but what happened?...**(10) woe, woe, the great city, Babylon...in one hour your judgement has come....**

Poof! Gone!... in an hour!... Judgement from God will be just... and it will be quick!... Jeremiah said it well centuries before John saw all this:

Jeremiah 51:24

**"But I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all their evil that they have done in Zion before your eyes," declares Yahweh.**

Jeremiah 51:56

**For the destroyer is coming against her, against Babylon,  
And her mighty men will be captured;  
Their bows are shattered;  
For Yahweh is a God of recompense,  
He will fully repay.**

**Read verses 9-10**

**These** kings of the earth are not lamenting their sinning against God... they are not feeling any remorse... they are lamenting the fact that the party is over!... their source for pleasure just got wiped out!

Interesting the repetition of a few words... **"Woe, Woe... (10, 16,17,19)** meaning very serious judgement has arrived...followed by **in one hour...** so quickly it comes to an end **in one hour gone!**

[By the way, the language really speaks of a literal city burning....] so here the kings of the world are lamenting.... In verse 11 the merchants... all those who have made money...much money in the Babylonian economic system... they too are lamenting.

**Read verse 11**

*No one is buying anything anymore!!...* and we're talking some good stuff!... here is a nudge to all of you who are buying tons of gold right now... thinking gold is inflation proof...

**Read verses 12-17**

All these things that are so precious...and valuable in this world... nothing!

**Read verses 18-19****JUST LIKE THAT!!!!SHE HAS BEEN LAID WASTE**

Jeremiah 51:13

**O you who dwell by many waters, abundant in treasures, your end has come, the measure of your end.**

James 4:4

**You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity toward God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world sets himself as an enemy of God.**

Interesting... when sinful man is partying...sinning... laughing... in the face of God... We see an angry God in heaven.... But when the same people are in misery... lament... agony from their sins yet unrepentant... heaven is rejoicing...

**Read verse 20**

*Why do the wicked prosper?.... Why do the wicked live on, growing old and increasing in power?"* (Job 21:7)...answer?... God's righteous judgement will take care of it!...rejoice!

Babylon the great city... Babylon the great world power will come to a final permanent end...

**Read verse 21-23**

[Jeremiah 51:60 - 51:64

**60 So Jeremiah wrote in a single scroll all the calamity which would come upon Babylon, that is, all these words which have been written concerning Babylon.61 Then Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "As soon as you come to Babylon, then see that you read all these words aloud,62 and then you will say, 'You, O Yahweh, have promised concerning this place to cut it off, so that there will be nothing inhabiting it, whether man or beast, but it will be a perpetual desolation.'63 And as soon as you finish reading this scroll, you will tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates,64 and then you will say, 'Just so shall Babylon sink down and not rise again because of the calamity that I am going to bring upon her; and they will become utterly weary.'" Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.]**

Peter tells us there is a day in the future where everything will be burned up... 2 Peter 3:10

**But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be found out.** All things will burn up...

This being the case... what should we be investing in?... Paul said in 1 Corinthians 7:31

**31 and those who use the world, as though they did not make full use of it. For the form of this world is passing away.**

John said in 1 john 2:17

**17 And the world is passing away, and also its lusts...**

What is our takeaway from these two chapters?...What should we be doing with our time?... Our investments?... should we buy gold?...as I search the Scriptures... I find only two things worth investing in... for I can find only two things that will last:

### **Two things will last:**

#### **1. The soul of a person**

The soul is the immaterial part of you that goes on through eternity...Ecclesiastes 3:11 **He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart...**all the stuff we work so hard to get is all going to burn up... but our souls go on forever....

*Invest in your own soul...*feed your soul... cleanse your soul in God's word...

*Invest in the souls of others*

Your family... children... grandchildren... your friends... anyone you bump into... rub shoulders with... what in this world can be more valuable and important than that!!!!???

#### **2. The Word of God.**

Mathew 24:35

**Heaven and earth WILL pass away, but My words will not pass away.**

Isaiah 40:28

**The grass withers and the flower fades, but the Word of our God stands forever.**

1 John 2:17

**And the world is passing away, and also its lusts, but the one who does the will of God abides forever.**