

Revelation Chapter 18 Continued

Revelation 18:14 "And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all."

And the merchandise that was available before are now gone and will never ever be available again. The commercial system is completely shut down and that reality is about to be made manifest.

It will probably be a time when it will be next to impossible to even find enough to feed your family. Even if you did find enough for them to eat, it would probably take all you could possibly make just to have even bread for your family.

This is probably the time when a loaf of bread would cost a whole day's wages. There will be no money at all left for niceties.

Even if you have a tremendous amount of money, there will be great shortages of real items necessary to live on not to mention the things the rich consume will be entirely unavailable.

Revelation 18:15 "The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,"

Here, we see such great fear from these merchants who used to sell their merchandise at tremendous, outrageous profits. Like today when many get rich from oil by taking advantage of those who can't afford the inflated prices. And that includes the government who adds very high taxes to every gallon of gas. When this horrible punishment comes, it will put the fear of God on those looking on. It is about time that someone begins to fear.

These merchants weep because their materialistic passions can no longer be fulfilled. The weeping that begins then will last for eternity in hell.

These greedy merchants are a classic illustration of those in all times who gain the whole world only to end up forfeiting their own souls.

Revelation 18:16 "And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!"

Any city, we would come up with; would be pure speculation. As in the lesson before this, we must realize this "Babylon" is a city and, also the apostate church. These plagues jump back and forth from the city to the church (see article "[Babylon the City](#)").

The "fine linen" has to do with the church world. All of this describes the finery in these big churches. "purple, and scarlet" are Godly colors.

These items were common commodities in the ancient world and were the source of great immense financial gain. Those materialistic, unrepentant people mourn as God brings His judgment against Babylon, knowing these items will never be found again.

Revelation 18:17 "For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,"

In one Hour: The destruction will come suddenly and quickly. The world's pagan economic system will collapse. They cast dust on their heads as a sign of mourning and sorrow (verse 19; Job. 2:12; Lam. 2:10; Ezek. 27:30). God hath avenged you on her: God at last judges the Babylonian system for its treatment of God's people, particularly those who are martyred during the Tribulation (Rev. 6:9-11).

“Shipmaster”: Ship captains will mourn the loss of Babylon and the lucrative transport business that went with it.

Revelation 18:18 "And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What [city is] like unto this great city!"

The people cry and are amazed as they see this destruction taking place before their eyes.

Revelation 18:19 "And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate."

Casting dust on their heads is a typical ancient expression of grief. These last few scriptures state sailors, but could mean any system of transportation and delivery systems of today such as planes, trains, trucks etc. All of these services would be immediately shut down if the commercial system was destroyed including banking and computers.

Even a lukewarm church would certainly be aware of what other believers thought the Bible teaches about the wrath of God. When they realize they have missed the rapture of the Church, there would be grief beyond comprehension. This was a sudden destruction that no one could deny was a punishment from God.

“In one hour”: Not just 60 minutes, but one brief period of swift judgment (see note on verse 8).

Consider what would happen if there was no more electrical system available.

Revelation 18:20 "Rejoice over her, [thou] heaven, and [ye] holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her."

“God hath avenged you on her”: The angel will exhort the tribulation martyrs (6:9-11), to rejoice, not over the deaths of those doomed to eternal hell, but, because God’s righteousness and justice will have prevailed.

God has taken vengeance on the ones who killed his prophets and apostles and even his blessed Son. Finally, all of those martyred by these have been avenged.

The long-awaited moment of vindication, retribution and vengeance for which the martyred tribulation believers had prayed for (in Rev. 6:9-10), and for which all the redeemed have hoped, that time has arrived.

These final verses picture from within the results of the collapse of the Babylonian system. The finality of its destruction is shown by the six fold repetition of the phrase "no more at all". The stone cast into the sea depicts the violence and permanence of the destruction. The Babylonian system began (in Genesis 10), and has continued uninterrupted in one form or another to the present day. But one day it will suddenly "sink," never to return.

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Revelation 18:21 "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast [it] into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."

"Great millstone": Millstones were large, heavy stones used to grind grain. This metaphor portrays the violence of Babylon's overthrow (compare Jer. 51:61-64; see note on Matt. 18:6).

"Sea" sometimes means masses of people, but I do not believe that is the meaning here. Whether this is only a real city, (rebuilt Babylon), or a sinful commercial, social and political system that corrupts the entire world which is being destroyed here, this is speaking of total destruction. More than likely this is speaking of both as the two can be easily associated. This millstone here is similar to the one spoken of as being around a neck and thrown into the sea.

In the light of this Scripture, this is a really bad punishment. I believe this illustration is to show the finality of this judgment of God. We must remember Babylon is destroyed by God Himself, not by the devil.

Verses 22-23: The fall of Babylon ends whatever semblance of normalcy will still exist in the world after all the seals, trumpets and vials. Life will be totally disrupted and the end near. No more music, no industry, no preparing of food ("millstone"), no more power for light, and no more weddings because God will destroy the deceivers and deceived.

Revelation 18:22 "And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft [he be], shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;"

Literally everything grinds to a halt everywhere. Babylon will be completely and so thoroughly destroyed that it will never rise again as predicted by the Old Testament prophets.

Isaiah 13:19-21 "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah." "It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there." "But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there."

In (verses 23b-24), three reasons are given for the destruction of Babylon:

- (1) Its arrogance;
- (2) Its deception of the nations; and
- (3) Its persecution and martyrdom of God's people.

Revelation 18:23 "And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."

Three final reasons are given for Babylon's judgment. Notice that the merchants are mentioned as the great men of the earth. That's why this is talking of a commercial system as well as a political system. They are not from the city of Babylon, but from all parts of the earth.

First, they use their wealth to ascent to positions of power, prominence and influence. The abuses of the proud, arrogant rich are well documented in scripture. James, Isaiah and Amos condemned the rich for their self-aggrandizement and maltreatment of the poor.

Second is all the nations were deceived by her sorcery. Sorcery is from pharmakeia, the root word of the English words "pharmacy" and "pharmaceuticals". The word is used in the New Testament to refer to magic and occult practices (Gal. 5:20).

We know that "sorceries" have to do with drugs. It seems this city was dealing in drugs. Of course, nearly every major city in the world is also. This is really no help in determining which city. It just helps us establish the extent of the evil. I still believe this city has worldwide connections to a branch of the church. I truly believe the deception they brought to the world was spiritual in nature. Here again, the things mentioned that have stopped, are normal things that happen in all large cities.

Babylon's hold on the world will not be entirely due to her military and economic power, but also to her occult influence.

Revelation 18:24 "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

A final reason given for Babylon's judgment is her murderous slaughter of God's people.

“Blood of prophets, and of saints”: The religious and commercial/political systems embodied in Babylon will commit unspeakable atrocities against God’s people (compare 6:10; 11:7; 13:7, 15; 17:6; 19:2). God will avenge that slaughter of His people (19:2).

This is the city Babylon and the faithless church as well. True, faithful Christians are many times neglected and even oppressed by the church. We see youth lost because of the shallow teachings of this apostate church. Every time I see strong Christians ridiculed by lukewarm Christians, I am more convinced, more people are lost going to a watered-down church than by not going to church at all. At least those who do not go at all are not fooled into a false sense of security. They know they are lost.

It is much easier to reach someone who never went to church, because they know they need a Savior. The ones who go once or twice a year believe they are already saved and don't need the Savior. It is such a shame that the Shepherds do not teach their people to study the Bible for themselves. Through the Word is where true commitment begins.

Recap

Let's go back and read the end of chapter 16 starting with verse 17 through verse 21, as this was the end of the world as we know it.

This is starting when the Angel pours out the seventh vial or bowl judgment which is the last of the 21 plaques of Revelation right before the second coming of Jesus and the battle of Armageddon.

16:17 “And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done”.

16:18 “And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, [and] so great”.

16:19 “And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath”.

16:20 “And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found”.

16:21 “And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, [every stone] about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great”.

Notice that not only Babylon fell, but also the cities of the nations as well (verse 19).

Also, don't forget the earth is already reeling from the thunders and lightings not to mention the biggest earthquake the world has even known.

Then the great hail that weight about a talent (100 pounds each). This hail is totally capable of destroying cities with no problem at all.

Then (verse 20), tells us that every island fled away and the mountains were no longer found. This is the worst plague of the 21 by far as it completely destroys the political, commercial system called Babylon the Great from off the earth. Not to mention that this is the end of the earth as we have known it as it now has been completely leveled and is ready for the renewal process that's coming.

Revelation Chapter 18 Continued Questions

1. In verse 14, what thing had departed from them?
2. What kind of a time is this describing?
3. How much will a loaf of bread cost?
4. Even if you had a great amount of money, what problem would you run into?
5. Why did the merchants stand afar off?
6. What two words were the merchants saying?
7. How was this great city clothed?
8. What do you associate fine linen with?
9. What two things is Babylon?
10. What period of time did the destruction come on?
11. What happened to the ships bringing goods to her?
12. The shipmasters cried when they saw what?
13. What was a sign of terrible grief?
14. Even a lukewarm church would be aware of what?
15. Who was to rejoice over her?

16. Why?
17. Who did God take vengeance on?
18. What did the angel cast into the sea?
19. How will Babylon be thrown down?
20. What does this indicate?
21. Who destroys Babylon?
22. What sounds will not be heard anymore?
23. In verse 23, name three things that indicate this is a city.
24. What does sorceries tell us?
25. What do I believe about the deception they brought into the world?
26. Where does true commitment begin?
27. What message have you received personally from this lesson.