

BABYLON FALLING

Episode Sixteen: Revelation 18&19

Babylon is as ancient as Genesis 10 and as young as the pseudo-utopia in the last pages of Revelation. She seduces the gullible, and destroys those who expose the beast behind her glittering façade. She dies repeatedly, only to rise again to deceive new generations. She reincarnates in Paris, London, Moscow, Beijing, Washington D.C., and other centers of world power. She promises only what God can deliver, but her end, along with those she seduces, is utter destruction.

*“After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority and the earth was illuminated by his splendor. With a mighty voice he shouted, ‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!”*

 —Revelation 18:1&2

1. **Babylon the Great Defined [Brief Refresher]:** St. Augustine in his monumental masterpiece, *The* *City of God*, calls Babylon *Homini Civitatem*—The City of Man. It is the first city-state built by Nimrod, the son of Cush and grandson of Noah. [Genesis 10:8-12] His ancient Babylon is the prototype of future global empires, and he is the prototype of all antichrist saviors to come. He builds a ziggurat [Genesis 11] to seduce his people to replace the worship of the Maker of stars with the stars themselves; the false worship of creation rather than the Creator. His Babylon is a utopian counterfeit of the paradise lost by Adam, as well as the one to be brought by our Savior, Jesus Christ.

His empire, like those to follow [Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, the Holy Roman Empire, the Third Reich] is really a beast—as are all predatory empires. But the beast is hideous and terrifying. **Babylon is the mask worn by the BEAST, the façade that seduces**: beautiful cities, businesses, arts, civic systems, welfare programs, law and order, military security, and social services promising to deliver what only God can ultimately provide. Babylon the Great is the final and most spectacular reincarnation of its day.

1. **The demise and death of the Whore called Babylon the Great.** [Rev. 17: 15-18] Like all prostitutes, Babylon exists to be used—to bring a religious and civil face to the evil and ferocious Beast. But the Beast hates the mask; the whore he is forced to carry.

Now the Rapture has occurred. The saints are gone. God has abandoned the earth to his Wrath [verse 17], just as he hardened the heart of Pharaoh in his judgment of ancient Egypt.

**Question:** Why does the Antichrist abandon all vestiges of pretense by killing the prostitute? [vs 16]

 **The Answer:** Without God’s restraining spirit, the man of lawlessness no longer has to hide behind appearances. The people left behind are so depraved that they will embrace a foul, ferocious beast—worshipping him, even as he prepares to devour them. *“The son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or hat is worshipped, so that he sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God* [2 Thessalonians 2:3-4]

1. **Babylon Doomed. [**Revelation 18:2&3]*“Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great.”*  The angel repeats it twice, like a dirge: “Fallen, fallen…” This an ominous tolling the of death bells.

Some hold that this is a prophecy to St. John about ancient Rome’s destruction. In a sense, that could be true. Ancient Rome was destroyed as are all reincarnations of Babylon—from Assyria to the Third Reich. The average lifespan of every great empire has been about 250 years or ten generations. But this is speaking of the final Babylon: the only one that will be truly a one-world government covering the whole earth.

**The description of her utter destruction is graphic**. [Rev. 18:2] No human life left alive within her ruins: *“…a dwelling for demons…haunt for every impure spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable animal.”* This isJewish apocalyptic literature. Demons and unclean spirits inhabit places of desolation and death. Unclean birds are buzzards, crows, and other carrion birds who feast on the flesh of the dead. Unclean and detestable animals would be jackals, wild dogs and other animals who feast on the flesh and bones of the dead. Babylon the Great becomes the feeding ground of flesh eaters—the banquet hall of the dead.

**The reason for the destruction is graphic.** [Rev. 18:3] *“For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries.”* She has seduced the peoples of the earth to turn from the God who made them for himself, and to run after her seductions. *“The kings of the earth have committed adultery with her.”* She has seduced the kings by giving them power, and propping them up on their tottering thrones. *“…and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.”*  Babylon has created economic networks that seduced the business leaders of the world with “excessive” riches. Think of the massive riches that are being stockpiled by Big Tech, Big Pharma, Wall Street, and the mushrooming number of billionaires in our age of dizzying wealth growth.

1. **A warning to separate from Babylon.** [Revelation 18:4-8] In this call for God’s people to extricate herself from the system. *“Come out of her my people.”* This is a **difficult passage**. After all, Jesus prayed that we would be ‘…in the world…” [John 17:16]. God told his people to build houses and gardens in Babylon, to raise their families there, and be good citizens there. [Jeremiah 29:5ff]. Daniel was a high government official in Babylon, and Esther was the queen of its successor *Beast*, Persia. So, why do we flee a place we are called to live in and see as a mission field?

**Two Possible Interpretations:** 1) The angel isn’t asking us to leave Babylon but to separate ourselves from its sinful culture. As Jesus prayed, “…in the world, but not of the world…” [John 17:16] 2) There really is a time to get out of Babylon, for our own safety and that of our family. We take the second interpretation. There really are times that we need to get out of Dodge. Jesus said of the last days, *“How miserable will those days be for pregnant and nursing mothers. Pray that your flight will not occur in the winter or on the Sabbath, for at that time there will be great tribulation, unmatched from the beginning of the world until now, and never to be seen again.”* [Matthew 24:19-21] So, when will we know that it is time to flee Babylon? [whether in Jeremiah’s day, St. John’s day, our day, or in the last day [remember, there are many editions of Babylon before the final one]:

* *“…so you will not share in her sins…”* [vs. 4] When sin is so overwhelmingly pervasive that it has an inescapably corrupting influence on you or your family.

* *“…so that you will not receive any of her plagues…”* [vs. 4]When judgment is coming that is will be inescapable if you wait too long to get out.
* *“…for her sins are piled up to heaven…”* [vv. 5-8] When the sinfulness is so egregious to heaven, that immediate judgment is inevitable.
* *“…in her heart she boasts, ‘I sit enthroned as queen. I am not a widow, I will never mourn…”* [vs. 7] When Babylon is so haughty that the fear of the Lord has left her altogether. No amount of warning will convince her that God has her in his crosshairs.

[**NOTE**: These principles not only tell us when “to come out and be separate from unbelief” when it comes to Babylon, but also getting out of a toxic friendship, destructive family, unbiblical church, corrupting public school or university, or any other relationship or community that fits the above four warning signs]

1. **Laments of the Doomed** [Rev. 18:11-19] *“…they will weep and mourn over her…”* [vs. 9] Is there anything more devastating than to build your life on something, only to have it collapse? The foolish man who built his house on the sand; to abandon the Creator for the stuff of creation, to believe in a counterfeit utopia, or worship an idol made with human hands, only to have everything you put your hope in crumble before your eyes? This will be the ultimate lament of billions of gullible people who have been seduced by the whore called Babylon.
* **Lament of the Kings** [vv. 9&10] The powerbrokers of the world looked to Babylon to keep them on their thrones. Notice the focus of their lament: *“…you mighty city, in one hour your doom has come!”* [vs. 10] How quickly the mighty can fall—in one hour! Do you remember how quickly the twin towers came down on 9-1-1? The symbol of America’s economic power collapsed before our very eyes! Can you think of how quickly and totally famous and powerful people have fallen from their lofty perch?
* **Lament of the Merchants** [vv. 11-17a] *“The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargos anymore…”* [vs. 11] No empire can ever collapse without creating a global financial crisis. Babylon seduces the titans of industry, merchants of commerce, speculators, bankers, and those who gobble up their merchandise to put trust in her as an economic powerhouse. Yet, all economic systems totter atop a house of cards. A shift in the winds, a catastrophic terrorist attack, plague, pandemic, ecological disaster, or a thousand other unexpected disasters—and everything collapses overnight. We’ve seen it in our lifetimes, but no one can imagine the final collapse of our global economic systems. The merchants lament, *“In one hour such wealth has been brought to ruin!”* [vs. 17a]
* **Lament of the Sea Captains** [vv. 17b-19] *“Every sea captain…*

*will stand far off…they will throw dust on their heads, and with*

*weeping and mourning cry out…”* Everyone will be affected by

this collapse, from kings to merchants to consumers—to those

who make their living delivering the goods! Their response is

the same: *“…in one hour she has been brought to ruin.”* [vs. 19] One cannot help but think of the Old Testament prophetic warnings about how easily and quickly idols made with human hands fall, whereas the God of the universe stand Immutable, Unchangeable, Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent!

1. **This Babylon Will Never Rise Again.** [Revelation 18:21-24] *“Then a mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said; ‘With such violence the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, never to be found again.”*  This is God’s violence. When he knocks anything down, it never gets up again. Phrase after phrase describe the finality of God’s judgment. Music will never be heard in her again [vs. 22]. No worker or tradesperson will ever work in her again [vs.22]. No lights will ever shine in her again [vs. 23]. No marriages or weddings will take place. No laughter of children or homes with families [vs. 23] There will be no powerbrokers, titans of industry, or celebrities to wow people [vs. 23].

**Again poetic justice:** Death in the city will be holy justice because *“In her was found the blood of prophets and of God’s holy people, of all who have been slaughtered on the earth.”*  Babylon is really the pretty face of the BEAST empire. In all of her reincarnations she has brought death, destruction, and untold misery to the earth. More than 1.6 billion people have been slaughtered in the wars she has inflicted on planet earth. She has martyred God’s prophets and his sons and daughters. He is a purveyor of death, the grim reaper, a serial killer, a mass murderer: Assyrian warlords, genocidal pharaohs, conquering Caesars, Hitler, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, and a thousand other bloody antichrists and their diabolical schemes to conquer the earth.

*“For her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes.”* Babylon has earned her death sentence after trying God’s infinite patience for far too long! As a result...

 *“REJOICE OVER HER, YOU HEAVENS. REJOICE, YOU PEOPLE OF GOD.*

 *REJOICE, APOSTLES AND PROPHETS! FOR GOD HAS JUDGED HER*

 *WITH THE JUDGMENTS SHE HAS IMPOSED ON YOU!’*

1. **A Three Stanza Praise Song from Heaven**  [Revelation 18:1-16] **QUESTIONS:** We might wonder how we could praise such death and destruction—especially since so many of our friends and family might be destroyed in apocalyptic holocaust that is unleashed on the world. How many millions, or even billions of men, women, and children will be slaughtered in God’s great wrath? It is hard to imagine, or comprehend. How could a loving God do this? How could we possibly sing “Hallelujah” over such carnage?

**THE ANSWER:** *“…a great multitude* ***in heaven*** *shouting: Hallelujah!”* [vs. 1] We will be glorified. That means we will have the exact mind of Christ. Our holiness will be perfected so that we no longer have a worldly mindset. We will have no fleshly sentimentalism that overlooks sin and its deadly impact on others. We live in an age that seduces us to overlook that which is abhorrent to God and perverse in its very nature—all in the name of tolerance, non-judgmentalism, and acceptance. That won’t be a temptation to us in heaven. The day of wrath has come, and we will rejoice for:

* For the **vindication of God’s sovereignty** [vv. 1&2] *“Salvation, power and glory belong to our God.”*
* **For his perfect justice** [vv. 2&3] *“He has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”*
* **For the completion of his plan of the ages** [vv. 4-6] *“Amen, Hallelujah!”* [vs.4]—Literally, “It is done, so be it! Praise the Lord!” What God has promised has been done. *“Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns.”* [vs. 6]
* **For the glorification of his saints** [vv. 6-9] *“Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb.”* [vs. 9]
* **For the glory that belongs to Christ.** [vs.10] *“…for it is the Spirit of prophecy who bears testimony to Jesus.”*