

BABYLON REAPING JUDGMENT

Rev. 18

INTRODUCTION:

There are few passages in literature which compare in dramatic power with the scene of the (fall of Babylon), as presented by John. The fate of the city is in his mind. After these things, he now commences and begins to (introduce) to us a new set of circumstances. And this serves to direct our attention to the unity of the subject. Or the subject which he has been discussing. This is very interesting. Babylon of course is in the forefront of Chapter 17, 18, and 19. In the chapter preceeding, we have discovered the (great harlot), Babylon. Highly organized system of evil in this world. And now, after that picture, he comes to give us in another form the doom of Babylon - Babylon reaping judgment. He gives this along with the lamentation of many who are involved in her activities. Sometime in the (future), when the Heavens open and are rolled back, and our Lord comes - we just wonder (how) these things could be. What is the sign of the coming. What is the end of the world. And in these chapters we are unfolding some of the things that are going to take place. And up ahead of us, in Chapters 21 and 22, we are going to get a description of the new Heaven and the new earth. And the new Jerusalem - the new home of the soul.

Pouring out the seven bowls of wrath, filled up with the judgment of God, we have now come as we see the great judgment upon the (harlot) sitting upon the waters. The judgment upon (Babylon), that city. Which symbolizes the life of a Godless Christ-rejecting world. And the mystery of that is carried over to Chapter 17 - in the judgment of God upon them. And in chapter 18 - the judgment of the Lord is on the city of Babylon. The social, the

political, the cultural, the commercial life of all of this, upon the face of the globe.

Now we want to come and look at this chapter in a couple or three ways. There are several ways that we might fix it up so that we can get it so that we can understand it. I've merely chosen -- first, review. V. 1-4. And then, a word - reasons for the judgment. V. 5-19. And third, the results. V. 20ff. Now with these three words, we'll be able to get this all together. However, right in the heart of this chapter, we have the lamentations. The kings, the merchants, and the ship masters. And they all weep because of their losses.

I. REVIEW

Now I have said just a word about some introductory things and the mystery of the harlot.

V. 1 - We discover, after these things, I saw another angel come down from Heaven. Having great power, and the earth was enlightened with his glory. This is a very impressive vision - the angel, number one - has authority. Number two, there is something of splendor about him - he seems to come directly from the presence of God. And the voice of this angel is coming.

V. 2 - And he cried mightily with a strong voice saying - Babylon the great is falling. And is become the habitation of devils and behold every foul spirit. The cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

The voice announces Babylon's fall. Secondly, the voice announced the demon habitation. This sounds very much like Jer. 50:39, 51:8, 37. And Isaiah 13:9-22, Isaiah 21:9, 34:11-14. In these verses talk about doom songs - about Babylon and Ninevah. In spite of their foretelling of the (ruin), we find that the passion and the spirit of her heart was charged with sin and evil. And the message here is that the angel comes with the very light of God upon his garments. And he brought to earth this shining glory that he possessed. He had come so recently from the very presence of God, the very precious light across the dark earth. That is a marvelous thing - when God's message comes. It always comes with some light.

V. 2 - There is the picture of redeemer in the ruins. The great power, and the earth was lighted up by his glory. And this strong voice says, Babylon the great is falling, is falling. We have heard that before. This is not the first time. When God destroys this great city, it will not be over a period of time, it will not be just a continuous assault week after week, but rather - the destruction has built up and will come suddenly, just as lightning. It will come in an instant. And the phrase is repeated again and again, in one hour. And the thing was done - the judgement was poured out.

The city of Babylon in review here is mentioned more times in the Bible than any other city except Jerusalem. More than 260 times, Babylon is referred too in the Holy Scripture. In Jer. 50 and 51, Babylon is called by name 37 times. It was the city of the first great monarch of the earth. The capitol of the golden kingdom, of Nebuchadnezzar. It was the city of the king who destroyed Judea, that destroyed Jerusalem, and destroyed the temple of Solomon.

It was the city of the great Babylonian captivity - located among rivers and canals. Psalm 137:1-2. By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, and yea we wept, and we remembered Zion. We hanged our hearts upon the willow trees. In the midst thereof.

Babylon was the great avenger of the sins of God's people. Babylon was more vile, wicked, ruthless, and merciless - than those whom God judged at her hand. Then the sins of Babylon come into remembrance before God.

You remember in our last sermon, we talked about Babylon. Being established by Mimrod - the grandson of Ham, who built in the plain of Shinar - Babel. In order that a man's strength, he might be able to reach up to Heaven.

This great city is a part of prophesy - for example, back in the fifth chapter of Zach, and going on to the end of the chapter - there is the vision concerning an angel and a woman. And the angel said this woman is wicked. And in the vision, the prophet also saw two women who had wings like a stork and wind was in her wings. And lifted her up between the earth and the sky. And Zach. 5:10-11 - and it talks about building the house in the land of Shinar. That wicked center of social, commercial life of the world - that was to be judged and is to be judged by Almighty God.

If you will notice in the review here in this chapter, that Babylon is to be judged by God himself. As you look at Chapters 17 and 18, there is a vast difference between the judgment that falls upon the harlot, and the judgment that falls upon the social, commercial, political, cultural life of the earth.

Epitomized by the great city of Babylon.

It is the hand of man that destroys the harlot. And it was political in government power that hated her, destroyed her flesh and burnt her with fire, and made her naked. Took over her property and her wealth. That was done by man. Now, so God becomes weary of the superstitions of Babylon, the gold and finally God's book says the nations of the earth, the people of the earth, the political leaders of the earth, they are going to destroy this woman - the harlot. And when her destruction comes, to pass, everyone seems to be glad. They are tired of the system. They are weary and they are burdened with it. And then when she is destroyed, the earth is glad to be rid of that.

But the destruction of the city of Babylon is altogether different. It is God who is going to destroy Babylon. Now the beast is not mentioned here, nor the ten kings, the governments of the earth are not mentioned. This really is an intervention of God. It is something that God does, and when Babylon is destroyed, there is lamentation all over the world. The kings lament, the virgins of the earth lament, the seamen, the merchant. All lament the destruction of Babylon is world-wide. There is a reason why we can see it exactly.

If someone is a messenger of God and has it announced over the radio, within 30 minutes the Heavens would roll apart, and Christ would descend. And the end of the age would come - the reaction would be just as it is here in Chapter 18, of the book of Revelation. It would be two-fold reaction. And we find that they are described - not getting ahead of ourselves.

But look at V. 19 - and they cast dust on their heads, cried, weeping and wailing. 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.

And then we skip over to V. 20 - and we read. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. You would find that double reaction this very day. This day, that we are here. If somebody made an announcement, within thirty minutes the systems of this world was going to be destroyed, God's children would be glad. They would be so happy that Jesus is coming. Oh joy, oh delight. We should go without dying. No sickness. No sadness, no dread, and no crying. Caught up with the clouds with our Lord into glory. When Jesus receives his own. There would be rejoicing.

On the other hand, there would be a great mass of this world that would lament. They would wail because their hearts, their lives, their hopes are all bound up in this world. They would begin to say -- what about the mortgages that are owed me. What about my bonds. What about my treasures. What about my wealth. All my possessions and accumulations. And they would lament that God had entered in in history. This is exactly what we find in Rev. 18.

There is lamentation on the part of those who have everything as Babylon. But, there will be rejoicing on the part of the saints and the hosts who are in Heaven. So, as in V. 3 - for all nations have drunk of the wind of the wrath of her fornication. And the kings of the earth have

V. 3

committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich with abundance of her delicacies. In this review of Babylon, you cannot but see here that the nations have been influenced and have been drunken and touched by this evil of Babylon. She has brought downfall to many. And here is a symbolism of a worldly, corrupt, domineering city, false religion all bound up in one - (anti-Christ). And these forces are doomed and people have been made drunk, that is to the point of insanity. As the people of Tyrus - Ez. 27:9-27.

Now John identified and hears and unidentified voice from Heaven.

~~V. 4.~~ And this voice is calling the people of God to separate themselves from Babylon in order to escape her punishment. Gen. 12:1. Matt. 24:16. The fact is that this message comes from Heaven. And this message is now saying, escape woes of this false religion and this false way of life. Escape that which is unreal. And this is a warning to the church. A mark which the people of God carry on their foreheads, must be the mark of a Godly heart and a Godly life.

Now before I come to the next point, let me say a few more words about what Babylon represents. There are many answers to this question.

There are first those who believe, that Babylon here, this city will be rebuilt some day on the Euphrates, at the head of the Persian Gulf. They believe that India and Asia, and some of these others - and the vast East will rise up in tremendous power. And make this a center of all the cities of the earth. Now there are those who believe that it is going to be rebuilt, and be a world center of commerce. Social life and political life.

2 Secondly, there are those who believe that this Babylon represents a system of life. Whose basic essential principle is separated from God. That it is a secular system - but it is epitomized by this great world city. That is, it could be any city in America, Europe, or Japan.

3 There is another idea that people believe this Babylon represents the social culture and commercial life at the ^{end} times. That is, it summarizes the entire system, into one great world city called Babylon. And that this is symbolic of the systems that are in action today in the world. You can study all of these, and you will just about come to the conclusion, that all of these things are very logical. And that all of them may be true and they may come true. This Babylon may be an ultimate great world city built at the head of the Persian Gulf where most of the oil is found today in the world. That could be.

And it certainly represents the system of commerce, social, and cultural life. Whether in that age or in today.

And of course, it symbolizes the vast Godless urban centers today. And certainly represents the age when Christ shall come. For it is a direct intervention of the appearing of Christ himself that is going to destroy this vast city. Now the review, I hope we have layed some foundation in which you have discovered something about Rome, and about Babylon. We know that we could see here in Babylon how desperate things were. Isa. 48:20 says, go ye forth from Babylon. Flee he says. That is, flee out of the midst of it. Jer. 51:6 said the same thing. And this is echoed in the New Testament when Paul writes, be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. He says, what fellowship hath

righteousness with unrighteousness. And what communion hath light with darkness.

2 Cor. 14, 15.

And so the great call here is an invitation to come out. And just as sure as we are here today - that is the invitation that we ought to issue to you, and invite you to accept.

II. THE REASONS

Now V. 5-19.

V. 5
The first reason is given in V. 5 - for their sins hath reached unto Heaven and God hath remembered her iniquities. The sins are known to God. And the first Babel built that famous tower. They built it block by block, brick by brick, up and up it went. Until Nimrod purposed to reach Heaven with it. And God says, that evil has come before me in remembrance.

Like the sin of wicked Babylon - there had building upon building, and they had been building with Godless materialism. And secularism and denying Christ.

Now the Bible here means this - they glue on a piece and then they glue another piece on top. And then another. And right on up to the throne of God that they hope to reach. And that is the reason for this destruction that is about to come in the terms of this punishment. It is that their sins are known

to God.

v, 6
Second, another reason is found in the description of God's judgment, which is going to be doubled in V. 6. And the Bible says, that reward her even as she hath rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works, in the cup that she hath filled to her double. So the double expression here, about the reason for this judgment is, that her sins have been so many and the cup of iniquity have been so full, so judgment is going to come in like manner. And really what he is trying to say is, it is going to come with full measure. The wrath of God is going to come - it is like something that is full and overflowing. That is, the (measure) is going to be in (accordance with the sin.) That is the punishment now, is going to be in proportion. So as in Matt. 7:2 - in what measure you measure - it will be measured unto you. And God is going to judge man.

v, 7
Third, the next reason is - I am immortal. I am invincible.

V. 7 - Is the reason for this. How much she had glorified herself and lived deliciously. So much torment and sorrow give her - that she saith in her heart - I sitteth as a queen. I am no widow and shall see no sorrow. Now, really what Babylon was saying, I am immortal. There is self-deceit and conceit, there is the boast of atheism, blasphemy, of Christ's rejection. To her, there is not any God, there is not any Christ, there is not any Holy Spirit. And the dominance in history here is that you are going to be judged for this. All of this pride will one day be humiliating. Why, she said she could live without God - the idea that she was so safe, so wealthy, and so powerful - is a picture that John might have picked up from Isa. 47:7-9. In which, Babylon said, I shall

be a lady forever.

V. 8
In V. 8 - There is a sin which is called arrogance. It is born of wealth, prosperity, and success. And this comes in V. 8 - from strong within her there is a fire that burns. And she says, I do not need God and tries to eliminate God from life. Pride always goes before a fall. So here we find that this is due judgment - and it is due and it is just. In V. 8 - it says that it is going to be quick. She said that it couldn't happen to her. And it couldn't happen here and it couldn't happen now. This is what God is trying to say. And this is what Julius Caesar who was killed, where the golden mill stone measured the distance of the empire. But that is only a monument today. That is not a fact or reality. And the destruction was quick. And there is sorrow. Yes, it can happen here - it can really happen to us.

The reason we have here is for this destruction - is that they were making traffic at the souls of men. Think of that. The souls of men were used just as men pack freight, cabbage, etc. and ship it away. And so here in Babylon, the lives and the souls of men were a matter of commerce. Now you would not have thought after all of those philosophers and those great teachers, and all of those preachers have preached, taught, and written books. And they have reached the peak of knowledge - and men have looked upon the value of human rights, and life - not as being supremely appointed as all the precious gifts of the earth. You would have thought they would, wouldn't you. Now God said it was the opposite here - as we increase in our culture. As we go on in science and in civilization, we come more cruel and blasphemous - and God dishonored. All of this can be found in newspapers, magazines, wherever you want to look today.

The majority of millions of people on this earth today live under governments that believe that the human soul and human rights are nothing more than merchandise. They destroy them, they waste them, and they shoot them down. They line up 50 people there in Iran and they shoot them with guns.

Lennon said, what would it matter if 2/3 of the earth were destroyed. If the 1/3 that remains be (communist). Did you ever think what that saying might mean. How many people are on this earth - the total of the population. Probably something beyond 3 billion or so - maybe more. What would it matter to this Godless nation if they destroyed 2/3 of them and had 1/3 left. Just think, all the population of the United States, all the population of Canada, North America, and throw South America in - you wouldn't have it yet. And here is this Godless man saying, that is what traffic is in the souls of man. To them, man is nothing to them, but to be slain. He is nothing to the nation - nothing but to be destroyed. He is nothing to a family.

Now when people lose this concept of God no longer is a man, ^{of value} anything but an animal. Where do we get the idea that man is worth something anyhow. Where does this value come from. Exactly, where did we learn this idea. Hitler, Marx, or did we learn it from our Lord who told that wonderful story about one lost sheep. And one lost coin. And one lost boy. Now, our Lord said that a man's life is worth something. Dignity, and there is God given life. And who made us in the image of God. That in our very body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. We learn that from Jesus. And when we depart from him and his teachings, and we say no to the things that have left us empty, and they persuade us that a man's life is nothing more than an animal.

He is just a dog or a beast. Woe is to a nation that can slay a man and think no more about it, than the destruction of an animal.

What a prediction - now God says I am going to purge this earth and I am going to destroy this age. And things are not getting better he says, they are getting worse.

V. 11 - ~~The merchants~~ of the earth shall weep and mourn over her, for no man shall buy their merchandise any more. He begins to tell what is going to happen when this calamity takes place. There is no more buying of cargo - and this symbolizes doing business - false religion that has been enriched by this trade and extensive commerce. Not to be able to purchase anymore wares.

V. 12-13 - There are some 29 articles of commerce which are listed here - extravagant luxury. And the matter of the merchandise of gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, wood, linen, ivory - all of these things, he says, cinnamon, ointment, wheat and flour, sheep and horses, slaves and finally he says -- and souls of men. That is what I have been talking to you about. The articles that were here bought and possessions - even down to human souls. This is the reason why this judgment is going to come. We have it very clearly. That the cargo which came, with fruit, dishes, and all of these things that were very costly - mirrors. Valuable things -- diamonds, silk, was common place in Rome and far off China. And the souls of men were no more of value than the livestock on the farm. But do you know there were some 60 million slaves in the Empire. And it was not unusual for a man to own 400 slaves or more. And they were to use the slaves like the limbs of their bodies. They were instructed to do this. How tragic - the idea of evil had grown.

V. 17
Not only did the merchants lament, in V. 17 - every shipmaster and everyone who sails the sea, and sailors who gain their living by the sea. They stood a far off and they cried. Why, they were doubt-founded. First, the kings lamented, and then the merchants, and now the ships masters. They cried.

Ez. 27:28-30. We would discover something about this if we had time to read this. These sailors brought their perfume. And their spices and things from afar.

Now I want you to notice here that the pathetic thing is - they are not lamenting for the death, the doom, and the judgment of the city. They are lamenting for themselves. They are grieved because they have no more trade and their wealth is gone. They have nothing but what they can get out of people. And they worship these things, and they disregarded the person - and hence, they were lamenting.

V. 14 - And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee. All things which were dainty and good are departed.

V. 15 - The merchants of these things which were made rich by her why they stand afar off weeping.

V. 16 - They say Alas, alas, the great city, clothed in fine linen, gold, and precious stones.

V. 17 - In one hour, so great riches has come to nought. And every shipmaster and all who accompany the ships and the sailors, the trade by sea. They stand afar off.

V. 18 - They cry.

I judge that today we really cannot understand the impact of this destruction and John looks upon it and sees what is coming to pass. Those people literally lived in luxury.

KA-League - Gw - LAH
The emperor Caligula tried always to do that which was impossible. And incredible. Why he and Nero poured their riches out. And we find that it was beyond our belief, that they could have a banquet. Think of something costing 500 thousand dollars. With a menu of peacock's tongues. All sorts of delicacies.

Think of one of them giving a banquet in which he had flowers from Egypt. Roses, mind you, brought in at a cost of 117 thousand dollars. Just for flowers, for this. The historians tell us that they were wreckless. And each one tried to outdo the other - in baths, in foods, in perfumes, in fact - they would drink pearls dissolved in vinegar. And some of them never wore the same garment twice. And it gives illustration of how one of them fished with a golden net. Drawn by cords, woven with scarlet threads. It is said that they never made a journey with less than a thousand carriages. Their mules shod with silver.

KA League - Gw - LAH

And the emperor Caligula drinking pearls that have been dissolved. And we know that it was a common practice. Cleopatra is said to have dissolved and drank pearls, worth over 400 thousand dollars. It was an age of extra ordinary gluttony. As they had mingled delicate food, livers, brains of peasants, peacocks, tongues of flamingoes, and sorts of things that they could do in extravagance. They had one of the emperors in Spain, 40,000 men toiling in a silver mine. And they brought in dishes, bowls, jugs, and baskets, that were made out of solid silver. Even women, would own and bathe in a silver bathtub. Even poor women had silver anklets. And every slave had a silver mirror. They mourned because of complete destruction and one hour judgment had come, and all of this had been destroyed.

III. RESULTS

V 20 Now just a word in V. 20 - the saints rejoiced. The whole church rejoices in the victory of Christ and what has been accomplished here at this time. God hath at last brought judgment.

V. 21 - A mighty angel took up a stone, like a great mill stone, and cast it into the sea. And another result was the illustration was that this mill stone was cast into the sea and Babylon had been completely judged. And the parable of the utter ruin is here in the sinking to the bottom of the sea - never to be recovered. Babylon is evil. All voices are silent. All of the crafts have been terminated. This was the final destruction. And the words which I hear,

no more at all. That means for certainty and without any question.

V. 22 - And the voice of harpers, musicians, pipers, and trumpeters, - now this means that all amusement life was stopped as a result of the sound of this mill stone going down and sinking. The amusement life was stopped and heard no more at all in Thee. Notice these splendid results that take place. They list the things that are not going to be heard again. No more music in this world is going to take place. And all the songs and festive occasions are going to come to an end.

V. 23 - Family life, he says, is going to be put out. And the light of a candle will shine no more, at all, in thee. And the voice of a bridegroom and bride shall be heard no more. And for thy merchants, the great men of the earth, they were all deceived. And so family life is going to be put out. Never again will the sound of domestic activity be heard. Children in the streets and houses - never again will there be lights in these houses. And these streets are going to be darkness and the light will never shine. From another house, another window. There will never be the sound of a wedding and rejoicing. Never, never again.

Jeremiah said I will take from thee and from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride. Jer. 25:10.

Now in this brief passage, we see the results. That are going to take place. Babylon is going to be thrown down with such great violence and found no more. Sink in the waves. And the water will be calm and it will be impossible

to raise it. The idea is that the judgment here is going to be complete. There will be no more banquets, no more entertainments. No more industries. No more at all. Never re-establish this great empire again.

Now there is here, another thing that comes as evidence as results here in V. 24. In her was found the blood of prophets and saints.

N.Y. - Man Attending Court - occasionally an individual come up charged repetition of an offense - judge say "we have put up with this long enough, & hereby sentence you"

Now this is the final reason and result of this judgment. What an amazing indictment against her - the blood of prophets and saints. All of these had been slain upon the earth, and now she is held personally accountable for the sins of these great principles. Matthew 23 says, he says upon the city of Jerusalem will come all the blood shed since the blood of Abel, to the blood of Zacharius - whom he slew between the altar. And how is this to be - one generation will be guilty of murder. And, the answer is found in God's principle here illustrated in Babylon. The truth is simple and it applies. You do not need to murder all the prophets in order to be guilty of all the prophets blood. You do not have to kill all the saints to be guilty. You do not have to commit all the sins - but you (just commit one sin). Every sin has a tendency towards God's judgment. And in the courts of earth - a man judges by acts what he does. But God judges by sin that is in the heart. And James says we are guilty of all - he that breaks the law in one part is guilty of it all. Just think of the sins of your own life. All those transgressions in my life that are typical of the transgressions against thee. So the judgment of Babylon is against - as the battle of Heaven and earth becomes down and is judged. Here is a poison that is found in every heart - it is unclean, like a hateful bird. And the city is going to be judged. And a glorious day is going to follow. And as we look here - as the judgment comes, six times in V. 21-22, he says in the strongest

way - not at all. And it is repeated six times in the closing chapter.