

**The Book of Revelation**  
**“The Fall of Babylon”**  
***Revelation 18***

Alright, well if you have your bibles with you then let's turn now to the book of Revelation.

Revelation chapter 18...

Well for the past couple of months as we've been studying the Book of Revelation, we've been looking at three series of judgments that God has, is, and will be bringing upon the earth as we live in these last days.

These judgments, as we've talked about before, are...

- The 7 Seal Judgments
- The 7 Trumpet Judgments and
- The 7 Bowl Judgments

And these judgments, as we've seen, involve famine, disease, war, death, natural catastrophes, etc...

And they are all really precursors of God's Final Judgment upon this evil world...

They are the beginnings of him bringing about his wrath upon a Christ-rejecting world.

Now, I don't know about you, but week after week of reading about all this judgment has kind of made me a little weary...

It's like, *“Ok Lord, when does the judgment end and the good times begin?!”*

Well, thankfully we're almost there...

In fact, Chapter 18 that we're looking at here this morning, marks the LAST chapter that deals exclusively with the judgment of this world.

There's some more judgment to come, but once we hit Chapter 19, we get to the good stuff...

We start to read about the Return of Christ, the 1,000 Reign of Christ, and the future arrival of a New Heaven and a New Earth.

And I can't wait until we get there...

But before we get there, as I said, we have ONE MORE chapter dealing with God's judgment...

And here in Chapter 18 we see the final details of the fall and destruction of the city of Babylon.

Here we read of where the people of this world mourn and weep over her passing...

They will grieve over her destruction and her end...

And so this chapter reads more like a funeral dirge or a song of lament...

Rather than weeping over their sin and future judgment, they begin weep over the fact that their sinful lifestyle will no longer continue.

It's quite the chapter about what will take place in the future...

And so let's read this together...

Chapter 18 verse 1...

<sup>1</sup> After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. <sup>2</sup> And 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 for every unclean and detestable beast.

<sup>3</sup> For 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.”

<sup>4</sup> 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;

<sup>5</sup> for her sins are heaped high as heaven,  
and God has remembered her iniquities.

<sup>6</sup> Pay 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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.’

<sup>8</sup> For 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.”

<sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup>  
They 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.”

<sup>11</sup> And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore, <sup>12</sup> cargo 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, <sup>13</sup> cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and slaves, that is, human souls.

<sup>14</sup> “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!”

<sup>15</sup> The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud,

<sup>16</sup> “Alas, alas, for the great city  
that was clothed in fine linen,  
in purple and scarlet,  
adorned with gold,  
with jewels, and with pearls!

<sup>17</sup> For 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 <sup>18</sup> and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning,

“What city was like the great city?”

<sup>19</sup> And 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.

<sup>20</sup> Rejoice over her, O heaven,  
and you saints and apostles and prophets,  
for God has given judgment for you against her!”

<sup>21</sup> Then 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;

<sup>22</sup> and 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,  
<sup>23</sup> and the light of a lamp  
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.  
<sup>24</sup> And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints,  
and of all who have been slain on earth.”

(Prayer)

I think most of us here this morning would agree that we all live in a very materialistic world...

Materialism is all around us.

People these days can become preoccupied with success, wealth, prestige, and...well, stuff.

As it's been said before, *“Too many people are spending money they haven't earned...to buy things they don't need...to impress people they don't even like.”*<sup>1</sup>

As a result, according to a George Barna report, research reveals that 90% of Americans have less than \$1,000 in savings.<sup>2</sup>

Truly, “materialism” is a sin that is rarely confessed...

Vance Havner, who was a preacher of the gospel during the early 1900's, once stated *“There's a big difference between Patrick Henry and the modern American...while Patrick Henry stated 'Give me liberty or give me death' the average American simply says 'Gimme, gimme, gimme.'”*<sup>3</sup>

And you know he's right...

The attitude of many living in this world is *“If some is good...more is better.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Hodgins, Michael. “Impressive Consumption” 1001 More Illustrations for Public Speakers, 1998

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.crosswalk.com/church/pastors-or-leadership/ask-roger/is-materialism-getting-in-the-way-of-your-faith.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://stomson2001.wordpress.com/2013/08/18/vance-havner-quotations/>

But how will this world respond when it's all taken away?

What will their reaction be when it's all gone?

Well, that's what Chapter 18 tells us...

Chapter 18 gives us a description of the world's reaction when Babylon falls and the world's wealth is no more...

Now, if you look there in your outline, you'll see that I've broken this chapter down into 5 sections...

First, I want us to look briefly at **The Cause** of the fall of Babylon...

The text tells us that Babylon falls for a few reasons...

First of all, in verses 1-2 it tells us that God judges Babylon because of its demonic activity.

Verse 1 says, “<sup>1</sup> After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. <sup>2</sup> And 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 for every unclean and detestable beast.”*

Now, I don't want to spend too much time discussing this because I'd much rather talk about Jesus than demons, but it does deserve a mention...

Here John mentions how Babylon (this world) has become a “...*dwelling place for demons*...”

That word there “demons” of course speaks of “fallen angels”—those who rebelled with Satan against God and were thus kicked out of heaven.

They are described here as “unclean spirits” / “unclean birds” and / “unclean and detestable beast.”

So you need to know that demons are in fact real...

They are spiritual beings who, under the leadership of Satan, seek to deceive the world, attack God’s people, and thwart God’s plan.

And it says here that Babylon is “a dwelling place” for them...

And that’s true—for God kicked them OUT of heaven TO earth.

And so the whole world is inhabited by demons.

Now as I say that, don’t let that scare you or intimidate you...

Yes, Satan and his demons are enemies of God and his church...but they are defeated enemies.

**Colossians 2:15** says that Christ has “*disarmed the powers and authorities*” and “*made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*”

And of course, the Apostle John wrote in **1 John 4:4**, “*4 You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.*”

So for the believer in Christ, we have nothing to fear.

But secondly, God judges Babylon because of her Idolatry... (v. 3)

Verse 3 says, “*3 For 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.*”

Now, when you read there where it speaks of “sexual immorality” it’s not talking so much literally, as it is figuratively...or spiritually...

We talked about this last week when we looked at the great prostitute who is described as a harlot...

In the bible when the Lord speaks of a nation or a people's "sexual immorality" in many cases it's speaking symbolically of their spiritual unfaithfulness...

It speaks of spiritual adultery—turning away from the Lord and giving one's affections to the things of this world.

And so Babylon is being judged because of how she has seduced many into false worship and spiritual idolatry.

And so the question I think we need to ask ourselves is what we talked about last week...

We must be honest in asking ourselves: Am I being faithful to my Lord and Savior?

Or have I been giving my affections to the things of this world?

Have I bought the lie that says that the things of this world will satisfy and fulfill me?

Have I been deceived into worshipping the creation, rather than the Creator?

Am I giving the majority of my time and treasures to "lesser" things when I could be investing in heavenly, eternal things?

These questions need to be asked...

Well, thirdly here, we read where God judges Babylon because of its Pride... (v. 6-8)

Verse 6 says, *"<sup>6</sup> Pay 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.*

*<sup>7</sup> 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.'* (hear the boasting...the pride?)



<sup>8</sup> *For 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.*”

You know, in John’s first epistle chapter 2, John wrote about this when he said, “<sup>15</sup>  
*Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for  
the Father is not in them. <sup>16</sup> For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the  
lust of the eyes, and (here it is) **the pride of life**—comes not from the Father but  
from the world.*”

You see, one of the marks of this world (of Babylon) is pride.

For it’s pride that declares, “*I’m the captain of my own ship.*”

It’s pride that says, “*I’ve got to where I am by my own wisdom...my own  
ingenuity...my own determination...my own effort.*”

It’s pride that says “*I don’t need God...I can get along just fine without him.*”

And boy if that doesn’t describe our culture...

You know, one of my favorite stories about pride is about Muhammad Ali—the  
heavy weight boxing champion...

If you know anything about Muhammad Ali, you know he never lacked confidence  
in himself.

He loved to boast of himself.

Well, in his prime he was boarding a plane for a trip and the flight attendant  
walked by and noticed that Ali didn’t have his seatbelt on.

And so she told him, just like everyone else, “*Sir, please fasten your seatbelt.*”

Ali looked up at her proudly and snapped back, “*Superman don’t need no  
seatbelt.*”

She responded back by saying, “*Yeah...and superman don’t need no plane either...put on your seatbelt.*”<sup>4</sup>

But pride is a serious thing...

It’s pride that makes us think that we aren’t all that bad...

It’s pride that makes us think that we don’t need the Lord...

Remember, it was pride that led to Satan rebelling against the Lord in heaven...

As it’s been said, “*We are never more like Satan than when we embrace the sin of pride.*”

And so may we be on our guard against this distinguishing mark of Babylon, this world...

May we be marked by humility and not pride and arrogance.

Well, this is the cause of Babylon’s fall—it’s demonic activity, idolatry, and pride...

Next, we read in verses 4 and 5 a **Command**...

We read this in verse 4, “<sup>4</sup> *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;  
<sup>5</sup> for her sins are heaped high as heaven,  
and God has remembered her iniquities***

So here we see this command, this call for separation...

He says “***Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins...***”

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<sup>4</sup> <https://ministry127.com/resources/illustration/superman-and-muhammad-ali>

When you read the bible it becomes extremely clear that God has always wanted there to be this separation, this clear distinction between HIS people, and the rest of the world.

In conduct...

In speech...

In behavior...

In deed...

God's people and those who belong to Babylon are to be as different as different can be.

In fact, in **2 Corinthians chapter 6** the Apostle Paul writes about how we are to be different from those living in this world...

He writes this, he says, <sup>14</sup> *Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?* <sup>15</sup> *What accord has Christ with Belial? **Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?*** <sup>16</sup> *What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,*

*"I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them,  
and I will be their God,  
and they shall be my people.*  
<sup>17</sup> ***Therefore go out from their midst,  
and be separate from them, says the Lord...***"

Now, is Paul saying that as believers we can't have any friends who are not Christians?

No...I don't think that's what he's saying...

Is he saying that we aren't to associate with non-Christians?

Of course not...for how else will we reach them with the gospel.

What Paul is getting at is that we as Christians are to live differently than non-Christians.

We are to come out from among them and be separate...

Now, the question is why?

Why are we to come out and be separate?

Well, he tells us in verse 4, “*Come out of her, my people lest you take part in her sins...*”

You see, the Lord cares about who we associate with and who we hang out with...

Primarily, because of their influence...

Or as Paul put it in his letter to the Corinthians church: “*bad company corrupts good morals.*”

Or as my dad used to say, “*Son, if you run with the dogs, you get flees.*”

We have to be aware as Christians of those we associate with and how they might be influencing us to live in ways that are contrary to our faith.

Yes, we are to associate with the lost...

Yes, we are to get to know the lost and seek to influence them for Christ...

But as believers we are always to be the hammer and not the nail...

In other words, we are to be the one’s influencing the world around us, not the other way around.

As the old saying goes, “A boat in the water is a good thing...what’s bad is when water gets in the boat.”

And so Christian, be IN this world, just don’t be OF this world.

INFILTRATE this world with the gospel, but don’t let this world INFLUENCE you to act in ways that go against God’s Word.

Come out of this world, and be separate...live differently.

Alright, so we've seen the Cause of the fall of Babylon...

We've seen the Command...

Next, I want us to see the Cry... (v. 9-19)

In verses 9-19 John speaks of this vision he receives of the world weeping and mourning over the fall of Babylon...

And there are three groups of people here that weep:

- The Rulers (v. 9-10)

It says *"<sup>9</sup> 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."*

- The Merchants (or businessman) (v. 11-17)

Verse 11 says *"<sup>11</sup> And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore..."*

- The Distributors (v. 17-19)

Middle of verse 17 says *"<sup>17</sup> And all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off<sup>18</sup> and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning,*

*"What city was like the great city?"*

*<sup>19</sup> And 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."*

Now, as you look at all this weeping and mourning, it's interesting that you don't see them weeping over their sin...

They aren't weeping over their sin of greed and materialism...

Rather they are grieving over the fact that their investments have taken a hit...

They're weeping over the fact that the economy has now changed...

They're weeping over the fact that the stock market has crashed and they've lost everything.

Now, what is this a description of?

We're not positive...

But many believe this is describing the downfall of the world's economic system...

One commentator writes this, *"With the fall and destruction of this worldwide economic system, chaos ensues. New York, London, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Beijing—all the markets of the world—tank and bottom out. Stuff is available, but no one has the resources to purchase it. All 'the merchants of the earth'—the Wall Street wizards—can do is 'weep and mourn over her, since no one buys their merchandise any longer.' Malls are empty. Shops are shut up. And they never saw it coming."*<sup>5</sup>

It could be that this here is describing a complete and utter meltdown of our world's economy...

And people won't be able to stand it, you know why?

It's because they put their hope and trust in their wealth.

The bible says that people will care more about their bank account and their financial investments and portfolio, than they do where they will spend eternity...

You know, it reminds me of a parable that Jesus once told about the Foolish Farmer...

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<sup>5</sup> Aiken, Danny. "A Funeral Song for a Prostitute" Christ-Centered Exposition, 2016

In Luke 12 Jesus tells this story...

He says, *“The land of a rich man produced plentifully, <sup>17</sup> and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ <sup>18</sup> And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. <sup>19</sup> And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’”* (In other words, he said to himself, ‘Man you’ve hit it big...you’re good to go for many, many years...sit back and relax and enjoy your wealth...’) <sup>20</sup> *But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’* (He says, “Hey foolish farmer! Guess what...you’re going to die tonight...and all that stuff that you worked so hard for and saved up, you’re going to give it all to your kids and they’re going to fight over it...)

Ok, he didn’t say that last part, but I’ve seen it happen enough to know that’s probably going to be the case...

But here’s the punch line...

Here’s the point of the parable...

Jesus, says verse 21, he says, *“<sup>21</sup> So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”*

You see, this farmer was foolish, not because he had a lot of wealth—that’s not sin...

He’s foolish because he spent all of his time and energy on trying to accumulate wealth and being rich in the things of this world and thought nothing about being rich towards God.

He paid way more attention to his earthly status than he did to his heavenly status...

And that’s the way it is for a lot of people living in Babylon...this world...

But may it not be said of us as believers...

May we see our wealth as a tool to make heavenly investments, not as a means to be indulge in earthly pleasure.

Alright, we've seen the cause, the command, the cry, next we have here the **Celebration**... (v. 20-24)

Real quickly, let me just point this out to you...

In verse 20, we see here how in contrast to the sadness that takes place on earth, there is a celebration from among God's people in heaven...

Verse 20 says, “<sup>20</sup> *Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her!*”

Now, you read that and you go, “*Wait a minute, that seems a little cruel...*”

Like how can we rejoice over the destruction of Babylon and her followers?

Well, please note, that the rejoicing is not over the fact that people are dying and going to hell...

Rather, the rejoicing is over the fact that justice and righteousness has prevailed.

For centuries God's people have been persecuted and afflicted...

Martyred and put to death...

All because of Babylon and her followers.

And here is the moment that Christ and his bride, the church, are avenged.

Here is the moment when justice prevails and God rights every wrong.

And that is indeed a cause for celebration and rejoicing.

And so just as a sidenote here...

This is why the bible says that “Vengeance belongs to the Lord.”



In other words, the bible assures us that there is coming a day when THE LORD will make things right...

And so newsflash, he doesn't need your help...

When you are persecuted and hated because of your faith in Christ, do not retaliate or get even...

Leave it in the hands of the Lord and trust that one day God will ensure that justice and righteousness prevails.

Alright, one more point...

And that is the **Conclusion**... (v. 21-24)

In these final verses of this chapter, John describes how the city of Babylon essentially disappears from the face of the earth.

There will be no more record of her...

There will be no more rejoicing over her...

She will be finished.

John the apostle spoke of this in his first epistle—**1 John 2:17** when he said, *“The world and its desires will pass away...but whoever does the will of God lives forever.”*

Babylon and it's desires...

This world and all of its wealth will one day be burned up...

It's all going to be kindling for God's wrath...

As Peter wrote in **2 Peter 3:10**, *“<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.”*

Therefore friend, it doesn't make sense then to put your hope and trust in material things...

For what does it profit a man, Jesus said, if he gains the whole world, and yet forfeits his soul?

I'll close with this...

Last week I heard an interesting story about a Turkish wrestler named Yussif... <sup>6</sup>

His nickname was The Terrible Turk.

He was a 350 pound wrestling champion in Europe several generations ago.

Well, after he defeated all his competitors he traveled to America to wrestle our champ—a guy named Strangler Lewis...who I'm told was just a little over 200 pounds.

Now, the reason the strangler was so good was because he was really good at maneuvering his way around his opponent and choking them out...

However, when he faced The Terrible Turk, he ran into a problem...

The problem was The Terrible Turk was so big he really didn't have a neck...

And so Lewis was never able to get his arms around him and thus the Turk threw him to the mat, pinned him and that was it.

Well, after winning the championship, the Turk demanded that his prize money (which was \$5,000) be paid in gold...

And he took that gold and stuffed inside his championship belt which he wore as he boarded the next ship back to Europe.

Well, as they set sail, halfway across the Atlantic, a storm struck and the ship began to sink.

Yussif went over the side with his championship belt and gold still strapped around his body.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.abiblecommentary.com/blog/2010/11/09/yussif-the-terrible-turk/>

The extra weight was too much for him to stay afloat and his gold served as an anchor taking him down to the ocean floor...

His body was never seen again.

The lesson we should learn from that story is this— if you love this world, with all of its desires, it will be destroyed and it will bring you down with it.

Don't let wealth (or the pursuit of riches) be what keeps you bound to a world that will one day be destroyed.

But rather flee from the sin of materialism...

Flee from worldliness...

Repent, let go of the things of this world, and embrace that which is eternal through faith in Jesus Christ.

Would you pray with me?

## OUTLINE

- The \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 1-3, 6-8)

Babylon Falls for its...

- \_\_\_\_\_ Activity (v. 1-2)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 6-8)

- The \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 4-5)

*“Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins...”*

- The \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 9-19)

Three groups of mourners...

- The \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 9-10)
- The \_\_\_\_\_ (or businessman) (v. 11-17)
- The \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 17-19)

- The \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 20)

- The \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 21-24)

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