

Revelation 18 – Babylon the Great: that “Great City”

By Holly Effiom

VV1-2

Where else did we read this phrase or scene? Rev 14:8

Why is it being repeated now in Rev 18?

Could this mean that Babylon was *not* a harlot at one time? Is this confirmation of our understanding out of Rev 17?

VV3-5

Why is Babylon being judged? Is this confirmation of our understanding out of Rev 17?

Why are the nations being judged? Were they under a vow or in covenant with God Almighty?

Who did Babylon draw into her fornication?

What is the injunction to God’s people? Who are God’s people? 2 Cor 6:17

Is this said to only those in the earth at Babylon’s judgment?

LESSON: What is the implication of committing fornication?

1. You are under a vow to or in covenant with God Almighty, and you have sexual relations with one other than your Husband. You become a whore or harlot.
2. Whores fornicate with multiple other people, by definition (they draw others into their fornication); and therefore, bring their condemnation on others as well.

Why is it that the nations have to suffer? Were they in covenant with God? God made a vow to Noah’s family to never destroy their home again; however, the nations (Noah’s family) fornicate with Israel and were therefore subject to the faithless Israel’s punishment. God has a controversy with one nation, but the decision and actions of the other nations made them subject to that one nation’s punishment.

It’s a frightful thing to realize the God, Who’s love is so deep, so wide, so high that we cannot comprehend it, is the same God who can *hate* and *destroy*. It is unfathomable.

Thank you, Jesus, for coming to get us!

VV6-8

Is there an admonition to turn the other cheek, or extend mercy to Babylon the great? Why or why not?

How is this related to Rev 17:16?

What do we know about the original Babylon? Isa 47:7-15

What were some of the activities the original Babylon got into? Was the original Babylon in covenant with God?

Why would participating in such activities be worse for Babylon “the great”?

What would cause Babylon “the great” to involve herself in the behaviors of the original Babylon?

How does she view herself?

Will Babylon’s destruction be drawn out? Did the pouring out of the vials of the wrath of God take as long as the sounding of the trumpets, during the tribulation?

LESSON: In Ezekiel 23, God describes His anger and hurt, and describes in detail the sins of His adulterous wife, Israel – Samaria and Jerusalem (Micah 6).

VV9-10

Did Babylon the great commit fornication all by herself? With whom did she fornicate?

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Where were the “kings” standing while Babylon is tormented and destroyed? Are they standing with her, trying to save her?

Are these the same kings in Rev 17:16-17?

So, who will be the ones who actually destroy Babylon the great?

VV11-15

How will the merchants feel about Babylon’s destruction? Why?

How is Babylon, a “city”, related to whether or not people bought things from the merchants?

What was it that the merchants were selling?

What does this tell us about Babylon the great’s harlotry? V12

Why are “slaves” set apart from the “souls of men” in V13? Eze 27:13; Joel 3:3

Where were the “merchants” standing while Babylon is tormented and destroyed? Are they standing with her, trying to save her?

VV16-19

How long did it take to destroy Babylon the great?

Who will be lamenting the death of Babylon the great? Why? Who will celebrate?

Who all will suffer because of the death of Babylon the great?

With what is John associating Babylon the great, according to this section of scripture?

How do we know that Babylon the great is not associated with any “church”?

Does this mean that every church-attender will not be there during the destruction of Babylon?

LESSON: Babylon the great is most closely related with the economy, not necessarily a “church”. There are many that name Babylon the great as the “Catholic church” or “Christendom” or “false religions”. What we *know* is that Babylon the great is steeped in idolatry – she is a *harlot*. And, to be a harlot, one must have been in covenant with God at one time. The church is in covenant with Jesus Christ.

Now, does this mean that Christians or entire church organizations cannot and will not get caught up in idolatry? No, not at all; and indeed, we have examples of such a thing happening, i.e., Jim Jones and Jonestown.

Perhaps Babylon the great, with specific regard to religion, is those who practice their faith falsely, or use their faith to gain wealth and material or control others, ultimately, to the gain of wealth, material, and position.

Jesus spent quite a bit of time in Rev 2 and 3, warning His churches away from Babylon the great; and, it was necessary to direct the messages to 7 the candlesticks; by Rev 11, only 2 candlesticks are left standing!

VV20-24 The Heavens Rejoice!

Why are the heavens encouraged to rejoice?

Why don’t we have to worry about meting out revenge?

Who is our revenge?

Why is God taking revenge on Babylon the great?

At the time of Babylon the great’s destruction will “kings” be the great men on the earth?

How does Babylon the great have the “blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were ‘slain’ upon the earth” on her hands?

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LESSON: By the end of Revelation 17, we proposed that Babylon the great is Jerusalem – Israel – who had descended into idolatry, and we learn from Revelation 18 that that idolatry, ultimately, had to do with all things *money*. Babylon the great understood that to maintain power and position in this earth, she must do what is necessary to maintain a steady supply of money from whomever is the power of the day and territory. Needless to say, when this becomes your philosophy, the Law of God quickly falls by the wayside; and, those who stand for the Law of God become very inconvenient – so inconvenient that they must be destroyed.

This said, is God against Israel having power and position? No, He’s against her losing her soul to have it.

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