

## Chapter 18

**Political and Commercial Babylon Judged**

In chapter 17 we discussed 'Mystery Babylon' as being Ecclesiastical, a corrupted professing Christian Church, the End-time Apostate Religious System. In chapter 18 we will study 'literal' Babylon.

- Old Testament Babylon, originally called Babel, is where 'Human Government' began its rebellion against God. It later became the 'Wonder City' of the ancient world (one of seven wonders of the ancient world).
- There are differences of opinion as to whether John is speaking of literal Babylon, or if this Babylon represents something else, or even some other city. David Wilkerson (and possibly others) believe it to be New York City (U.N. Headquarters, Stock Market, etc.). Some believe it represents a literal city or nation that has the ungodly aspects of the Babylon mentioned here. Still others think it represents the entire ungodly world system having been brought under the antichrist rule.
- Too, because of the prophecies of Isa.13,14, and Jer.50,51 - some believe Babylon will not be rebuilt. Their two reasons are: (1) All O.T. prophecies concerning its destruction have been fulfilled. (2) Since there is not a city of Babylon now in existence, the references to its destruction in Revelation must be 'symbolic', and not refer to a literal city. **Note:** Sounds like a valid argument. But, in studying the O.T. prophecies, you discover there's much foretold which has not yet been fulfilled in regard to this city.
- Since there are no 'horns' or 'heads' associated with this Babylon many writers believe there is nothing mysterious about it at all. It is simply the literal city of Babylon. **(I agree.)**

**I. The fall of literal commercial Babylon is announced - Vs.1-8.**

- A. 'After these things'. After the judgment of religious Babylon (represented by the 'great whore'), is destroyed by the 10 kings and Antichrist in the middle of the 7-year tribulation. Here, the 'tribulation' is winding down, and it's believed the destruction of this great city will occur a short time before the Battle of Armageddon.
  - B. 'Another angel'.
    - a. 'From heaven'.
    - b. 'Having great power'.
    - c. 'Earth lightened with his glory'. **Note:** It's believed by many that this is 'Christ' Himself (seen here as an angel), because the Father has given Him authority to execute judgment, and, because the earth is enlightened by his glory. **Note:** This is possibly the case, but not necessarily so. (I'm not sure, but I tend to believe this is not Christ, but an 'angel'.)
    - d. 'He cried mightily with a strong voice'.
  - C. 'Babylon the great is fallen'. **Note:** Babylon will be rebuilt, and will become the chief center of demon operations after the rapture. This will be the main reason for her fall.
  - D. 'I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her, my people'. The words: 'my people', suggests that this is either the voice of Christ or of God.
- It seems there will be children of Abraham among the population. And this is a call to 'come out' of this ungodly city and system. (A physical separation with a corollary in the experience of Lot in Sodom.) If God's people remain they will inevitably become partakers of her sins. **Note:** The call to be separate from the world and false religious institutions has been an essential aspect of salvation throughout the history of redemption.

- E. 'Her sins have reached unto heaven' (v.5). Babylon had a long history of rebellion and sinning against God. And He has the record. **Note:** The judgment of God may be delayed, but it is sure.
- F. 'Reward her even as she rewarded you' (v.6). Babylon burned Jerusalem and the Temple of God. Now, she is to be destroyed to such an extent that nothing is left.
  - Jeremiah said, 'Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity, for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence. And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the Lord' (Jer.51:6,24).
- G. Death, Mourning, Famine (vs.7,8). These are the three horsemen who ride roughshod over Babylon. 'She shall be utterly burned with fire'. The destruction is total and final. **Note:** This is the first city of prominence mentioned in the Scriptures; but its long, eventful, and sinful history now comes to an end.
  - The suddenness and completeness of Babylon's destruction are emphasized by this prophecy, proving the judgment is yet future.

## II. Anguish in the World because of judgment on Babylon (vs.9-19).

- In that day Babylon will dominate and rule the world. She will have the first total dictatorship (Antichrist). The stock market will be read from Babylon, and from this city the styles of the world will be set' (McGee).
- The 'world', here, speaks of all those a part of 'governmental, commercial, and maritime' activities. All those whose main concern is money, luxury, and gratification of pleasure will weep and mourn, for the god of their life is destroyed. They will be brought down by the wrath of God.
- It's been said, this is 'scriptural proof' of two Babylons: In chapter 17, the kings of the earth will freely destroy 'Mystery Babylon'. And here, the kings of the earth lament the destruction of literal Babylon. In fact, the entire world mourns the fall of this great city.

## III. Joy in heaven because of the judgment of Babylon (vs.20-24).

- The saints prayed for this day (judgment); Prophets of O.T. and Apostles of N.T. predicted it; and now, it is fulfilled. There is 'joy', for God has exonerated His Name.
- Stone like a great millstone cast into the sea (v.21). Jesus said, 'Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea' (Matt.18:6).
- This is a picture of the violence and suddenness of the destruction of literal Babylon. She shall 'be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all'. **Note:** This has not yet been fulfilled, for ruins of Babylon still remain, and can be found any day.
- Many remains of old Babylon have been used to build the city of Hilihah. Too, Babylon is presently (in 2018) being rebuilt, and this is contrary to Jer.51:26 if there is to be no future destruction of a literal Babylon. After its final destruction, not one stone will be used to rebuild any city or house.
- Nimrod (Gen.10) thought of Babel (Babylon) as the 'Gate of God', but it proves to be the 'Mouth of hell'.

**Note:** The 'main theme' of Zech.5 is the building of a house for 'wickedness' and establishing this wickedness upon its base, which is to be built in the land of Shinar (Babylon).

- Babylon will be rebuilt, and will become the headquarters for Antichrist. He will reign from this city during his rise to power over the 10 kingdoms of Dan.7 and Rev.17:12-17.

- Then, Antichrist will leave Babylon to make his headquarters in Jerusalem, and will rule from that capital city during what is known as the 'great tribulation (last 3 1/2 years of the 7-year tribulation). He will be the 8th kingdom to rule the known world, after: (1) Egypt, (2) Assyria, (3) Babylon, (4) Medo-Persia, (5) Greece, (6) Rome, (7) Revised Roman Empire (10 kings during the tribulation represented by the 10 toes of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of Dan.2). Then, kingdom number 8, that of the Antichrist. All eight of these kingdoms have been, or will be, anti-God and anti-Jewish.