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## The Fall of Babylon Rev 18:1-24

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### Revelation 18:1-24 (NASB)

<sup>1</sup> After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory.

<sup>2</sup> And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.

<sup>3</sup> "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality."

<sup>4</sup> I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues;" awarung

<sup>5</sup> for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

<sup>6</sup> "Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her.

<sup>7</sup> "To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, 'I SIT as A QUEEN AND I AM NOT A WIDOW, and will never see mourning'."

<sup>8</sup> "For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong.

<sup>9</sup> "And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning,

<sup>10</sup> standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.'

<sup>11</sup> "And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more—

<sup>12</sup> cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every *kind of* citron wood and every article of ivory and every article *made from* very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble,

<sup>13</sup> and cinnamon and spice and incense and perfume and frankincense and wine and olive oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and *cargoes of* horses and chariots and slaves and human lives.

<sup>14</sup> "The fruit you long for has gone from you, and all things that were luxurious and splendid have passed away from you and men will no longer find them.

<sup>15</sup> "The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning,

<sup>16</sup> saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls;

<sup>17</sup> for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!' And every shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea, stood at a distance,

<sup>18</sup> and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What *city* is like the great city?'

<sup>19</sup> "And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste!'

<sup>20</sup> "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has

pronounced judgment for you against her."

<sup>21</sup> Then a strong 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 not be found any longer."

<sup>22</sup> "And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer;

<sup>23</sup> and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all the 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 the earth."

## 2. POLITICAL BABYLON DESTROYED ([CHAP. 18](#))

[18:1-3](#). Further revelation on the destruction of Babylon was made by another angel coming down from heaven. This contrasts with "one of the seven angels" mentioned in [17:1](#) and should not be confused with angelic representations of Christ. Angels do have great authority and often make pronouncements in the Book of Revelation. The power and glory of this angel was such that the earth was illuminated by his splendor ([18:1](#)).

The angel's message is summarized: **Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!** The question has been raised as to whether or not this is another view of the same destruction mentioned in [17:16-17](#). A comparison of [chapters 17](#) and [18](#) reveals that these are different events. The woman in [chapter 17](#) was associated with the political power but was not the political power itself, and her destruction apparently brought no mourning from the earth. By contrast the destruction of Babylon in [chapter 18](#) brings loud lamentation from the earth's political and economic powers. Instead of being destroyed and consumed by the 10 kings, here the destruction seems to come from an earthquake, and it is probable that this is an enlarged explanation of what was described in [16:19-21](#).

What is pictured here is a large prosperous city, the center of political and economic life. The judgment of God makes it **a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird. For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. This false religion is like a drug that drives men to madness. While it brought riches to merchants, it is now doomed for destruction.**

[18:4-8](#). Following the pronouncement of the angel, another voice from heaven instructed the people of God to leave the city so that they would escape the judgment to come on it ([vv. 4-5](#)). Babylon will receive **torture and grief** commensurate with her **glory and luxury**, in which she boasted that she was a **queen** ([v. 7](#)). **Death, mourning, and famine, also fire, will come on the city in one day** ([v. 8](#)).

[18:9-20](#). When **kings** who were involved with the city see its destruction they will be grieved, and will cry, **Woe! Woe, O great city, O Babylon, city of power!** ([v. 10](#)) **Merchants** too will bemoan the city's downfall since they will no longer be able to carry on commerce with the city. The description in [verses 12-13](#) indicates the great luxury and wealth of the city. This obviously

refers to an economic and political situation rather than a religious one. The mourning of the merchants is similar to that of the kings: **Woe! Woe, O great city... !** ([v. 16](#))

**Sea captains... sailors**, and others in navigational occupations will lament in similar fashion: **Woe! Woe, O great city... !** ([v. 19](#)) All three groups—kings, merchants, and sailors—speak of her destruction as sudden: **in one hour** ([vv. 10, 17, 19](#)). As the world mourns the destruction of Babylon, **the saints** are told to **rejoice because God has judged her for the way she treated you** ([v. 20](#)).

[18:21-24](#). The final and violent destruction of the city is compared to throwing **a large millstone... into the sea** ([v. 21](#)). The lament follows that those who once characterized the city—**harpists and musicians, flute players and trumpeters**, and workmen **of any trade** ([v. 22](#))—will not be seen in the city again. Nor will there be **light** and the joy of weddings ([v. 23](#)). The **reason for her judgment is that by her magic spell** (*pharmakeia*; cf. [9:21](#)) **all the nations were led astray from God** ([18:23](#); cf. [17:2](#)), and she was guilty of murdering **prophets and... saints** ([18:24](#); cf. [17:6](#)).

The question remains as to what city is in view here. A common view is that it refers to the city of Rome, because of the prominence of Rome as the seat of the Roman Catholic Church and the capital of the ancient Roman Empire. Some find confirmation of this in the fact that the kings and sea merchants will be able to see the smoke of the burning of the city ([18:9, 18](#)).

Other evidence seems to point to the fact that it is Babylon itself, located on the Euphrates River, which in the end time will be converted into a ship-bearing river. When all the evidence is studied, the conclusion seems to point to Babylon being rebuilt as the capital of the world empire in the end time rather than to Rome in Italy. Bible expositors, however, continue to be divided on this question.

The events of [chapter 17](#) will be fulfilled **at the midpoint of the seven years**, whereas the events of [chapter 18](#) **will occur at the end of the seven years**, immediately before the second coming of Christ. The destruction of the city of Babylon is the final blow to the times of the Gentiles, which began when the Babylonian army attacked Jerusalem in 605 B.C. (cf. [Luke 21:24](#)).

With [chapters 17](#) and [18](#) giving additional insight and information concerning the earth's major religious and political movements during that final seven years, the stage is now set for the climax of the Book of Revelation—the second coming of Christ ([chap. 19](#)).

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

## Open it

1. Why do you think many people enjoy seeing the rich, the great, and the famous toppled from their lofty pedestals?

**The haughty fall hard, they should set higher standards for themselves**

2. What is the most extreme or humiliating fall from power you have ever seen someone undergo?

**Religious leaders for sin, politicians for lying, embezzling**

Explore it

3. How did John describe the angel he saw coming down from heaven? ([18:1](#))

**Having great authority and the earth was illumined with his glory**

4. What pronouncement did the angel bring? ([18:2](#))

**And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.**

5. What pronouncement did the angel bring? ([18:2](#))

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6. What did a voice from heaven urge? ([18:4](#))

**Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues;**

7. What specific message of judgment did the angel bring concerning Babylon's sins? ([18:5](#), [8](#))  
**for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. "For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong.**

8. How will the fall of Babylon affect rulers and merchants all over the earth? ([18:9](#), [11](#), [15](#))

**And the kings of the earth, who committed *acts of immorality* and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning, "And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more—And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more—**

9. What will happen to Babylon's wealth? ([18:10-19](#))

**standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.' And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more—cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every *kind of* citron wood and every article of ivory and every article *made* from very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble, and cinnamon and spice and incense and perfume and frankincense and wine and olive oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and *cargoes* of horses and chariots and slaves and human lives. "The fruit you long for has gone from you, and all things that were luxurious and splendid have passed away from you and *men* will no longer find them.**

**"The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls; for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!' And every shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea, stood at a distance, and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What city is like the great city?' "And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste!'"**

10. Why will Babylon be judged? ([18:20](#))

**God has pronounced judgement for you against her**

11. Near the end of the vision of Babylon's fall, what did a mighty angel do? What did it illustrate ([18:21](#))

**Then a strong 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 not be found any longer.**

12. What symbol of violence was found in Babylon? ([18:24](#))

**"And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth."**

### **Get It**

13. What is pride and why is it dangerous?

1. A sense of one's own proper dignity or value; self-respect.
2. Pleasure or satisfaction taken in an achievement, possession, or association.
3. Arrogant or disdainful conduct or treatment; haughtiness.

**You begin to think all of this was what I did and not God**

14. Why do you think the kings, merchants, and sailors are singled out to mourn the great city's fall?

**They were the ones making money from what Babylon stood for and did**

15. What can we do to avoid being slaves to money?

**Not let it control us but use it wisely in our lives. Sometimes this is very hard to do**

### **Apply it**

16. What can you do to maintain a spirit of humility as you go about your day?

**Act with an attitude of what Jesus would do and not what I would do**

17. What is one step you can take today to put things and money in proper perspective?

**Try and remember God gave us these things, money. They are His, as we are**