

- 1) Chapter 18 is truly unique.
- 2) It is somber chapter; a requiem, a dirge for the funeral of humanity.
- 3) The Antichrist will have built the greatest commercial empire the world has ever seen.
- 4) This is a testament to the power Satan has given him since the world is generally in the worst physical shape it has ever seen because of the judgments of the seals, trumpets, and bowls.
- 5) In this chapter, Babylon is most likely the capital of the Antichrist's worldwide commercial empire.
- 6) It will also represent the state of the entire world over the last 3.5 years of the Tribulation and with its destruction, the stage is set for the triumphant return of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 7) God's destruction of commercial Babylon is the theme of chapter 18.
- 8) John MacArthur comments on the city:

“Though some commentators view it as a symbol for the Antichrist's whole godless system, the Babylon described in chapter 18 is most likely an actual city. It is called a city five times in the chapter (vv. 10, 16, 18, 19, 21), and other features in the text imply that a literal city is in view.”

- 9) He goes on to say:

“As the Antichrist's capital city, it will be the hub of and represent his commercial empire. Thus, the judgment and destruction of Babylon will kill the head, and the rest of the body of the Antichrist's whole world empire will follow in death.”

- 10) Simply put, God's judgment will fall on Babylon at the conclusion of all this.

- 11) Chapter 18 records seven aspects of that judgment on the Antichrist's commercial empire:

- a) ***Judgment Pronounced***
- b) ***Judgment Avoided***
- c) ***Judgment Defined***
- d) ***Judgment Lamented***
- e) ***Judgment Enjoyed***
- f) ***Judgment Completed***
- g) ***Judgment Justified.***

- 12) We begin with verses 1 thru 5. 1, 2, and 3 are the Judgement Pronounced and 4 and 5 are God's call to his people to avoid the judgement

Rev 18:1-5 (NIV)

Judgment Pronounced

Revelation – NOTES – 2021

- 1) With the beginning of vs. 1, John begins a new vision or at least a new portion of his ongoing vision.
- 2) The vision starts with another angel coming down from heaven to earth.
- 3) This angel has a couple of noteworthy characteristics.
 - a) He has great authority which probably will make him even more glorious than other angels that John has seen in his visions.
 - i) This also indicates that he left the presence of God with delegated authority to act on God's behalf.
 - b) A second unique characteristic is that he illuminates the entire world with his presence.
 - i) Since we are not told otherwise, we can probably assume that the world is still in darkness. From 16:10 we read:

Rev 16:10 (NIV)

- c) Finally, the angel cried out with a mighty voice.
 - i) No one will be able to ignore him; everyone will hear him as well as see him.
 - ii) His message will add to the consternation and terror caused by his appearance.
- 4) A comparison of this passage with 16:17-ff suggests that this judgment takes place when the seventh bowl is poured out:

Rev 16:17-21 (NIV)

- 5) Next, the angel begins his description of the reasons for the final destruction.
- 6) The city will be a hideout of demons and evil spirits, a nest for filthy buzzards, and a den for dreadful beasts.
 - a) The "hideout of demons and evil spirits" is literally a prison or watchtower, like a haunt, from which the evil beings watch over the desolate ruins.
 - b) This is an image of desperate desolation.
 - c) "Buzzards" are carrion birds, considered "unclean," also found in desolate places.
- 7) The reason that Babylon had fallen is described in 17:2: "all the nations have drunk the wine of her passionate immorality."
- 8) The rulers of the world have committed adultery with her, meaning that they have committed shameful sins — giving up what is most important for what is gratifying.
- 9) This "adultery" probably refers to both sinful alliances and the total abandoning all morality.
- 10) The rulers were living immorally and there will be no such thing as a "Christian nation" anywhere in the world
- 11) The merchants throughout the world have grown rich as a result of her luxurious living.
- 12) They will be seduced by the great riches that can be gained by their relationship with her.

- 13) At this point, Babylon personifies everything that is evil — sexual immorality, idolatry, greed, and oppression.
- a) I perceive that there will be a polarization (if that is the correct word) between Christian and non-Christian as has never been seen in all history.
 - b) By this I mean the differences are more exaggerated than ever.
 - c) The “people of the earth” will have degenerated morally to a state that has never been seen before.
 - d) On the other hand, those who are Christian will be stronger than ever.
 - e) The situation will dictate that your faith be absolute and true.
 - f) It is no longer a matter of only professing and living a right life and “just standing out.”
 - g) **All** who profess to love and follow Christ will be choosing to live or die for that profession.
- 14) This polarization is clearly seen in the call of the voice in verse 4

Come out of her, my people,
so that you will not share in her sins,
so that you will not receive any of her plagues;

- 1) The voice from heaven continues by describing or defining the judgement against the Antichrist’s kingdom.
- 2) The angel appears to have stopped talking to John.
- 3) He now addresses a request to God for what the specific judgments are to be.

Rev 18:6-8 (NIV)

Judgment Defined

- 4) These prayers echo the requests of the martyred saints over in chapter 6 when Jesus broke the 5th seal.
- 5) Here however, instead of asking God how long, the angel spells out the magnitude of the judgments.
- 6) In essence, for all the sin she has committed, repay her double in punishments.
- 7) The angel completes his plea with a statement that, as always, places the responsibility for the revenge or punishments on God to whom it always belongs.

“for mighty is the Lord God who judges her”
- 8) We are never allowed to seek vengeance or retribution – that is only God’s right.

- 1) In the next 10 verses, we see the world lament these judgements and the final disposition of the great Babylon.

Rev 18:9-19 (NIV)

Judgment Lamented

- 2) As you can see from these verses, this is clearly a lament for the judgments that the angel requested of God.
- 3) Of course, we must first understand that Babylon here represents not only the capital city of empire, but it also represents the entire evil and corrupt system that now exists under the Antichrist.
- 4) Those who control various parts of the economic system will mourn at Babylon's fall.
- 5) These verses are a funeral dirge for the fall of Babylon, sung by three distinct groups:
 - a) ***the rulers of the world*** (18:9-10) – because they have been the overseers of Babylon's wealth and have been in a position to enrich themselves greatly.
 - b) ***the merchants*** (18:11-16) – because Babylon, the greatest customer for their goods, will be gone.
 - c) ***and the ship owners*** (18:17-20) – because they will no longer have anywhere to bring their goods because the merchants will have nowhere to sell them.
 - i) As the verses tell us, this includes not only the owners but “sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea”
- 6) They have all grown rich because of the evil economy represented by Babylon.
- 7) They will sing songs of mourning because they will lose everything when the economy collapses.
- 8) The kings had given over their power to the Beast (the Antichrist).
- 9) Since the Beast controlled Babylon and they worshipped the Beast they are committing adultery with her.
- 10) As a reward for their subservience, these kings shared her luxury.
- 11) But when the city is destroyed, they will be terrified at her torment and stand far off.
- 12) These rulers will be terrified because, without Babylon, they will be nothing.
- 13) They are terrified for Babylon, but more important, they are also terrified that they will receive the same fate for themselves.
- 14) Merchants – when we look in more detail at the merchants, we get a slightly different picture.
- 15) The list of various merchandise shows only a very few common items.
- 16) Most of the list contains luxuries, including precious metals, jewels, and cloth, aromatic perfumes, foods and so on.
- 17) One interesting item on the list is the last item “bodies and souls of men”
- 18) All the items in this list would be familiar to John’s readers and would be indicative of opulence.

Revelation – NOTES – 2021

- 19) Slavery, of course was common in John's time but, it gives one pause for thought.
- 20) It makes one wonder if in the end times, slavery returns.
- 21) With the level of evil that the Antichrist's system represents, it would not be a surprise to me.
- 22) One group that is probably included but not directly mentioned in the merchants are all the countries that fed the economy of the great Babylonian system.
- 23) They too would be lamenting, as did the merchants.
- 24) The final group considered here are the men of the sea – they represent all those who indirectly make their livings from the Babylonian system.
- 25) As is obvious from their short lament, they realize the source of their wealth and know that, in comparison to anything that had existed before this system, none would compare.
'Was there ever a city like this great city?'

Judgment Enjoyed

- 1) As one might consider appropriate, the angel now addresses those who have been waiting for this very moment – all of heaven.

Rev 18:20 (NIV)

Judgment Completed

- 2) John then continues his description of the ongoing vision

Rev 18:21-23 (NIV)

Judgment Completed

- 3) The judgment is now complete.
- 4) John begins by describing another strong angel who completes the destruction.
- 5) From the highest to the lowest, they are all wiped out and will never exist in this system again.
- 6) So complete is the destruction that none of the normal activities of human life will ever take place in her again.

Judgment Justified

- 1) Almost like a period on a sentence, the angel pronounces a justification for the judgment that he has carried out.

Rev 18:23-24 (NIV)

- 1) One interesting note on the final words of this justification is “all who have been killed on the earth.”
 - a) This probably refers to the deaths of all those Christians who have been killed in the past three- and one-half years because they would not bow and worship the Antichrist.
 - b) This makes the ending and justification even more significant.