

Revelation 18

“Where is your Treasure?”

“*Watch therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming*”
 (Matthew 24.42) -- these words remind me of the last call, which will happen at the moment the Lord wishes. I desire to follow Him, and I desire that everything making up part of my earthly life should prepare me for this moment... I leave no property behind me of which it is necessary to dispose. As for the everyday objects that were of use to me, I ask they be distributed as seems appropriate...

- Pope John Paul II, Last Will and Testament, dated March 6, 1979

“The history of human civilization is to a great extent the history of human luxury; and the history of human luxury is the history of bodily appetites growing by what they feed upon.”
 W.G.T. Shedd

Chapter 17 > Harlot: Vulgar Display of Wealth and Power

Chapter 18 > City: Brought to Ruin from position of Domination

1. City 2. Customers 3. Catastrophe 4. Christian

1. City

a. Things > BABYLON like BARAHOLKA You Can Find ANYTHING There

v. 7 “the glory and luxury she gave herself” / v. 17 “such great wealth”

v. 16 “O great city, dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet, and glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls!”

One of Nero’s Banquets > Egyptian ROSES = Equivalent of \$100,000 USD

Vitellius > Emperor for ONE YEAR > in that Year > \$20,000,000 on Food
 LOVED DELICACIES: Peacocks’ Brains and Nightingales’ Tongues

“Ten measures of wealth came down into the world: Rome received nine, and all the world one.”
 Jewish Talmud

v. 12,13 cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble; cargoes of cinnamon and spice, of incense, myrrh and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, of fine flour and wheat; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and bodies and souls of men.

List of Imports from All over World

1) Precious METALS and GEMS, 2) Luxurious FABRICS 3) ORNAMENTAL Pieces 4) AROMATIC Substances, 5) FOOD 6) ANIMALS and PEOPLE

CITRON WOOD > Expensive Dark Wood from North Africa
Seneca had 300 Tables of Citrus Wood with Ivory Feet

“bodies and souls of men” > 60,000,000 Slaves in Roman Empire
Prostitutes, Gladiators, Menial Slaves

“souls of men” = Human Livestock > Died for Entertainment of Romans

IRONY > Trading away their Own Lives:

What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?
Matthew 16.26

b. Trap > TERRIBLE PLACE > Even EVIL SPIRITS Must be IMPRISONED

vs. 2,3 She has become 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. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.”

Habitation of Evil Spirits > Ceremonially Unclean Creatures
BABYLON “unclean – unclean - unclean” / GOD IS “Holy, Holy, Holy”

TRAP for EVIL SPIRITS > TRAP for KINGS > AND for COMMON MAN

“others...hear the word; but the worries of this life, the *deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful*”
Mark 4.18,19

People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. *For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.* Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 1 Timothy 6.9,10

“Today Babylon looks like a confident and beautiful queen, a city teeming with energetic activity and overflowing with the good things of life. In reality, however, Babylon is now a hag, a hollow husk, and a haunt of demons, defilement, and death.”
Dennis E. Johnson

c. Type > ANCIENT BABYLON is Alive and Well in the HERE and NOW

v. 10 ‘Woe! Woe, O great city, O Babylon, city of power! > MORE THAN ROME

Babylon > Symbol of Opposition to the ADVANCE of KINGDOM of GOD

“John is not thinking of the fall of one city or empire, but the collapse of civilization...all that opposes itself to God.”
Leon Morris

v. 19 *all who had ships on the sea* became rich through her wealth

v. 24 In her was found the blood of prophets and of the saints, and of *all who have been killed on the earth.*”

“the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained... called out in a loud voice, ‘How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?’”
Revelation 6.9,10

“All the judgments of history are but types and warnings of the final and total judgment of the last day.”
Philip E. Hughes

BABYLON is CLOSER than you THINK > May Be IN YOUR HEART

2. Customers

a. Masters

v. 9,10 “When *the kings of the earth* who committed adultery with her and shared her luxury see the smoke of her burning, they will weep and mourn over her. Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry:

“Woe! Woe, O great city, O Babylon, city of power!”

Kings of Earth > IN BED w/ HARLOT > Will Weep, Wail, Tremble For SELVES
STAND at SAFE DISTANCE to Weep and Mourn

TERRIBLE NEWS > SPOUSE is HIV POSITIVE > TIME BOMB in You
For Them > Loss of BABYLON is Loss of EVERYTHING > Bitter Lament

“Cases of hardened wickedness take this very pattern. Even when people know that they are sinning, and when they know that destruction follows, they cannot bear to

give up their sins. They cannot give up the pleasures or wealth that they obtain from sin.”
 Vern S. Poythress

b. Merchants

v. 11-16 “The *merchants of the earth* will weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargoes any more...“They will say, ‘The fruit you longed for is gone from you. All your riches and splendor have vanished, never to be recovered’ The merchants who sold these things and gained their wealth from her will stand far off, terrified at her torment. They will weep and mourn and cry out: “Woe! Woe, O great city”

Merchants of Earth > Great Men of Earth > Rich thru Power of Babylon
 MOURNING is NOT out of SYMPATHY > DEPRIVED of FINANCIAL GAINS

Dainties and Luxuries > Materialistic Extravagance for which THEY EXISTED
 Suddenly & Completely Lost > Before Judge of all the World > Empty and Naked

KINGS lost POWER & PRESTIGE / Merchants: PROPERTY & PROSPERITY
 MEGA MALL is Gone UP IN SMOKE!

c. Mariners

v. 17-19 Every *sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea*, will stand far off. When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, ‘Was there ever a city like this great city?’ They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out: “ ‘Woe! Woe, O great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth!

Mediterranean Sea > “Super Highway” of Roman Empire > World Wide Web

Your wealth, merchandise and wares, your mariners, seamen and shipwrights, your merchants and all your soldiers, and everyone else on board will sink into the heart of the sea on the day of your shipwreck. The shorelands will quake when your seamen cry out. All who handle the oars will abandon their ships; the mariners and all the seamen will stand on the shore. They will raise their voice and cry bitterly over you; they will sprinkle dust on their heads and roll in ashes.
 Ezekiel 27.27-30

Frantic Demonstration > Utter Despair > Loss of Worldly Wealth = Loss of ALL

Great City > So PERMANENT & PROTECTED > Pleasures INEXHAUSTIBLE
NOW > NOTHING REMAINS but SMOKING ASHES

Each Part of Society > Mourns in Relation to PERSONAL ADVANTAGE
CRISIS > Reveals TRUE NATURE > CUSTOMERS Ultimately SELF Centered

“Babylon is allegorical of the idolatry that any nation commits when it elevates material abundance, military prowess, technological sophistication, imperial grandeur, racial pride, and any other glorification of the creature over the Creator.”

Bruce M. Metzger

3. Catastrophe

a. Sure > DOWNFALL DECREED in the ETERNAL COUNCIL of GOD

Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the glory of the Babylonians' pride, *will be overthrown by God* like Sodom and Gomorrah...Her time is at hand, and her days will not be prolonged. Isaiah 13.19-22

Babylon will be a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals, an object of horror and scorn, a place where no one lives. Jeremiah 51.37

GENESIS > Babel made TOWER INTO HEAVEN > Show DEFIANCE of GOD
From HEAVEN God had to LOOK DOWN to SEE IT

NOW THEIR MANURE PILE has CAUGHT GOD'S ATTENTION

v. 5-7 “her sins are *piled up to heaven*, and God has remembered her crimes. Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done. Mix her a double portion from her own cup. Give her as much torture and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself.

‘Double’ > NOT Twofold Amount > MIRROR IMAGE = Exact Equivalent

Repay her for her deeds, do to her as she has done; for she has defied the Lord, the Holy One of Israel’ Jeremiah 50.29

Greatest Folly: IGNORE GOD > Suppress the Obvious Truth about the Lord God
“For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled” Luke 14.11

b. Sudden

v. 8 in *one day* her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.

MASTERS: v. 10 O Babylon, city of power! In *one hour* your doom has come!’

MERCHANTS: v. 17 In *one hour* such great wealth has been brought to ruin!’

MARINERS: v. 19 In *one hour* she has been brought to ruin!

v. 21 Then a mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said: “With such violence the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, never to be found again.”

Great Babylon > Sinks out of Sight into Sea > Overtaken by Devastating Judgment

“Babylon will sink to rise no more because of the disaster I will bring upon her. And her people will fall.”
Jeremiah 51.64

“with such violence” // Mark 5:13 > WORD > PIGS Rushing Down into LAKE
Suddenly and Spectacular Judgment of God > Entire Antichristian World

RED SEA > Pharaoh’s troops: “The deep waters have covered them; they sank to the depths like a stone.”
Exodus 15.5

Now listen, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.’ *Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow.* What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.
James 4.13,14

c. Scornful > HEART > DEEPEST Reality > Deep Rooted DECEPTION

“This is the carefree city that lived in safety. She said to herself, “I am, and there is none besides me.” What a ruin she has become, a lair for wild beasts!”
Zephaniah 2.15

Belshazzar and his Party > Defiling Sacred Vessels of Temple > Drunken Orgy
READ THEIR BAD NEWS > SAW Hand Writing on their Decorated Wall

v. 7 In her heart she boasts, ‘I sit as queen; I am not a widow, and I will never mourn.’

“Not even God could sink this ship.”

Officer of the Ship *Titanic*

Defiant to End > Scornful of Grace Freely Available > Too Late for Repentance

Now therefore hear this, you lover of pleasures, who sit securely, who say in your heart, ‘I am, and there is no one besides me; I shall not sit as a widow or know the loss of children’: *These two things shall come to you in a moment, in one day*
Isaiah 47.7-9

‘We would have healed Babylon,’ the Lord declared, ‘but she cannot be healed.’
Jeremiah 51.9

d. Sadness > Six times in vv. 21-23 > “NEVER . . . AGAIN”

vs. 22,23 The music of harpists and musicians, flute players and trumpeters, will never be heard in you again. No workman of any trade will ever be found in you again. The sound of a millstone will never be heard in you again. The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The voice of bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world's great men. By your magic spell all the nations were led astray.

Arts, Crafts, Commerce, and Customs of Great City > Permanently SILENCED
HELL IS THE ABSENCE OF ALL GOOD > ALL GOOD FROM GOD

Great NEW CAR STEREO SPEAKERS > Booming Down the Highway
COOL HEADPHONES and All those MP 3 FILES on your I-POD
“MUSIC never be heard in you again”

BELLS – WHISTLES – TOYS – AND GADGETS > Everyone WISHES HAD
BUILDINGS – MONUMENTS – TOWERS - TROPHIES
“WORKMAN never be heard in you again”

SUNSHINE – Utter Darkness Reigns Supreme – Cold, Eternal, Penetrating
“LIGHT will never shine in you again”

“VOICE of Bridegroom and Bride will never be heard in you again”
NO HAPPY HUMAN CELEBRATION – No Socializing – Utter ALONENESS
NO MORE LOVE – GOD IS LOVE – GOD WILL NOT BE THERE

“The gaiety of the tambourines is stilled, the noise of the revelers has stopped, the joyful harp is silent”
Isaiah 24.8

“I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp” Jeremiah 25.10

“The main point for us to observe is that the pleasure-mad, arrogant world, with all its seductive luxuries and pleasures, with its anti-christian philosophy and culture, with its teeming multitudes that have forsaken God and have live according to the lusts of the flesh and the desires of the mind, shall perish.” William Hendriksen

4. Christian

a. Separation – Identity not Isolation

v. 4 Then I heard another voice from heaven say: “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”

Call to God’s People> SEPARATE from Great WORLD-City of UNGODLINESS

"Flee from Babylon! Run for your lives! Do not be destroyed because of her sins. It is time for the LORD's vengeance; he will pay her what she deserves.”

Jeremiah 51.6

2 REASONS for Separation: To NOT Share 1) Her SINS, 2) Her PLAGUES

HOW do we GET OUT of Babylon > When we OWN an APT There?

I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. *In that case you would have to leave this world.*

1 Corinthians 5.9,10

To separate ourselves from Fallen Babylon does not mean to remove ourselves from active involvement in the life of the world. It means to live our lives in the world as God’s people, citizens of God’s kingdom New Jerusalem...Fallen Babylon is characterized by possessiveness; New Jerusalem by stewardship

M. Robert Mulholland, Jr.

Do not be *yoked together with unbelievers*. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?...Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord”

2 Corinthians 6.14,15,17

Biblical separation is not merely about people and places, it is mostly about purpose. Jesus – the ‘friend of sinners’ – shows us the primary issue is not where we are or who we are with. The important question is why. Are we advancing His purpose – His kingdom, glory, and grace - in all we do? Yours Truly

“You cannot stop the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from nesting in your hair.”

JOHN to STRUGGLING BELIEVERS in Asia Minor > Remember your Identity
SEPARATION > Not about ISOLATION from World > IDENTITY in World

REDEEMED UNTO A NEW IDENTITY: To him who *loves us* and has *freed us from our sins by his blood*, and has made us to *be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father*”
Revelation 1.5,6

“saint” = to be set apart to God for a holy purpose

What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; *those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them.* For this world in its present form is passing away. I would like you to be free from concern.
1 Corinthians 7.29-32

b. Celebration – Glory not Gloating

v. 20 Rejoice over her, O heaven! Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you.’

Literary GENRE > Prophetic TAUNT SONG > Not Personal Vindictiveness

Leave Babylon, flee from the Babylonians! Announce this with shouts of joy and proclaim it. Send it out to the ends of the earth; say, "*The LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob.*"
Isaiah 48.20

JOY – Somewhere to Go! – NEW IDENTITY – Citizens of New Jerusalem
When BABYLON SINKS > We WILL RISE with our ASCENDED LORD

“We must not think that the voice of celebration calls us to be glad because sinners are judged. The fact of divine judgment ought always to break our hearts, knowing lost sinners will be condemned to eternal punishment. The joy in this section

centers on God's righteous judgment, the fact that justice has been done."

Warren W. Wiersbe

God's People > Do NOT SHARE Grief of Masters, Merchants, and Mariners
Downfall of Babylon is Cause for Rejoicing > Vindicates Justice of Almighty God

Then heaven and the earth, and all that is in them, will shout for joy over
Babylon...Remember the Lord in a distant land, and think on Jerusalem

Jeremiah 51.48,50

As Citizens NEW JERUSALEM passing thru FALLEN BABYLON > On Mission
1885 – General William BOOTH – Founder of SALVATION ARMY
Preached to LARGE RALLY of SALVATIONISTS in London

"How wide is the girth of the world?" > Crowd Shouted > 25,000 Miles
Booth SPREAD OUT HIS ARMS and ROARED:

"Then, we must grow till our arms get right round it"

c. Confirmation – in God not Things

"We dare not underestimate the persuasiveness of the woman. We may react to the
glamour of Babylon with a shudder – 'how cheap, how tawdry!' – because that is
what we think is expected of us. But in practice, in daily life, the pearls and the
purple and the golden cup have an awful fascination. The world *is* powerful, its
message *is* attractive." Michael Wilcock

THIS SPELL can ONLY BE BROKEN by a VOICE w/ GREATER AUTHORITY

Passage > 2 ANGELS – Great Authority & Mighty - & VOICE from HEAVEN

v. 1 "angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was
illuminated by his splendor"

CAME FROM GLORIOUS PRESENCE OF GOD > God's Radiance Transformed
REFLECTED RADIANCE Spread Across the Sin Darkened Babylon
God will never Allow his Eternal Plan Overthrown > His Kingdom will Prevail!

Future not Desolate > Filled with Joyful Expectation of Vindication of Faith

Jesus: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life." John 8.12

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Revelation 18

¹After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor. ²With a mighty voice he shouted: “Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!

She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit,
 a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird. ³For all the nations have drunk
 the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed
 adultery with her,

and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.”

⁴Then I heard another voice from heaven say: “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; ⁵for her sins are piled up to
 heaven,

and God has remembered her crimes. ⁶Give back to her as she has given;
 pay her back double for what she has done.

Mix her a double portion from her own cup. ⁷Give her as much torture and
 grief

as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she boasts,

‘I sit as queen; I am not a widow,

and I will never mourn.’ ⁸Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her:
 death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire,
 for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.

⁹“When the kings of the earth who committed adultery with her and shared her
 luxury see the smoke of her burning, they will weep and mourn over her.

¹⁰Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry: “ ‘Woe! Woe, O great
 city,

O Babylon, city of power! In one hour your doom has come!’

¹¹“The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her because no one buys
 their cargoes any more— ¹²cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine
 linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every
 kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble; ¹³cargoes of cinnamon
 and spice, of incense, myrrh and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, of fine flour
 and wheat; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and bodies and souls of men.

¹⁴“They will say, ‘The fruit you longed for is gone from you. All your riches and
 splendor have vanished, never to be recovered.’ ¹⁵The merchants who sold these
 things and gained their wealth from her will stand far off, terrified at her torment.

They will weep and mourn ¹⁶and cry out: “ ‘Woe! Woe, O great city,
 dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet,

and glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls! ¹⁷In one hour such great
 wealth has been brought to ruin!’

“Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their
 living from the sea, will stand far off. ¹⁸When they see the smoke of her burning,
 they will exclaim, ‘Was there ever a city like this great city?’ ¹⁹They will throw
 dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out: “ ‘Woe! Woe, O great

city,

where all who had ships on the sea

became rich through her wealth! In one hour she has been brought to ruin!

²⁰Rejoice over her, O heaven!

Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you.' ”

²¹Then a mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said: “With such violence

the great city of Babylon will be thrown down,

never to be found again. The music of harpists and musicians, flute players and trumpeters, will never be heard in you again. No workman of any trade

will ever be found in you again. The sound of a millstone

will never be heard in you again. ²³The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The voice of bridegroom and bride

will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world's great men.

By your magic spell all the nations were led astray. ²⁴In her was found the blood of prophets and of the saints,

and of all who have been killed on the earth.”