

# REVELATION 18:1-24

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# REVELATION 18:1-24

## I. TWO BABYLONS II

### OPENING PRAYER



*Take the opportunity to admit sins and be in fellowship with God in preparation for study His Word. Then, I will open with public prayer.*

*Heavenly Father, we thank You that Your Spirit can take what we study and turn it into the "Bread of Life" for us. Therefore, we come to you, hungry, empty handed...with nothing but what Your Son, Jesus Christ, has provided. We thank you for it all. In Jesus' name, we pray.*

### REVIEW

*Questions at end of previous lesson could be used for review in this lesson and Vocabulary could be in the form of questions.*

### Summary



*Chapter 17 described religious Babylon, Satan's evil counterfeit. False worship or religion holds the world captive during the Great Tribulation. Satan uses religion to dominate every area of life. Everything and everyone is affected.*

*The unholy trinity uses the public lie to encourage hatred and to gather all the world's nations against the Jews and the Lamb of God at Armageddon. Antichrist uses the world's religious system to establish his power. He betrays that system after it fulfills his purpose.*

# I. TWO BABYLONS II

## A. COMMERCIAL CONNECTION

### 1. GREAT GLORY

**REVELATION 18:1** *After these things (after the things in CHAPTER 17) I (John) saw another angel (different from the angel in CHAPTER 17) coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory.*



VERSE 1 tell us the coming events follow the events in CHAPTER 17. Another teaching angel from heaven reports to John. The description of the angel clearly states he is the same ***kind*** of angel (holy, high ranking) as before, but not the same ***one***.

#### a. The angel's glory is reflected: he is closely associated with Jesus Christ.

Reference to the bright, superior glory of the angel emphasizes his power, authority, high rank and importance as a holy angel in heaven. Jesus Christ is the light of the world. This angel is close to Christ and reflects the Lord's glory. With that reflected glory he lights up the earth.

#### b. The angel reflecting Christ's glory delivers an important announcement.

1) The angel's announcement concerns the destruction of the evil system called "Babylon." We have heard it described before.

2) The announcement of the destruction of Babylon appeared in CHAPTER 14 immediately following evangelism by the high noon angel. Further description is in the book of Jeremiah.

**REVELATION 14:8** *And another angel, a second one, followed (followed the High Noon angel), saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."*



**JEREMIAH 51:7** *Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of the Lord, intoxicating all the earth. The nations have drunk of her wine; Therefore the nations are going mad.*

3) CHAPTER 17 describes religious Babylon's (the harlot's) destruction sometime

after Antichrist turns on her in the middle of the Tribulation. Commercial Babylon operates a while longer, but since her power was so closely related to Religious Babylon, her doom is sealed. The world adores commercial Babylon, but God must judge her. She shakes her fist in the face of Almighty God.

*It is interesting to note that it is not recorded that the world deeply mourns religious Babylon's destruction. Antichrist replaces all religion. At mid-point of the Tribulation, he set himself up as God and the world is satisfied with worshipping him. There is a different feeling for the destruction of commercial Babylon, however. We do not attempt to place these two events firmly on a timeline, though they obviously occur close to the end of the Tribulation.*



4) CHAPTER 18 repeats the announcement of Babylon's destruction and adds a few fresh details clearly exposing her decadent activities.

**REVELATION 18:2** And he *(the angel)* cried out with a mighty voice, *(there is no problem hearing his message)* saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! And she *(Babylon)* has become a dwelling place of demons *(demons actually live there)* and a prison *(demons are captured or caught in that geographical area)* of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird *(flesh eating birds, such as vultures)*."



5) CHAPTER 19 describes an event referred to as "the feast of the vultures". Following the final battle at Armageddon, an angel summons flesh eating birds to devour the bodies of those killed in battle. The birds mentioned in 18:2 are reportedly confined to that location. It seems the destruction of Babylon and the campaign of Armageddon are simultaneous and the same birds are involved.



**REVELATION 19:17** And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God; in order that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men both free men and slaves and small and great."



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## 2. GREAT EVIL

Commercial Babylon and religious Babylon are so thoroughly associated with each other their destruction is tied together.

**a. Chapter 17 describes the judgment of religious Babylon.**



**b. Chapter 18 describes God's judgment upon commercial Babylon.**

**c. Babylon is an evil, exalted world system of huge prominence.**

She is called a “dwelling place for demons and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird” (verse 2). These phrases mean that religion on earth during the Tribulation is a haven for demon spirits that are already feeding on the souls of human beings.



**REVELATION 18:3 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.**



*Call attention to the emphasis on merchants: the subject has shifted. The world loves commercial Babylon more than religious Babylon. Also note the reference to drinking the wine of her immorality in verse 3. Remind students of our choice to use drinking goblets to designate the third set of judgments. The references to wine, mixing, drinking and pouring are our reasons for that choice.*



**VERSES 3 and 9** express the same idea: wealth, immoral activity and power “intoxicate” the world. **The world is “addicted”.**

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## 3. GREAT MESSAGE

**REVELATION 18:4 And I (John) heard another voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, My people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues.”**



a. John hears another voice from heaven (he is still using his ear-gate).

The words, "from heaven" indicate God authorizes the message. The advice to "Come out of her" emphasizes the principle of God's people separating themselves from religious systems. "My people" means the command is for believers only.

b. The voice authorized by God calls God's people out of Babylon's religious system to protect them. God's people are those who have trusted Him yet they are involved in this horrible system. Jesus warns them and gives them a chance to get out before judgment falls.

c. God's grace precedes God's judgment. Just as God shut Noah and his family safely inside the Ark before the flood (**GENESIS 7:15-17**), He also allowed Lot and his family to leave before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (**GENESIS 19:12-24**).



*Teacher should study and be familiar with the 19<sup>th</sup> Chapter of GENESIS. Students should read verse 29.*



**GENESIS 19:29** Thus it came about, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, that God remembered Abraham (*Abraham asked God to spare Lot*), and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot lived.

God promises Church Age believers will be removed before the "wrath" of the Tribulation (**REVELATION 3:10**). God promises believers of all time will never suffer His final wrath (**I THESSALONIANS 5:9**) in the Lake of Fire, but when God's children refuse to separate from evil, they will (because of their proximity) be affected by God's punishment of evil people.



**II CORINTHIANS 6:14** Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?



**II CORINTHIANS 6:17** "Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord, "And do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you."



d. Memory verse.

**JOHN 2:15 Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

**e. Paraphrase.**

*God's children are not to be enticed away from God by the world's systems. Anyone who loves the world excessively makes a conscious decision not to love God as God deserves to be loved.*

**e. Gospel**

1) Anyone living comfortably (“settled down”) in the environment of Babylon is an immoral, God rejecting creature. Still, God offers the gift of eternal life. Anyone who believes Jesus Christ died in his place for his sins becomes God's child and God protects His children from final judgment. Believers cannot be separated from God in eternity.



2) This is good news for believers in the Tribulation!

3) Jesus Christ calls believers, today to separate from the world. His call is expressed over and over in our study. He calls us out, He tells us to stay in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, regularly gather with other believers to study His Word and apply what we learn to our lives. He wants us to live the spiritual life...and that separates us from the world, but He cannot force us. We must choose to stay in His plan.

**HEBREWS 10:24-25 ...and let us consider how to stimulate** (*stir up, encourage*) **one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some** (*some are in the habit of staying away from Bible class*), **but encouraging one another** (*italicized words are not in the original*); **and all the more, as you see the day drawing near** (*as you can tell the end times are drawing closer and the Rapture can't be far away*).



5) Paraphrase of **HEBREWS 10:24-25**

*Maturing believers are told to help each other focus on Spiritual things by faithfully sitting down in each others' presence for the purpose of receiving collective encouragement and comfort from Bible study. Believers who consistently follow this command grow in strength, wisdom and love for God,. They are able to understand unfolding future events and appreciate the imminence of the Lord's return for His Church (**PROVERBS 8:17, Wisdom is speaking**).*



## B. DESTRUCTION

### 1. DESCRIPTION



*Display the fist symbolizing rebellion*

#### a. Of her attitude.

- 1) Babylon has brought judgment upon herself by shaking her fist in God's face. Listen, again, to the report regarding her attitude.

### TEACHER'S INSTRUCTIONS



*Read all verses (REVELATION 18:5-19) aloud to the class including editorial comments (in italics and parenthesis). Instruct students to follow in their Bibles and ask questions when the meaning is unclear.*

**REVELATION 18:5-7** ...for her sins have piled up as high as heaven (*her sins have reached the maximum*), and God has remembered her iniquities. Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds (*her sins are so terrible she deserves double punishment*); **in the cup** (*Notice the reference to a drinking utensil, she is drunk with her sins*) **which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her** (*give her a double portion of the torment she made the saints of God drink, because she influenced so many others to join her*). **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** (*she thinks she is independent of God and has no need of anything. She is egotistical, arrogant and completely wrapped up in herself*)."



- 2) Commercial Babylon does not recognize her need of anything from God and she has no idea she has lost anything. How sad! However, it is even sadder when a believer in Jesus Christ exhibits this same attitude.

#### b. Of her judgment.

**REVELATION 18:8** “For this reason (because of her attitude toward God and His Word) in one day her plagues (a reference to the seven plagues poured out from the drinking goblets) will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong. (Notice, God judges her for the very things she refuses to recognize about herself. She deceives herself and she is full of arrogance: she is self absorbed.)



**REVELATION 18:9, 10, 11** And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of (especially spiritual) immorality and lived sensuously with her will weep and lament with her when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, ‘Woe, woe (remember, “woe” means “You’re in a heap of trouble.”), 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 (their prosperity was unalterably linked with hers).

1) **VERSES 2 and 4-6 in Chapter 17** employ identical phrases to describe religious Babylon. Religious and commercial Babylon are tied together and the rulers of the world eagerly join with them. They lust for pleasure and wealth in common ventures. The leaders of the world mourn for commercial Babylon because their own power and wealth depend on their common interests.



2) Two factors imply Babylon is destroyed by nuclear or atomic blast.

- a) The suddenness and surprise of the attack: total destruction accomplished in one hour implies nuclear explosion.
- b) Observation of the smoke of her destruction from a distance implies avoidance of nuclear contamination.
- c) God uses Antichrist’s evil 10-nation coalition to destroy by a nuclear attack, the evil, religious system called Babylon. Often God uses one evil to wipe out another evil. Eventually, the second evil is destroyed, too.

**c. Of her wealth.**

- 1) Scripture describes the wealth of commercial Babylon.



**REVELATION 18:12, 13** ...cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, (*luxury items*) and every kind of citron wood (*a valuable, dark, mahogany colored wood used for making fine cabinets*) 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 (*expensive perfumes*) and wine and olive oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and cargoes of horses and chariots (*luxurious ways of travel*) and slaves and human lives (*wealthy people with many servants*).

- 2) Details of God's wrath or judgment upon the anti-God crowd follow.



**REVELATION 18:14-19** And 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 (*here's that word, "woe", again*), 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 (*they expressed mourning: openly, for all to see. Notice there is mourning for loss of money and power connected with commercial Babylon*) and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, "Woe, woe (*they know they are in a heap of trouble*), the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for one hour she has been laid waste!



## 2. CONCLUSIONS

### a. Concerning time.

1) ***Destruction of commercial Babylon is quick.*** It is accomplished in one hour probably with a nuclear explosion. **(VERSES 10 and 19)**

2) In the previous Chapter, religious Babylon was destroyed by fire. **(CHAPTER 17)** It takes time for even a raging fire to accomplish total destruction, but commercial Babylon is destroyed in the short space of one hour. This is unusual.



3) Something similar happened to the ancient city of Babylon when Darius conquered the city in one day. **DANIEL 5:1, 3-5, 30** records that defeat.



### b. Concerning scope.

1) One hour and nothing remains of Babylon. Babylon's judgment is real, sure, swift, complete and final. ***Destruction is total!*** Everything is gone in the period of one hour. We have seen something like that in our time, haven't we?

2) Two unusually lovely, lofty towers in New York city were destroyed in a two hour period of time. I watched on T.V.: two hours and they were no more. I had enjoyed long, leisurely lunches and dinners at the top of those twin towers from time to time. I saw a dusty, level square of dirt and sand in the same spot a year later. And this (in Revelation) speaks of an entire city...perhaps even a larger area than a city.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE AN HOUR MAKES!

### c. Concerning earth's attitude.

Earth mourns the loss of Babylon. Citizens of the world hate the fact that she is gone because the world benefited from her existence. What was the source of the world's joy? Babylon, the harlot.: the controlling city. The counterfeit wife provided temporary joy and it's influence spread all over the world for a time. .

THE WORLD'S ILLIGITIMATE, COUNTERFEIT JOY IS  
FLEETING AT BEST.

### d. Concerning Heaven's attitude.



REVELATION 18:20-21 "Rejoice over her, O heaven and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her." And a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer."

1) Three categories of the souls of heaven's occupants at this particular time are mentioned, here. "Saints" represent Tribulation martyrs. "Apostles" represent New Testament believers. "Prophets" refer to Old Testament believers.

2) The large millstone thrown into the sea pictures total destruction of Babylon. She sinks to the depths of the sea and is never seen again.



3) Remember the second trumpet where "something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea." REVELATION 8:8-9. Compare that description with this report of the angel throwing a millstone into the sea. Perhaps these two descriptions are of the same event.



4) Heaven rejoices because Babylon has been an evil influence on the world and heaven is glad for earth to be rid of her. In the second line of VERSE 20, the phrase "God has pronounced judgment for you against her" informs us that the martyrs prayers for vengeance in REVELATION 6:10 are answered. The judgment of Babylon is part of the answer and heaven celebrates.

GOD WARNS THE WORLD, THROUGHOUT HIS WORD,  
"DON'T MESS WITH MY PEOPLE".

**"VENGEANCE IS MINE!", SAITH THE LORD.**



REVELATION 18:22-23 And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you (*in Babylon*) any longer; (*no more music*); and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer (*no skilled workers*) and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer (*no industry*); and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer

*(no more light)* and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; *(no more love, no more happiness)* for your merchants were the great men *(in men's sight, not God's)* of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your *(by Babylon's)* sorcery *(her demon activity)*.



#### e. Concerning those who are sorry.

The world enjoyed Babylon's activities. Scripture says four distinct classes of people on earth are sorry for her destruction.

**First**, Verse 9 says the *monarchs of the world* are sorry. The wealth and power of kings increased with Babylon's activity.

**Second**, the *merchants of the world* are sorry she is gone. Babylon was an economic benefactor.

**Third**, the *sailors of the world and people of commerce* are sorry she is gone. Babylon kept the tradesmen busy and guaranteed their wealth.

**Fourth**, the reference to weddings ("the voice of the bridegroom") means even the *ordinary people of the world are affected by the destruction of Babylon*. In the Bible, the height of earthly joy is portrayed by weddings. Absence of weddings symbolizes total inability to find fulfillment on a human level. All earthly joy for those depending on the world's system is gone because of Babylon's destruction. All is lost for them!

WORLD WIDE ACTIVITIES OF BUSINESS, POLITICS,  
COMMERCE AND SOCIAL LIFE FALL WITH BABYLON.

**REVELATION 18:24** And in her *(Babylon)* was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth *(Babylon was responsible for the murders of God's people, including the martyrs under the altar during the Tribulation)*.



#### FIVE PRINCIPLES EMERGE.

1. GOD IS IN CHARGE.
2. GOD IS RESPONSIBLE FOR JUDGMENT.

3. GOD TAKES CARE OF HIS PEOPLE.

4. THE THINGS OF THE WORLD ARE FLEETING.

...AND 5.

**THE THINGS OF GOD LAST FOREVER.**

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3. SONG: *"Class Antham" ("A Band of Believers Are We"),*  
*from Student Songbook. P. 156*



CLOSING PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, for Your faithfulness to us even though we are faithless to You. Thank You for loving us enough to send Your Son to take our place and pay for our sins so we might live with You Thank You for Your mercy in dealing with us as Your children. In Jesus name, we pray, Amen*

