

BABYLON THE GREAT IS FALLEN

REVELATION 18

Text: Revelation 18:2

Introduction:

Last week, we considered the destruction of religious Babylon. The Bible paints a horrific picture of the end of all false religion. One day, every belief system in the world that bypasses the Lord Jesus Christ will be utterly destroyed and will cease to exist. That will be a devastating day for the devil and his followers, but it will be a glorious day for the God of Heaven and for His Son Jesus.

While chapter 17 reveals the demise of ecumenical Babylon, this chapter reveals the doom of economic Babylon. In verses 1-2a, a mighty angel, shining with the glory of Heaven, appears on the scene. This angel comes to announce the condition and the condemnation of this world's economic system. Mankind will not only be deprived of the religion he created; he will also suffer the loss of the wealth he craves.

Nothing seems to devastate people more than destitution. Take away a man's money and often you have taken away his reason for living. This was the case in 1929 when the stock market crashed. October 29,

1929 became known as “Black Tuesday”. When the stock market crashed, the world was plunged into “The Great Depression”. Over the next few years the economic structure of the U.S. economy was nearly destroyed. Over 9,000 banks closed their doors between 1930 and 1933. Production in U.S. manufacturing plants ground to a halt, leaving millions unemployed. Many thousands lost their homes to foreclosure; many others lost their health to malnutrition. All across this nation, people waited in soup lines for their meals. People who lived through those dark and difficult days were changed forever by the hardships they suffered.

These verses tell us of an economic collapse that will make the stock market crash of 1929 seem like nothing! This economic disaster will be worldwide in its scope and it will take away mankind’s favorite god: money! Our money has the words “In God We Trust” printed or stamped on every piece. For far too many, the “god” they trust is that piece of money they hold in their hands. We have already considered the destruction of the one world religious system that will dominate the end times. We will consider this evening the demise of the one world economic system that will dominate the world in those days. By the way, whether we realize it or not, the world’s economy is already headed toward being one vast system. These verses talk about a time when the entire economic structure of the world will come crashing down in a moment of time.

Let's consider the facts in this chapter that are revealed as God judges the economic system of this world.

1. v. 2b-8 A SYSTEM CORRUPTED

A. v. 2b The Spirit Of This System – The angel tells us about the spirit behind the system. It will be a system energized and controlled by demons and evil spirits. It will be utterly vile and corrupt. We look at our world today and think that it can't get much worse. What this verse describes is a world that has literally gone to the devil. Things can get worse and they will!

B. v. 3 The Seduction Of This System – This Babylonian system will seduce the entire world. Kings and merchants will all tie their futures to what happens in this economic boom. Billions of dollars will be made as the wealthy people of the earth give everything they have to get their hands on all they can get. (III. We live in a world obsessed with money. How many of us have sat around and imagined what we would do if we had millions of dollars? How many are spending money they don't have buying lottery tickets to try and get rich quick? How many always have some scheme cooking in their head that they think will make them rich? The love of money is the greatest corrupter of mankind ever conceived, 1 Tim. 6:10. Money in and of itself is not evil. But, when a person loves money to the

point that it controls their life and lifestyle, it becomes evil.)

C. v. 4-8 The Sentence Of This System – The angel is preparing to pronounce God’s judgment upon this corrupt system. Before he does, he calls for God’s people to avoid being caught up in the wickedness of that hour. The angel calls for the people of God to reject this system and the sins of this system. God expects His people to come out of this world’s system and to be different, 2 Cor. 6:17. He expects us to be motivated by a different set of values.

We will never win the world by being like them! We will impact the world the most when we separate from their ways and allow them to see Jesus living through our lives!

Let’s listen in as the Lord’s sentence is passed on the Babylonian economic system.

1. v. 5 Her Deeds – The sins of this system have “reached unto heaven”. The word “reached” means “to glue, to cement, to fasten together”. The ancient tower of Babel failed to reach the heavens, but the sins of this system have succeeded in reaching the throne of God. God, in His patience, has held back His judgment. Now, the sins of Babylon come up in the remembrance of God and the day of His judgment has arrived.

I praise the Lord that those who are in Jesus do not have to worry about their sins being remembered. Consider the wonderful promise of Isaiah 43:25, “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.”

2. v. 6 Her Doom – The word “reward” here means “to pay a debt; to give back that which is due”. Babylon has sin much and she is about to be punished much! Her sins have been doubled and her punishment will be doubled too!

You never get away with sin! Gal. 6:7 tells us that we always reap what we sow. The problem with this sowing and reaping business is that we always reap more than we sow and later than we sow. Many people think they are getting away with sin, but they aren't! There will come a reaping day and the reaping will far exceed the sowing!

3. v. 7 Her Deception – This system glorifies itself. It thinks it is so powerful and so glorious that it is above sorrow and judgment. The Babylonian system is about to learn a harsh lesson.

Lots of people have this same attitude about their lives. They think that they are safe and that they will never be judged. God has a word for people with that attitude, 1 Thes. 5:3, “For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon

them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.”

4. v. 8a Her Destruction – Her power, her glory and her pride will not stave off the judgment of the Lord. Her destruction will be swift and sure. In one day all that man has built over thousands of years will be brought to nothing! Judgment will come and there will be no escape. It is settled!

5. v. 8b Her Destroyer – God makes promises and not threats. This system has defied His Word and defiled His ways. He will come in judgment and none will be able to stay His hand or stop His purposes. He is able to judge the world and none can stop Him!

1. A System Corrupted

2. v. 9-20 A SYSTEM CONSIDERED

(III. When the Babylonian economic system is judged, the entire world is plunged into grief. The world cries “Alas, Alas” as they realize that their wealth and power is gone. Notice how the different groups react to the fall of Babylon.)

A. v. 9-10 The Monarchs Of The Earth Consider Her –

All the leaders of the nations of the earth who have risen to power and prosperity on the back of this system now mourn over her destruction. Every economy of every nation on the earth will crash to the ground in a moment of time. The crash of this system will be accompanied by the wailing and weeping of the rulers of the world.

B. v. 11-17a The Merchants Of The Earth Consider Her

– These merchants are the business men and CEO's of the great businesses of the world. In an instant their financial empires are brought to desolation. They weep and mourn because no one has any money with which to buy their goods, v. 12. All of a sudden all their goods, which were worth so much, v. 13-14, are worth nothing! Verse 12 tells us that the luxuries of life are out of reach. Houses, cars, jewelry, and other fine things of life will be unobtainable. Verse 13 tells us that the basic necessities of life will be impossible to obtain. Spices, bread, meat and others foods will be out of the reach of every man. Verse 14 tells us that the exotic things that men long for will be taken away too. (Ill. Notice this list. The first item is “gold”, verse 12. The last item is “the souls of men”, v. 13. This reveals where this world system places its priorities. It elevates profits over people. This system has built its power and gained its prosperity through oppression and enslavement of the common man. Those days are over!)

Verse 15-17a shows the formerly wealthy merchants weeping over the destruction of the city. They have witnessed the devastation of the world's economic system and they are shattered by what they have seen.

We live in an hour when anything we want is readily available, and most people in our society are able to afford about anything they want. People talk about the economic downturn in our area, but you can't prove it by the parking lot at Wal-Mart! People still have plenty of money. That will change one day! The money of the world will be worth nothing. Good's will cease to be available. The world will be brought to its knees by the destruction of economic Babylon.

C. v. 17b-19 The Mariners Of The Earth Consider Her – All the people who made a fortune carrying the goods produced by this system mourn when they see its destruction. Their source of wealth is taken away and they are left destitute. All hope of profit and prosperity are taken away in an instant.

D. v. 20 The Multitudes Of Heaven Consider Her – While earth weeps over the fall of Babylon, Heaven worships! This system has been responsible for the death and destruction of many of God's people. Now, this system is judged and Heaven is filled with joy. It is interesting to observe Heaven's perspective concerning the events of earth. What brings sadness to the hearts of earthly men brings shouting to the hearts of

heavenly men. One day we will have a heavenly perspective, we should pray that God will give us some of that today!

1. A System Corrupted

2. A System Considered

3. v. 21-24 A SYSTEM CONDEMNED

(III. These last few verses bring the judgment of economic Babylon to a conclusion. Let's consider how this evil system will be condemned.)

A. v. 21 Her Condemnation Characterized – A mighty angel casts a millstone into the sea. A millstone was a huge, round stone used to grind grain. A typical millstone was around four to five feet in diameter and about a foot thick. A stone of that nature would sink to the bottom of the sea and it would not float back to the surface.

This stone is used to illustrate the judgment that is coming upon Babylon. Babylon will be destroyed and it will not rise to power ever again. This is what Jeremiah prophesied many years ago. Jeremiah 51:64, "And thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall

be weary. Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.” The judgment of Babylon will be sudden, swift and sure. It is also a judgment that is forever settled!

B. v. 22-23a Her Condemnation Completed – When Babylon is judged and ceases to exist, her passing will also signal the passing of life as the world knows it.

There will be no more music, verse 22. Music has always been associated with happiness and joy. There will be no more reason for rejoicing. Music will cease.

There will be no more manufacturing, verse 22. People have always been industrious. Man has always found a way to work with his hands and provide for his family. Man works because he has hope for the future. When Babylon falls, all hope for the future vanishes with her.

There will be no more merriment, verse 23. The “light of a candle” speaks of habitation and home. A light in the window of a home suggest happiness, hope, family and home. All these are taken away when Babylon falls. The homes of the world will be plunged into darkness and despair!

There will be no more marriages, verse 23. No longer will love bring hopeful couple to an altar to exchange their vow. There will be no more beautiful brides in their white dresses. There will be no more nervous grooms in their tuxedos. There will be no flower girls, ring bearers and wedding bells. Weddings are times filled with hope and happiness. A couple meets at the altar with their hearts full of love and hope for the

future. They begin their relationship with great expectations. When Babylon falls, there will be no more love, no more marriages and no more hope for the future!

C. v. 23b-24 Her Condemnation Contemplated – This system is judged because she stood for everything God was against. This system was domineering. A few got rich while the rest suffered, v. 23b.

This system was deceptive, v. 23b. People were lead to believe that salvation was in achieving riches and success. That is the lie of the devil! It is better to have none of this world's goods, than for this world's goods to have you. Listen to the Word of God: Pro. 11:4, "Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death." Pro. 11:28, "He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch."

This system was deadly, v. 24. The Babylonian system has been responsible for the deaths of many of God's precious people down through the ages. In fact, most of the faithful martyrs that have been killed have been sacrificed on the altar of power and profit.

Close

This world economic system that has caused so much pain is going to be destroyed one day. My advice to you is to be sure that your treasure is in the right place.

Matthew 6:19-21

¹⁹ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: ²¹ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

If you place the eggs of your life in the basket of this world, they will all be broken one day!

Are you saved today? If the Lord Jesus were to return for His church this day, would you be taken in the Rapture or would you be left here? If you are left behind, you need to know that you will be left to endure the Tribulation Period. You will suffer hardships like you cannot imagine, and, eventually, you will die and go to Hell. That does not have to be your future. You can be saved and made ready for Heaven right now. If you will come to Jesus, He will save your soul. He died to redeem you and if you will come to Him, He will not turn you away.

If you are too tied to this world and its pursuit of wealth, God can set you free. If there are needs, you mind Him!