

Chapter 18

¹And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. ²And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

The Vision of the Angel

“After these things” = a new vision

“another angel come down from heaven”

Who is this angel? Is it Jesus? Some have argued that it will be Jesus but the Greek word used here is “*allos*” which means “another of the same kind.” Cf. 17:1. Thus, this angel is just that. Note the way in which the angel is described.

- **“Having great power” = He will be acting on God’s authority.**
- **“The earth was lightened by his glory.” = Remember the earth will be in darkness as a result of the 5th bowl judgment. Thus, the angel’s brilliance will light up the sky.**
- **“He cried mightily with a strong voice.” = His message will be heard worldwide. His message will be one of woe and ill tidings.**

Babylon the Great. The Judgment of the World system.

- **A habitation of demons.**
 - **6th trumpet: 200 million demons were released, 9:13-16**
 - **5th trumpet: demons from the abyss were released. 9:1-11**
 - **Those cast with Satan from heaven. (12:4,9)**

John Phillips observed:

Babylon is to be overthrown because of the magnitude of her sins. The city is wholly given over to demonism and depravity. In fact, it is to be the home of demons . . . Demon worship will have its home there again, as it did in ages past. In Daniel’s day, Babylon was the home of the magicians, soothsayers, and astrologers who were official counselors of the king.¹

¹ John Phillips, *Exploring of vanity will be the mother of evil and all forms of false religion Revelation: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004), 221.

Chuck Swindoll noted:

At the end of Revelation 17 we learned that Babylon is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth; it is the end-capital of a godless worldwide empire under the Anti-Christ. That future Mecca of me-theism and Vegas of vanity will be the mother of evil and all forms of false religion. . . The identification of the actual city in the coming tribulation is less important than the fact that it will be the nerve center of Antichrist's final world system directly opposed to God and His people.²

³For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

The Charges Read

- ❖ All nations have become intoxicated with her immorality and sensuality.
- ❖ All the rulers of the earth have committed spiritual idolatry. (Most likely worship of materialism).
- ❖ Merchants have profited from her sin.

⁴And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. ⁵For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

“another voice” = “Another of the same kind” Thus a different angel calls God's people to come out and not to fall into her sins. (Cf. Heb. 12:1)

Just as God called his people to leave Sodom & Gomorrah, before they got caught in his judgment, he does here amid the Tribulation saints. The temptation to save themselves will be great, but God warns his people to steer clear or suffer needlessly.

“Her sins have reached unto heaven”. This is another way of pointing out the magnitude of her sin. There will be no restraint. Those who live during this time will be consumed with satiating their fleshly lusts and it will be done unashamedly.

⁶Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

Here the angel is speaking to God, not John. The angel is calling upon God to double the judgment/punishment. Pay her back double. Remember only God can exact vengeance. Only God has a right to, since he is holy and just in all his ways.

² Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll's New Testament Insights: Insights on Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 236.

⁷How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

The angel is calling upon God to give Babylon a just recompense of torment and sorrow. The world system had exacted an enormous cost of life and suffering for God's people, thus it was only fitting that Babylon receive equality in this.

Note the arrogance: "I sit a queen and am no widow and shall see no sorrow." How wrong she was.

⁸Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong *is* the Lord God who judgeth her.

God's judgment will be swift. Babylon will go from the center of the world reveling in riches, prestige and power to unimaginable devastation. ***It is important to note that Babylon here will be a real place. It may represent the economic power of the Anti-Christ, but it also indicates that a real city will be destroyed.***

⁹And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, ¹⁰Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. ¹¹And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

The Mourners

- ❖ **The kings of the earth—Vv. 9-10.**
- ❖ **The merchants—V. 11-17**
- ❖ **The Shipmasters and Sailors—V. 17-20.**

Note the motives of each group for mourning. Their mourning is not for the city but for themselves, i.e., they will no longer be able to satisfy their selfish lusts. Note below:

"Who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her."

"No man buyeth their merchandise any more."

¹²The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyne wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, ¹³And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

The list of items

There are 28 items listed.

¹⁴And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

“And thou shalt find them no more at all.” This simply means in the Greek language that these items will never be found again. That is, they will not be available ever again.

People with misguided morals will mourn over that which is of no eternal consequence. The Scripture speaks about “Gaining the whole world and losing one’s own soul.” Jesus asked his disciples what profit there was in it for a person. Yet, just as today, so in the end time, people will be consumed with filling their passions for material things, rather than being concerned about their souls.

¹⁵The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, ¹⁶And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! ¹⁷For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, ¹⁸And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What *city is* like unto this great city!

“¹⁷For in one hour so great riches is come to nought.”

Babylon’s destruction will be swift and sudden. God’s judgment will come in one swell blow to the Anti-Christ’s capital city. This obviously will also come as a major blow to the Anti-Christ.

¹⁹And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

All those who worship materialism will be left desolate. The picture here is one of great pain and suffering. The phrase: “that great city” is used repeatedly. Thus one can see the sense of devastation, shock and disbelief.

Heaven’s Perspective (Vv. 20-24)

²⁰Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, and *ye* holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. ²¹And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast *it* into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. ²²And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be*, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard

no more at all in thee; ²³And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. ²⁴And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

“Rejoice” This is the angel’s instruction to the saints, apostles and prophets.

The taking up of the millstone and casting it into the ocean symbolizes the swiftness of Babylon’s coming destruction. Just as the stone disappeared into the water and sank, so will Babylon.

Swindoll noted:

Finally, a mighty angel appeared in John’s vision with a millstone in his grip. He plunged it into the depths of the sea as a picture of the finality of the judgment of God. A stone of that size makes a huge splash with rippling waves as it sinks forever into oblivion. In the same way, the destruction of the world system under the Anti-christ will shake heaven and earth as it vanishes from the world scene, never to be recovered (18:21).³

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³ Swindoll, *New Testament Insights*, 238.