

6/6/04

Revelation 18

Keep in mind that chapters 17-18 go together as a parenthetical passage of greater detail that fits into the seven year period of Tribulation and Great Tribulation but they stand three and a half years apart in time.

1) As we looked at Revelation seventeen last time we studied “Religious Babylon” and her judgment by God at the hands of the Antichrist, the capital being Rome. Rev. 17:15-18

-This will take place at the middle of the 7 years, which will begin the last 3 1/2 years of Great Tribulation.

2) Now we have Revelation 18, which will give to us “Commercial Babylon” and her judgment by God at the end of end of the 7 years.

-Babylon will then be the commercial and political capital of the world for Satan’s Antichrist.

- This is the third “woe”, the seventh bowl judgment! Rev. 14:8; 16:19

-Both chapter 17-18 stand as a sharp contrast to the bride of Christ and the eternal city of God. Rev. 21-22

Remember when Nebuchadnezzar had a dream and none of his magicians, astrologers and soothsayers could not give him the interpretation, then Daniel finally came in and gave him the interpretation.

Daniel said, “And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules. Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.” Dan. 4:26-27

At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. The king spoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?” While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.” That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws. And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and

honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?" At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. Dan. 4:29-36

The Babylon of the anti-christ will not be so fortunate, it will be completely destroyed.

18:1-8 The Fall of Commercial Babylon.

18:1-3 The proclamation of the angel about the judgment of Babylon.

- 1) Once again another “allos” angel is the instrument of God to announce the destruction of commercial and political Babylon. vs. 1
 - a) Angels are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, messengers of God and worriers of heaven.
 - b) His authority is great illuminating the earth with his glory.
- 2) The message is judgment. vs. 2-3

- a) The dirge is in a form of irony, “Babylon the great is fallen”. vs. 2a-d
 - 1)) The proclamation is as if it already took place, the prophetic aorist.
* Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 18:2
 - 2)) Means that Babylon is to be built again and it will become the capital of the antichrist, after he has destroyed the religious woman at Rome.
 - 3)) Remember that Babylon was once the capital of the world, under Nimrod, that stood in rebellion against the true worship of God.
 - 4)) The prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah deal with that aspect of prophecy of Babylon’s past judgment and yet future one. Is. 13:9, 12, 19-32; 25:12; 47:7-9, Jer. 50-51
 - a)) Sennacherib destroyed Babylon and Esarhaddon, the next Assyrian king rebuilt it and Cyrus did not destroy it in 539 B.C.
 - b)) It is very clear that Babylon will be rebuilt and destroyed at this future time and never to rise again, yet some take it merely symbolic! Is. 13:5-6, 10, 19-22; 14:1-6, 22, 25-26; Jer. 51:37
 - c)) Napoleon planned to rebuild the city, Kaiser attempted to build

- a railway to the area and Russia had plans for it also.
- 5)) We have had two Middle East wars with Iraq, how this will play out we have to wait and see, if it has any fulfillment, time will tell.
- b) Babylon will become the place of Satanic demonic activity. vs. 2e-g
- 1)) Babylon at this point, has become a dwelling place of demons.
* The word is “daimon”, a devil or fallen angel, who influence fallen man.
- 2)) A prison for every foul spirit.
* A fousl spirit “akathartos”, vile is the idea and unholy.
- 3)) A cage for every unclean and hated bird!
* A gathering of mankind through demons and every unclean spirit for wicked men to gravitate and inhabit. vs. 3e-g
- 4)) Remember Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon was run by magician, soothsayers, astrologers, etc, being guided by demons and familiar spirits.
- c) All nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her. vs. 3a-b

- 1)) The nations will seek Babylon out and be captivated by her ingenious business mind and will become intoxicated with her immoral and evil power and authority. Rev. 17:2
- 2)) Idolatry and demons are always tied together. 1Cor. 10: 20; Rev. 9:20; 16:14
- d) The merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury. Vs. 3c
- 1)) They have merchandise people by being one and following her example, becoming exceedingly wealthy and powerful.
- 2)) Her judgment is just and long coming.
- 18:4-5** The proclamation of the angel to the people to exit her before the judgment of Babylon.
- 1) This call is by another voice and is to those tribulation saints who have heard and believed the gospel to come out of her, “my people”, probably God. vs. 4a-c
* Gen. 12:1; Is. 48:20; 52:11; Jer. 50:8; 51:6-9, 45; 2Cor. 6:14-18
- 2) The warning is lest they share in her sins and plagues. vs. 4d-e

- a) The free-will of man is never violated.
- b) The believer still has sin nature.
- c) The plagues of the seventh bowl.
Rev. 16:17-21
- 3) Her sins have heaped up to heaven. vs. 5
 - a) Much like the days of Noah, Sodom and Gomorrah and Nineveh.
 - b) Her evil character has never changed. Jer. 50:8-10; 51:9
- 4) God remembered her iniquities and so will he every person without Christ.

18:6-8 The just and severity of her judgment.

- 1) She is rendered in kind as she has done two-fold. vs. 6a
- 2) She is given double, a full measure according to her works, for she has sown much. vs. 6b-c
 - a) The expression “double” does not mean twice as worst but equal, it will be just and equitable. Rev. 2:23; 18:6; 20:12, 13
 - b) God told Jeremiah that after He used Babylon to judge Israel, then He was going to judge Babylon for her sin of going further than God ordered. Jer. 50:18; 51:44, 47

- 3) She is paid in measure for her empty living. vs. 7
 - a) Pride, her self-glorification.
 - b) Prosperity, luxurious living.
 - c) Personal control, “She says in her heart, I sit as a Queen, and not a widow, and not see sorrow.”
* Is. 14:22-23; 47:7-10; Ezk. 28:18
- 4) She is suddenly destroyed in one day or one hour. vs. 8, 10, 17, 19
- 5) She will experience all this suddenly and complete, by the phrase “one day”. vs. 8
* Vengeance belongs to God. Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:19; 2Thess. 1:7-8

18:9-20 The response to fall of Babylon.

18:9-10 The kings of the earth are in awe of her judgment.

- 1) The kings will mourn her because their chicken that laid the golden egg is gone. vs. 9
 - a) This is a dirge or funeral lamentation, like Jeremiah for Jerusalem and in his Lamentation.
 - b) They are cut off from their immoral pleasure and prosperity, like the judgment of Tyre. Ezk. 26:16; 27:30-35

- c) These kings stand in sharp contrast to those of chapter 17, who rejoice at the destruction of the woman. Rev. 17:16
- 2) Their viewing is from a distance for fear of her torment. vs. 10
 - a) One hour, in a very short time. vs. 17, 19
 - b) Some have suggested nuclear exchange.
 - c) The distance, due to fear, would seem to imply some horrific devastation and is repeated. vs. 9, 10, 15, 17
 - d) Alas, alas “ouai” is the same word translated “woe”, an exclamation of grief. Rev. 8:13; 9:12; 11:14; 12:12; 18:10, 16, 19

18:11-13 The merchants weep for their inability to sell their goods.

- 1) The sorrow is due to their inability to do business, their customers have been destroyed. vs. 11
 - * This is much like the dirge song for Tyre and fifteen of the twenty-nine commodities list here in Revelation are listed with Tyre. Ezk. 27:12-24
- 2) The various merchandises of commercial Babylon are named. vs. 12-13
 - a) This is an inventory list of sorts.
 - b) Precious metals, gold, silver, brass and iron.

- c) Precious gems, stone and pearls.
- d) Precious fabrics, fine, linen and purple.
- e) Precious materials, citron wood, precious wood and marble.
- f) Precious spices, cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense.
- g) Precious consumable commodities, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat.
- h) Precious live-stock, cattle and sheep, horses.
- i) Precious defense resources, chariots, and bodies and souls of men, slavery.
 - * These are not only luxuries but an extravagant life-style.

18:14-16 The mourning is described. vs. 14-19

- 1) They reaped mourning and wailing over her destruction. vs. 14-15
 - a) What they lived for and sought after is gone. vs. 14
 - b) The wealthy merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will be devastated as they stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, vs. 15
 - c) Like the parable of the rich fool. Lk. 12:16-21
- 2) They will express their grief. vs. 16
 - a) The words of these men will be a dirge, a funeral lamentation, “Alas,

alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls!” vs. 16

18:17-19 The mariners are astonished.

- 1) They will see the suddenness of the destruction. “For in one hour such great riches came to nothing! Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance.” vs. 17
 - a) All the great seaports of the world, New York, London, Hong Kong, Tokyo will be midgets compared to Babylon!
 - b) If you can imagine, all these ships of the world congested in the Persian Gulf in awe of the destruction!
- 2) Their severe grief is declared, “And cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ‘What is like this great city?’” vs. 18
- 3) They become demonstrative in their grief, “They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.’” vs. 19

* The entire long shore trade will be affected, to never return.

18:20 The response of heaven is entirely different.

- 1) One of joy, “Rejoice over her, O heaven” vs. 20a-b
 - * Rejoice is the same word for the Prodigal Son. Lk. 15:23
- 2) The holy apostles and prophets also. vs. 20c
- 3) The reason is, “for God has avenged you on her!” vs. 20c
 - * For it is righteous judgment, her due or the martyrdom of the people of God!

18:21-24 **The finality of the destruction of Babylon.**

18:21 The proclamation is made by the angel.

- 1) The angel symbolically throws a great millstone into the sea to communicate her utter destruction for ever.
 - a) It is with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down.
 - b) It shall not be found anymore.
 - * Like Tyre. Ezk. 26:21
- 2) The prophet Jeremiah did a similar thing and tied the prophecy to a stone and cast

it into the Euphrates River, prophetic of the future fulfillment. Jer. 51:63-64

- a) The overthrow will be violent.
- b) The overthrow will be certain.
- c) The overthrow will be final.

18:22-23a-b The angel describes her utter desolation in detail to emphasize her final destruction. vs. 22-23a-b

- * An allusion to Jeremiah. Jer. 25:10
- 1) No sounds of daily life will be heard in her ever again. vs. 22a-d
 - * “The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore.”
- 2) No work, commerce or business will be found in her ever again. vs. 22e-f
 - * No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore.
- 3) No festive occasions of marriage will ever occur again. vs. 23a-b
 - * “The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore.

18:23c-24 The angel declares her two fold sin.

1) By her sorceries she deceived the nations. vs. 23c-d

- * “For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived.”
- a) The word sorcery “pharmakeia” deals drugs and with magical spells and associated with murder, fornication and thefts. Rev. 9:21
- b) The word deceived ‘plano’ means to roam, deviate, wonder or go astray from the things of God.
- 2) She was a heartless murderer of the righteous prophets and saints on the earth. vs. 24
 - * “And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.”
 - a) Those throughout history.
 - b) Those of the Great-Tribulation. Rev. 5:6, 9, 12; 6:4, 9; 13:8