

Revelation 18: The Judgment of Babylon, Part IV

Scripture: Revelation 18

II. The Response of the World to the Fall of Babylon (vs. 9-20)

Three general categories of response to the fall of Babylon, are recorded here for us, namely, a response from the kings of the earth, a response from the merchants and a response from the seamen. And all of these mournful responses are given not so much out of concern for Babylon, but rather out of concern for how the fall of Babylon will affect them personally.

1) The kings of the earth weep and lament for Babylon because they shared in and benefited from her luxury (vs. 9-10).

2) The merchants of the earth mourn because they have grown rich by supplying all of Babylon's insatiable desires for luxury (vs. 11-17). They will no longer have someone to whom they can sell all of their merchandise.

3) The seamen of the earth mourn because they will no longer be able to prosper in the maritime trade that has thrived because of the idolatrous ways of Babylon (vs. 17-19). [Rome and the Mediterranean; international commerce]

[See also Ezekiel 27:12-22- re: the destruction of Tyre]

Note of Interest re: Rome: Robert Mounce stated, "The tremendous volume of [trade done with Rome] may be inferred from contemporary writers such as Pliny and Aristides. The excessive luxury of Rome and its passion for the extravagant are well known. At one of Nero's banquets the Egyptian roses alone cost nearly \$100,000. Vitellius had a penchant for delicacies like peacocks' brains and nightingales' tongues. In his reign of less than one year he spent \$20,000,000, mostly on food. One Roman, after squandering an immense fortune, committed suicide because he could not live on the pittance that remained--about \$300,000. In the Talmud it is written, 'Ten measures of wealth came down into the world: Rome received nine, and all the world one' (pg. 332).

Again, brethren, we are given a list of very specific, costly materials (and slaves) that were especially common in the Roman Empire (different kinds of wood, spices, materials, gems, valuables...etc). Rome is our guiding template for every age, and especially for the final destruction of this world system. The point here is that all of the valuable treasures and idols, which pull the attention of the world away from its Creator; all that we naturally put our stock and trust in, will ultimately be pulled down. Rulers of the world will mourn and they will stand back in awe over the quick devastation that has crippled the economic, materialistic world system, which has thrived so powerfully. Merchants and international traders will mourn in shock over the downfall of their main source of income. In short, Babylon's fall, pictured by the fall of OT Babylon and the fall of NT Rome will devastate the whole world, which has built its confidence in, and defined its life by her.

Note: A Prelude to those who rejoice over the fall of Babylon (read vs. 20). Those in heaven are vindicated, and they are called to rejoice to see the anti-God system of this world removed, so that God and His Christ and His church are vindicated! This rejoicing will take place in the next chapter [Chapter 19].

III. The Result of the Fall of Babylon (vs. 21-24)

A *mighty* angel then throws a mill stone (with great force) into the sea, which is to picture the great force with which Babylon will be thrown down. The implication is that the great city will be thrown down hard, never, ever to rise again. She, who interfered with and distracted living souls away from the Kingdom of God, will be no more...forever!

And the painful results of this great overthrow are as follows:

1) Every form of celebration; every form of relaxation; every form of entertainment, which once saturated the world, will be shut down forever (vs. 22a).

2) Every career; every sound of labor and working, which busied the world and brought it to great prosperity and success, will be shut down forever (vs. 22b).

3) There will be complete darkness; no indication of the joyful comforts of life; weddings and all forms of celebration that once filled the world, will no longer exist (vs. 23).

In essence, the world as we know it will come to a screeching halt; and everyone who has laid their stock in this world will be devastated. Only those who stand upon the Rock of Christ will stand. They will have every reason to go on, because their kingdom is not of this world. They are seated in heaven with Christ!

Finally, we are given again the two main reasons for the destruction that has come upon Babylon:

1) The world was deceived by her seductress ways. By her lusts and luxuries, she has turned the world away from God and His Christ (vs. 23b).

2) She is guilty of blood shed. The world system, which has contended with the church (the whore has contended with the true Bride of Christ), has put the people of God to death, as they have sought to expose her idolatrous ways, so that the lost would be rescued from the whore's grasp, and brought to Christ.

Conclusive Thoughts

1) What are you holding on to? A flimsy, temporal, dying, decaying, soon to be destroyed world system? or...the solid Rock of Christ?

2) Note the speedy and unexpected, shocking nature of the fall of Babylon. Be prepared now...so that you are not taken by surprise. "Come out of her, lest you share in her idolatrous ways and the plagues that will come upon her." [This is a caution for the *church!*]

Amen!!!