

Revelation Pastor Lou DeVizia

Revelation 18:1-8 Fellowship Bible Church; Woodbridge, NJ

www.yourfamilychurch.com

Introduction: Chapter 17 revealed the emergence and sudden destruction of the religion of the future world empire of Antichrist (the beast). The religion was described as "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (17:5), and it was shown to have captured the hearts and minds of all the world. Antichrist uses it in his rise to power. But then - all part of the plan of God Himself (17:17) - Antichrist turns on the religion, bringing about its total destruction, and in even greater pride establishes himself as the one-world object of worship. That will ultimately be put to a violent end when the Lord Jesus returns (ch. 19), but the religious element of end-times Babylon will meet a swift and terrible end.

But Babylon in the Great Tribulation is much more than a religion. "Babylon" is emblematic of the world in general, the world of Antichrist. He will rule his empire from Babylon, quite possibly a reference to the actual, literally rebuilt city (though obviously previous studies have shown that Rome, in some way, has a great part in the end-times picture as well). Especially, Babylon will control the economy of the world and be involved with virtually all commerce. There is seemingly complete control.

That, however, will also come to a swift and spectacular end. Whereas Chapter 17 discussed the destruction of the religious aspect of Babylon, Chapter 18 describes a more comprehensive destruction of it in general - all of her wealth, her commerce, her economic power, her luxuries and lifestyle and culture, and of course her people. Her end is described as swift, violent, and total; and it draws the attention and mourning of the entire world. There are two speakers in Chapter 18: First an angel with great authority announces the destruction, then another unnamed voice calls God's people out of her (God will have His elect even in the Great Tribulation who will repent and turn to Him in faith), describing further Babylon's sins.

1. Verses 1-3 - The angel of great authority: "Babylon the great is fallen...!"

- v.1 - **After these things...** Separate from the destruction of the religion (Ch. 17) comes the destruction of the entire world system of Babylon. **Another angel... great authority... earth was illuminated with his glory...** It is interesting that the destruction of Babylon - Satan being the power behind Antichrist who rules it, as we have seen - is announced by such an angel, whose description seems similar to that of Satan's/Lucifer's before he fell.

- v.2 - The cry of the angel is made as if the destruction was already done. See 14:8 for the precursor to this. **...dwelling place of demons...** Previously in Revelation we have seen demons released from the Abyss. We have seen Satanic forces working in the earth throughout the book. Babylon becomes the earthly center of operation for these demonic forces. That will all be happening, on earth, in the Great Tribulation.

- v.3 - Babylon will influence not only economics but also values. Every nation of the world will commercially deal with Babylon, many will become wealthy because of this. *Satan is able to make people and nations prosper materially!* There will be riches and luxury, though by this time the world will have already seen quite a bit of that destroyed.

2. Verses 4-8 - Another voice: "Come out of her, my people..."

- v.4 - **another voice from heaven...** unnamed. This voice calls to God's people to **come out** of Babylon, thereby avoiding the judgment upon her. This certainly can be seen as a call to repentance

and faith - as we have seen there will be a remnant of God's elect in the Great Tribulation, and some of them will survive. This may be an actual call to salvation, or it may be a call to the saved to separate from the worldliness and sinfulness of Babylon.

NOTE: Both Isaiah and Jeremiah made similar calls to separate from Babylon - Isa. 48, Jer. 51.

NOTE: There is a principle here that is applicable to every age, not just the future world of the Antichrist. We are living right now in a fallen, God-forgetting, sinful world. We are living in a materialistic world. We are not to get wrapped up in it. We are to come out of it. We are the church, a *called out people*. "This kind of call has come in every generation" John MacArthur. "It should be a warning to us... that (God) wants us to be separate, not indulging the old nature, but walking by the Spirit" J. Vernon McGee.

- vv.5-8 - The voice announces that the sins of Babylon have reached heaven, then cries for just judgment. Self-glory, luxury - rampant materialism and covetousness, which is idolatry - are all greatly offensive to God. They become the great tools of the last, Satanic uprising against the Lord. The post-Rapture world is deceived into thinking it is free of God, turns to Antichrist, runs headlong into rampant carnality and materialism, and suffers swift and terrible judgment from the Lord.