

## Chapter 18:

After the previous events in chapter 17, John sees another angel come down from heaven. The angel is described as having “great authority”. There are other places in the Bible that a “great angel” is referenced and it is believed to be Jesus. The earth being “illuminated by his splendor”, would speak to the glory of this being. Usually, glory is reserved for God and Jesus. If this were a normal angel, it has been thought by others to displaying the glory of God since he was in God’s presence. I know there are pastors out there who have done studies on angels. In the Greek, the word used here also means messenger. So this may not necessarily be an angel.

The angel shouts with a mighty voice: “Fallen is Babylon the Great”. In the NIV, Babylon is described as being a dwelling for demons and “a haunt” for every impure spirit. In the NASB, “prison” is used instead of haunt. In the KJV the word “hold and cage” is used. When used as a noun it represents a place frequented or dwelled in. As a verb it would show the action of dwelling in or visiting. It does not speak to haunting like that associated with ghosts or spirits.

The terms “unclean bird” and “unclean and detestable animal” are also used here. The nations of the world took in the evil ways that Babylon promoted that went against God. The kings of the earth turned away from God and believed in Babylon’s false and evil ways. People grew rich from feeding her the luxurious things that she possessed. This city is full of sin.

In verse 4, John hears another voice from heaven telling the people of God to come out of her so that they will not partake of her evil ways and share in the wrath of God that Babylon is about to receive. Her sins are so great that they are piled up to heaven and God has remembered all the things she has done against Him and His people. God will give back to her as she has done. I’m curious why it is referenced here for “people of God” to come out of her. I would expect that Christians would have been raptured or killed. If there are Orthodox Jews that are still living, within Babylon, and haven’t accepted the mark, I would expect that they are slaves.

She will be paid back a double portion for her sins. She will receive an equivalent amount of torment and grief as she received in luxury and self-glorification. Babylon is boastful and sees herself as a queen and not like a woman who has lost her husband and is in mourning. She pridefully states that she will never mourn or be in a position of grief. God will however teach her that she is wrong. In 1 day these plagues of death, mourning, and famine will take her, and she will be consumed by fire.

In verse 9-16 we see that the kings of the earth will see her burning. These kings would be seeing her burn from a great distance, their home countries (don’t forget Babylon surrounds many waters), and they will be saddened over this. We see merchants and sea captains mourning the loss of Babylon. There will be loss of life of their evil friends. There will be great loss in money for these kings, merchants, and sailors because Babylon lived off these luxurious things, who will be around that can afford them and use them. I believe this really speaks to the collapse of whatever level of financial stability that is remaining in this time. It is hard to imagine wealth and prosperity during

the Tribulation, but we know there will be people of great wealth. Many, if not a majority of, these wealthy people would reside in Babylon or get their wealth by fulfilling the evil desires of Her.

In verse 13 it speaks of slaves being sold among the list of everything the merchants and sea captains bring. I would guess these slaves could come from all over the world, but I would not be surprised to find that many of them are of Jewish decent. Especially with God instructing His people to come out of Babylon. Verses 17-20 is a continuation of the woe and celebratory statements about the fall of Babylon. There is focus here on the sea captains who are affected by this. There is a reminder this will happen in only 1-hour. In verse 19 in the NIV it states “They will throw dust on their heads...” This action signifies extreme grief and mourning. It shows humility, and in some situations, repentance; although I don’t think these sea captains are repenting. I believe they are selfishly grieving because of their financial loss.

Verses 21-24 are describing the finality of Babylon’s doom. Another mighty angel picks up a boulder and throws it into the sea. It is stated to be the size of a millstone. A millstone is a very large stone used for grinding grain. It is typically 4-5 feet in diameter and 12+ inches thick. There may be more significance and meaning to why this is called a “millstone” verses a stone the size of a mountain or something that is larger and more destructive sounding. No matter, the result is that Babylon is essentially washed away by a tsunami from the stone being thrown into the sea.

Verses 22-23 speak of what will no longer be seen or heard of again within Babylon. She lead all the nations astray and has paid the price. In her was found the blood of prophets and God’s holy people. This speaks of those who were killed because they maintained the testimony of Christ and shared the word of God, within Babylon and across the world.

Babylon is really seen as the city of the beast, or Antichrist. He originally will partner with her and use her to corrupt the entirety of the world. He will eventually turn on her and take her for himself. Whether this is the Antichrist’s primary place of residence will remain to be seen. He will be tied to this place spiritually and physically. The destruction of Babylon is significant, and an emphasis in the book of Revelation, as it is symbolic of the downfall of man’s opposition of God.