

REVELATION 18:9-24

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Revelation chapter 18 as we continue our study through the Word of God, and we will finish up this chapter this evening.

Remember back in Revelation chapter 17 we saw the destruction of religious Babylon or the false religious system.

Here in Revelation chapter 18 we see the destruction of commercial Babylon and this destruction will be complete!

Let's face it, we have seen a lot of destruction, a lot of death here in the book of Revelation. And some don't understand it, they don't think God is being fair. Let me say this, when God judges' man, it is a righteous judgment. He does not give to man too much punishment and not too little, it is perfect judgment upon a Christ rejecting world!

Think of it like this. God has established His rules, His ways and all He asks us to do is to walk in them. But rebellious man wants to do his own thing and he thinks he is going to win out, but in the end, he will lose everything.

Let me share this with you and you will see what I mean. This story was reported back in 1993 and things have gotten a lot worse since then. This is what we are told,

President Clinton named Kristine Gebbie, a lesbian, as the new AIDS czar.

Four months later she spelled out her perceptions on traditional morality.

She said, “[The United States] needs to view human sexuality as an essentially important and pleasurable thing. [Until it does so], we will continue to be a repressed, Victorian society that misrepresents information, denies homosexual sexuality, particularly in teens, and leaves people abandoned with no place to go. I can help just a little bit in my job, standing on the White House lawn talking about sex with no lightning bolts falling on my head.”

- Associated Press, October 29, 1993

I want you to understand that she is mistaken. She is confusing the grace of God with the acceptance of God in her actions or more than likely denying that there is even a God who will judge.

And many do that today. God has not brought judgment upon them and thus, they just go and do their own thing.

And many, when they hear people talking about the judgment of God, they just don't think this is right, that it is fair, they believe God would never judge people for their actions. Again, they are sadly mistaken!

Yes, they may not see this as fair, but the Gospel message has gone forth and they have rejected it, mocked it, ignored it and thus, they are going to stand before God in their own righteousness, which are like filthy rags before a holy and righteous God.

God's grace and mercy will come to an end. Remember what we read back in Genesis 6:3 before the judgment of God fell upon a world that was in rebellion against Him. We are told, **“And the Lord said, ‘My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.’”**

I believe judgment is coming just like in the days of Noah, whether people believe it or not!

And, like I have said, our God is so gracious, He is so merciful, that even in the midst of His judgment here in Revelation, we see His grace. In Revelation 14:6-7 we are told, **“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth - to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people - saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.’”**

In the midst of this rebellion, God sends forth this angel to proclaim the Gospel message one more time until it will be too late, and the final judgments will come forth. Man has one more chance to turn to God, and yet, most of the world will reject Him at this point in the Tribulation Period!

As I have said, the commercial center of the world, Babylon will be destroyed, completely! We saw that in our last study of Revelation chapter 18.

As we continue on here in Revelation chapter 18 we will see how the world will respond to the destruction of Babylon. And this is interesting to me because everything that man has placed their hope in will be destroyed. They refused to look up to God, repent of their sins and receive Jesus into their lives and now they will face the judgment of God.

One writer gives us this insight and it will lead us into our study this evening. He wrote, Babylon's doom is certain and cannot be avoided for the Lord God who judges her is strong. No one can frustrate God's plans, or keep Him from accomplishing what He purposes to do.

Job said to God, "I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted" (Job 42:2).

Despite the "plans [that] are in a man's heart . . . the counsel of the Lord, it will stand" (Prov 19:21). "For the Lord of hosts has planned," declared Isaiah, "and who can frustrate it?

And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?" (Isa 14:27). A chastened and humbled Nebuchadnezzar affirmed that God "does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, 'What have You done?'" (Dan 4:35).

God Himself declares that "there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it? . . . My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure" (Isa 43:13; 46:10).

All the power of wicked men and demons will not be enough to deliver Babylon from God's judgment.

- John MacArthur, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Revelation 18:9-19

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in Revelation chapter 18, beginning in verse 9 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

REVELATION 18**VERSES 9-10**

What are these people mourning over?

Why are these people mourning?

Because “**... Babylon is fallen, is fallen ...**” Revelation 18:2.

Now we may read that and not think much about this. But this shows you the heart of man.

What do I mean by that?

I want you to notice that their mourning is not for the people who were destroyed when this commercial empire came crashing to the ground, but it was for the commercial institution itself.

In other words, it is all about themselves and what they have lost and there is no concern for others.

Does that sound familiar?

It should because it is what Paul said the last days would be like. And yes, we see that today, but it will reach its climax during the Tribulation Period.

In II Timothy 3:1-5 we are told, **“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!”**

So notice the main characteristic of the last days or the days we are living in and on into the Tribulation Period – ***MEN WILL BE LOVERS OF THEMSELVES!***

It is out of that selfishness that we see some 19 general characteristics of man, a time of social disintegration, the wickedness of man's heart manifested in his actions.

Paul calls them “**perilous times**” or times of stress because the evil of man is rampant!

One writer put it like this regarding this word, “The word was used in classical Greek both of dangerous wild animals and of the raging sea. Its only other New Testament occurrence is in the story of the two Gadarene demoniacs who were as savage and untamed as wild beasts and whom Matthew describes as ‘so *fierce* that no one could pass that way’ (Matthew 8:28).”
(Stott)

And Calvin put it like this, “But readers should note that *lovers of themselves*, which comes first, can be regarded as the source from which all the others that follow spring.”

Now why did they mourn the destruction of commercial Babylon and not for the people?

Because they were more interested in themselves and what the loss of this commercial empire meant to them – they would lose everything. You see, the kings of the earth see this destruction and the fall of this empire, and they lament for her.

And this is not a silent cry, but a loud wailing because, once again their wealth, their lifestyles, their toys, their material things, the things of this world are going up in smoke!

And I see this happening in America today. We have moved away from God and have developed our own religious ideas and that is never good.

Let me share with you this article that was published online back on March 10, 2021.

We are told,

The United States had long been a holdout among Western democracies, uniquely and perhaps even suspiciously devout.

From 1937 to 1998, church membership remained relatively constant, hovering at about 70 percent. Then something happened. Over the past two decades, that number has dropped to less than 50 percent, the sharpest recorded decline in American history. Meanwhile, the “nones” - atheists, agnostics, and those claiming no religion – have grown rapidly and today represent a quarter of the population. . . .

The notion that all deeply felt conviction is sublimated religion is not new.

Abraham Kuyper, a theologian who served as the prime minister of the Netherlands at the dawn of the 20th century, when the nation was in the early throes of secularization, argued that all strongly held ideologies were effectively faith-based, and that no human being could survive long without some ultimate loyalty. *If that loyalty didn't derive from traditional religion, it would find expression through secular commitments, such as nationalism, socialism, or liberalism.* The political theorist Samuel Goldman calls this “the law of the conservation of religion”: In any given society, there is a relatively constant and finite supply of religious conviction. What varies is how and where it is expressed. . . .

Without Christianity, Americans no longer have a common culture upon which to fall back.

No wonder the newly ascendant American ideologies, having to fill the vacuum where religion once was, are so divisive. They are meant to be divisive.

On the left, the “woke” take religious notions such as original sin, atonement, ritual, and excommunication and repurpose them for secular ends.

Adherents of wokeism see themselves as challenging the long-dominant narrative that emphasized the exceptionalism of the nation's founding.

Whereas religion sees the promised land as being above, in God's kingdom, the utopian left sees it as being ahead, in the realization of a just society here on Earth.

After Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died in September, droves of mourners gathered outside the Supreme Court - some kneeling, some holding candles - as though they were at the Western Wall.

- bit.ly/35rXUUX

There is nothing wrong with being patriotic but be careful that you don't lose sight of the mission you are on in Christ. We are not here to save our nation because this is not our home. Our citizenship is in heaven. We are to save people out of this kingdom of darkness and bring them into the Kingdom of Light in Christ!

But the church has lost its focus and has become secular in her actions and is not fulfilling the great commission that the Lord has given us.

Let me give you an example to show you how this plays out today looking at this from another aspect. And if you want to get mad at me you can send your letters and e-mails to Steve! Just kidding.

But if you are mad I what I am going to share with you I would ask you to think about why you are so mad.

When you see these commercials for rescuing animals that are being abused, for wildlife that are being shot and killed for their tusks for example, are you mad? Are you angry at what is happening?

Now I am for animals, I don't believe we should treat them cruelly. So please don't jump to that conclusion. We are to care for them.

What I do find interesting is that many of these same people that weep and do all they can to save animals, when it comes to abortion, they are for it. They see no problem with aborting a piece of tissue! Let me be clear on this, it is not a piece of tissue.

In fact, as soon as the egg and sperm come together all the genetic information for life are in that cell. Nothing more is needed except growth. God has knit us together!

And yet, many don't even blink an eye when it comes to aborting children in the womb, but they will fight for the life of an animal!

I once saw this car that had these bumper stickers. And you tell me if they are messed up. Here is what these two bumper stickers said, on the same car!

SAVE THE WHALES!

PRO-CHOICE!

Now you may be wondering why I think that aborting a child is selfish. I will tell you. It takes work to raise children, right? Of course it does!

Before my wife and I had children it was all about us. But once we had one child and then two, it was never about us, but it was about them. And that is the way that God designed it, we are to train up our children.

But if you don't want to take the time to do that, then abortion is the selfish way out. Sorry, but it is true.

Now we may be feeling pretty good about ourselves at this point. ***“Hey, I am a Christian and I am for life not abortion!”***

That is great, but before you are too hard on them, do you get mad because of a traffic backup due to an accident?

You see, if you do then you are more concerned about yourself, what you are missing out on than the people who were involved in this accident.

Here's the thing, when you are more concerned for material things than you are for people then your heart is not right with God!

These kings, these leaders who were living "**luxuriously with her**" are weeping and crying for all that they are losing out on and not concerned about all the people who lost their lives in the destruction of Babylon!

And notice how fast their destruction is. In one hour!

It is only in our recent past that we have developed the ability to destroy a city in 1 hour, within the last 80 years or so.

But, with the introduction of the Atomic Bomb, within minutes, a city can be destroyed!

In fact, we even have what is called a Neutron Bomb that kills people and leaves the buildings standing.

Why do we need a bomb like that?

Well, after the attack you can go in and use the buildings that your enemy built. Talk about the mindset of materialism and the worthlessness of life!

Why are they standing at a distance watching this?

Could it be that this city is destroyed by an Atomic Bomb?

It could be.

But I do see this a little differently. I believe it is God that is going to destroy Babylon and not any human or man-made device. And as God brings down Babylon the people do not want to get close, just as when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah as Lot watched from a distance.

As we read on we will get more insight into why they are weeping and what they are buying and selling.

VERSES 11-19

Why are they weeping and mourning?

Again, not for the lives that were lost but because of the toys they have lost and the money they are losing because they can no longer sell their products, no one is buying them anymore!

Listen again to what Revelation 18:11 says, “**And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore.**”

These earth dwellers are past the point of no return, they have received the Antichrist and Satan himself and thus, they can't be saved! And when you look at their actions, what they are mourning over, you can see their hearts are not upon others but upon themselves!

Man can be pretty bold, pretty arrogant until all they are putting their trust in is taken away and that is what we see here.

Now I want you to notice how John describes this commercial empire. He is describing it through the eyes of man or how man sees it.

And, of course, he sees it as great, as beautiful, wealthy.

In fact, John lists some 28 items of luxury in these verses.

We see gold, silver, precious stones and-so-on.

Now I know that there are some who would like to spiritualize this and not make it a literal Babylon or a literal commercial center that is destroyed.

But as you read this it would make no sense to spiritualize this. I think the Scriptures are very clear that this is a literal commercial empire that will be destroyed.

Not only are these merchants not weeping for the lost lives, but these merchants are not weeping for their sins or for the city, but for themselves: they have lost valuable customers and money!

Again, it is interesting to see how people respond when God takes away people's luxuries and wealth!

And here is the key. These are luxuries, things that they don't necessarily need and yet they are weeping. Think about all the people living during this time that don't have the basic necessities of life and yet, these merchants really don't care because it is all about them!

Don't think we are much better. Materialism is a big part of the American society today!

Let me show you what I mean, and I think you already know this. We are told,

Simply put, materialism is the importance one places on material possessions. These possessions could be anything, such as clothes, shoes, handbags, cars, electronic equipment, and gadgets. One's home also counts as a material possession, even though everyone needs a place to live. Materialistic people don't view a home as simply a place that they dwell in for shelter but a place that reflects their social status in some way.

Someone with a high level of materialism, described as “materialistic,” considers material possessions to be central to their life and their identity. They focus a good deal of their energy on acquiring possessions. Someone with a low level of materialism described as “non-materialistic,” or “not materialistic,” does not consider acquiring possessions to be particularly important, although they vary in the extent to which they acquire material possessions in order to meet other objectives, such as social acceptance.

In the United States, materialism is as American as apple pie and football. It is in many ways a national pastime. The Thanksgiving holiday has largely been overshadowed by Black Friday sales and many department stores even hold sales on Thanksgiving itself, spawning the phrase Brown Thursday. In short, a day that was supposed to focus on gratitude, family and, yes, football, to an extent, is now largely centered on department store sales.

Materialism has spawned other terms such as “keeping up with the Joneses” and “conspicuous consumption.” When the pursuit of material things impacts one’s quality of life, it is sometimes called a shopping addiction (although “shopping addiction” is not an official psychiatric diagnosis like gambling addiction).

It’s difficult not to be materialistic in a culture where shopping is virtually a competitive sport and where children are ostracized if they’re not wearing the right gym shoes or brand name clothes.

- <https://bit.ly/3GqjbeM>

Again, like here in Revelation, we are looking at luxuries and not necessities to live by, but things that will please us and when those are taken away from us, we are not happy! Something to think about.

We are told in Proverbs 11:4, “**Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivers from death.**”

And James gives us this warning in James 5:1-3, “**Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days.**”

Let me paraphrase what James is saying here. *“To you rich and godless people, you need to weep and howl now because of what is coming for you, the judgment of God in Hell someday. And thus, while there is time, while you are still alive on this earth, you still have time to repent and receive Christ!”*

In other words, don't depend on your wealth, your resources but be totally dependent upon God and His resources!

It is the opposite of what the world believes, and that philosophy of the world is creeping into the church, don't let it get in.

Jesus made this powerful point in Matthew 16:26, “**For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?**”

Think about that one for a minute. You can be the wealthiest man in the world and not know Christ and the reality is, you are the poorest man in the world. You can't take your wealth with you, but you can use it to bring glory to God and build up His Kingdom, bring the Gospel message to the lost.

And you can have all those riches for 60, 70, 80 years or maybe even just a little bit longer, but in the end, once you die, they are gone from your life and apart from Christ, you will have an eternity to think about what you lost, what you gave away to gain just a little bit more money or whatever!

And here in Revelation we see this picture of how unbridled materialism will dominate and control the people of the world just prior to God destroying the capital city of the world's government.

Now as we look at these verses let's view them as a department store and the products that they sell. Let me show you what I mean.

In Revelation 18:12 we see this can be speaking of the first floor, jewelry.

Then you can move to the second floor, again in Revelation 18:12 as we move to the clothing department.

The third floor, again in Revelation 18:12 we come to home furnishings.

As you move to the fourth floor, in Revelation 18:13 you come to cosmetics.

Then on the fifth floor, again in Revelation 18:13 we find the food court.

On the sixth floor, here again in Revelation 18:13 we see these horses and chariots and we can call this the automotive section. Sorry, but it does fit!

And lastly, from Revelation 18:13 we see the souls of men, which is found in the basement, you might call it the adult bookstore.

One writer summed it up like this as he wrote, ***“Please note not one of the aforementioned deals with life’s necessities. They’re all luxuries. Babylon specializes in materialism gone mad.”*** (Jon Courson)

I would have to agree! These are all luxuries, not necessities!

Now let's deal with this for a minute because it is kind of creepy when you think about it.

We are told that they are merchandising in the **"bodies and souls of men."**

What does that mean?

I think there are a few of ways to look at this and I think they can all apply.

First of all, it can speak of our enslavement into the material world.

It is as Peter tells us **"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption [depravity]; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage [slavery]."** II Peter 2:19.

In other words, we can become enslaved as we obtain more and more things and sink farther and farther into debt! There is no freedom in that and there is no satisfaction in that, there is always bigger, better, newer, faster, prettier, younger, and-so-on.

And I think the idea here is that materialism has moved them away from God, they are sending people down the river you might say! I will talk more about this in a minute.

Also keep in mind, that when John wrote Revelation one third of Rome's population were slaves. In fact, it was not unusual to sell 10,000 human beings in one day in the slave market!

And it has been estimated that throughout the Roman Empire, there were over 60 million slaves! And these slaves were bought and sold, used and abused, they were thought of as nothing!

Maybe, during the Tribulation Period we will see slavery as a normal part of society. Maybe those who refuse the Mark of the Beast will be put into slavery. Maybe things are so bad that just to survive people will become slaves.

Don't write that off. We have sex trafficking today and when the church is gone and the Tribulation Period begins, don't think it is going to get better!

Is it also possible that these souls of men that are being enslaved is speaking of the bondage of sin and being condemned to Hell!

You see, Jesus came to set us free from the bondage of sin, He has broken those chains that have us bound and all we must do to be set free is to receive the free gift of life that is found in Jesus. Ask Him to be your Lord and Savior. But if you refuse the gift of life, you will remain in bondage to sin. You have sold your soul to the Devil!

Jesus tells us this in John 8:34-36, as He says, **“Jesus answered them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.’”**

The choice is yours, free in Christ, or in bondage to sin!

Of this commercial empire, John Phillips writes,

What a catalog of opulence [luxury]! What a vivid picture of a great, commercial city, trafficking in every luxury the heart could desire. This is the world's great Vanity Fair. It offers articles of adornment and display, beautiful things to grace the mansions of the world's millionaires. It deals in exotic spices and perfumes, in delicacies for the table, in provisions for banquets, in slaves, and in the souls of men. And Babylon imported all these things. . . .

Babylon's demand for this world's goods was insatiable; ever it clamored for more and more!

- John Phillips, Exploring Revelation, p. 225

So all those who were indulging in her luxuries, all those who were making a profit off of her, are weeping and wailing because in one hour this commercial center of the world has been destroyed!

That is what is going on here on the earth, this mourning. But, as we read on, notice what is going on in heaven.

VERSES 20-21

We have seen this financial empire through the eyes of man, the beauty, the wealth, and the luxury. And as man today looks at the evil in the world, they see it as good. They love sin and they hate righteousness.

Now they probably would not admit that but if the things you are doing are contrary to what God has said in His Word, then you are loving what God hates and God hates sin!

And as much as man looks at this empire, these worldly things as great, God see's it far differently.

In fact, in Revelation 18:24 we can see how ugly this empire and the people are. This is a deadly empire that **“ . . . in her was found the blood of the prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.”**

So as God destroys what the earth dwellers have placed their hope and life into, they mourn over her destruction.

But that is not what we see happening in heaven. You see, as this takes place, we see that heaven rejoices.

Why is heaven rejoicing over this?

Because this evil institution will be done away with.

Like I have said, what earthly man holds onto, loves, the lover of God sees as ugly, detestable, and wants nothing to do with it. And her destruction will be complete; she will not get away with anything. She will rise up no more.

Like a milestone that was thrown into the sea and sank to the dark depths, never to rise up again, so too will commercial Babylon sink to the depths of destruction as she is judged by God.

Listen to this warning we see in Isaiah 5:20-21. We are told, **“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight!”**

This woe here in Isaiah 5:20 deals with *RELATIVISM*.

What does that mean?

It is speaking of the lack of absolutes. In other words, what is right for you may not be right for me and that is okay! You can't really say what is right or what is wrong anymore. Light is dark and dark is light or as Isaiah put it, those that **“call evil good, and good evil.”**

One writer put it like this,

However contrary to reason and experience, we find ways to rationalize sin. We redefine it. We change the labels. It is possible to lose one's sense of taste, the taste of the heart, not by age or injury but by choice, by rejecting the law of the Lord and despising the word of the Holy One (v.24). If we do not discover sweet to be sweet but insist that reality be redesigned so that our taste for bitter can not only be satisfied but *called* sweet, how can the grace of God thrive under those conditions? Do we enjoy the right things? Do we call good and evil by their true names? Or is that passé?

That is exactly right, and we have seen our society flourish in this kind of thinking, and it is leading us down a very dark road away from God!

When we come to the conclusion that everything is relative then everything gets turned around and we start calling evil good and good evil, just like we are doing today! Just like Judah, we are using clever and deceptive words to blur moral issues and excuse our sin.

We have turned things around so far in this country that the evil person is not the one committing the sin but the one who is exposing the sin! And even in the church we have developed committees; we have meetings to determine if something is right or wrong. Why do we need to do that? Because we don't believe what God has said in His Word! If we did then we would know that God has already told us what is right and what is wrong, what is a sin and what is not a sin!

Make no mistake about it; the end does not justify the means. If it did, if we had that kind of mentality, then you could defend Hitler's actions as being good.

How can I say that?

Because he killed off the weaker people, he killed off those that he felt did not meet his standards. (I am not agreeing with that, but just stating what moral relativism does, it justifies the guilty!)

And yes, you may not agree with that but in the age of relativism, there is no right or wrongs, thus, you can't judge him for what he has done. In his eyes, he was right. And if you think that kind of logic is farfetched, listen to what one professor said regarding what the students in his class feel, what relativism has done, and as you will see, they have learned this lesson very well.

He said regarding his students, *“They accept the reality of the Holocaust, but they believe themselves unable to morally condemn it, or indeed to make any moral judgments whatsoever. Such students typically comment that they themselves deplore the Holocaust and other great evils, but then they wind up by suspending moral judgment.”*

What that means is that they refuse to take a stand; they don’t want to be considered intolerant of other people’s views, as atrocious as they may be. You see, there is always a moral inversion with relativism, and we see that today in our own country and it is dark, and it is bitter tasting!

In Isaiah 5:21 we see another woe and this woe deals with *INTELLECTUALISM*. It is speaking of self-confidence! When you hear of man’s prideful boasting of how smart he is and how they mock God, they are showing themselves to be nothing more than fools. By being filled with pride they are rejecting the wisdom and the standards of God for their lives!

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones wrote, *“Sin is very clever; it always brings forward its reasons, its arguments. Sin knows us so well; it knows that we like to think of ourselves as highly intelligent people. So it does not just tell us, ‘Do this’; it gives us reasons for doing it, and they appear to be so wonderful. But the whole point is that in reality they are specious [baseless]; they are empty and foolish. The reasoning is always false reasoning. The arguments are always wrong.”* (D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, A Nation Under Wrath: Studies in Isaiah 5, p. 75).

Then how do we know what is right?

We are told in Proverbs 30:5-6 says, **“Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.”**

There you go, trust in God's Word and don't add to it, don't take away from it because in the end you will be found wrong because God is always right! If you disagree with that you must think you are smarter than God and you are not, make no mistake about it!

In Jeremiah chapter 51 we see this played out for us as we read beginning in verse 60, **“So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that would come upon Babylon, all these words that are written against Babylon. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, ‘When you arrive in Babylon and see it, and read all these words, then you shall say, “O LORD, You have spoken against this place to cut it off, so that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but it shall be desolate forever.” Now it shall be, when you have finished reading this book, that you shall tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates. Then you shall say, “Thus Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her. And they shall be weary.” Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.”** Jeremiah 51:60-64.

That is what is in store for this Babylon, this financial empire, this commercial center, it will be sunk! And yes, this was Babylon in Jeremiah's day, but I also believe it looks ahead to the destruction of Babylon, this commercial center during the Tribulation Period.

Back in 2001 on 9/11 we saw the destruction of the Twin Towers there in New York City by terrorists. They leveled these huge buildings, brought them to the ground.

What is interesting to me is that these towers represented wealth, power, luxury, and commercial enterprises and yet in one hour they were brought to the ground!

What is also interesting to me is what was left standing after they came crashing to the ground!

There were two huge metal beams that help to support one of these buildings, and all that was left was this and as they came down, they formed a cross! Folks, that is the reality, it is only in Jesus that we will stand no matter what comes our way. What are you putting your faith in?

Now, with the destruction of this commercial Babylon it will be on a far greater level than what we saw on 9/11 and God will bring this empire to the ground!

And when He does, it will be complete!

It is as Isaiah 14:22-23 tells us, **“For I will rise up against them,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘And cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, And offspring and posterity,’ says the LORD. ‘I will also make it a possession for the porcupine, And marshes of muddy water; I will sweep it with the broom of destruction,’ says the LORD of hosts.”**

In Jeremiah chapter 50 we are told of Babylon’s complete destruction, **“Because of the wrath of the LORD She shall not be inhabited, But she shall be wholly desolate. Everyone who goes by Babylon shall be horrified And hiss at all her plagues. . . . ‘Therefore the wild desert beasts shall dwell there with the jackals, And the ostriches shall dwell in it. It shall be inhabited no more forever, Nor shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah And their neighbors,’ says the LORD, ‘So no one shall reside there, Nor son of man dwell in it.’”** Jeremiah 50:13, 39-40.

And as John tells us, **“. . . Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore.”** Revelation 18:21.

As we read on, we will see how complete this destruction is going to be and how evil they were towards the people of God!

VERSES 22-24

Is this speaking of literal Babylon or modern-day Iraq?

I believe that it is.

Listen to what we are told in Zechariah 5:5-11, **“Then the angel who talked with me came out and said to me, ‘Lift your eyes now, and see what this is that goes forth.’ So I asked, ‘What is it?’ And he said, ‘It is a basket that is going forth.’ He also said, ‘This is their resemblance throughout the earth: Here is a lead disc lifted up, and this is a woman sitting inside the basket’; then he said, ‘This is Wickedness!’ And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover over its mouth. Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were two women, coming with the wind in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. So I said to the angel who talked with me, ‘Where are they carrying the basket?’ And he said to me, ‘To build a house for it in the land of Shinar [Babylon]; when it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base.’”**

One writer put it like this as he looks at this prophecy. He wrote, *“When the time comes it will be marked by commerce (the basket-ephah), false religion (the woman), speedy accomplishment (the wings of the stork), and a demon spirit in their wings.”*

It’s possible that Rome starts out as the capital of the one world government during the first 3½ years of the Tribulation Period.

But during the last half of the Tribulation Period the capital or his headquarters is moved to Jerusalem, after the world church is destroyed by Antichrist.

But make no mistake about it, this Babylon, this commercial center will be completely destroyed.

A city that was alive with life is now dead. No music, no industry, no joy, but a financial ruin.

As we have seen with the stock market crash of the 1920's, joy was far from the hearts of the people. Society was in ruin. And during this time, it will be far worse. There will be no hope to resurrect this world financial institution, for this occurs at the end of the Tribulation Period.

And it is interesting to read that by "sorcery" or PHARMAKEIA, (far-mak-i-ah) in the Greek the nations were deceived. By drugs and witchcraft, occult practices the nations fall into this financial institutions enchantments until it was too late to turn back.

And look at us today with the promotion of legalizing mind altering drugs. Allowing witchcraft, New Age teachings, eastern mysticism into the church. We are opening the door for demonic activity to grow, and it is growing!

But we are different; we are led by the Spirit of God and not by the flesh. Thus, these things should not overtake us!

As you look at what people are pouring their lives into, what the treasure of their heart is, they will be left with nothing. It is like the parable that Jesus gave in Luke 12:16-21, where He said, "Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: 'The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" But God said to him, "Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?" So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

In other words, be rich towards God and you will not lose out on anything!

We have now seen the fall of the false religious system and the commercial system.

All that is left is the political system, which will come crashing down in chapter 19.

Let me say this. You may look at the wealth of many today and be discouraged. You may look at the wicked and see them prosper and wonder why all these difficult times are coming upon your life.

During the time of the depression, a Christian man hit some very hard times. He lost his job, his home and finally his wife.

And he was depressed to say the least, and yet he did trust in the Lord. And as he was walking one day, he came upon this building project, and he saw this mason working on a small piece of stone, cutting this small triangular shape. And wondering what it was for, what he was doing, the man asked the mason.

And he said to the man, ***“I must cut it and shape it down here so that it will fit up there,”*** as he pointed to a triangular opening in the upper portion of the building.

At that point the man began to cry, for he realized that what God was doing down here, was to prepare him for up there, for heaven.

God is molding and shaping us, don't fight against it, allow Him to make you into a vessel of honor for Him!

As Jesus said, **“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”** Matthew 6:21.

Where is your heart this evening, focused on the material things of this world or on the Kingdom of God and His righteousness?

We will see next week that Jesus is coming back to right the wrong in this world and to establish His Kingdom here on the earth, are you ready for Him? I pray that you are!

And I want to close with these words from Revelation 19:1-8 and we will dig into them next time. But listen to what is going on in heaven.

We are told, **“After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.’ Again they said, ‘Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!’ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, ‘Amen! Alleluia!’ Then a voice came from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!’ And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, ‘Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.’ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.”**

What does this all mean to us?

REJOICE!

But why?

Because someday, this world system will pass away, like a great stone falling into the bottom of the sea!

GOD WINS! REJOICE!