

# Living Word Fellowship Church

## An Expository Explanation of Revelation Chapter 18

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### A. Chapter Introduction:

1. Revelation 18:4–20 is a message from “another voice calling from heaven” (18:4). The message begins with a call to separate from the city (18:4) and ends with a call to rejoice (18:20). The heavenly rejoicing forms a stark contrast with the world’s mourning (18:9–19). The prayer of the martyrs (6:10) is answered. [\[1\]](#)

2. This chapter is modeled on the doom songs of OT prophets over oppressive and arrogant nations of their times. So reminiscent is it of these that it may be said to summarize all prophetic oracles on the doom of unrighteous peoples. The prophecies against Babylon (Is. 13, 21, 47; Je. 50, 51) and against Tyre (Ezk. 26, 27) appear to have been especially in John’s mind. [\[2\]](#)

3. Revelation 18 describes the judgment on the final form of Babylon, the Beast and his empire. The imagery of Babylon falling is taken from Isaiah 21:9, where the ancient city of Babylon was destroyed. [\[3\]](#)

a) The angel’s message is summarized: **Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!** The question has been raised as to whether or not this is another view of the same destruction mentioned in 17:16–17. A comparison of chapters 17 and 18 reveals that these are different events. The woman in chapter 17 was associated with the political power but was not the political power itself, and her destruction apparently brought no mourning from the earth. By contrast the destruction of Babylon in chapter 18 brings loud lamentation from the earth’s political and economic powers. Instead of being destroyed and consumed by the 10 kings, here the destruction seems to come from an earthquake, and it is

probable that this is an enlarged explanation of what was described in 16:19–21. <sup>[4]</sup>

b) Old Testament law sometimes required repayment of double a violation as just punishment for a crime (Exod. 21:24–25; Lev. 24:19–20; Deut. 19:21; cf. Jer. 16:18). Greeks also practiced this means of discipline, though not emphasizing its justice as much (Hesiod, *Works* 709–11; Homer, *Iliad* 13.445–47; Aune, 992). <sup>[5]</sup>

4. Babylon willfully and viciously persecuted the Lord's saints (18:24), so God carried out vengeance on the city for these saints (6:9-11).

a) **Apostles.** Both Paul and Peter were most likely martyred in Rome during the reign of Nero and his persecutions beginning in A.D. 64 (cf. 1 Clem. 5:3–7; Ign. Rom. 4.3; Dionysius in Eus. Hist. Ecc. 2.25.8; Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. 3.1.1; Origen in Eus. Hist. ecc. 3.1.2–3; Acts of Peter 9:30–41; Acts of Paul 11:1–7). <sup>[6]</sup>

b) The judgment against Babylon is on behalf of heaven and the saints (18:20). <sup>[7]</sup>

5. What is pictured here is a large prosperous city, the center of political and economic life. The judgment of God makes it a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird. For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. This false religion is like a drug that drives men to madness. While it brought riches to merchants, it is now doomed for destruction. <sup>[8]</sup>

a) Satan's prominence comes after he has no more access to heaven, and he is so angry that the earth is warned (12:11-13). All of this happens after he comes out of the abyss kills the two witnesses and then goes after the church (12:1-6, 13-17).

6. Following the pronouncement of the angel, another voice from heaven instructed the people of God to leave the city so that they would escape the judgment to come on it (vv. 4–5).<sup>[9]</sup> Even though these individuals did not turn their lives over before the tribulation period, Christ still loves and protects them.

7. The call to separate is to believers living in the Tribulation period who might be tempted to compromise their convictions and become associated with the Beast.<sup>[10]</sup>

8. The events of chapter 17 will be fulfilled at the midpoint of the seven years, whereas the events of chapter 18 will occur at the end of the seven years, immediately before the second coming of Christ. The destruction of the city of Babylon is the final blow to the times of the Gentiles, which began when the Babylonian army attacked Jerusalem in 605 B.C. (cf. Luke 21:24).<sup>[11]</sup>

B. A thought to Remember:

It is better to live in the grace of God than in His justice. Trials tend to make us compromise, especially when they linger, or even cause us to become lukewarm Christians. It is better to accept the Lord's commitment to refine and bless us (James 1:2-4, 12) than to turn to our destruction (Hebrews 10:37-39). He only disciplines those whom He loves (Hebrews 12:4-11).

*“Do not fret because of evildoers, Be not envious toward wrongdoers. For they will wither quickly like the grass And fade like the green herb. Trust in the Lord and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, and He will do it. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light And your judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing. For evildoers will be cut off, But those who wait for the Lord, they will inherit the land.” (Psalm 37:1-9; NASU)*

Live righteously so that at the end of your journey, you are not just a Christian but a saint of God.

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[1] Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). [Tyndale concise Bible commentary](#) (pp. 746–747). Tyndale House Publishers.

[2] Beasley-Murray, G. R. (1994). [Revelation](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 1448). Inter-Varsity Press.

[3] Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). [Tyndale concise Bible commentary](#) (p. 746). Tyndale House Publishers.

[4] Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 972–973). Victor Books.

[5] Evans, C. A., & Bubeck, C. A., eds. (2005). [John's Gospel, Hebrews–Revelation](#) (First Edition, p. 388). David C Cook.

[6] Evans, C. A., & Bubeck, C. A., eds. (2005). [John's Gospel, Hebrews–Revelation](#) (First Edition, p. 390). David C Cook.

[7] Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). [Tyndale concise Bible commentary](#) (pp. 746–747). Tyndale House Publishers.

[8] Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 973). Victor Books.

[9] Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 973). Victor Books.

[10] Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). [Tyndale concise Bible commentary](#) (pp. 746–747). Tyndale House Publishers.

[11] Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 973). Victor Books.