



## Revelation 18 The Fall of Babylon the Great

### Matthew Henry Commentary on Revelation Chapter 18:1-8 (Concise)

- † **Verses 1-3** Another angel from heaven proclaims the fall of mystical Babylon.
- † **Verses 4-8** A voice from heaven admonishes the people of God, lest they partake of her plagues.

**Verses 1-8** The downfall and destruction of the mystical Babylon are determined in the counsels of God. Another angel comes from heaven. This seems to be Christ himself, coming to destroy his enemies, and to shed abroad the light of his gospel through all nations. The wickedness of this Babylon was very great; she had forsaken the true God, and set up idols, and had drawn all sorts of men into spiritual adultery, and by her wealth and luxury kept them in her interest. The spiritual merchandise, by which multitudes have wickedly lived in wealth, by the sins and follies of mankind, seems principally intended. Fair warning is given to all that expect mercy from God, that they should not only come out of this Babylon, but assist in her destruction. God may have a people even in Babylon. But God's people shall be called out of Babylon, and called effectually, while those that partake with wicked men in their sins, must receive of their plagues.

### Revelation 18:1-8 (NKJV)

- 1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory.
- 2 And he cried <sup>a</sup>mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!
- 3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the <sup>b</sup>abundance of her luxury."
- 4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.
- 5 For her sins <sup>c</sup>have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.
- 6 Render to her just as she rendered <sup>d</sup>to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her.
- 7 In the measure that she glorified herself and lived <sup>e</sup>luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.'
- 8 Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who <sup>f</sup>judges her.

#### Footnotes

- [a] 18:2 NU, M omit mightily
- [b] 18:3 Lit. strengths
- [c] 18:5 NU, M have been heaped up
- [d] 18:6 NU, M omit to you
- [e] 18:7 sensually
- [f] 18:8 NU, M has judged

See Acts 17:11 — **Be like the Bereans**; “receive the word with all readiness, and search the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things are so.”



## Notes on Footnotes

The KJV / NKJV is based on the received text, the version where there exist most ancient Greek manuscripts.

**NU** - stands for Netsle-Aland Greek New Testament /United Bible Society. These are texts based on the oldest, but not the most numerous ancient manuscripts.

**The NU-Text** found in the footnotes represent the text found in Alexandria / Egypt, because this text is considered to be oldest version of the new testament still in existence. However, old does not automatically mean correct. Alexandria is known to be the seat of occult teachings in ancient times. Even in the 1st and 2nd century there were already incorrect versions of Paul's letters in circulation, but the majority of the copies (i.e. the received text) agreed with each other.

**M** - Masoretic Text - Traditional text of the Old Testament. Often compared to the LXX (Septuagint, which is the Greek version of the Old Testament.)

## Revelation 18 Outline

1. Proclamation of Judgment
2. God Announces Babylon The Great has Fallen
  - a. **See Daniel 2** Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and Daniel's Interpretation
3. The Lamentations of the Merchants and Kings over the Fall of Babylon The Great
4. While This is Going on There Will Be a Celebration in Heaven

## Similarities Between Babylon in Revelation 17 and 18.

Some scholars believe there are two Babylons, one Religious and one Commercial. Others see just one, both being judged at the same time.

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ✠ Under the Rule of Antichrist | ✠ Hate the Saints, and Shed Their Blood    |
| ✠ Rule Like Royalty            | ✠ Are Associates with Kings in Fornication |
| ✠ Filled with Blasphemy        | ✠ Both are Under Judgment and Destroyed    |

## Significant Differences:

### Spiritual Babylon (Revelation 17)

- ✠ Title: Mystery, Babylon The Mother Of Harlots
- ✠ Symbol: Harlot Woman.
- ✠ Guilty of Religious Abominations.
- ✠ Destroyed by the Antichrist
- ✠ Judged at the Mid-Point of the Great Tribulation

### Commercial Babylon (Revelation 18)

- ✠ Title: Mystery, Babylon The Great
- ✠ Called a Great City (4 times\*)
- ✠ Guilty of Greed and Self-Indulgence.
- ✠ Habitation, a Great City Marketplace.
- ✠ Destroyed by God.
- ✠ Judged at the End of the Great Tribulation

\*Revelation 18:16, 18, 19, 21

## Revelation 18:1-8 (NKJV)

### Verses 1-3 Announcement of the Glorious Angel.

1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory.

**Illuminated with his glory:** This angel coming down from God's presence glows and light across the earth.

**Another:** (Greek, all on the same in kind of angel in Revelation 17:1.

2 And he cried "mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!

**Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen:** There is a double fall: The fall of spiritual Babylon in Revelation 17, and commercial Babylon her in Revelation 18. — The phrase is repeated like a dirge of the damned.

### James 5:1-3 James 5 Rich Oppressors Will Be Judged

1 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! 2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. 3 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. 4 Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

**Become a dwelling place of demons:** This is a picture of absolute desolate) on where man's achievements have become the home of demons

3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury."

**Abundance of her luxury:** Babylon's sin was not only idolatry, but also pride, greed, and selfishly held wealth.

### Verses 4-5 A Call to God's People to Separate From Babylon.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.

**Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins:** Commercial Babylon, with its materialistic lure, is a constant threat to be guarded against.

**Come out of her:** The call to leave Babylon and her worldliness, is a theme repeated in the Scriptures.

**Lest you receive of her plagues:** The warning focused on God's people in a place doomed for destruction.

**Isaiah 52:11 — 11 Depart! Depart! Go out from there, touch no unclean thing; go out from her, be clean, you who bear the vessels of the Lord. 12** For you shall not go out with haste, Nor go by flight; For the Lord will go before you, And the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

### Jeremiah 50:8

8 Move from the midst of Babylon, Go out of the land of the Chaldeans; And be like the [d]rams before the flocks. 9 For behold, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon An assembly of great nations from the north country, And they shall array themselves against her; From there she shall be captured. Their arrows shall be like those of [e]an expert warrior; None shall return in vain.

10 And Chaldea shall become plunder; All who plunder her shall be satisfied," says the Lord. Flee

**Jeremiah 51:45 — 45** "My people, go out of the midst of her! And let everyone deliver [e]himself from the fierce anger of the Lord. 46 And lest your heart faint, And you fear for the rumor that will be heard in the land (A rumor will come one year, And after that, in another year A rumor will come, And violence in the land, Ruler against ruler), 47 Therefore behold, the days are coming That I will bring judgment on the carved images of Babylon; Her whole land shall be ashamed, And all her slain

See Acts 17:11 — **Be like the Bereans**; “receive the word with all readiness, and search the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things are so.”



shall fall in her midst. **48** Then the heavens and the earth and all that is in them Shall sing joyously over Babylon; For the plunderers shall come to her from the north,” says the Lord.

## **2 Corinthians 6:14 Be Holy**

**11** O Corinthians! [c]We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open. **12** You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections. **13** Now in return for the same (I speak as to children), you also be open. **14** Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what [d]fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? **15** And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? **16** And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

## **Ephesians 5:11 Walk in Light**

**8** For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light **9** (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), **10** finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. **11** And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. **12** For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. **13** But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. **14** Therefore He says: “Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.”

## **5** For her sins <sup>c</sup>have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

**For her sins have reached to heaven:** The sins of commercial Babylon have piled up like a tower – the tower of Babel.

**God has remembered her iniquities:** This is the destiny of the materialistic world, but to believers, God says, I will remember their sins no more

## **Hebrews 8:12 A New Covenant**

**7** For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. **8** Because finding fault with them, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— **9** not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. **10** For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. **11** None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. **12** For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” **13** In that He says, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

## **Verses 6-8 A Call to Those Who Will Carry Out Babylon’s Judgment.**

## **6** Render to her just as she rendered <sup>d</sup>to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her.

**Render to her just as she rendered to you:** The ancient Greek word for render “apodidomi” means literally “to pay a debt” or “to give back that which is due.” — God will give Babylon exactly what she deserves.

**Repay her double according to her works... mix for her double:** Double restitution was required in the Old Testament in cases of theft **Exodus 22:4-9 Responsibility for Property**

**1** “If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep. **2** If the thief is found breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, there shall be no guilt for his bloodshed. **3** If the sun has risen on him, there shall be guilt for his bloodshed. He should make full restitution; if he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. **4** If the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall restore double. **5** “If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed, and lets loose his animal, and it feeds in another man’s field, he shall make restitution from

the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard. “If fire breaks out and catches in thorns, so that stacked grain, standing grain, or the field is consumed, he who kindled the fire shall surely make restitution. **7** “If a man delivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, and it is stolen out of the man’s house, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. **8** If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the judges to see whether he has put his hand into his neighbor’s goods. **9** “For any kind of trespass, whether it concerns an ox, a donkey, a sheep, or clothing, or for any kind of lost thing which another claims to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whomever the judges condemn shall pay double to his neighbor. This may be a commentary that Babylon has made her wealth through dishonest dealings. **10** If a man delivers to his neighbor a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any animal to keep, and it dies, is hurt, or driven away, no one seeing it, **11** then an oath of the Lord shall be between them both, that he has not put his hand into his neighbor’s goods; and the owner of it shall accept that, and he shall not make it good. **12** But if, in fact, it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to the owner of it. **13** If it is torn to pieces by a beast, then he shall bring it as evidence, and he shall not make good what was torn.

**According to her works:** “commercial Babylon’s works are three sins

1. Lived Luxuriously-----**Self-Indulgence**
2. Glorified Herself (Sits as a Queen) -----**Pride**
3. Am No Widow, and Will Not See Sorrow -----**Avoidance of Suffering**

All these things are characteristic of worldliness and materialism.

**7** In the measure that she glorified herself and lived <sup>e</sup>luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.’

**8** Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who <sup>f</sup>judges her.

**Therefore her plagues will come in one day:** The destruction of commercial Babylon will come suddenly and completely.

### Isiah 13:19-20

**19** And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans’ pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. **20** It will never be inhabited, nor will it be settled from generation to generation; nor will the Arabian pitch tents there, nor will the shepherds make their sheepfolds there. **21** But wild beasts of the desert will lie there, and their houses will be full of owls; ostriches will dwell there, and wild goats will caper there. **22** The hyenas will howl in their citadels, and jackals in their pleasant palaces. Her time is near to come, and her days will not be prolonged.”

**Standing at distance for fear of her torment:** The heat and smoke of her burning is so great that the kings must stand at a distance.

### 2 Peter 3:11 The Day of the Lord

**10** But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. **11** Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, **12** looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? **13** Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

See Acts 17:11 — **Be like the Bereans**; “receive the word with all readiness, and search the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things are so.”



### Footnotes

- [a] 18:2 NU, M omit mightily
- [b] 18:3 Lit. strengths
- [c] 18:5 NU, M have been heaped up
- [d] 18:6 NU, M omit to you
- [e] 18:7 sensually
- [f] 18:8 NU, M has judged