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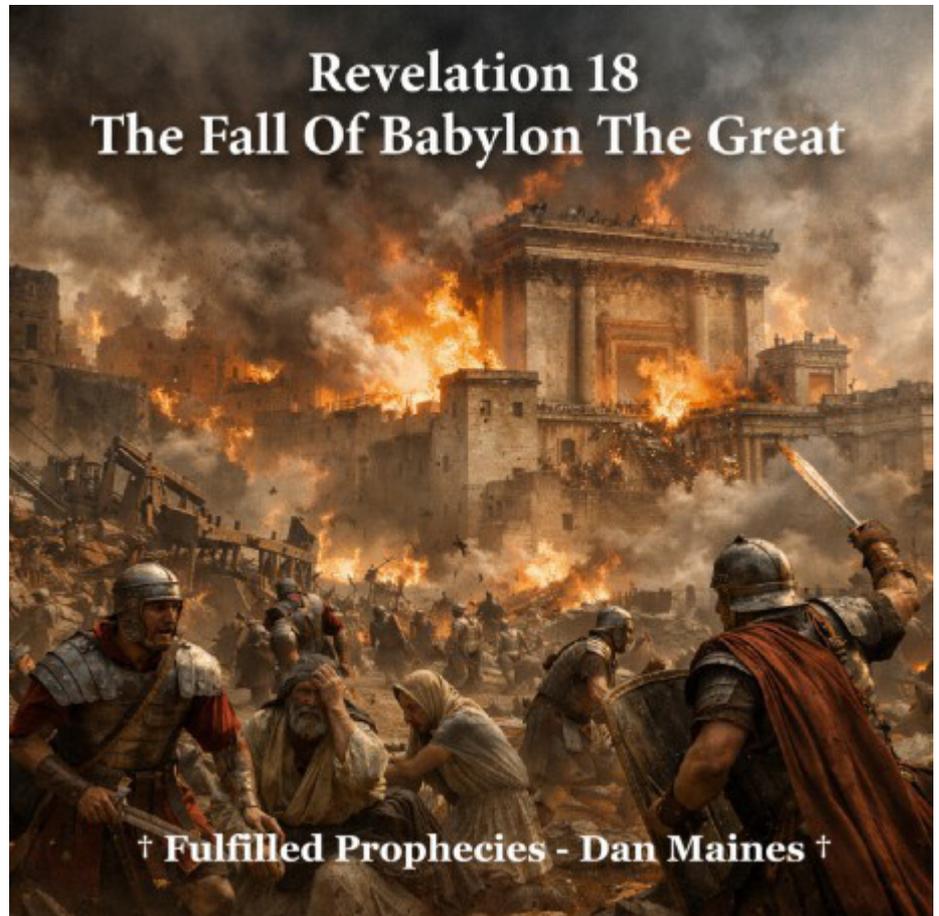
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Revelation 18 The Fall Of Babylon The Great



By Dan Maines

Revelation 18 The Fall Of Babylon The Great

Introduction

† Revelation 18 continues the judgment that began earlier in the book, showing the complete collapse of covenant Babylon. From the fulfilled perspective, this chapter describes the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, the same city Jesus said would be judged for killing the prophets.

† Jesus warned that all the righteous blood shed on the earth would come upon that generation. When we read Revelation 18 we are seeing that judgment unfold exactly as He said it would.

† The language in this chapter comes directly from the Old Testament prophets when they described covenant judgment on cities like Babylon and Tyre. John uses the same prophetic language because Jerusalem had become the covenant harlot.

Revelation 18:1-2

After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated from his glory. And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird."

† The proclamation fallen, fallen echoes Isaiah 21:9 where the fall of Babylon was announced. John applies the same language to Jerusalem to show the certainty of her judgment.

† The description of demons and unclean spirits reflects the spiritual corruption of the city. The place that once housed God's temple had become filled with rebellion and violence.

† Josephus describes Jerusalem during the siege as filled with madness and internal destruction as factions within the city turned against one another.

Revelation 18:3

For all the nations have fallen because of the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of sexual immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich from the excess of her

luxury.

† In prophetic language sexual immorality represents covenant unfaithfulness. Jerusalem was supposed to be faithful to God but instead pursued political alliances and rejected the Messiah.

† Jeremiah 51:7 described Babylon as a golden cup in the Lord's hand making the nations drunk. Revelation uses the same imagery to describe the influence of Jerusalem's corruption.

† Josephus records that the leaders of the city lived in luxury and plundered wealth even while the nation was collapsing.

Revelation 18:4-5

I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive any of her plagues. For her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her offenses."

† This call shows that God's people were not meant to share in the judgment of Jerusalem.

† Early believers obeyed this warning and left the city before the Roman siege began.

† Eusebius records that the church fled Jerusalem and escaped to Pella before the destruction started.

Revelation 18:6-7

Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her. To the extent that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, to the same extent give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, "I sit as a

queen and I am not a widow, and I will never see mourning."

† Jerusalem believed she was secure because the temple stood within her walls.

† This arrogance mirrors Isaiah 47:8 where Babylon claimed she would never see mourning.

† Josephus records that many leaders mocked the idea that the city could fall because they believed God would never allow the temple to be destroyed.

Revelation 18:8

For this reason in one day her plagues will come: plague and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong.

† The phrase one day emphasizes the suddenness of the judgment once it began.

† Josephus records that famine spread throughout the city during the siege as food supplies collapsed.

† The temple was ultimately burned with fire by the Roman army under Titus.

Revelation 18:9-10

And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of sexual immorality and lived luxuriously with her, will weep and mourn over her when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, "Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come."

† The lament shows the influence Jerusalem once had across the region.

† Yet when judgment came the nations could only watch from a distance.

† Tacitus recorded that the destruction of Jerusalem became widely known throughout the Roman empire.

Revelation 18:11-13

And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargo any more, cargo of gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every article of ivory, every article made from precious wood, bronze, iron, marble, cinnamon, spice, incense, perfume, frankincense, wine, olive oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, cargo of horses, carriages, slaves, and human lives.

† The long list of goods highlights the wealth that flowed through Jerusalem.

† The mention of slaves and human lives exposes the corruption of the system.

† Josephus records the horrific suffering that overtook the city during the famine.

Revelation 18:14-17

The fruit you longed for has left you, and all things that were luxurious and splendid have passed away from you, and people will no longer find them. The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning, saying, "Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and

scarlet, and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls; for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!"

† The destruction of the city shows how quickly earthly wealth can vanish.

† Ezekiel 27 used similar language when describing the fall of Tyre.

† Jerusalem trusted in status and wealth rather than repentance.

Revelation 18:18-19

And every shipmaster, every passenger and sailor, and all who make their living by the sea, stood at a distance, and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, "What city is like the great city?" And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, "Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich from her prosperity; for in one hour she has been laid waste!"

† The lament of the sailors highlights Jerusalem's wide economic connections.

† Merchants and travelers constantly moved through the city.

† Josephus records that news of the destruction spread rapidly across the empire.

Revelation 18:20

Rejoice over her, heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her.

† Heaven rejoices because the blood of the saints has been avenged.

† Revelation 6:9-10 shows the martyrs crying out for justice.

† Revelation 18 shows that their blood has now been avenged.

Revelation 18:21-23

Then a strong angel picked up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will never be found again. And the sound of harpists, musicians, flute players, and trumpeters will never be heard in you again; and no craftsman of any craft will ever be found in you again; and the sound of a mill will never be heard in you again; and the light of a lamp will never shine in you again; and the voice of the groom and bride will never be heard in you again; for your merchants were the powerful people of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your witchcraft."

† The millstone imagery comes from Jeremiah 51 where Babylon was symbolically thrown into the sea.

† The silence described here represents complete devastation.

† Josephus recorded that the destruction of the city was so thorough that visitors could hardly believe it had once been inhabited.

Revelation 18:24

And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slaughtered on the earth.

† Jesus said Jerusalem was the city that killed the prophets.

† Luke 13:33 confirms that prophets perished in Jerusalem.

† The destruction of the city fulfilled Christ's warning.

Historical References

† Josephus recorded the famine, violence, and destruction during the Roman siege of Jerusalem.

† Tacitus confirmed that the fall of Jerusalem became widely known across the Roman world.

† Eusebius recorded that the early church fled Jerusalem before the siege began.

† Sulpicius Severus recorded that the temple and city were completely destroyed under Titus.

How It Applies To Us Today

† Earthly wealth and religious status cannot protect anyone who rejects truth.

† The call to come out of Babylon reminds believers to separate from corruption and false religion.

† God's judgment proves that His word is always fulfilled.

† The destruction of the old covenant city makes way for the New Jerusalem where God's people now dwell.

Q & A Appendix

Q Why does Revelation call Jerusalem Babylon?

A Because Jerusalem had become the covenant harlot like ancient Babylon. Jesus identified Jerusalem as the city that

killed the prophets, Matthew 23:37-38.

Q Did Christians really leave Jerusalem before the destruction?

A Yes. Early believers fled to Pella before the Roman siege according to Eusebius.

Q Why does heaven rejoice over the city's fall?

A Because God vindicated the prophets and saints whose blood had been shed, Revelation 6:9-10.

Q What does this judgment prove?

A It proves that Jesus' prophecy about that generation was fulfilled exactly as He said.

Q Why does Revelation say Babylon fell in one hour if the siege of Jerusalem lasted months?

A The phrase one hour emphasizes the sudden collapse of the city once the judgment reached its climax. When the Romans breached the defenses and the temple burned, the entire system collapsed quickly. The language reflects prophetic imagery showing how rapidly the city fell once God's judgment was complete, Revelation 18:10, 17; Matthew 24:21-22.

Q How do we know Babylon cannot be Rome instead of Jerusalem?

A Jesus clearly identified Jerusalem as the city guilty of killing the prophets. Revelation 18:24 says the blood of prophets and saints was found in Babylon. That matches what Jesus said about Jerusalem, not Rome. Scripture directly identifies the guilty city, Matthew 23:35-37; Luke 13:33.

Q Why does Revelation describe merchants mourning over the city?

A Jerusalem had become a major center of trade connected to temple commerce and pilgrimage traffic. Merchants profited from the religious system and the constant flow of travelers into the city. When Jerusalem was destroyed that economic system

collapsed, Revelation 18:11-17; John 2:14-16.

Q What does the millstone thrown into the sea symbolize?

A The millstone represents complete and irreversible judgment. Jeremiah used the same symbol when describing the fall of ancient Babylon. Revelation shows that Jerusalem's covenant system was permanently ended when the city was destroyed, Jeremiah 51:63-64; Revelation 18:21.

Q Why can't Babylon in Revelation 18 be a future world economic system?

A Because Revelation says the judgment would happen soon to the original readers. The book opens by saying the things revealed must soon take place and the time is near. A prophecy that was near for the first century church cannot suddenly be pushed thousands of years into the future. The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 fits the time statements exactly, Revelation 1:1, 3; Matthew 24:34.

Q Why does the blood of the prophets prove Babylon is Jerusalem?

A Revelation 18:24 says the blood of prophets and saints was found in Babylon. Jesus clearly said Jerusalem was the city that killed the prophets and that all the righteous blood would come upon that generation. That direct statement from Christ identifies the guilty city as Jerusalem, not Rome or a future city, Matthew 23:35-37; Luke 13:33.

Q How does the merchants list in Revelation 18 connect to the temple system in Jerusalem?

A Jerusalem had become a massive religious marketplace connected to the temple. Pilgrims traveled there from all over the Roman world bringing money and trade goods. Merchants profited from sacrifices, animals, and temple commerce. Jesus drove the money changers out of the temple because they had turned God's house into a place of business. When the city and temple were destroyed that entire economic system collapsed,

John 2:14-16; Revelation 18:11-13.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Revelation 18; Isaiah 21:9; Isaiah 47:7-8; Jeremiah 51:7, 63-64; Ezekiel 16; Ezekiel 27; Luke 13:33; Matthew 23:35-38; Revelation 6:9-10

† Josephus Wars 5.1.1; 6.2.1; 6.3.4; 6.4.5; 6.8.2; 6.8.5; 6.9.1; 6.9.3; 6.9.4; Tacitus Histories 5.13; Eusebius Ecclesiastical History 3.5.3; Sulpicius Severus Chronicle 2.30

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