

Revelation 18

Outline:

- I. Introduction: in verse 1 an angel with great authority and splendor announces Babylon's destruction
- II. Verses 2-3 give reasons; the city is destroyed for its many sins.
- III. Verses 4-8 are a warning for the church to come out and then asserts God's justice in repaying Babylon for her sins.
- IV. Verses 9-19 earthly Lament for Babylon
 - a. Verses 9-10: the kings lament
 - b. Verses 11-17a: the merchants lament
 - c. 17b-19: the shipmasters/mariners lament
- V. Verse 20 transition from earthly lament to heavenly celebration
- VI. Verses 21-24 are a metaphor of the finality of Babylon's fall.

- I. Introduction: in verse 1 an angel with great authority and splendor announces Babylon's destruction

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

- a. The destruction over Babylon continues until Rev. 19:10
- b. This verse starts with "after these things..." This is a phrase continuing the narrative.
- c. In the previous chapter we saw the metaphorical description of the beginning of Babylon's fall.
- d. In chapter 16 we saw the seven last bows/vial of God's wrath being poured out.
 - i. There are differing views on Babylon. I think Babylon could be a combination of a view of these views.
 - ii. Babylon could be purely representative of the fallen religions (spiritual Babylon).
 - iii. Babylon could be political, the fallen world's political systems.
 - iv. Babylon could be economic, the fallen world's monetary systems.
 - v. Babylon could be the actual city.
 - vi. I favor a combination. Babylon must be some city because I believe the battle of Armageddon is real.

Dr Constable: *The description of Babylon in this verse is what it will be after God judges it (cf. Isa. 13:21; 34:14; 47:7-9; Jer. 50-51; Ezek. 26-28; Nah. 3; Zeph. 2:15). Ancient Babylon fell to Cyrus the Persian in 539 B.C., but that fall did not fulfill Old Testament prophecies about Babylon completely (cf. Isa. 47:11; Jer. 51:8).⁵⁹⁴ John had described God only through hymns of worship to this point,*

⁵⁹⁴ 594. Kiddle, pp. 359-60; Wilcock, p. 168; Bullinger, p. 553.

and he now similarly described the fall of Babylon through the laments of onlookers.⁵⁹⁵

*“The prophecy thus indicates that before the advent of the warrior-king in 19:11–16, Babylon will rise to its greatest heights, not only of idolatry (chap. 17), but also of luxury (chap. 18). . . . Babylon of the future, therefore, will be the center for both false religion and world economic prosperity.”*⁵⁹⁶

- e. “after these things” can sometimes be translated as “with.” So, it is hard to tell for certain if this follows chapter 16 or 17 or is the same time.
- f. John sees another coming from heaven and the angel has great authority.
- g. Remember the seven angels in chapter 16, this is another angel.
- h. The angel has great splendor. The angels splendor even lit up the earth. Think about that, wow!
- i. Dr. Mulholland: The term for “splendor” is *doxa* [^{TG}1391, ^{ZG}1518], which is usually translated “glory”; it denotes the very nature of the being to whom it refers. This description echoes both Isa 60:1 and Ezek 43:2. In both, the earth is made bright with God’s glory. The larger context of the passages is the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. As has been noted (see notes on 1:5 and 6:17), an essential part of the restoration of the kingdom was the judgment of the nations who had oppressed God’s faithful people.²
- j. This angel is giving a message.
- k. The Moody Bible Commentary: *The glory (v. 1) emanating from God’s avenging angel contrasts with the fate of the once vibrant city. Fallen, fallen (v. 2) points to the fulfillment of the ruination anticipated earlier (14:8). Demons and detestably unclean ... birds would make a home there. To describe the dwelling of the birds as a prison does not make sense here. It is better to see it as their “haunt,” or “watch.” They hovered over it. Verse 3 explains why. The city had engaged in so much covetous and idolatrous behavior, that no semblance of decency remained. Evil had taken over completely.*³

II. Verses 2-3 give reasons; the city is destroyed for its many sins.

² And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.” ³ For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her

⁵⁹⁵ 595. Caird, p. 227; Sweet, p. 267; Mounce, p. 323.

⁵⁹⁶ 596. Thomas, *Revelation 8–22*, p. 317.

¹ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 18:2.

^{TG} Tyndale-Strong’s Greek number

^{ZG} Zondervan Greek number

² M. Robert Mulholland Jr., [“Revelation,”](#) in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 559–560.

³ The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 83263-83267). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.”

- a. Babylon is fallen.
- b. Notice that Babylon is considered great.
- c. But notice why Babylon has fallen.
- d. She has become a dwelling place of demons and prison for every unclean spirit.
 - i. Demons and unclean spirits are likely the same.
 - ii. They could be restated differently for emphasis.
- e. Babylon has become a prison for every unclean spirit.
- f. Dr Mulholland:

the wine of her passionate immorality. Lit., “the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” To translate “wrath” as “passionate,” though possible (ESV, RSV, NIV), misses the point of the text. As noted at 14:8, “fornication” is the spiritual condition of rejecting God. Such rejection places one in opposition to God’s holiness, which becomes a consuming fire (“wrath”) against all unholiness. Elsewhere in the vision, John makes it clear that “wrath” is related to God, the only clear exception being 12:12. It is fallen Babylon’s spiritual fornication (i.e., turning away from God and having something other than God as a god) that evokes God’s wrath (6:16–17; 11:18; 14:8–10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19; 19:15).

The kings of the world. Lit., “kings of the earth.” “Earth” is Revelation’s term for “fallen Babylon” (see note on 3:10), used both here of the rulers and next of the merchants.⁴

- g. Notice how it says and “hateful bird.” One source (Henry Morris study Bible) shares the ancient prophecies of Isaiah 13:19-22 will be fulfilled in part during the church age and now completely fulfilled. That prophecy concerned Babylon being deserted. Babylon was filled with unclean and dangerous animals.
- h. This is approximately the middle of the tribulation period.

Is 21:9 *Look what’s coming! A charioteer, a team of horses.” When questioned, •he replies••, “Babylon •has fallen, fallen! All the idols of her gods lie shattered on the ground!”*

Je 51:8 *But suddenly Babylonia will fall and be destroyed. Cry out in mourning over it! Get medicine for her wounds! Perhaps she can be healed!*

Re 14:8 *A second angel followed the first, declaring: “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great city! She made all the nations drink of the wine of her immoral passion.”*

Is 13:21f *Wild animals will rest there, the ruined houses •will be full of hyenas••. Ostriches will live there, •wild goats will skip •among the ruins. ^{13:22} •Wild dogs will yip in her ruined*

Lit. literally

ESV English Standard Version

RSV Revised Standard Version

NIV New International Version

Lit. literally

⁴ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., “[Revelation](#),” in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 560.

fortresses, •jackals will yelp in the once-splendid palaces. •Her time is almost up, •her days will not be prolonged.

Is 34:11 •Owls and wild animals will live there, •all kinds of wild birds will settle in it. •The LORD will stretch out over her the measuring line of ruin and the plumb line of destruction.

Is 34:13–15 Her fortresses will be overgrown with thorns; thickets and weeds will grow in her fortified cities. Jackals will settle there; ostriches will live there. ^{34:14} Wild animals and wild dogs will congregate there; •wild goats will bleat to one another. Yes, nocturnal animals will rest there and make for themselves a nest. ^{34:15} Owls will make nests and lay eggs there; they will hatch them and protect••• them. Yes, hawks will gather there, each with its mate.

Je 50:39 Therefore desert creatures and jackals will live there. •Ostriches will dwell in it too. But no people will ever live there again. •No one will dwell there for all time to come.

Je 51:37 •Babylon will become a heap of ruins. Jackals will make their home there. It will become an object of horror and of hissing scorn, a place where no one lives.

Zep 2:14f Flocks and herds will lie down in the middle of it, as well as every kind of wild animal. •Owls•• will sleep in the tops of its support pillars; they will hoot through the windows. Rubble will cover the thresholds; even the cedar work will be exposed to the elements. ^{2:15} This is how the once-proud city will end up— the city that was so secure. She thought to herself, “I am unique! No one can compare to me!” What a heap of ruins she has become, a place where wild animals live! Everyone who passes by her taunts her and shakes his fist.

Re 16:13 Then I saw three unclean spirits that looked like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

- i. Notice verse 3. All the nations have taken part in her immorality (drunk of the wine, partake).
- j. There are vivid metaphors of the immorality.

III. Verses 4-8 are a warning for the church to come out and then asserts God’s justice in repaying Babylon for her sins.

⁴ I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; ⁵ for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. ⁶ 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. ⁷ To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit as a queen and I am not a widow, and will never see mourning.’ ⁸ For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong.

- a. Moody Bible Commentary: *These verses contain clear allusions to ancient Babylon. The voice that spoke called to mind words formerly used to exhort Israelites to remain pure after their exile there was completed (Is 52:11). They had been expected to leave the moral filth of that country far behind. Such would also be expected of future believers in and around the harlot city. They were to separate themselves from*

its values and activities as well. The city of John's vision was then likened to ancient Shinar, whose inhabitants had pridefully constructed a ziggurat. Brick after brick had been laid in wholesale rebellion against God (Gn 11:4-5). As in the ancient account, God would also come down to judge the city that John saw. I SIT AS A QUEEN (v. 7; cf. Is 47:7-9) are the words that the angel tauntingly put in her mouth. Her doom was certain, as God would mix double strength in His cup the retribution due her. One day (v. 8) describes the suddenness with which the city and its system would come crashing down. God will judge the boastful pride of life (1Jn 2:16), and His people are to avoid it at all cost.⁵

- b. Now this is another voice speaking.
- c. This is a call for Christians to come out from her. Henry Morris points out how sad it is that Christians would compromise and be a part of her to begin with. But Christians throughout the ages have compromised.
- d. Dr Mulholland: *It is because of this unholiness of Babylon that a heavenly voice shouts out, "Come away from her, my people. Do not take part in her sins, or you will be punished with her" (18:4). This is a recurring theme in the Old Testament. Lot was warned to get away from Sodom lest he and his family suffer its destruction (Gen 19:12–15). Moses warned the people to separate themselves from Dathan and Abiram lest they suffer their destruction (Num 16:26). Isaiah called God's people to come out of Babylon (Isa 48:20) and not to touch anything unclean (Isa 52:11). Perhaps the closest resemblance to John's vision is Jeremiah 51:6—"Flee from Babylon! Save yourselves! Don't get trapped in her punishment!" Jeremiah's next word, "It is the LORD's time for vengeance; he will repay her in full," is reprised by John's vision: "For her sins are piled as high as heaven, and God remembers her evil deeds" (18:5). Paul used the same exhortation to the Corinthians: "Come out from among unbelievers, and separate yourselves from them, says the LORD. Don't touch their filthy things" (2 Cor 6:17).⁶*
- e. Dr Mulholland: *The vision employs imagery from Isaiah and Jeremiah to portray the demise of fallen Babylon:*
- f. **Do to her as she has done to others.** See Jer 50:15, 29.
- g. **Double her penalty for all her evil deeds.** See Jer 17:18.
- h. **She glorified herself and lived in luxury, so match it now with torment and sorrow.** See Isa 47:1.
- i. **I am queen on my throne. I am no helpless widow, and I have no reason to mourn.** See Isa 47:7–8.
- j. **these plagues will overtake her in a single day—death and mourning and famine.** See Isa 47:9.
- k. **She will be completely consumed by fire.** See Jer 51:58.

⁵ *The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 83275-83276). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.*

⁶ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "[Revelation](#)," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 562.

- l. **for the Lord God who judges her is mighty.** See Jer 50:34.⁷
- m. The ESV Study Bible: *The prophets' appeals for the OT Israelites to come out of the cultures in which they sojourned as exiles (Isa. 52:11; Jer. 51:6–9, 45) are equally relevant to the NT church in the apostles' day and today (2 Cor. 6:14–18; see 1 Pet. 2:11–12). Churches in Thyatira, Laodicea, and elsewhere failed to keep their distance from Babylon's power-driven, pleasure-crazed value system.*
- n. Verse 5: her sins are piled up. How high? As high as heaven.
- o. God has remembered her iniquities.
- p. Verse 6 is about Babylon being paid back double according to her works. They will experience the plagues of the rest of the world, but double.
- q. Verse 7 is about how she has glorified herself and lives in sensuality.
- r. The ESV Study Bible: *Babylon's boast, I sit as a queen, I am no widow, mimics her OT namesake and will be silenced in a single day (cf. Isa. 47:7–9). Her delusion of affluent security also finds a chilling parallel in the blind self-reliance of the Laodicean church (Rev. 3:17).*
- s. Verse 8: plagues will come, pestilence, mourning and famine. She will burn up with fire.
- t. **Fire from heaven consumes the city in a single moment.**⁸
- u. God judges her and He is strong.
- v. Henry Morris shares: Ancient Babylon beginning with Nimrod and brought to its zenith under Nebuchadnezzar, was also the mother of all human covetousness and desire for wealth and luxuries. That same spirit infected many of the Jewish exiles there, as well as the trading partners of the Babylonians, in other nations and in every age and nation since there have been some men who have been able to accumulate great wealth and even greater power than kings and emperors. Paul charged that the covetousness was really idolatry (Eph 5:5; Col. 3:5) and warned that the love of money is the root of all evil (1 Tim 6:10).
- w. Dr Constable: *The "one day" may very well be literal (cf. Dan. 5:1, 3–5, 3). It also expresses suddenness, as does the "one hour" in verses 10, 16, and 19. Likewise we could interpret the burning literally. Rebuilt Babylon and the cities that are the centers for this worldwide network of political, commercial activity will evidently burn up in the great earthquake (16:18–19). She will collapse suddenly, not decline gradually. The strength of the Lord God will accomplish this destruction, but He will use means (17:16–17).*⁹
- x. With the wealth and power today this is very applicable.

John sees a vision on Patmos Event

⁷ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., ["Revelation,"](#) in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 560.

⁸ H. L. Willmington, [The Outline Bible](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), Re 18:8.

⁹ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 18:8.

Babylon the great falls Event

The battle of the lamb and the beasts Event

Is 52:11 *Leave! Leave! Get out of there! Don't touch anything unclean! Get out of it! Stay pure, you who carry the LORD's holy items!*

Je 50:8 *"People of Judah, get out of Babylon quickly! •Leave the land of Babylonia! Be the first to depart! •Be like the male goats that lead the herd.*

Je 51:6 *Get out of Babylonia quickly, you foreign people. •Flee to save your lives. Do not let yourselves be killed because of her sins. For it is time for the LORD to wreak his revenge. He will pay Babylonia back for what she has done.*

Je 51:9 *Foreigners living there will say, 'We tried to heal her, but she could not be healed. Let's leave Babylonia and each go back to his own country. For judgment on her will be vast in its proportions. •It will be like it is piled up to heaven, stacked up into the clouds.'*

Je 51:45 *"Get out of Babylon, my people! •Flee to save your lives from the fierce anger of the LORD!*

2 Co 6:17 *Therefore "come out from their midst, and be separate," says the Lord, "and touch no unclean thing, and I will welcome you...*

Ps 137:8 *O daughter Babylon, soon to be devastated! How blessed will be the one who repays you••• for what you dished out to us!*

Je 50:15 *Shout the battle cry from all around the city. She will throw up her hands in surrender. Her towers will fall. Her walls will be torn down. Because I, the LORD, am wreaking revenge, take out your vengeance on her! Do to her as she has done!*

Je 50:29 *"Call for archers to come against Babylon! Summon against her all who draw the bow! Set up camp all around the city! Do not allow anyone to escape! Pay her back for what she has done. Do to her what she has done to others. For she has proudly defied •me, •the Holy One of Israel.*

IV. Verses 9-19 earthly Lament for Babylon

Lament for Babylon

⁹ *"And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning, ¹⁰ 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.'*

¹¹ *"And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more— ¹² cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every kind of citron wood and every article of ivory and every article made from very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble, ¹³ and cinnamon and spice and incense and perfume and frankincense and wine and olive oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and cargoes of horses and chariots and slaves and human lives. ¹⁴ The fruit you long for has gone from you, and all things that were luxurious and splendid have passed away from you and men will no longer find them. ¹⁵ 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, ¹⁶ saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls; ¹⁷ for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!' And every shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea, stood at a distance, ¹⁸ and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What city is like the great city?' ¹⁹ 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 by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste!'

- A. In verses 9-10 the kings lament. These kings were immoral with her. They were sensual with her. They will weep and lament.
- B. Moody Bible Commentary: *These rulers are not the same as the ten horns who had attacked her (17:10), and will no doubt exercise less political leverage. Their remorse was shown through the phrases woe, woe, one hour, and they stood at a distance (vv. 10, cf. 15-16, 17, 19). These are recurrent structural markers that distinguish the kings (vv. 9-10) from the land merchants (vv. 11-17a) and sea merchants (vv. 17b-19) who follow. None of them would be able to handle emotionally what they saw.*¹⁰
- C. The ESV Study Note shares: *Laments from kings, merchants, and mariners who profited from Babylon's power and prosperity provide earthly commentary on the great city's fall. When her fall comes, her lovers will stand far off, in fear and horror; but it will be too late to distance themselves from her fate. Kings will mourn Babylon as the mighty city that God judged in a single hour (see vv. 17, 19), suddenly and swiftly, when his patience had reached its limit.*
- D. They see the smoke of her burning.
- E. Revelation 18:8 also mentions that her fall comes in one day. There will be a mighty earthquake (Rev 16:19) also the fire and the plagues.
- F. Verse 10 shares that they will be standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment.
- G. Verses 11-17a are the merchants lamenting.
- H. Dr Mulholland: *It is significant that the largest block of material among the three groups (kings, merchants, and shipowners) is given to the merchants. They receive more "press" than the rulers and shipowners combined. (The merchants have 161 words in Greek, the rulers 51, and the shipowners 73.) This is due to the massive list of luxury items that form their existence.*¹¹

Moody Bible Commentary:

John saw land merchants who were shaken by their loss of customers. Cargoes (vv. 11, 12) usually describes products carried on the sea and is a good word choice here. The merchants were middlemen who sold a vast array of goods from around the world: expensive gems, materials for the finest clothing, furniture made of exquisite marble and wood, coveted spices, expensive food stuffs, animals, and chariots. The final terms, slaves and human lives (v. 13), describe the same entity, human beings in bondage, to be sold in the marketplace. In the

¹⁰ The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 83278-83281). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

¹¹ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "[Revelation](#)," in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: James, 1–2 Peter, Jude, Revelation*, ed. Philip W. Comfort, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), 561.

ancient world, slaves were regarded as animals or implements. Some staffed the large households of the rich, while others filled their brothels and provided fodder for the beasts at the amphitheater (Henry B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, n.d.], 234). These merchants had exercised no conscience whatever. Anything had been permissible for a profit. Their cry of distress (v. 16) was a bit different from that of the kings (v. 10), emphasizing not loss of power, but loss of sales. Many first-century Christians were among the slave population and would have taken great comfort in the ultimate ruin of all such despicable people. Babylon represents the corruption of human trafficking and idolatrous materialism—both of which will be judged.¹²

- I. The ESV Study Bible shares: *The merchants, who gained wealth from the great prostitute (v. 15) issue a lengthy lament, since the great prostitute especially represents the lust for materialistic acquisition and luxury.*
- J. No one buys their cargoes anymore.
- K. Ezek 27:27-34 is a good cross reference.
- L. The ESV Study Bible shares: *The list of cargo for which no market will remain after Babylon's fall resembles the goods transported by the Phoenician merchants of ancient Tyre, which arrogantly boasted of its beauty (Ezekiel 27). As Revelation's beast incorporates every expression of corrupt government (see note on Rev. 13:1–2), so its prostitute includes every corrupt economic system. Even human souls are reduced to cargo, traded as slaves to drive the engines of production and prosperity.*
- M. Verses 12-14 mention the different cargoes.
- N. Notice verse 13 even mentions their cargoes included human slaves. The NET Bible shares about this term: *Grk "and bodies and souls of men." This could be understood (1) as a hendiadys (two things mentioned = one thing meant), referring only to slave trade; (2) it could be referring to two somewhat different concepts: slavery (bodies) and the cheapness of human life—some of the items earlier in the list of merchandise were to be obtained only at great cost of human life; or (3) a somewhat related idea, that the trade is in not just physical bodies (slavery) but human souls (people whose lives are destroyed through this trade).*¹³
- O. Verse 15: the merchants who became rich now stand at a distance mourning.
- P. Verse 17 shares again that in 1 hour her wealth was laid waste.
- Q. 17b-19: the shipmasters/mariners lament
- R. This is very similar to Ezek 28:28-30: 28

*"At the sound of the cry of your pilots
The pasture lands will shake.
29 "All who handle the oar,
The sailors and all the pilots of the sea*

¹² The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 83289-83291). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

¹³ Biblical Studies Press, *The NET Bible First Edition Notes* (Biblical Studies Press, 2006), Re 18:13.

*Will come down from their ships;
They will stand on the land,
30 And they will make their voice heard over you
And will cry bitterly.
They will cast dust on their heads,
They will wallow in ashes.¹⁴*

- S. They are all amazed “What city is like this...”
- T. Verse 19: includes Jewish symbols of mourning.

V. Verse 20 transition from earthly lament to heavenly celebration

²⁰ Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her.”

- a. Cross reference this with Jeremiah 51:48: *Then heaven and earth and all that is in them will sing for joy over Babylon. For destroyers from the north will attack it,” says the LORD.*^{99 15}
- b. Notice how the voice changes.
- c. Why is there rejoicing in Heaven? It is because of the sin which is always against God. The sin is high treason against God.
- d. Also, Babylon has harmed, martyred the saints. Notice how it says prophets, apostles, saints. Notice Rev 19:2: *BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.*¹⁶
- e. Remember Rev 6:10: *and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from ^djudging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”*¹⁷

VI. Verses 21-24 are a metaphor of the finality of Babylon’s fall.

²¹ Then a strong angel took 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 not be found any longer. ²² And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be

¹⁴ [New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update](#) (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995), Eze 27:28–30.

⁹⁹ **tn** Heb “Oracle of the LORD.”

¹⁵ Biblical Studies Press, [The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible](#) (Biblical Studies Press, 2005), Je 51:48.

¹⁶ [New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update](#) (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995), Re 19:2.

^d Deut 32:43; Ps 79:10; Luke 18:7; Rev 19:2

¹⁷ [New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update](#) (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995), Re 6:10.

heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer;²³ and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery.²⁴ And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth.”

Moody Bible Commentary:

A millstone (v. 21) was a part of the ancient mechanism used for grinding grain, and could weigh thousands of pounds. These allude to Jeremiah’s prophecy, which is fulfilled in this chapter (Jr 51:63-64). The stone would crush the city and everything associated with it. Family relationships, business, and the enjoyment of the arts would all cease (Rv 18:22). The merchants were conceited in their success and taken in by the harlot’s sorcery (v. 23). This term may mean that she had bewitched or seduced them. She had also spilled the blood of the saints. First-century AD believers could certainly relate to the circumstances in future Babylon. They were immersed in a Roman culture characterized by riches and saturated with false gods. They would have been greatly satisfied to know that perpetrators of such idolatry would ultimately meet their demise.¹⁸

- A. The ESV Study Bible: As Jeremiah cast a stone and scroll into the Euphrates to show that ancient Babylon would “sink, to rise no more” ([Jer. 51:63–64](#)), so a mighty angel threw a great millstone into the sea to illustrate Babylon’s fall, to be found no more (see also [Ezek. 26:21](#)).
- B. Interesting thought that Jeremiah could have been the physical Babylon and now this is the spiritual, political, and economic Babylon.
- C. Verses 22-23 give details (particularization) of what will no longer be heard from Babylon anymore.
- D. ESV Study Bible: *The pleasant sights and sounds of everyday life—music, labor, food preparation, lamplight, marital love—will be seen and heard no more in Babylon (cf. [Jer. 7:34; 25:10](#)). Ordinary cultural activities and artifacts, though proper in themselves, become unsustainable when human civilization, having defied the Creator, receives his judgment. Babylon’s sorcery ([Rev. 21:8](#)) has deceived ... all nations, as the false prophet’s signs tricked earth dwellers, small and great, into worshiping the beast ([13:13–16; 17:8](#)).*
- E. Ever since the plague of the fifth vial (rev 16:10), Babylon would have been in darkness. With the drying of the Euphrates (Rev 16:12), the city’s power plants would fail, and the city would have to be lit by candlelight. The city’s riotous social life would come to a standstill.
- F. Verse 23 at the end: all the nations were deceived by her sorcery.

¹⁸ The Moody Bible Commentary (Kindle Locations 83296-83301). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

- G. Verse 24 is about those harmed by her.
- H. ESV Study Bible: *In Babylon's fall and the beast's impending defeat, God will at last avenge the blood of his martyrs—i.e., of prophets and saints (6:10; 11:8; 17:6)—and of all who have suffered undeserved violence on earth (11:18).*