

# Forever Lost

## Revelation 18

The seventh bowl of wrath has been poured out and the voice from the temple declared, "It is done!" As with chapter 17, God is herein continuing with the background information that runs in parallel with previous chapters but concludes with the seventh bowl judgment. Chapter 17 basically exposed the whore, Babylon the Great, which Satan used to bring together all the rebellious against God into one vile congregation. At this point, it is the entire planet. This chapter will show the consequences of both her seduction and her destruction under God's wrath.

*After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. 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! Because this messenger has great power and glory, some may think it is Jesus, but the words "another angel" make it clear that it is indeed an angelic messenger for there is no "other" Christ. He is probably*

one of the seven angels that stand before God like Gabriel. His power and glory are indicators that he has been close to God just as Moses on the mount spending time in the presence of the Lord was radiant with glory when he descended.

His message is twofold. First, he declares emphatically that whorish Babylon is fallen or as the lexicon amplifies, cast down from a state of prosperity. Whenever an attribute is repeated in scripture, it is for emphasis. There'll be no rising up from this fall. Second, he declares what she has become – the habitation of demons, the prison of every filthy spirit and the cage for every filthy, hateful bird. These are likely three echelons of evil entities; the point being that planet Babylon is a spiritual toxic dump.

But it is this 'becoming' that is significant. Of course, it implies a transformation. What this tells us is that Satan has made planet Babylon the gathering place for all evil in existence. This world is NOT a playground but a battleground. As he corrupted angels, he will have corrupted men and indeed the whole of creation on this planet.

*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."*

To say that there are two Babylons, religious and commercial, is like saying there must be two heavens – a religious heaven and a commercial heaven. That's nonsense. Planet Babylon is Satan's answer to God's kingdom. As we said before, it is the result of a whorish spiritual force that gathers and indwells the throng of those rebellious against God. Satan sees himself as the counterpoint to God, the antichrist as his counterpoint to Christ and the false prophet as the counterpoint to the Holy Spirit. Babylon is the counterpoint, in his fiendish mind, to the New Jerusalem. All the devil can do is imitate God by providing 180 degree opposites. This, of course, in no way makes him God's peer. Satan is only an angel and a diminished, fallen one at that. Even Michael the archangel is able to cast him out of heaven.

"Her fornication" is quite simply idolatry, the worship of anything except the truth in Christ. And it is an angry idolatry. This wrath is the unholy counterpoint to God's. God's wrath is pure and it cleanses, whereas the "wrath of her fornication" is filthy and it corrupts. All nations have imbibed this foul brew. The leaders of men have been intimately entangled with her

lies, and the leaders of business have been enriched by the power of her luxury. They have bought in to Satan's 'anti-gospel' which says, "You can have it all – just take it. Love yourself and crave things. Lust is good. Self sacrifice is bad. Seek riches. Seek power. Live for now." On and on it goes, counterpoint by counterpoint, and everyone in Babylon agrees.

*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. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Consistently, God speaks to His people as two groups – the Hebrew remnant and the mostly gentile church. Both are His people. First, God showed us the horrible condition of the planet. And now, He reminds us what His command has always been to His people – to "Come out." As we know from chapters four and five, He gave that command to the church at the rapture. He also executed that command in taking the final harvest of believers in chapter fourteen just before the bowls of the seven last plagues were poured out. Finally, there remains the remnant of Israel.*

As you consider the phrase "lest you share in her sins" you sense He's speaking of the

remnant since they remain on earth during the tribulation wherein their faith is tested. The phrase “lest you receive of her plagues” is surely a reference to the other groups of believers who have already been taken to heaven either by rapture or by death so they would not see the plagues of God’s wrath.

They say that you must bury a corpse at least six feet deep in order to keep animals from smelling it and digging it up. The rottenness of death is a stench like no other. When it says “her sins have reached to heaven” it is not so much that they are piling up, though in a sense they are; rather, the stench of their decay is a kind of cosmic pollution. This also reminds us of man’s vain attempt at Babel to build a tower to the heavens.

*Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. In the measure that she glorified herself and lived 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.’ Who is God speaking to? His people. But all His people save the remnant are in heaven at this point. How can they render anything back to the whore? When they return with*

Jesus to the planet to take it by force. That’s coming up.

This, then, is a pep talk of sorts. It’s taking place in the locker room of heaven if you would and the ‘Coach’ is telling His team how to play the second half. When we return with Jesus, we will render to her and repay her just as God has commanded.

Her thought, ‘I sit as queen, and am no widow...’ takes us back to the original perverted mind of Semiramis. It seems that she induced her drug intoxicated priests to kill her husband, King Nimrod, by tearing his body apart while was still alive. Then she took over the rulership of his kingdom as the “queen of heaven”. And this mindset has been the attitude of the whore, Babylon, ever since.

*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 judges her.* Day here means the ‘last day’ of this present age, the day in which Christ will return from heaven, raise the dead, hold the final judgment, and perfect his kingdom. The lexicon amplifies by saying, “Eastern usage of this term differs from our western usage. Any part of a day is counted as a whole day.” What’s being said is that her destruction will be in a relatively

short span of time compared to the millennia she has built up her domain. Her plagues are the seven bowls of God’s wrath that have been poured out culminating in the return of Jesus Christ with his army -- the saints of heaven. Recall, also, as we learned earlier, that the ten kings who have given their power over to the antichrist will, at the convenient time, burn the whore with fire. However, this “utterly burned with fire” may also pertain to the time at the end of the millennium when, after a last rebellious uprising inspired by Satan, God destroys the entire planet with fire. See chapter twenty and 2 Pet 3:7,12.

*“The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’* Now how, you might ask, can anyone stand at a distance from the whole planet? Trust me, you’ll see in a minute. What is a bit more important is that we recognize that it is the ultra rich who are weeping for indeed, Babylon the mother of whores, has made all who worship her materially wealthy. Once again, it is the counterpoint to the true eternal

riches the Lord has promised to those who are faithful in Christ.

The contemporary church especially in western society has been completely caught up in material concerns. This is most obvious with the televangelists, but is not limited to them. Pastors increasingly look to the church rather than the Lord for their welfare. Some have even developed ‘social marketing’ schemes to, in essence, fleece the flock under their care. The church budget, though ‘sanctified’ by prayer is more and more often the ‘prudent’ guideline of church activities rather than the Lord’s Spirit. Trusting obedience, even unto poverty, is unheard of today. Sadly, the modern church is significantly influenced by the ‘propaganda’ of the whore. Remember from chapter three that the Laodicean church says, “I am rich and increased in goods and in need of nothing.”

*“And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and*

oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men. You may wonder why the Spirit cares to give us this cargo manifest, so to speak. That is, until you see that it is ordered in degree of value to the 'owner'. Do you see gold and silver at the beginning? As you run down the list, the relative values decrease; and what's at the bottom? The bodies and souls of men. In Satan's whorish kingdom of Babylon, regardless of what the media says, the least valuable items of trade are people. That's because we are made in the image of God. To the devil and his followers, we are worth less than all the rest. Abortion has made that completely obvious, hasn't it.

*The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all.* We have GOT to get it into our understanding that material prosperity has always been the snare of the devil. By default, we assume it to be the blessing of God and that just ain't necessarily so! Prosperity will be the primary device by which the beast will seduce and destroy both the Hebrews and the nations of the world.

*The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! For in **one hour** such **great riches** came to nothing.'* Every shipmaster, **all who travel by ship**, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, **stood at a distance** and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What is like this great city?'

*"They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.'* In a previous study we noted that from the perspective of prophetic imagery, one hour probably refers to the seven year period of the tribulation. Recall, the ten kings which support the beast during this time are said to reign with him for one hour. What we're seeing is that although the beast will likely bring a supernatural economic revival to the world, it will crumble under the wrath of God.

Returning to our question above about standing at a distance, notice that it is those who are at sea who witness this

mess from afar. It is they who bemoan Babylon's devastation from afar.

*"Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!"* There are three groups that God has avenged – those in heaven, the apostles and the prophets. Of course, we expect that the latter two are in heaven but the term heaven probably refers to all who have suffered the affliction of the whore and been faithful to the Lord. Both the New Testament apostles and the Old Testament prophets died as martyrs, at least a large portion of them did.

*Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore. The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore. The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. You know what a millstone is used for – it grinds. Babylon has been a grinding force in the life of sincere*

believers – you can sense it grinding on your soul each and every day. But the most important part of the first sentence is "shall not be found anymore". What wonderful news for the redeemed. Recall that the angel declared that Babylon had become the abode, the prison and the cage for all things evil. I'm inclined to think that it may indeed be the repository of all sin, even yours and mine. Thus, seeing God cast it into the sea, forever to be lost, is a great comfort.

*For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth."* Notice who the "great men of the earth" have been – her merchants. Do you still want to be listed in Fortune magazine's Top 100 richest? Of course, since Babylon is the congregation of the rebellious against God, the whore would have the blood of everyone who was ever killed on earth, from Abel on including Jesus. No wonder she was described as being drunk with their blood. How glorious, how wonderful, that she is cast so far away from all the created cosmos, both seen and unseen, as to never be found again. I've been inclined to picture her and all the

demonic horde within her as  
diminishing in size forever and  
ever into infinite smallness and  
complete darkness.

Babylon will be no more.