

April 28, 2024

The Great Unveiling...Rejoice at God's Reversal...

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Revelation 18:1-10. 20

¹After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor.

²With a mighty voice he shouted: "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird. ³For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries." ⁴Then I heard another voice from heaven say: "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues; ⁵for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes. ⁶Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done. Mix her a double portion from her own cup. ⁷Give her as much torture and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she boasts, 'I sit as queen; I am not a widow, and I will never mourn.' ⁸Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her. ⁹"When the kings of the earth who committed adultery with her and shared her luxury see the smoke of her burning, they will weep and mourn over her. ¹⁰Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry: " 'Woe! Woe, O great city, O Babylon, city of power! In one hour your doom has come!'

²⁰Rejoice over her, O heaven! Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you.

Questions for Personal or Small Group Use

Opening: What are some of the values and realities of the world that you are most looking forward to seeing God reverse in his coming kingdom?

Discussion Questions:

- What do we learn about this other angel introduced at the beginning of chapter 18?
- What does the angel announce about Babylon? In what sense is Babylon "Great?" In what sense does Babylon represent all that is opposed to God?
- What are the crimes of the prostitute, identified as Babylon (18:1-3)? What does the harlot's fate tell you about God?
- How does the prostitute see herself (18:7-8)? What do we learn from this about the influence of evil in this world?
- How has Babylon impacted the nations, kings, and business practices of the world?
- What does God call his people to do in response to Babylon, the world, and its' values? Why is it important for God's people to "come out of her" (18:4)? What would that look like for you? How can you do this while continuing to live in this world?
- What will "Babylon" experience as a result of God's judgment and justice?
- Note the reasons why the kings (18:9-10), merchants (18:11-17) and sea captains (18:17-20) lament Babylon's fall. How do you think the demise of our own culture would be greeted?
- In contrast, how should God's people respond? How are the saints, apostles & prophets to rejoice over Babylon's fall?
- What will never be heard of in Babylon again? In contrast, what will the people of God experience in the kingdom of God when it fully comes?

Application Questions:

- What have you learned about resisting the temptations of the world? What does it mean for you to be in and not of the world? How can we live distinctively in and from the world but still make a difference in it?