

Notes on Revelation 18

Intro: The three forces Satan uses to destroy the church represent three great threats that he may use: 1) political power represented by the beast; 2) false religion as represented by the false prophet; 3) materialism as represented by the harlot.

The harlot is everything that the woman of chapter twelve is not! She is characterized by immorality, greed, and luxury. It is these things that make her attractive to the world and a great threat to the church. But now the angels of God declare her complete fall.

The Fall of Babylon the great is declared

- v. 1--The angel who brings the message of God's judgment has great authority and a glory that illumines the heavens as he descends. His message is one of judgment upon Babylon. Perhaps he borrows the words of Is. 21:9
- v. 2--Babylon is pictured as a prison for demons to whom the wicked had offered their idolatrous worship, unclean spirits and unclean and hateful birds.
- v. 3--Babylon is destroyed for spiritual fornication and materialism.

The appeal to depart from the harlot city

- v. 4--Come out from among her is reminiscent of the Lot's Exodus from Sodom (Cf. 11:8). Cf. the appeal to leave Babylon by Jer. 51:45. It is not merely an appeal to leave the city physically but also spiritually. If the harlot is Jerusalem, then such an appeal has a strong physical as well as spiritual implication, since the faithful were encouraged to "flee for the mountains" (Mt. 24)
- v. 5--Her sins are piled up (Cf. Jesus statement to Jerusalem, Mt. 23:32-34.
- v. 6--Pay her double (Cf. Is. 40:2)
- v. 7--I shall not be a widow (Cf. Is. 47:7)
- v. 8--Sudden destruction by burning (Cf. Is. 47:9)

The kings of the earth and merchants wail

This description is similar to that of Ezekial's prophecy concerning Tyre (Eze. 26-28)
The items mentioned here indicate luxury and sumptuous living. Some have pointed out that Rome was noted for slave trade.
The judgment comes because of the killing of "saints, apostles and prophets".

The consequences of judgment for the great city

The city to be thrown down with violence; never to be found again. This city would never exist as it presently existed.

No music, no commerce, no light, no weddings
Again, the reason for judgment: in her was found the blood of prophets and saints and all who have been slain on the earth. From this statement Ogden strongly argues for Jerusalem (Cf. Mt. 23:34-35).