



Babylon is Fallen- Part 2

The Laments of the Mourners and the Finality of God's Judgment

Revelation 18:9-24, *"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,¹⁰ 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.'*
¹¹ *"And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: ¹²merchandise 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; ¹³and 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. ¹⁴The 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. ¹⁵The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, ¹⁶and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! ¹⁷For 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 ¹⁸and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What is like this great city?'*

¹⁹ “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.’ ²⁰ “Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!”

²¹ 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. ²² 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. ²³ 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. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. ²⁴ And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.”

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Introduction.

◆ The Day the lights went out on the Seventh Floor

On the morning of **December 2, 2001**, thousands of employees arrived at the Houston headquarters of **Enron Corporation** to find the doors locked and security guards blocking entry. The previous evening, Enron had filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy — at the time, the largest corporate collapse in American history.

In a single day, the company that had been named “**America’s Most Innovative Company**” by Fortune magazine for six consecutive years simply ceased to exist.

The numbers were staggering. **Twenty thousand employees** lost their jobs that day. **Retirement savings evaporated** — ordinary workers who had invested their entire pension funds in company stock watched their life savings reduce to nothing.

Stock that had traded at **\$90 per share was worth less than \$1**. Meanwhile, senior executives had already sold their shares months earlier, walking away with hundreds of millions of dollars while their employees were left with nothing.

One employee, a woman who had worked at Enron for eighteen years, later testified before Congress. She said: “I believed in this company. I gave it everything. I turned down other offers because I believed this was the future.” She had put 90% of her retirement savings into Enron stock because she trusted the system. When it collapsed, she lost \$700,000 in a single day. She was 57 years old and starting over.

What happened to Enron is a modern parable of Revelation 18.

A company of breathtaking ambition, dazzling to the outside world, trading in prestige and power — that was, at its core, built on

deception, exploitation, and the treatment of ordinary people as expendable. And it fell. In one hour.

Those who built their futures on it wept — not for what was right or just, but for what they had lost.

John saw this scene, not in Houston, but in heaven.

Not in 2001, but in eternity.

What he saw was not a corporation. It was the entire world-system.

The weeping was louder. And the fall was final.

This is the passage where the mourners speak.

Three groups, three laments, one devastating chorus: **we loved the wrong thing, and now it is gone.**

But Revelation 18 does not end with mourning. It ends with a millstone, a silence, and a verdict and then, breaking through it all, the most unexpected word: *Rejoice*.

The question this passage presses upon every one of us is this: **when Babylon burns, which group will you be in,**

- **Those who weep at a distance, or**
- **Those who worship in the presence of God?**

Context.

Job 21:30, *For the wicked are reserved for the day of doom; They shall be brought out on the day of wrath.*

Psalm 9:7-8, *But the Lord shall endure forever; He has prepared His throne for judgment. ⁸ He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.*

Psalms 96:13, *For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.*

Isaiah 59:18, *According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, Fury to His adversaries, Recompense to His enemies; The coastlands He will fully repay.*

Matthew chapter 3, John the Baptist talks about the fact that God is going to come in fiery judgment.

Matthew chapter 7, “There is coming a day when the Lord will judge, and many who think they will escape that judgment will in fact have to go through that judgment.”

Matthew chapter 13, Jesus teaches what are known as the parables of the kingdom. And in the culminating parables there are angels who gather the ungodly from around the world for burning.

Matthew 24 and 25, there is the very teaching of Jesus regarding His return and the judgment associated with it.

Acts 17:31, *because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”*

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10, *since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you,⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in*

His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

Revelation 18.

Part One (**18:1–3**) proclaimed heaven's verdict.

The angel descended in blazing glory and announced the fall of Babylon with prophetic certainty.

Part Two (**18:4–8**) issued the call and the decree.

God called His people out, and the exact sentence of retribution was pronounced.

Now the earth responds. Three groups who built their lives on the world-system stand at a safe distance, watching the smoke rise, and weep not for Babylon, but for themselves.

They weep for what they have lost.

Then heaven contradicts them with a single word: Rejoice.

A mighty angel hurls a millstone into the sea, and the silence that follows is the silence of eternity.

Chapter 18 is the most sustained prophetic mourning in the New Testament and the most devastating indictment of materialism, political corruption, and false religion ever written. These are not three unrelated laments. They are three voices saying the same thing: we loved the wrong thing, and now it is gone.

I. The lament of the Kings.

Revelation 18:9–10, *“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, ¹⁰ 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.’”*

The Kings who wept — But not for the Right Reason.

These are the same kings described in **Revelation 17:2** as having committed fornication with the harlot.

They entered into political alliance with the world-system.

- Trading truth for stability,
- Using religion for power,
- Building their kingdoms on Babylon's foundations.

Now they stand at a distance and watch it burn.

The verb 'will weep and lament' is the language of formal mourning the ritualized grief of the ancient world at a public funeral.

This is not private sorrow. It is public lamentation. The mourning is performed and theatrical, which is itself saying that these are men accustomed to managing appearances.

Notice where they stand: 'at a distance for fear of her torment.' They do not run to help. They do not intercede. They do not throw themselves on the mercy of God. They stand back far enough to avoid the flames, close enough to see the smoke. Their mourning is self-preserving. They grieve as spectators, not as penitents.

'Alas, Alas' — The language of lamentation.

The double 'Alas' (**ouai ouai**) is borrowed from the Old Testament prophetic lament.

The same word is used in the seven woes of **Revelation 8–9**.

The same word Jesus used in the seven woes of **Matthew 23** over Jerusalem.

It is the cry of irreversible loss the sound of a man realizing, too late, that what he trusted has collapsed.

'That great city Babylon, that mighty city!'

- They call her great.
- They call her mighty.
- The adjectives tell the story of their love.
- They did not see her as corrupt.
- They saw her as great.
- They did not see her as doomed.
- They saw her as mighty.

Their categories were wrong from the beginning, which is why her fall destroys them.

'In One hour, your judgment has come'

Three times in this chapter the phrase 'one hour' appears (**V 10, 17, 19**). The repetition is deliberate and devastating.

The world-system took centuries to build. Kings rose and fell over its accumulation. Empires rose on its commerce. And it is gone in one hour.

This is the divine commentary on all human empire-building. The higher the tower, the more spectacular the fall. What men build without God, God dismantles without effort.

The 'one hour' is not a measure of God's power — He is more than sufficient — it is a commentary on the fragility of what seemed so permanent.

Isaiah 47:11, *"Therefore evil shall come upon you; you shall not know from where it arises. And trouble shall fall upon you; you will not be able to put it off. And desolation shall come upon you suddenly, which you shall not know."*

Application: Do not build your life on political alliances with the World-System.

The kings wept because they had invested in Babylon politically, economically, and spiritually.

When she fell, they had nothing left. The Christian is called to a different kind of kingdom allegiance. We are citizens of the kingdom that cannot be shaken (**Hebrews 12:28**).

We vote, we serve, we engage but we do not put our hope in political structures that are, at their core, part of a system under judgment.

Psalms 146:3–5, *"Do not put your trust in princes, Nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help. ⁴His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; In that very day his plans perish. ⁵Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, Whose hope is in the Lord his God."*

II. The lament of the merchants.

Revelation 18:11–13, *“And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: ¹²merchandise 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; ¹³and 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.”*

The cargo list — A portrait of human appetite.

The list of **twenty-nine commodities** in **V 12–13** is one of the most carefully constructed catalogues in the New Testament.

It is not random. It moves from the luxurious to the essential, and it ends with the most damning entry of all ***'bodies and souls of men.'***

This list mirrors the imports of ancient Rome from its conquered territories, but it also describes every consumer economy that has placed profit above people. The list tells us what Babylon valued, and in what order she valued it.

Category	What It Reveals About Babylon
Precious metals & gems	The love of wealth as an end in itself — accumulation without purpose.
Fine fabrics & luxury goods	The love of display — identity found in appearance and status.

Category	What It Reveals About Babylon
Spices, oils, wine & grain	The love of sensory pleasure — appetite without restraint.
Animals and chariots	The love of power and mobility — the assertion of dominance.
'Bodies and souls of men'	<i>The final, damning commodity: human beings treated as tradeable goods.</i>

'Bodies and Souls of Men' — The final commodity.

The climax of the cargo list is stunning.

After **twenty-eight categories of luxury goods**, John concludes with 'bodies and souls of men' human beings as merchandise.

The Greek is '*somata kai psychas anthropon*' bodies and souls, the whole person.

In the Roman world, this referred to the slave trade which is the most lucrative and most dehumanizing commerce of the ancient world.

But the principle is wider than chattel slavery. Any economic system that reduces human beings to units of productivity, consumers to be exploited, or souls to be sold has the spirit of Babylon running through it.

The world-system does not merely trade in goods. At its worst, it trades in people.

It assigns human beings monetary value based on their utility to the market. This is the logical end-point of a civilization that has put gold above God: eventually, human beings made in God's image become commodities in the marketplace of empire.

V 14, *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.*

V14 stands between the cargo list of verses **12–13** and the merchants’ formal lament of verses **15–16**.

It is not a continuation of the cargo list, nor is it yet the mourning cry. It is something more personal and more devastating than a direct address to Babylon herself, spoken by the voice of heaven before the merchants even open their mouths.

Clause	What It Declares
<i>“The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you”</i>	The deepest appetite of the soul, the longing that drove Babylon’s entire existence is permanently unsatisfied. Not deferred. Gone.
<i>“All the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you”</i>	The entire external display of her glory, the luxury, and the splendour is stripped away in a single moment. What took centuries to accumulate is gone in hours.
<i>“You shall find them no more at all”</i>	The Greek is the strongest possible negative in Greek. The double negative of absolute, irrevocable finality. The same construction used in Revelation 18:21–23 for the seven “no more” silences of judgment. Not merely absent, but permanently, irreversibly, categorically gone.

This is the ultimate diagnosis of the world-system. It promises to satisfy the soul with what can never satisfy the soul. It took the God-shaped vacuum and tried to fill it with gold, silk, spices, and status.

***Verse 14** is the heart of Babylon's tragedy stated in its barest form. The merchants in **verses 15–16** will weep over what they have lost.*

But verse 14 goes deeper than their weeping — it identifies what was always wrong with the desire itself.

Babylon did not merely lose her wealth. She lost the very thing her soul was built to hunger for. And because she had directed that hunger toward things that were always temporary, the loss is not merely financial. It is existential. She longed for the wrong thing with everything she had. And now the wrong thing is gone, and no substitute exists, and she shall find it no more at all. This is the ultimate emptiness that awaits every soul that has spent its longings on what cannot last.

The merchants' lament.

Revelation 18:15–16, *"The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, ¹⁶and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls!'"*

Like the kings, the merchants stand 'at a distance.' They weep and wail, but they do not repent.

Their grief is the grief of interrupted commerce.

What they mourn is not Babylon's sin, but their lost revenue stream.

This is the ultimate tragedy of the worldly.

- They can grieve without repenting.
- They can acknowledge loss without acknowledging guilt.

'That great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet'

These are the exact colours of the harlot in **Revelation 17:4**.

The merchants loved Babylon for her beauty, her opulence, her market. They did not ask what was underneath the purple. They did not ask who bled for the scarlet.

They asked only: **What can I sell here?**

Application: Examine what you are building your wealth upon.

The merchants' sin was not wealth itself. Scripture never condemns prosperity in itself.

Their sin was that they grew rich through 'the abundance of her luxury' (**V3**). A system built on exploitation, false religion, and the treatment of human beings as commodities.

The call to come out of her (**V4**) is a call to examine our economic lives.

Where does our wealth come from?

What system does it depend on?

What does it cost others?

1 Timothy 6:9–10, " *But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* "

III. The lament of the seafarers.

Revelation 18:17–19, " *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 ¹⁸and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What is like this great city?' ¹⁹"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.'"*

The third voice — The louder silence

The three mourners form a deliberate rhetorical structure.

- The political class (kings),
- The commercial class (merchants),
- The working class (sailors and shipmasters).

The judgment of Babylon does not spare any economic stratum. From the throne room to the dockyard, the fall is universal.

The sailors' lament is the most visceral.

They '*threw dust on their heads*' the ancient gesture of extreme grief, used in the Old Testament for the most devastating loss (**Job 2:12; Ezekiel 27:30**).

What they felt was not merely financial loss. It was the collapse of their entire world-order. Everything that gave their life meaning and direction was gone.

Ezekiel 27 — the prophet's lament over Tyre is the direct Old Testament background for this passage.

John is drawing the parallel intentionally: Tyre was the great maritime trading city of the ancient world, as Babylon was the great land empire.

Both fell.

Both were mourned by those who grew rich from them.

Both fulfilled God's prophetic word.

John is telling us: what God said about Tyre and Babylon is now happening finally, completely, and permanently.

'In one hour, she is made desolate'

This is the third occurrence of 'one hour' (**V 10, 17, 19**).

The repetition is John's literary device for intensity. Each group that mourns punctuates their lament with the same stunned disbelief One hour.

They cannot process it. Centuries of accumulated power, wealth, and glory dissolved in sixty minutes.

The Greek word for 'made desolate' (eremothe) is the same root used for 'wilderness' and 'desolation.'

- The great city has become a wasteland.
- The teeming harbour is empty.
- The docks are silent.
- The ships have nowhere to go.
- The commerce is over.

Application: The only wealth that survives Judgment is the wealth stored in Heaven.

The three laments describe three groups who built everything on a system that burned. The contrast is the teaching of Jesus in

Matthew 6:19-20, *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

When Babylon falls, all earthly investment is lost. The only investment that survives is the investment made in the Kingdom of God lives given in service, the gospel proclaimed, the poor cared for, the nations reached. This is not destroyed in one hour. This lasts forever.

IV. Heaven's counter cry.

Revelation 18:20, *"Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!"*

After three extended laments from three groups, heaven speaks in a single verse and completely reverses the emotional verdict.

- The mourning earth says: Alas.
- The rejoicing heaven says: Rejoice.

The contrast could not be more deliberate.

'O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets'

This is the complete company of the redeemed. Those now in heaven (who are addressed as 'heaven'), specifically the apostles and prophets who were martyred or persecuted by the system they confronted.

These are those who paid the price for faithfulness to God in a world that demanded faithfulness to Babylon.

*'For God has avenged you on her' — this is the answer to the prayer of the martyrs under the altar in **Revelation 6:10**, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'*

The answer is: *Until Babylon falls.*

The patience of the saints has been vindicated.

Every tear shed in the service of God, every persecution endured, every life laid down all of it is answered here.

God has avenged you.

Why Heaven Rejoices?

The Theology of Divine Justice.

Some find it troubling that heaven rejoices at judgment. But this misunderstands both the nature of God's justice and the experience of His people.

Heaven does not rejoice in cruelty.

Heaven rejoices in righteousness in the vindication of everything that Babylon spent centuries destroying truth, justice, the lives of the saints.

The same God who wept over Jerusalem (**Luke 19:41**) also pronounces judgment on Jerusalem.

The same God who is patient, not willing that any should perish (**2 Peter 3:9**), is also the God who will not leave the guilty unpunished.

Divine love and divine justice are not in tension. They are the same God being fully Himself.

Revelation 19:1–2, " After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honour and power belong to the Lord our God! ² For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her."."

The Hallelujah of **Revelation 19** grows directly out of the fall of Babylon in **Revelation 18**.

The rejoicing is not at suffering, but it is at justice.

The martyrs are avenged. The corrupt system is gone. The way is clear for the coming of the King.

V. The millstone.

Revelation 18:21–23, " 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. ²² 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. ²³ 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. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived.""

The angel performs a prophetic sign-act.

Lifting a stone 'like a great millstone' and hurling it into the sea.

This is a direct echo of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 51:63–64, *Now it shall be, when you have finished reading this book, that you shall tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates. ⁶⁴ Then you shall say, 'Thus Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her. And they shall be weary.'* ” Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

Prophet Jeremiah commanded Seraiah to tie a stone to the scroll of prophecy against Babylon and cast it into the Euphrates. Thus, Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her.

The millstone was the heaviest common object a labourer would encounter. It could grind grain or crush a skull.

Jesus used millstone imagery for the severity of judgment against those who harm the innocent.

Matthew 18:6, *“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.*

Here the imagery is of absolute, irrecoverable finality. What is thrown to the bottom of the sea does not come back.

'Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down and shall not be found anymore.'

The word 'violence' (hormema) means rushing force, like a torrent or a flood. This is not a gentle dismantling. It is a violent overthrow. The system that enthroned itself through violence will be overthrown by it. And once thrown, it is not found anymore. The language of 'no more' (ouketi) appears six times in verses 21–23, each repetition hammering the same point: finality, silence, absence, forever.

Seven silences — The 'No More' of Eternal Judgment

#	What Is Gone	What It Meant
1	The city itself	The entire world-system that organised human life around opposition to God.
2	Music	The cultural life — arts, entertainment, the celebration of beauty. Gone.
3	Craftsmen	The creative and productive life — skill, industry, craft. Gone.
4	The millstone's sound	The daily work of ordinary life — grinding grain, the rhythm of the working day. Gone.
5	Lamplight	The domestic life — the warmth of home, safety in darkness, the gathering place. Gone.
6	The bride and groom	The social life — love, family, marriage, the basic human covenant. Gone.
7	The great merchants	The commercial life — and the reason it all existed: <i>'by your sorcery all the nations were deceived.'</i>

'By your sorcery all the nations were deceived'

The **Greek word** for 'sorcery' here is ***pharmakeia*** the root of our English word 'pharmacy.'

It was used in the ancient world for the use of drugs and potions in magic and witchcraft.

But in the prophetic tradition, it is the metaphor for spiritual seduction the way the world-system bewitches its victims, making them unable to see clearly.

Babylon's greatest power was **not** military or economic, but deceptive.

- She made the nations believe that her way of life was the only way.
- She made wealth seem like ultimate security.
- She made political power seem like ultimate safety.
- She made human comfort seem like ultimate fulfilment.

This was the ***pharmakeia*** the drug that kept the nations intoxicated and unaware of the judgment coming.

*The antidote to Babylon's sorcery is the clear-eyed view of heaven. This is why the angel descends with earth-illuminating glory to shine a light on what Babylon actually is. The Christian who reads **Revelation 18** has been given the antidote. We can see the smoke for what it is. We can hear the 'no more' and refuse to build on what is burning.*

VI. The final verdict.

Revelation 18:24, "And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth."

The Final charge.

After the laments, after heaven's call to rejoice, after the millstone and the seven silences, the chapter closes with a single verse of indictment.

Not a symbol. Not a metaphor. Blood.

'In her was found'

The language of judicial discovery. The investigators searched the ruins and found what had been hidden in the luxury, the commerce, the music, the lights. Beneath the purple and the gold, beneath the cargo lists and the merchant fleets, beneath the political alliances and the cultural achievements: blood.

'The blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.'

Three categories, expanding outward.

The prophets — those sent by God to speak truth to Babylon.

The saints — the believing community that refused to bow the knee.

All who were slain on the earth — the universal scope of the world-system's violence against humanity.

Babylon did not merely persecute Christians. She was the spirit behind all unjust bloodshed in human history. Every martyr's death, from Abel to the last tribulation saint, is laid at her door.

The bloodguilt of the world-system

This final verse answers a question that has haunted every generation of God's people.

Why does God let the wicked prosper?

Why do the martyrs cry out 'How long?'

Why does Babylon seem so invincible, so permanent, so triumphant over those who love God?

The answer is that God has been keeping count.

'In her was found the blood...'

The blood has not been forgotten. God has been recording every ounce of it. The scroll has been filling since the first murder in human history. And when the book is full, when the measure is complete the judgment falls.

Genesis 4:10, *"And He said, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground.'"*

From the very first murder, God said, blood cries out.

Revelation 18:24 is the final answer to Abel's cry.

- All the blood.
- All the prophets.
- All the saints.
- All the slain.

God has heard every cry.

And in the fall of Babylon, He has answered everyone.

Application: The blood of the Saints is never wasted.

For the persecuted church in every age, this verse is not a cause for despair, but it is a cause for confidence.

Those who die for the gospel do not die in vain. Their blood is recorded. Their names are known. Their Judge is just. The world-system that destroyed them will not escape.

Revelation 6:9–10, *"When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'"*

The answer to the martyrs' prayer is **Revelation 18**.

- ✓ God has not forgotten.
- ✓ He has not abandoned.
- ✓ He has not been slow because He is indifferent.
- ✓ He has been patient, giving time for the measure to fill and for His people to be called out.

But when He acts, He acts with perfect justice, and the blood of His servants is avenged.

Conclusion.

Two Cities, Two Responses, One Certainty

Revelation 18:9–24 confronts every reader with a choice that is, ultimately, a choice about what city you live in. Not geographically spiritually, fundamentally, and finally.

The kings, the merchants, and the sailors all made the same choice. They invested their lives in Babylon. They loved her beauty, lived in her luxury, built their futures on her commerce. And they stood at a distance watching her burn, unable to stop weeping, unable to stop loving what they had just lost, unable to repent.

Heaven made a different choice. Heaven rejoiced not because the loss of human life is trivial, but because the justice of God is real, and

His people are vindicated, and the path to the new creation is now clear.

The question this passage asks of every person in this room is not: are you successful? Are you comfortable? Are you positioned well in the world-system?

*The question is: **When Babylon burns, where will you be standing?***

At a safe distance, weeping for what you have lost?

Or in heaven, worshipping the One whose judgments are true and righteous?

There is still time to choose. The angel has made the proclamation. The millstone has not yet been thrown. The 'no more' has not yet fallen.

God is patient not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (**2 Peter 3:9**).

The call of **18:4** is still open: '*Come out of her, my people.*'

Come out not by retreating from the world, but by refusing to love what is perishing.

Come out by holding your wealth loosely and your King tightly.

Come out by living as a citizen of the city whose builder and maker is God — the New Jerusalem that is already descending, the Kingdom that cannot be shaken, the wedding feast that is already being prepared.

Revelation 21:3–4, "*And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying.*

There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away'"

Babylon will fall. The former things will pass away. The mourning will end not because the loss is forgotten, but because the final city has come, and its light does not go out, and its joy does not end, and its inhabitants will never weep for what they have lost because what they have found can never be taken away.

Strong is the Lord God who judges her.

And stronger still is the Lord God who saves.

◆ **The Man who walked away from the trading floor**

In **1987**, a young trader named **Brian Griffiths** was working at one of London's most prestigious investment banks. He was **29 years old**, earning more money than he had ever imagined possible, and moving fast up the ranks of a financial system that rewarded aggression, ambition, and the complete subordination of everything else relationships, ethics, health, faith to the pursuit of profit. He was good at it. Exceptionally good.

He had grown up in a Christian home but had drifted far from faith by his twenties. The trading floor, he later said, was his church: it had its own rituals, its own language, its own community, its own sense of ultimate meaning. The numbers on the screen told him who he was. His bonus told him his worth. The system gave him everything — or so it seemed.

One evening, after a particularly brutal day in which he had watched colleagues lie to clients, manipulate numbers, and celebrate outcomes that had destroyed other people's savings he sat in his car in the parking garage underneath the bank and could not get out.

He later described it as the moment the sorcery lifted. *"I could suddenly see what it was," he said. "I could see what I had become a part of. And I was sick."*

He **resigned the following Monday**. His colleagues thought he had lost his mind. His family was confused. His lifestyle collapsed overnight. But over the following months, as he began to attend a small church near his flat, something else happened.

He described it this way: *"I had spent years building something that I now knew could vanish overnight. For the first time in my adult life, I was building on something that couldn't."*

*That is the call of **Revelation 18**. Not that we would have nothing but that we would have the right thing.*

Not that we would be poor but that we would be rich toward God. Not that we would stop working but that we would know what lasts.

He walked out of Babylon. He did not wait for the smoke.

A personal challenge.

Before you walk out of this building today, ask yourself these three questions honestly. Not as theology exercises as a personal audit of where you are standing:

- **If Babylon fell tomorrow if the financial system collapsed, if the political structures you trust dissolved, if the career you have built disappeared overnight, *what would you have left?*** If the honest answer is "not much," that is not

condemnation. It is a diagnosis and diagnosis is the beginning of healing.

- **Is there something specific, a habit, a relationship, a financial commitment, an ambition, an entertainment that you know has the spirit of Babylon in it? Not because wealth or culture is sinful, but because *for you, in your life, it has become a substitute for God?*** The call of **verse 4** is personal: *“Come out of her, my people.”* God knows your address inside the system. He is calling you by name.
- **If you have never trusted Christ, if you have been living in Babylon without ever hearing the call to come out, *today is the day that call reaches you.*** The angel has given the proclamation. The millstone has not yet been thrown. The door is still open. Do not leave this building the same way you came in.

The traders who wept over Babylon in **Revelation 18** did not lack intelligence.

- They did not lack information.
- They had seen the system from the inside.
- They had built their lives inside it with full awareness of what it was.

What they lacked was the will to come out before the smoke rose. That will that decision is what God is calling for today.

Come out.

Build on the kingdom that cannot be shaken.

Invest in the city whose builder and maker is God. And on the day when the millstone falls and the silence descends and the smoke rises you will not be standing at a distance, weeping for what you have lost. You will be in the presence of the One who said: ***“Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord.”***

