

*The harlot church sells out to Satan and is burned by the beast.*

**And he cried with a strong voice, saying,  
Great Babylon has fallen, has fallen, and  
has become the habitation of demons, and  
a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of  
every unclean and hated bird;** Rev 18:2

This Lesson Outline was prepared by John M. Wharton      September 13, 2006

#### Sources -

All bible text, unless otherwise indicated, is the Darby Translation. ASV indicates the American Standard Version, with KJV indicating the King James Version. Quotations are often included from various classic Christian commentaries such as John Gill's Expositor, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures, and others. Greek and Hebrew word definitions are often included from the Strong's Concordance, unless otherwise indicated. All of these sources, both the bible texts, commentaries, and Strong's definition's are taken from the excellent source the e-Sword Bible computer program unless otherwise indicated.

#### Introduction -

Revelation chapter 18 describes the judgment and destruction of the great city Babylon by God. Many writers think this is some great city of today and not literally Babylon in modern Iraq. Many think Rome is the likely candidate. That idea is often based on the belief that the Old Testament prophecies about Babylon's destruction have all been fulfilled. But have they? The merchants of the earth grieve as they watch it's destruction from afar. They have been enriched by the luxuries and costly products they have brought in from the countries of the world and sold in her markets. The people of God are warned one last time to flee out of Babylon before the destruction and judgment overtake them as well.

#### Lesson Text - Revelation Chapter 18:

**Rev 18:1** After these things I saw another angel descending out of the heaven, having great authority: and the earth was lightened with his glory.

**Rev 18:2** And he cried with a strong voice, saying, **Great Babylon has fallen, has fallen, and has become the habitation of demons**, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hated bird;

**Rev 18:3** because **all the nations have drunk of the wine of the fury of her fornication**; and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and **the merchants of the earth have been enriched through the might of her luxury**.

**Rev 18:4** And I heard another voice out of the heaven saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye have not fellowship in her sins, and that ye do not receive of her plagues:

#### Comments -

*Come out of her, my people, that ye have not fellowship in her sins*

Who could this people of God be so late in the seven years of the Great Tribulation? It seems unlikely they are Christians, since those looking for Jesus coming were translated off the earth before the Great Tribulation. Those who then became believers were martyred (see Rev. chapters 6-7). The 144,000 men from all twelve tribes of Israel are mentioned twice after the Christian martyrs, in Revelation 7 and 14. And in chapter 14 they seem already to be with God. They are certainly with the Lamb of God on Mount Zion.

**Rev 14:1**, and behold, the Lamb standing upon mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having his name and the name of his Father written upon their foreheads.

The only people of God left are Israel. And we are also told in Daniel 9, that during the last seven years, Israel will have a peace treaty with the beast. But he will break that treaty in the midst of the seven years, and invade Israel, and stop the temple sacrifices. Perhaps, relations being peaceful at first, some Israelis have moved to Babylon, the beast's capitol, to do business. Or perhaps this refers to those Jewish people who still live in Iraq to this day. But they are few in number. This may be the final warning before God's judgment falls.

**Rev 18:5** for her sins have been heaped on one another up to the heaven, and God has remembered her unrighteousnesses.

**Rev 18:6** Recompense her even as she has recompensed; and double *to her* double, according to her works. In the cup which she has mixed, mix to her double.

**Rev 18:7** So much as she has glorified herself and lived luxuriously, so much torment and grief give to her. Because she says in her heart, I sit a queen, and I am not a widow; and I shall in no wise see grief:

**Rev 18:8** for this reason in one day shall her plagues come, death and grief and famine, and she shall be burnt with fire; for strong *is the* Lord God who has judged her.

**Rev 18:9** **And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication, and lived luxuriously with her, shall weep and wail over her, when they see the smoke of her burning,**

**Rev 18:10** **standing afar off, through fear of her torment, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! for in one hour thy judgment is come.**

**Rev 18:11** **And the merchants of the earth weep and grieve over her, because no one buys their lading any more;**

#### Comments -

***And the kings of the earth...shall weep and wail over her, when they see the smoke of her burning -***

These kings of the earth are not in Babylon herself. They rule over other countries. But they have all engaged in lucrative trade in the city. They have sold their wares to customers there. And they will weep bitterly when they see this judgment fall on that great city, destroying their trade and riches.

***standing afar off, through fear of her torment -*** But they don't try to approach Babylon for fear of the destruction.

***for in one hour thy judgment is come***

The passage is interesting. These kings of other lands, some distance away, have seen this judgment fall on Babylon so quickly. But how could they from their homes. That is possible today, with satellite communications, and news services.

***because no one buys their lading any more -*** It's important to notice that they are sad that the leaders and people of Babylon can't buy their wares anymore. They were not buying items made in Babylon. They were selling these, luxuries, precious metals, and jewels to the inhabitants of that evil city. Babylon won't have to have manufacturing plants, and make products to sell. It will have financial riches, or credit, such that it can buy the expensive products of other lands.

**Rev 18:12** lading of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and pearl, and fine linen, and

purple, and silk, and scarlet dye, and all thyine wood, and every article in ivory, and every article in most precious wood, and in brass, and in iron, and in marble,

**Rev 18:13** and cinnamon, and amomum, and incense, and unguent, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle, and sheep, and of horses, and of chariots, and of bodies, and souls of men.

**Comments -**

**Rev. 18:11 -because no one buys their lading any more – Remember, these merchants are not going to Babylon to purchase expensive wares and products made there. Babylon will not become an industrial center in that respect. They are bringing expensive products to Babylon to sell there. So Babylon will become wealthy, monetarily, and will buy the world's luxuries.**

**Rev 18:14** **And the ripe fruits which were the lust of thy soul have departed from thee,** and all fair and splendid things have perished from thee, and they shall not find them any more at all.

**Rev 18:15** The merchants of these things, who had been enriched through her, shall stand afar off through fear of her torment, weeping and grieving,

**Comments -**

**And the ripe fruits which were the lust of thy soul have departed from thee – Babylon will not be known for growing this exotic produce. They will import such delicacies from other lands through these merchants.**

**Rev 18:16** saying, Woe, woe, the great city, which *was* clothed with fine linen and purple and scarlet, and had ornaments of gold and precious stones and pearls!

**Rev 18:17** for in one hour so great riches has been made desolate. And every steersman, and every one who sailed to any place, and sailors, and all who exercise their calling on the sea, stood afar off,

**Rev 18:18** and cried, seeing the smoke of her burning, saying, What *city* is like to the great city?

**Rev 18:19** and cast dust upon their heads, and cried, weeping and grieving, saying, Woe, woe, **the great city, in which all that had ships in the sea were enriched through her costliness!** for in one hour she has been made desolate.

**Comments -**

**the great city, all that had ships in the sea were enriched through her costliness! – Babylon was known among the merchants of the world, as costly. She was expensive to maintain. Babylon was known for buying the expensive luxuries the merchants shipped in. So Babylon did not produce these expensive wares. She was not selling them in that sense. She bought them from the other nations. So Babylon will have to become wealthy. Where can these riches come from? Perhaps from oil, if the current unrest is controlled, and the petroleum flows uninterrupted. If Babylon unites the Middle East (especially the Islamic countries) and possibly some of Europe (south eastern Europe) the increased oil production and trade may enrich her.**

**Rev 18:20** Rejoice over her, heaven, and *ye* saints and apostles and prophets; for God has judged your judgment upon her.

**Rev 18:21** And a strong angel took up a stone, as a great millstone, and cast *it* into the sea, saying, **Thus with violence shall Babylon the great city be cast down, and shall be found no more at all;**

**Rev 18:22** and voice of harp-singers and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters

**shall not be heard any more at all in thee, and no artificer of any art shall be found any more at all in thee**, and voice of millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee, [Rev 18:23](#) and light of lamp shall shine no more at all in thee, and voice of bridegroom and bride shall be heard no more at all in thee; for thy merchants were the great ones of the earth; for by thy sorcery have all the nations been deceived.

[Rev 18:24](#) And in her was found *the* blood of prophets and saints, and of all the slain upon the earth.

#### **Comments -**

***and voice of harp-singers and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters shall not be heard any more at all in thee*** – Many Bible writers and teachers think this is the destruction of Babylon that took place in ancient times as with the example from the commentator Adam Clarke's -

#### **Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible from the e-Sword Bible Program -**

**...Shall be found no more at all** - In her government, consequence, or influence. This is true of ancient Babylon; we are not certain even of the place where it stood. It is also true of Jerusalem; her government, consequence, and influence are gone. It is not true of Rome pagan; nor, as yet, of Rome papal: the latter

In past generations they had thought this, but much of it is not accurate any longer, if I understand correctly. Even after the time of Alexander the Great people continued to live in Babylon. Sometimes in noticeable numbers. There was an effort in rebuilding and refurbishing some of the city by later Greek kings after Alexander. Some degree of commerce continued. Down to the time of Christ there were scholars and astronomers still living and working in the area. They observed the stars and celestial bodies. It is true that Babylon did continue to decline from that time and never rose again to its original power. We do know that small groups of people have always lived in that area by the ruins. Some sources say that shepherds have kept their flocks right there since ancient times while others deny it.

**and shall be found no more at all** - But archaeologists have located some of these ancient foundations and portions of walls of the original city. The general location of the ruins is noted in modern atlases. There are interesting articles on the subject of Babylon and these ruins to be found on the Internet.

**and no artificer of any art shall be found any more at all in thee** - Amazingly, Sadaam Hussein, the previous Dictator of Iraq, had rebuilt and painted some of the ruins and constructed a large gate entry with a mural of Nebuchadnezzar and himself. Obviously, he viewed himself as a revival of the ancient leaders of that evil city.

**and voice of harp-singers and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters shall not be heard any more at all in thee** - News articles recently have outlined the plans and hopes of leaders in Iraq to revive the city and establish it as a cultural and historical center backed by the U.N. It is not accurate to presume that ancient Babylon is dead yet. Or that it is incapable of some degree of rebuilding and revitalization financially if allowed by God. All of that appears to be very possible and in the plans of some world leaders. Just keep in mind that one of the things John sees as compelling to the inhabitants of the earth about this beastly institution that will arise, is the fact that it seems like empires of the past which are long dead and gone. Yet it seems to resurrect itself in our modern times.

*Rev 17:7 And the angel said to me, Why hast thou wondered? \*I\* will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast which carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.*

*Rev 17:8 The beast which thou sawest was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go into destruction: and they who dwell on the earth, whose names are not written from the founding of the world in the book of life, shall wonder, seeing the beast, that it was, and is not, and shall be present.*

*Rev 17:9 Here is the mind that has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains, whereon the woman sits.*

*Rev 17:10 And there are seven kings: five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes he must remain only a little while.*

The beast is a ruler who has already reigned before John's time in the first century A.D. And has left the scene. He will raise to power again in the last days, and revive the empire concept he used in the past to deceive the earth, lead them away from true knowledge of God, and attempt to destroy the people of God who will not follow him. This is not a man whom will be resurrected to do more evil. This is one of the fallen angels under Satan, who has ruled in the past and will do so again in the end times.

### **Conclusion -**

In chapter 18 of the Revelation we have seen the judgment and destruction from God fall on the great city of Babylon. Many Bible teachers do think this is some other great modern city of today and not literally Babylon in modern Iraq. Rome is probably the most often chosen candidate. But the bases for this, that the Old Testament prophecies about Babylon's destruction have all been fulfilled is not true. The degree of destruction outlined in the Revelation itself has not befallen that ancient city yet. So those prophecies still remains to be fulfilled. John saw the merchants from all over the earth grieve as they watch it's destruction. They were so grieved because they had been enriched by the many luxuries and costly products they have brought in from the countries all over the world and had sold in Babylon's markets. The people of God are warned a last time to flee out of Babylon before this destruction from God overtakes them as well as the people of the city. These people of God must be. The Christian believers have already been martyred. Any small numbers still alive must be hiding in caves and in the countryside.