



FAITH PRINCETON SUNDAY SCHOOL

REVELATION 18:1-8 Fall of Babylon (part 1)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

REVELATION 18 Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

18 Fall of Babylon (part 1)

1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. 2 And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. 3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.”

4 I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; 5 for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

6 Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her. 7 To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as a queen and I am not a widow, and will never see mourning' 8 For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong.

Enduring Word Commentary: **Revelation 18:1-8 The Fall of Commercial Babylon (part 1)**

A. Announcing the fall of Babylon.

1. Introduction: is this the same Babylon as is described in chapter 17?

a. Good scholars see the issue differently. Some point to two manifestations of Babylon, one religious and one commercial or material. Others see the two as one, both being judged at the same time.

b. There are definite similarities between Babylon as described in [Revelation 17](#) and [Revelation 18](#). Both are under the rule of Antichrist, and have ruling queens; both are filled with blasphemy; both hate the saints, and shed their blood; both are associates with kings in fornication; and both are under judgment and destroyed.

c. However, there are also some significant differences:

Mystery Babylon ([Revelation 17](#))

- Symbol: Harlot woman.
- Identified with Rome (inland).
- Woman, whore, mother.
- Guilty of religious abominations.
- Destroyed by a political power that previous supported her.

Commercial Babylon ([Revelation 18](#))

- Symbol: Great city.
- Identified with a port city (coastal).
- Habitation, great city, marketplace.

- Guilty of greed and self-indulgence.
- Destroyed by sudden act of God.

d. In my view, it is best to see them as intertwined, yet somewhat distinct. Religious Babylon of [Revelation 17](#) is judged at the mid-point of the seven-year period of tribulation. Commercial Babylon is judged at the end of that period.

i. This breadth in prophecy shouldn't surprise us. Think of what the Old Testament says about the first coming of the Messiah:

- Micah said that Messiah would *come* out of Bethlehem ([Micah 5:2](#)).
- Hosea said that Messiah would come out of Egypt ([Hosea 11:1](#)).
- Malachi said that Messiah would *come* to the temple ([Malachi 3:1](#)).
- Zechariah said that Messiah would *come* to Zion ([Zechariah 9:9](#)).
- Isaiah said that Messiah would *come* to Galilee ([Isaiah 9:1-2](#)).

ii. Which of these is true? They are all true. So it isn't strange at all to say, "Babylon is falling" and to mean it in two senses (religious Babylon and commercial Babylon) at two different times (the middle of the Great Tribulation and the end of the Great Tribulation).

e. This passage is very much in the style of Old Testament prophecies of doom regarding wicked cities. Two examples of this are Babylon ([Isaiah 13-14](#), [Isaiah 21](#) and [Jeremiah 50-51](#)) and Tyre ([Ezekiel 26-28](#)).

i. "John has caught the spirit of the prophetic doom songs." (L. Morris)

2. Is Babylon of Revelation 18 a literal or symbolic city?

a. Some have thought it to be a future rebuilt Babylon on the Euphrates River in the Middle East. This is now a desolate desert in modern day Iraq.

i. Many years ago, Saddam Hussein was outspoken in his desire to resurrect the ruined city of Babylon in all of its glory. He obviously failed, but it is conceivable that a rebuilt Babylon could be a world economic center, especially with the wealth of Mideast oil. But so far, Hussein or any other leader has not made good on the dream to rebuild Babylon.

b. But most likely, commercial Babylon is symbolic, like religious Babylon. “When the Lord was here on earth He spoke of the great hatred that ‘the world’ had for Him and His own ([John 15:18,19](#)). What is this world but a combination of religion, government and commerce? In other words, Babylon in all its parts stands for that which Christ called ‘the world’ (Barnhouse)

i. “In portraying the destruction of a (symbolic) city, he describes God’s judgment on the great satanic system of evil that has corrupted the earth’s history.” (Johnson)

ii. “In chapter 18, the context seems to indicate that Babylon here is viewed in its political and economic character rather than its religious aspect.” (Walvoord)

3. (1-3) Announcement of the glorious angel.

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! 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.”

a. **Illuminated with his glory:** This angel **coming down from heaven** is so “fresh” from God’s presence that he glows. “So recently has he come from the Presence (of God) that in passing he flings a broad belt of light across the dark earth.” (Swete)

i. “It is a matter of no great moment, whether by this *angel* we understand Christ, or a created angel; the description agreeth to Christ, and may agree to a created angel.” (Poole)

ii. “The term ‘another’ (Gr., *allon*) makes it clear that this angel is the same in kind as the angel of [Revelation 17:1](#).” (Walvoord)

b. **Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen:** He announces that Babylon is **fallen, fallen** and the phrase is “repeated like a solemn dirge of the damned.” (Robertson)

c. **Become a dwelling place of demons:** A sad fate for a once-great city. This is “a prophetic picture of absolute desolation where the proud achievements of man become the demonic haunts of unclean and horrible creatures.” (Mounce)

d. **Abundance of her luxury:** Babylon’s sin was not only idolatry (referred to with the term **fornication**), but also pride, greed, and selfishly held wealth.

4. (4-5) A call to God's people to separate from Babylon.

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."

a. **Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins:** It is inconceivable that a child of God could be a part of religious Babylon (though elements may creep in). But commercial Babylon, with its materialistic lure, is a constant threat to be guarded against.

b. **Lest you receive of her plagues:** The warning is focused towards saints who are in the position Lot was in while he lived in the city of Sodom ([Genesis 19](#)). These are God's people in a place they shouldn't be, a place ripe for destruction.

c. **Come out of her:** The call to depart from Babylon and the worldliness that it represents is a theme repeated frequently in the Scriptures.

i. *Depart! Depart! Go out from there, touch no unclean thing; go out from her, be clean, you who bear the vessels of the Lord. ([Isaiah 52:11](#))*

ii. *Flee from the midst of Babylon, and everyone save his life! ([Jeremiah 50:8](#))*

iii. *My people, go out of the midst of her! And let everyone deliver himself from the fierce anger of the Lord. ([Jeremiah 51:45](#))*

iv. *Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? ([2 Corinthians 6:14](#))*

v. *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. ([Ephesians 5:11](#))*

d. **For her sins have reached to heaven:** The sins of commercial Babylon have piled up like a tower – the tower of Babel.

e. **God has remembered her iniquities:** This is the destiny of the materialistic world, but towards believers, God says, *I will remember their sins no more* ([Hebrews 8:12](#)).

5. (6-8) A call to those who will carry out Babylon's judgment.

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.' 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.

a. **Render to her just as she rendered to you:** The ancient Greek word for **render** (*apodidomi*) means literally "to pay a debt" or "to give back that which is due." God will give Babylon exactly what she deserves.

b. **Repay her double according to her works... mix for her double:** Double restitution was required in the Old Testament in cases of theft ([Exodus 22:4-9](#)). This perhaps is a commentary on how Babylon has made her wealth – through dishonest dealings.

c. **Repay her double according to her works:** This passage presents a three-fold sin. First, *self-indulgence* (**lived luxuriously**). Second, *pride* (**glorified herself... sits as a queen**). Third, *avoidance of suffering* (**am no**

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widow, and will not see sorrow). All these things are characteristic of worldliness and materialism.

d. Therefore her plagues will come in one day:

The destruction of commercial Babylon will come suddenly and with completeness (**utterly burned with fire**).

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by David Guzik –