

“COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE”

Revelation 18:1-8

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INTRODUCTION

This scene is announced by “another angel” who “comes down from heaven” in order to reveal the fact of the destruction of “Babylon the great” to John the apostle. The angel has “great authority” that obviously has its source in his master—God Himself. This angel has an especially glorious appearance—so much so that “the earth” itself “was illumined with his glory.” If the messengers of God have that much splendor and glory and authority, can we even begin to imagine how much authority and glory reside in God Himself? **Infinite glory, majesty, power, and authority!**

The glory of God stands in stark contrast with the chaos, ruin, devastation, and climactic judgment that is then taking place on the earth and that ruins the “earth-dwellers” and their leaders. Here in chapter 18 the special focus is on the ruin and fall of Babylon the Great, the ruin introduced in chapter 17 and now elaborated more fully in chapter 18.

However, there were believers in and followers of the Lamb in Babylon; many of them have kept themselves pure and separate from the spiritual and moral corruption of the wicked city with its merchandise, corrupt religious practices, and political intrigues; but, as is always the case, a significant number have likely compromised their faith and practice. The pressures of living and functioning in Babylon have likely taken their toll even on believers. However, if they are to be spared the ruin of the city, they must make their separation complete both in moral values, practices, and even in social contacts. In fact, prior to the final judgment on the city, they, like Lot and his family, must physically separate themselves from the city and find a place of retreat and safety.

In a similar way, the clarion call for God’s people to “come out of” Babylon goes forth through the Holy Spirit and by the Word of God even today:

“COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE. DON’T PARTICIPATE IN HER SINS, AND DON’T RECEIVE OF HER PLAGUES”!

I. THE PORTION OF BABYLON

A. Her Sin (3, 5, 7)

1. Passion—literally “wrath” of her immorality (3)

- Notice the connection of “wine” with her passion, for excessive wine and alcohol not only heat up the body, but stir the mind and emotions and exerts a negative influence on one’s behavior. One comes under the influence of alcohol and such leads to very negative consequences.
 - Notice the union of “immorality” with “wine” and “passion, anger.”
 - Once again, as often in Scripture, this immorality is literal, spiritual [unfaithfulness to God], political [dependence upon men and political leaders instead of God], and commercial [caught up in materialism and consumerism].
- a. With the nations—“all” of them were under her influence. Everyone becomes part of the system of ungodliness in the last days, except the remnant.
 - b. With the kings—political leaders have been caught in the political, religious, financial web.
 - c. With the merchants—Apostasy and political intrigue are associated with enormous financial resources; the Earth’s merchants are seduced along with everyone else, and they “have become rich.” Wealth has great seductive powers, and had led to many a compromise over the centuries. The Greek term has the idea of both sensuality and luxury.

2. Piling up (v. 5; “joined together”)

- a. Enormity
- b. Enumeration—“God has remembered”

- Here not for blessing, but for punishment
 - Their “misdeeds, injustices, wrongs” will not go unpunished.
 - cf. the “tower of Babel and how man’s sins have “piled up.”
3. Pride (v. 7)
 - She has *glorified herself*”; when one lives his life his own way that is exactly what he is doing!
 - She says in her heart, “I sit as queen and I am not a widow, and will never see mourning.”
 4. Arrogant luxury—lived for sensuality and pleasure [cf. related word used in I Tim. 5:11].
- B. Her Punishment
1. Proclamation (1-2)
 - a. The Agent—the glorious angel with great authority and a *strong* voice (v. 1)
 - b. The Action (2)
 - (1) Destruction—“Fallen, Fallen,” doubly stated for emphasis
 - (2) Demonic infestation—also called “unclean spirits” here
 - (3) Prison of every unclean and hated [having become detested] bird
 - Note that sin and rebellion **enslaves** and **makes wretched** and **detestable!**
 - Note the relationship between satanic activity and all ugliness & misery.
 - All this is evidence of God’s curse on sin and Satan; see similar passages such as Is. 13:19-22; 34:11-15; Jer. 50:39; 51:37.
 2. Payback (6-8)
 - a. Just Retribution: (6)
 - “Give or pay back to her as she has given, paid.”
 - “Doubly pay back to her double; pay back according to her deeds.”
 - “In the same cup she has mixed, mix twice as much for her.”
 - “As great as...so great,” to the same degree (v. 7).
 - b. Swift Retribution: “in one day” (v. 8).
 - c. Horrific retribution—torment, mourning (twice, vv. 7, 8) plagues, famine, burned with fire.
 - d. Powerful Retribution—the **Lord God** who judges Babylon **is strong** (8).
- II. THE PURITY OF THE SAINTS (v. 4) [another voice—God Himself on behalf of his own people]
- A. Non Participation: See Eph. 5:11; I Tim. 5:22; II Cor. 6:14-17
 1. “Come out of her”—you are “**My people**—*you don’t belong to this world system; you are not “earth dwellers!*
 2. Do not participate in, share, her sins.
 - B. No plagues—sharing in the sins will result in sharing the plagues. (v. 8).

CONCLUSION

How many of those who claim to be Christians have become just like the world they claim to be opposed to? If they become like the world, they will participate in the world’s judgments.

The call to genuine believers has always been: “Come out of her, my people!”

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