

Text: Rev 18:1-8

Title: "A description of the fall of Babylon" – Part Two

Time: 6/10/2018 am

Place: NBBC

Introduction: The story of Babylon is in some ways the story of the Bible. The first global uprising against the God of heaven was Nimrod's tower of Babel in Genesis 11. Here in Revelation 17 and 18, the last global uprising against the God of heaven will be this future kingdom of antichrist called *Babylon*.

In the middle of our Bibles, during the transition from Old Testament to New Testament, we have another Babylon – the one ruled by Nebuchadnezzar and his successors, whom God used to bring a temporary end to the nation of Israel and to usher in the time of the Gentiles.

Jeremiah was Judah's prophet in these days of God's judgment upon the nation of Israel. His prophecy ends with a hopeful expectation that the godless Babylon, whom God had allowed to crush His sinful people, would meet its final judgment as well someday at the hands of the Medo-Persian empire (Jer. 51:11, "Make bright the arrows; gather the shields: the Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for his devise is against Babylon, to destroy it; because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple.").

Nimrod's Babel fell; Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon fell; and this final Roman Empire ruled by antichrist will also fall. That fall is described for us in the first 8 verses of Revelation 18, and last week we saw that Babylon's fall is determined by heaven.

The assumption of self-determination is Babylon's great sin (v. 7). We are tempted by that same sin, but even the destiny of Nebuchadnezzar himself was determined by the God of heaven, not by him. The same is true for us.

This angel from heaven, with great authority, enlightening glory, and strong word, pictures the Lord Jesus Christ. Our destiny will be determined by Him. For this reason, Jesus has said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes unto the Father but by Me." Have you come to God the Father through Jesus the Son? Only He will determine our destiny.

This morning we will notice three other things from this description of future Babylon's fall.

I. Babylon's fall is determined by heaven (vv. 1-2a, 5, 8b).

II. Babylon's fall deals with an unseen enemy (v. 2b).

Illustration: This past week we finally dealt with an enemy in our kitchen that was largely unseen. We could see his effects—holes in the donut box with donuts missing, for example, and then there were the squirrel droppings, but we could only rarely see him. When we did see him, he was too fast for us to deal with.

Finally, Casey suggested a trap, which came in the mail last week, and we caught this creature Wednesday night and transported him Thursday morning some distance down Lyndeboro Rd. never to have to deal with him again.

Application: As I wrote this message Thursday morning and read this verse, I thought about that squirrel. Satan is man's cruel unseen enemy and destroyer. We see the effects

of his droppings everywhere in the world. He does not tear into donut boxes, but into hearts and lives and families and churches and nations, seeking whom he may devour. He can even look as attractive and as cute as that squirrel we caught Wednesday night if doing so helps him remain undetected and unseen. He is the roaring lion who can disguise himself as an angel of light.

Well, it is the great glory of the victory of Christ over this enemy that Babylon, which will be Satan's greatest rebellion, will be also a trap for him and his demons. It is like that squirrel that liked peanut butter too much. When Babylon falls, Satan and his demons shall fall too.

Why does John's vision tell us that? I think Jesus in His grace wants us to see our unseen enemy the way He sees him. He tells us in His word two things about this enemy:

1. He is real, powerful, manipulative, and destructive in relation to you and me, and we need to be warned against his influence. If you cannot see his destroying influence in your life this morning, to lead you away from Christ and God's love in Christ, this enemy has you exactly where he wants you.
2. He is a trapped squirrel in relation to Christ. His doom is as certain as the doom of Babylon is. The day will come when this caged creature is taken a long way down the road and put in a place where he is no longer able to deceive the nations.

Babylon's fall will deal with this unseen enemy. To avoid falling with him, we must recognize his influence on us and escape it by running to Christ for salvation from our sin.

III. Babylon's fall is a consequence of worldly desires and sinful pleasure (vv. 3, 7).

Illustration: A friend sent me a link to a news report on a Gallup pole that found that 43% of Americans now think that pornography is morally acceptable. We are a nation that elected a president who made a large part of his fortune in this industry.

Application: The Bible describes this final kingdom of anti-christ as a place of tremendous riches and sexual pleasures. What makes her the object of God's wrath is described as wine and fornication and riches and delicacies and luxuries. It is delicious living that Babylon offers those who are willing to rebel with her against the Lord. This morning 43% of Americans think they can drink from the wine of sexually immorality without moral consequence. This passage warns us that Babylon's fall is a consequence of worldly desires.

Our God is a merciful God. But our God is not Someone of whom we can make a fool. He is merciful, but not mockable. The Bible tells us, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7-8).

That is the teaching of this passage as well (vv. 6-8). The idea of rewarding double for sin comes from Exod. 22:4, 7, 9, where those who had stolen from their neighbor were to pay back double of what they had taken. It is not enough to just return what you have taken, there also needs to be a penalty for taking it. God's justice is perfectly equal and exactly meted out to sinners.

Illustration: What would we think of the judge who refused to sentence a murderer simply because he had a special love for murderers?

This is why Christ had to suffer on Calvary's cross for us. That suffering was required both by God's justice and by His desire to justify poor sinners. Jesus took the penalty that we deserve so that we can have His righteousness instead of our sinfulness freely by His grace. We simply trust Him for that. He received double for all our sins.

Man may try to deny the connection between his sin and a coming judgment, but Babylon's fall is a consequence of her worldly desires, and the sinner's fall under the judgment of God works the same way. God is not mocked.

IV. Babylon's fall is a danger to God's people (v. 4).

Illustration: We saw an answer to prayer come from the Supreme Court this past week, when the justices found 7-2 that the Colorado Civil Rights Commission had violated the right of Jack Phillips to the free exercise of his religion with their hostility toward his religious convictions that come from the Scripture. That was an important victory for the survival of religious freedom in our nation, and we need to thank the Lord for that answered prayer.

Application: Rev. 18:24 tells us that this future global kingdom of antichrist shall have the blood of prophets and saints on her hands. There is no such thing as religious freedom in this future kingdom of antichrist. All must first worship the harlot, and then they must worship the antichrist himself.

But I want us to notice that when the Lord Jesus warns His people that Babylon is a danger to them, He does not say

“Watch out for their executioners.” No, the warning is “watch out for her sins.” As the people of Jesus, we must come out of Babylon, with her life of self-determination, self-glorification, worldly desires, and the influence of the unseen enemy, or we too can fall to the kind of plagues that will ultimately topple her.

Verse 8 tells us what those things are: death, mourning, and famine. Professing believers who partake of the sins of Babylon rather than come out of her in love for Christ can expect to know these plagues just like Babylon will someday.

Why choose death, when Christ offers us abundant new life? Why choose mourning, when Christ offers us a life of joy and contentment? Why choose famine, when Jesus sends us into a harvest rich with His blessings and fruitfulness in His work? Can we hear Jesus say, “Come out of her My people!”?

Conclusion: Babylon will fall, because God will remember her iniquities (v. 5). That will be the day of judgment.

Today is a day of grace, and the opportunity to have our iniquities forgotten is offered freely to any sinner who will come to Christ for salvation from sin.

Jeremiah 31:34, “And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Will we fall with the fall of Babylon; or will we be blessed with the blessing of God’s people? Will your iniquities be

remembered, or will they be remembered no more because Christ is your Savior?

“A man came—I think it was actually in Philadelphia—on one occasion to the great George Whitefield and asked if he might print his sermons. Whitefield gave this reply; he said, ‘Well, I have no inherent objection, if you like, but you will never be able to put on the printed page the lightning and the thunder.’ That is the distinction—the sermon, and the ‘lightning and the thunder.’ To Whitefield this was of very great importance, and it should be of very great importance to all preachers, as I hope to show. You can put the sermon into print, but not the lightning and the thunder. That comes into the act of preaching and cannot be conveyed by cold print. Indeed it almost baffles the descriptive powers of the best reporters.”

—David Martin Lloyd-Jones,

*Preachers and Preaching*