

39. The Rejoicing at the Fall of Commercial Babylon

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why those whose hearts are controlled by evil have no concern for their own spiritual needs or for the spiritual needs of others. This attitude results in rebellion against God. In this topic, we will see that the saints will rejoice because the judgment of God against this rebellion will be just.

We see the rejoicing that will be in heaven in Revelation 18:20, where we read: “Rejoice over her, O heaven, and *you* holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!” We see that there will be rejoicing in heaven over the destruction of Babylon. All in heaven will realize that God has waited a long time to judge and that His judgment is just. Romans 12:19 says, “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord.” God will judge all who reject the free gift of eternal life that Christ paid for with His blood, and for which the Father showed He was satisfied by raising Christ from the dead. However, we see that God has been very patient and longsuffering, as He has waited a long time to carry out that judgment.

God has demonstrated that patience many times throughout history, but He did finally bring judgment. In the time of Noah, Noah preached for one hundred years while he built the ark. 2 Peter 2:5 says, “And did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of eight people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly.” Then, in the time of Abraham, Genesis 15:16 says, “But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet complete.” It was more than six hundred years later when God brought Israel into the land of Canaan, and they carried out this judgment. The only cities He judged earlier were the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. 2 Peter 2:6 says, “And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly.” In both cases, we see that God waited a long time.

However, God has waited much longer to judge the rebellion and unbelief of the world. That judgment is still future and will be carried out after Christ takes the church to heaven. Here, we see the rejoicing that will happen in heaven as part of that judgment is carried out during the tribulation. This rejoicing will be due to the fact that God is avenging the treatment of the holy apostles and prophets. Throughout the Old Testament, we see that the prophets were persecuted by those in rebellion against God. Hebrews 11:36-37 describes some of that persecution. Those verses say, “Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.” Similar things happened to the apostles in the New Testament. That is the reason there will be rejoicing in heaven when God avenges that persecution.

We see that Babylon will be completely destroyed so that nothing remains. Revelation 18:21-22 says, “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. 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.” A millstone was a large stone wheel. Here, we see that God compares the judgment of Babylon to the sea being struck with a huge stone similar to a millstone. This could be similar to a large meteor falling from the sky. This will cause the immediate and complete destruction of Babylon.

This destruction will be so complete that the city, the people, and everything in the city will be so completely destroyed that nothing will be found. In Genesis 19:24, we read, “Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens.” In this verse, we see the complete destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Many people believe that the remains of these cities are at the bottom of the Dead Sea, but the remains of those cities have not been located. In the same way, when Babylon is destroyed by the Lord, no one will be able to find anything that remains. There will be nothing remaining to be found.

We see that the various groups of people who will live in Babylon will not be found. First, we see that those who provide music will not be found. There are four groups of musicians mentioned in Babylon who will be completely destroyed. The harpists are people who play the harp and sing with the accompaniment of the harp. In Revelation 14:2-3, we see that harpists can develop beautiful music. Those verses say, “And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.” However, no one will ever play a harp again in Babylon after this destruction. Musicians include those who play other kinds of musical instruments, like flutists or trumpeters.

Second, we see that no workers who worked in Babylon will be found. This will include craftsmen of any craft (trade). The word translated “craftsmen” means *those who work at any trade*. Twice, this word is used in Acts 19 to talk about those who were silversmiths. Acts 19:24-25 says, “For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: ‘Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade.’” Revelation shows that all who work in any trade or industry in Babylon will be destroyed. Millstones were used to grind grain for food. We see that no more food will be prepared in Babylon because none of the workers in that business will be found. The judgment of all people in Babylon will be complete.

Revelation 18:23-24 says, “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. And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.” Here, we go on to read that there are other things that will never again happen in Babylon. These verses show that the complete destruction of Babylon will mean that a lamp will never shine again in the city. That is the result of the fact that there will be no city left in which the light can shine. Everything in the city will be destroyed.

Weddings are a time of happiness. However, no bridegroom or bride will ever be heard in the city of Babylon again. In fact, none of the things that bring happiness will happen again in Babylon, because it will no longer exist. We also see another reason why the world will mourn because of the destruction of Babylon. We read that the merchants of Babylon will be the great men of the earth. In Mark 6:21, the word translated “great men” in Revelation is translated “nobles”. That verse says, “Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief *men* of Galilee.” Then, Revelation 6:15 says, “And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains.” From these other two verses, we see that these are the men who have great influence. Here, in this verse, we see that these merchants are men who have great influence throughout the earth.

However, their great influence throughout the earth will be a result of their sorcery. The word translated “sorcery” is from the Greek word “*pharmakeia*” and means *witchcraft or magical arts*. This word is often found in connection with idolatry which many times also included some form of drug. This word is used two other times in the New Testament. Galatians 5:20 includes it in a list of the works of the flesh and that verse says, “Idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies.” Then, Revelation 9:21 adds, “And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.” Together, this word, its uses, and its meaning show that the real influence of Babylon will be through idolatry, the use of drugs, and witchcraft. These things are very common in our world today and will continue to grow in their influence.

One of the things religious and commercial Babylon has done to spread her evil influence is killing and destroying those who stand for righteousness. This evil influence has been the cause of the death of many of the prophets and saints who have been killed throughout the earth. Revelation 12:11 says, “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.” Here, we see that many saints have given their lives as they shared the message of the Gospel. This will result in the judgment of Satan and his influence throughout the world. There will be great rejoicing in heaven because Satan and his followers, with their evil influence, have been defeated. In the next topic, we will see that this rejoicing continues because of the fact that Christ can now come to rule on the earth for a thousand years. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that God is righteous in His judgments, because Satan and all of his followers have chosen to live in total rebellion against God and have made many efforts to destroy the righteous. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.