

An Indictment of Babylon's Economic System

Revelation 18



¹ After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. ² And he called out with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast. ³ For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living." ⁴ Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues; ⁵ for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. ⁶ Pay her back as she herself has paid back others, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed. ⁷ As she glorified herself and lived in luxury, so give her a like measure of torment and mourning, since in her heart she says, 'I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.' ⁸ For this reason her plagues will come in a single day, death and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her." ⁹ And the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning. ¹⁰ They will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say, "Alas! Alas! You great city, you mighty city, Babylon! For in a single hour your judgment has come." ¹¹ And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore, ¹² cargo of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth, all kinds of scented wood, all kinds of articles of ivory, all kinds of articles of costly wood, bronze, iron and marble, ¹³ cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and slaves, that is, human souls. ¹⁴ "The fruit for which your soul longed has gone from you, and all your delicacies and your splendors are lost to you, never to be found again!" ¹⁵ The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud, ¹⁶ "Alas, alas, for the great city that was clothed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, with jewels, and with pearls!" ¹⁷ For in a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste." And all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off ¹⁸ and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning, "What city was like the great city?" ¹⁹ And they threw dust on their heads as they wept and mourned, crying out, "Alas, alas, for the great city where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth! For in a single hour she has been laid waste. ²⁰ Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her!" ²¹ Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence, and will be found no more; ²² and the sound of harpists and musicians, of flute players and trumpeters, will be heard in you no more, and a craftsman of any craft will be found in you no more, and the sound of the mill will be heard in you no more, ²³ and the light of a lamp will shine in you no more, and the voice of bridegroom and bride will be heard in you no more, for your merchants were the great ones of the earth, and all nations were deceived by your sorcery. ²⁴ And it was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on earth."



The Tale of Two Women and Two Cities

Chapters 14, 16, 17, 18

Chapters 19, 21, 22

Great Prostitute

Bride of Christ

Clothed purple and scarlet

Clothed fine linen, bright and pure

City of man

City of God

Babylon

New Jerusalem

Earth Dwellers

Elect of God

Sinful & Wicked

Holy & Righteous

Kings of the Earth

King of Kings, Lord of Lords

Destroyed from heaven

Coming down from heaven

Built by Man

Built by God

Revelation 18:1



- After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory.

Revelation 18:2



- And he called out with a mighty voice, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!”

Babylon is a moniker. It is NOT one particular city that will be destroyed when Christ returns.

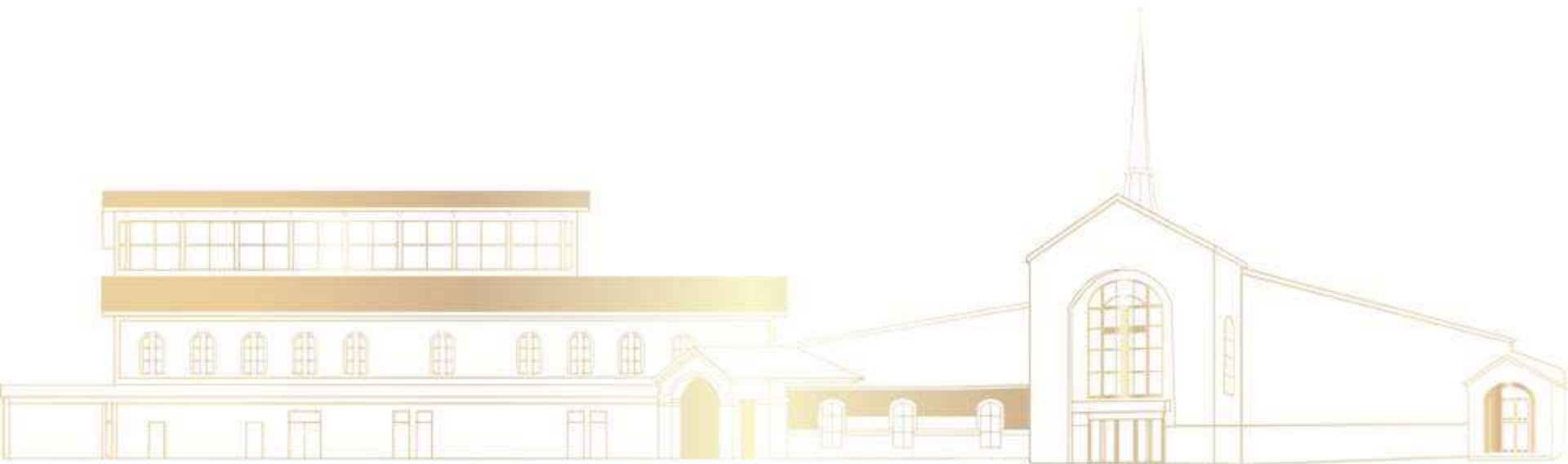
As a city, Babylon symbolizes humanity's ambition to dethrone God and make the earth its own.

ESV Study Bible



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She & Her



The city is described symbolically as a woman because:

- 1. She is/was not faithful to her husband God.**
- 2. She, the city, gives birth to the most humanistic, rebellious, idolatrous and sinful ideas humanity can produce.**
- 3. Great cities are the place where kings rule from and commit great sin—idolatry and fornication beyond measure.**



Revelation 18:2



- She has become a dwelling place for demons,

What does it say about a city when it is a dwelling place for demonic activity?

Revelation 18:2



- a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast.

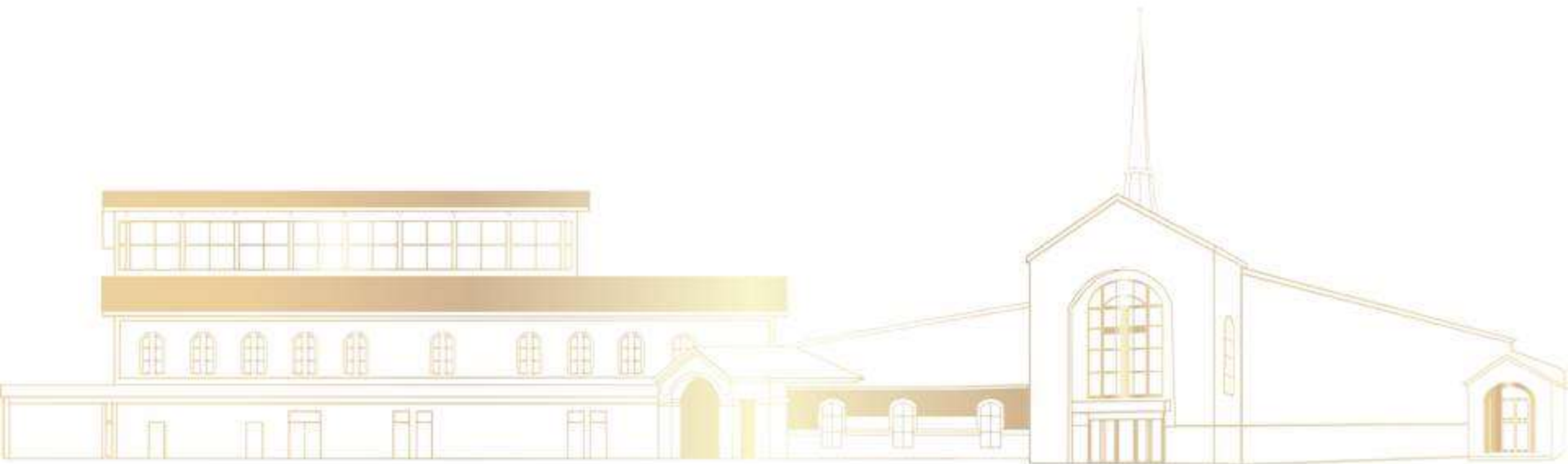
Revelation 18:3



- For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living.”

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Compare 18:3 to 14:8



Recursive Parallelism

The Woman is the great city Babylon

Rev
14:8

Another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is **Babylon the great**, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.”

**Chapter 14:8 and Chapter 18:2
have the identical language
about Babylon.**

Recursive Parallelism

**John describes something he sees and
then circles back to tell us something
more about the same thing from another
perspective or w/ more details.**



Recursive Parallelism

The Destruction of Babylon

Rev
14:8

Another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is **Babylon the great, she** who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.”

Rev
16:19

The **great city** was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered **Babylon the great,**

Rev
17:18

And the **woman** that you saw is **the great city** that has dominion over the kings of the earth.”

Rev
18:10

They will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say, “Alas! Alas! **You great city, you mighty city, Babylon!** For in a single hour your judgment....

Recursive parallelism is important because it tells me whether I am supposed to be viewing the judgments described in a linear timeline sense.

Are chapter 4-22 describing a linear timeline such that the seals take place before trumpets, and the trumpets take place before the bowls?

This will become very important in ch. 20.



Revelation 18:4



- Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people,

This is
important

If you every hear a teacher seem to create a distinction between the church and the people in Revelation who are saved—reject that teaching as unbiblical.

The entire book is a letter written to 7 churches.

And the individuals in the book are either redeemed saints of God whose names are written in the book of life.

Or they are earth dwellers.



to the churches—for the churches

Rev
1:4

John **to the seven churches** that are in Asia:
Grace to you and peace from him who is
and who was and who is to come, and from
the seven spirits who are before his throne,

Rev
22:16

“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to
you about these things **for the churches**. I
am the root and the descendant of David,
the bright morning star.”

**Any teacher that suggests the church is not present on the earth for the events described in this book is simply ignoring the truth that this Revelation from the beginning to the end was given to the church for the church.*

The people of God in Revelation are called saints from chapter 5 all the way through chapter 20.

Tribulation saints is a misnomer.

All saints of God are tribulation saints according to Acts 14:22.

There are 61 or 62 references to saints in the NT and nothing indicates a distinction one from another.

They are all described as holy.



The 144,000 are NOT a distinct group of people.

They are a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages (Rev 7).

They are sealed with the Holy Spirit (Rev 14).

They are redeemed with the blood of the lamb; they follow the Lamb (Rev 14).



**At this point, I want
you to see just how
similar these words are
to**

2 Corinthians 6:17-18



Revelation 18:4



- Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, **“Come out of her, my people,**

2 Corinthians 6:17

- Wherefore **come out**
from among them,
and be ye separate, saith the Lord,
and touch not the unclean *thing*;
and I will receive you,



2 Corinthians 6:18

- And will be a Father unto you, and
**ye shall be my sons
and daughters,** saith the
Lord Almighty.



**How similar is
“my people”
to
“my sons and
daughters”**



Compare These Two Verses

Revelation 18:4

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out** of her, **my people**, that ye **be not partakers of her sins**, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

2 Corinthians 6:17–18

Wherefore **come out** from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and **touch not the unclean thing**; and I will receive you, ¹⁸ And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be **my sons and daughters**, saith the Lord Almighty.

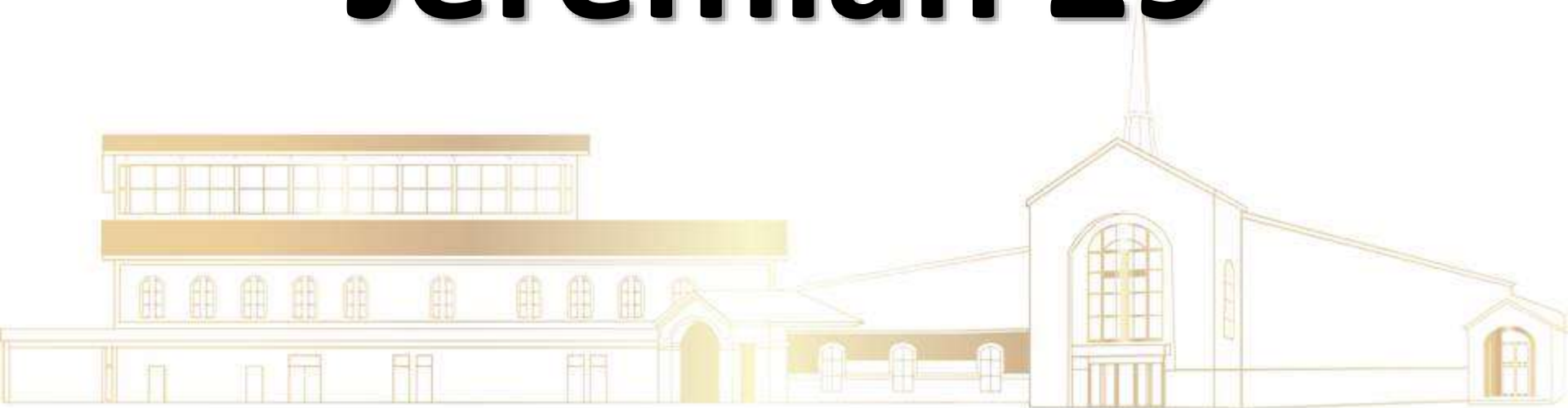
Revelation 18:4



- lest you take part in her sins,
- lest you share in her plagues;

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Compare these instructions to Jeremiah 29



4 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles **whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. ⁶ Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. ⁷ But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.**



Jeremiah 29:28

For he has sent to us in
Babylon, saying, **“Your exile will be
long; build houses and live in them,
and plant gardens and eat their
produce.” ’ ”**



Do you see the tension?

**The follower of Christ understands
he or she has been sovereignly sent
to Babylon by God; YET the
follower of Christ must 'come out
of her.'**

How do we do that?



How do we live in a sinful society and not be influenced by her sinful ways?

How do we attended a secular college and NOT adopts a secular worldview?

How do we work with sinners all day long and not sin in the same way?

Can I share a personal story?



Revelation 18:5



- for her sins are heaped high as heaven,

**What kind of
language is this?**



Revelation 18:5

- and God has remembered her iniquities.

Did God forget?

Revelation 18:6



- Pay her back as she herself has paid back others, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed.

Revelation 18:7



- **As she glorified herself**

**Whose glory
are you
living for?**



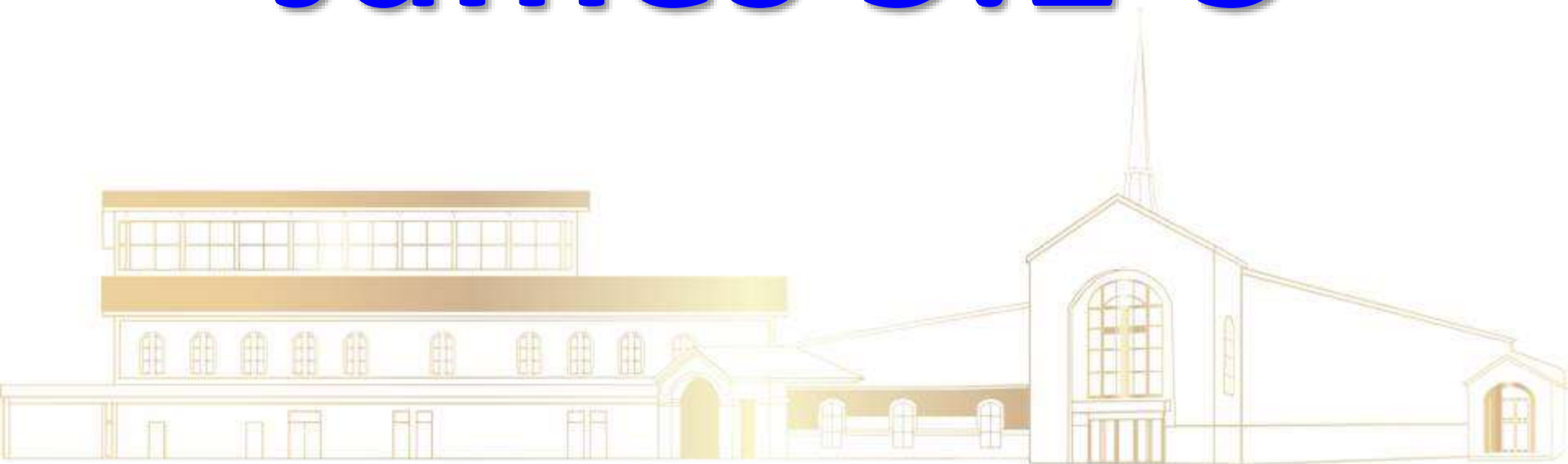
Revelation 18:7



- As she glorified herself and lived in luxury,

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Let me show you
James 5:1-5



¹ Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. ² Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days. ⁴ Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. ⁵ You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.



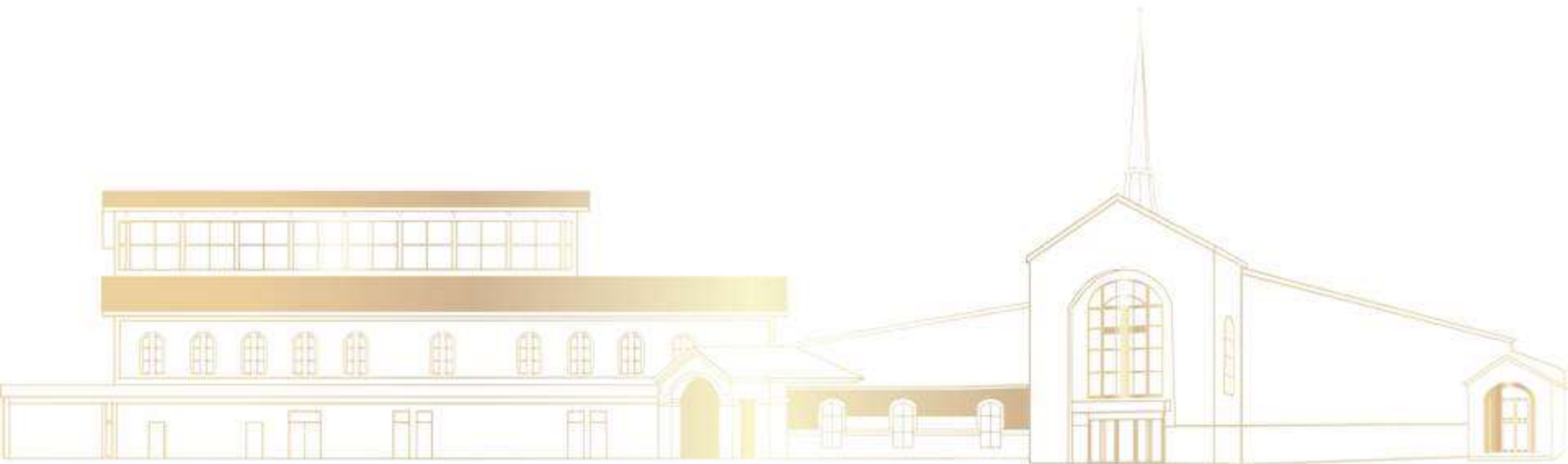
Revelation 18:7



- so give her a like measure of torment and mourning, since in her heart she says, 'I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.'

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Turn to Luke 12



16 And he told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man produced plentifully, **17** and he thought to himself, ‘**What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?**’ **18** And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. **19** And I will say to my soul, “**Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.**” ’ **20** But God said to him, ‘**Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?**’ **21** So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”



Revelation 18:8



- For this reason her plagues will come in a single day, death and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her.”

Revelation 18:9



- And the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning.

Revelation 18:10



- They will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say, “Alas! Alas! You great city, you mighty city, Babylon! For in a single hour your judgment has come.”



Revelation 18:11

- And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her,

Look why they are mourning

- since no one buys their cargo anymore,

**Look @ what
is being
described in v.
12 & 13**



Revelation 18:12



- cargo of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth, all kinds of scented wood, all kinds of articles of ivory, all kinds of articles of costly wood, bronze, iron and marble,

Revelation 18:13



- cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and slaves, that is, human souls.

**Notice the phrase ‘and
slaves, that is, human
souls.’**

What an indictment!



Could this same language be applied to aborted babies?

Babies who are dismissed as unwanted inconveniences to pursue careers of power and wealth.

Could the text have said, 'and aborted babies, that is, human souls' ?



Revelation 18:14



- “The fruit for which your soul longed has gone from you, and all your delicacies and your splendors are lost to you, never to be found again!”

More Figurative Language

What do you long for?

Followers of Christ long for the return of their king.

Abraham looked for a city whose maker and builder was God—namely the New Jerusalem.



Revelation 18:15



- The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud,

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**Those in Christ have
NOTHING to fear—only
earth dwellers have
something to fear.**



Revelation 18:16



- **“Alas, alas,** for the great city that was clothed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, with jewels, and with pearls!

An expression of regret

Revelation 18:17



- **For in a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste.”**

Think about what this sentence is saying.

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**The language in this
chapter reminds us of
Luke 16:19**



19 “There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day.



20 And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, 21 who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. 24 And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’ 25 But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.

Luke 18:24

- Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, **“How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!”**



Revelation 18:17b-18



- And all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning,

“What city was like the great city?”

Revelation 18:19



- And they threw dust on their heads as they wept and mourned, crying out, “Alas, alas, for the great city where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth! For in a single hour she has been laid waste.

This passage cautions us to keep our distance.

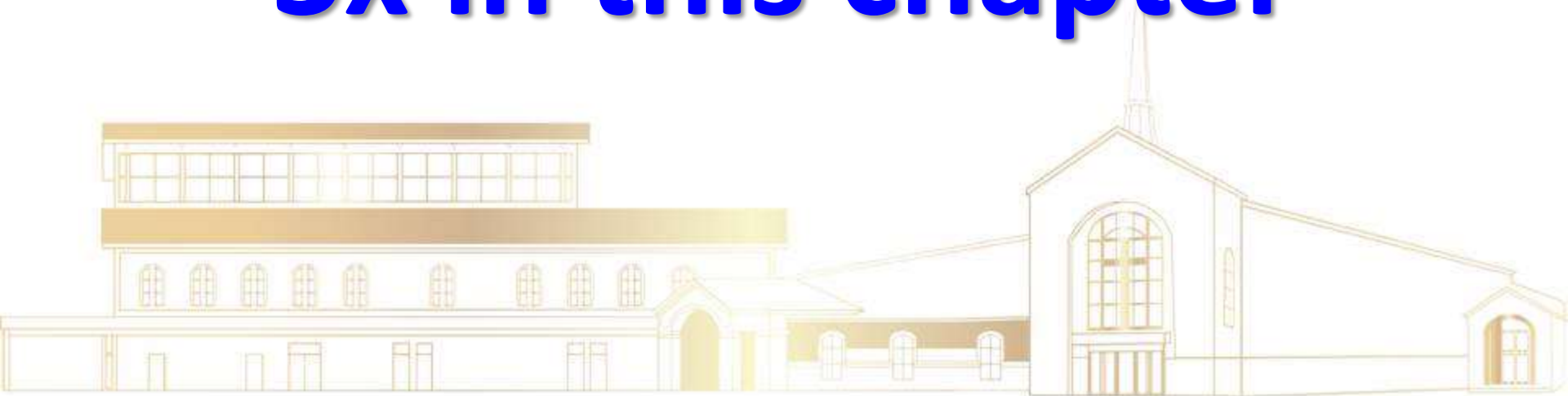
We are to guard our hearts from becoming too attached to the earth.

We are reminded it will all be destroyed.



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‘single hour’
mentioned
3x in this chapter



Revelation 18:20



- Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her!”

**The merchants/sailors understand
that God is now judging Babylon
for their sin.**



Revelation 18:21

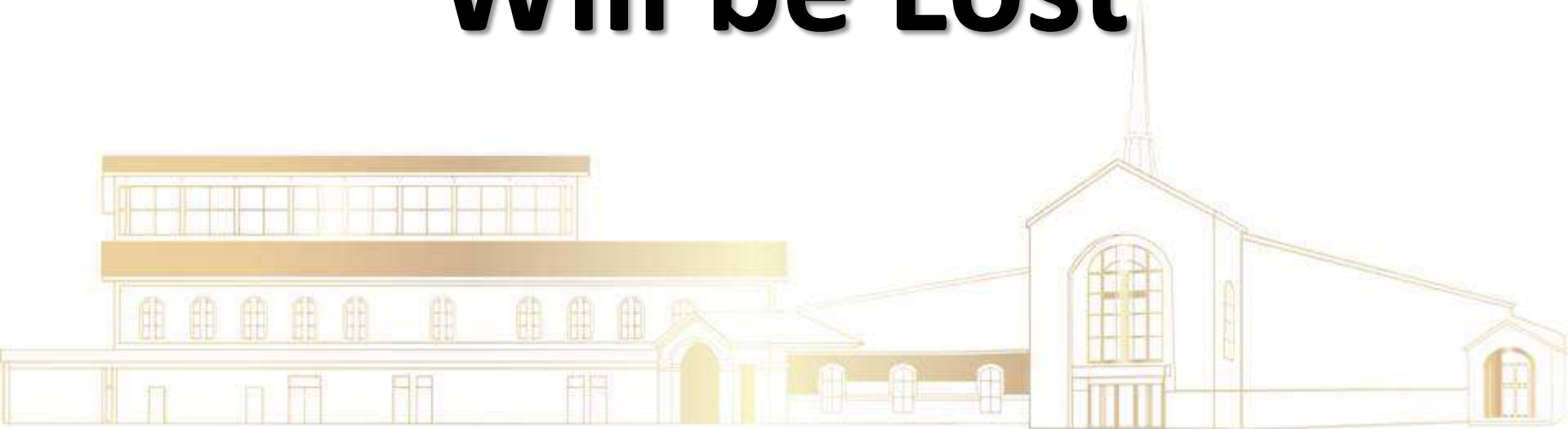


- Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, “So will Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence, and will be found no more;

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V. 22-23

**Lists Everything that
Will be Lost**



Revelation 18:22



- and the sound of harpists and musicians, of flute players and trumpeters, will be heard in you no more, and a craftsman of any craft will be found in you no more, and the sound of the mill will be heard in you no more,

Revelation 18:23



- and the light of a lamp will shine in you no more, and the voice of bridegroom and bride will be heard in you no more, for your merchants were the great ones of the earth, and all nations were deceived by your sorcery.

Revelation 18:24



- **And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on earth.”**

