

Session 13 The Forerunner Message in Revelation 17-18

I. THE RISE AND FALL OF BABYLON (REV. 17:1-19:10)

- A. The fourth angelic explanation in the book of Revelation (17:1-19:10) highlights the rise and fall of Babylon in two expressions—the **great harlot religion** (Rev. 17) and the **great economic city** (Rev. 18), or some suggest “**ecclesiastical Babylon**” (Rev. 17) and “**economic Babylon**” (Rev. 18). John concludes by describing the response of those in heaven to the fall of Babylon (19:1-10).
- B. **Outline of Revelation 17** (the fourth angelic explanation/parenthetical section)
- 17:1-6 The great harlot religion and her worldwide influence
17:7-11 The mystery of the Antichrist and his 7 heads
17:12-14 The mystery of the Antichrist’s 10 horns
17:15-18 The mystery of the harlot’s influence and destruction
- C. **Outline of Rev. 18:1-24** (fourth angelic explanation/parenthetical section continued)
- 18:1-3 The fall of the great city of Babylon
18:4-5 The divine call to come out of Babylon
18:6-8 The divine indictment against Babylon
18:9-10 The lament of the kings of the earth
18:11-19 The lament of the merchants of the earth
18:20 The righteous rejoice at the fall of Babylon
18:21-24 A prophetic act to symbolize the fall of Babylon
- D. **Outline of Revelation 19** (the fourth angelic explanation/parenthetical section continued)
- 19:1-4 Heavenly multitudes rejoice over Babylon’s judgment
19:5-10 The Marriage of the Lamb
- E. I agree with a popular view that sees Revelation 17-18 describing the fall of Babylon in two stages.
1. The first phase of the fall of Babylon relates to worldwide religious network of toleration called “the great harlot” (17:1, 5). This fall occurs at the beginning of the Tribulation when a coalition of 10 kings burn (17:16) and replace the harlot religion with Antichrist worship.
 2. The second phase of the fall of Babylon relates to a worldwide economic network. This fall occurs at the end of the Tribulation when God directly destroys the great city (18:8).
- F. The harlot religion will include apostate Christendom, Judaism, Islam, and many world religions. An apostate **ecclesiastical** system will not recognize any *one* system of doctrine as supreme but will harmonize them all in seeking to ensnare the people from each different religious heritage. Syncretism seeks to harmonize all conflicting doctrines and appears tolerant and open-minded.
- G. This angelic explanation explains why the severity of the 7 bowls of wrath are necessary—because Babylon’s seduction will infiltrate all levels of society. The Lord will destroy all infrastructures of society that have been influenced by the seductions of Babylon.

- H. In seeking to properly interpret the end-time function and judgment of Babylon, we must answer a number of questions. First, is the harlot a religious/spiritual reality or merely an economic system? Second, are there one or two judgments on Babylon being described in Revelation 17-18? Third, is the global network of the harlot “based” in Jerusalem, Babylon, Rome, or another city?
1. I do not see this as a formal religion institutionalized with a bishop or leader over every city. Rather, I see it as a *religious ideology* that gives people confidence to cast off their moral restraints and doctrines about being accountable to God, etc.
 2. When the Lord describes a city in terms of harlotry or adultery (17:5), it clearly asserts that they have embraced idolatry in flagrant disloyalty to the God of Israel.
 3. When the Scriptures declare that a person’s actions were an abomination and blasphemous (17:3-4), it clearly asserts that they have embraced idolatry in rebellion to the God of Israel.
 4. The harlot will be drunk with the blood of the saints (17:6), clearly showing it to be more than an economic system. The harlot will kill those who expose her deception, wickedness, and blasphemy against God. They will be protecting their religious or spiritual ideology.
 5. David prophesied that the kings of earth would work together to remove the influence of God’s word from every sphere of society (Ps. 2:2-3), viewing God’s Word in a negative light, as if it were “bonds” that enslave them and “cords” that bind them to His morality and ways.
*²The kings of the earth...and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD...saying,
³“Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us.” (Ps. 2:2-3)*

II. FROM JERUSALEM TO BABYLON (ZECH. 5)

- A. In my view, the harlot religion is possibly based in Jerusalem before it is destroyed and replaced by Antichrist worship in context to the abomination of desolation (13:8; Mt. 24:15). The 10 kings under the Antichrist will burn the harlot (17:16). This may imply burning the facilities and infrastructure that host the harlot’s religious network in Jerusalem and across the nations.
¹⁶And the ten horns [the 10 kings]...will hate the harlot...eat her flesh and burn her with fire. (Rev. 17:16)
- B. Revelation 17 depicts a mysterious intersection between mystery Babylon and apostate Jerusalem. The harlot includes apostate Jerusalem, yet is by no means limited to one city. The harlot is not synonymous with Jerusalem but represents something more expansive in power (17:15). In the Tribulation, Jerusalem will spiritually be called Sodom and Egypt before the Lord transforms it.
⁸And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city [Jerusalem] which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. (Rev. 11:8)
1. God charged Jerusalem with adultery (Isa. 1:21; Jer. 2:20; 13:27; Ezek. 16:17; Hos. 2:5).
²¹How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice... (Isa. 1:21)
 2. Israel’s past adultery included idolatry with orgies and human sacrifice (Jer. 13:27).
²⁷“I have seen your adulteries and your lustful neighings, the lewdness of your harlotry, your abominations on the hills in the fields. Woe to you, O Jerusalem!” (Jer. 13:27)

3. Jerusalem is compared to Sodom (Deut. 32:32; Isa. 1:10; 3:9; Jer. 23:14; Ezek. 16:46-48).
¹⁴I have seen a horrible thing in the prophets of Jerusalem: they commit adultery and walk in lies...All of them are like Sodom to Me, and her inhabitants like Gomorrah. (Jer. 23:14)
¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom...you people of Gomorrah. (Isa. 1:10)
... and they declare their sin as Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to their soul! (Isa. 3:9)
⁴⁶“Your younger sister, who dwells to the south of you, is Sodom...⁴⁸As I live,” says the Lord GOD, “neither your sister Sodom nor her daughters have done as you... (Ezek. 16:46-48)
³²...their [Israel’s] vine is of the vine of Sodom and of the fields of Gomorrah. (Deut. 32:32)
- C. The harlot’s network could be seen as based in Jerusalem even with strong opposition of the rabbinic community who will be focused on the restoration of their temple.
1. The harlot could be based in Jerusalem without the majority of the people living in the city actually engaging in it. There are a number of cities once known as “the world capital” of a specific skill, product, or ideology without the majority of the people in that city being engaged in their associated activities.
 - a. Detroit was once considered by many as the automobile capital of the world, but the majority of the people living there at that time were not involved in the auto industry.
 - b. Silicon Valley (San Francisco Bay area) is considered by some to be the technology capital of the world, but the majority of the people living in the cities in the Bay area are not involved in the technology industry.
 - c. San Francisco is considered by some to be the world “capital” for the gay movement, yet is reported that out of nearly 5 million people living in the San Francisco metro area only about 300,000 or about 7% identify as gay.
- D. Zechariah 5 is foundational to understanding the two main cities involved in Revelation 17-18—Jerusalem as the base for the great harlot (Rev. 17) and Babylon as the economic center (Rev. 18).
- E. There are 2 visions in Zechariah 5—the first deals with God removing *individual sins and sinners* from Jerusalem (Zech. 5:1-4); the next deals with Him removing the *systems of sin* from Jerusalem (Zech. 5:5-11). Jerusalem is the focus in all 8 visions that Zechariah had in one night (Zech. 1-6), his four messages (Zech. 7-8), and two oracles (Zech. 9-14). He does not specifically mention Jerusalem in Zechariah 5, but God’s zeal for it is expressed throughout the book (Zech. 1:14; 8:2).
- F. Zechariah saw part of God’s end-time plan to cleanse Jerusalem from wickedness (Zech. 5:5-11). He saw a wicked woman trapped in a basket that was moved from Jerusalem to Babylon. This wicked woman will be located in Jerusalem before “the base” is set up in the land of Shinar (Babylon’s ancient name). The woman in the basket speaks of the harlot in Revelation 17:1-6.
⁶So I asked, “What is it?” And he said, “It is a basket that is going forth.” He also said, “This is their resemblance [appearance; NAS] throughout the earth: ⁷Here is a lead disc lifted up, and

this is a woman sitting inside the basket.”⁸Then he said, “This is Wickedness!” And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover over its mouth (Zech. 5:5-8)

1. ***Basket:*** an English translation of *ephah* (5:6; see the KJV, NAS, and Young’s translation). An ephah was both a commercial *measurement* (about 6 gallons) and a *container* (basket).
2. The woman sitting in the basket (5:7) in Jerusalem is the embodiment of wickedness (5:8). She is the personification of an evil system of commerce. The heavy lead cover was lifted to reveal the wicked woman trapped inside (5:7a). She was trapped in the basket, restrained from gaining global dominance until God’s timing.
3. Many translate “their resemblance” as “what iniquity or sin will look” across the earth, because all nations will be affected by the system of evil represented by the woman.

⁶...he said, this is their iniquity [resemblance] in all the earth. (Septuagint of Zech. 5:6b)

- G. This woman in Jerusalem was moved to the land of Shinar or Babylon or Iraq (5:11).

...⁹here were two women, coming with the wind in their wings...they lifted up the basket...

¹⁰I said..., “Where are they carrying the basket?” ¹¹And he said to me, “To build a house for it in the land of Shinar; when it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base.” (Zech. 5:9-11)

1. ***Thrust her down:*** The woman tried to escape, not wanting to be restrained (5:8b). The heavy lead covering on the top of the basket prevented her from escaping.
2. ***The land of Shinar:*** This is the ancient name for Babylon, where the tower of Babel was built (Gen. 10:10; 11:2). It is in present-day Iraq.
3. ***To build a house for it:*** This house speaks of “the base” for this global economic system.
4. ***When it is ready:*** This evil economic system will have a base in the city of Babylon. This base will not be ready until the 10 kings give their power to the Antichrist and burn the harlot (17:17).

¹⁶The ten horns [the 10 kings]...on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate ...and burn her with fire. ¹⁷For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast... (Rev. 17:16-17)

III. TWO STAGES IN SATAN’S END-TIME PLAN TO BE WORSHIPED

- A. I see two stages in Satan’s end-time plan to be worshipped by all nations. Satan knows that it is a step too large for a compromising Christian, Muslim, Hindu, etc. suddenly to become a devoted Satan worshipper. Thus, he will first call all to join one world religion of tolerance that will declare that all paths lead to God and salvation. As multitudes from various religious backgrounds are seduced into joining the harlot Babylon religion, it will weaken and defile their conscience concerning their religious heritage. Then Satan will demand that they worship him (13:4).

⁴They worshipped [Satan]...⁸All...on the earth will worship him [the Antichrist]... (Rev. 13:4, 8)

- B. People will break away from their religious heritage as they renounce their former beliefs. Once they leave their religious ideals, whether Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, or Buddhism, there will be no absolutes to keep them from worshipping Satan who appears as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).

- C. The *voluntary* harlot Babylon religion will be replaced by a *mandatory* Antichrist religion.
 - 1. First, people voluntarily join the harlot Babylon world religion of tolerance (17:1-6).
 - 2. Second, they will be forced to be Satan worshippers in the Antichrist religion (13:4, 15).
- D. The emergence of the harlot religion will lead to a falling away in the Church. The two signs that Paul gave to indicate the time of Jesus' coming are a falling away from the faith combined with the revealing of the Antichrist on the world stage (2 Thes. 2:3). There will be an end-time falling away (Mt. 24:9-13; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-5; 2 Pet. 2:1-3).

³***Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day [Jesus' second coming] will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin [Antichrist] is revealed... (2 Thes. 2:3)***

IV. THE GREAT HARLOT RELIGION AND HER WORLDWIDE INFLUENCE (REV. 17:1-6)

- A. Revelation 17 is about the seductive power, cruel persecution, and inevitable destruction of a global harlot religious network that operates in the years leading up to the Tribulation.

¹...***"I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, ²with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication."***³...***I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast [the Antichrist]...***

⁴***The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold...having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication...¹⁵He said, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits are...peoples, multitudes, nations..." (Rev. 17:1-4, 15)***

- B. ***I will show you the judgment:*** Before John was shown the power, wealth, and counterfeit beauty of the harlot religion, he was showed her sure destruction—she will be burned by 10 kings (17:16).
- C. ***Who sits on many waters:*** The angel interpreted the “many waters” as many nations (17:1, 15). The harlot will “sit on” or control many of the most powerful leaders—the kings and merchants.
- D. ***The great harlot:*** She is a harlot because she prostitutes herself to seduce others to be unfaithful to God by offering them her false religion (occult), immorality, sinful pleasures, and murder in context to gaining money (she sells her favors). Earlier, God charged Jerusalem with committing spiritual adultery by engaging in the occult, murder, etc. (Isa. 1:21; Jer. 2:20; 13:27; Ezek. 16:17; Hos. 2:5).
- E. ***Great:*** This refers to the harlot's size, influence, impact, depravity, etc.
- F. ***With whom the kings of the earth committed fornication:*** Kings will purposefully prostitute themselves for money by using their power to promote her agenda that they know is based on lies. David prophesied that the kings of the earth would plot together against the Lord (Ps. 2:1-3).
- G. ***The inhabitants were made drunk with her fornication:*** The nations will be overjoyed, even intoxicated, with her promises of prosperity, humanitarian aid, and a unified religion of tolerance.
- H. ***A woman sitting on a beast:*** The harlot will *sit on* or depend on the Antichrist who will *carry* her or will provide resource, support, and protection for her even as she exerts some control over him. She will need the Antichrist, and initially the Antichrist will need her influence and power.

- I. ***She was arrayed in purple and scarlet:*** To be arrayed in purple speaks of her royal status, dignity, and prominence. Scarlet speaks of sin and bloodshed (17:6). Her nature and function are pictured as combining purple (dignity), scarlet (murder), and gold with precious stones (financial prosperity).
- J. ***She was adorned with gold:*** She will be the wealthiest religious network in all of history.
- K. ***She had a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness:*** She will “serve” the nations with her cup, which will appear golden (valuable and good). She will offer unprecedented humanitarian service in helping the poor. Her service is full of abomination and filth. In the Old Testament, *abomination* refers to idolatrous, occultic activities and *filthiness* refers to moral perversions.

V. BABYLON, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS (REV. 17:5)

- A. The end-time harlot is named “Babylon the Great” and is the mother of harlots, or the source of false religion and spiritual harlotry for nearly 4,300 years since the tower of Babel (2,300 BC ?).
⁵And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH... (Rev. 17:5)
- B. ***Mystery, Babylon the Great:*** “Mystery” is not part of her name but a description of her name. John called her simply “Babylon the great” rather than “Mystery Babylon the great” (14:8; 18:2). The harlot’s mysterious name is linked to her origin at the tower of Babel (where Babylon began). By understanding what happened at the tower of Babel we gain insight into how she will operate. The first organized religion and rebellion against God on earth was developed in Babel (Gen. 11).

VI. THE TOWER OF BABEL

- A. God told His people to multiply and fill the earth (Gen. 1:26). Those in Babel wanted to *stay in* Babel to accomplish more together instead of going out from Babel to fill the earth (Gen. 11:4).
⁴They said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over...the whole earth.” (Gen. 11:4)
- B. ***Top:*** The “top” of their tower reached into the heavens—thus, into the spirit realm. The Lord hindered their unity, thus their synergism and progression in evil, not their architectural pursuits. In Jacob’s dream, he saw a ladder that gave him godly access to the heavenly realm (Gen. 28:12).
¹²He [Jacob] dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. (Gen. 28:12)
- C. Nothing that they set their heart to do *together* would be withheld from them in terms of reaching their full potential in sin, advancing in evil, and accessing the realm of the demonic.
⁶The LORD said, “Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.” (Gen. 11:6)
- D. The Lord confused their language to slow down their escalation of sin until the end times.
⁹Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth. (Gen. 11:9)

- E. ***Its name is called Babel:*** Those in Babel were seeking to reach a “demonic open heaven.” In the Babylonian language, Babel means the “*gate of heaven*,” yet in Hebrew it means “*confusion*.”
- F. The harlot will have a murderous heart despite her humanitarian appearance (17:6). The influence of the harlot will cause many to be drunk or intoxicated with the blood of the saints who expose her. The more she kills, the more invigorated, crazed, and bolder she will become in killing the saints.
⁶I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints...when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. (Rev. 17:6)
- G. ***I marveled with great amazement:*** John wondered at the depth of power, deception, and hatred of this global harlot movement against Jesus and His people and at her partnership with the Antichrist.

VII. THE MYSTERY OF THE ANTICHRIST AND HIS 7 HEADS (REV. 17:7-11)

- A. The angel told John about the mystery of the harlot and the Antichrist and their relationship (17:7). The 7 heads represent 7 specific empires that persecuted Israel—Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, ancient Rome, and a future empire (12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7-17; cf. Dan. 2:41-42; 7:7, 20, 24).
⁷But the angel said to me, “Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. (Rev. 17:7)
- B. The Antichrist’s 4-fold journey—he was; he is not; he will ascend and yet is; he will go to perdition (17:8). He is a counterfeit of the Lord as the One who is and who was and who is to come (1:4).
⁸The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel...when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. ⁹“...The seven heads are seven mountains on which the [harlot] woman sits. ¹⁰There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is [Rome], and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. ¹¹The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. (Rev. 17:8-11)
- C. Stage #1 ***He was:*** The Antichrist is described as “he was”—he was living on earth for a season.
- D. Stage #2 ***He is not:*** He is described as “he is not” or is not on the earth referring to his future death. The Antichrist will appear to be suffer a mortal wound of one of his heads (13:3). One of his heads was wounded (13:3)—this speaks of his personal death and the death of one of his kingdoms.
³I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast... (Rev. 13:3)
- E. Stage #3 ***He will ascend:*** The Antichrist will ascend out of the bottomless pit to live on earth (17:11). For the Beast to ascend out of the bottomless pit implies that he descended to it. This refers to the Antichrist as a person because a kingdom cannot descend to and ascend from the pit. My view is that the Antichrist will ascend from the bottomless pit *after* his head wound is healed.
- F. Stage #4 ***He goes to perdition:*** He will surely be defeated and cast into the lake of fire (19:20).

- G. **The 7 heads are 7 mountains:** The Antichrist has 7 heads which speaks of 7 kingdoms and their kings (17:9). Daniel spoke of kings and their empires in nearly a synonymous way (Dan. 7:17, 23). The 5 kingdoms that persecuted Israel are Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. The 6th kingdom identified as “one is”—i.e. existed in John’s generation—is the Roman empire.
- H. **The seventh:** The 7th kingdom which “has not yet come” must come after the Roman Empire *but before* the Antichrist’s empire. The identity is debated—some see it as the 10-nation confederation, while others see it as Antichrist’s rule over them (before he receives great power after his death).
²⁴*...another [Antichrist] **shall rise after them** [the 10 kings in 4th beast kingdom]... (Dan. 7:24)*
- I. **The eighth:** The Antichrist is the 8th king ruling this 8th kingdom which is a “composite kingdom” in the sense that it incorporates the evil characteristics and geographic regions of the 7 kingdoms. Part of the mystery is that this trans-historical beast finds its ultimate expression in a man.

VIII. THE MYSTERY OF THE ANTICHRIST’S 10 HORNS (REV. 17:12-14)

- A. The 10 horns are seen as being 10 kings who rule as contemporaries of the Antichrist (17:13). Their *one hour* under the Antichrist speaks of 42 months—similar to Satan’s short time (12:12).
¹²*“The **ten horns** which you saw are **ten kings** who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for **one hour** as kings with the beast. ¹³These are of one mind, and **they will give their power and authority to the beast** [the Antichrist]...¹⁷**God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast...** (Rev. 17:12-14, 17)*
- B. After the harlot religious system serves its purpose, the 10 kings under the Antichrist destroy it.
¹⁶*And the ten horns [the 10 kings] which you saw on the beast, these **will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.**” (Rev. 17:16-17)*

IX. THE FALL OF THE GREAT CITY OF BABYLON (REV. 18:1-3)

- A. An angel with great authority decrees the fall of the city of Babylon (18:1-3). “After these things” in 18:1 designates events occurring after the harlot is burned in 17:16.
¹*After these things I saw another angel...having great authority...²And 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!** (Rev. 18:1-2)*
- B. **Prison of demons:** The city of Babylon will be the prison of demons. The land of Edom (part of Jordan) and Babylon (part of Iraq) border each other, and both are described as being a place of perpetual burning and resulting in such destruction that humans cannot live there (Jer. 49:13, 18, 20; 50:9-40; 51:43; cf. Isa. 13:20; 34:10; Ezek. 35:9, 14-15; Mal. 1:3-4). It may be *one vast flaming region* connected to the lake of fire. The distance between Jerusalem and Edom is about 75 miles.
- C. The Lord calls His people to leave the city of Babylon (18:4-8; cf. Jer. 50:8; 51:6-9, 45).
⁴*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. ⁵For her sins have reached to heaven... (Rev. 18:4-5)*

- D. God’s indictment against Babylon is to destroy her because of her pride and brazen sin (18:6-8).
*⁶Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works...
⁷for she says in her heart, “I sit as queen...and will not see sorrow.”⁸Therefore her plagues will come in one day... she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her. (Rev. 18:6-8)*
- E. John describes the kings of the earth lamenting (18:9-10). Three groups mourn her fall—the kings (18:9-10), the land merchants (18:11-16), sea merchants (18:17-19). Each mourns at a distance (18:10, 15, 17), maintaining that Babylon was a great city, not a guilty city (18:10, 16, 18-19).
⁹“The kings of the earth who committed fornication...with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning,¹⁰standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon...For in one hour your judgment has come.’” (Rev. 18:9-10)
- F. John describes the lamenting of the great merchants and those in the shipping industry (18:11-19).
¹¹“The merchants of the earth will weep...over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore...¹⁵The merchants...who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment...¹⁷Every shipmaster...stood at a distance¹⁸and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning. (Rev. 18:11-18)
- G. The righteous will rejoice at the fall of Babylon (18:20).
²⁰“Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you...” (Rev. 18:20)
- H. A prophetic act to symbolize the fall of Babylon (18:21-24):
²¹Then 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...²⁴And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints...” (Rev. 18:21-24)

X. HEAVENLY MULTITUDES REJOICE OVER BABYLON’S JUDGMENT (REV. 19:1-4)

- A. John saw a multitude celebrating the judgment of Babylon (19:1-3) and the marriage of the Lamb (19:7). This gathering occurs after the rapture of the Church at the 7th trumpet and after Babylon is judged (Rev. 18) at the 7th bowl (16:19), yet *before* the Antichrist is destroyed (19:19-21).
*¹After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia!...
²For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot...and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.”³... they said, “Alleluia!” (Rev. 19:1-3)*
- B. *Great multitude in heaven*: John describes the first gathering of the redeemed from all history.

XI. THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB (REV. 19:5-10)

- A. John gives three reasons for the redeemed to rejoice with certainty (19:6-7): God will openly manifest His reign on the earth; the marriage of the Lamb has come; and His Bride is prepared.

*⁶I heard...the voice of a great multitude, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!
⁷“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” ⁸And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (Rev. 19:6-8)*

- B. ***Made herself ready:*** John emphasized the role of the individual’s freewill to choose obedience in cooperating with grace. We daily make decisions for righteousness to express our love for Jesus.
- C. ***Fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints:*** Part of the saints’ reward will be seen in the clothing they receive, which will express their love and obedience for Jesus in this age.
- D. John was commissioned to write, thus, proclaim this aspect of the forerunner message (19:9-10).

*⁹He said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb’...
¹⁰For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” (Rev. 19:9-10)*