

## BABYLON = THE WORLD'S SYSTEM = RELIGION-POLITICS-ECONOMICS



*18 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the Earth was illuminated with his glory. <sup>2</sup> And 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! <sup>3</sup> For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the Earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the Earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury."*

*<sup>4</sup> And 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. <sup>5</sup> For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. <sup>6</sup> Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. <sup>7</sup> In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.' <sup>8</sup> Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her. (Revelation 18:1-8, NKJV).*



Wow! As Scott T Armstrong always says, "It'll all burn up." And you know what? IT WILL! This is the account of the fiery end of things; the end of the world as we know it. Last Sunday, we looked at the collapse of the "religion" of the world. We have discussed the term "Babylon" at length. Remember, humankind first shook its fist in God's face in historical Babylon. God has an agenda for mankind, and man has an agenda for mankind. They are different and distinct. "Babylon" is man's agenda worked out in the world. Part of man's agenda is man's religion. This week, we'll examine the fall of man's economic and political systems. They will come to an end.

This collapse we read of is a "great city." It is full of wealth, and it has made the world wealthy. At the time that all of this happens, THAT CITY will come to an end within one

hour. I want to repeat what I said last week. I do not believe this city is the ancient city of Babylon. Scripture is clear that it would be pulled down and *"it will never be inhabited, nor will it be settled from generation to generation, nor will the Arabian pitch tents there..."* (see *Isaiah 13:19-22*). Babylon, spoken of here, will be that city that is the center of the world's politics and economic system at the end of times.

Verses 1-3 The angel here is not Jesus but is a magnificent angelic being. The Greek says *allos* which means "another one of the same kind" (as those that have poured out the wrath of God). It brings a message to the Earth. It will light up the world with its glory. Wow, that will be some kind of angel! He cries: It is fallen; it is fallen. The angel declares that it is a dwelling place for demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean bird. Birds are often indicative of evil in scripture. In the parable of the sower, Jesus talked about the way Satan snatches the gospel away from those unto whom it is shared. <sup>4</sup> *And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and **the birds came and devoured them.*** (*Matthew 13:4, NKJV*). Jesus then explained the birds saying, <sup>18</sup> *"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: <sup>19</sup> When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the **wicked one comes (the birds)** and snatches away what was sown in his heart."* (*Matthew 13:18-19, NKJV*).

He describes that the kings of the Earth (the powers of the planet) have all participated in the wealth of the nations. All the countries have been involved in her wrongdoing. The whole world has become intoxicated with materialism and greed. Materialism is idol worship. In chapter 17, we saw the idol of sexual pleasure mixed with a kind of religion. Here in chapter 18, we see the nations of the world being given over to materialism. Each of us is born with what Blaise Pascal called a God-shaped vacuum in our souls. The world economic system, with all of its advertisers and goods, tries to convince us that they are selling "that thing" that will meet our needs. Part of our fleshly nature is the desire for things we think will secure us. We must remember that there is no real security or long-lasting fulfillment in things. The world economic system is set up to fan the flame within us that desires yet another thing to be happy. That void can ONLY be satisfied by God.

When I sold my company, my father was upset that I didn't "get enough" for it. I remember thinking about how much was "enough." Humans aren't very good at realizing what is "enough." Please don't get me wrong. I am not saying that having wealth is evil. It is just very dicey. Not everyone can handle wealth. Just read what happens to people when they win the lottery. They are usually both DEAD and BROKE within a couple of years. Entertainers desperate to be known/famous often crash-burn into alcoholism or drug addiction. They end up snorting or shooting themselves to

death because their wealth has enabled them to buy ANYTHING in an attempt to find satisfaction.

Jesus says very clearly that we shouldn't be too focused on storing up a lot of treasures here on Earth. He also tells us that unto whom much is given, much is required (Luke 12:48). A selfish heart is a heart that is spiritually in trouble. God calls us to be good stewards, managing our material wealth well. If we aren't cautious, it will control us very quickly. Our identity must be in the Lord and not in our stuff. If our identity is tied up in our stuff, and we lose our stuff, we won't be able to figure out who we are. God speaks a lot about our relationship with material things. We should also be responsible with our wealth. We should not live beyond our means.

The world's system is relentlessly trying to tell us about all of the stuff we need to be happy. If we can't afford something, maybe God is telling us we shouldn't be buying it. Stop buying stuff on credit. The world's system of advertisement knows we have this deep need within us. They falsely promise that some gizmo, perfume, animal, or gold coin will satisfy. It will not. And when we try to live in a way that our finances don't support, we get in big trouble. I heard a wise saying once that said we should "want what we have" instead of wanting "what we don't have." Americans have a love affair with things.

One out of five Americans have off-home storage<sup>1</sup>. There are 50,000 storage facilities in America. The excesses of the American Dream have filled millions of square feet with "good junk."<sup>2</sup> About 3.1% of the children in the world live in America. Yet our kids own 40% of the toys. We've got a materialism problem. I remember how we lived when I was a little boy. We lived in a tiny two-bedroom house with one tiny closet that held all of the clothes that my sisters and I wore. It's okay to have stuff. We just have to be VERY CAREFUL that our stuff doesn't get ahold of us.

Verses 4-8 If you're here during the Tribulation, the Lord is saying, COME OUT OF THAT SYSTEM. Don't get caught up in the world. God tells us the same thing throughout scripture! Speaking to holiness in our living, the Apostle Paul says, <sup>17</sup> "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." (2 Corinthians 6:17, NKJV).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://mishtalk.com/economics/over-20-percent-of-americans-use-self-storage-are-you-one-of-them/#:~:text=More%20than%20a%20fifth%20of,self%20storage%20in%20its%20aftermath.>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.governing.com/context/too-much-stuff-americans-and-their-storage-units>

*Ecclesia (Iglesia in Spanish)* itself means the "called out." It is a compound of *ek*, a preposition meaning "out of," and the verb *kaleo*, meaning "to call." We as believers, as the church, ARE THE "CALLED OUT" of God. We are to separate ourselves from this wicked world. We are in the world, but we should never be of the world. This is so difficult to do with the pressure we come up against with materialism. So how and when will this happen?

### ***The World Mourns Babylon's Fall***



<sup>9</sup> *"The kings of the Earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, <sup>10</sup> standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.'* (Revelation 18:9-10, NKJV).

This tells us that the demise of it all will happen in a day. In "one hour" her judgment will come. Oh my goodness, the political leaders along with the financial leaders with all of their wealth will mourn this deeply when they see it. And all the leaders of the Earth won't be able to do anything when they see it happening. They will see her burning up. Interestingly they'll keep their distance when they see "the smoke of her burning." Perhaps this means that the great economic center that is going to be destroyed will be done in by a nuclear bomb. People would certainly keep their distance to avoid radiation fallout. This says that all who lived in her luxury will lament for her.

<sup>11</sup> *"And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: <sup>12</sup> merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; <sup>13</sup> and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men. <sup>14</sup> The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all. <sup>15</sup> The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, <sup>16</sup> and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! <sup>17</sup> For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.' Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on*

*the sea, stood at a distance <sup>18</sup> and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What is like this great city?'*



*<sup>19</sup> "They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! **For in one hour she is made desolate.**" <sup>20</sup> "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!" (Revelation 18:11-20 NKJV).*

Wow, that was exhausting to read. I've thought about what I'm going to say right now for many years. It might bother some reading this or hearing this sermon. At present, only America fulfills this description of the Babylon described here. It doesn't mean that America is Babylon, but it will be whatever is the center of economic power when the end comes. Think about the unique position of America. It is through our innovation and our productivity that the world has known the prosperity that it has known. Our commercial system has been the envy of the world. Every country that has copied what we have done has become prosperous. Truly, the world has become wealthy with the economic marvel that America began. The text says that the destruction is being watched from afar. Hence, I believe it is a real place where something is coming down. We could be looking at the wholesale destruction of America. I love my country. I am a patriot. But I do not love what I see my country becoming. Whatever city becomes "Babylon" will have many of the traits that we see in America today.

The last 80-100 years have taken America from being a "city on a hillside," a model for religious and economic freedom for all the world to emulate, to being a promoter of much godlessness. America is the number one producer of pornography in the world. America is number one in hosting porn sites. California is at the top of the pornography industry in America. America leads the free world in abortions boasting 1,213,000 abortions annually.<sup>3</sup> I am not sure about sex slaves being exploited by Americans, but I'm sure the numbers are mind-boggling. I first began to think that America might be the Babylon discussed in Revelation chapter 18 when I was looking out over the ocean in Galveston. I saw ships sitting off of Galveston. During Covid, I saw pictures of them sitting off of the port of Los Angeles. Seeing those images brought this scripture to my mind again and again. If America is the Babylon spoken of here, those ships will watch the destruction from afar and mourn the loss to the world's prosperity. The port city

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<sup>3</sup> <https://lozierinstitute.org/world-leaders-in-abortion-top-10-countries/>

which moves the most cargo into the United States today is Los Angeles. Second is Newark, NJ (right across from New York City).

There is a long list of commodities that are built in this Babylon place, described in scripture. There are products of every kind imaginable. Everything of value has been made in this place. If you think about it, the world has become rich off of America. I don't really know if this is speaking exclusively about some city in America or perhaps all of the commercial centers of the world, but IT OR THEY WILL COME TO AN END IN AN HOUR. They will be found no more. It's all gonna burn!



So, what happened along the way? How did things go so awry? It is a long story, but the short version is that in the American experience, for most of the time, America followed God's agenda. We have certainly had our participation in wrongdoing though. I can think of chattel slavery of human beings that was in no way limited to America. I can also think of the genocide committed against the Native Americans. This in no way exculpates the Indians who, for the most part, were not "noble savages" by any means. Many of the tribes were horrific in their treatment of one another. And the wholesale human sacrifices of the Aztecs led the Spaniards to want to annihilate them all. The bottom line is that the objective truth that once guided America is gone. The moral and biblical frame upon which America was built has been removed with NOTHING BEING PUT IN ITS PLACE!

THIS DEPARTURE FROM OBJECTIVE TRUTH IS NOT UNIQUE TO AMERICA. The world is now in on the game. Power and wealth move from place to place and country to country. So, if it's not like a place I've described here, it will be in a place like those I've just described. Things are rotten to the core. God promises that the thievery, exploitation, excesses, abuse, and trafficking will all come to an end. And this is how it will look.

### ***Finality of Babylon's Fall***

***21 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. 22 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. 23 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.*<sup>24</sup> *And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.” (Revelation 18:21-24, NKJV).*

And with that, it will be over.

## Believers Are Salt and Light

<sup>13</sup> *“You are the salt of the Earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.”<sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup> Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16, NKJV).*



When the American experiment began, there were those who tied it to this passage. In 1630, John Winthrop preached a sermon proclaiming that “we shall be as a city upon a hill.” Beginning in the 1970s, Ronald Reagan placed that line, from that sermon, at the center of his political career. We were a “city” of light and hope on a hillside. How did this city on a hillside become so dark?

*For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. (Matthew 12:34b-35, NKJV).* I will add that out of the heart a person acts. Out of its heart a nation acts. These acts of wickedness grow out of hearts that do not know God. They do not respect God. They do not recognize sin. For them, IT IS ALL ABOUT THE MONEY. IT IS ALL ABOUT POWER. That’s the world’s system. That’s Babylon, and wherever it is, it’s coming to an end.

Jesus said, <sup>36</sup> *“For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”<sup>37</sup> Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? (Mark 8:36-37, NKJV).*

When Sandy and I married, we talked about all of this. We never prayed to have a lot. We were both just drawn to a verse that is still a great verse.

<sup>8</sup> *Remove falsehood and lies far from me;  
Give me neither poverty nor riches—  
Feed me with the food allotted to me;*

*<sup>9</sup> Lest I be full and deny You,  
And say, "Who is the LORD?"  
Or lest I be poor and steal,  
And profane the name of my God. (Proverbs 30:8-9, NKJV).*

We prayed that we would never be so financially well off that we would end up losing our understanding of our need for God. We also didn't want so little that we would be tempted to steal or take what didn't belong to us. We just decided to open our hands and receive what God wanted to place in them. We also asked him to open our hands and share what He has given us, knowing it's ALL FROM HIM. We have always asked Him for wisdom to know how to handle what He felt we were able to handle.

I encourage each of you this morning. Let's never look to things to fulfill the needs of our souls. If we do, there will never be enough! He is ALL THAT WE NEED.

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at [uniongrove362@gmail.com](mailto:uniongrove362@gmail.com) or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.