

SALVATION IN SYMBOLS & SIGNS

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Corresponds to Program 67

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the NKJV and KJV.

The Fall of Babylon STUDY GUIDE

Revelation 18:1-4

These verses are a reminder to us of God's persistent efforts to call all of His honest-hearted people out of Babylon before He brings judgment upon it. We have just considered Revelation chapters 15, 16, and 17, and they contain the worst judgments ever visited upon Planet Earth. We have no idea how bad things are going to get once probation closes. So, as we have reflected on God's judgments, God is reminding us that He longs for us to come out of Babylon before these judgments are meted out from heaven.

These verses are not a chronological order of events. The message in Revelation 18:1-4 that lightens the earth with God's glory, announcing the fall of Babylon and calling all His people out, actually takes place before probation closes. We call this the fourth angel's message because it connects with the three angels in Revelation 14:6-12. This fourth angel's message fills the earth with God's glory, the everlasting gospel of the first angel's message. It also announces the second angel's message: the fall of Babylon. The second angel's message calls God's people out of Babylon, to join the commandment-keeping faith of Jesus' believers of the third angel's message.

Exodus 33:18-19; 34:5-7

The devil has been doing all he can to distort the character of God. God proclaims His Name as His glory. As a name can represent one's character, so the final message to all the world is a revelation of the perfect character of a perfect God and His glory. This revelation will be made through God's people, the

majority of whom are in Babylon, and although they may not have all the doctrines figured out, they reflect God's character. Doctrines can be learned over weeks and months. Character, on the other hand, is often developed over years.

The judgments we see in Revelation 15-19 are revelations of the God of love. The character of God does not change when

justice is finally meted out. Many people in the system of Babylon today recognize the injustice taking place in our world and they long for God to make things right. God will make things right as these final chapters in Revelation so clearly reveal.

Revelation 18:5-13

God has finally "remembered" the sins of Babylon. Up until this point in history, God has not counted our sins against us (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). At Calvary's cross, Jesus took the consequences and punishment of our sins upon Himself so that we could be forgiven (2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:3-4). Jesus died as our substitute so that our sins could be legally, fairly, and righteously forgotten by God. Yet Babylon has insisted on holding onto their sins. They have refused to give them up. They have per-

sistently refused the gift of salvation offered to all mankind in the everlasting gospel. Not only so, but they have muffled the Gospel. They are guilty of the souls of men who have been deceived and made drunk by the wine of her false teachings. In rejecting the everlasting covenant of God's salvation grace in Jesus Christ, Babylon has become a merchant of sin. It has augmented sin and made it a means of revenue.



"...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!" **REVELATION 18:2**

KEY SCRIPTURES

Rev. 18:1 I SAW ANOTHER ANGEL COMING...FROM HEAVEN **Rev. 18:5** GOD HAS REMEMBERED HER INIQUITIES

Exo. 34:6 THE LORD GOD, MERCIFUL AND GRACIOUS **Rev. 18:16** ALAS, ALAS, THAT GREAT CITY

The ultimate sin of Babylon is pride. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had a dream wherein he saw a tree that “reached to the heavens” (Daniel 4:11). This was a prophetic dream given by God to warn Nebuchadnezzar that his pride was reaching up to heaven and that his kingdom was about to be taken from him. In the book of Job, the sea creature, Leviathan, a type of the devil, “is king over all the children of pride” (Job 41:34), further illustrating the evils of pride.

The Bible says, “Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18). So the “fall” of Babylon is ultimately due to her pride. The devil deceived her and the people embraced her deception through pride. This is the tipping point for its final fall.

Revelation 18:14-24; Matthew 18:1-6

The millstone in Revelation 18:21 has a direct correlation with Matthew 18, where Jesus warns the disciples who were contending for the highest place. It was pride that led Lucifer to seek a higher position than God had given him. Not just a higher place, he wanted the very seat of God (Isaiah 14:12-14). The antichrist also seeks the position of God (2 Thessalonians 2:4). The disciples were in danger of doing the same, as is every human being, and the devil longs to imbue us with his character of pride and self-exaltation. We see Babylon being the prime example of the essence of self-exaltation and human pride. The “millstone” in Revelation 18:21 is a direct fulfillment of Christ’s words to the disciples when they were contending for the highest place (Matthew 18:6). Babylon receives

the judgment that Christ predicted would come upon any who cause His little ones to sin through self-exaltation.

Revelation 19:1-7; 18

God is finally bringing evil, pain, suffering, and sin to an end. Heaven is called to rejoice. God’s people on Earth are called to rejoice. The character of God, justice, and mercy, are finally reconciled as they were on the cross. Joy is the only response possible for those who have agonized over sin and its pain in this world.

Summary

The final chapters of Revelation bring to the universe a full and final display of God’s character. In this revelation, Babylon is called into account for its pride, its sin, and its merchandising of the gospel of grace. The entire system of spiritual and government leaders and the people who have been deceived by Babylon comes to an end. God has exhausted every resource, He has left not one person without light, opportunity, and warning. Many of God’s honest, sincere people respond to the final call and come out of Babylon. This chapter reminds us, amid the most terrible judgments visited upon men, that God first called all the world out of Babylon. Will you heed the call now, today, before it is forever too late? In Jesus’ name, amen. ★

