

## Revelation 18.1-19.5: The Great Prostitute Judged

### 16: Bowls of Judgment and Divine Wrath

### 17.1-20.15: The Final Judgment

#### 17.1-19.5: The Destruction of Babylon the Great

A large interpretative review of the Sixth and Seventh Bowl Judgments (16.12-21)

#### 17.1-3 The Great Prostitute, the Waters, the Kings, and the Scarlet Beast

Great Prostitute = Woman on a Blasphemous Scarlet Beast – icon of idolatry

#### 17.4-6 The Luxurious Depravity of the Prostitute

Jeremiah 51.7: Babylon is ‘a gold cup’ . . . ‘that has made the whole earth drunk’

Rome as ‘Babylon the Great’ – 1 Peter 5.13; 2 Baruch 11.1; 67.7; 79.1), drunk with ‘the blood of the saints’

#### 17.7-14 An Angel Interprets the Vision

seven heads = seven hills. Rome is a city memorably built on seven hills.

Four Groups: Antichrist, the earth-dwellers who worship him, the 10 kings, and the ‘kings of the earth’ who join the coalition of evil (16.14, 16). Their purpose is to make war against the Lamb/Christ (17.14)

#### 17.15-18 The Prostitute is Killed by the Beast

Civil War among the coalition of evil; a la Ezekiel 38.21 (‘everyone’s sword will be against his brother’)

### 18:1-24 – The Fall of Babylon the Great

Expands on 17.16

Anti-Babylon oracle – Jeremiah 50-51; also Ezekiel 27

#### 18.1-3: An Angel Announces the Fall of Babylon (14.8 repeated)

Angel - Great authority illumined with glory; Ezekiel 43.2; Likely straight from the throne

Isaiah 13.21-22: Depicted as a deserted city inhabited by demons and unclean birds (also Jer. 50.39; 51.37)

In 17.5, Rome/Babylon is depicted as ‘the mother of prostitutes and abominations’; now the nations are destroyed because of her evil acts

Condemnation for materialistic luxury built on the back of conquest and exploitation – the ‘merchants’

1C Roman economy based on: forced extraction and movement of goods and taxes from the conquered

#### **18.4-8: Believers Commanded to Leave**

‘come out of her my people’

Christians – ‘flee the evil desires’ (2 Tim. 2.22); also command to lot (Genesis 19.15-17)

Ephesians 5.11: ‘Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness’

#### **18.6-8: Just Judgment**

*Lex talionis* – law of retribution

Jeremiah 50.29: ‘Repay her (Babylon) for her deeds; do to her as she has done’

Pay her back double – Ex. 22.4, 7, 9: some transgressions demanded double payment

She: glorified herself and lived in ‘sensuous luxury’

#### **18.9-19: Three Laments Over Babylon the Great**

Three funeral dirges sung by three groups who profited from Empire – kings, merchants, and seamen

12-13 - Cargo list of 29 items

Gold from Spain and the Balkans; silver from Spain; jewels from India and the Persian Gulf (pearls); silk from China; citron wood from N Africa; marble from Africa, Egypt, and Greece; Myrrh and Frankincense from Somalia and Yemen

18.17-19: Those who profit from Rome’s sea trade; Think of the East India Company or slave ships

#### **18.21-24: Destruction of Babylon**

Jeremiah 51.63-64 – ‘tie a stone to the scroll’ and throw it in the Euphrates’ - ‘so will Babylon sink to rise no more’

Three sins: economic tyranny, sorcery, and murder of the saints

‘Deceived by sorcery’ – symbolizing the demonic deception of the nations by Babylon/Rome

#### **19.1-5: Hallelujah Chorus – Joy and the Justice of God**

‘a loud voice from a great multitude’ – angels or the *hagioi* (7.9)

Hallel psalms – 113-118

After all the horror, why the joy here?

16.7: ‘Your judgments are true and just’

6.10: ‘How long, O Sovereign, holy and true, are you not going to judge and avenge our blood against those who inhabit the earth?’

19.4 – The 24 *presbyterioi* and 4 living creatures – 4.8-10; 5.8-14; 7.11-17; 11.16; 14.3; 19.4