

What Happens When a Church Worships | Part 8

Lesson 2

Revelation chapters 17-18

April 16, 2023

The End of the World Order

INTRODUCTION

As the conclusion of Revelation draws near, John's visions unveiled by Jesus come into full and daunting view. Chapters 17 and 18 list the crimes perpetrated by Babylon and the details of her subsequent destruction.

Let it not be forgotten that Babylon is the personification of rebellion against God. Wearing purple and scarlet, adorned in jewels and pearls, she is totally irresistible as she attracts victims who are "intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries" (Revelation 17:2) and tumble into her God-snubbing cult.

Yet, the beast, the evil entity who first supported her, turns against her, as do ten horns (kings) whose future she no longer controls. "For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish His purpose" (Revelation 17:17) to destroy her.

A few, merchants, sea captains, and corrupt kings, mourn her ruin. But not those who love God. Their response echoes in the memory verse below.

Memory verse: "Rejoice over her, you heavens! Rejoice, you people of God! Rejoice, apostles and prophets! For God has judged her with the judgment she imposed on you."

—Revelation 18:20

Pray, and read Revelation chapters 17-18. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

OBSERVATION: What do the passages say?

1. What evil empire does the “great prostitute” represent “who sits by many waters” and has persecuted God’s people? (Revelation 17:1b, 5-6)
2. What happens to the prostitute in accordance with God’s word? (Revelation 17:16-17; 18:5-8)
3. What warning from heaven is strongly advised for the people of God and possibly those “not of God”? (Revelation 18:4-5)
4. What motivates kings and merchants to mourn the demise of Babylon? (Revelation 18:9-14)
5. What was the great sin of Babylon? (Revelation 18:24)

4. “Another voice from heaven “sends a cheerleader’s shout in Revelation 18:20 (memory verse) which, at first, seems ironic. Yet, read on; God has the last word, proclaimed elsewhere in Psalm 7:16; Proverbs 26:27; Isaiah 44:33; Jeremiah 51:48. What is His last word?

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. When merchants of the earth and captains of the sea weep and mourn over Babylon’s fall, to what circumstance of the 21st century might this be compared?

2. How might we be deceived? By an idea? A commercial? A person? How do we avoid envoys of Babylon?

3. When the world appears lost with every glance of a newspaper headline, let us rejoice whenever evil has lost a battle in the least significant cause. Compose a prayer of thanks to God for these sometimes unrecognized victories.