

**DAY  
4****Revelation 18: Babylon's Judgment**

See Jeremiah 51 for an Old Testament picture of God's judgment on Babylon, and Ezekiel 27 for a picture of God's judgment on Tyre. Both shape the language and themes of Revelation 18.

This chapter is one of the most clear chapters and easier to interpret, but the message is one of the most painful. A new element is added to the description of fallen kingdoms, and that is their economic system. The economics of Babylon is judged in this chapter. For every kingdom that sets itself up against the Kingdom of God, its power comes from its military and its economics.

(1-3) A strikingly powerful angel leads this chapter, and Babylon is again described as a place of demonic presence/power and adultery (sexual and religious).

(4) A warning to all God's people to come out from Babylon. This is NOT a call to physically leave the world, but rather a call to spiritually stand against ALL the corruptions of Babylon, including the idolatry of excessive luxury (vv. 3, 7), sexuality, and power (v. 10).

(4-10) Babylon's judgment. Her sins are piled up; she will receive a double judgment for her sins. Notice how fast the judgment and fall happen. John uses the idea of 1 hour 3x (vv. 10, 17, 19) and 1 day (v. 8).

(11-19) The economic ruin of kingdoms who do not honor God with their wealth. Verses 12-13 have 28 items listed in 7 categories (see Ezekiel 27:12-24 for a list of 40 items). These items are listed in the order of most valuable to least valuable. Notice that human lives are least valuable. The Roman economy depended on over 60,000,000 slaves. Unjust wealth will be judged. That is a constant message of the Old Testament prophets. Corrupt kingdoms are built on evil practices. The merchants who profited are the ones who are most terrified and distraught (vv. 11, 14-15).

(17-19) All this commerce depended on a vigorous sea trade. They lament (see also Ezekiel 27:25-27).

(21-23) All the normal features of life in a kingdom that cares nothing for God are ultimately and once and for all disrupted.

(23-23) Finally, the reason for God's judgment against Babylon is given.

*Followers of Jesus always need to "come out" from unjust ways of fallen kingdoms. It is hard for us to sense how much we benefit from these unjust practices. God sees and God gives warning: Stop it!*

**DAY  
5****Revelation 19: Rejoicing Over Babylon Defeated**

The end is getting closer—both the end of Revelation and the end of history. Revelation 19 describes the end of sin, Satan, death, and all that is wrong with the world.

(1-8) The final worship (on earth). This is the longest worship section in Revelation. Read these verses and use the language to form your own worship and praise. Notice who God is and what God does that evokes such lavish worship. May lavish worship come from your own heart.

(7-10) The wedding supper of the Lamb. This is a reference to the Lord's Supper and Last Supper, and Jesus promises that he will drink this cup once again in the kingdom to come (see Matthew 26:29). It finishes with an exhortation to "Worship God."

(11-16) What John saw when heaven was opened to him. John saw the King of Kings and Lord of Lords who was coming to bring justice, to wage war against evil, and to bring judgment against all the enemies of God. Notice each description of Jesus and recall how Jesus was described in Revelation 1-3.

(17-18) Judgment. There are evocative images that talk about how all the enemies of God have become "food" for unclean birds.

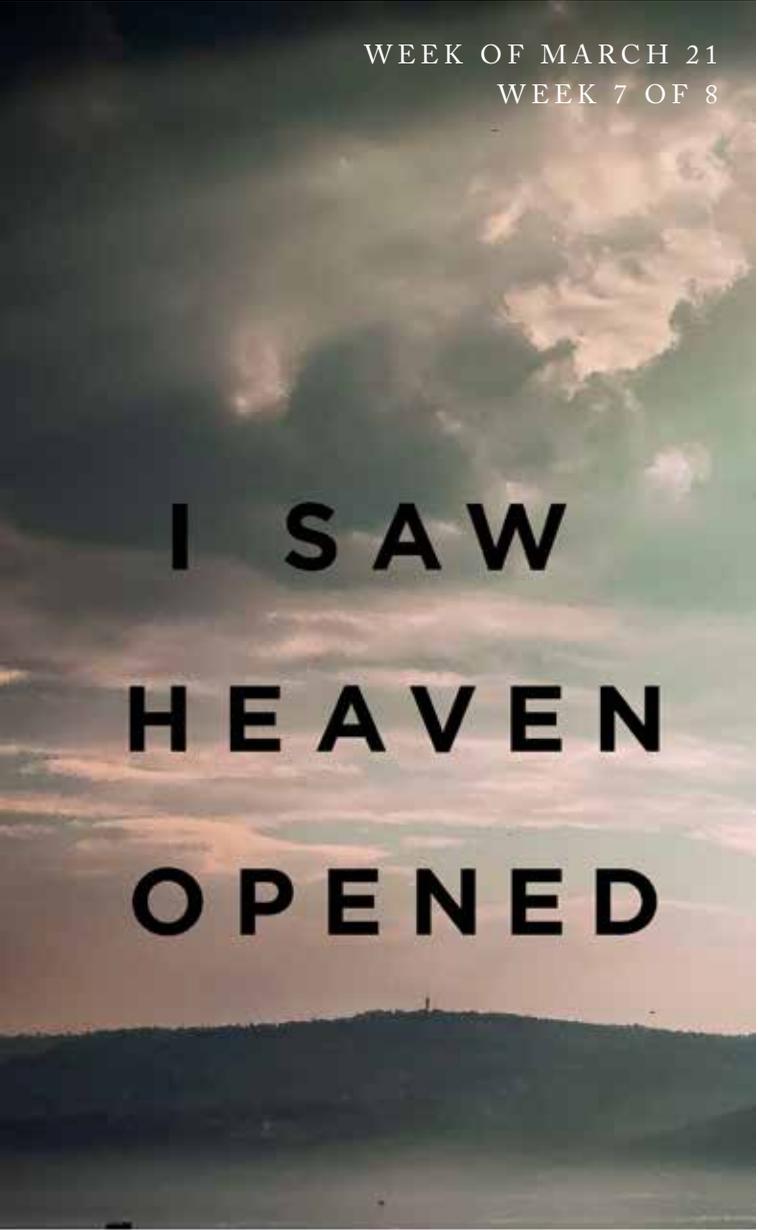
(19-21) The fate of the beast (whether a personification or an actual person/the anti-Christ), as well as the kings/nations of the earth, their armies, the false prophet (religiosity in the service of evil, and often through actual individuals). All evil is destroyed.

Justice requires a judgment. Judgment means a verdict is passed. The verdict acquits the innocent and holds the guilty liable. With the verdict comes a sentence that pronounces consequences. The innocent find recompense and the guilty are punished. All unrepentant evil MUST be punished and expelled from God's universe. God will NOT allow a single iota of evil to stain his universe.

The theological belief of final justice/judgment is hard, but it is vital. It has been said that if God does not judge the modern west (including the USA) for our sexual insanity, he will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. It has also been said that everything God judged ancient Israel for is being done in our world today (in church and in the world). Skim over the words to the 7 churches in Rev. 2-3.

*Repent and return to our (your) first love—Jesus (Rev. 2:4-5).*

WEEK OF MARCH 21  
WEEK 7 OF 8



I SAW  
HEAVEN  
OPENED

*Sermon: Salvation*



**DAY  
1****Revelation 16:1-15 The  
Bowls of Wrath**

The bowls are the third, final, and now full set of judgments. Like the seals and the trumpets, the bowls are closely connected with earlier judgments and with the plagues on Egypt.

(2) First bowl: The 6th plague (Exodus 9:8-12). This is poured on those who have the mark/protection of the beast, and who worship him. Idolatry is judged; evil has no power to protect those who worship it.

(3) Second bowl: The 1st plague (Exodus 7:14-24) and the 2nd trumpet (Rev. 8:8-9). This is comprehensive destruction.

(4) Third bowl: More of the 1st plague and the 3rd trumpet (Rev. 8:10-11).

(5-7) A short worship and proclamation of the justice of God's judgment because of God's character and the evil that has been perpetrated. Blood poured because of blood shed by God's people. How long, O Lord? Now is the time of judgment.

(8) Fourth bowl: Contrast this judgment with the protection on God's people (Rev. 7:16).

(10) Fifth bowl: The 9th plague (Exodus 10:21-23) and the 4th trumpet (Rev. 8:12)

(9, 11) These verses are almost identical in the response to the fourth and fifth. Those who follow the beast suffer, but they REFUSE to REPENT. Instead, they curse God (blaspheme is the actual, more intense, word). Their refusal and curse is because of their suffering, but more deeply, because of their unrepentant evil.

(12) Sixth bowl: The Euphrates, which never ran dry, dries up. This is connected to God drying/dividing the Red Sea and the Jordan River so Israel could escape. Here he prepares for the final destruction of evil.

(13-14, 16) Always at the source of evil is supernatural evil. The unholy trinity of the dragon (Satan), the beast of the sea (political power of fallen kings), and the best of the land (spiritual power, also called the false prophet) display impure, demonic spirits. They deceive and manipulate the kings of the world, mobilizing them for a final and futile battle.

(15) Jesus repeats his warning (Rev. 3:3) and pronounces the third blessing (Rev. 1:3; 14:13) on those who stay awake (Rev. 3:2) and are clothed (Rev. 3:4-5, 18).

**DAY  
2****Revelation 16:16-21 &  
19:11-21: Armageddon**

This is a focused case study to illustrate the problems of a "pop-eschatology" that has a pre-conceived idea about the end times, but does not work with careful biblical and theological study on what is actually said about Armageddon in the Bible—which is NOT MUCH.

The sixth bowl has been emptied (Rev. 16:12) and the powers of evil have gathered the kings/nations of earth to war against God Almighty (Rev. 16:14, 16). The seventh bowl (v. 17) is emptied into the air, symbolizing worldwide consequences. Verse 16 is the only reference to the term Armageddon in the Bible. John clarifies for his readers that this is a Hebrew term.

*Har* means mountain; *Megiddo* means plain and a city. So, Har + Megiddo is Mountain of Megiddo. The only problem is there is NO SUCH geographical place. There is a plain, there was a city, but there is no mountain. Here is what John does using the Old Testament to create Armageddon.

First, Jewish belief about the end times was that a battle would be fought on Mt. Carmel near Jerusalem (a 2-day journey from Megiddo). The enemies Gog and Magog would be defeated in the mountains of Israel (Ezekiel 38-39). Second, in the history of Israel, a number of important battles, actual and spiritual, occurred at Megiddo (see Judges 5:19-21; 1 Kings 18:40; 2 Kings 23:29). Zechariah 12:9-12 talks about Megiddo as a place of mourning.

John has conflated these realities for his purposes. He wants his readers to call to mind the "final battle" and not necessarily a specific place (that does not exist the way he described it). John uses images that resonate with the final battle—the mountains of Israel and a place called Megiddo.

Armageddon is the symbolic and typological place for the final spiritual battle of good and evil. That battle is described as John talks about Babylon (city, nation, beast) who is opposed to God. The battle is described in Revelation 19:11-21 and the obvious reality is there is NO BATTLE. There is no army of Jesus ready for battle. They are wearing fine linens. They see Jesus win, using the sword of the Lord, which is the Word of God. The battle is instantly won with the TRUTH of God.

*Our faith and hope are in this. God Almighty has no equal, not for a day, an hour, or a second. Jesus WINS instantly, decisively, and finally. And you win in Christ. Be full of faith, hope, and love in all times and in end times.*

**DAY  
3****Revelation 17: Babylon's  
Evil**

This is the first of three entire chapters devoted to Babylon. Babylon is one of the great images/symbols used in Revelation. It was the greatest ancient enemy of Israel. Babylon became the archetype and representative of the kingdom of the world against God's kingdom. It is also symbolic for the immediate Roman Empire, which is the context of suffering for God's people.

In addition to the word Babylon, the prostitute (whore) of Babylon is another way to refer to Babylon. The prostitute of Babylon is the way John describes the sexual immorality and religious idolatry that is prominent in the evil city. Look for the list of vile words associated with the prostitute of Babylon (vv. 1-6; 15-18).

(7-13; 16-18) John also refers to Babylon (the kingdom) by the word beast. He uses this metaphor throughout these verses.

(9) Seven heads is a reference to the 7 hills on which Rome was built. Rome was known as the city of 7 hills.

(10) 7 kings is a reference to the emperors of Rome, but it is very difficult to determine the exact emperors described, simply due to the many variables associated with the Roman emperors. There were 12 emperors, starting with Julius Caesar through Domitian, who was the emperor when John wrote Revelation.

(12) 10 kings is a reference to the many kings of the various nations ruled by Rome. They were vassal kings who hated Rome and would take any good opportunity to revolt against Rome (the meaning of vv. 16-17). In addition, evil hates evil and evil destroys other evil as well as destroying good. Also see Ezekiel 23 for Old Testament sources on this.

(8, 11) John often uses parody to create an evil but pathetic competition to God. These verses are a parody of the one who was and is and is to come. The beast is a parody of Christ.

(14) Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, another clear description of Jesus equal to God in Revelation. God the Almighty and God the Lamb are equally God.

Notice the language to describe the followers of Jesus. In verse 6 they are saints; in verse 14 they are "called, chosen, and faithful" (the last one being John's favorite term for Christians).

*Today, know you are a saint; you are called, chosen, and, faithful. Live like that and follow Jesus with faith, hope, and love.*