

I. Review (Rev. 16-18)

- A. The last events of the earth that John witnessed in this vision of the final days leading up to the coming of Jesus were the 7 trumpet judgments. John watched as the most severe judgements were released upon the Antichrist (Beast) and his kingdom. Fallen humanity's response to these judgments was to rage against God and set their hearts against Him even more. Then from all over the earth they gathered together outside Jerusalem to the valley of Armageddon to wage war against Jesus. (Rev. 16:8-9, 11, 12-16, 21)
- B. John was surely puzzled by this surprising response of humanity to the judgments of God. An angel comes quickly to him to help him understand the mystery how humanity arrived at such a mindset. The angel told him he would show him two things that would explain their response and actions to him.
 - 1. The first was a great and luxurious harlot woman that was adored by the whole earth and she deceived and made the earth intoxicated through her ideology and worldly pleasures.
 - 2. The second was a powerful beast (The Antichrist) who would come to power through the ideological and economic system that the woman represented. The angel explained that the Beast would use the Harlot System to rise to power and wait for the nations to become intoxicated and dependent upon the system for their happiness. He would then destroy the system and its premier city and declare himself to be the king of the earth and demand to be worshipped as a God.
- C. The angel then showed John that this entire series of events was allowed to happen through the sovereign leadership of God. God in His wisdom and desire for the fullness of love would use this system and the rise of the Antichrist to purify and make fully ready the church of Jesus (The Bride) to be married to His Son forever in the fullness, faithfulness, partnership, and love. (Rev. 17:17; 2 Thes. 2:7-17)

II. The Fall of the Greatest City of is Age (Rev. 18:9-42)

- A. Satan is a deceiver and counterfeiter, so it is no surprise that his influence in the nations causes them to build a glorious city that entices the earth to bask in its production and glory forever. Indeed, we have been made for a great city that will be the pinnacle place of glory in the earth where our king reigns forever, whose builder and maker is God. As God destroys this counterfeit city that humanity built upon the foundations of their own strength, the earth will weep and He once again will shake everything that can be shaken. (Gen. 11:4; Dan. 4:28-30; Heb. 11:8-10, 12:25-29, 13:10-14; Phil. 3:17-21; Rev. 21:22-27)

B. What is like this great city? – As John describes the vastness of the economic, governmental, and religious power of this city, there can be no doubt that this city will possibly be the greatest wonder the world has ever seen. (Eze. 27)

1. World Leaders “Kings” (Governmental Power) – These rulers who lament are clearly different than the 10 kings who destroy the city. They mourn because of their loss of governmental power. Doubling the sorrow they feel increases the perception of their loss of power. The city to them was a city of “might” and power. (Rev. 18:9-10)
2. Business Leaders “Merchants” (Economic Power) – The business leaders of the earth weep and mourn at the loss of wealth and business for this city is the world’s epicenter of exports. It tells us that they weep and wail with a double repetition of their sorrow that they have lost the ability to live luxuriously and lavish in wealth. Their market was the world and most the items they sold were considered luxury items in John’s day. (Rev. 18:11-16)
 - a) Precious Metals and Gems
 - b) Fine Clothing
 - c) Furnishings
 - d) Spices and Perfumes
 - e) Fine Food
 - f) Implements and Equipment
 - g) People – There will be a legal world wide market in the coming days that is celebrated and promoted where humans will be bought and sold once again. The words used here (bodies) and (souls) speak of what these business men and women are selling. The first word (bodies) speaks of the value of the human body and its physical abilities devoid of the spirit or soul of the person. The second (souls) speaks of the breath, life, or spirit of an individual.

This leads us to an interesting question. What individuals are being bought and sold in a system of tolerance and celebration of the glory of humans? What people group will be reduced to sub-human in that day? I believe it will be the people who refuse to participate in the system.

3. Helmsmen, Sailors, Sea Travelers, and Fisherman/Divers “Shipmasters, travelers, sailors, sea traders” (Economic Work Force) – This secondary group of working class individuals also are becoming rich from this city and its produce. They cry out “What is like this great city?” Throwing dust on your head symbolizes great and excruciating grief.

III. The World Grieves and Heaven Rejoices (Rev. 18:20-19:10)

- A. When this city is destroyed, heaven and the church rejoices, however, there is a very interesting reason given for why it was this city was judged. Once again we are overwhelmed by the love and care that our God has for us. The Harlot system clearly stole worship, love, glory and affection that was rightly due God but that's not why He judged her so harshly. This city and system is judged by God because of what it did to us, His highly valued treasure and bride, rather than what it did to Him. (Rev. 18:20, 23, 24; 19:2)
1. "Apostles and Prophets" are listed as the primary leadership gifting's upon which the church is built. In other words, we are to see this judgment as God bringing justice for the Church. (Lk 11:49; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 2:20, 3:5; 2 Pet. 3:2)
- B. This judgment is final and the Harlot System and its City will never be seen or felt in the earth again. God will destroy the system of tolerance and relative truth in which we are so entrenched in today. This is His first major judgment event in which he removes everything that hinders the fullness of love for Him in our hearts. With this system of tolerance gone, all that's left is black and white, to choose the Antichrist as God, or Him as God, there will be no more fence-sitting and no more casual Christianity.
1. The angel performs a symbolic act demonstrating the sudden, violent, and permanent judgment of the Harlot. Millstones in John's day were huge, many times 4 or 5 feet in diameter and weighing thousands of pounds. It is impossible for that huge stone to ever rise to the surface again and so too the harlot system that has driven the world virtually throughout history will sink never to rise again. (Rev. 18:21)
- C. Many things will dynamically shift in the earth when the Harlot system and city is destroyed. John tells us that the destruction of this system will result in a dramatic halt to the counterfeit peace and happiness that it produced world-wide. This event will shake humanity to its core. This city and system drove fallen humanities expectations, vision, and hope.
1. Music/Worship - This system and city drove the vision, inspiration, and aspirations for the music and entertainment industry of the earth. The entertainment and happiness that this city brought to the earth will never be felt again.
 2. Industrial/Material – This system also inspired and drove the industrial and material markets of the earth. The latest and greatest building

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(Rev. 18:9-24)

materials, vehicles, computers, televisions, clothes, appliances, ext. all came from the strength of this system and city.

3. Light – The symbolism and reality of light in the scriptures has always pointed to the life, truth, and hope of humanity. The light that shined forth from this system and city will no longer be seen or felt on the earth again.
4. The voice of groom and bride - Joyful expectation of the future hope of humanity found is life within the promise of this system as well. Newly married couples embody and represent our hope and vision of humanities future.

- D. The angel gives a progression of results or implications of this system that leads up to its killing and persecution of God’s people and why God brought such final and total devastation to it.
1. This system produced very wealthy businessmen and women who because of their wealth and prosperity became the influencers and role models to the world.
 2. Through these influential people the earth became hooked on a worldview and ideology that is likened to a drug addiction. The word translated “sorcery” is the Greek word “pharmakon” in which we get our word pharmacy. Through the influencers this system produces, the entire earth gets drugged or intoxicated to all think and act in direct opposition to the truths of God.
 3. Finally the result is a humanistic culture intoxicated in selfishness and wickedness. The people of God are seen as enemies and in turn are killed and persecuted. In verse 24 the angel tells us that this satanic world system has been responsible for “all” the slayings of God’s people throughout the ages upon the earth.
- E. As we looked at before, the judgment of this system is a result of God dispensing justice to us His bride. All of us have felt and suffered various degrees of trial, pain, and suffering that the spirit of this age and its seduction has brought upon us and our children. (Mal. 4:1-3; Is. 42:10-16; 63:4-9)
- F. Take heart Church! Your Bridegroom sees and feels it all, and there is a day burning in His heart where He will vindicate and bring justice on your behalf. In addition to that, Jesus heals all your pain, restores everything you lost, brings an end to Satan’s influence, and ushers you into a eternal reality that is more than you can ask or imagine. (1 Pet. 1:3-13)