

The Book Of Revelation Study 73

Revelation 14:8 (NKJV)

⁸ And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

As we began to look at the 3 angels that John Saw. We learned that the first one preached the eternal Gospel as he flew through the heavens.

The second angel pronounces judgment,
And the third angel promises damnation.

We have already taken up the 1st angel in our last study, today we want to take up the second and so on.

THE SECOND ANGEL: PRONOUNCING JUDGMENT

John saw **another angel, a second one**, who **followed** the first angel.

Unlike the first angel, this one does not preach the good news of the gospel, but rather pronounces the bad news of judgment.

Sadly, that implies that the first angel's message was largely rejected.
It is almost as if the second angel interrupts the first angel because no one is responding.

The second angel's equally brief and direct message is "**Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great,**"

The repetition underscores the finality, certainty, and comprehensive nature of Babylon's judgment.
Babylon's yet future fall is so certain that it can be spoken of as though it has already taken place.

The angel's pronouncement will come as a shock to the unbelieving world.
That Antichrist's mighty empire, the most powerful in human history, could be destroyed will be inconceivable to his followers

Remember this verse:

Revelation 13:4 (NKJV)

⁴ So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"

Babylon here refers to Antichrist's worldwide political, economic, and religious empire.

Babylon has from its inception symbolized evil and rebellion against God.
It was founded by Nimrod (Gen10:9), a proud, powerful, God-rejecting ruler.
Babel (Babylon) was the site of the first organized system of idolatrous false religion

Genesis 11:1-4 (NKJV)

¹ Now the whole earth had one language and one speech.

² And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.

³ Then they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar.

⁴ And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."

The Tower of Babel, the expression of that false religion, was a ziggurat; an edifice designed to facilitate idolatrous worship.

God judged the people's idolatry and rebellion by confusing their language and scattering them over the globe

Genesis 11:5-9 (NKJV)

⁵ But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.

⁶ And the LORD said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.

⁷ Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

⁸ So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.

⁹ Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

Thus the seeds of idolatry and false religion spread around the world from Babylon, to take root wherever these proud rebels and their descendants settled.

As humanity was united in idolatrous false religion at Babel, so will it again be united in the end times under the auspices of the final Babylon.

History will come full circle.

The final Babylon, is personified as a harlot

Revelation 17:1-5 (NKJV)

¹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters,

² with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

³ So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

⁴ The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.

⁵ And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

She is described as **"She who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."** The world will be intoxicated, deceived, and seduced by the Babylonian false religion headed by Antichrist

The word **"passion"** describes strong, consuming lusts and desires.

As a result of their passion, sinners will engage in an orgy of rebellion, idolatry, and hatred of God.

While sexual sin will be rampant, the **immorality** spoken of here is spiritual prostitution to Antichrist's false religion; it pictures unfaithfulness to God.

Having imbibed the wine of the seductive harlot, **the nations** of the world will continue on their course of spiritual defection from God and end up drinking the “*wine of the wrath of God,*” (v 10)

As the third angel reveals, this will prove disastrous.

And this judgment will be detailed in the discussion of chapter 16 and 17 and 18.

THE THIRD ANGEL: PROMISING DAMNATION

Revelation 14:9-11 (NKJV)

⁹ *Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,*

¹⁰ *he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.*

¹¹ *And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."*

The three angels appear in a logical, if not chronological, sequence.

The rejection of the gospel preached by the first angel results in the pronouncement of judgment by the second angel which will be carried out in the damnation described by the third angel.

The third angel will deliver his warning **with a loud voice**, so that all will hear and understand his message.

God, being perfectly holy and righteous, judges people because they reject what they know to be true. That is why everyone sentenced to hell will be without excuse

Romans 1:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,*

Romans 2:1 (NKJV)

¹ *Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.*

The third angel's dire warning is addressed to **anyone who worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand.**

As noted in chapter 5, everyone will be required under pain of death, to worship **the beast and his image.** As a **sign of loyalty** to Antichrist and in order to function in his world economy, everyone will be required to receive a **mark on his forehead or on his hand.**

It will seem to the deceived followers of Antichrist who receive that mark that they are backing the winning side.

But the angel warns that a terrible fate awaits those who, despite all of God's judgments and warnings, persist in worshipping Antichrist.

Once again God graciously calls on sinners to repent in the final hour.

Those who drank the wine of the harlot Babylon **also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger.**

To drink of the wine of the wrath of God, is to experience His wrath;

Job 21:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ *Let his eyes see his destruction, And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.*

Psalms 75:8 (NKJV)

⁸ *For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, And the wine is red; It is fully mixed, and He pours it out; Surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth Drain and drink down.*

Isaiah 51:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ *Awake, awake! Stand up, O Jerusalem, You who have drunk at the hand of the LORD The cup of His fury; You have drunk the dregs of the cup of trembling, And drained it out.*

Isaiah 51:22 (NKJV)

²² *Thus says your Lord, The LORD and your God, Who pleads the cause of His people: "See, I have taken out of your hand The cup of trembling, The dregs of the cup of My fury; You shall no longer drink it.*

Jeremiah 25:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ *For thus says the LORD God of Israel to me: "Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it.*

The full fury of God's wrath so long restrained will be unleashed.

Such wrath is not an impulsive outburst of divine emotion aimed at people whimsically, it is the settled, deliberate, merciless, graceless, response of the righteous God against all sinners.

John describes that terrifying reality by noting that God's wrath will be **mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger.**

Mixed in full strength, refers to the ancient practice of diluting wine with water.

The wine filling **the cup of God's anger**, however is strong, undiluted wine.

God's eschatological wrath will be undiluted vengeance, unmixed with any trace of compassion.

The horrifying fate awaiting the person who drinks **the wine of the wrath of God** is to **be tormented with fire and brimstone.**

The verb translated be tormented speaks of the ceaseless infliction of unbearable pain.

The noun for of that verb is used in Luke:

Luke 16:23 (NKJV)

²³ *And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

It is used here to describe the agony of the rich man in Hades.

Those whom God will force to drink from **the cup of His anger** will know no lessening or diminishing of their torment; they will enjoy no moments of rest throughout eternity.

Fire and brimstone are often associated in Scripture with divine judgment. God used them to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:24-25; Luke 17:29)

David wrote;

Psalm 11:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Upon the wicked He will rain coals; Fire and brimstone and a burning wind Shall be the portion of their cup.

Hell, the final resting place of the unregenerate, is also described as, *“lake of fire which burns with brimstone”*

That the unregenerate will be tormented **in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb** will add shame and embarrassment to their suffering.

To suffer in the presence of the hosts of heaven is not to lessen the fierceness of the judgment but to make it more grievous.

“Christians had borne the shame of public derision and opposition; soon their antagonists will suffer before a more august gathering.” Says (Robert H. Mounce, of the New International Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1977], 276))

Unrepentant sinners will be banished from God’s presence relationally; (21:27; 22:15; Matt 7:23; 25:41; 2 Thess 1:9) they will forever be barred from the loving fellowship with Him that believers will enjoy;

They will not however, be away from His presence in the sense of His sovereignty and omnipresence even in hell.

Psalm 139:7-8 (NKJV)

⁷ Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?

⁸ If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.

Those in Hell will suffer eternal punishment at the hands of God, because He is the One who is *“able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matt 10:28)”*

The third angel concludes his message with final sobering thought about the punishment of those who worship the beast, declaring that **the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night.**

This angel would strongly disagree with those who deny the eternity of hell.

His description of hell as the place where **the smoke of the torment** of the wicked **goes up forever and ever**

Revelation 20:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

This description is consistent with the rest of Scripture.

Our Lord taught the eternity of the place called hell.

Matthew 18:8 (NKJV)

⁸ If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire.

Matthew 25:41 (NKJV)

⁴¹ Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

He spoke of the unquenchable fire

Mark 9:43 (NKJV)

⁴³ If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched--

Mark 9:48 (NKJV)

⁴⁸ where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'

The teaching of eternal punishment is both explicit in the Bible and demanded by God's justice and holiness.

So these three angels deliver God's last call to repentance before the final judgments fall and the Lord Jesus Christ returns.

But God's gracious warnings will go unheeded by most of the sinful world. There is perhaps no clearer illustration in Scripture of the sad truth that

John 3:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.