

The Book Of Revelation Study 87

Chapter 18 records seven aspects of the Judgment of commercial Babylon and on Antichrist.

Judgment Pronounced,
Judgment Avoided,
Judgment defined,
Judgment lamented,
Judgment enjoyed,
Judgment completed,
Judgment justified.

We have looked at the pronouncement of the judgment to come. It has been outlined clearly for all to see. Now we want to take a look at Judgment Avoided.

JUDGMENT AVOIDED

Revelation 18:4-5 (NASB77)

⁴ *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues;*

⁵ *for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.*

God's judgment on this commercially prosperous but morally bankrupt society can be avoided, as **another voice from heaven** makes clear.

Again the use of *allos* (**another** of the same kind) suggests that the speaker is an angel like the one in verse 1. The message he proclaims "**Come out of her, my people,**" is a call for God's people to disentangle themselves from the world system.

It may also be an evangelistic call to God's elect to come to faith in Christ and come out of Satan's kingdom.

Colossians 1:12-14 (NASB77)

¹² *giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.*

¹³ *For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,*

¹⁴ *in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

In both cases the call is to abandon the system.

Throughout the terrifying judgments of the Tribulation, God will save people.

The result of the gospel preaching by the 144,000 Jewish evangelists, the two witnesses, and an angel flying in the mid-heaven will be the greatest harvest of souls the world has ever known.

Revelation 7:9-14 (NASB77)

⁹ *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands;*

¹⁰ *and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the*

Lamb."

¹¹ *And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,*

¹² *saying, " Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."*

¹³ *And one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and from where have they come?"*

¹⁴ *And I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

Many of these believers will be martyred for their faith in Christ when they refuse to take the mark of the beast;

Revelation 13:15-16 (NASB77)

¹⁵ *And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed.*

¹⁶ *And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead,*

The survivors will face powerful temptations to participate in the system.

Family and friends will no doubt pressure them to save themselves by accepting the mark of the beast.

The need to obtain the basic necessities of life will also pressure them to conform to the system.

Revelation 13:17 (NASB77)

¹⁷ *and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.*

The exhortation to flee Babylon find an Old Testament parallel in the prophets' warnings to flee ancient Babylon.

Isaiah 48:20 (NASB77)

²⁰ *Go forth from Babylon! Flee from the Chaldeans! Declare with the sound of joyful shouting, proclaim this, Send it out to the end of the earth; Say, " The LORD has redeemed His servant Jacob."*

Also;

Jeremiah 50:8 (NASB77)

⁸ *"Wander away from the midst of Babylon, And go forth from the land of the Chaldeans; Be also like male goats at the head of the flock.*

Jeremiah 51:6 (NASB77)

⁶ *Flee from the midst of Babylon, And each of you save his life! Do not be destroyed in her punishment, For this is the LORD'S time of vengeance; He is going to render recompense to her.*

Jeremiah 51:45 (NASB77)

⁴⁵ *" Come forth from her midst, My people, And each of you save yourselves From the fierce anger of the LORD.*

Believers in the present day must also avoid the temptation to get caught up in the world system.

Romans 12:2 (NASB77)

² *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

To the Corinthians he wrote;

2 Corinthians 6:14-17 (NASB77)

¹⁴ *Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?*

¹⁵ *Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?*

¹⁶ *Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, " I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.*

¹⁷ *" Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you.*

James wrote that ;

James 1:27 (NASB77)

²⁷ *This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.*

He sharply rebuked those caught up in the world system;

James 4:4 (NASB77)

⁴ *You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

In his first epistle, the apostle John exhorted believers;

1 John 2:15 (NASB77)

¹⁵ *Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

The biblical truth that believers are not to be involved in the world system will take on new urgency as Babylon faces imminent destruction.

The angels message to the believers still in that city is the same one that the angels brought to Lot;

Genesis 19:12-13 (NASB77)

¹² *Then the men said to Lot, "Whom else have you here? A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whomever you have in the city, bring them out of the place;*

¹³ *for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it."*

The message is, get out before you are caught up in God's judgment of that wicked place.

Believers are to flee Babylon so that they **will not participate in her sins.**

The materialistic, pleasure-mad, demon-infested city of Babylon will exert an almost irresistible influence on believers to **participate in her sins.**

But they must flee to avoid succumbing to the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life.

1 John 2:16 (NASB77)

¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

God's people must also flee Babylon so they do not **receive of her plagues.**

Some here view the **plagues** as a reference to the bowl judgments, which are also called plagues (15:1, 6, 8; 16:9)

The bowl judgments, however, are worldwide in scope; hence, there would be no place to escape to

Revelation 18:9 (NASB77)

⁹ "And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning,

Therefore it is best to see these plagues as specific judgments on Babylon, perhaps as noted above in conjunction with the outpouring of the seventh bowl.

Revelation 16:17-19 (NASB77)

¹⁷ And the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air; and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done."

¹⁸ And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty.

¹⁹ And the great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath.

Finally, believers must flee Babylon because **her sins have piled up as high as heaven**

Jeremiah 51:9 (NASB77)

⁹ We applied healing to Babylon, but she was not healed; Forsake her and let us each go to his own country, For her judgment has reached to heaven And towers up to the very skies.

Piled is from *kollao*, which literally means to glue together, or join"

Babylon's sins will pile up like a new Tower of Babel, but unlike the ancient tower, her sins will reach **as high as heaven.**

Then the angel adds that **God has remembered her iniquities.**

He will take note of them.

Just as He did with that earlier monument to man's sinful, arrogant, prideful rebellion at Babel.

The blessed truth is that God says of believers,

Isaiah 43:25 (NASB77)

²⁵ *"I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.*

Jeremiah 31:34b (NASB77)

³⁴ *"for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*

But for defiant, unrepentant Babylon there will be no forgiveness, only judgment.

Now we come to the next specific aspect of Babylon's judgment

JUDGMENT DEFINED

Revelation 18:6-8 (NASB77)

⁶ *" Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her.*

⁷ *" To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, ' I SIT as A QUEEN AND I AM NOT A WIDOW, and will never see mourning.'*

⁸ *"For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong.*

Babylon's judgment is defined as the angel now speaks not to John, but to God.

His call for vengeance on Babylon, **pay her back even as she has paid**, parallels the prayers of the martyred saints recorded in chapter 6

Revelation 6:9-10 (NASB77)

⁹ *And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained;*

¹⁰ *and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, " How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"*

The angel's prayer for justice is based on the Old Testament principle of *lex talionis*, the law of retaliation, the principle of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"

Babylon has been extended enough grace and heard enough warnings. It is time for vengeance. It is time for her destruction.

The angels plea is reminiscent of the Old Testament saints' pleas for vengeance on ancient Babylon.

Psalm 137:8 (NASB77)

⁸ *O daughter of Babylon, you devastated one, How blessed will be the one who repays you With the recompense with which you have repaid us.*

Jeremiah also pleaded for vengeance on Babylon;

Jeremiah 50:14-15 (NASB77)

¹⁴ *"Draw up your battle lines against Babylon on every side, All you who bend the bow; Shoot at her, do not be sparing with your arrows, For she has sinned against the LORD.*

¹⁵ *"Raise your battle cry against her on every side! She has given herself up, her pillars have fallen, Her walls have been torn down. For this is the vengeance of the LORD: Take vengeance on her; As she has done to others, so do to her.*

Jeremiah 50:29 (NASB77)

²⁹ *"Summon many against Babylon, All those who bend the bow: Encamp against her on every side, Let there be no escape. Repay her according to her work; According to all that she has done, so do to her; For she has become arrogant against the LORD, Against the Holy One of Israel.*

Jeremiah 51:24 (NASB77)

²⁴ *"But I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all their evil that they have done in Zion before your eyes," declares the LORD.*

Jeremiah 51:56 (NASB77)

⁵⁶ *For the destroyer is coming against her, against Babylon, And her mighty men will be captured, Their bows are shattered; For the LORD is a God of recompense, He will fully repay.*

It is important to note that retaliation belongs to God alone.

The Bible explicitly forbids Christians to take their own vengeance.

Believers must not say I will repay evil, instead they are to wait for the Lord, and He will save them.

Proverbs 20:22 (NASB77)

²² *Do not say, "I will repay evil"; Wait for the LORD, and He will save you.*

Instead, the Christian is instructed;

Romans 12:14 (NASB77)

¹⁴ *Bless those who persecute you; bless and curse not.*

Romans 12:17 (NASB77)

¹⁷ *Never pay back evil for evil to anyone.*

Romans 12:19-21 (NASB77)

¹⁹ *Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.*

²⁰ " **BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS UPON HIS HEAD.** "

²¹ **Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

1 Thessalonians 5:15 (NASB77)

¹⁵ **See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all men.**

1 Peter 3:9 (NASB77)

⁹ **not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.**