

Hungry For Home

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[0 : 00] We will be in Revelation chapter 18 this morning. If you have a Bible, I invite you to turn there so that you can follow along. One of the most encouraging and convicting themes that our life group has discussed this spring has been the courage and conviction of Daniel and his friends.

Daniel, of course, is from the tribe of Judah, and God has brought judgment upon Judah for their idolatry. And Daniel and some of his friends find themselves living as captives in a foreign land, in the land of Babylon, who in fact were the very nation who brought God's judgment upon his people. Imagine being a teenager, forcibly removed from your home to live with the people who have just plundered and pillaged your home.

How easy it would be in that environment to compromise, to blend in, fearfully obey this idol-worshipping society.

But Daniel remained true to Yahweh, Israel's God. And he was thrown into a den of lions because he remained true.

[1 : 30] And yet, we know God saved him. What kept Daniel faithful and uncompromising in his walk with his God?

Well, we can answer in this way. We can say that Daniel's heart was never in Babylon. His heart longed for home.

Multiple times a day, we see in the book of Daniel that he would go up into his private room and he would open this window toward the east, toward Jerusalem, and he would pray to his God with his eyes set on his homeland that was so seemingly far and distant.

He hungered for home. So, when Babylon the great made demands of Daniel and said, do this, worship this king, worship this image, Babylon had no influence on Daniel because his heart was somewhere else.

Well, we've come to Revelation 18 today and we see that Babylon is still alive and well. Not literally, of course.

[2 : 47] That nation that Daniel lived in has been long gone. But Babylon, as Mike told us last week from Revelation 17, is representative of the world's powers and all of those who rally themselves together in opposition to God.

That Babylon is still alive and well and remains a very constant and unwavering threat to us. This self-exalting, sin-sick, hell-bound city of God-haters, supported and led by the dragon, Satan himself and his cronies.

This Babylon is alive and well. And we, as God's people, this current threat of this great city, we're under constant attack because we're not yet home.

Revelation 18 is in our Bibles, friends, to help us endure and overcome until the end when we arrive at home forever. Revelation 18 is in our Bibles, friends, to help us learn more.

We're going to be a part of this chapter. We're going to take a look at this vision that John saw and listen to the voices that John heard. And then we're going to try and apply it.

[4 : 07] So behold and apply. So first we need to take a look at this chapter and behold what John sees and hears. And we're going to work from the outside in.

We're going to start in verses 1 to 3 and 21 to 24. And then we're going to move to verse 4 and verse 20. And then we're going to kind of look at the middle, the core of this passage in verses 9 to verse 19.

And it's intentional that we're going to do it this way. So first the outsides we see in verses 1 to 3 that there's an angel. And then in verses 21 to 24 there's another angel.

And both of these angels are announcing judgment upon Babylon. Essentially we could say that they're announcing the just desserts. Babylon is getting what she deserves.

These angels both declare in authoritative mighty voices from heaven. The first angel in verse 1 we see how this angel is described.

[5 : 10] Coming down out of heaven. Great authority. And the earth was made bright with his glory. The only thing that this could mean is that this angel has been in the presence of God.

And is radiating the glory of God. Great authority because God has sent this angel to declare judgment upon Babylon. And similarly the angel at the end of the chapter is described as a mighty angel.

So mighty that this angel takes this ginormous stone. Weighing thousands of pounds and just hurls it into the sea. Making this huge devastating splash.

And then they both make the announcement. We see it in verse 2. First angel with a mighty voice. Fallen. Fallen is Babylon the great. Second angel says very similar things.

So shall Babylon be thrown down in violence. After making these announcements of judgment. Then we can see that there's a contrast.

[6 : 19] First angel says what will be found in Babylon. Second angel says what will not be found in Babylon. See that in verse 2.

Fallen. Fallen is Babylon the great. She has become a dwelling place for demons. A haunt for every unclean spirit. A haunt for every unclean bird. A haunt for every unclean and detestable beast. The only thing you will find in Babylon is wickedness and unclean things when she is destroyed. But then the angel at the end we see the exact opposite.

Here's what won't be found anymore. And it's all the good things that Babylon enjoyed. Her wealth. Her perfumes. Her jewels. Her marriage ceremonies. And her sort of festivals.

And her big feasts. There won't be any more craftsmen to make her fine throne of a queen. And so on and so forth. None of that will be found in her anymore.

[7 : 19] And then both of these angels give us the reason why. Essentially to kind of paraphrase what they say. Babylon has turned the hearts of all of the nations away from the one true living God.

And not just turned the hearts onto her. But turned everyone's hearts onto themselves. We'll see that as we get to the middle of our chapter.

But that's essentially what the reason why judgment has come. Babylon you have deceived the nations. You've deceived the kings of the nations. You've deceived the merchants, the businessmen of the nations.

They've all rallied to you. You will be judged accordingly. So that's the outer ring. Now if we move in just a little bit.

In verse 4 and verse 20. We see that there's two kind of commands. Now a third voice is speaking. Verse 4 it says. John writes.

[8 : 23] Then I heard another voice from heaven. And this voice calls. Come out of her my people. So this is either God speaking.

Directly to his people. Maybe Jesus is talking here. Or maybe it's an angel just speaking on behalf of God. But either way this voice from heaven. Is urgently calling his people.

Out of this city. This same voice. Speaking in verse 4. Is speaking in verse 20. When we read this. Rejoice over her.

O heaven. And you saints. And apostles. And prophets. For God has given judgment. For you against her. Now you might see.

The quote there. In verse 20. Is tied to. The quote in verse 19. I don't think we should see. The ship masters. Saying this. This again is the voice.

[9 : 23] Just like come out of her. This voice is directly. Calling to heaven. And all of the saints. And apostles. And prophets. Who have already come out of Babylon. Through death. Who are in heaven.

They're rejoicing. Over her destruction. They've suffered from it. They've been the victims. From this. Great city. And they are all called.

To rejoice. And we'll see next week. When Billy and I. Preaches. The first half of. 19. We'll see a fuller picture. Of why exactly. Heaven is rejoicing. Over this. Destruction.

But nonetheless. In verse 20. We see that heaven. Rejoices. Over Babylon's. Fall. Fall. Justice. Justice. Has been served. The wedding feast.

Has arrived. So that's the. Rejoice. So heaven. Now looking back. More specifically. At verses 4. To verses 8. We hear this appeal.

[10:21] This. This. This. Urgent. Call. To come. Out. Of her. My people. Notice why. Lest you take part.

In her sins. Lest you share. In her plagues. This voice from heaven. Says. To associate. With Babylon. Is to be judged. With Babylon.

And then in verse 5. We see why. Her sins are heaped. As high as heaven. And God. God's remembered them. If you've ever been down.

To downtown Chicago. And you've stood. At the foundation. Of one of these. Giant skyscrapers. And you've tried. To look up. And imagine.

Where the top. Of this building is. It's disorienting. Right? You start getting. A little dizzy. Because it's just. So high up there. Verse 5.

[11:17] We see that Babylon. Sins. Are not just heaped. As high as the Willis Tower. All the way. To heaven. God. This is a staggering. And disorienting.

Pile. Of sin. This city. Is wicked. Beyond measure. And God knows. And remembers. What she has done. So in verse 6.

He begins. Issuing this command. Pay her back. Repay her. As she glorified herself. Give her a like measure. Of torment. And mourning. The call for double.

It's kind of a little bit. Of a translation. Missed there. I think. It should rather be. Duplicate it. Like for like. What she did. Pay it back. That's what makes sense.

Of everything else. Surrounding it. Pay her back. As she paid others back. So it's kind for kind. Lex talionis. Right? This retribution principle. God isn't somehow now. Flying off the handle.

[12:16] Or kind of. Ceasing to be just. In this judgment. It's right. And good. And notice. The root issue. In verse 7. In her heart.

She says. I sit. As a queen. I am no widow. And mourning. I'll never see that.

Babylon is all. About. Babylon. Babylon. And always. Will. Be about. Babylon. Even as I babble on. About Babylon.

She's still about. Babylon. God knows. And remembers. It's why. In verse 8.

We see. For this reason. Her plagues. Will come. In a single. Day. She'll be consumed. Fire. Fire. And as mighty.

[13:18] As she may be. As many times. In this chapter. She's referred to. As the great city. The mighty city. This wonderful. High. Lifted up thing. The end of verse 8.

Tells us. Who's really. Mighty. Mighty. Is the Lord God. Who has judged her. That's why. Years. And years. And years. Of acquiring. Wealth. And power. And prestige. And luxury. Can be taken away. Like that. God almighty. Has no equal.

And when his judgment. Comes. It comes. Fallen. Is Babylon. And we move now. Into the core. Of our chapter. Verses 9 to 19. John wants us. To see here. A trio. Of lament. A trio.

[14:11] Of laments. Verses 9 and 10. We see. That the kings. Of the earth. Who have committed. Sexual morality. And lived in luxury. With Babylon. They're crying out.

In sorrow. Verses 11. To 17. We see the merchants. Of the earth. And they're crying out. In sorrow. They're weeping.

And mourning. Over Babylon. And then. In verses 18 and 19. We see. The sailors. And the ship masters. And the oarsmen. All the people. Who have been. Sort of.

Doing business. On the sea. They're crying out. And they're throwing dust. On their heads. As they mourn. Over Babylon. Well there's a common theme.

A thread. Connecting all three. Of these. Segments. Of society. It's in the phrase. Of the earth. With the kings. And of the earth. With the merchants. Verse 9.

[15:06] And verse 11. And then. On the sea. In verse 18. We already know. That revelation. Uses the phrase. Dwellers. On the earth.

Or dwellers. Of the earth. To talk about all those. Who have opposed God. So too. These are segments. Of those on the earth. Who are opposing God. The kings of the earth. Who oppose God. The merchants of the earth. Who oppose God. And the sailors. On the sea. The very place. The beast. Sent by Satan. Arises from.

These people. Are aligned. Against God. With Babylon. And they're wailing. And weeping. They all have the same response. To her. Destruction. Just listen.

In verse. I'll just read these. Woes. That they pronounce. 10. 16. At 19. Alas. Alas. You great city.

[16:05] You mighty city. Babylon. For in a single hour. Your judgment. Has come. That's what the kings say. The merchants.

Chime in. In verse 16. Alas. Alas. For the great city. That with clothed. And fine linen. And purple. And scarlet. Adorned with gold. With jewels. And with pearls. For in a single hour.

All this wealth. All of it. Has been laid waste. And the ship masters. And mariners. In verse 19.

Alas. Alas. For the great city. Where all who had ships. At sea. Grew rich. By her wealth. For in a single hour. She has been laid waste.

And all three of these groups. They stand far off. They see the smoke of her torment. And they're standing far off.

[17:02] Just horrified. And fearful. Of this judgment. Why are they mourning? Why are they? I mean obviously it's an upsetting sight.

But why? Why are they mourning? The destruction of Babylon? Why are they mourning? It's because of what they lose. It's self-centered sorrow.

We see it most easily in 11 to 17. In the merchants. You can look there with me. Verse 11. And the merchants of the earth. Weep and mourn for her.

And then it's right there. Since no one buys their stuff. The merchants are heartbroken. Because nobody's buying their stuff. If nobody buys their stuff. They don't have money.

They just have useless stuff. And see it's impressive stuff. Verse 12 and verse 13. Cargo of gold, silver, jewels, pearls. Fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth.

[18:07] All kinds of scented wood. All kinds of articles of ivory. All kinds of articles of costly wood. Bronze, iron, and marble. Cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense.

Wine, oil, fine flour, wheat. Cattle and sheep. Horses and chariots. And slaves. That is human souls.

These merchants know that. If the price is right. They can get anything they want. To give to Babylon.

Even human beings. Whether that's to parade them in the arena. As animals devour them. For entertainment. Or whether it's some kind of sex trafficking industry. Or prostitution ring. If you have the money.

The merchants can get it for you. And Babylon had the money. She had more money than anybody. On earth. In John's day it was Rome. And it was said that. Ten measures of wealth came to the earth.

[19:10] Nine went to Rome. One went to the rest. Rich beyond measure. And wanting what they want. Self-seeking. Self-glorifying. Even at the expense of other human beings.

The sailors. The merchants. The kings. They're not sad for a friend. They're sad for themselves. Their money maker. Has just been destroyed. And along with it.

All of their profits. All of their immorality. Like the kings. All of their luxurious sitting at table. Even the oarsmen. If nobody's buying a product.

Nobody's shipping a product. Nobody's hiring a guy to row the boat. From top to bottom. It's all undone. Because Babylon is judged by God. Friends.

We need to see in this. This. This. Very clear cut call. That. All who love and adore the world. Are self-seeking.

[20:14] Right. You're not seeking the good of the world. If you love the world. You're seeking what the world can get you. And. And it's this immoral relationship. It's this. This making friends with the world. Is.

Turning yourself as an enemy. Against. God. God. And we know what Jesus says. You can get the entire world. And what does it profit.

If you forfeit. Your soul. What does it profit you in the end. But lose your life for my sake. Jesus says. And you will find it.

If we love Babylon. We are seeking our own glory. And we become just like her. In her pride. In her wickedness. And in that stack of sin.

That rises to heaven. And God will bring it all. Crashing down. In just one. Single. Hour. Did you hear that? In all of the three laments. It's repeated.

[21:13] By all three. The kings. The merchants. And the sea. Sea captains. So fast. Each group.

We didn't even get one last meal. Together. It just comes toppling down. In one. Single. Hour. Sudden starvation. Where all they knew was luxury. And happiness.

Just like that. Judgment has come. And it's all gone. Oh friend. Oh friend. Beware. Lest you find yourself mourning. The loss of this great city.

That's self-centered sorrow. These three laments should shake us. And get us to hear the call. And get us to hear the call to come out of her.

As the voice of heaven graciously offers to us. So just one final thing to point to. And it's at the very end. This second angel.

[22 : 11] The mighty angel. That we see in verse 21. I wish we could get more into this. But this is the third time a mighty angel shows up in the book of Revelation. If you want to go check it out later.

The first one is 5 verse 2. Second one is 10 verse 1. And then this one in 18. 21. The first mighty angel.

We see that it is only the slain and risen lamb. Who can take the scroll and carry out God's judgments on the earth. Second mighty angel.

We see that it is the church faithfully witnessing to Jesus. Will be slain. And suffer. As the plan of judgment is carried out.

The church prophetic. Hated by the world. Will be killed by the world. And yet. Will be raised. Again. It's chapter 11. The two witnesses. Now this third mighty angel.

[23 : 12] Is saying Babylon. Will be thrown down. Just like this huge rock falls into the sea. Babylon will be slain. And Babylon. Babylon will never rise.

Again. Jesus was slain and raised. The church slain. Persecuted. Raised. Babylon. No more. Behold Revelation 18.

Fallen is Babylon. And all of her lovers. Because they oppose God. They crucify his Messiah. And they kill his saints. It's a just and right judgment.

On her. Her kingdom is built on the blood of God's people. Chapter 18 is something to behold. Babylon has fallen from her lofty pride. Her luxurious living. And her immorality and bloodshed.

Through God's just judgment. So now to try and apply this.

[24 : 21] I want to do that two ways. First by saying it negatively. What this passage teaches us. And then saying it positively. The first to say it negatively.

We are to hate. And detest. Babylon. And the ways. Of the world. Hate.

And detest. Babylon. And the ways. Of the world. This passage is in our Bible. To make us. Have this growing dislike. And this distaste. For all the delicacies of the world.

That are. That are phony. That are. Sugar pills. It's to. To cause us to sever. All of our ties.

With the one who will come toppling down. To not seek her glory. Which is to seek our own glory. Not to be. Seduced. And allured away. From God. By her. Delights. They're all fake.

[25 : 16] They're all phony. And they're all going to be judged. See heavens rejoicing. And know what the end of Babylon is. And what that means. For. God's people. For. God's people.

God's people. If you're in the room today. And you need a. You need a. You need help. Developing a distaste for the world. And the world's ways. Study.

The world's. Ends. If the world is. Delicious. Look. Where it's all. Going. You want no part in this. Whatsoever. Hear the call. To come. Out of her. As the gracious. Gospel call. That it is. Now.

Of course. This. Passage. Is in our Bible. For God's people. But. If you're in the room today. And you're not a Christian. There's an opportunity.

[26 : 16] Today. For you. For the first time. In your life. To sever ties. With the world. To come out of her. And align yourself. With Jesus. The one who has shed his blood.

Of his own will. To forgive you of sins. And to rescue you. From this end. Jesus. Alone. Can do that. That. And his call on you. Today. Is to come out of her. Stop loving the world. Confess your sins.

Turn from them. And trust that Jesus. Is who he says he is.

And that he's coming back. As king. And judge. Confess your sins. And find life. Come out of Babylon. God. Maybe some in the room.

Are. Professing Christians. And claiming to follow Jesus. And yet are in love with the world. It's easy to be like this.

[27 : 14] We can hide it. We can keep it secret. We can kind of have this love affair with the world. That stays in the dark. That people never have to know about. We can even hide it from those closest to us.

Our friends and families. And yet friends. God sees. He sees in the dark. He needs nobody to tell him.

What you're doing. You need to come out of her. You need to bring this into the light. You need to confess it. You need to repent. Come out of Babylon. Lest you face the judgment. Coming upon her. Maybe you're sitting on the fence. Maybe you know God's word is true. You're kind of holding on to worldly things. You're trying to serve two masters. That thing that Jesus says you cannot do. It's all going to fall.

[28 : 11] It's all going to fall. Do not feast. Do not delight in the things that will be brought to nothing. It's useless. Maybe it's to say it this way.

Friends. There is no single solitary person. Angel. Being around the throne. In heaven right now. Saying. I just wish I had more time to love the world.

If I could just go back. I would just love the world longer. Before I gave my life to Jesus. There is not a single person in heaven saying that. They are all saying. Hallelujah. Come out of her.

Detest Babylon. And hate the ways of the world. That's the negative claim of this text. But we would be risking just kind of sounding like a bunch of legalists.

Some do-gooders. Some goody two-shoes. If that's all we said this text called us to do. There is a positive claim that this text has on our lives as Christians.

[29 : 22] Be hungry for home. Be hungry for home. For here we have no lasting city. But we seek the city that is to come.

Then I looked. And behold. I saw the new Jerusalem. Descending out of the clouds from heaven. With the pearly gates. And the streets of gold. And the mansions prepared for the people of God. The real deal. Not some phony hell-bound substitute. Hunger for home church. The call to come out in Revelation 18 verse 4.

Is an invitation to come out. And enter a new and better and abiding city. It's not just come out and just don't have anything to do. It's come in. It's everlasting.

I've prepared this place for you. Where you will dwell in peace and prosperity and security forever. No more tears. No more pain. No more suffering. No more hurt. No detestable thing in heaven like there is in Babylon.

[30 : 25] Nothing unclean will ever enter her. Come out. And come in. Jesus says. Friends, if you're here and you've come out.

And you're longing for home. And you're longing for home. This passage says. Press on. Don't look back like Lot's wife.

And kind of become a pillar of salt. And regret all the things that you kind of gave up. Jesus is infinitely better. Press on. And you'll see his face. And you'll see his face.

You'll be home. And it'll all be worth it. Hate Babylon. Hunger for home. That's what Revelation 18 calls us to.

A couple of corrections. I realize we can hear the word hate. And some of us might think.

[31 : 36] Okay. Now I just got to. No more iPhone. No more, you know. Honey roasted Cheerios. Whatever it is that we love. That this world is, you know. Offers. We just got to reject all of it.

Kind of live this black and white. Bland. Boring existence. That is not what Revelation 18 is calling us to. Right? Don't run to sell everything you've got. And live as a pauper on the street corner.

When you hear hate the world. Don't stop enjoying good gifts. That God has provided for you. But always remember to glorify the giver. Correction two.

To come out of the world. Does not mean to stop bearing witness to Jesus in the world. This is not a call to go join a monastery high up in the mountains.

Away from all those sinners who might lead you astray. Friends, God continues to call sinners to come out of Babylon.

[32 : 41] Who are our faithful witness. In fact, frequently we find when we share our faith that our hunger for home grows.

Because we know we're speaking truth. And this isn't where we belong. We can know that these corrections are right and good. Because Revelation has everything to do with our hearts.

This is not some legalistic, moral, ethical code. Live this way and you'll be better off. This passage gets us asking questions like these.

Where is your treasure? Are you storing up treasure on earth? It's going to all be toppled down. Or are you storing up treasure in heaven where moth and rust cannot destroy and thieves cannot steal?

