

Introduction to Revelation Chapter 18

Revelation chapter 18 describes the dramatic and final downfall of Babylon the Great, the powerful world system that has corrupted the nations and opposed God throughout history. After the symbolic vision of Babylon introduced in the previous chapter, this chapter focuses on the announcement and consequences of her sudden destruction. What once appeared powerful, wealthy, and unstoppable is shown to be fragile before the judgment of God.

An angel from heaven proclaims that Babylon has fallen and has become a dwelling place of corruption and spiritual darkness. The city or system symbolized by Babylon represents the center of worldly pride, greed, immorality, and rebellion against God. Nations, rulers, and merchants have prospered through her influence, indulging in luxury and moral compromise. Yet the very prosperity that seemed like success becomes evidence of her arrogance and sin before God.

A powerful call then goes out to God's people: "Come out of her, my people." This command emphasizes the importance of spiritual separation from corrupt systems and values that oppose God. Believers are warned not to participate in the sins of Babylon so that they will not share in her coming judgment.

The chapter vividly portrays the reaction of the world to Babylon's fall. Kings who once aligned themselves with her power mourn from a distance. Merchants who grew rich from her trade weep because their wealth and commerce collapse in a single moment. Shipmasters and traders lament the sudden destruction of the economic center that once sustained their prosperity. The repeated phrase "in one hour" highlights how quickly God's judgment can bring down what humanity believes to be permanent.

While the earth mourns, heaven rejoices. The fall of Babylon represents the vindication of God's justice and the end of a system that persecuted the faithful and promoted rebellion against Him. The chapter concludes with a powerful symbolic act in which a great millstone is thrown into the sea, illustrating that Babylon's fall will be final and irreversible.

Revelation 18 serves as a sobering reminder that worldly wealth, power, and influence are temporary when they are built on pride and opposition to God. The chapter calls believers to live with spiritual discernment, refusing to be captivated by the seductive promises of the world system. Ultimately, it assures readers that God will bring justice, and every structure of corruption and rebellion will one day collapse under His righteous judgment.

Heavenly Father,

As we open Your Word and study Revelation chapter 18, we come before You with humble hearts, seeking wisdom and understanding. This chapter reminds us how quickly the power and wealth of this world can fall when they stand in opposition to You.

Lord, help us not to place our trust in worldly systems, riches, or temporary success. Teach us to keep our hearts focused on Your kingdom, which will never pass away. Give us discernment so that we will not be drawn into the pride, corruption, and temptations that lead people away from Your truth.

Guide us through Your Holy Spirit as we study this chapter. Help us understand its message clearly and apply it to our lives so that we may live faithfully and honor You in all we do.

In Jesus' name we pray,
Amen.

Revelation 18:1–2

“(1) After this, I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor. (2) With a mighty voice, he declared: ‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every impure spirit, a haunt for every unclean and hateful bird.’”

The Context:

In Chapter 17, we saw the *reason* for the judgment (the woman's corruption). Now, in Chapter 18, we see the *reality* of the judgment. The systems of the world that once glittered with gold are now physically and spiritually dead.

The angel's arrival is so bright that "the earth was illuminated by his splendor." This is a stark contrast to the darkness we saw in Chapter 16 when the fifth bowl was poured on the throne of the beast. God's light has finally returned to expose the ruins of the world's empty empire.

The Meaning of the "Fallen" City and the "Unclean Haunt":

In simple American English, we might say, "The angel announced that the world's great system—which everyone thought was so permanent—had finally collapsed. It went from being a center of global trade and luxury to a ghost town filled only with things that are corrupt, hidden, and broken." John highlights these points:

- **"Fallen! Fallen!":** This signifies **The Finality of the Collapse**. Repeating the word "fallen" emphasizes that the fall is complete and irreversible. Babylon is not just stumbling; it is gone.
- **"Home for demons":** This signifies **The Spiritual Reality**. Before the fall, the system looked like a paradise of human achievement. Now, with the "curtain" pulled back, we see that it was always a habitat for the demonic. The things that people worshiped (the system) were actually dark, spiritual traps.
- **"Unclean and hateful bird":** This signifies **Total Desolation**. In the ancient world, ruins were thought to be inhabited by "unclean" animals like owls or vultures. This tells us that the glory of Babylon is now a graveyard. There is no more life, no more trade, and no more power—just silence and decay.

The Core Lesson:

The world's "glory" has an expiration date. People often invest their lives, their hearts, and their security in the "Babylons" of this world—careers, nations, wealth, or status. But the angel reminds us that these things are fragile. They can fall in an instant. This teaches us that **if your life is built on a "city" that can fall, you will be left with nothing when the earthquake comes. Build your life on the Kingdom of God, which cannot be shaken.**

The Illustration: The Abandoned Mall

Imagine a shopping mall that was once the pride of the entire country. It had the best stores, the brightest lights, and thousands of people visiting every day. Everyone thought it would be there forever.

But then, the economy shifted, the roof collapsed, and the power was cut. A few years later, you walk back in. The gold-plated signs are rusted, the floors are covered in dust, and the only things living inside are stray animals and shadows. The "Babylon" of the world is that mall. It looks impressive from the outside right now, but the angel is announcing that it is already destined for the "dust and shadows."

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Investment" Check:** If I had to list the top three things I depend on for security, would they be things that could "fall," or are they eternal (like my relationship with God)?
- **The "Splendor" Check:** Do I find the "splendor" of God's Word more satisfying than the "glitter" of the world's systems?
- **The "Desolation" Check:** Does the idea that the world's system is "haunted" by corruption change how I view the media, the news, or the cultural trends I see every day?

The city has fallen, and the world's merchants are beginning to realize that their entire business model has just evaporated.

Revelation 18:3–8

“(3) For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the world grew rich from her excessive luxuries.’ (4) Then I heard another voice from heaven say: ‘Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues; (5) for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes. (6) Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done. Pour her a double portion from her own cup. (7) Give her as much torment and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she says, "I sit as queen; I am not a widow, and I will never mourn." (8) Therefore, in her death, toils, and deadly plague; and she will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.’”

The Context:

The "city" has fallen, and now the **verdict** is read aloud. This section explains *why* the judgment is so severe. Babylon wasn't just a victim of circumstance; she was a predator. She intoxicated the world with "excessive luxuries" and turned commerce and politics into a system of worship that excluded God.

The most important part of this passage is the **rescue mission**. God's voice rings out from heaven, calling His people to "Come out!"

The Meaning of the "Call to Leave" and "Double Payment":

In simple American English, we might say, "The world's system had become a giant trap of greed and pride. God told His people, 'Get out of that system before it crashes, because you don't want to be caught in the wreckage of its judgment.' Then, He declared that her pride—the arrogance of a 'Queen' who thought she was untouchable—would be repaid in full."

- **"Come out of her, my people":** This signifies **The Call to Separation**. This isn't just about moving to a different city; it's about breaking your heart's attachment to the values of the world. It's an urgent warning to stop participating in the "sins" of a culture that mocks God.
- **"Piled up to heaven":** This signifies **The Irrefutable Evidence**. Sins don't just disappear. Eventually, they reach a "tipping point" where God must act. God hasn't forgotten the abuse, the pride, or the injustice.
- **"I sit as queen; I will never mourn":** This signifies **The Delusion of Secular Pride**. Babylon thought she was "too big to fail." She thought her wealth made her immune to tragedy. This pride is the exact reason for her downfall.
- **"Pay her back double":** This signifies **The Fullness of Justice**. In biblical law, "double" often refers to full, complete restitution. God is ensuring that every ounce of the suffering the system caused is accounted for in its own destruction.

The Core Lesson:

You cannot be "part" of the system and "apart" from its judgment. We often try to have a foot in both worlds—we want the "luxuries" of the world and the "peace" of God. But God tells us that if we stay "in" the system of Babylon, we will inevitably share in her "plagues." This teaches us that **true faith requires choosing sides**. You cannot build your life on the "Queen of Luxury" and expect to be safe when she is toppled.

The Illustration: The Sinking Ship

Imagine a luxury cruise ship that is secretly owned by pirates. The guests are having a great time, drinking the "wine" and enjoying the "gold" on board. But you discover that the pirates are about to sink the ship for the insurance money. You run through the decks, shouting, "Get off the ship! It's going

down!" Some people are so busy enjoying the party that they call you crazy. They think the ship is "too beautiful to sink." The ones who listen to you jump into the lifeboat. The others stay, thinking they are "queens of the party," until the water starts coming over the railing.

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Exit" Check:** Is there a part of my life—a habit, an ambition, or a relationship—that is part of "Babylon's" system? Am I willing to "come out" of it if it's keeping me from God?
- **The "Queen" Check:** Do I ever get "arrogant" about my own security? Do I think, "I'm doing just fine on my own; I don't need God's help"?
- **The "Plague" Check:** Do I realize that God's call to "come out" is a **rescue**, not a punishment? He wants me to be safe.

The call to leave has gone out. Now, we see the world's leaders and merchants looking at the burning ruins and mourning because their "profit" is gone.

Revelation 18:9–14

“(9) When the kings of the earth who committed adultery with her and shared her luxuries see the smoke of her burning, they will weep and mourn over her. (10) Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry: ‘Woe! Woe to you, great city, you mighty city of Babylon! In one hour your doom has come!’ (11) The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargoes anymore—(12) cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble; (13) cargoes of cinnamon and spice, of incense, myrrh and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, of fine flour and wheat; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and even human bodies and souls of people. (14) They will say, ‘The grain and the luxuries you left have gone, and all your life once enjoyed and everything that was fine and bright and shiny will never be found again.’”

The Context:

The party is officially over. In a single hour—a blink of an eye in history—the global economic system of "Babylon" is destroyed. The kings and merchants, who once stood beside the "Prostitute" to get rich, now stand at a safe distance, watching the smoke rise.

The Meaning of the "Merchants' Mourning":

In simple American English, we might say, "The leaders and businessmen of the world aren't sad that the city is gone because they cared about the *people*—they are heartbroken because their *profits* have gone up in smoke. They realize the golden age of greed has ended forever." John highlights:

- **"Stand far off and cry":** This signifies **Cowardice**. These are the same leaders who built the system, but when the judgment comes, they do nothing to help the city. They are only interested in protecting themselves.
- **The List of Cargo (vv. 12–13):** This isn't just a list of items; it represents **The Scale of Materialism**. Notice how the list starts with luxury (gold, pearls, silk) and ends with the most disgusting item of all: **"human bodies and souls of people."** This system was so corrupt that it eventually started treating human beings as mere products to be bought and sold.
- **"Never be found again":** This signifies **The Finality of the Loss**. Unlike a normal economic recession or a temporary market crash, this is the total, permanent end of that specific worldly way of living.

The Core Lesson:

Wealth is a poor god to serve. The merchants are devastated not because they've lost their friends or their purpose, but because their "business model" has collapsed. This highlights the emptiness of a life built on consumption. When you treat life as a transaction rather than a relationship with God, you will find that when your "cargo" vanishes, you are left with absolutely nothing. **The tragedy of the merchants is that they mourn the loss of the "stuff," but they never mourn the loss of their own souls.**

The Illustration: The Auction of the Empty Warehouse

Imagine a warehouse fire. The owner is screaming and crying outside. Someone walks up and asks, "Are your children safe? Is your family okay?" The owner ignores them and just screams, "My inventory! My shipping containers! My profits!"

The merchants of Babylon are like that owner. The world is burning, God's justice is happening, and all they can think about is their missing grain and cattle. They are so consumed by the *cost* of their loss that they are completely blind to the *reason* for their judgment.

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Value" Check:** If everything I owned was taken away in "one hour," what would I have left? Is my identity tied to what I *own* or who I *am* in Christ?
- **The "Human" Check:** Verse 13 mentions the "selling of souls." Am I participating in any system that treats people as "things" to be used rather than as humans created in the image of God?
- **The "Perspective" Check:** Do I find myself getting "distressed" when I see the world's economy struggle, or do I remain grounded in the peace of a Kingdom that can never be bought or sold?

The merchants have lost their market, and the world is in shock. Now, we will see the reaction of those who relied on the city for travel and trade—the sea captains and the sailors.

Revelation 18:15–16

“(15) The merchants who sold these things and gained their wealth from her will stand far off, terrified at her torment. They will weep and mourn and cry out: (16) ‘Woe! Woe to you, great city, dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet, and glittering with gold, precious stones, and pearls!’”

The Context:

In the previous verses, we saw the merchants crying because their "cargo" was gone. Now, they are crying because the **city itself**—the center of their economy, the "customer base," and the symbol of their prestige—is being destroyed.

They aren't mourning the *people*; they are mourning the *market*. They stand "far off" because they are too terrified to help. They are trapped in their own greed, watching the very thing they gave their lives to build turn into ash.

The Meaning of the "Terrified Mourning":

In simple American English, we might say, "The wealthy businessmen who became rich by feeding the city's greed now stand at a distance, paralyzed by fear. They are horrified not because they lost a neighbor, but because they lost the place that made them feel like royalty." John highlights these points:

- **"Terrified at her torment":** This signifies **The Powerlessness of Wealth**. All the money, gold, and influence these merchants had cannot stop the fire of God's judgment. They realize that their "wealth" is useless when they are face-to-face with the Almighty.
- **"Dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet":** This signifies **The Superficial Identity**. The merchants only remember the city by how "expensive" she looked. They don't mention her history, her people, or her art. They only mention her "brand"—the gold and the fabrics. It shows how shallow their world had become.
- **"Woe! Woe!":** This signifies **The Realization of Final Loss**. In the Bible, "Woe" is a cry of hopeless grief. They know they can't rebuild this; the "Golden Age" of the Beast is over for good.

The Core Lesson:

You can't buy your way out of judgment. The merchants spent their entire lives obsessed with "fine linen" and "precious stones." But in the hour of judgment, those things have zero value. This teaches us that **the world prizes things that will eventually be burned, while the things that actually last—faith, truth, love, and a relationship with God—are the only things that survive the fire.**

The Illustration: The Luxury Resort

Imagine a high-end luxury resort built on an island. It's known for its expensive cocktails, imported silks, and gold-plated fixtures. The managers of the resort are the merchants. When a hurricane comes and destroys the island, the managers stand on a distant boat and cry—not for the lives lost, but because they know the "brand" is gone. They talk about the "luxury" and the "decor," never realizing that the *entire place* was built on a fragile sandbar. Babylon is that luxury resort, and the "hurricane" is the final judgment.

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Value" Check:** If I had to describe my life's work, would it be focused on things that "glitter" (worldly gain) or things that "glow" (God's presence)?
- **The "Terror" Check:** Am I more "terrified" of losing my comfort, or am I more concerned with being right with the God who judges the heart?
- **The "Relationship" Check:** Do I view other people as "markets" (ways to get what I want) or as people who need the love and truth of Jesus?

The merchants have lost their luxury. Now, the sea captains and sailors look on in horror as they realize the entire system of global trade has vanished.

Revelation 18:17–18

“(17) In a single hour, such great wealth has been brought to ruin! Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off. (18) When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, ‘Was there ever a city like this great city?’”

The Context:

The "Great City" was the ultimate hub of global trade. People came from all over the world to buy, sell, and profit from her. But now, the trade routes are empty. The sea captains—the ones who moved the goods—are watching the destruction from their ships, paralyzed and shocked.

The Meaning of the Sea Captains' Lament:

In simple American English, we might say, "The logistics network of the world—the people who actually moved the wealth from place to place—are now standing at a distance, looking at the smoke. They can't believe that the biggest, most powerful trade hub in history could disappear in just sixty minutes." John highlights these points:

- **"In a single hour":** This signifies **The Speed of Divine Judgment**. The world expected a long, slow decline. Instead, God's judgment happened in a flash. It shows that when God decides it is time to end the rebellion, He doesn't need to negotiate or wait for the markets to adjust.

- **"Stand far off":** This signifies **Helplessness**. The captains represent the "infrastructure" of the world. They have the ships and the power to move goods, but they have zero power to stop the fire. They are merely observers of their own economic collapse.
- **"Was there ever a city like this great city?":** This signifies **The World's Obsession with Human Achievement**. They aren't asking, "How can we help?" or "What have we done?" They are asking, "Wasn't it impressive?" They are still in love with the *scale* of the system, even as it burns down.

The Core Lesson:

Human systems are built on "shifting sands." The sea captains and merchants operated on the belief that the "Great City" was permanent—that the supply chains would never break and the demand would never stop. This passage teaches us that **when we prioritize "global systems" over the "Kingdom of God," we are building our entire lives on a foundation that can be vaporized in an hour.**

The Illustration: The Empty Port

Imagine a massive international port that operates 24/7. Thousands of ships come and go, bringing everything from food to gold. Then, the city behind the port is suddenly destroyed. The ships arrive, look at the flames, and realize there is nowhere to dock, no one to buy the cargo, and no reason to stay. They just sit in the harbor, watching the smoke, realizing their entire purpose for existing has vanished. The world's economy is that port, and God's judgment is the fire that leaves it empty.

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Obsession" Check:** Is there anything in my life that I think is "too big" or "too important" to fail? Am I keeping God at the center, or am I distracted by the "scale" of my own worldly ambitions?
- **The "Wonder" Check:** Do I find myself "wondering" at the power of human technology and systems, or do I save my "wonder" for the Creator who holds the stars in His hands?
- **The "Stability" Check:** Do I have a "port" that is safe from the storms of this world? (This is the peace of Christ).

The sea captains are mourning the loss of the city. Now, we will see the contrast—a powerful angel throws a huge stone into the sea to symbolize the permanent fall of Babylon, followed by a joyful proclamation from heaven.

Revelation 18:19–20

“(19) They will throw dust on their heads and will weep and mourn and cry out, ‘Woe! Woe to you, great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth! In one hour she has been

brought to ruin!' (20) 'Rejoice over her, you heavens! Rejoice, you people of God, apostles, and prophets! For God has judged her for the way she treated you.'"

The Context:

This is the ultimate collision of two perspectives.

Below, on the earth, the merchants and sailors are performing the ancient, dramatic ritual of mourning: throwing **dust on their heads**. They are overwhelmed by the loss of their massive wealth.

But above, in heaven, there is a completely different reaction. While the earth weeps for its "cargo," heaven breaks into a **celebration**. Why? Because the "City of Rebellion" is gone, and God has finally delivered justice for His people.

The Meaning of the "Dust" and the "Rejoicing":

In simple American English, we might say, "The earth mourned the loss of money, but heaven celebrated the arrival of justice. The people who were once treated as 'cargo' by the world are now vindicated by God." John highlights these points:

- **"Throw dust on their heads":** This signifies **The Utter Futility of Earthly Grief**. In the Bible, this was a sign of total despair. Their "god"—wealth—has died, and they have no other hope to turn to.
- **"Rejoice over her, you heavens":** This signifies **The Restoration of Order**. Heaven rejoices because God's holiness has been defended. The "great prostitute" was a cancer on creation; her removal is a cause for celebration.
- **"God has judged her for the way she treated you":** This signifies **Divine Vindication**. This is the climax of the story for the believers. It's not just that the city fell; it's that God *noticed* the suffering of His people and answered. Every injustice, every persecution, and every lie ever told against the followers of Jesus is being balanced out by God's perfect justice.

The Core Lesson:

God's timing is perfect, and His justice is absolute. We often look at the world's power structures and feel discouraged because they seem to have the upper hand. We see them winning, and we see the "saints" (the followers of Jesus) suffering. This passage tells us that the scoreboard is not final. God is keeping track, and the moment of the world's "bankruptcy" is the moment of the believer's "vindication." This teaches us that **your faithfulness to God is never a waste, even if the world treats you like "cargo."**

The Illustration: The Victim and the Courtroom

Imagine a person who has been cheated, slandered, and abused by a wealthy, powerful criminal who controlled the entire town. The victim couldn't do anything because the criminal owned the police, the court, and the media. Everyone in town just watched and said, "That's just how the system works."

But then, the Judge of the Universe arrives. He walks into the courtroom and delivers a final, unchangeable verdict of "Guilty!" The criminal loses everything. The entire town mourns because they can't make money off the criminal anymore, but the victim—the one who was crushed—is finally free. **Heaven is the courtroom, the criminal is Babylon, and the victim is the child of God.**

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Rejoicing" Check:** Do I trust God enough to "rejoice" in His justice, even if I don't see it happening in my life right now?
- **The "Vindication" Check:** If I am suffering for my faith, do I remember that God sees it? Does it bring me peace to know that He will one day make everything right?
- **The "Dust" Check:** If the things I am currently "attached" to were to vanish, would I be throwing dust on my head in despair, or would I be ready to rejoice in the return of the King?

The city is in ashes. Babylon is officially closed for business. Now, a mighty angel finishes the job by throwing a massive stone into the sea to show that the city will *never* return.

Revelation 18:21–24

“(21) Then a mighty angel picked up a stone the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said: ‘With such violence the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, never to be found again. (22) The music of harpists, musicians, pipers, and trumpeters will never be heard in you again. No worker of any trade will ever be found in you again. The sound of a millstone will never be heard in you again. (23) The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The voice of bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world’s important people. By your magic spell all the nations were led astray. (24) In her life, you found the blood of prophets and of God’s holy people, and of all who have been slaughtered on the earth.’”

The Context:

This is the final "closing statement" of Babylon's trial. A mighty angel performs a powerful, physical act to prove that the destruction is **permanent**. Throwing a millstone into the sea is a vivid picture: just as that heavy stone sinks into the deep and can never be retrieved, Babylon is gone forever.

The Meaning of the Silence and the Millstone:

In simple American English, we might say, "The angel showed that Babylon's fall wasn't a setback; it was the total end. The lights, the music, the business, and the joy of daily life in that corrupt system

were silenced forever. The system that used 'magic' to deceive the world was destroyed because of the blood of the righteous." John highlights these points:

- **"The size of a large millstone"**: This signifies **The Weight of Judgment**. It's not a pebble; it's an massive, heavy instrument used for daily survival (grinding grain). Using it to illustrate destruction shows that God is removing the very "tools" Babylon used to pretend it was necessary for life.
- **"Never be heard/seen again"**: This signifies **Total Erasure**. There will be no "rebuilding," no "economic recovery," and no "second act" for this system. When God closes a door, it is locked.
- **"By your magic spell all the nations were led astray"**: This signifies **The Nature of the Deception**. The word "magic spell" here is *pharmakeia*, which can also mean drugs or witchcraft. It represents the way Babylon "drugged" the nations, making them addicted to her power, her economy, and her lifestyle until they lost their ability to think clearly.
- **"The blood of prophets and of God's holy people"**: This signifies **The Cause of Death**. The final reason for her destruction isn't just her pride; it's her **violence against those who stood for the Truth**. God never forgets those who suffer for Him.

The Core Lesson:

God's silence is not absence, and God's final judgment is absolute. We often wonder why evil is allowed to flourish. But this passage shows us that God has a point where He says, "Enough." When the end comes, it is sudden, total, and permanent. This teaches us that **no system—no matter how powerful, wealthy, or influential—can survive once it has made the people of God its enemy.**

The Illustration: The Sunk City

Imagine an ancient city that was legendary for its gold and its cruelty. One day, a massive earthquake hits, and the entire city slides into the ocean. Thousands of years later, divers go down and look at the ruins. It is dark, silent, and cold. There is no music, no bustling market, and no "glamour." The city that once thought it was the center of the universe is just a pile of rocks at the bottom of the sea. That is the "millstone" prophecy coming to life.

The "Glory" Reflection:

- **The "Addiction" Check:** Am I "drugged" (led astray) by the values of my culture? What am I addicted to—comfort, status, or being liked—that keeps me from seeing things as God sees them?
- **The "Permanence" Check:** Do I live like this world is permanent, or do I live like someone who knows that the "music" of this world will one day go silent?

- **The "Value" Check:** Do I cherish the people who stand for Truth, knowing that in God's eyes, they are the most valuable people on earth?

Looking Ahead

Babylon is gone. The corruption has been purged. The heavens have rejoiced. **Now, the stage is set for the most incredible event in all of Scripture: The Marriage Supper of the Lamb and the return of the King of Kings.**

Lord, we look at the world's passing empires and realize that no wealth or system can compete with Your eternal Kingdom. Help us to detach our hearts from the "glitter" of this world and keep our eyes fixed on the Lamb. When the kingdoms of men fall, may we be found standing securely in Your grace, ready to rejoice in the return of our King.

In Jesus' name, **Amen.**