

Revelation - Part 4 - Lecture 7

[Previous](#)

[Next](#)

Introduction: These transcripts of Kay Arthur's lectures on Revelation (Parts 2-4) are provided as a service to the body of Christ with the written permission of Precept Ministries International. This material is the property of Precept Ministries International and all rights are reserved. The transcripts are for the most part verbatim with deletions identified by the characters (...). The utilization of italics, bolding, hyperlinks and pop up notes represent editorial additions. Any written additions are identified by the designation "Ed note". Note that all text in **blue** identifies a link or popup. All reference are the NASB unless otherwise indicated. Please note that these lectures by Kay Arthur supplement the excellent Precept Upon Precept inductive Bible study on the Revelation. Click the following links to view each division of this encouraging study and note that you can also download the first lesson of each of the 4 parts:

[Revelation - Pt 1](#) - Revelation 1-3, 10 lessons

[Revelation - Pt 2](#) - Revelation 4-22, 12 lessons

[Revelation - Pt 3](#) - Revelation 4-22, 11 lessons

[Revelation - Pt 4](#) - Revelation 4-22, 14 lessons

If you can find a local Precept class studying Revelation, I would strongly encourage you to join the class, as I know of no other study available anywhere in the world that will equip you so thoroughly to discern the signs of the times and cause you to live expectantly as you look for Christ's Return!

Index to Revelation Lectures Kay Arthur

Click Here for other "Futuristic" Resources on Revelation
Click here for Kay Arthur's Older Lecture Series on Daniel

Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Lecture 01	Lecture 00	Lecture 00
Lecture 02	Lecture 01	Lecture 01
Lecture 03	Lecture 02	Lecture 02
Lecture 04	Lecture 03	Lecture 03
Lecture 05	Lecture 04	Lecture 04
Lecture 06	Lecture 05	Lecture 05
Lecture 07	Lecture 06	Lecture 06
Lecture 08	Lecture 07	Lecture 07
Lecture 09	Lecture 08	Lecture 08
Lecture 10	Lecture 09	Lecture 09
Lecture 11	Lecture 10	Lecture 10
Lecture 12	Lecture 11	Lecture 11
		Lecture 12
		Lecture 13
		Lecture 14

Who is the Great harlot
Babylon ?
Rev Pt 4: Lecture 7:
Kay Arthur

Click following for literal
chapter by chapter chart summary

Revelation 4-10

Revelation 11-16

Revelation 17-19

Revelation 20-22

Let's allow Scripture to interpret Scripture...

The woman is the great city

Rev 17:1 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters,² with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality."³ And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, (note "she" is NOT scarlet herself!) full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.⁴ And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality,⁵ and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."⁶ And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered greatly. (Indeed many since this writing have wondered greatly who this harlot is.)⁷ And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman (one mystery) and of the beast (the other mystery we discussed last week) that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns... 18 And the woman whom you saw is **the great city**, which reigns over the kings of the earth."

In conclusion...**BABYLON is a CITY**, a city of GREAT INFLUENCE that reigns over the kings of the earth. Whenever you see this woman mentioned in Scripture, she is either a **CITY** or a **KINGDOM** and the city/capital of that kingdom is called **Babylon**.

Revelation 18 THE FALL OF THE GREAT CITY

Rev 18:1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory.² And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! ...¹⁰ standing at a distance because of the fear of her (Babylon's) torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come....¹⁶ saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls;¹⁷ for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!' (Babylon is a city of great wealth.) ...¹⁸ and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What city is like the great city?'¹⁹ "And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste!' (This city caused the ships of the earth to be made wealthy by the cargo that they carried for her.) ...²¹ And a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer. (once this great city is destroyed, it will cease to exist.)

When John wrote Revelation, **Babylon** was in existence and had a good-sized Jewish contingency. In fact the Babylonian Talmud was completed 500 years after Christ's death, burial and resurrection documenting that Jews were in Babylon at that time. Babylon is in the process of being rebuilt (Dyer's The Rise of Babylon), and is located in modern Iraq.

Were believers at Babylon IN THE FIRST CENTURY?

1 Pet 5:13 She (some manuscripts say "church" instead of "she") who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark.

WILL BELIEVERS BE IN BABYLON AT THE END?

Rev 18:4 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 always remembers iniquities unless the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed you from all your sins and He then buries them in the deepest ocean and as Corrie Ten Boom used to say "He puts up a '**No Fishing Allowed**' sign", and He remembers them no

more. So God is going to remember the iniquities of Babylon and because He is righteous and holy He will judge her. So in these last days we know that there will be believers in this city of Babylon and God is telling them to COME OUT of her my people. Remember that the reason is because HER SINS HAVE PILED AS HIGH AS HEAVEN

Characteristics of Babylon

1). **babylon is a City of influence** at the time of the end, Daniel's 70th Week which begins with a treaty.

Dan 9:26 "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people (ROMAN EMPIRE) of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. 27 "And he (who comes out of the 4th Beast with 10 horns) will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; (to be made in the REBUILT Jewish Temple) and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

Remember that this man who makes this FIRM COVENANT is part of the BEAST and the woman is riding on (sitting on) the BEAST, who "was, is not and is about to come out of the abyss and to go to destruction." Dan 9:27 also says this one will go to a "complete destruction."

Rev 17:8 "The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.

Those that interpret Revelation 17 as the **ECCLESIASTICAL BABYLON**, go on to likened it to the Roman Catholic church because the beast has **7 heads** and **7 mountains**. They then assume that the world at the time of John's writing knew that **Rome** set on 7 mountains. These commentators looked at the decadence in the Roman Catholic Church (as there has been in all denominations) and they interpreted these Scriptures **HISTORICALLY**, instead of letting the Scriptures speak for themselves. Now all the parts did not fit together but they still held to this interpretation. They said that this WOMAN sits on 7 mountains in Rome and thus in [Rev 17](#) you have an **ecclesiastical system**, personified in the Roman Catholic Church. But they were wrong because they failed to let Scripture interpret Scripture.

Rev 17:9 "Here is the mind which has wisdom. (this mind never takes SCRIPTURE OUT OF CONTEXT) The 7 heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, 10 and they are 7 kings; (not the 7 hills of Rome!) 5 have fallen, (did 5 hills of Rome fall? No!) one is, (Was only one hill of Rome existing at that time? No!) the other has not yet come; (Was another hill literally going to come? No!) and when he comes, (Was the "mountain" a "he"? No!) he must remain a little while."

So the problem was they looked at the Scriptures **HISTORICALLY** rather than simply **waiting** for those things to be fulfilled. So Rev 17 does not say Babylon is an ECCLESIASTICAL SYSTEM but that it is a GREAT CITY, A CITY THAT REIGNS!

2). **Babylon is a city that is connected with the BEAST.**

3). **babylon is a city of great influence.** It is a city that has influence in that it is the "MOTHER OF HARLOTS" so the realm of it's influence is that it has in a sense given birth to HARLOTTRY.

4). **babylon is a city of ABOMINATIONS.**

So in Babylon one will see harlotry, immorality, abominations...it will be "Sin City." Some have said AMERICA is the city Babylon because of our sin. But AMERICA is not Babylon and for that interpretation we go to the Scriptures, and we see Babylon has always been and it sets in Iraq and not in the U.S.

5). **There is a political liaison between the city of Babylon and the Beast** ("sits on the beast").

6). **babylon is a city that is drunk with the blood of the martyrs** so we know Babylon is the site of great persecution and that believers who hold to the testimony of Jesus Christ have been put to death there.

Rev 17:6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered greatly.

Kay wonders if the "SAINTS" here might be JEWS because ever since Nebuchadnezzar came down after the battle of Carchemish

and conquered Jerusalem and started leading Jews captive back to Babylon, there have been Jews in Babylon. So Kay thinks this verse could refer to both Jews and Christians.

Considering that **Babylon** is the **mother of harlots**, who is the **Father of lies**? John 8:44 describes the Devil as "a liar and a murderer from the beginning and he is the **father of lies**." So if we go back to the Garden of Eden we find the **Serpent** (we know this individual is the Devil from Rev 12:9 and Rev 20:2) lying to Adam and Eve. And **EVERY LIE** after that time the Serpent is the "father" of because he is the one who gave birth to those lies. As Satan is the FATHER OF LIES, so Babylon is the MOTHER OF HARLOTS and of the ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. So just as we must go to **Genesis** to trace the "father of lies" so to we must do to trace the "mother of harlots".

As you have in Daniel's 70th Week a focus on the Temple of Jerusalem, we see another city in a sense opposed to Jerusalem, the city of Babylon. So in Revelation, we see several "opposites" contrasted:

CONTRASTS IN REVELATION	
Christ	Antichrist
Trinity	Unholy trinity
Jerusalem, the holy city	Babylon, the unholy city
Bride of Christ, the church (New Jerusalem)	The harlot Babylon

BABYLON THE GENESIS CONNECTION

Gen 10:1 Now these are the records of the generations of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah; and sons were born to them after the flood.

CONTEXT: God creates heaven and earth, Adam and Eve eat of the fruit of the tree and sin enters the world and death by sin. So MANKIND is living now in a state of sin.

Ro 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned => Ps 51:5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.

So men after Adam and Eve when born were **born into SIN**. In Gen 6 God looks at His creation and is grieved that He has made man

Ge 6:5 Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.⁶ And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.⁷ And the Lord said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, ...⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

God brought a **FLOOD** and destroyed everyone in the flood except the animals and the 8 SOULS (Noah, and his son's-Shem, Ham, and Japheth and the "mrs's") who were in the ARK. **AFTER the FLOOD**, God takes Shem, Ham, and Japheth and populates the WHOLE WORLD through these 3 men and thus we can all trace our genealogy to one of these 3 men.

Ge 10:7 And the sons of Cush were Seba ...⁸ Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth.⁹ He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord." (Some feel that "before" here means that in a sense Nimrod was against or opposed to the Lord). ¹⁰ And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. (modern day Iraq is where Babel was founded by Nimrod, a mighty hunter.)

In Genesis 10 God gives a "broad sweep" and then in Gen 11 He goes back and explains it all and fills in the details...

Ge 11:1 Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. (Shem, Ham, and Japheth when they got off the Ark spoke one language) ² And it came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain

in the land of Shinar and settled there.

But the problem is that they not settling where God told them....they were to **FILL THE EARTH**...

Ge 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth....7 "And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; populate (Hebrew word literally means to SWARM in the earth) the earth abundantly and multiply in it."

Ge 11:3 And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly." And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar.⁴ And they said, "Come, let us build **for ourselves** (not for God but for themselves) a **city**, and a tower whose **top will reach into heaven**, (What is piled as "high as heaven" in Babylon? **Iniquities** so this tower in a sense is like a picture of the sins of rebellion that are piled as high as heaven.) and let us make **for ourselves** a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.

God had told them to FILL THE WHOLE EARTH...Nimrod is behind this rebellion against God because he is building for himself his own kingdom in his own way...a direct rebellion against the command of the Lord God.

Gen 11:5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.⁶ And the Lord said, "Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. (Why? Because man made God in His image and man is a brilliant entity. Men today are proving that he can do most anything...from a man on the moon to bringing life in an artificial setting of an ovum and a sperm.) ⁷ "Come, let Us go down and there **confuse** (the Hebrew word, **balal**, is similar to Babel) their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."⁸ So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city.

So here we have the story of a CITY that was built in **REBELLION** against God, and which was **CENTERED IN "SELF"**. Some believe that on the top of the tower in Babel was the **Zodiac**, a perversion of the truth that God had written in Ps 19:1 that the heavens declared the glory of God and night after night bear witness to the truths of God. But men came up with **ASTROLOGY** so that instead of consulting God, they consulted the stars. So back in post-flood Genesis, we see a MOTHER, BABYLON, giving birth to all the abominations of the earth.

7). Babylon is a MOTHER who is committing HARLOTTRY.

Throughout God's Word, He uses IMMORALITY and HARLOTTRY as a symbol of **spiritual infidelity**...

Jas 4:4 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.

So this city of Babylon is composed of a people in rebellion against God and who are committing **spiritual adultery/harlotry**. Why? Because they knew the TRUTH. They knew that God existed and that He was in control and that He had power over man? How did they know? Shem, Ham, and Japheth had seen it! So you start off with TRUTH and it becomes PERVERTED.

So is Babylon in Revelation 17 an ecclesiastical Babylon? No.

It is a CITY that religiously is in REBELLION AGAINST GOD. It is a CITY that through all the ages of mankind has been in REBELLION against God, against His word, against His commandments. So BABYLON is **not ONE CHURCH** as some have said equating "Babylon" with the Catholic Church but it is **ANY CHURCH**, any religion, that is CONTRARY TO the clear teaching of what THE WORD OF GOD HAS TO SAY. Nimrod deified himself (from extra-biblical historical writings), calling himself first the CHIEF PRIEST and later the CHIEF GOD OF BABYLON, whose name was **MARDUK** (or **MERODACH**).

So Babylon was a city that would NOT LISTEN TO GOD, a city that wanted to WALK IN ITS OWN WAY. This is the very ESSENCE or ROOT OF ALL SIN...INDEPENDENCE FROM GOD, NOT LISTENING TO GOD...**Isaiah 53:6** says "All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way..."

You find some elements of TRUTH in Babylon, but it PERVERTS what truth it does have. You can study the historical writings but be careful if you read and always be a Berean, examining what you read or hear with what God's Word states. Nimrod had a queen, Semiramis, who had a virgin birth. In the Zodiac you find a virgin having a child, because the whole heavens declare the glory of God and we even find the gospel written on the stars.

8). Babylon is a city that sits on many waters

Rev 17:1 ... the great harlot who **sits on many waters**, ¹⁵ And he *said to me, "The **waters** which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.

If you study the old Roman Empire, you see it extended even into what is modern day **Iraq**. So many want to take the center of the Revived Roman Empire and move it to Rome. But if this **harlot** is connected with the **beast** and is the city that reigns on the face of the earth, where does it move the balance of power to? Toward the Middle East where you find TWO CITIES in CONFLICT. But you say "Jerusalem is a city that is full of harlotry." Right but let's see what God is going to do...

THE EPHAH IN ZECHARIAH 5

CONTEXT: The prophet sees a FLYING SCROLL with a curse on the scroll. Remember that Zechariah is a POST-EXILIC BOOK, written after the Babylonian captivity (as is the book of Haggai) and the Jews are in the process of re-building the Temple.

Zech 5:5 Then the angel who was speaking with me went out, and said to me, "Lift up now your eyes, and see what this is, going forth."6 And I said, "What is it?" And he said, "This is the ephah (a bushel or basket used as a household measure) going forth." Again he said, "This is their appearance in all the land 7 (and behold, a lead cover was lifted up); and this is a woman sitting inside the ephah."8 Then he said, "This is Wickedness!" (What had God seen back in Gen 6? All the wickedness of the earth...and now in this basket is wickedness.) And he threw her down into the middle of the ephah and cast the lead weight on its opening.9 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and there two women were coming out with the wind in their wings; and they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens.10 And I said to the angel who was speaking with me, "Where are they taking the ephah?" (Filled with what? Wickedness.) 11 Then he said to me, "To build a temple for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there on her own pedestal.

Babylon is not yet re-built but Kay believes that we will see the **power center of the world** move toward Babylon (**Ed:** These notes were written before Saddam Hussein was overthrown and a new government established in Iraq!). Out of the Revived Roman Empire is going to come an ANTICHRIST who is in league with this city who will eventually be destroyed. A Temple has to be prepared for Babylon, even as a Temple is prepared for the Jews. It could be that when this **ephah** is lifted up it is a picture of all that wickedness being lifted up from Jerusalem, the land of the Jews and being transported and consolidated right here in Babylon.

Some say that Babylon can never be rebuilt because it was destroyed. In Isaiah 13:20, 21, 22 the prophecy describing the destruction of Babylon states that it would never be inhabited again. While Babylon has been largely in ruins over the past 2000+ years, it has never been totally uninhabited and thus God's prophecy through Isaiah has not yet been fulfilled. A day is coming when this prophecy will be literally fulfilled, at which time Babylon will be full and finally destroyed. And all heaven will rejoice...

Rev 19:1 After these things I heard, as it were, a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; 2 BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER." 3 And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER."

Babylon is destroyed because she is the Mother of Harlots and all the abominations of the earth have come because men have lived in REBELLION TO GOD. All the false religions have come from her because men have walked and lived and believed in rebellion to God and now it is being consolidated and that Babylon will be in league with the ANTICHRIST until one day he looks at her and hates her and says we are going to destroy her. Why? Because he and he alone declares himself to be God and he will not tolerate any others in conflict with him.

And when the Beast burns Babylon all the merchants of the earth will begin to wail because this was the **city of wealth**. But what is the LOVE OF MONEY but the ROOT OF ALL EVIL? It has destroyed government after government after government. And where did it all start? It all began with MYSTERY BABYLON, the MOTHER OF HARLOTS and of all the ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

GOD'S MESSAGE FOR YOU AND FOR ME

And what is God saying to you and me? He is saying **COME OUT FROM HER! HAVE A PURE RELIGION**. Don't love money. Love God. Be willing to forsake all and to follow Him. Why? Because He is coming soon and when He comes He is going to destroy those who destroyed the earth with a great judgment. You and I are the BRIDE and we are to prepare our garments and we are to be walking in righteousness not in wickedness.

Babylon is a city and in her is all the iniquity of the earth, in every religious form, in every economical form, in every political form, and it is INIQUITY because it is REBELLION AGAINST GOD.

DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH BABYLON THE MOTHER OF ALL ABOMINATIONS!

BABYLON IN REVELATION 17 & 18

THESE NOTES ARE NOT FROM KAY ARTHUR BUT EXTRA NOTES RELATED TO THE QUESTION: DO REVELATION 17 and 18 OF DESCRIBE TWO DISTINCT "BABYLONS", ONE "religious" and THE OTHER "financial"? If one compares Scripture with Scripture, the similarities leave little doubt that the same entity is being discussed in both chapters.

The Designation

The name is the same = babylon the great

- Rev 17:5 "Babylon the great"
- Rev 17:18 "the woman whom you saw is the great city"
- Rev 18:2 "Babylon the great"

The identity is the same = a great city

- **Rev 17:18** "The woman is the great city"
- **Rev 18:10** "Woe, woe, the great city"

The Description

The clothing is the same = purple, etc

- **Rev 17:4** "the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet and adorned with gold and clothed in fine linen and precious stones and pearls"
- **Rev 18:16** "Woe, woe, the great city, she who was purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls"

Both hold a cup

- **Rev 17:4** "Having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations"
- **Rev 18:6** "In the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her"

The Deeds

The relationship to kings acts is the same

- **Rev 17:2** "With whom the kings of the earth committed of immorality"
- **Rev 18:3** "And the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her"

The relationship to the nations is the same

- **Rev 17:2** "Those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality"
- **Rev 18:3** "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality"

The relationship to believers is the same

- **Rev 17:6** “And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus”
- **Rev 18:24** “And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth”

THE DESTRUCTION

The means of destruction is the same

- **Rev 17:16** “These will hate the harlot...and will burn her up with fire”
- **Rev 18:8** “She will be burned up with fire”

The source of destruction is the same

- **Rev 17:17** “ For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose”
- **Rev 18:5,8** “ God has remembered her iniquities...for the Lord God Who judges her is strong”

THE CONCLUSION

Babylon in Revelation 17 is identical to Babylon in Revelation 18

Dr Charles Dyer summarizes his findings...

The larger context in which these chapters (Rev 17-18) are positioned also underscores the parallelism between the chapters. Chapters 17 and 18 are an interlude placed here to explain the destruction of Babylon the Great mentioned in Revelation 16:19-[note](#). Thus both chapters would seem to be describing this one event. This also conforms to Rev 19:1, 2, 3-[note](#), in which heaven is said to rejoice over this fall of Babylon. In describing this fall those in heaven mention the harlot (compare Rev 19:2-[note](#) with Rev 17:1) and the smoke ascending forever (compare Rev 19:3-[note](#) with Rev 18:9-[note](#), Rev 18:18-[note](#)) and relate both to one judgment. Thus the larger context limits chapters 17 and 18 to such an extent that the Babylons they are describing must be considered identical.

The larger context actually begins in Rev 14:8-[note](#), which first predicts an angel flying in mid-heaven proclaiming,

“Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality.”

Several of the phrases used here are later repeated in Revelation 17 and 18. The title “Babylon the great” is used in all three chapters; and the proclamation “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great” is repeated in Rev 18:2-[note](#). The reference to the nations being drunk with the wine of her fornication (Rev 14:8) is also found in Rev 17:2-[note](#) and Rev 18:3-[note](#). The one proclamation is fulfilled by chapters 17 and 18, and yet there is only one Babylon in view in Rev 14:8.

The next appearance of Babylon occurs during the outpouring of the seventh bowl in Revelation 16. Part of the judgment associated with this bowl is that “Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath” (Rev 16:19-[note](#)). Again only one Babylon is in view. Immediately after this pronouncement John recorded the destruction of a “Babylon the great” in chapters 17 and 18. What is important is that chapters 17 and 18 are an expansion of Rev 16:19, which seems to refer to the destruction of a city called Babylon. It is pictured as a literal city. Kuhn captures the exact relationship in these words:

The destruction of Babylon is proclaimed by an angelic voice in Rev 14:8. The place of the fall of Babylon in the apocalyptic drama (with the outpouring of the 7th vial) is indicated in Rev 16:19. Then in Rev 17:1 to Rev 19:10 the divine expressly portrays this city and its fall in 7 visions.

The larger context begins before Revelation 17-18, but it does not end there. The subject of the fall of Babylon extends beyond these chapters into chapter 19. The first five verses of chapter 19 present the “Hallelujah Chorus” in heaven following the destruction of Babylon. As Ladd has noted,

The first paragraph of chapter nineteen continues the celebration of the fall of Babylon and consists of a song of thanksgiving in heaven that God had judged the great harlot.

Chapter 19 begins with the phrase "After these things." Ryrie notes that "

After these things evidently refers to the visions of the chapters immediately preceding. In Rev 18:20^{[note](#)} the call to rejoice was issued; here is the response to that call."

Thus the heavenly chorus is in response to the destruction of Babylon in chapter 18, but it looks back to the destruction in both chapters.

The first part of the heavenly praise focuses on the harlot of chapter 17. The multitude says,

Because His judgments are true and righteous; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and He has avenged the blood of His bond-servants on her" (Rev 19:2-^{[note](#)}).

In response to the angels' call to rejoice over the fall of Babylon in Rev 18:20^{[note](#)} the heavens do respond—with a song of praise for the judgment of the harlot. The implication is that the harlot of chapter 17 and the Babylon of chapter 18 are identical. The song of praise continues in Rev 19:3-^{[note](#)}, which says,

And a second time they said, 'Hallelujah! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!'

This reference to the smoldering city is drawn from chapter 18, in which the kings of the earth and the shipmasters are said to look on "the smoke of her burning" (Rev 18:9-^{[note](#)}, Rev 18:18-^{[note](#)}). The praise song in heaven over the fall of Babylon incorporates elements of both chapter 17 and chapter 18, and yet it seems to be a song celebrating just one fall and doing so in response to the command of Rev 18:20-^{[note](#)}. Again this larger context can be understood best if chapters 17 and 18 are viewed as a unit that looks forward to the destruction of a single city of Babylon...

This article has attempted to establish the relationship between Revelation 17 and 18. Several arguments advanced against the unity of the chapters were examined and found to be lacking. The arguments were based on the differences between the chapters, but those differences could also be explained by the different focus of each chapter or the different setting in which each chapter was presented to John. In contrast, the parallelism between the chapters pointed toward a strong unity that exists between them. That unity can best be explained by the presence of only one Babylon within the chapters. That one city is the subject of the larger context into which chapters 17 and 18 are set. Whatever the final identity of this Babylon might be, that identity must be the same for both chapters. There is only one Babylon in view. The exact identity of that city will be examined in the second article in this two-part series."

Related Resources:

- [The Identity of Babylon in Revelation 17-18: Part 1 -- BSac 144:575 Jul 1987](#) - Charles Dyer
- [The Identity of Babylon in Revelation 17-18 Part 2 -- BSac 144:576 Oct 1987](#) - Charles Dyer
- [The Identity of Babylon in Revelation 17-18 - Part 1](#) - Charles Dyer
- [The Identity of Babylon in Revelation 17-18 - Part 2](#) - Charles Dyer
- [What is the Identity of "Babylon" in Revelation 17-18?](#) by Andy Woods (in depth - 270 literature citations!)
- [Babylon and the Harlot](#) by Tony Garland - recommended - excellent summary of Babylon of old, Destruction of Babylon, Babylon's historic fall, Babylon's coming future destruction, Timing of Babylon's destruction, Identity of Babylon, Comparison of Zechariah 5:5-11 and Babylon in Revelation 17-18