WORKBOOK STUDY COMPANION · REVELATION 18

The Death of Politics *and Wealth*

REVELATION 18

Scripture written out in the NASB95, every question answered in one sentence, cross references, verse-by-verse commentary from three trusted teachers — and for each question, a point of critical thinking and a key question to carry into the week.

Amir Tsarfati
REVEALING REVELATION

John MacArthur
GRACE TO YOU

David Guzik
ENDURING WORD

01 CAPTURE THE SCENE

What do I see?

Using my Bible, reading Revelation 18:1-24 and working through the chapter verse by verse.

1 What does this chapter tell you about Babylon as a great city (Revelation 18:2, 10, 16-17, 19, 21)?

Revelation 18:2, 10 NASB95

And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. ... Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come."

IN MY WORDS

Babylon is a truly great and wealthy world city — yet in one hour she becomes a haunt of demons, her riches are laid waste, and she is thrown down like a millstone, never to be found again.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 18:21** "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

"With violence ... not be found any longer" is total and final — this is not decline but obliteration, matching the certainty announced in verse 2 before the city is even down.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

John writes in the style of the ancient doom-songs over Babylon and Tyre — "fallen, is fallen" repeated like a solemn dirge for the damned; whether a literal city or the world system itself, this is God's judgment on the whole order that has corrupted history.

CRITICAL THINKING

Five times the mourners call her "the great city" while heaven calls her fallen. Earth measures Babylon by her size and wealth; God measures her by her sins — and only one measurement survives the hour.

KEY QUESTION

What am I calling "great" in my life that God has already called fallen?

2 What was the city's boast (18:7)?

Revelation 18:7 NASB95

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."

IN MY WORDS

She boasts in her heart, "I sit as a queen and I am not a widow, and will never see mourning" — a claim that her wealth and power make her untouchable.

CROSS REFERENCE **Proverbs 16:18** "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

Three sins are named in her sentence: self-indulgent luxury, self-glorifying pride, and the presumption that she would never see sorrow — and that presumption is the world's constant lie.

CRITICAL THINKING

The boast is made "in her heart," not in a speech — God sentences a city for what it quietly assumes about itself. Judgment reads the inner monologue, not just the public record.

KEY QUESTION

What does my heart quietly assume can never be taken from me?

3 How does that boast compare to that of the literal Babylon (Isaiah 47:7)?

Isaiah 47:7 NASB95

Yet you said, "I will be a queen forever." These things you did not consider nor remember the outcome of them.

IN MY WORDS

It is the very same boast — literal Babylon also said "I will be a queen forever," refusing to consider her end, so the final Babylon simply repeats the pride of the first.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 47:8** "I am, and there is no one besides me. I will not sit as a widow, nor know loss of children."

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

The chapter deliberately echoes the Old Testament oracles against Babylon and Tyre — the same pride, the same songs, the same fall; God has already judged this spirit once in history, and the record stands as the preview.

CRITICAL THINKING

Centuries apart, both Babylons say "queen forever" almost word for word. Pride has no new material — and God's answer to it has not changed either.

KEY QUESTION

Do I ever remember "the outcome" of things — or do I plan as if my present season is permanent?

4 Why is God bringing such judgment on this city (Revelation 18:24)?

Revelation 18:24 NASB95

And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth.

IN MY WORDS

Because beneath her luxury lies bloodguilt — in her was found the blood of prophets, of saints, and of all who have been slain on the earth.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 6:10** the martyrs cry, "How long, O Lord … will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood?"

> **John MacArthur** GRACE TO YOU
>
> The ultimate charge is not merely greed but bloodguilt — God takes the persecution of His people as a personal offense, and that should steady every believer who has ever felt small or unseen.

> **Amir Tsarfati** REVEALING REVELATION
>
> The kings and merchants who grew rich exploiting people shed not one tear for the saints they persecuted — but God kept the account, and this chapter is Him settling it.

> CRITICAL THINKING
>
> The world indicts Babylon for nothing; her markets were legal and her luxury admired. God's indictment reads differently — the ledger He audits is written in blood, not gold.

KEY QUESTION

Do I evaluate systems by what they produce for me, or by what they cost the people God loves?

02 ANALYZE THE MESSAGE

What does it mean?

This chapter's workbook section teaches through five guided readings rather than numbered questions — each reading is captured below with the workbook's own point.

1 Read Revelation 18:1-3

Revelation 18:1-2 NASB95

After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!"

IN MY WORDS

Two voices open the chapter — an angel bright with God's glory announces Babylon's fall, the same message Jeremiah preached over the literal Babylon centuries before it happened.

CROSS REFERENCE **Jeremiah 51:8** "Suddenly Babylon has fallen and been broken; wail over her!"

Amir Tsarfati REVEALING REVELATION

An angel so fresh from God's presence that his glory lights the earth announces the end of the world's economic order — a system whose pieces already line up in our headlines, and whose expiration date God has already set.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

"Fallen, fallen" is announced before it happens — that is how certain God's judgments are; and this is not a religious system condemned for false worship but an economic and political one condemned for greed and self-indulgence.

CRITICAL THINKING

Chapter 17's Babylon was religion; chapter 18's is commerce and politics. God does not only judge what calls itself a church — He judges what functions as one, and money is the world's oldest congregation.

KEY QUESTION

Which system do I trust so instinctively that I never thought to ask if God will judge it?

2 Read Revelation 18:4-6

Revelation 18:4-5 NASB95

I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities."

IN MY WORDS

God remembers the sins of those who continue in them, but He does not remember the sins of those who have trusted Him — so His people are called out of Babylon before her plagues arrive.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 43:25** "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins."

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

This warning targets saints who, like Lot in Sodom, are living somewhere ripe for judgment; her sins "reached to heaven" like the tower of Babel — but toward His own, God says the opposite: "I will remember their sins no more."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

Repaying her double is precise justice, not vindictive excess — the picture is paying back exactly what is owed; and the certainty of that judgment is meant to produce present holiness, not speculation about dates.

CRITICAL THINKING

The same verb divides humanity: God "remembered" Babylon's iniquities but will "not remember" the sins of His own. The difference is not the quality of the sins — it is the blood that covers them.

KEY QUESTION

Am I living inside anything God is calling me to walk out of while there is still time?

3 Read Revelation 18:7

Revelation 18:7 NASB95

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."

IN MY WORDS

The city's attitude is King Nebuchadnezzar's all over again — extreme pride before the God of heaven — and this time the judgment will strike rich and poor alike, those in high positions as well as low.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 4:30** "Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built … by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?"

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

Her presumption that she would "never see sorrow" is the world's constant lie — and God is sovereign over commerce as much as over creeds; a world built on luxury and self-love will not escape His hand because it never called itself a religion.

CRITICAL THINKING

Nebuchadnezzar was given seven years of madness and came back humbled; this Babylon is given no second act. Pride that ignores every warning eventually meets the judgment that ends the warnings.

KEY QUESTION

When God humbles me in a small way, do I learn from it — or wait for the larger lesson?

4 Read Revelation 18:9-19

Revelation 18:11, 17 NASB95

And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more ... for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!

IN MY WORDS

Kings, merchants, and mariners watch everything they built on Babylon crash in a single hour — and because that judgment allows no plea bargain afterward, now is the accepted time to be saved.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Corinthians 6:2** "Behold, now is 'the acceptable time,' behold, now is 'the day of salvation.'"

Amir Tsarfati REVEALING REVELATION

Named among her merchandise are "bodies and souls of men" — the ancient slave trade and every modern form of trafficking it foreshadows; the mourners' grief is entirely self-interested, with not one tear for the people they exploited.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

The cargo list is a catalog of wants, not needs — and even facing God's wrath these men weep for merchandise, not for sin; "the fruit you long for has gone from you" previews an eternal principle: hell is, in part, the unending absence of what the unrepentant heart most craved.

CRITICAL THINKING

God may warn for years and even centuries before He acts — and many read the delay as a verdict of innocence. The mourners standing "at a distance" prove the opposite: delayed judgment was mercy extending the deadline, not canceling it.

KEY QUESTION

If everything I own vanished in one hour, how much of my grief would be for things — and how much of my hope would be left?

5 Read Revelation 18:21-24

Revelation 18:22-23 NASB95

And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer ... and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer ... because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery.

IN MY WORDS

The repeated "not ... any longer" marks the loss of life itself — musicians, craftsmen, lamplight, and wedding songs all go silent because the people were wiped out with the city.

CROSS REFERENCE **Jeremiah 51:63-64** the scroll tied to a stone and thrown into the Euphrates: "Just so shall Babylon sink down and not rise again."

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

The millstone recalls Jeremiah sinking the stone-bound scroll in the Euphrates — and "sorcery" translates *pharmakia:* her lure works like a drug, fed by deception; this world system will pass away like a stone to the sea bottom, and it will only hurt us to the extent we invested ourselves in it.

Amir Tsarfati REVEALING REVELATION

The silencing of "bridegroom and bride" in Babylon stands in deliberate contrast to what comes next — the marriage supper of the Lamb in chapter 19; one wedding song ends forever so another can begin.

CRITICAL THINKING

The chapter's final losses are not gold but music, craft, light, and marriage — the good gifts of common grace. Sin never destroys only the sinful things; it eventually takes the beautiful ones down with it.

KEY QUESTION

Which wedding am I actually living for — the world's party that ends, or the Lamb's supper that begins?

03 COMPARE THIS CHAPTER WITH THE REST OF SCRIPTURE

Is this supported by other passages in Revelation, John's other books, the Old/New Testaments?

Letting Scripture interpret Scripture.

1 You have already read from the prophet Jeremiah that the Babylon of his day had fallen. Now compare the historical event of Babylon in Isaiah 21:9 with Revelation 18:2.

Isaiah 21:9 NASB95

"Now behold, here comes a troop of riders, horsemen in pairs." And one said, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon; and all the images of her gods are shattered on the ground."

IN MY WORDS

The angel of Revelation 18:2 repeats Isaiah's cry word for word — "fallen, fallen is Babylon" — so the historical fall of the literal city is the preview God gave of the final one.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 18:2** "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons."

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

The doubled "fallen, is fallen" is the ancient dirge form — John deliberately sings over the last Babylon the same doom-song the prophets sang over the first.

CRITICAL THINKING

Isaiah's Babylon fell with her idols shattered; John's falls having become a home for the demons behind those idols. The final fall does not just repeat history — it unmasks it.

KEY QUESTION

Do I let fulfilled prophecy strengthen my confidence in the prophecies still ahead?

2 Compare Jeremiah 51:6-10 with Revelation 18:4-5.

Jeremiah 51:6 NASB95

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.

IN MY WORDS

Both passages sound the same alarm — God's people must flee Babylon before His vengeance falls — because God always calls His own out before He judges what they are standing in.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 18:4** "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues."

Amir Tsarfati REVEALING REVELATION

"Come out of her, my people" echoes the very call God gave through Isaiah and Jeremiah before literal Babylon fell — and it is the same call today: separation is not isolation from the world's people but refusal to be yoked to the world's corrupted systems.

CRITICAL THINKING

Noah, Lot, Jeremiah's exiles, and the tribulation saints all hear the same sequence — the call to come out precedes the fire. God's warnings are exits, and every exit has a closing time.

KEY QUESTION

When God opens an exit for me, how long do I typically stand in the doorway?

3 Compare the attitude of this great city as described in Revelation 18:7 with the attitude described in Daniel 4:28-30.

Daniel 4:30 NASB95

The king reflected and said, "Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?"

IN MY WORDS

Nebuchadnezzar's "I myself have built … my power … my majesty" is the same self-crowning pride as the city's "I sit as a queen" — both glorify self and forget the God of heaven.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 4:31** "While the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven … sovereignty has been removed from you."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

Self-glorifying pride is one of the three sins named in Babylon's sentence — the identical attitude that cost Nebuchadnezzar his sanity for seven years until he confessed the Most High rules.

CRITICAL THINKING

Nebuchadnezzar's judgment fell "while the word was in the king's mouth," and Babylon's falls in one hour — pride never gets the long twilight it plans for. But the king was humbled and restored; the city is not. Pride repented of is survivable; pride enthroned is fatal.

KEY QUESTION

Whose might and majesty do I quietly credit for what I have built?

4 Compare Revelation 18:16 with Revelation 17:4.

Revelation 18:16 NASB95

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.

IN MY WORDS

The city wears exactly what the harlot wore — purple, scarlet, gold, precious stones, and pearls — because religious Babylon and commercial Babylon are two faces of the same corrupt system.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 17:4** "The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls."

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Religious Babylon and commercial Babylon are best seen as intertwined yet distinct — the first judged at the Tribulation's midpoint, the second at its end — two chapters, two mourners, one satanic order.

CRITICAL THINKING

Scripture dresses the false church and the world's marketplace in the same wardrobe. When religion and commerce wear identical jewelry, both have the same tailor — and the same fate.

KEY QUESTION

Can I tell where my faith ends and my lifestyle begins — or do they wear the same clothes?

5 Compare Revelation 18:11-17 with Ezekiel 27:22-36.

Ezekiel 27:33, 36 NASB95

When your wares went out from the seas, you satisfied many peoples; with the abundance of your wealth and your merchandise you enriched the kings of earth. ... The merchants among the peoples hiss at you; you have become terrified and you will cease to be forever.

IN MY WORDS

John's lament over Babylon follows Ezekiel's lament over Tyre almost line by line — the same cargo lists, the same weeping merchants and mariners, the same sudden end to a sea-trading empire that enriched kings.

CROSS REFERENCE **Ezekiel 27:13** Tyre also traded in "the lives of men" — the same human merchandise as Babylon's "slaves and human lives" (Revelation 18:13).

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

The long cargo list needs little comment except this: these are luxuries, not necessities, and the mourning is rooted purely in self-interest — a system built on complete disregard for the God who gave the wealth and for the people made in His image.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

Grief on earth and joy in heaven over the same event is possible because each measures by a different standard — earth measures loss of wealth, heaven measures the triumph of justice.

CRITICAL THINKING

Tyre's mourners and Babylon's speak the same script twenty-six centuries apart. Economies change, ships become markets — but a world that trades in "the lives of men" always ends the same way.

KEY QUESTION

Is there any place my comfort is quietly financed by someone else's harm?

04 EXECUTE

So what? How does this affect my life?

Principle: We reap what we sow. — Bringing Revelation 18 home to my own walk.

1 What quality and quantity of sowing have you done in your personal Bible reading and prayer life?

Galatians 6:7-8 NASB95

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

IN MY WORDS

I have been sowing consistently through our weekly studies and daily time in the Word, but I want the quality to deepen — less rushing, more meditating and praying the Scripture back to God.

CROSS REFERENCE **Psalm 1:2-3** the blessed man's "delight is in the law of the LORD … he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

Certainty of coming judgment is meant to produce present holiness — the study of prophecy that does not drive you deeper into the Word and prayer has been mishandled.

CRITICAL THINKING

Babylon's citizens reaped exactly what a lifetime of small daily choices had sown. Harvests never surprise the farmer — only the man who forgot he was planting.

KEY QUESTION

If my walk with God next year is the harvest of this week's sowing, what exactly am I planting?

2 What quality and quantity of sowing have you done in your relationships with…

Galatians 6:9-10 NASB95

Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

a. others in your family?

IN MY WORDS

Our weekly study together is real sowing, and I want to keep widening that faithfulness to the whole family — more patience, more encouragement, more of the Word shared at home.

CROSS REFERENCE **Joshua 24:15** "as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

b. others in your work environment?

IN MY WORDS

I sow at work mostly by how I do the work — doing it heartily as for the Lord — and I want my integrity and peace under pressure to open doors my words alone would not.

CROSS REFERENCE **Colossians 3:23** "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men."

c. unbelievers?

IN MY WORDS

This is where my sowing is thinnest — I want to make the most of the opportunities God puts in front of me, with speech seasoned with grace and a readiness to actually invite.

CROSS REFERENCE **Colossians 4:5-6** "Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity."

Amir Tsarfati REVEALING REVELATION

Separation from Babylon is not isolation from Babylon's people — we refuse the world's corrupted systems precisely so we can still reach the people caught inside them.

CRITICAL THINKING

The workbook asks about quality and quantity — because it is possible to sow much and sow badly, or to sow beautifully but almost never. A harvest needs both the right seed and enough of it.

KEY QUESTION

Which person in each of these three circles is due a deliberate act of sowing from me this week?

3 What quality and quantity of ministry have you done in your church or outside the church?

1 Peter 4:10 NASB95

As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

IN MY WORDS

God has given me gifts of teaching and building — our studies, the books, the blog — and I want to steward them faithfully rather than let ministry become another possession I manage.

CROSS REFERENCE **Ephesians 2:10** "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

This world system will pass away like a stone to the bottom of the sea — it will only hurt us to the extent we invested ourselves in it; ministry is the investment that survives the splash.

CRITICAL THINKING

Babylon's craftsmen were skilled and her musicians excellent, yet every talent went down with the city because it was all spent on her. The question is never whether I am gifted but where the gift is banked.

KEY QUESTION

How much of my ministry would still be standing if everything built for my own name sank tonight?

4 What quality and quantity of your possessions or finances have you shared with those people or ministries who are reaching those you cannot reach?

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 NASB95

Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

IN MY WORDS

I give, but this question presses me to give on purpose — bountifully and cheerfully toward the ministries reaching people I will never meet, instead of only when the plate happens to pass.

CROSS REFERENCE **Matthew 6:20** "store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

The merchants' catalog was wants, not needs — a heart in love with itself spends accordingly; the direction of a man's money is the direction of his worship.

CRITICAL THINKING

Babylon's wealth vanished in one hour, unspent and unsent. Whatever I share with eternity's work before the hour comes is the only wealth the millstone cannot sink.

KEY QUESTION

Does my giving look like a purposed sowing plan — or like Babylon's leftovers?

5 What quality and quantity of time are you using toward your walk with the Lord?

Ephesians 5:15-16 NASB95

Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

IN MY WORDS

My time is the one seed I cannot replant — I want the hours I give the Lord to be first and focused, not the tired remainder after everything else has been fed.

CROSS REFERENCE **Psalm 90:12** "So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom."

Amir Tsarfati REVEALING REVELATION

The posture of a watchful believer is not fixation on what is collapsing but readiness for the celebration Scripture promises is close behind it — alert, sober, and living like the wedding is near.

CRITICAL THINKING

Babylon's people ran out of time mid-sentence — the music stopped between notes. Time feels like the most renewable resource I have; Revelation 18 says it is the least.

KEY QUESTION

If this were the week the hour arrived, would my calendar show a man who was watching?

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Babylon has fallen… again. Chapter 17 buried the world's false religion; chapter 18 buries its economy and politics — the glittering system that fed the greed of kings, merchants, and mariners alike. And this time no human hand tears her down. She falls by a sudden, direct act of God, in a single hour, with no plea bargaining and no second act.

What lingers after the smoke is who mourns and who rejoices. The mourners weep for merchandise — not one tear for sin, not one for the people trafficked as "slaves and human lives." Heaven, meanwhile, is commanded to rejoice, because the blood of prophets and saints has finally been avenged. Same event, two verdicts — earth measuring lost wealth, heaven measuring justice done.

The chapter's one command to God's people is the oldest one He gives before judgment: come out. Not isolation from Babylon's people, but refusal to be yoked to her systems — her pride, her appetite, her presumption that tomorrow is guaranteed. We reap what we sow, and every seed lands in one of two cities: the one going down like a millstone, or the one whose wedding music is about to begin.

"Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues."

REVELATION 18:4

You will never sail a cargo ship into Babylon, but you live in her shopping district. The pull of this chapter is not exotic — it is the ordinary gravity of comfort, accumulation, and the quiet boast that sorrow is for other people. Hold this world's wealth loosely and its King's reign closely; sow toward the city that cannot sink.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

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