

Mourners Wail for Babylon **Revelation 18:9-19**

I wish to talk with you about some personal matters in your life. We have needs for survival--food, clothing and shelter.

Jesus spoke about those needs. He urged His disciples to trust in the LORD and not to worry. In His sermon on the Mount He said these words. Matthew 6:25-34.

"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

We have come to Revelation 18:9-19 and we learn how the several groups wept at the destruction of a great city. MOURNERS WAIL FOR BABYLON.

9 The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning,

10 Standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.

11 And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore:

12 Merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble;

13 And cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and slaves and souls of men.

14 The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all.

15 The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

16 And saying, Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls!

17 For in one hour such great riches came to nothing. Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance

18 And cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like this great city?

19 They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.

The Apostle was given a preview of the three groups of MOURNERS who wail for Babylon.

The first Group; The Kings

They represent the political aspect of this picture. And we learn that they had committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her. These were sinful relationships, improper relationships. We learn from our study of the Bible that fornication in this context may well mean spiritual departure, apostasy from the truth of God, and lived luxuriously. They shall lament and beat their breasts because of the tragedy of the destruction. They will be standing afar off.

This one who rode the beast, who was in charge of the political activities, apparently, suddenly comes to nothing. All that judgment in one hour. And they shall say, “Alas, alas, that great city.”

It might be pointed out that as John heard this on the Island of Patmos he heard words that conveyed more of their meaning by their sound. These who stood afar off in Greek would say, “ouai, ouai.” I say the meaning of this is conveyed by the sound. Standing afar off to see all this destruction are the kings, the political rulers of the world.

The second Group; The Merchants

They represent the commercial aspect of this picture. The source of their sales is gone. They say, “Who is going to buy?” Nobody will buy their merchandise anymore. What kind of merchandise? I turn to Dr. Smith as he outlined them: “Costly ornaments: gold, and silver, precious stones, and pearls. Costly clothes: fine linen and purple, and silk, and scarlet. Costly furnishings: all thyme wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble. Costly perfumes: cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense. Costly foods: wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, beasts and sheep. Costly conveyances: Horses and chariots. Costly chattel: slaves and souls of men.”

What a catalog of merchandise! What a merchandise mart! What a shopping mall! They surely fared sumptuously every day. They were made rich by the abundance of her delicacies. But they also stand afar off and say, “ouai, ouai.” So we have the kings and the merchants.

The third Group; The Shipmasters

They represent transportation, those who were plying their trade across the waters from country to country, from city to city. They also look upon the destruction. And they cry, “What city is like unto this great city!” “They cast dust on their heads and cried, weeping and wailing, ouai, ouai, that great city, in which were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness!”

Money, riches, greed, the importance of it all suddenly comes to nothing but ruins.

Those mourners: the kings, the merchants, the shipmasters were distressed because the source of their wealth had been destroyed. Earthly values gone in an hour.

The spiritual aspect of life was completely eclipsed. They had what the politicians call “the good life,” but only for time with no thought for eternity.