

By Your Magic Spell All Nations Were Led Astray

18: 23b-24

DIG: How many nations will be defiled by Babylon? What will Babylon use to lead people astray? Whose blood will Babylon be responsible for shedding?

REFLECT: Does any of her magic spell exist today? How? If **God** remembered to avenge the blood of the prophets, do you have to worry about accounts that you feel need to be settled in your life? Can you trust **Him** to take care of those things that you are holding on to?

Three final reasons are given for Babylon's judgment. The first reason given for her destruction is that her **merchants were the world's great men**, using their wealth to rise to positions of power, fame and authority. The Bible documents the abuses of such proud, egotistical **rich** men. **James** asks: **Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court (James 2:6)?** Later, in his letter, **James** continued to accuse the rich for their abuse of the poor: **Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your field are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of ADONAI, God of heavens armies. You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and murdered innocent men, who were not opposing you (James 5:4-6).** **Isaiah (Isaiah 3:14-15, 5:8)** and **Amos (Amos 4:1, 5:11, 8:4-6)**, also condemned the **rich** for their boasting and abuse of the poor.

The second reason given for **Babylon's** judgment will be that **by her** sorcery, or **magic spell**, **all the nations** will be **led astray (18:23c)**. The English word sorcery comes from the Greek word *pharmakeia*. The root of the English words *pharmacy* and *pharmaceuticals*. It is used in the New Covenant to refer to magic and occult practices (**Galatians 5:20; Revelation 9:21**). The prostitute of Babylon, with her false religion of satanic evolutionary humanism, had literally corrupted every nation in the history of the world since Nimrod. The religion of ancient **Babylon** was heavily influenced by astrology, magic, fortune-telling and occultism. It was through **her** that Satan had deceived the whole world (**12:9**). All of the earth's people had, to one degree or another, been intoxicated with her corrupting wine (**17:2**).⁴⁰² Thus, Babylon's **magic spell** on the world will not be solely due to **her** military or economic strength, it will also be due to pressure from the occult.

The third reason given for **Babylon's** judgment will be her vicious slaughter of ADONAI's children. Not only was **Babylon** the mother of spiritual prostitutes, giving birth to every false religion in the history of rebellion against **God**, but **she** was also the mother of

persecutions. Whom she could not deceive and corrupt, she would pursue and slay. In her was found the blood of prophets and the saints (11:7, 13:7 and 15, 16:6, 17:6), the souls under the golden altar of incense (6:9-11), and of all who have been killed on the earth (18:24). Babylon has a long history as the city of Satan. The false prophet will make his headquarters there during the second half of the Great Tribulation. He will worship the Antichrist and have no tolerance for the people of God. He will kill all those who do not have the mark of the beast. Thus, her destruction will be well deserved.⁴⁰³

In every generation, the enemies of God have persecuted the people of God. Sometimes it has been in the name of pagan pantheistic polytheism, such as in the kingdoms of ancient Egypt, Assyria, Persia and Rome. Modern pagan nations, like Japan and China, have done the same thing. Even more severe have been the persecutions of the pseudo-monotheistic Islamic nations. Sometimes a corrupted form of Christianity, compromising with paganism, like the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, has been the instrument of persecution. Most vicious of all, however, have been the mass executions instigated in the name of humanistic socialism, whether the system of totalitarian fascism (as in Hitler's Germany), or of revolutionary communism (as in Stalin's Russia or Mao's China). It has been estimated since Karl Marx, more than one hundred million people have died in communist purges. This monstrous fruit of the bitter wine of evolutionary atheism has, of course, destroyed millions of people who were not believers at all, but it is God's true witnesses who have been the objects of Satan's special hatred.

All these systems have their roots in Babylon. The terrible indictment has been written: Babylon is the source of murder, warfare, and of all who have been killed on the earth (18:24). And at that time, its mighty capitol will be judged and sentenced to everlasting destruction and oblivion.⁴⁰⁴

The words of Jesus form a fitting conclusion to the message of judgment on Babylon: **The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, "What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops." Then he said, "This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself: You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy. Eat drink and be merry." But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself." This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God (Luke 12:16-21).**

With the vivid description of the fall of Babylon in Chapters 17 and 18, the way is cleared for the presentation of the major theme of the book of Revelation, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the establishment of His millennial Kingdom.