Excurus on Revelation 17-18: Study of the Future of "Babylon"

All 269 references to "Babylon" in the NASU Bible:

2 Ki. 17:24, 2 Ki. 17:30, 2 Ki. 20:12, 2 Ki. 20:14, 2 Ki. 20:17, 2 Ki. 20:18, 2 Ki. 24:1, 2 Ki. 24:7, 2 Ki. 24:10, 2 Ki. 24:11, 2 Ki. 24:12 *2, 2 Ki. 24:15 *2, 2 Ki. 24:16 *2, 2 Ki. 24:17, 2 Ki. 24:20, 2 Ki. 25:1, 2 Ki. 25:6, 2 Ki. 25:7, 2 Ki. 25:8 *2, 2 Ki. 25:11, 2 Ki. 25:13, 2 Ki. 25:20, 2 Ki. 25:21, 2 Ki. 25:22, 2 Ki. 25:23, 2 Ki. 25:24, 2 Ki. 25:27, 2 Ki. 25:28, 1 Chr. 9:1, 2 Chr. 32:31, 2 Chr. 33:11, 2 Chr. 36:6 *2, 2 Chr. 36:7 *2, 2 Chr. 36:10, 2 Chr. 36:18, 2 Chr. 36:20, Ezr. 1:11, Ezr. 2:1 *2, Ezr. 5:12 *2, Ezr. 5:13, Ezr. 5:14 *2, Ezr. 5:17, Ezr. 6:1, Ezr. 6:5, Ezr. 7:6, Ezr. 7:9, Ezr. 7:16, Ezr. 8:1, Neh. 7:6, Neh. 13:6, Est. 2:6, Ps. 87:4, Ps. 137:1, Ps. 137:8, Isa. 13:1, Isa. 13:19, Isa. 14:4, Isa. 14:22, Isa. 21:9, Isa. 39:1, Isa. 39:3, Isa. 39:6, Isa. 39:7, Isa. 43:14, Isa. 47:1, Isa. 48:14, Isa. 48:20, Jer. 20:4 *2, Jer. 20:5, Jer. 20:6, Jer. 21:2, Jer. 21:4, Jer. 21:7, Jer. 21:10, Jer. 22:25, Jer. 24:1 *2, Jer. 25:1, Jer. 25:9, Jer. 25:11, Jer. 25:12, Jer. 27:6, Jer. 27:8 *2, Jer. 27:9, Jer. 27:11, Jer. 27:12, Jer. 27:13, Jer. 27:14, Jer. 27:16, Jer. 27:17, Jer. 27:18, Jer. 27:20 *2, Jer. 27:22, Jer. 28:3 *2, Jer. 28:4 *2, Jer. 28:6, Jer. 28:11, Jer. 28:14, Jer. 29:1, Jer. 29:3 *2, Jer. 29:24, Jer. 29:10, Jer. 29:15, Jer. 29:20, Jer. 29:21, Jer. 29:22 *2, Jer. 29:28, Jer. 32:3, Jer. 32:4, Jer. 32:5, Jer. 32:28, Jer. 32:36, Jer. 38:17, Jer. 38:18, Jer. 38:22, Jer. 38:23, Jer. 39:1, Jer. 39:13, Jer. 40:1, Jer. 48:20, Jer. 39:5, Jer. 39:7, Jer. 39:9, Jer. 39:11, Jer. 39:13, Jer. 40:1, Jer. 40:4 *2, Jer. 40:5, Jer. 40:7 *2, Jer. 40:9, Jer. 40:11, Jer. 41:2, Jer. 41:18, Jer. 42:11, Jer. 43:3, Jer. 44:30, Jer. 46:2, Jer. 46:13, Jer. 46:26, Jer. 49:28, Jer. 49:30,

Jeremiah 50-52

Jer. 50:1, Jer. 50:2, Jer. 50:8, Jer. 50:9, Jer. 50:13, Jer. 50:14, Jer. 50:16, Jer. 50:17, Jer. 50:18, Jer. 50:23, Jer. 50:24, Jer. 50:28, Jer. 50:29, Jer. 50:34, Jer. 50:35, Jer. 50:42, Jer. 50:43, Jer. 50:45, Jer. 50:46, Jer. 51:1, Jer. 51:2, Jer. 51:6, Jer. 51:7, Jer. 51:8, Jer. 51:9, Jer. 51:11, Jer. 51:12 *2, Jer. 51:24, Jer. 51:29 *2, Jer. 51:30, Jer. 51:31, Jer. 51:33, Jer. 51:34, Jer. 51:35, Jer. 51:37, Jer. 51:41, Jer. 51:42, Jer. 51:44 *2, Jer. 51:47, Jer. 51:48, Jer. 51:49 *2, Jer. 51:53, Jer. 51:54, Jer. 51:55, Jer. 51:56, Jer. 51:59, Jer. 51:60 *2, Jer. 51:61, Jer. 51:64, Jer. 52:31, Jer. 52:4, Jer. 52:10, Jer. 52:11 *2, Jer. 52:15, Jer. 52:17, Jer. 52:26, Jer. 52:27, Jer. 52:31, Jer. 52:34, Jer. 52:34,

Ezek. 12:13, Ezek. 17:12 *2, Ezek. 17:16, Ezek. 17:20, Ezek. 19:9, Ezek. 21:19, Ezek. 21:21, Ezek. 24:2, Ezek. 26:7, Ezek. 29:18, Ezek. 29:19, Ezek. 30:10, Ezek. 30:24, Ezek. 30:25 *2, Ezek. 32:11, Dan. 1:1, Dan. 2:12, Dan. 2:14, Dan. 2:18, Dan. 2:24 *2, Dan. 2:48 *2, Dan. 2:49, Dan. 3:1, Dan. 3:12, Dan. 3:30, Dan. 4:6, Dan. 4:29, Dan. 4:30, Dan. 5:7, Dan. 7:1, Mic. 4:10, Zech. 2:7, Zech. 6:10, Matt. 1:11, Matt. 1:12, Matt. 1:17 *2, Acts 7:43, 1 Pet. 5:13, Rev. 14:8, Rev. 16:19, Rev. 17:5, Rev. 18:2, Rev. 18:10, Rev. 18:21

Jeremiah 51:24-26

"But I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all their evil that they have done in Zion before your eyes," declares the LORD. 25 "Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, Who destroys the whole earth," declares the LORD, "And I will stretch out My hand against you, And roll you down from the crags, And I will make you a burnt out mountain. 26 "They will not take from you *even* a stone for a corner Nor a stone for foundations, But you will be desolate forever," declares the LORD.

Jer. 51:60-64

So Jeremiah wrote in a single scroll all the calamity which would come upon **Babylon**, *that is*, all these words which have been written concerning **Babylon**. 61 Then Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "As soon as you come to Babylon, then see that you read all these words aloud, 62 and say, '**You**, **O LORD**, **have promised concerning this place to cut it off, so that there will be nothing dwelling in it, whether man or beast, but it will be a perpetual desolation.' 63 "And as soon as you finish reading this scroll, you will tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates, 64 and say, 'Just so shall Babylon sink down and not rise again because of the calamity that I am going to bring upon her; and they will become exhausted.'" Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.**

Isaiah 13:17-22 Prophet's oracle against Babylon

NAU Isaiah 13:17 Behold, I am going to stir up the Medes against them, Who will not value silver or take pleasure in gold. 18 And *their* bows will mow down the young men, They will not even have compassion on the fruit of the

womb, *Nor* will their eye pity children. 19 And <u>Babylon</u>, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride, <u>Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. 20 It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to</u> generation; Nor will the Arab pitch *his* tent there, Nor will shepherds make *their flocks* lie down there. 21 But desert creatures will lie down there, And their houses will be full of owls; Ostriches also will live there, and shaggy goats will frolic there. 22 Hyenas will howl in their fortified towers And jackals in their luxurious palaces. Her *fateful* time also will soon come And her days will not be prolonged.

THREE VIEWS OF THE MEANING OF "BABYLON" IN REVELATION 17-18

VIEW #1 -- BABYLON IS A REFERENCE TO AMERICA

Major Proponents: R. A. Coombes

A key website is: http://americathebabylon.com/

America has defeated the lands of ancient Babylon known as Iraq. This makes America the latest world power to conquer "Babylon" and from a prophetical standpoint, America holds title to Babylon and thus America inherits the "Mystery Babylon" title. But that's only the tip of the "Mystery Babylon" iceberg that includes DOZENS of other PROOFS from the scriptures that all points to and proves that America is the only answer as to who or what is Mystery Babylon.

A Day of Reckoning with God.

If you thought September 11th 2001 was bad

consider this Divine angelic forces are standing ready to fulfill the ancient written Biblical Prophecies with a sudden attack upon "America, The Babylon."

Did you know that there are Biblical prophecies yet to be fulfilled which predict that just before the rise of the Antichrist and before the return of Jesus Christ, a Super-Power nation will exist called Mystery Babylon. The Biblical Prophecies indicate that this Super-Power nation will set up an alliance with Satan and his cosmic rebel angelic forces and thus allow them to have an "observation base" within that nation. The prophecies use a symbolic "code-name" for this end- of- the-era Super Power nation. The symbolic code name is: "Mystery Babylon." Today, we know this nation as the United States of America. Now you can read about America's future in *America, The Babylon: America's Destiny Foretold In Biblical Prophecy.* The books are now available in 2 formats:

1. New Downloadable E-books for INSTANT access -- no waiting for mail delivery and no extra mailing costs 2. CD-Rom with both books on a single CD-Rom. This format does cost extra for the CD and for shipping and handling and will take at least 3 days or more in shipping time.

<u>Volume 1</u> (the original) -- provides the basic framework of under-standing the prophecies of "Mystery Babylon." It is 256 pages. Available on CD-Rom. The CD-Rom version provides direct online website links to proof sources so that you can verify the data for yourself. CD-Rom makes it much easier to verify the data than with a regular hard, softcover or paperback book.

<u>Volume 2</u> -- provides further research and background plus new data that further identifies America as "Mystery Babylon." It includes a post-September 11th analysis also.

Volume 2 is now available, but only on CD-Rom. Again, we reiterate that this new CD-Rom book format enables you to get confirming proof immediately in your computer via hundreds of internet links. In doing so, you don't have to take the author's word as proof for his empirical claims. Many of these links take you online directly to U.S. gov't. websites that help to positively document the author's claims. Other links will take you to other resource sites with corroborating research materials.

VIEW #2 – BABYLON IS A REFERENCE TO ROME AND ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Major Proponents: Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost

The word "Babylon" occurs nearly 500 times in the Bible. It's meaning has been masterfully outlined Rev. Alexander Hislop's book, *THE TWO BABYLONS*, published in 1858. This study remained unchallenged for over 100 years. See the actual writing at this website: <u>http://philologos.org/__eb-ttb/default.htm</u> Another website resource is a book by Dave Hunt: <u>http://www.chick.com/information/religions/catholicism/</u> <u>sevenhills.asp</u> According to Genesis 10 and 11, Nimrod son of Cush ("the black one," not physically, but spiritually), son of Ham ("darkened"), the unworthy son of Noah organized a kingdom in rebellion against God's revelation through Noah. Nimrod's kingdom first centered in the land of Shinar (Babylonia, cf. 10:8-10) and his activities included the building of the tower of Bab-el ("Gate of God," 11:1-9), which became the center of the first false religious system. God judged by confusing the language of the whole earth and scattering the people. He gave it the name "Babel," "confusion" (cf. Gen. 11:9).

Outside of the biblical records, Hislop traces the development by examining over 250 ancient authors. Symarimus, wife of Nimrod, bore Tammuz, a son she claimed was conceived miraculously in fulfillment of Genesis 3:15. She claimed she was the woman of Gen. 3:15, and that Tammuz was the seed of the woman. Since Nimrod's wife had already become high priestess of the so-called Babylonian mysteries (secret religious rites connected with idol worship in Babylon), her son became, in effect, a false messiah. So the mother-child cult was born, symbolized by a mother cradling a baby in arms. Tammuz the child died (but supposedly was restored by his mother, who was then called the "Queen of Heaven"). The evergreen became a symbol of perpetual life, and the egg a symbol of Tammuz - and life out of death.

Hislop traces the spread of this idea from Babylon—to Phonecia (Ezek. 8:14); to Egypt and the Isis cult; to Greece with Aphrodite; and to Rome with Venus and Cupid - mother and child worship.

Scripture alludes to conflict with this pseudo-religious system when Jeremiah mentions the heathen making cakes for the queen of heaven (Jer. 7:19) and offering incense to the queen of heaven (Jer. 44:17-19, 25). Baal was another name for Tammuz in the worship of the Canaanites. This concept seemed to have permeated the ancient world.

Before a member could be initiated into the "Babylonian Cult" he had to confess to the priest or pontiff whose word was law. Babylon continued as the center until the fall of the Babylonian and Medo-Persian empires (cf. Daniel's dreams), when it moved to Pergamos in Asia Minor (Rev.2-5).

When Attalus. the Pontiff and King of Pergamos died in B.C. 133, he bequeathed the Headship of the "Babylonian Priesthood" to Rome. When (63 B.C.) Julius Caesar became "Supreme Pontiff" of the "Babylonian Order," Romans accepted their emperors as head of the "Babylonian Priesthood." When (376 A.D.) Emperor Gratian, for Christian reasons, refused the title, the Bishop of the Church at Rome was elected to the position so that the ruler of the "Roman Church" became the Head of the Babylonian Order by 378 A.D.

Soon after, the "rites" of Babylon came to the front. The worship of the Virgin Mary was set up in 381 A.D., and the mother-child cult was made "Christian" in the 4th Century and perpetuated in Romanism. The decree for Easter and Lent, given in 519 A.D. corrupted the resurrection event with the very name "Easter," which means "Ishtar," one of the titles for the Babylonian Queen of Heaven, whose eggs symbolized life out of death (see above).

VIEW #3 – BABYLON IS A LITERAL CITY IN THE FUTURE THAT CONTROLS RELIGION AND ECONOMICS

Major Proponents: Dr. Charles Dyer; Dr. Robert Thomas

A website with pictures of Saddam Hussein's attempts to rebuild the city of Babylon on its ancient site. <u>http://www.zionministry.com/babylon.html</u> Another website by Prophecy Watch, featuring Dyer's book: <u>http://www.prophecywatch.com/articles/</u> saddam hussein.htm

"Saddam Hussein, Iraq, & The Coming Wars Of Babylon" by Phillip Goodman

It grieves us here at Thy Kingdom Come when we think of war; men, many barely out of their teens, violently locked in deadly struggles on foreign fields. War is the bloody outworking of man's fall into sin at the outset of creation and all the more reason to look with anticipation for the return of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ.

But the Bible predicts two coming wars in Babylon-modern Iraq- and according to Jeremiah, there may be a

third. But first, the infamous City of Babylon must be rebuilt. Iraq's Saddam Hussein began that rebuilding project some years ago. Recent satellite photos show that Babylon is rising again.

Before we consider the rebuilding of Babylon and the coming wars there, we must be careful to never "demonize" any race of people. In fact, there will be many Iraqis in that final number of saints who have accepted Jesus Christ and gained entrance into heaven.

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues...Revelation 7:9

In our files we have a picture of 50 Jews standing on the Mediterranean Sea shore in 1909 dedicating the vacant area as the future site of Tel Aviv. Within 50 years, the place had been transformed into the metropolis it is today. Tel Aviv is a manifest reminder to skeptics, who refer to the rebuilding project taking place at Babylon as nothing more than a Disney-like amusement park, to do a sober retake. What was Tel Aviv— or even Israel— to the skeptics in 1909?

The fulfillment of every prophecy has a starting point. Even the incarnation of the Messiah began in a manger. The same Bible that foretold the seemingly impossible return of the Jews declares that Babylon will also rise again. And it is. Will There Be 3 Future Wars In Babylon? There are 2 coming wars of Babylon which are certain according to Revelation. One is the war of the Antichrist & 10 Kings when they destroy the worldwide false religious system situated in end-time Babylon (Rev.17). The other war is described in Revelation 18. At the return of Jesus Babylon meets a climactic fate similar to that of Sodom & Gomorrah. (Jer. 50:40)

However, Jeremiah 50-51, which clearly makes mention of both of the Revelation wars, seems to include another. <u>Notice that Babylon's judgment comes in phases</u>. It spans the time from Nebuchadnezzar's era (Jer. 50:17) all the way to the final restoration of Israel when they will accept "an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten." (50:5) Thus, Jeremiah's description of <u>Babylon's judgment spans the entire period from 539 BC</u> <u>until the second coming</u> <u>a series of events leading to Babylon's final fall</u>. But some of the events do not seem to fit what we know about the fall of ancient Babylon or the future judgments of Revelation 17-18. Here are some of the Biblical prophecies that could be pointing to a war in Babylon that occurs before the Tribulation:

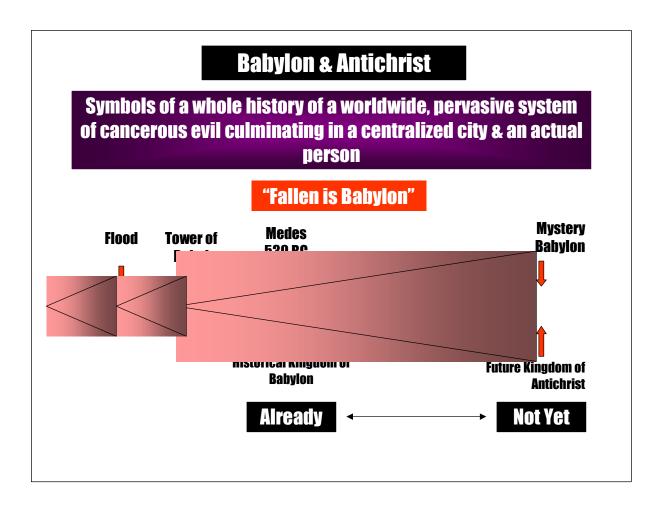
- Many Nations "A horde of great nations from the land of the north...Their arrows will be like an expert warrior..." Jeremiah 50:9
- Nations from Remote Parts of the Earth "A great nation & many kings, will be aroused from the remote parts of the earth." Jeremiah 50:41
- Nations Attack from All Sides "Draw up your battle lines against Babylon on every side ...Come from the farthest border." Jeremiah 50:14,26

These battle descriptions, interspersed through a period in Jeremiah covering 2500 years, sound ominously familiar, & similar to the looming events of our own day: A coalition of nations from the far corners of the earth descending upon Iraq from every direction. Or their final fulfillment may yet be in the future— but not the too distant future.

Why? Because the convergence of all of the other signs of the soon coming of our Lord are weighing heavy upon this generation. Whatever the case, Babylon/Iraq has a judgment prepared for her & ready to be proclaimed from heaven at the time of her final destiny, "Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER." Revelation 19:2-3

A better set of photos of modern restorations in Babylon (7th Day Adventist site?): http://www.global-evangelism.org/Travel%20highlights/98-6-Jerusalem-Baghdad/jerusalem_baghdad-2.htm

Interesting site sponsored by Iraq's Babylon Festival, 2002 http://www.babylon-festival.net/bablyonintfestivalenglish.html **Use of the term "Babylon":** Biblically, this term referred to (1) literal city of Chaldea; (2) a whole evil system which historically has opposed God's purposes and which prophetically will be epitomized in the reign of the beast in the latter days.



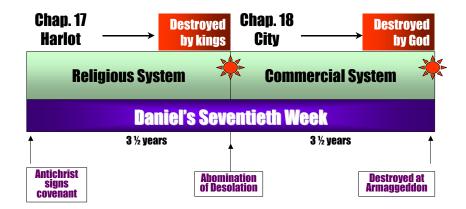
d. Babylon's Judgment, 17:1-18:24

2 expressions of one corrupt system:

 Religious system – Chap. 17 "harlot" – because outwardly and religiously seem to be joined to the true God, but are untrue to Him.
 Commercial system – Chap. 18 "city"

Comparative chronology of chapters 17 and 18

Babylon's Future Judgment Revelation 17-18



- 1) Destruction of religious Babylon, 17:1-6
 - a) The symbol John saw, 17:1-6 ("I shall show")
 - (1) Invitation to the show of the harlot, 17:1-2

One of the angels who poured out 1 of the bowls. Intro suggests symbol -(1) literal sense doesn't make sense (2) Scripture interprets it!

Description	Explanation
17:1 – harlot	17:18 – great city
17:1 – waters	17:15 – all peoples
17:3 – scarlet beast	17:8, 11 – antichrist
17:3 – 7 heads	17:9, 10 – kings
17:3 – 10 horns	17:12 – kings hate harlot
17:6 – blood	18:24 – all slain saints

Babylon	Jerusalem
17:1	21:9
one of the bowl angels	one of the bowl angels
great harlot	bride
"carried away in the Spirit"	"carried away in the Spirit"
to a wilderness	to a mountain

Compare these final visions of cities:

- (2) Description of the symbol of the harlot, 17:3-6
 - (a) Her appearance, 17:3-5
 1] <u>Her position</u>, 17:3 Emphasis on the scarlet beast (Satan? 12:3, Antichrist? 13*)
 Woman = harlot – religious system in control of nations and kingdoms
 - 2] *<u>Her adornment</u>*, 17:4

Indicates 2 things:

(1) wealth of this religious system

(2) corruption of this religious system

3] *Her name*, 17:5 "Babylon the great, mother of harlots"

This name provides an Interpretive Key: "Mother of" = religious harlotry; general immorality.

This represents <u>all</u> that is unfaithful to the One true God during all of human history. (cf. Jer. 51:7, 25)

- (b) Her murders, 17:6
 - 1] Of saints of all time (cf. 18:24)

- 2] Of witnesses (martyrs) of Jesus (both Church age and Tribulation period)
- b) The significance John heard Identity of this <u>beast</u>, 17:7-14 ("I shall tell")
 - (1) The wonder, 17:8

beast = Antichrist – Reviews his brief history in terms of his existence. Cf. 13:3, 12, 14.

- (2) The wisdom, 17:9-14
 - (a) The seven heads (17:9-11) [cf. notes and chart, 12:3]

7 kings or kingdoms*?

May refer to the destruction of the Revived Roman Empire by Antichrist as he ascends to world power mid-way in Trib. (see notes below)

**Best view is 7 kingdoms: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome (is), Revived Roman Empire (is to come)

"Beast an eighth (kingdom), and is of the seven" (out of revived Roman empire), 17:11

"he goes to destruction" – prelude of his final doom in last battle (cf. 17:8)

(b) The ten horns (17:12-14)
 cf. Dan. 7:23-24 → ten horns of fourth beast (cf. toes → Dan. 2:42)

24 'As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. 25 'He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

- 1. Another little horn will arise after them = beast of Rev. 13 and 17, the Antichrist
- 2. Antichrist subdues 3 of the 10 and gains overall power
- 1] one hour, 12 These 10 reign co-equal with the beast (antichrist) for a brief time for one purpose.
- 2] one purpose, 13 to give power and authority to beast and set up a one world kingdom (cf. 16:10; chapter 13).
- 3] one outcome, 14 looks ahead to final battle of Armageddon (cf. 19:11-21). The beast (antichrist) gathers the kings of all the earth to battle the Lord (cf. 16:12-16) at the end of the Tribulation.
- c) The significance John heard <u>Identity of this woman</u>, 17:15-18 ("I shall tell")
 - (1) The waters, 17:15Refer to all peoples (of every age since civilization began)

(2) The war, 17:16-17

- (a) Mid-point of Tribulation → 10 kings and Antichrist destroy this religious system, 16
- (b) They execute God's purpose, 17

Why do the Satanically inspired leaders destroy the satanic harlot?

Answer: They want to consolidate religion and worship as a one-world expression under one ultimate leader, the antichrist.

(3) The woman, 17:18 (serves as a transitional link to next phase) Views of this woman; this city (see earlier discussion of views of Babylon):

- Literal city of future Rome (figurative name)
- Literal city of future Babylon (literal name)
- Figurative name for an unknown, literal city in the future headquarters of a religious and economic system.

- 2) Destruction of commercial Babylon, 18:1-24
 - a) Effective announcement, 18:1-3
 - (1) Angelic authority, 18:1
 - (2) Actual announcement, 18:2-3
 - b) Earnest appeal to come out of this sinful system, 18:4-8
 - (1) God's warning, 18:4-5(a) Avoid participation, 2 Cor. 6:14-17; James 4:4 .
 - (b) Avoid plagues Reason: sins piled up
 - (2) God's vengeance, 18:6-8 "Vengeance in Mine!"
 - c) Economic anguish of those in this sinful system, 18:9-19

Cycle of these lamentations: (note the cycle)

- 1. Group identification
- 2. Position standing at a distance
- 3. Saying begins "Woe, woe"
- 4. One hour reference

1st lamentation, vv.9-10 -- Political

2nd lamentation, vv.11-17a -- Earth economy

3rd lamentation, vv.17b-19 -- Shipping economy

- d) Eternal acclaim, 18:20-24(1) Rejoicing in her judgment, 18:20
 - (2) Finality of her judgment, 18:21-23a. "any longer" $\rightarrow 6x$
 - (3) Reason for her judgment, 18:23b-24. Nations deceived.