We do a disservice to people when we tell them, "Give your life to the Lord, and He will keep you from trouble." That is not altogether true. We would be more honest to say, "Give your life to Christ, and He will empower you to overcome trouble and adversity." Yes, He will take care of you. But He will not place you in a world void of problems and challenges; rather, He will create in us the spiritual shelter of a transformed life of faith.
Francis Frangipane

REVELATION EIGHTEEN

Handout Twenty-four
Prayer Study #423
First Love Ministries, Inc., of Perry, Georgia USA

Just as we saw the destruction of spiritual Babylon or the apostate church at the end of Revelation 17, we will see commercial Babylon, or the world system, judged in Chapter 18, and earth and heaven's reaction to this judgment. The kings or rulers or leaders of the earth hate the apostate church and were used by Antichrist, in the will and purposes of God, to destroy it. These same leaders, however, love the commercial Babylon or world system.

J Vernon McGee believes that mystery or spiritual Babylon, the apostate church, will be headquartered in Rome and will be destroyed during the Great Tribulation. When this happens, the religious center will shift to Jerusalem where the False Prophet will put up his image of the Antichrist to be worshiped.

McGee sees the commercial Babylon or world system as being headquartered in Iraq at the sight of ancient Babylon which Saddam Hussein was in the process of rebuilding before he was toppled from power. McGee says the wealth of the world is being is moving into that region of the world because of oil, which thus could become the great commercial capital of the world. At any rate, we know that commercial Babylon will be destroyed at the second coming of Christ. What this means is that big business will be totally bankrupt causing great anguish to non-Christian men of business and politics but great joy in heaven over the destruction of man's sinful world system. The destruction of Babylon will mark the end of the Great Tribulation period.

I have given you this song on numerous occasions, but I would like to repeat it here because it has such great significance to what we are looking at in this chapter:

I want to see Israel marching,
I want to hear the kingdom call!
I want to see Zion's mountain,
I want to see great Babylon fall!
I want to see Jesus reigning,
Upon King David's royal throne.
O, won't that be a glorious sight to see
When Israel comes marching home!

Revelation 18

The Doom of Rome

18 Then I saw another angel descending from heaven, possessing great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his radiance *and* splendor.
2 And he shouted with a mighty voice, She is fallen! Mighty Babylon is fallen! She has become a resort *and* dwelling place for demons, a dungeon haunted by every loathsome spirit, an abode for every filthy and detestable bird.
3 For all nations have drunk the wine of her passionate unchastity, and the rulers *and* leaders of the earth have joined with her in committing fornication (idolatry), and the businessmen of the earth have become rich with the wealth of her excessive luxury *and* wantonness.

This is a prophetic type in scripture, called the "Doom Song." We see this same type of the reaping of the judgment of God in Isaiah 13:19-22, which concerning the doom of ancient Babylon; in Isaiah 34:11-15, concerning the destruction of Edom; and in Zepphaniah 2:13-15, concerning the doom of Nineveh, among other places in scripture.

The angel from heaven, sent to proclaim this doom, was radiant with light because he had just come from the Presence of God. The men of the earth had become rich with the wealth of Babylon, much like many businessmen became rich from work at the World Trade Center. The scripture has much to say about money and finances. The trouble does not lie in money but in the love of money and the desire of men to live in excessive luxury.

Leave

4 I then heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out from her, my people, so that you may not share in her sins, neither participate in her plagues.
5 For her iniquities (her crimes and transgressions) are piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her wickedness *and* [her] crimes [and calls them up for settlement].

The Christians are being told to leave Rome, to come out of the evil world system, before destruction comes, much like Lot was told to leave Sodom (Genesis 19:14). To come out from among them or leave is a Biblical principle expressed through the Bible. 2nd Corinthians 6:14-15 says: *Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?* And 1st Timothy 5:22 says, "Don't participate in the sins of others; keep yourself pure."

The Doom of Pride

6 Repay to her what she herself has paid [to others] and double [her doom] in accordance with what she has done. Mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed [for others].
7 To the degree that she glorified herself and reveled in her wantonness [living deliciously and luxuriously], to that measure impose on her torment *and* anguish and tears *and* mourning. Since in her heart she boasts, I am not a widow; as a queen [on a throne] I sit, and I shall never see suffering *or* experience sorrow—
8 So shall her plagues (afflictions, calamities) come thick upon her in a single day, pestilence and anguish *and* sorrow and famine; and she shall be utterly consumed (burned up with fire), for mighty is the Lord God Who judges her.

This passage speaks of punishment and pride. Notice that the Lord is not calling human beings to be the instrument of His punishment, but this is a job for the angel, a divine instrument. Truly we see the world system, with its glorification of money and flesh, dishonesty and taking advantage of others for material gain, and pride, about to reap what it has sown. Again, we always reap more than we sow, and the evil of the world system is coming on those of Babylon double.

Pride is one of the major sins through the Bible. It was because of pride that Satan fell. Pride is an iniquity drive in many people today, even those who are in the church! We can look at the pride of Satan through his 5 "I will" statements in Isaiah 14:13-14: *For you have said in your heart: I will ascend into heaven* (striving for recognition, working your way to heaven, social climbing, etc.)*; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God* (competition, working for praise, self-exaltation, etc)*; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north* (attention seeking)*; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds* (a soul drive that feeds off emotions and tries to gratify the 5 senses, often leading to addictions of all kinds and escape practices, such as is found in work alcoholics, obsessions with TV, etc.) *; I will be like the Most High* (a drive that causes men to fight, strive and murder in order to prove that they are right and are entitled to be regarded as above all others; it always drives the afflicted to try to get his own way and win every argument).

Sodom was destroyed because of pride and pride is a main iniquity drive in the homosexual agenda: Ezekiel 16:49: *Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.*

Most likely, it was the pride of the religious leaders and the High Priest that crucified Jesus. Proverbs 13:10 tells us that *by pride comes nothing but strife.*

This total and final destruction of the world system will be swift and by fire. There will be such great worldly grief that this is listed as one of the plagues Babylon will experience. Babylon was one of the first cities of prominence in the history of man on the earth. Unfortunately, her ungodliness and sin bring her to the judgment of God.

The Worldwide Lamentation over the Fall of Babylon

9 And the rulers *and* leaders of the earth who joined her in her immorality (idolatry) and luxuriated with her will weep *and* beat their breasts and lament over her when they see the smoke of her conflagration.
10 They will stand a long way off, in terror of her torment, and they will cry, Woe *and* alas, the great city, the mighty city, Babylon! In one single hour how your doom (judgment) has overtaken you!
11 And earth's businessmen will weep and grieve over her because no one buys their freight (cargo) any more.
12 Their merchandise is of gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls; of fine linen, purple, silk, and scarlet [stuffs]; all kinds of scented wood, all sorts of articles of ivory, all varieties of objects of costly woods, bronze, iron, and marble;
13 Of cinnamon, spices, incense, ointment *and* perfume, and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, fine flour and wheat; of cattle and sheep, horses and conveyances; and of slaves (the bodies) and souls of men!
14 The ripe fruits *and* delicacies for which your soul longed have gone from you, and all your luxuries *and* dainties, your elegance *and* splendor are lost to you, never again to be recovered *or* experienced!
15 The dealers who handled these articles, who grew wealthy through their business with her, will stand a long way off, in terror of her doom *and* torment, weeping and grieving aloud, and saying,
16 Alas, alas for the great city that was robed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, bedecked *and* glittering with gold, with precious stones, and with pearls!
17 Because in one [single] hour all the vast wealth has been destroyed (wiped out). And all ship captains *and* pilots, navigators and all who live by seafaring, the crews and all who ply their trade on the sea, stood a long way off,
18 And exclaimed as they watched the smoke of her burning, What city could be compared to the great city!
19 And they threw dust on their heads as they wept and grieved, exclaiming, Woe *and* alas, for the great city, where all who had ships on the sea grew rich [through her extravagance] from her great wealth! In one single hour she has been destroyed *and* has become a desert!

Rome or Babylon or the World System has been destroyed, causing the whole earth to mourn from the kings, the merchants, and the shipmasters and sailors. If Babylon is a scriptural code name for Rome, the world is lamenting the fall of the greatness, wealth, and luxury of Rome. The Jews have their Talmud, which says that ten measures of wealth came down into the world and Rome received nine and all the rest of the world only one. The Rome of ancient times was ostentationally magnificent, causing one

scholar to say that our most extravagant luxury is poverty compared to the lavish and wasteful luxury of ancient Rome.

The situation here is almost too complete for us to grasp. I would compare it to the destruction of New York City and worldwide depression, the likes of which the world has never seen.

The Rejoicing Ones

20 Rejoice (celebrate) over her, O heaven! O saints (people of God) and apostles and prophets because God has executed vengeance for you upon her!

Not everyone is mourning. There are those who are rejoicing in seeing the avenging of the blood of God's children and the destruction of His enemies.

The Final Desolation

21 Then a single powerful angel took up a boulder like a great millstone and flung it into the sea, crying, With such violence shall Babylon the great city be hurled down to destruction and shall never again be found.
22 And the sound of harpists and minstrels and flute players and trumpeters shall never again be heard in you, and no skilled artisan of any craft shall ever again be found in you, and the sound of the millstone shall never again be heard in you.
23 And never again shall the light of a lamp shine in you, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall never be heard in you again; for your businessmen were the great *and* prominent men of the earth, and by your magic spells *and* poisonous charm all nations were led astray (seduced and deluded).
24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all those who have been slain (slaughtered) on earth.

Babylon or Rome or the World System will never again be found on the earth.