

Revelation 18:9-19-The World Mourns for the Scarlet Harlot

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Witnesses help to confirm a decision. And so God called witnesses to testify to the judgment he put on his former people, the Scarlet Harlot, the new Babylon, Israel. These witnesses were foreign monarchs君主, merchants商人, and mariners水手. So there were 3 groups of outside witnesses confirming this judgment. But these were not just observers. These 3 groups would feel some of the consequences of God's judgment as well. This is why they would mourn and testify to the severity and suddenness of God's judgment on Israel. They had personal involvement, so their testimony was crucial...and their testimony would go to the farthest parts of the world from which they came.

Our headings are: **Monarch's Mourn** for the Scarlet Harlot, and **Merchants Mourn** for the Scarlet Harlot, and **Mariners Mourn** for the Scarlet Harlot.

Our goals are: That **you will see the fullness of God's judgment on those who reject him, and you will see his preserving love for those who are his through Christ.**

Monarchs Mourn

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.'

1. The Monarchs of the world **mourned for Israel and for themselves.** Why? God's severe judgment on the Jews would affect them. They had joined Israel in sin and now they feared God's judgment would come on them as well. They saw the smoke and are stunned目瞪口呆, a smoke that probably drew them back to the smoke that rose over Sodom and Gomorrah, and Edom. That was a historical account that was well document.

Genesis 19: 28 Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace.
Isaiah 34:10 It shall not be quenched night or day; Its smoke shall ascend forever. From generation to generation it shall lie waste; No one shall pass through it forever and ever.

2. The Monarch's **stayed far away from the Scarlet Harlot as she is burned, trying to avoid judgment on themselves.** It is possible that the Monarch's would have known from the Jewish prophets that this judgment would come on them. Jewish scrolls were everywhere.

Jeremiah 25: 28 "And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "You shall certainly drink! 29 "For behold, I begin to bring calamity on the city which is called by My name, and should you be utterly unpunished? You shall not be unpunished, for I will call for a sword on all the inhabitants of the earth," says the LORD of hosts.'

3. Notice the cry of "alas, alas," or (literally)"woe, woe." This was an announcement of doom. Historian Josephus confirmed that there was a man who spent much time in Jerusalem showing "woe, woe." He wrote: "He was going his rounds, shouting in penetrating tones from the wall, "Woe, woe, once more to the city, and the people and the Temple!" Then, when he added a last word – "And woe to me also!" – a stone hurled 投掷 from the ballista 发射石块 of the ancient weapon struck him, killing him on the spot. Thus, with those same forebodings still upon his lips, he met his end.'

4. The Monarch's also saw the speed at which judgment came – it came in "one hour."

Merchants Mourn

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 香檬 wood, every kind of object of ivory象牙, 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 **bodies and souls of men**. 15 "The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing 悲叹, 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.'

1. The Merchants also mourned because they saw the certainty and intensity of God's judgment on the Jews, and they thought of that judgment on themselves because of their associations with the Scarlet Harlot. She was beautiful, but was set for destruction. Of course when Christ married the new Bride you saw that she was dressed like the Old Israel was dressed, only better in her heart. Revelation 19: 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed 穿着 in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

The suddenness of the destruction was also a shock to the Jews who expected to be bailed out 保释 by God. Their complacent life had caused them to be blind thinking: We are safe.

2. And the merchants also cry because there is no one to buy their merchandise anymore. Judgment was bad for business. God used similar language in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 to describe blessings and cursings on his people if they turned away from him. Consider first Deuteronomy 28.

Deuteronomy 28: 36 "The LORD will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods—wood and stone. 37 "And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword 谚语 among all nations where the LORD will drive you.

Consider Ezekiel 27, God used similar language describing his judgment and curses on Tyre.

Ezekiel 27: 12 "Tarshish was your merchant because of your many luxury goods. They gave you silver, iron, tin, and lead for your goods. 13 "Javan, Tubal, and Meshech were your traders. They bartered 交换 human lives and vessels of bronze for your merchandise. 14 "Those from the house of Togarmah traded for your wares with horses, steeds 战马, and mules. 15 "The men of Dedan were your traders; many isles were the market of your hand. They brought you ivory tusks 长牙 and ebony 乌木 as payment...26 Your oarsmen 划手 brought you into many waters, But the east wind broke you in the midst of the seas. 27 "Your riches, wares, and merchandise, Your mariners and pilots 领航员, Your caulkers and merchandisers, All your men of war who are in you, And the entire company which is in your midst, Will fall into the midst of the seas on the day of your ruin. 28 The common-land will shake at the sound of the cry of your pilots.

Was there really much trade with Jerusalem prior to its fall or is this last day scenario? Trade with and through Jerusalem was huge - for food supplies, precious metals, luxury goods, and clothing materials. You see a full list in verses 12-13. The temple structure was part of this as well...and is described this way.

Luke 21:5 Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said,

And Josephus described the temple: ""The first gate was 70 cubits high and 25 broad; it had no doors, displaying unhampered 无妨碍的 the vast expanse of heaven; the entire face was covered with gold, and through it the arch of the first hall was fully visible to an onlooker 观望者 without in all its grandeur 宏伟, and the surroundings of the inner gate, all gleaming with gold, struck the beholder's eye. . . . The gate opening into the building was, as I said, completely overlaid with gold, as was the whole wall surrounding it. Above it, moreover, were the golden grapevines from which hung grape clusters as tall as a man. In front of these hung a veil of equal length of Babylonian tapestry 挂毯 embroidered with blue, scarlet and purple, and fine linen, wrought with marvelous craftsmanship. . . . The exterior of the sanctuary did not lack anything that could amaze either mind or eye. Overlaid on all sides with massive plates of gold, it reflected in the first rays of the sun so fierce a flash that those looking at it were forced to look away as from the very rays of the sun. To strangers as they approached it, it seemed in the distance like a mountain clad with snow; for any part not covered with gold was of the purest white." And even after Jerusalem was captured by Titus, the historian Josephus recorded the inordinate amount of gold and precious things that the priests gave to Titus.

3. Historians confirm these things as well. Edersheim wrote: "In these streets and lanes **everything** might be purchased: the production of Palestine, or imported from foreign lands – nay, the rarest articles from the remotest parts. Exquisitely shaped, curiously designed and jeweled cups, rings, and other workmanship of precious metals; glass, silk, fine linen, woolen stuffs, purple, and costly hangings; essences, ointments, and perfumes, as precious as gold; articles of food and drink from foreign lands – in short, what India, Persia, Arabia, Media, Egypt, Italy, Greece, and even the far-off lands of the Gentiles yielded, might be had in these bazaars 集市. Ancient Jewish writings enable us to identify no

fewer than 118 different articles of import from foreign lands, covering more than even modern luxury has devised.” It is not surprising that the Jews had enough food to outlast the Roman siege – except that it was burned by their own people, trying to force them to go out and fight the Romans. But John was also **describing the spiritual traders from Jerusalem as well**...not just the material traders. You’ll see this later.

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.

4. What was the fruit to which John is referring here? Wealth. And the merchants mourn! But this should not have surprised the people of God. God, the only true God of heaven and earth, had warned his people about this.

Deuteronomy 28: 31 "Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey shall be violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue them. **33** "A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually.

Leviticus 26: 18 'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. 19 I will break the pride of your power...

The people might have hoped for a miraculous deliverance, but none would come. Remember what Jesus said before the described the full destruction of Jerusalem?

Matthew 23: 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate;

Mariners Mourn

17 ...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 is like this great city?'

1. The sailors who were used by the Monarch's and merchants to ply trade with Jerusalem also saw the judgment on the city.

And they looked in disbelief as great city like Jerusalem was destroyed. All investments in Israel's economy would cease to be profitable and be lost. If there were poor kings, expect poor merchants...and poor mariners.

2. Based on Psalm 107:23-32 – the whole earth rejoiced when Israel prospered, and now the whole earth will mourn for the coming destruction of Jerusalem. (Romans 2:19-20). When Israel was in fellowship with God and under His Spiritual and material blessing, the nations had come to her both for wisdom and for trade and commerce (Deut. 28:12; 1 Kings 10:23-25). Trade was huge from the time of Solomon. But now trade became a trap...

Deuteronomy 28:12 "The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

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.'

3. When reality set in, they began to mourn and wail and they wept like the merchants, to whom their livelihood 生计 was tied.

Conclusion:

Monarchs, merchants, and mariners mourned at the sudden, severe, and complete destruction of Jerusalem. But they also mourned because their lives were affected by judgment on the Jews – their business dealings would suffer. And so they mourned. And so they would testify of and confirm the reality of this judgment of the Scarlet Harlot to the world. This was a real occurrence that occurred within 1 generation after the Jews killed Christ. Secular history confirms this.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: God's judgment on Israel was sudden, severe, and final. The Jews rejected the Lord and the Lord rejected them. First, learn that the Lord's patience runs out. He may be patient with you for a long time, but the time comes when he says: So far and no more. So don't let the fact that you are in the covenant cause you to be careless about how you live. Give up that sin that has control of your life. Second, the rejection of the Jews opened up the door wide for the Gentiles to come in. Thank God for his mercy to you. You did not deserve to be saved, but you were rescued from idolatry. And third, God saved you through Christ's sacrifice and he keeps you for eternity through Christ's sacrifice. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven for receiving that sacrifice by faith.

Finally, if you are outside of God or if you have not lived to please God, you need to become aware of the sinfulness of your life, have godly sorrow for your sins, and recognize that Jesus paid the full penalty for sins. When this happens you will be forgiven all your sins, adopted as Christ's child, and have eternal security...beginning now, and in fullness when you die.