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# GLOBALIZATION AS BABYLON

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By Jim Jordal

"And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise any more: merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; 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."

Rev. 18: 11-13 (NKJV)

The 18th chapter of the Book of Revelation details what many Bible scholars believe to be the collapse and fall of a future world commercial/financial empire, the values of which are in direct antithesis to the Jubilee law of God and the principles of His coming earthly kingdom. The above Scripture sets forth the values and priorities in descending order of this God-defying system: monetization and commercialization of virtually everything, worship of gold and other forms of wealth as the highest expression of human achievement, and the relegation of human welfare to the lowest level of strategic importance.

If you consider these events and trends presently happening in the world, you may wonder if the days predicted by Revelation are not now here:

- Vast human suffering in the developing world as a result of negotiated trade policies like NAFTA
- Despoliation of the physical world by giant international corporations intent only on profits
- Explosive growth of executive compensation as compared to worker salaries
- Disgusting salaries and bonuses paid to professional athletes and entertainers
- The boom in luxury goods like multi-million dollar dwellings, executive jets, yachts, and, yes, even luxury submarines for those who have everything
- Continuing revelations of Wall Street financial manipulations preying upon the poor
- The leveling and even decline of middle class family purchasing power over the past generation

- Periodic financial crises and debt defaults in many countries
- The world-wide nature of the financial empire so that no one escapes when things go bad
- The persistence of poverty and hunger in spite of relief efforts

Look at the values underlying the above disclosures and ask yourself, Do any of them represent the biblical values of Jubilee justice as expounded by the prophets and the teachings of Jesus?

Some Christians will not even seriously consider what Revelation says for various reasons. Some consider it incomprehensible, while others discount it as the ravings of a wild man. Some think it has already been fulfilled, and others place it all in the future. Others would claim this chapter was fulfilled when the Babylonian Empire was conquered by King Darius of Persia centuries ago. But I'll go along with the view that Revelation is God's disclosure of events to transpire during the Church Age, or the time beginning with the Advent of Jesus Christ and culminating with the establishment of Christ's earthly kingdom.

No matter what view you take, I think it difficult to avoid the truth of what this chapter reveals about world socio-economic conditions today. Every newscast or newspaper adds to the conclusion that what we call Babylon, or world systems in opposition to God, becomes stronger and more aggressive each week. The result is increased suffering for those bypassed in the mad scramble for efficiency and profits, and ecological destruction for the earth.

The remainder of chapter 18 reveals the participation of all nations and rulers in the evil deeds of Babylon, and scolds the merchants of the earth for supporting this system in order to profit from it. Of course there is nothing wrong with buying and selling to make profit; but there is something inherently evil in doing so at the expense of the bodies and souls of human beings. Because of this reversal of Jubilee priorities God declares vengeance upon the Babylonian system and those who have perpetrated her evils.

Jeremiah 50 and 51 also chronicle the fall of Babylon, referring to its evil universal dominance as "the hammer of the whole earth." Jeremiah also blames this system for making the nations "mad" or "deranged."

He then says her consorts would attempt to heal Babylon, but she could not be healed because God had pronounced destruction against her.

With this in mind, think of the many efforts today to ameliorate the evil effects of the world socio/economic system through charity, political action, and religious evangelism. But God says the system is doomed because it is in direct contrast to His Jubilee provisions for human welfare. Therefore, continue your good work to help victims of the system, but remember that the system itself cannot be reformed, and must be replaced by God's Jubilee system.