



## **JESUS PUNISHES THE “GREAT CITY” OF REVELATION REVELATION CHAPTER 18 VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY**

### **SUMMARY OF REVELATION CHAPTER 18**

In Revelation chapter 18 John saw another angel coming down from heaven. This angel had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor. With a mighty voice he shouted: “‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!’ She has become a dwelling for demons and a haunt for every impure spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable animal.”

John heard the angel say: “Woe! Woe to you, great city, you mighty city of Babylon! In one hour your doom has come!”

The saints and angels in heaven rejoiced. John heard another voice from heaven say: “Rejoice over her, you heavens! Rejoice, you people of God! Rejoice, apostles and prophets! For God has judged her with the judgment she imposed on you.”



**Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.**

Revelation 18:8 (NIV)

## REVELATION CHAPTER 18 VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY

**Rev 18:1 After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor.**

*“After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven.”* The usual form of introduction to a new vision to John (see Revelation 4:1 and Revelation 7:1). The "mystery" of the beast (Baal released from the Abyss) and the harlot (Mecca the great city) having been declared, the angel now describes the doom in store for them. The angel is from heaven, as carrying the news of the judgment which is sent from heaven. The judgment is from God against Satan and Baal, the dragon and the beast.

*“He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor.”* The “great authority” refers to the judgment which follows, which, however, is not acted out before the seer, but only described. The last clause records the visible manifestation of the great power. This is very much like the description in Ezekiel 43:1-2.

### **Ezekiel 43:1-2 (NIV)**

**Then the man brought me to the gate facing east, and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory.**

In this description of the angel there seems to be a reference to the vision of Ezekiel when he beheld the glory of the God of Israel, and the earth, it is said, shined with his glory. A bright and shining light, it seems, usually attended the appearance of angels; and it is likely the splendor of the appearance used to be greater in proportion as the angel appearing was more honorable.

**Rev 18:2 With a mighty voice he shouted: “‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!’ She has become a dwelling for demons and a haunt for every impure spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable animal.**

The angel in 18:2 cries out with a “*mighty voice*”—found only here but compare to “a loud voice” in Revelation 5:2; 10:3; and 16:1. In keeping with his authoritative pronouncement and repeats the message of the second angelic herald in 14:8, “*Fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great*” Here the angel emphasizes the absolute certainty of the event. God has already seen the event.

This passage refers to Babylon and the demonic spirit Baal. This connects back to Isaiah 21:9, where Isaiah prophesied the destruction of Babylon via a messenger in a chariot who cries, “*Babylon has fallen, has fallen!*”, followed by “*all the images of its gods lie shattered on the ground.*”

### **Isaiah 21:9 (NIV)**

**Look, here comes a man in a chariot with a team of horses. And he gives back the answer: ‘Babylon has fallen, has fallen! All the images of its gods lie shattered on the ground!’**

Thus, the judgment on the empire includes the destruction of its idols, specifically the beast Baal, who has set up an idol of himself (Revelation 13:14–15). Moreover, it is not seen as a new announcement but one foretold by Isaiah himself, grounded in God’s eternal decree.

**Revelation 17:3 (NASB)**

**And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.**

It is possible that Mecca, in the desert wilderness and no water was the reason Jesus said in Matthew 12:43-45 that an unclean spirit “*passes through waterless places seeking rest.*” Some think this means avoiding the Holy Spirit. But in Revelation, John tells us Mecca is the home of impure spirits.

**Matthew 12:43-45 (NASB)**

**“Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came’; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order. Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation.”**

There is no more waterless place than Mecca. That’s why John saw the prostitute woman in the desert wilderness. The harlot Mecca is a dwelling place (home) for all kinds of unclean spirits.



**Rev 18:3 For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.”**

*“For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries.”* Every nation on earth has Muslims that all must face the Kaaba when they pray five times a day. A Qibla compass (sometimes also called qibla/qiblah indicator) is a modified compass used by Muslims to indicate the exact direction to face to perform ritual prayers. In Islam, this direction is called qibla, and points towards the city of Mecca and specifically to the Kaaba.

*“The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.”* Merchants since the time of Mohammad have enriched themselves by sending their commodities to Mecca to sell to the Hajj pilgrims, through the vast consumption and luxuriousness of the place, they have obtained a good price.

It should also be interpreted to include spiritual merchants—they are selling the false gospel of the Qur’an and destroying the souls of one third of the earth.



The image of Mecca, the great, rich, splendid, proud and luxurious city having been employed to denote that anti-Christian power, all that is said in this chapter follows, of course, on its fall. The general idea is, that she was doomed to utter desolation, and that all who were connected with her, far and near, would be involved in her ruin. Babylon-Mecca is here represented under the image of such a luxurious city; and of course, when she falls, they who have thus been dependent on her, and who have been enriched by her, have occasion for mourning and lamentation.

**Rev 18:4 Then I heard another voice from heaven say: “‘Come out of her, my people,’ so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues;**

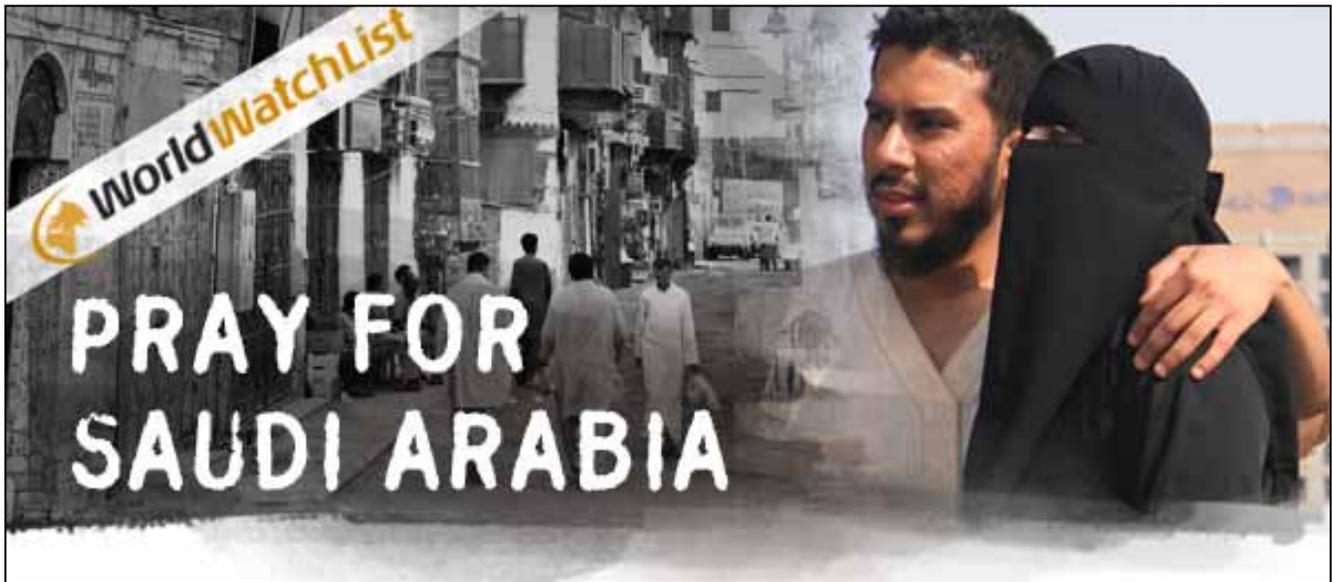
*“Then I heard another voice from heaven say:”* Other instances of “voice from heaven” have occurred in Revelation 10:4, 10:8, 14:2, and 14:13 and always refer to a direct message from the throne itself. This is God or Jesus Christ directly speaking.

*“‘Come out of her, my people,’ so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues.”* Only here and in Revelation 21:3 are believers called God’s “people,” a semi-technical term in the Old Testament and New Testament indicating a special relationship with God.



The command from God to separate oneself from depraved society is frequent in the Old Testament (Isaiah 48:20; 52:11; Jeremiah 50:8; 51:45, 51:50; and Ezekiel 20:41). It also occurs in the New Testament ( 2 Corinthians 6:14-17).

The theme is more than just physically fleeing the city lest they be destroyed with the pagans. In the narrative picture of Revelation 18, it means to get out of the dark shadow of the image of the beast, the Kaaba where Baal dwells. Anyone who prays to the Kaaba image or the beast spirit inside it will not enter heaven. (Revelation 14:11 *“And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.”*)



Since the harlot, who is identical with Babylon, is representative of those that have taken the mark (the Islamic Shahada) and prayed to the image (the Islamic Blackstone in the Kaaba set up by the false prophet Mohammad), these words also form a direct warning to Christians. "Don't mix the Qur'an teachings with the Gospel truth."

The parallel warnings in Jeremiah 51:6; Jeremiah 51:45, and Zechariah 2:6-7, should be read; but the story of Lot in Sodom best illustrates the spirit of the passage (Genesis 19), for it is participation in sin which is to be primarily guarded against.

#### **Isaiah 48:20-22 (NIV)**

**Leave Babylon, flee from the Babylonians! Announce this with shouts of joy and proclaim it. Send it out to the ends of the earth; say, "The Lord has redeemed his servant Jacob." They did not thirst when he led them through the deserts; he made water flow for them from the rock; he split the rock and water gushed out. "There is no peace," says the Lord, "for the wicked.**

#### **Jeremiah 51:6-9 (NIV)**

**"Flee from Babylon! Run for your lives! Do not be destroyed because of her sins. It is time for the Lord's vengeance; he will repay her what she deserves.**

**Babylon was a gold cup in the Lord's hand; she made the whole earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore they have now gone mad. Babylon will suddenly fall and be broken. Wail over her! Get balm for her pain; perhaps she can be healed.**

**"We would have healed Babylon, but she cannot be healed; let us leave her and each go to our own land, for her judgment reaches to the skies, it rises as high as the heavens.'**

**Rev 18:5 for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes.**

John tells us God “remembered” the transgressions of Babylon. When God “remembers,” he performs a specific action. When he remembered his people, he works on their behalf (Psalm 105:8–11; 111:5–6; Ezekiel 16:60); when he remembers sin (Psalm 109:14; Jeremiah 14:10; Hosea 8:13; Hosea 9:9), he acts in judgment. In Revelation 16:19 *“God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath”*.

This is continuation of God's judgment on Babylon-Mecca in Revelation 16:19 and Jeremiah 51:9.

**Revelation 16:19 (NIV)**

**The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath.**

**Jeremiah 51:9 (NIV)**

**“We would have healed Babylon, but she cannot be healed; let us leave her and each go to our own land, for her judgment reaches to the skies, it rises as high as the heavens.”**

*“For her sins are piled up to heaven.”* That is, the accumulation of Baal and Satan's sin is so great as to reach up to the heaven. The idea is more than that of the cry of sin reaching heaven, as in the case of Sodom (Genesis 18:20-21); the sins themselves, many and blasphemous, have touched the face of heaven.

**Rev 18:6 Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done. Pour her a double portion from her own cup.**

*“Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done.”* Mecca and Islam have taken billions of souls astray with a false gospel (the Qur'an) through the revelations received by the false prophet Mohammad from Baal (the beast), the revealed spirit. This is spoken to the people of God, who are before called out of Babylon; and the chief of them are the seven angels with the seven last plagues of the wrath of God, and the same with the ten demonic kings that will burn the harlot city with fire. These are called upon to take vengeance, by way of retaliation, for what she had done to them, in allusion to what is said of old Babylon, Jeremiah 1:15.

This judgment from God is not of what she will have done to them personally, but to their predecessors in the faith of Christ in former ages; that as she had hated them, and made war with them, so now they should hate her, and make war with her; and as she had stripped them naked of their clothes, and spoiled them of their worldly goods and substance.

The *“pay her back double”* must not be taken to mean double her sins; her sins are themselves called double, and her judgment is according to her sins. The meaning is not to inflict upon her a punishment doubly greater than her sins, for this would be contrary to the justice of God. Any earthly punishment from God must be just. Mecca, Satan, Baal and Mohammad will be punished hereafter, and therefore will not have her full punishment now, but will receive full punishment on the day of judgment and cast into the outer darkness--away from the loving and glorious presence of Jesus.

**Rev 18:7 Give her as much torment and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she boasts, 'I sit enthroned as queen. I am not a widow; I will never mourn.'**

*"Give her as much torment and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself."* No city is more glorified than Mecca. On just the Kaaba and a single adjacent hotel, more than \$115 billion has been invested during the last decade. Muslims call Mecca the "Sacred City", "Mecca the Honored", and "The Holy City of Mecca."

Mecca is glorified by pride, and the pomp of the annual Hajj, and arrogant boasting; and lived deliciously — In all kinds of elegance, luxury, and wantonness; so much torment and sorrow give her — Proportioning the punishment to the sin; for, or because, she saith in her heart — As did ancient Babylon, Isaiah 47:7-10; I sit — Her usual style. Hence those expressions, the "wicked house", the Kaaba in Mecca.

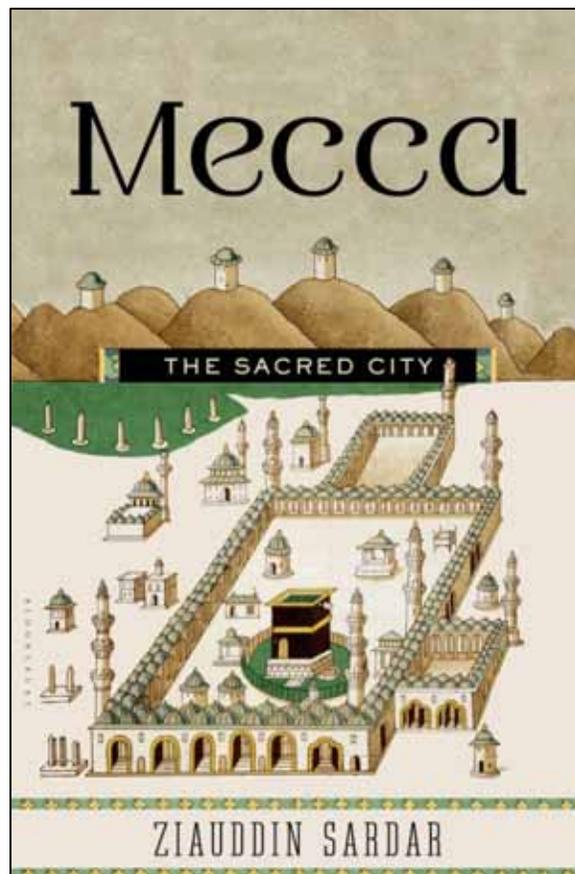
Mecca sat for more than 14 centuries as a queen, over many kings, holding final revelation from Allah--the Qur'an--a false gospel about Jesus that has taken billions of souls astray. But the false prophet Mohammad and the great city Mecca shall see much sorrow. In the room of luxurious plenty; the very things from which she imagined herself to be most safe; and she shall be utterly burned with fire.

*"In her heart she boasts, 'I sit enthroned as queen. I am not a widow; I will never mourn.'"* The consequence of this proud security; shall her plagues come in one day —

All at once, in full extremity; death — The death of her children, with an incapacity of bearing more; mourning — , sorrow, or lamentation, instead of carnal pleasure and delights; and famine. God may have a people even in Babylon. But God's people shall be called out of Babylon, and called effectually, while those that partake with wicked men in their sins, must receive of their plagues.

### **Isaiah 47:7-10 (NIV)**

**You said, 'I am forever— the eternal queen!' But you did not consider these things or reflect on what might happen. "Now then, listen, you lover of pleasure, lounging in your security and saying to yourself, 'I am, and there is none besides me. I will never be a widow or suffer the loss of children.' Both of these will overtake you in a moment, on a single day: loss of children and widowhood. They will come upon you in full measure, in spite of your many sorceries and all your potent spells. You have trusted in your wickedness and have said, 'No one sees me.' Your wisdom and knowledge mislead you when you say to yourself, 'I am, and there is none besides me.'**



**Rev 18:8 Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.**

*“Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine.”* Mecca is destroyed in one day, in one hour, on the Day of the Lord. This is the retribution for her boasting in Revelation 18:7; *“I sit enthroned as queen. I am not a widow; I will never mourn.”*

The description of Mecca’s destruction indicates a sudden and overwhelming reverse that which will occur at the last judgment day. *“She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.”* This is the fulfilment of the predicted punishment of the harlot (Revelation 17:16).



The downfall and destruction of the mystical Babylon are determined in the judgment of God. This seems to be Christ himself, coming to destroy his enemies, and to shed abroad the light of his gospel through all nations. The wickedness of this Babylon was very great; she had forsaken the true God, and set up worship to Baal in the Kaaba, and had drawn all sorts of men into spiritual adultery. The true and mighty God has passed sentence. Mecca enjoyed much wealth from the Hajj pilgrims coming in the tens of millions to worship the non-god spirit in the Kaaba. This is Baal the beast. Mecca thought herself strong; she forgot the strength of the Almighty.

Mecca will be consumed by fire. So completely destroyed as if she were entirely burned up. The certain and complete destruction of that formidable anti-Christian power is predicted under a great variety of horrific images.

**Rev 18:9 “When the kings of the earth who committed adultery with her and shared her luxury see the smoke of her burning, they will weep and mourn over her.**

The kings of the earth are the first to grieve over Babylon-Mecca's fall. They grieve because they committed adultery with her, meaning they shared in her idolatry and worshipped her, and they shared in her luxury. The kings participated in her greed and wealth that resulted from her idolatry and wickedness.

From the context of chapters 17 & 18 the kings who mourn her here in chapter 18 are not the ten spiritual demonic kings who are close allies of the beast Baal in chapter 17. These are human earthly kings who have profited from the Hajj traffic to Mecca. These are human kings who have performed the Hajj themselves, taken off their fine clothes, and been completely ruled by the great city. They thought the true God dwelled in the Kaaba. They prayed to the Blackstone.



The Islamic kings of the earth weep and mourn over Babylon-Mecca's fall. They stand far off and are terrified by her torment. They have participated in her idolatry and greed and now try and contemplate what life will be like without her. They have worshipped Babylon-Mecca at the Kaaba rather than worship God and their "goddess" is now in flames! It shakes them to their core.

**Rev 18:10 Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry: “Woe! Woe to you, great city, you mighty city of Babylon! In one hour your doom has come!”**

Few cities are geographically close to Mecca because it is in the desert wilderness. It is easy to understand why they stand far off today and can still see what happens to Mecca when you take into account Internet and television.



The spirit of antichrist (Satan) is a worldly spirit, and that sorrow is a mere worldly sorrow; they do not lament for the anger of God, but for the loss of outward comforts. The magnificence and riches of the people in Mecca will avail them nothing but will render the vengeance harder to be borne. The spiritual merchandise is here alluded to, when not only slaves, but the souls of men, are mentioned as articles of commerce, to the destroying the souls of billions. This is the outcome of the Qur’an and its false stories about Jesus, the Son of God, being only the “mere messenger” of Allah.

**Rev 18:11 “The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargoes anymore—**

*“The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargoes anymore.”* Now the merchants, the wholesale dealers and travel agents made rich through Mecca Hajj trade weep and mourn” over the destruction of Mecca and the Kaaba. Just in the past decade the Saudi government has invested \$115 billion into one Mecca hotel and the Kaaba. The various goods are placed in groups. The treasures come first—gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls.



The reason for their sorrow is both for their religious love for the Kaaba, and the loss of trade. While their loss is monetary, the spiritual loss causes them the most sorrow.

Beside its centrality to Muslim spirituality, the Hajj pilgrimage is a collective Islamic rite that represents an opportunity for socializing, trade, conviviality, interaction, and international commerce. Moreover, long before the rise of Islam in sub-Saharan Africa, the pilgrimage represented an occasion to do business as it coincided with a large annual fair to which established Mecca residents welcomed visiting pilgrims. Thanks to the enlargement of the Kaaba that allows for millions pilgrims to visit all the holy sites of Islam, economic and business activities contributed to the intensification of trade between Meccan merchants and visitors.

The typical profile of a status Hajji was that of the rich businessman who saw performing the pilgrimage as a highly prestigious act that crowned his economic success and established his status among his ethnic community. This profile of the pilgrim merchant has greatly changed over the past twenty years as ever more wealth has flowed into Mecca. The economic impact of these “new merchants” is now noticeable in three main sectors of Mecca activity, namely currency exchange rates, electronics and telephony, and the market for luxury goods.

**Rev 18:12 cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble;**

Much of the laments here in chapter 18 are summaries or restatements of the prophecies in Jeremiah and Isaiah concerning Babylon's fall. John uses those prophecies as his template to express the grief of the world over Mecca's demise. John lists some of the cargoes the merchants would bring into Babylon-Mecca or traded with her. There is everything from precious stones and metals to fine silks and cloth needed to cover the Kaaba. Almost all the things here named are still in use at Mecca, both in their idolatrous service and in common life for the Hajj pilgrims.



### **GOLD MERCHANTS IN MECCA SELL MINIATURE KAABAS**

*“Cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble.”*

The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet. Such was the attire of the harlot (see Revelation 17:4). The Muslim pilgrimage and the trade that is inherent to it makes it possible to understand and evaluate their impact on the new manifestations of Islam in Mecca. The organization of the Hajj has been managed by the Saudi Government, which greatly controls its strategic, financial, and diplomatic interests. The huge wealth involved in the various transactions also contributed to the commercial strategies employed by the organizers of the pilgrimage, as well as for the Muslim pilgrims and merchants.

**Rev 18:13 cargoes of cinnamon and spice, of incense, myrrh and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, of fine flour and wheat; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and human beings sold as slaves.**

The great city mourners had shared Mecca's "special status" wealthy sensual pleasures and gained by her wealth and trade. There is no city like Mecca. One third of the world is required to travel to it at some time in their lifetime. The Islamic kings of the earth, whom she flattered into worshipping the beast Baal at the Kaaba, allowing them to be tyrannical over their subjects, while obedient to her; and the merchants, those who trafficked for her indulgences, pardons, and honors now mourn.

Mecca-Babylon's friends partook her sinful pleasures and profits but are not willing to share her plagues. They stand far off and watch the destruction on the internet because Mecca is in the desert wilderness and there are no large cities near Mecca. The spirit of antichrist (Satan) and the beast (Baal) are worldly spirits, and that sorrow is a mere worldly sorrow; they do not lament for the anger of God, but for the loss of outward comforts. The magnificence and riches of the ungodly will avail them nothing but will render the vengeance from Jesus harder to bear. The spiritual merchandise is here alluded to, when not only slaves, but the souls of men, are mentioned as articles of commerce, to the destroying the souls of billions through the false teaching of the Qur'an.

### **INCENSE, MYRRH AND FRANKINCENSE**

The frankincense tree, *Boswellia Sacra*, only grows in one area in the world—that is in southern Arabia. Both frankincense and myrrh start as a resinous sap inside a special family of trees that grow almost exclusively in the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula. At certain times of year, the trees are cut with special knives, and the sap oozes out. Once the sap has dried in the sun, it is ready to be used.

Frankincense and myrrh were so expensive in Europe that southern Arabia became known as Arabia Felix, "Arabia the Blessed." Frankincense and myrrh can be collected from multiple *Boswellia* and *Commiphora* species, several different varieties are available. The shrubby trees that produce them are native to the Arabian Peninsula and regions of northeast Africa.



Harvested frankincense and myrrh are burned as incense because of their pleasing aromas, but historically they have a number of other uses as well.

They were carried north by camel caravans across the Arabian Desert through Mecca and Medina to Petra, Damascus, Aleppo, Palmyra, and beyond; or shipped by sea from the now ruined Omani port of Sumhuram to Africa, China and India. During the trade's heyday, 1000 BC to 300 AD, more than 3,000 tons were traded annually along these pathways.

For hundreds of years the `Frankincense Routes', surrounded by a halo of secrecy and fable, were jealously guarded. The merchants of southern Arabia took no chances – they kept them totally hidden. For over 2,000 years, these pathways were the foundation of Arabia's fame and prosperity.



#### **FRANKINCENSE RESIN FROM ARABIA**

Both frankincense—also known as olibanum—and myrrh have been traded in the Middle East and North Africa for upwards of 5,000 years. It is believed that the Babylonians and Assyrians burned them during religious ceremonies. The ancient Egyptians bought entire boatloads of the resins from the Phoenicians, using them in incense, insect repellent, perfume and salves for wounds and sores; they were also key ingredients in the embalming process.

Myrrh oil served as a rejuvenating facial treatment, while frankincense was charred and ground into a powder to make the heavy kohl eyeliner Egyptian women famously wore. Sacks of frankincense and potted saplings of myrrh-producing trees appear in murals decorating the walls of a temple dedicated to Queen Hatshepsut, who ruled Egypt for roughly two decades until her death around 480 B.C. The Roman historian and botanist Pliny the Elder, who recommended frankincense as an antidote to hemlock poisoning, wrote in the first century A.D. that the pricey dried sap had made the southern Arabians the richest people on earth.

At the time Jesus was born, frankincense and myrrh may have been worth more than their weight in gold. But despite their significance in the New Testament, the substances fell out of favor in Europe with the rise of Christianity and fall of the Roman Empire, which essentially obliterated the thriving trade routes that had developed over many centuries. In the early years of Christianity, incense was expressly forbidden because of its associations with pagan worship; later, however, some denominations, including the Catholic Church, would incorporate the burning of frankincense, myrrh and other aromatic items into specific rites.

## **ISLAM FORBIDS WINE-WHAT DID JOHN MEAN BY “CARGOES OF WINE AND OLIVE OIL”?**

In Saudi Arabia, alcohol is officially “banned.” But the country behaves more like the United States during Prohibition during the 1920s. Mecca and Saudi Arabia strictly interpret Islamic law and alcohol is illegal in Saudi Arabia. The punishments can be harsh--anyone caught in possession of wine or other alcoholic beverages runs the risk of time in jail and flogging. Despite this, there are wealthy people within the country who like to drink alcohol – and there are wealthy merchants willing to come up with elaborate methods of getting the alcohol into the country.

Merchants can supply the wealthy with fine wine. A bottle of smuggled wine costs about 800 Saudi riyals (\$215). The diplomatic quarters of Riyadh—a gated neighborhood filled with embassies—plays host to barely concealed parties. Some Saudi homes are so well-stocked that a host would ask which kind of white or red wine his guests would like. Saudi Arabia's custom officials have been sharing some of the failed attempts to smuggle wine into the country on social media.

There are other Islamic countries in the Middle East that also ban alcohol, like Iran, Sudan and Kuwait. In many of those that don't, there are significant restrictions even if they're sometimes overlooked. In Dubai, alcohol can only be served at a licensed establishment, and violations can be punishable by jail time. In Egypt, hotels can't serve Egyptians alcohol during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. The wine is then smuggled into the Great City.

## **THE ANNUAL SACRIFICE OF MORE THAN A MILLION ANIMALS IN THE GREAT CITY**

Between one million and two million animals are slaughtered annually during the pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and throughout the Islamic world in observance of the Feast of the Sacrifice (Id al-Adha). Concurrently, Muslim population growth has created a demand for animals beyond the potential production of some Islamic countries.

Only the sacrifice of Jesus takes away our sins. Animal sacrifice is pointless.

### **Hebrews 10:4-6 (NIV)**

**It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased.”**

From domestic and foreign sources, the transportation of about one million animals to Mina (near Makkah), their slaughter there according to strict ritual, and the disposal of carcasses—all within several days—is an extraordinary exercise in logistics and management.

Knowing the futility of animal sacrifice, the false god of the Qur'an then demands it. Satan has read the Bible; he knows this is futility.

### **Qur'an 22:36**

And the cattle and especially the camels – We have appointed their sacrifice as among the public symbols and rituals set up by Allah for you, in which there is much good for you. When they (the cattle and camels) are lined up in standing position for sacrifice, pronounce Allah's name over them.



Concurrently, Muslim population growth has created a demand for animals beyond the potential production of some Islamic countries, so animals are imported from far away to the great city.



### **HUMAN SLAVERY STILL EXISTS IN THE GREAT CITY MECCA**

In 1962, under pressure from the US and Great Britain, Saudi Arabia abolished slavery officially; however, unofficial slavery is still known to exist.

According to the U.S. State Department as of 2005: Saudi Arabia is a destination for men and women from South and East Asia and East Africa trafficked for the purpose of labor exploitation, and for children from Yemen, Afghanistan, and Africa trafficking for forced begging. Hundreds of thousands of low-skilled workers from India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Kenya migrate voluntarily to Saudi Arabia.

Some fall into conditions of involuntary servitude, suffering from physical and sexual abuse, non-payment or delayed payment of wages, the withholding of travel documents, restrictions on their freedom of movement and non-consensual contract alterations. The Government of Saudi Arabia does not comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so.

see <https://2001-2009.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2005/46616.htm>

**Rev 18:14 “They will say, ‘The fruit you longed for is gone from you. All your luxury and splendor have vanished, never to be recovered.’**

The splendor and wealth of Mecca is beyond comparison. By far, the two most expensive structures in the world are in Mecca. With a total construction cost of over \$100 billion (and still more is planned) the Great Mosque of Mecca can accommodate up to four million people and surrounds the Kaaba which holds the beast Baal. It contains 100 acres, and has vast outdoor and indoor praying spaces. The mosque is also home to the Blackstone, set into the Kaaba by the false prophet Mohammad.

Mecca also holds the second most expensive building in the world. The \$15 billion Abraj Al Bait Towers in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, holds the records for the world's tallest clock tower and the world's tallest hotel. The clock face is also the world's largest, at 43 meters in diameter. It has 10,000 rooms and 70 restaurants. It is the third tallest building in the world, standing 1,972 feet high. For comparison, the newly rebuilt World Trade Center building in New York City cost \$3.5 billion.

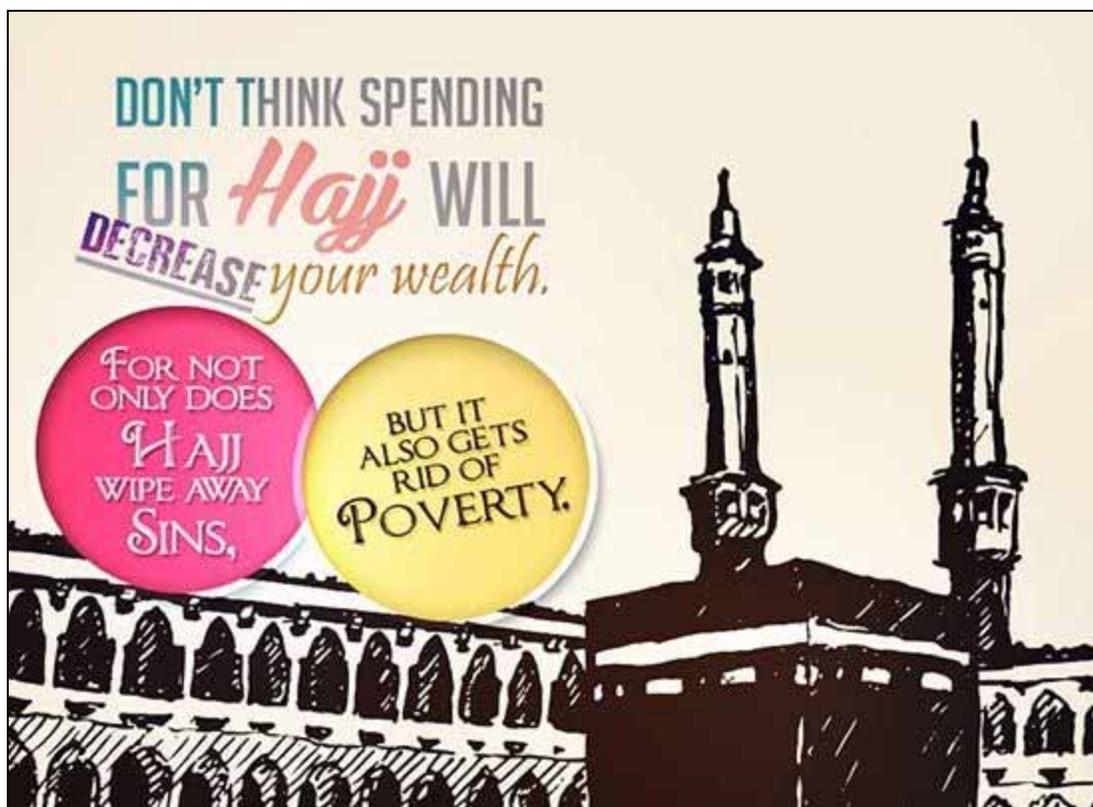


Babylon-Mecca represents not only the religious and political power of Islam and Mecca, but her economic power from the Hajj as well. The woman seated on the seven mountains symbolizes materialism and worldly wealth, as well as worship to a false pair of gods, Satan and Baal. Satan is so clever they believe that only one god is worshipped! That is why the merchants mourn over her.

**Rev 18:15 The merchants who sold these things and gained their wealth from her will stand far off, terrified at her torment. They will weep and mourn**

In verse 15 John returns to the merchants of 18:11 (*"The merchants of the earth"*), and they are described as those merchants *"who sold these things and gained their wealth from her."* These are the merchants, gold dealers, laborers and travel agents who gained much wealth facilitating the Hajj travel to and from Mecca to worship Baal in the Kaaba.

The annual pilgrimage of Muslims to Mecca is a massive logistical challenge for Saudi Arabia, which has been making significant investment in infrastructure. The pilgrimage is performed from the 8th to the 12th of the last month of the Islamic lunar calendar and coincides with the holiday of Eid al-Adha, which follows Ramadan, the month of fasting. The pilgrims (or hajjis, as they are called) usually arrive several days in advance and often stay on for a week or more, generating more than \$10 billion in revenue and makes the Hajj Saudi Arabia's second largest income earner after oil.

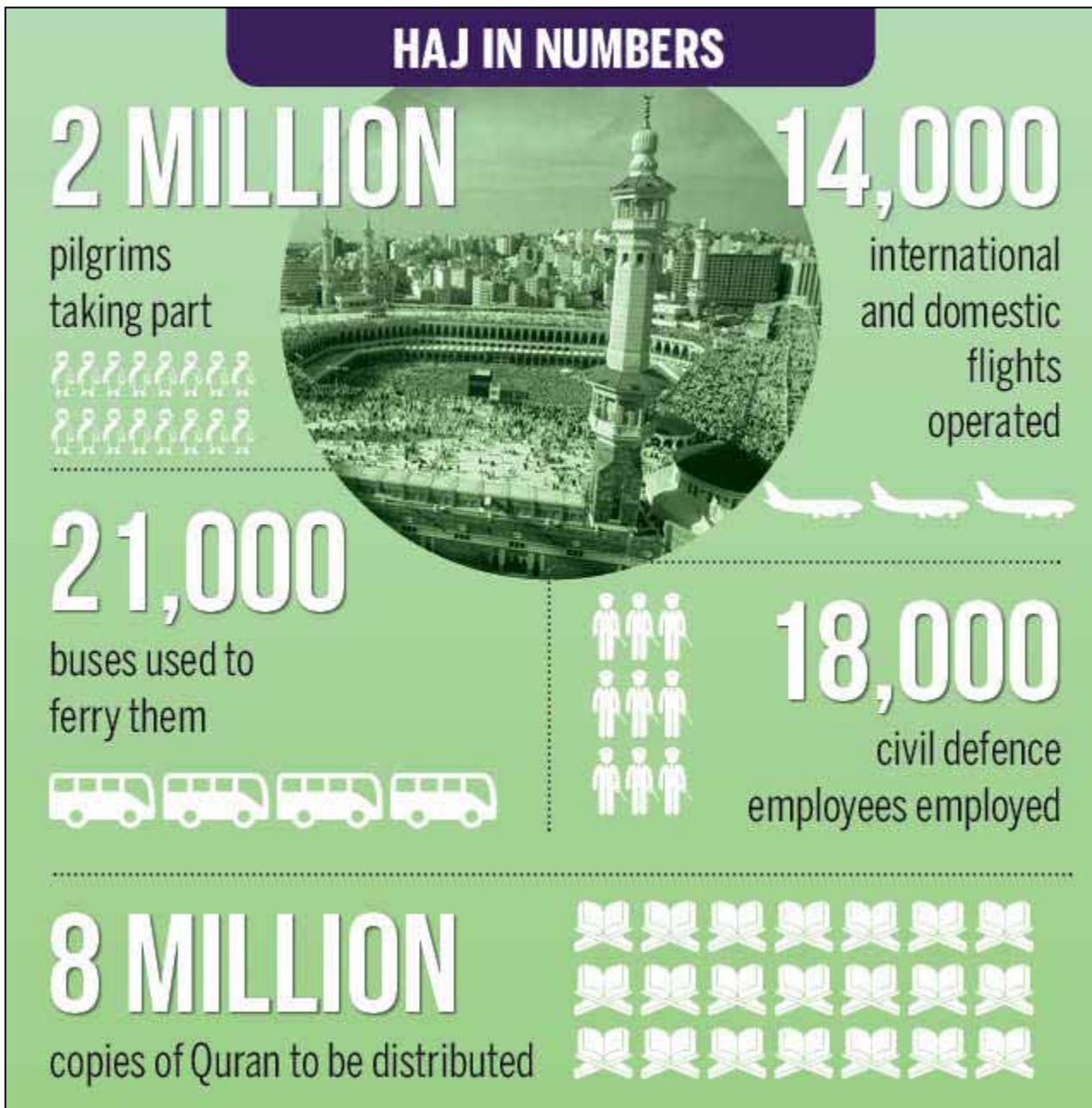


According to the national real estate committee at the Council of Saudi Chambers, the hajj and umrah are expected to generate \$150 billion of income in the country over the next five years, creating a further 100,000 permanent hajj-related jobs. The kingdom also plans to set up specialized research centers to develop a Hajj economic index.

Experts believe that revenue from pilgrimage will top \$150 billion by 2022. Many luxury hotels have sprung up in Mecca, offering, among other amenities, the view of the Grand Mosque; a suite can be as costly as \$7,000 a night.

## NATIONAL GOVERNMENT HAJJ INVESTMENT FUNDS

Muslims in the West are privileged and generally can go on demand. Governments around the world help fund the trip to Mecca. Indonesia is home to more than 220 million Muslims. Indonesia is one of the Muslim-majority countries where a government agency (BPKH – the Hajj Fund Management Agency) handles hajj pilgrimages by holding deposits on behalf of future pilgrims (who may wait 30 years or more for a hajj visa). The deposits are held in a fund used to help subsidize poorer pilgrims. Set up in 1963, Malaysia's equivalent, Tabung Haji (the Pilgrims Fund), had assets of nearly \$20 billion under management in 2019.

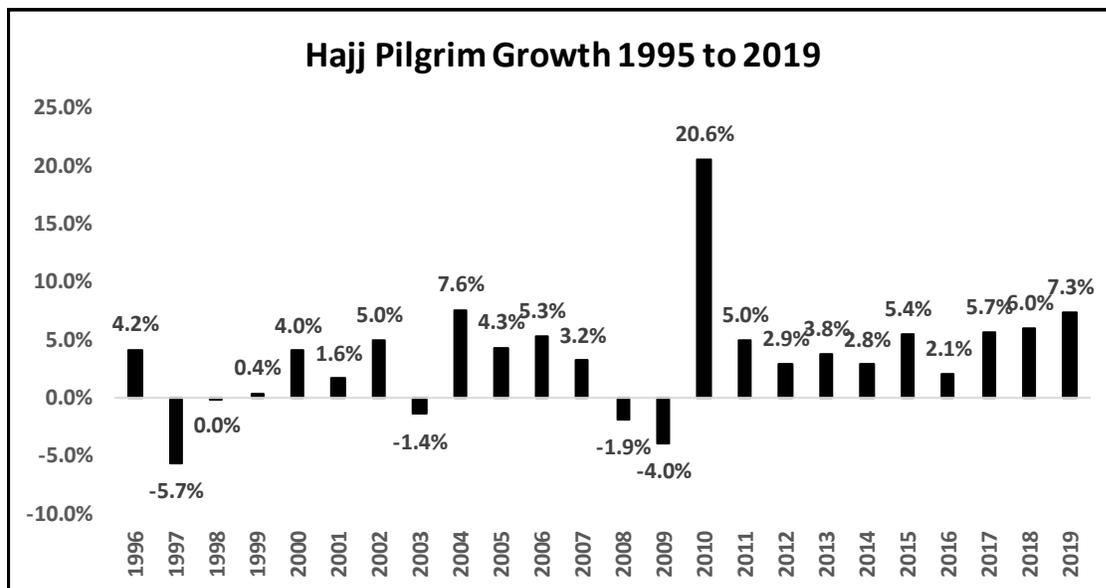


## THE PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA IS A HIGH GROWTH SECTOR FOR SAUDI ARABIA

The discovery of one of the world's biggest oil reserves in the Eastern Province of the Saudi Kingdom in 1938 helped fuel the development of the country at an unprecedented rate. Especially since 1975 Saudi Arabia has been transformed into one of the most prosperous and dynamic of world economies. Funded by its vast oil wealth traded on the oceans, Saudi Arabia has pumped more than \$150 billion of investment into Mecca the past decade. The level of pampering offered by some of the hotels in Mecca is beyond description.

The king of Saudi Arabia is first and foremost the guardian of the Holy Mosques and has a special duty to maintain the Holy sites, enable the Faithful to perform their Hajj obligation and keep those sites from the view of unbelievers and non-Muslims as required by the Qur'an. Unlike most other pilgrimages, Hajj is not an option for Muslims but a fundamental obligation, and this element of compulsion makes it difficult to define as tourism proper. Men and women who are physically capable and economically able have a religious obligation to perform Hajj at least once in their lifetime.

According to data provided by the Saudi Office of General statistics and information, the total number of pilgrims reached 2.9 million in 2011. By 2019 that number had reached an estimated 4.2 million. Over the past decade the average annual growth rate was 6.0%.



Besides this annual Hajj ritual, which is one of the largest gatherings on earth, there is a lesser Hajj known as "umrah" that can be performed by a Muslim at any time during the year. The economic impact of religious tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is substantial and increasing in importance every year.

Tourism worldwide is a risky business. Nevertheless, religious motives of Muslim pilgrims have never been noticeably vulnerable to any circumstances. Furthermore, religious tourists are the highest spenders compared with other types of tourists in Saudi Arabia. Subsequently, annual pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia for Hajj and Umrah plays an increasingly vital role in economic growth and development.

## **THE DESERT WILDERNESS PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA HAS GOTTEN MUCH EASIER**

Most of Saudi Arabia has a harsh desert climate, with frequent dust and sand storms and little rainfall. From May to September, the weather is very hot and dry. Temperatures drop rapidly after sunset, and the nights are relatively cool. The Hajj travel through the desert was dangerous and difficult for more than 13 centuries. Oil wealth has made the travel much easier, and Mecca even more wealthy.

Now the merchants can sell Asprey toiletries, 24-hour butler service, and \$270 chocolate selections. The vast number of wealthy Hajj merchants around the world are some of the richest people in the whole Islamic empire. But this also means that they share the guilt of Mecca, for they have also participated in it themselves.

The arid landscape hugging the Mecca highway used to hold little appeal. But now travelers can marvel at the fantastical structure rearing out of the otherwise unforgiving landscape, clearly visible from 25 miles away.



The kingdom is boosting its infrastructure spending and expanding its railways, including with a \$22.5 billion metro system as it seeks to diversify its oil-dependent economy. In 2011, Saudi Arabia signed a deal for a Spanish consortium to build the rail track, supply 35 high-speed trains and handle a 12-year maintenance contract.

The rail project, dogged by several delays, was built at a cost of more than \$16 billion, according to Saudi media.

The Haramain high-speed railway, also known as the Western railway or Mecca–Medina high-speed railway, is a 453-kilometre-long (281 mi) high-speed inter-city rail transport system in Saudi Arabia. It links the Muslim holy cities of Medina and Mecca via King Abdullah Economic City, using 450 kilometers (280 miles) of main line and other local connecting lines.

**Rev 18:16 and cry out: "Woe! Woe to you, great city, dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet, and glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls!"**

No building is more beautifully outlined and decorated than the Kaaba in Mecca. The door of the Kaaba contains more than \$6 million of gold. The kiswah cloth covering the Kaaba costs \$6 million, and is replaced every year. Nearly 670 kg (1,477 pounds) of silk, enough to cover a structure estimated to measure about 50 feet (15 meters) high and 35 to 40 feet long, is imported from Italy. Hundreds of pounds of silver and gold thread from Germany are woven in the cloth.



**Rev 18:17 In one hour such great wealth has been brought to ruin!’ “Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off.**

Like a bustling superhighway, the Saudi Arabia oil transport sea-road serves the world's traffic today just as she did in the days of the Phoenicians. The money from the sale of the oil flows into Mecca, as the Saudis have poured hundreds of billions of dollar into Mecca over past decade.



A great Saudi oil tanker, a thousand feet long, moves imperiously up a Red Sea shipping lane. Not far away an Arabian fishing trawls for the large blue fish which abound there. Because the sea lanes are narrow and the traffic is as heavy as that on Fifth Avenue at high noon, an American naval ship, capable of 35 knots, idles along at ten knots an hour. There are yet other ships on this watery thoroughfare.

To the east, pleasure steamers cruise serenely along the coast, their passengers lining the rails to enjoy the view of flat tablelands set unbelievably close to the shore. And to the north and south, freighters, holds stuffed with the world's goods, wait patiently for the sea lanes to clear.

John introduces the lamentation of the mariners, who would, of course, be deeply interested in the destruction of a city with which they had been accustomed to trade, and by carrying merchandise to which they had been enriched.

Death, at any rate, will soon end their commerce, and all the riches of the ungodly will be exchanged, not only for the coffin and the worm, but for the fire that cannot be quenched. They will pay the price for believing the false gospel of the Qur'an.

**Rev 18:18 When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, 'Was there ever a city like this great city?'**

The ship masters and sailors live by carrying merchants' goods and the black gold of crude oil. All who get their living by serving this mystical Babylon, whether goldsmiths that make shrines for miniatures Kaaba replicates for Hajj pilgrims, or travel clerks, or notaries, or any officers that Mecca employs will cry when they see the smoke of her burning.



The mourners had shared Babylon's sensual pleasures and gained by her wealth and trade. The kings of the earth, whom she flattered into idolatry, allowing them to be tyrannical over their subjects, while obedient to her; and the merchants, those who trafficked for her indulgences, pardons, and honors; these mourn.

Babylon's friends partook her sinful pleasures and profits but are not willing to share her plagues. The spirit of antichrist is a worldly spirit, and that sorrow is a mere worldly sorrow; they do not lament for the anger of God, but for the loss of outward comforts.

The magnificence and riches of the ungodly Mecca will avail them nothing but will render the vengeance harder to be borne. The spiritual merchandise is here alluded to, when not only slaves, but the souls of men, are mentioned as articles of commerce, to the destroying the souls of millions.

**Rev 18:19 They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out: “Woe! Woe to you, great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth! In one hour she has been brought to ruin!”**

*“They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out.”* When they see the smoke of her burning, they will be shocked to the core. Since they believe God lives in the Kaaba, they will not understand how God could have destroyed the great city.



Because in one hour she was made desolate!

The prosperous traders learn, that even with all their gains, to get the unsearchable riches of Christ; otherwise; even in this life, they may have to mourn that riches make to themselves wings and fly away, and that all prayer to the Kaaba they said in great piety, are departed from them. Death, at any rate, will soon end their commerce, and all the riches of the ungodly will be exchanged, not only for the coffin and the worm, but for the fire that cannot be quenched.

#### **Revelation 17:8 (NIV)**

**The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and yet will come up out of the Abyss and go to its destruction. The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because it once was, now is not, and yet will come.**

**Rev 18:20** “Rejoice over her, you heavens! Rejoice, you people of God! Rejoice, apostles and prophets! For God has judged her with the judgment she imposed on you.”

John has been recording the grief of the world over Babylon-Mecca’s fall and the laments of those who grew rich through her wealth. The scene now suddenly shifts to God’s people who worship and serve the Lord Jesus.

The voice from heaven in 18:4 which warned God’s people to come out of Babylon-Mecca (al all Islamic teaching) and not to fellowship with her now speaks again. It calls all of heaven, the saints, apostles and prophets to rejoice over God’s judgment of Babylon-Mecca.



*“Rejoice over her, you heavens! Rejoice, you people of God! Rejoice, apostles and prophets.”* The second portion of the chapter closes with this invitation to the saints to rejoice: they are summoned to rejoice because the law of retribution has worked on her. Your judgment (it is said to the saints) is judged on her. This does not mean a judgment which the saints have decreed, but the judgment which Babylon wrought on the holy is now exacted from her by Jesus, the Lamb of God.

**Revelation 19:13 (NIV)**

**He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.**

**Rev 18:21 Then a mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said: "With such violence the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, never to be found again.**

John sees a mighty angel or powerful angel pick up a boulder the size of a large millstone and throw it into the sea. He then declares that with such violence Babylon will be thrown down.

All that made Islam and Mecca attractive to people will be taken away. The things the angel lists are not evil in themselves. Musicians, tradespeople, a millstone grinding grain, the light of a lamp, a wedding with bridegroom and bride; all these things will be silenced or extinguished. These are signs of normal human life. They will perish.



John intensifies Jeremiah's prophecy of Babylon's fall in Jeremiah 51:59-64. Baruch's brother Seraiah, a staff officer in King Zedekiah's army was to go to Babylon and read Jeremiah's prophecy of Babylon's fall in Babylon. The prophecy was all that Jeremiah had said about Babylon in chapters 50-51. He was then to declare, "O Lord, you have said you will destroy this place, so that neither man nor animal will live in it; it will be desolate forever." Then he was to take the scroll and tie a stone to it and throw it into the Euphrates River and say, "So will Babylon sink to rise no more because of the disaster I will bring upon her. And her people will fall." The angel is clearly remembering Jeremiah's words. God will fulfill his prophet's words in the last days and will apply them to eschatological Babylon-Mecca.

**Rev 18:22 The music of harpists and musicians, pipers and trumpeters, will never be heard in you again. No worker of any trade will ever be found in you again. The sound of a millstone will never be heard in you again.**

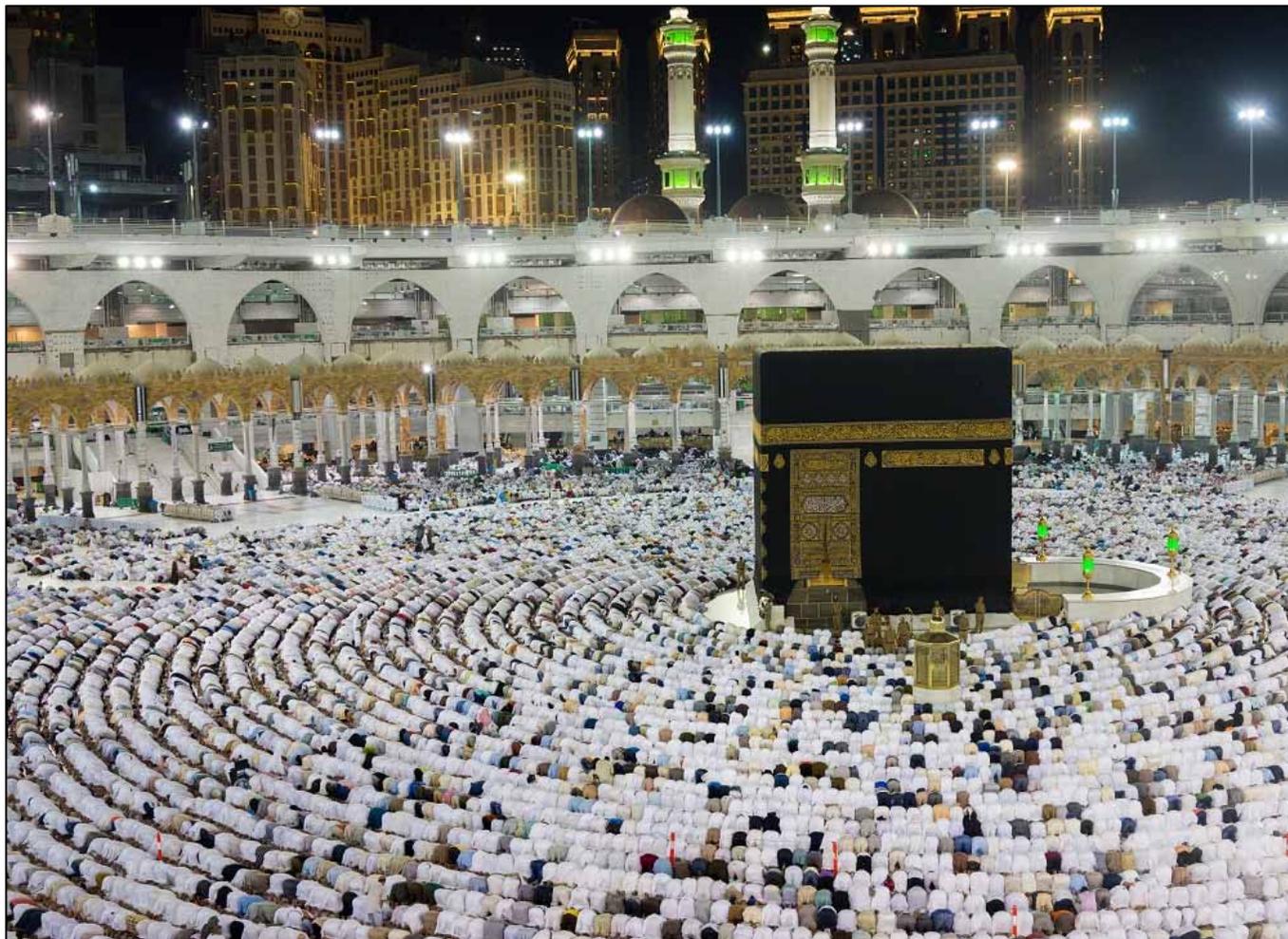
John's picture also points out to us that not everything human beings do is sinful and evil, even those who follow the beast. Total depravity does not mean we are as evil as we can be. It means every part of human life has been tainted and corrupted by sin. We can still do good things but because of sin we are separated from God and prone to do evil. The beast is as depraved as he can be because Baal has received authority and power from the dragon-Satan. What about the flute player or workman or bride and bridegroom in Mecca? They were following the beast yet still doing normal human things. It is their choice of who to worship that determines their eternal future and destiny.



They chose poorly and rejected the Lord Jesus Christ! The angel declares that the merchants of Babylon-Mecca were some of the world's great men but they were deceived and led astray by the "magic spell" of Babylon. The word for "magic spell" is pharmakeia, which the ESV translates sorcery. The word means magic arts or sorcery. The verb form means to mix potions and cast spells and is related to our English word pharmacy. They could not break away from the Kaaba's seduction and so were led astray to the evil of Satan and the beast. Worldly power and intelligence is no defense against the deception of Satan. Only the Holy Spirit in the Christ-follower is a defense against the attacks of spiritual evil. Without him all human beings are vulnerable!

**Rev 18:23 The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The voice of bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world's important people. By your magic spell all the nations were led astray.**

*“By your magic spell all the nations were led astray.”* The Saudi government estimates the number of people circling the Kaaba—Islam's holiest site—is 115,000 people an hour!



The fall of Babylon was an act of God's justice. And because it was a final ruin, this enemy should never molest them any more; of this they were assured by a sign. Let us take warning from the things which brought others to destruction, and let us set our affections on things above, when we consider the changeable nature of earthly things.

The judgment does not fall because the merchants were great: it is the sorcery of the next clause which is the true cause of her fall: the merchants are those who traded with her, as well as those who dwelt in her: by “her sorceries” we must understand her artful policy, her attractiveness, and the seductions by which she drew into the meshes of her worldliness and sin the nations around. “In thy sorcery were all the nations led astray” (Revelation 13:14). The fall of Babylon was an act of God's justice. And because it was a final ruin, this enemy should never molest them any more; of this they were assured by a sign.

**Rev 18:24 In her was found the blood of prophets and of God's holy people, of all who have been slaughtered on the earth."**

*"In her was found the blood of prophets and of God's holy people, of all who have been slaughtered on the earth."* This passage is another reason why Rome cannot fulfill Revelation prophecy. Rome did not kill all the Old Testament prophets!! Actually Rome killed no prophets, other than Jesus, if the Son of God can also be considered a prophet. Certainly Rome did not kill all of God's holy people! Even a revived future Rome could not go back in time and do this. But Baal and Satan did, and they fulfill Revelation 18:24 as stewards of Babylon-Mecca.

#### **John 8:44 (NIV)**

**"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."**

Baal and Satan have controlled an initial rebellion as Babel, ancient Babylon all the way to the current demonic worship masquerading as the true God. The prophet Zechariah warned about the wicked basket heading to a house to be built later in Babylon (Zechariah 5:8-10-11 *"Where are they taking the basket?" I asked the angel who was speaking to me. He replied, "To the country of Babylonia to build a house for it. When the house is ready, the basket will be set there in its place."*) The Kaaba is the house. Mecca is the great city, not Rome or Jerusalem.

Neither Rome nor Jerusalem are on seven mountains nor in the desert wilderness. Mecca constantly blasphemes the true God. Mecca is on seven mountains and far in the desert wilderness. Rome did not face anything like imminent attack by its vassal kings (Rome cannot fulfill Revelation 17:16), and Jerusalem did not have any control whatsoever over the rest of the world.

The angel's final pronouncement against Mecca (Satan and Baal) Babylon-Mecca is the most chilling. In her was found the blood of God's prophets and saints, along with the blood of all who have been murdered or slaughtered.

At first sight it seems difficult to understand that these words are spoken not only of Babylon, but of Baal and Satan leading a rebellion since the time of the prophets. What other world Empire could be convicted of killing all the prophets and the saints?

Similar words are addressed by Jeremiah to Judah (Jeremiah 2:34): "Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents" (see on Revelation 17:1). Here is concluded the pronouncement of the judgment of Babylon; which may be said to answer the prayer in Revelation 6:10; and which forms the conclusion of the revelation commencing at Revelation 17.

The false prophet Mohammad that ministers to the beast Baal at the Kaaba in the great city of Mecca are specially mentioned among those doomed to the lake of fire.

Listen to the warnings from Jesus.