

In a Single Hour

Revelation 18:1-24

Big Idea: "You can't take it with you, but you can send it on ahead." Every treasure invested in God's kingdom is laid up in heaven. Don't build your life in a wadi. Build on the solid rock of Jesus. Where is your treasure today?

Main Points

1. **The World System Will Fall** - Babylon the Great represents not just a single city but an entire world system built on pride, self-sufficiency, and the rejection of God.
2. **God Calls His People Out** - The command "Come out of her, my people" is not just a future warning for tribulation saints. It is a present call to examine where we are placing our trust.
3. **Treasure Reveals the Heart** - Where our treasure is, our heart will be also. The question is not whether we have possessions, but whether our possessions have us.
4. **God Will Judge and God Will Avenge** - God is just. He has not forgotten the suffering of his people, and his judgment will be complete and final.
5. **Build on the Rock, Not the Sand** - Like a house built in a wadi, a life built on the world's system is one flood away from total destruction.

Scriptures:

- ☐ Deuteronomy 8:18
- ☐ Hosea 8:7
- ☐ Romans 12:17-21
- ☐ Proverbs 11:10
- ☐ Matthew 6:19-21

Opening Question:

When you hear the phrase "in a single hour it can all be gone," what comes to mind from your own life experience? Has there been a moment when something you relied on disappeared quickly?

Discussion Questions:

The sermon describes Babylon the Great as representing a world system rooted in self-sufficiency and the rejection of God, tracing it all the way back to the Tower of Babel. In what ways do you see that same spirit at work in the world today? In your own life?

Pastor contrasted two cities -- Babylon, representing chaos and confusion, and Jerusalem, representing shalom and peace. Which of those two words better describes the internal state of your life right now, and why?

Read Revelation 18:4 together, where God calls his people to come out of Babylon so they do not share in her sins or plagues. What does it look like practically for a believer today to "come out" of the world system while still living and working within it? Where is that line difficult to find?

The sermon referenced Corrie Ten Boom's advice to hold loosely whatever God places in your hands. What is something in your life right now that you are holding tightly? What would it look like to hold it more loosely?

Pastor Tim mentioned that 300,000 items are in the average American home and that the average American home has tripled in size in fifty years. Without turning this into a guilt trip, what do those kinds of statistics reveal about the values of our culture? How have those values shaped your own habits and decisions?

Romans 12:17-21 teaches that vengeance belongs to God, not to us. Is there a situation in your life where you have been tempted to take matters into your own hands rather than trusting God to bring justice? What does it feel like to release that to him?

Randy Alcorn's idea -- "you can't take it with you, but you can send it on ahead" -- was referenced in the sermon. What are some specific, practical ways a person can lay up treasure in heaven rather than on earth? What does that look like in your stage of life?

The sermon closed with the image of a wadi -- a dry riverbed that looks safe until a flood comes rushing through without warning. On what foundation is your life actually built right now? What evidence points to your answer?

Practical Applications:

1. **Inventory Your Trust** Spend fifteen minutes this week writing down the things you would be most devastated to lose. Bring that list to God in prayer and ask him to reveal whether those things have become sources of security that belong to him alone.
2. **Hold It Loosely** Identify one possession, relationship, or comfort that you tend to grip tightly. Pray specifically over it each day this week, consciously releasing it to God and thanking him that it belongs to him.
3. **Send It On Ahead** Take one concrete step this week to invest in something eternal -- a conversation with someone who needs to hear about Jesus, a financial gift toward kingdom work, or a commitment of your time to serve someone in need.
4. **Practice Forgiveness** If there is someone in your life whose offense you have been carrying, commit to the daily practice of forgiving them this week, even if that means doing it again each morning. Consider sharing that commitment with a trusted person in your group for accountability.
5. **Seek Shalom** The sermon contrasted the chaos of Babylon with the peace of Jerusalem. Identify one area of your life characterized by *tohu* -- confusion, disorder, or anxiety -- and bring it to God this week, asking him to replace that chaos with his shalom.

Closing Thought/Prayer:

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." -- Matthew 6:19-20