CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS

NOVEMBER262022

Scripture Story: Revelation 18:1-14.
Commentary: *The Great Controversy* (or *Love Under Fire*), chapter 38.

run for your life



Photo by A Truman

flashlight

"But not one is made to suffer the wrath of God until the truth has been brought home to his mind and conscience, and has been rejected. There are many who have never had an opportunity to hear the special truths for this time. The obligation of the fourth commandment has never been set before them in its true light. He who reads every heart and tries every motive will leave none who desire a knowledge of the truth, to be deceived as to the issues of the controversy. The decree is not to be urged upon the people blindly. Everyone is to have sufficient light to make his decision intelligently" (*The Great Controversy,* p. 605).

keytext

"And I heard another voice from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.'"

(Revelation 18:4, 5, NKJV)

what do you think?

When natural disasters leave a path of destruction and ruined lives, one of the first questions that people ask is, Was there adequate warning? That's one question that can never be asked of God when He brings judgment on human beings. He always gives a warning.

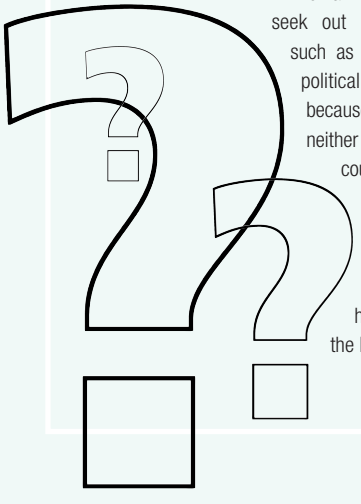
Here are few warnings God gave before destruction came. Match the people with the scripture where the warning is found.

A. Noah	1. Genesis 41:30, 31
B. Pharaoh	2. Genesis 19:12-15
C. Lot	3. Jonah 3:4, 5
D. Nineveh	4. Genesis 6:5

did you know?

The book of Revelation encompasses visions given by Jesus Christ to John while he was imprisoned on the island of Patmos. Patmos still exists today. It is a relatively small island among the Sporades group of islands in the Aegean Sea near the west coast of Turkey.

Roman emperors would seek out remote territories such as Patmos to imprison political and religious rivals because there they would have neither legal rights nor access to courts. According to some historians, John was believed to be in his 90s when the emperor Domitian imprisoned him on Patmos for two years. It was during this time that God gave him revelations of the end of time and John wrote the book of Revelation.



INTO THE STORY

"After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.'

"And I heard another voice from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, "I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow." Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.

"'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, 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."

"'And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, 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. 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.'"

(Revelation 18:1-14, NKJV)

OUT OF THE STORY

Have you ever read Revelation 18:1-14 before? What part of this week's passage caught your attention?

Who is speaking? Who is the audience for this message?

Notice the sins of the woman symbolically referred to as Babylon. Place a *checkmark* by each sin that she has committed. How do people in the world relate to her?

If you were to describe God's attitude toward Babylon, what would you say?

What do you think Babylon represents? What is it a symbol of?

Why does the world mourn for Babylon after God begins to destroy it? Is it possible to become so caught up in sin that you literally cry over the fact that it is gone?

What two lessons do you take away from this week's *Into the Story* passage?

punch lines

"And another angel followed, saying, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication'" **(Revelation 14:8, NKJV).**

"Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God; for He has given you the former rain faithfully, and He will cause the rain to come down for you—the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month" **(Joel 2:23, NKJV).**

"Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" **(Ephesians 6:13, NKJV).**

"As the Lord had commanded Moses his servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that the Lord had commanded Moses" **(Joshua 11:15, NKJV).**

"Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong" **(1 Corinthians 16:13, NKJV).**

further insight

"So the followers of Christ are to shed light into the darkness of the world. Through the Holy Spirit, God's word is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver."

—Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons,* p. 414

connectingtolife

Sabbath

Read Matthew 25:31-46.

Complete the *What Do You Think?* activity. Were you able to correctly match the warning given with the person or persons warned? By now you've got the answers, but let's dig a little deeper into each story.

Take a moment to read the following scriptures again. Examine each passage to find out what specific sin or sins led God to begin punishment. Write what you find next to each verse.

Genesis 41:30, 31: _____

Genesis 19:12-15:_____

Jonah 3:4, 5:_____

Genesis 6:5:_____

Notice that God's punishments are not arbitrary. God's punishments are always a last resort, after all other means have failed.

Sunday

Read Revelation 18:3.

After reading the *Into the Story* section, explore the passage using the *Out of the Story* prompts. The word "Babylon" comes to us from an ancient place called Mesopotamia. Babylon was its chief city, a place known for its sensuality, sexual immorality, and luxury.

Now that you know what Babylon means, why do you think God calls the world's system of sin by the name Babylon?

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The world has committed fornication with Babylon. Fornication occurs when two unmarried people have sex. Why is the angel of Revelation 18 using such strong terms to describe what's happening in the world?

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Monday

Read Revelation 18:4, 5.

The angel encourages all people to come out of Babylon. In a sentence or two share what you think it means to "come out of Babylon."

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Now, read Romans 12:1, 2. How does giving your life to Jesus Christ help you detach from the world?

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Tuesday

Read Exodus 20:1-17.

This week's *Flashlight* quote reminds us that God will give every person an opportunity to accept Him as their personal Savior from sin and Lord of their life. One of the ways that we demonstrate that we are willing to follow Jesus is by keeping His commandments.

What message does keeping all the commandments send to the world? What does it say about you and your relationship to God? Do you think you'll have to defend that relationship one day?

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Wednesday

Read Isaiah 44:3, 4.

Do any of this week's *Punch Lines* grab your attention? They should.

Farmers and others who work in agriculture understand the importance of early and latter rains. Early rains—typically in the spring—help a crop to get going. Latter rains get it ready for the harvest.

In today's reading we see the harvest imagery at work. Why does God want to rain down His Holy Spirit on you as Jesus prepares to return to earth?

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Thursday

Read James 3:17.

Write a three- or four-sentence response to the following scenario:

One day while you are walking to school, two friends you usually hang out with begin to shout at each other. They get louder and louder and soon a pushing match ensues. You listen in and discover that they are fighting over a girl they both like.

What would you do and why?

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Friday

Read 1 John 1:8-2:2.

Do you see any parts of Babylon in your life? What about the music you listen to, the movies you watch, the friends you hang with?

Is there something that you need to give up in order to heed God's final warning? Why not ask God's forgiveness, and pray at the beginning of each hour for strength to go without it?

this week's reading*

The Great Controversy (or *Love Under Fire*), chapter 38.

**Love Under Fire* is a special adaptation of *The Great Controversy,* created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.