



## THE VOICE OF EVANGELISM INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

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## THE DELUSIONS OF LUXURY

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We want to take our Scripture text from *Revelation 18:1-5*, "**And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues(Rev.16:1-19). For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.**" Just as overeating can make an individual sick and too much insulation in a home can trap toxic air inside, too much wealth and riches can be very dangerous to the moral and spiritual health of an individual, a city, or a nation. In fact, Jesus warned about the "*deceitfulness of riches*" found here in *Matthew 13:22*, "**He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.**" It is demanded of every believer that they manifest the fruit of God's spirit in their lives instead of bareness. The apostle Paul warned us in *Romans 8:9*, "**Now if any**

**man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.**" Without a doubt, luxury can easily delude each Christian into spiritual carelessness, greed, and ultimately ruin. Never before have we witnessed more recklessness in Christianity than we are witnessing today. Having both a genuine spiritual and physical reverence is all but gone from within modern Christendom. Unbridled greed, lust, and covetousness have pervaded the church because today's pulpiteers are advocating foolishness and frivolity. All but a handful of modern day preachers have become so covetous they continue to teach and preach only on the subject of money and finances. The message has never been about money; the message is about redemption: the shedding of innocent blood which was none other than the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord. The apostle Peter declared in *1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:18-19* "**Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation (or lifestyle) received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.**" Greed, coupled with apathy will ultimately bring total ruin and destruction within an individual's life. Such is the case of Babylon in John the revelator's vision concerning her mighty fall. Historically, Babylon achieved wealth, power, and dominance through constant warfare, oppression, and deception. Every measure of deception is based upon a lie seeking to conceal the truth about a certain

matter or subject. With all respect to America, historically we have had a meteoric rise in our power and world dominance. America as a nation is only 242 years old which is a very short time frame compared to most other nations. As a world power America has exercised her might in dictating to other nations and their governments. The purported Iraqi war under the presidency of George W. Bush is now found to have been based upon fraudulent and faulty information concerning weapons of mass destruction. This is the type of overbearing power that John speaks of here in our scripture text concerning Babylon. It has been recorded and historically proven that throughout the ancient world Babylon was renowned for plundering others for her own personal gain. Here in the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Revelation, Babylon is without a doubt a symbol of not only world power, but of the world system that operates in open rebellion against God. In the Old Testament Babylon represents confusion and chaos while in the New Testament Babylon represents tyranny. Let me say unequivocally, there is a heavy price to pay for the self-indulgent lifestyle that Babylon's people live, and for the many injustices that many resort to in maintaining their power. It is amazing as a nation how much corruption we have witnessed in our government in the last two years. Power truly corrupts anyone or a nation. America must be warned: cruelty and deception do not go unanswered

when it comes to the scales of God's justice. Solomon gave a stern warning about a just weight found here in **Proverbs 11:1, "A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight."** Simply put, God demands a holy and spiritually certified set of scales when it comes to righteousness and justice. Since the election of Donald J. Trump, as American citizens, we have witnessed an unfathomable and relentless attack against his presidency and leadership. Without a doubt this man, Donald J. Trump will tire and weaken if we do not keep him covered in prayer. The media in America is so deceived, diluted, and biased; the man Donald J. Trump seemingly has no chance to succeed in his leadership concerning our nation. I am convinced God has blessed America having raised up Donald J. Trump against all odds: therefore God will be justified when He harshly judge's America for her Babylonian spirit. Many times in the Old Testament God's last measure of grace and mercy was demonstrated to Israel through blessing their nation: therefore He was just and righteous when He brought severe punishment and justice to their nation. Let us examine a few of the characteristics that delusion and luxury have brought to America. America has become a nation wherein dwells untold numbers of demonic entities. No one seems to care that witchcraft, demonic practices, sorcery, better known as drugs have not only exploded within our nation but have found a place of residence within many of our churches. Without being condescending, I am bewildered at the magnitude of people who are taking pharmaceutical drugs on a daily basis to alleviate either physical or emotional pain. The patterns of luxury have brought addictive circumstances in our populace which is manifested through alcoholism, drug addiction, sexual excess, and a lifestyle of unmitigated greed. Look at the many media news anchors who are avowed sodomites and lesbians. Both CNN and MSNBC have become inundated and

awash by these sexual perversions and perverts. With so many people medicated today; one may ask the question, why is this happening and taking place? Most addicts never intended for their lives to become controlled by addiction. Regretfully, these addicts are trying to insulate their minds from the pain of sin that is wreaking havoc within their lives. How about the surgeon in Kentucky just a few months ago who came to the operating room drunk? Therefore many people in America live in a state of denial concerning their true spiritual condition. America's economic powers have allowed the world to indulge in their own greed and access. Twenty five years or so ago the spirit of God impressed David Wilkerson to walk the streets of New York at night and to look at all the signs and billboards. What he soon realized was that foreign entities had set up a place of residence within America. What Brother Wilkerson witnessed were foreign entities such as Panasonic, Yamaha, Mazda, and Sony had set up shop in America. The list is far greater today: Honda, Lexus, Volkswagen, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Hitachi, Beringher, Mitsubishi and many more companies have come to America. Beginning this year one automobile entity from China will begin to sell its cars in America. America could very easily represent modern day Babylon because America has made so many other nations rich. The truth remains, if there is no genuine repentance, all of America's possessions could very well disappear and America could very well be left desolate. We often hear the term "trade deficit." Look with me please at a particular phrase found here in **Revelation 18:17, "For in one hour so great riches is come to naught. And every ship master, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!"** Did you notice the phrase; trade by sea? Each month America has a trade deficit with most

nations of the world. What could very well happen to America is instructive for those of us who follow Christ, especially since we live in a culture of affluence. What about the meteoric rise of the stock market since this past presidential election. It is asinine to believe we can continue this path of prosperity without some measure of correction. Is there a note of warning in this Scripture text for us? Today we hear of child sacrifices, also through abortion, which is pure unmitigated murder. Mass murder such as the Mandalay massacre: and still no one knows why. We should not take lightly the things we are witnessing in America at this present time. When a nation loses its God consciousness, sin will explode uncontrollably. The only remedy for sin is the blood of Jesus Christ. The blood of the Son of God will never lose its power. His blood has cleansed untold millions if not billions: however, it has never lost one ounce of its power to cleanse a sinner from their sins. There is no sin too great the blood of the Lamb cannot cleanse from the sinners heart. We are told in **Ephesians 1:7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."** We are told in **Revelation 1:5, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."** I rejoice in the power of the blood of the Lamb! Reading from **1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."** If there's anything in your heart that should not be there let us pray right now and ask Christ to forgiveness us of that sin. How blessed is the act of confession to God the Father through Jesus Christ His Son? As always, we thank you for loving us and for supporting us. Until next month, run the race, because Jesus is coming again.

Serving With You All,

Pastor / Evangelist David W. Lankford