

# Revelation 18:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,

## Analysis

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The phrase 'in one hour' (repeated three times: vv. 10, 17, 19) emphasizes judgment's sudden swiftness despite long prosperity. Shipmasters, sailors, and all who trade by sea represent those depending on maritime commerce. Their standing afar off and crying demonstrates shock at rapid reversal. The 'great riches' becoming desolate warns against trusting uncertain wealth. Reformed theology emphasizes God's sovereignty over economic systems—what seems stable can collapse instantly at divine decree. The witnesses' distant position shows their inability to help or reverse judgment.

## Historical Context

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Mediterranean trade enriched coastal cities through maritime commerce. Rome's navy secured sea routes, enabling vast trade networks. The vision depicts complete collapse of this system. Ancient sea trade involved significant risk; shipwreck meant total loss. This imagery communicated that seemingly secure economic foundations could vanish instantly, devastating those dependent on them.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## 1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

### Study Questions

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1. How does the 'one hour' timing challenge your assumptions about the stability of economic systems or personal wealth?
2. What practical steps can you take to ensure you're investing in eternal riches rather than trusting in uncertain earthly wealth?

### Interlinear Text

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ὅτι	μῆ	ὥρα	ἡρημώθη	ὁ	τοσοῦτος	πλοῦτος	καὶ	
For	G1520	hour	is come to nought	G3588	so great	riches	And	
G3754		G5610	G2049		G5118	G4149	G2532	
πᾶς	κυβερνήτης	καὶ	πᾶς	ἐπὶ	τῶν	πλοίων	ὁ	ὄμιλος,
all	shipmaster	And	all	in	G3588	ships	G3588	the company
G3956	G2942	G2532	G3956	G1909		G4143		G3658
καὶ	ναῦται	καὶ	ὅσοι	τὴν	θάλασσαν	ἐργάζονται	ἀπὸ	
And	sailors	And	as many as	G3588	by sea	trade	off	
G2532	G3492	G2532	G3745		G2281	G2038	G575	
μακρόθεν	ἔστησαν							
afar	stood							
G3113	G2476							

### Additional Cross-References

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**Revelation 17:16** (Parallel theme): And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

**Isaiah 23:14** (Parallel theme): Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste.

**Revelation 18:19** (Parallel theme): And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all

that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

**Jeremiah 51:8** (Parallel theme): Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed.

**Jonah 1:6** (Parallel theme): So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

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