

# CHAPTER 18

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 18

This chapter gives an account of the fall of Babylon, and of the lamentation of many, and of the joy of others, by reason of it; which account is published by several angels: the first that declares her fall is described by his original, descending from heaven; by the great power he had; by his resplendent glory, and by his mighty cry in publishing her destruction; which is illustrated by the desolate condition she will be in upon her fall; the reasons of which are given, because the nations and kings of the earth had committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth were enriched by her luxury, (~~66814~~ Revelation 18:1-3). Another voice is heard from heaven, calling upon the people of God, first to come out of her, lest partaking of her sins they should share in her plagues, seeing her iniquities had reached to heaven, and were remembered before God; and next to take full vengeance on her, because she had glorified herself, lived deliciously, and in great security, (~~66814~~ Revelation 18:4-7). And then follows a continuation of the account of her destruction, what her plagues would be, death, mourning, famine, and fire; and which would be sudden, in one hour, and certain, from the power and justice of God, (~~66818~~ Revelation 18:8). Next follow the lamentations of the kings, merchants, and masters of ships, because of her greatness, riches, and merchandise, which are all come to nothing, (~~66819~~ Revelation 18:9-19). And then the church; the saints, apostles, and prophets, are called upon to rejoice at the vengeance taken on her, (~~66820~~ Revelation 18:20) upon which a mighty angel appears, who by an action signifies the manner of her destruction, and the irrecoverableness of her state and condition, (~~66821~~ Revelation 18:21) and declares her utter ruin, by affirming that nothing that was either delightful or profitable, or necessary or comfortable, should any more be found in her; giving the reasons of it, because of her luxury, idolatry, and bloodshed, (~~66822~~ Revelation 18:22-24).

**Ver. 1.** *And after these things*, etc.] The vision of the woman on the scarlet coloured beast, and the interpretation of both by the angel:

*I saw another angel*; not the Lord Jesus Christ, though the several things said of this angel agree with him; nor one of the ministering spirits, though the characters of him will also suit with one of them, but rather a minister of the Gospel, or a set of Gospel ministers, who will arise a little before the downfall of Babylon, in the spiritual reign of Christ; though not the same with the angel of fire, (<sup><6148></sup>Revelation 14:18) as some have thought, because of his illustrious appearance, and the loudness of his voice; but the same with the angel, or third thundering voice in (<sup><6146></sup>Revelation 14:6) for not only the times of both agree, but the selfsame words are expressed by one as by the other; and this angel is distinct from him that showed John the preceding vision, and gave him the interpretation of it, and from all the seven angels that had the vials, and is described as follows: and first by the place from whence he came, John saw him

*come down from heaven*; denoting the suddenness of his appearance and cry; he came down at once, and cried out immediately; the subject of his cry, the destruction of Babylon, being what will be at an unawares; and also the commission and authority of the ministers signified by him, who will have their warrant from heaven to say what they will deliver; so that this likewise expresses the truth of their message, since both that and they come from heaven:

*having great power*; to do great work, to declare the fall of Babylon the great: or “having great authority”; being sent from the King of kings, in his name, as his ambassador, to proclaim what shortly will come to pass; an event of the greatest importance to the glory of God, the interest of Christ, and the comfort of his people:

*and the earth was lightened with his glory*; (see <sup><260D></sup>Ezekiel 43:2) by which is meant the glorious Gospel of Christ, the light of which will at this then be very great: these ministers will run to and fro the earth, and knowledge will be increased, and the earth will be filled with it: the Arabic version reads, “with the splendour of his countenance”; and the Ethiopic version, “with the splendour of his countenance, and his glory”; (see <sup><280D></sup>Isaiah 60:1-3).

**Ver. 2.** *And he cried mightily with a strong voice*, etc.] Which shows not only the vehemence and affection of the ministers of the word, who will publish what follows, but the greatness and importance of it; and this loud voice may be, as for the sake of the whole church in general, that all may bear, so for the sake of those of the Lord's people in particular, that will be

in Babylon at this time; and it may have regard to that deep sleep and spirit of slumber that Babylon itself will be in, which, notwithstanding this loud cry, will remain insensible of its ruin till it comes upon her, as was the case of old Babylon, (<sup>2513</sup>Jeremiah 51:39-41),

*saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen:* the whole world is not designed by Babylon, for it is distinguished from all nations in the following verse; nor Babylon in Chaldea, which was fallen long before John saw this vision, but Rome Papal; (see Gill on "<sup>648</sup>Revelation 14:8") so the woman is called in (<sup>675</sup>Revelation 17:5) who sits on seven mountains, and is that great city, the city of Rome, that reigns over the kings of the earth, (<sup>689</sup>Revelation 18:9,18) this is said to be fallen, because, in a very little time after this declaration, it will fall; for as yet it was not destroyed, since after this the Lord's people are called upon to come out of her, and are bid to reward her double; and it is declared, that her plagues, should come in one day, and she should be burnt with fire; and an angel after this throws a millstone into the sea, saying, that so should Babylon be thrown down, (<sup>684</sup>Revelation 18:4,6,8,21) and it is repeated to denote the certainty and utter destruction of her: and which is more fully expressed by what follows,

*and is become the habitation of devils;* as old Babylon was of satyrs, (<sup>232</sup>Isaiah 13:21) demons, which appeared in a hairy form, like goats, and the word is rendered devils in (<sup>670</sup>Leviticus 17:7) and the inhabitants of Rome now are no other; the pope and his cardinals, the priests, Jesuits, monks, and friars, are the spirits of devils, and their doctrines the doctrines of devils; (see <sup>644</sup>Revelation 16:14 <sup>401</sup>1 Timothy 4:1)

*and the hold of every foul spirit:* devils are frequently called unclean spirits, and these appear in desert and desolate places, (<sup>428</sup>Matthew 12:43) where they are either of choice, or rather are obliged to it; and so the word translated "hold" signifies a prison, or place of confinement; and such as are comparable to unclean spirits now haunt and abound in Rome, and its territories; (see <sup>613</sup>Revelation 16:13)

*and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird;* such, as vultures, kites, owls, etc. which generally reside in desolate and uninhabited places; the Alexandrian copy, the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, add, "and the hold", or "seat of every unclean and hateful beast"; and so the desolation of old Babylon is described by wild beasts and doleful creatures dwelling in it, (<sup>212</sup>Isaiah 13:21,22 <sup>289</sup>Jeremiah 50:39 51:37). Some consider all this as a reason of the destruction of Babylon or Rome, because it now is the

residence of persons comparable to devils, foul spirits, hateful birds, and beasts of prey; but this account rather describes its state and case in which it will be after its ruin, being never more to be inhabited by men, in allusion to old Babylon, (<sup>23139</sup>Isaiah 13:19,20 <sup>24506</sup>Jeremiah 51:62).

**Ver. 3.** *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication*, etc.] That is, all the nations of the Roman empire, the European nations, otherwise the Pagan and Mahometan nations have not; but these have, being made to drink by her, and made drunk therewith, that is, with her idolatries; (see Gill on “<sup>6648</sup>Revelation 14:8”).

*And the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her*; joined with her in her idolatrous worship and practices, and encouraged the same, and obliged their subjects to them in their dominions; (see Gill on “<sup>6670</sup>Revelation 17:2”).

*And the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies*; or “luxury”; which is not to be understood in a literal sense; though it is true that many merchants, in all ages, have enriched themselves by sending their commodities to Rome, where, through the vast consumption and luxuriousness of the place, they have bore a good price; but this is to be interpreted of spiritual merchants; these are such who do not merchandise by sea, but are land merchants, the merchants of the earth, and are said to be the great men of the earth, (<sup>66823</sup>Revelation 18:23) such as are equal to princes, lords, and nobles; such are the cardinals, archbishops, and bishops; though the inferior clergy of the Romish church, who are under these, may be included: to which may be added, that one part of their wares is said to be the souls of men, (<sup>66813</sup>Revelation 18:13) which plainly shows what sort of merchants these are; they are such who make merchandise of men, and pretend to sell them heaven, and the salvation of their souls; these are they that deal in pardons and indulgences, which they sell to ignorant people, and for a sum of money say Mass to fetch souls out of purgatory: all things have been saleable at Rome, crucifixes, priests, altars, temples, prayers, heaven, Christ, yea, God himself, as the poet Mantuan expresses it; and because of these idolatries, and wicked practices, Rome will be at last destroyed.

**Ver. 4.** *And I heard another voice from heaven*, etc.] Either of another, or of the same angel, or rather of God, or Christ himself, since the persons addressed are called his people:

*saying, come out of her, my people*; meaning either his elect ones, till now uncalled, being such whom God had chosen for his people, and were so by virtue of the covenant of grace, were given to Christ as his people, and were redeemed by him, though, till this call, in an unconverted state; or else such who had been secretly called by the grace of God, but had not made a public profession of the Gospel, nor bore an open testimony against the Romish idolatry; for as the Lord had a righteous Lot in Sodom, and saints where Satan's seat was, Rome Pagan, so he will have a people in Rome Papal, at the time when its destruction draws near; and these wilt be called out, not only in a spiritual sense, to quit the communion of the church, to forsake its idolatries, and not touch the unclean thing, separate themselves from her, and bear a testimony against her doctrines and worship, but in a literal sense, locally; they shall be bid to come out of her, as Lot was ordered to go out of Sodom before its burning, and the people of the Jews out of Babylon before the taking of it, (<sup>2610</sup>Jeremiah 50:8 51:45) to which reference is here had: and as the Christians were called out of Jerusalem before the destruction of it: this shows the particular knowledge the Lord has of his people, be they where they will, and the gracious care he takes of them, that they perish not with others; and that it is his will they should be a separate people from the rest of the world; and this call of his sufficiently justifies the Protestants in their separation from the church of Rome, and every separation from any apostate church;

*that ye be not partakers of her sins*: by conniving at them, or committing the same; and all such are partakers of them, and have fellowship with these unfruitful works of darkness, that are in the communion of that church; and those that dwell at Rome are in great danger of being so, and cannot well avoid it: yea, even those that only go to see it, and stay but for a time in it, and that not only through the strength and influence of example, but through the force of power and authority:

*and that ye receive not of her plagues*; or punishments; the seven last plagues, which belong to her, the vials of which will be poured out upon one or other of the antichristian states, and the fifth particularly will fall upon Rome, the seat of the beast, and is what is here referred to.

**Ver. 5.** *For her sins have reached unto heaven*, etc.] Or “have followed unto heaven”; one after another, in one age after another, until they have been as it were heaped up together, and have reached the heavens; the phrase denotes the multitude of them, God's knowledge and notice of

them, and the cry of them to him; (see <sup><0180></sup>Genesis 18:20 Jon 1:2) the Alexandrian copy and Complutensian edition read, “have cleaved”, or “glued”, and so the Syriac and Arabic versions seem to have read; her sins were as it were soldered together, and stuck fast to her, and being joined and linked together, made a long chain, and reached to heaven, and cleaved to that, and cried for vengeance:

*and God hath remembered her iniquities*; and is about to punish her for them; for as forgiveness of sin is signified by a non-remembrance of it, so punishment of sin by a remembrance of it, and of the persons that commit it; (see <sup><669></sup>Revelation 16:19).

**Ver. 6.** *Reward her even as she rewarded you*, etc.] 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 kings that will burn the whore 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, (<sup><2015></sup>Jeremiah 1:15 51:24,35) and must be understood 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, so now they should strip her naked of her harlot's attire, of her gold, silver, and precious stones, and make her and her territories desolate; and as she has burnt many of the precious saints in the flames, as here in England, and elsewhere, so now they shall utterly burn her with fire; and as she has shed the blood of the righteous, and drank it, and been drunk with it, they shall give her blood to drink; and as she hath killed multitudes with the sword, so now shall they kill her and her children; (see <sup><632></sup>Revelation 13:12) nor is this contrary to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and the spirit of Christianity, which will not admit of revenge, (<sup><058></sup>Matthew 5:38,39) (<sup><627></sup>Romans 12:17,19-21) since this will not be private, but public revenge, inflicted by Christian princes and magistrates, who are ministers of God, and revengers to execute wrath on them that do evil:

*and double unto her double according to her works*: 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; nor does ever God punish men in this life more, but less, than their iniquities deserve; nor can any temporal

punishment be doubly greater than sin, which deserves eternal death; and with this she will be punished hereafter, and therefore will not have her full punishment now, and much less a greater than her sins required; to which may be added, that this will be according to her works, her wicked works, and therefore will not exceed the demerit of her sins: but the sense is, that if it was possible to be done, they should use her with double severity to that she had used them with; seeing her sins deserved a severer treatment than even they had had from her; the phrase signifies an abundant and utter destruction, a punishment which was suitable and sufficient; (see <sup><2410></sup>Isaiah 40:2 <sup><2410></sup>Jeremiah 16:18 17:18) and it suggests that they should not spare her, nor pity her, but use her with the greatest severity imaginable, it being not possible to exceed her due deserts, or what her works required:

*in the cup which he hath filled, fill to her double:* not in the cup of her abominations, her errors, idolatries, and wickedness; but in the cup of afflictions and trouble, which she wrung out to the people of God, in that give her double portion: the sense is the same as before.

**Ver. 7.** *How much she hath glorified herself,* etc.] And acted the proud and haughty part in exalting herself above all emperors, kings, and princes, above all kingdoms and states, and also above all churches, assuming arrogant titles, and even blasphemous names; (see <sup><630></sup>Revelation 13:1,5)

*and lived deliciously:* in a very luxuriant manner, as the popes, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, and friars have done; some being clothed in purple and scarlet, and in gold and silver, and all living upon the fat of the land, and in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness:

*so much torment and sorrow give her:* by pulling down her pride, which goes before a fall, than which nothing could more torment and afflict her; by stripping her of her fine clothes and rich apparel; and by taking away her fat benefices from her, which will cut her to the heart; and by burning her with fire, which will be very excruciating:

*for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen;* a lady of kingdoms, as in (<sup><2410></sup>Isaiah 47:5) to which the reference is; having a temporal power and authority over the kings of the earth, and a spiritual jurisdiction over all churches, apostate ones, being the mother of harlots; and her “sitting” as such, as it well agrees with the whore on many waters, and the woman on the scarlet coloured beast and seven mountains, who are all the same, and

is very suitable to antichrist, who pretends to sit in Peter's chair, and does sit in the temple of God, as if he was God; so it is expressive of her empire and government over nations and churches, and of the continuance of it, as she imagines, (see <sup>2347</sup>Isaiah 46:7) and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “I shall reign always”: to which she adds,

*and am no widow*; nor never shall be, as she flatters herself, (see <sup>2378</sup>Isaiah 47:8). Were she the true spouse of Christ, as she boasts herself, she indeed would be no widow, for Christ is an everlasting and never dying husband; but she is the whore of the kings of the earth, and though she fancies she shall be no widow, that is, bereft of people and power, (see <sup>2300</sup>Lamentations 1:1) because she now sits on many waters, people, multitudes, and nations and tongues; yet ere long, like old Babylon, she will have no men in her, but will be inhabited by devils, foul spirits, and hateful birds:

*and shall see no sorrow*; through loss of children, power, and authority; (see <sup>2378</sup>Isaiah 47:8) but in this also she will be mistaken; her children will be killed with death, as is threatened to Jezebel, (<sup>6123</sup>Revelation 2:23) and her plagues shall come upon her at once: now these words may be considered either as spoken by her when in the height of her power and glory, as she was about three or four hundred years ago; or just before her destruction, which seems to be the case, and looks as if she would regain her power, and be in her former state before her utter ruin; (see Gill on <sup>6112</sup>Revelation 11:2”).

**Ver. 8.** *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day*, etc.] The seven last plagues, which will be in a very little time executed upon her, very speedily and very quickly, one after another, if not all together; and particularly the fifth vial may be respected, as well as the plagues that follow; (see <sup>2379</sup>Isaiah 47:9)

*death*; not the second death, which will not be till after the decisive battle at Armageddon, when the beast will be taken, and cast alive into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death; but either the pestilence, which is called so, (<sup>6118</sup>Revelation 6:8) or rather death by the sword, war, which will be brought upon her, and in which she and her children will be slain with the sword:



*mourning*; for the loss of her children, the destruction of the city of Rome itself, the seat of the beast, and for the darkness of his kingdom, the inhabitants of which shall be in such pain, as to gnaw their tongues for it:

*famine*; which generally attends war, at least sieges; and it looks as if Rome would be besieged awhile before it is destroyed, which will produce a grievous famine in it; this is opposed to her living deliciously, as well as the two former are to her notion of sitting a queen for ever, and knowing no sorrow:

*and she shall be utterly burnt with fire*; the burning of Rome has been attempted several times, by different persons, and has been burnt in part, but not wholly, (see Gill on “<sup><6716></sup>Revelation 17:16”) but now it will be entirely destroyed by fire; either by fire from heaven, as Sodom and Gomorrah were; or by fire breaking out of the earth, it being very manifest that there are volcanos, burning mountains, and subterraneous fires in those parts, which seem to be so many preparations in nature for the burning of that city; or rather by the ten kings, who will set fire to it; and it may be by all these ways. The Jews have a notion, that, at the coming of the Messiah, Rome will be burnt <sup>f410</sup>, as Sodom has been; you will find, say they <sup>f411</sup>, that of Sodom and of that kingdom (Rome, of which they are speaking, and which they afterwards call the fourth kingdom), it is decreed concerning them both, that they “should be burnt with fire”; of Sodom, (<sup><01924></sup>Genesis 19:24) and of the fourth kingdom (Rome), (<sup><2349></sup>Isaiah 34:9).

*for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her*; the Alexandrian copy reads, “that has judged”: and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; that is, has purposed and determined her destruction, and therefore it is unavoidable; he that has resolved upon it, and foretold it, and has condemned her to it, is the Lord God Almighty; and he is able to execute the sentence determined and pronounced, and it is impossible she should escape: it may be understood of Christ the mighty God, the Judge of quick and dead; (see <sup><2534></sup>Jeremiah 50:34).

**Ver. 9.** *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication*, etc.] Idolatry, (<sup><6702></sup>Revelation 17:2 18:3)

*and lived deliciously with her*; (<sup><6808></sup>Revelation 18:3,7) joining with her in her sensual, as well as in her idolatrous practices:

*shall bewail her, and lament for her*: shall mourn inwardly, and by various gestures outwardly express their sorrow at her desolation; (see <sup><3721></sup>Ezekiel

27:30-32) these will not be the ten kings who will burn the whore with fire, and then repent of what they have done, and weep over her, as Titus did at the destruction of Jerusalem, as some Popish writers have fancied, for they will hate the whore, and eat her flesh; but earthly and idolatrous kings, who will be in the communion of the church of Rome:

*when they shall see the smoke of her burning:* as Abraham saw the smoke of Sodom and Gomorrah go up like the smoke of a furnace; by which they will perceive that her judgment is come, and her ruin begun.

**Ver. 10.** *Standing afar off for the fear of her torment,* etc.] Lest they themselves should share in it, who have partook of her sins; either they will not be in a capacity to help her, or they will be dispirited, and will be in awe and dread of God's righteous judgments:

*saying, alas! alas! that great city Babylon! that mighty city!* it will aggravate their sorrow, when they reflect upon the former grandeur, magnificence, power, and authority, of the city and see of Rome, so often called in this book the great city; and so it is by other writers; the Jews call it so: they say <sup>f412</sup>, when the Messiah comes,

“the kings of the world shall be gathered to **atbr atrq**, “the great city” of Rome; and the holy blessed God will cast upon them fire and hail, and great hail stones, (with which compare (~~f62~~ Revelation 16:21)), and they shall perish from the world, except those kings that do not come there.”

It is common with the Jewish writers to call the Roman empire Edom; and Magdiel, one of the dukes of Edom, (~~036B~~ Genesis 36:43) who has his name from “greatness”, is interpreted by one of their commentators <sup>f413</sup> of Rome; the reason of which, another of them says <sup>f414</sup>, is because Rome is become great above all kingdoms: the mount of Esau in (Obidiah 1:21) is interpreted **abr akrk ty**, “that great city” of Esau, which is Rome <sup>f415</sup>, and the same epithet it has in the Talmud <sup>f516</sup>; and Porphyry calls it **την μεγαλην πολιν**, “that great city”, without making mention of its name, as here; so among the Latins <sup>f417</sup>, “Magne spes altera” Romae:

*for in one hour is thy judgment come:* the Ethiopic version reads, “the hour of her judgment”; the time of her punishment fixed by God; but the sense is, that her vengeance was suddenly come upon her; this is the judgment of

the great whore, which the angel proposed to show to John, (<sup>6670b</sup>Revelation 17:1).

**Ver. 11.** *And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her*, etc.] Who these are, (see Gill on “<sup>6688b</sup>Revelation 18:3”) and, what their lamentation, (<sup>6686b</sup>Revelation 18:16) the reason of their weeping and mourning follows: for no man buyeth their merchandise any more; what their merchandise is, is expressed in the two next verses; and this shows that it is not to be understood merely in a literal sense; for such commodities in general as are there mentioned, if they do not sell at one place, they will at another; and the decline of trade in one city does not put a stop to business all the world over; and often so it is, that the ruin of commerce in one place is the rise of it in another; and all the things hereafter spoken of, excepting the last article, are what will be merchandised in one place or another to the end of the world; unless the sense should be, that no man at Rome, and the parts adjacent, will buy of this merchandise any more; but though they should not, this could not be cause of such lamentation as is afterwards expressed, since their goods might be sold elsewhere; but it looks as if this must be understood of such kind of wares as will be disused and despised all the world over, and they will meet with no customers any where to deal with them in them.

**Ver. 12.** *The merchandise of gold and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls*, etc.] Things for treasure and ornament, and with which the great whore is said to be decked, (<sup>6670b</sup>Revelation 17:4) and, literally understood, may denote the vast riches which these spiritual merchants, or factors for Rome, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, and friars, bring into their own coffers and the pope's, by the trade they drive in her wares with the souls of men; and may have also a regard to what their images, chalices, crowns, mitres, etc. are made of, and what some of them are adorned with; and as Tyre, to whom the reference is in the several particulars of this account, had her merchants for these things, (<sup>3570c</sup>Ezekiel 27:12,16,22) so Mr. Brightman thinks that in these, and in some following ones, Spain is Rome's merchant, which fetches them from the Indies for her: but these things, mystically taken, sometimes design the doctrines of the Gospel, (<sup>4682c</sup>1 Corinthians 3:12) and which are to be preferred to, and more to be esteemed than thousands of gold and silver; and these Rome's merchants pretended to deliver out; but instead of them, they put off wood, hay, and stubble, yea, doctrines of devils, and lies in hypocrisy; and sometimes the grace of God is meant, (<sup>6688b</sup>Revelation 3:18) which is more

precious than gold that perisheth; and this they pretend to convey to men “ex opere operato”, in the ordinances, as baptism, etc. and to communicate the Spirit, with his gifts and graces, for money, which is direct simony; yea, they pretend to sell eternal life, nay, Christ, and God himself:

*and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet:* things which belong to apparel and dress; and, literally taken, the “fine linen” is for their copes, wore by bishops and by chanters, and sub-chanters, and for surplices wore by their priests, in imitation of the Jewish priests, and for Mass clothes, etc. the “purple, silk”, and “scarlet”, were for the popes, cardinals, archbishops, and bishops; so the woman on the scarlet coloured beast is said to be arrayed in purple and scarlet, (<sup><6170></sup>Revelation 17:4), Tyre had its merchants for these, (<sup><620></sup>Ezekiel 27:7,16,24) the fine linen and silk may mystically denote the holy lives, good works, and merits of the saints, those of them called works of supererogation, which become the church's stock, and they sell out for others that want; which is a monstrous kind of ware, and a dreadful imposition upon men, since men cannot be saved and justified by works; and the best of men are so far from having a redundancy of works, that in everything they sin and offend, and are greatly deficient: and they are so far from helping others, that they are unprofitable servants themselves: the purple and scarlet may signify the blood of Christ, which they pretend to sell in the Mass; nay, they have pretended to have had the very liquid blood of Christ, which they have carried in a crystal glass, thick on one side, and transparent on the other; and so could not be seen by persons in a mortal sin, until they had given a good deal of money, and then the clear side was by sleight of hand turned to them; and which was no other than the blood of a duck, renewed weekly by the priest; which trick for a long time brought in vast sums of money, and was detected at Hales in Gloucestershire, in Henry the Eighth's time; or these may intend the sufferings of the saints, which likewise come into the treasure of the church, and are at its dispose for money, the virtue of which being very great for the salvation of men's souls:

*and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble:* things for utensils and furniture, not so much for their houses, as for their churches; Tyre had its merchants for these, (<sup><621></sup>Ezekiel 27:5,6,12,13,15). “Thyine wood”, Pliny says <sup>f418</sup>, was very durable, and of it the rafters of ancient temples were made; and may design such like lasting and odoriferous wood as cypress, cedar, etc. used in the Popish churches, for

the embellishing of them, and for images in them; it may be the same with the wood of the Almug, or Algum trees, since these are rendered thiyne wood in the Vulgate Latin version in (<sup><1101></sup>1 Kings 10:11,12 <sup><490></sup>2 Chronicles 9:10,11) vessels of ivory may be boxes made thereof, in which the host is put, and the relics of saints are preserved: and “vessels of most precious wood”, or “stone”, as the Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions read,

*and of brass, iron, and marble*, may intend various vessels used in their churches; as vessels for holy water, fonts of marble, and other valuable stones, for baptism, censers of iron and brass to burn incense in. Cocceius thinks that by these vessels of different materials are meant good men; who are like sweet smelling wood for the fragrancy of their doctrines and lives; and like iron, brass, and marble, for their courage, constancy, and patience; and who have been canonized for saints, which has brought in much money into the pope's coffers: this is a practice in imitation of the Heathens, who deified men, and set them over particular days and affairs; and the privileges of such canonization among the Papists are, that such a saint has his name set in the calendar in red letters, may have churches and altars dedicated to him, and his image set up in them, and a holiday be kept for him, and may be prayed to, and worshipped; a practice dreadfully derogatory to the glory of Christ's person and office, but is that in which these merchants have found their account; for through references, commissions, and reports, for proof of the saint's character and miracles, his friends are at very great expense before the affair is issued, especially if rich; our King Henry the Seventh was very desirous of having his kinsman Henry the Sixth canonized, and solicited the pope for it, but he would not do it under fifteen hundred ducats of gold, which the king thought was too much, and so declined it.

**Ver. 13.** *And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense*, etc.] Things for delight and pleasure, for the gratifying of the senses; cinnamon, and odours were used for perfuming, (<sup><1077></sup>Proverbs 7:17) anointing with oil was used at feasts, (<sup><3235></sup>Psalms 23:5) and “frankincense”, or censings, at banquets, and for the regaling of persons after food<sup>f419</sup>: these customs obtained among the eastern people. Tyre had its merchants for these things, (<sup><3279></sup>Ezekiel 27:19,22) and Mr. Brightman thinks Italy is Rome's merchant in these, which it fetches from Greece, Arabia, and Egypt; it may be these rather respect the ecclesiastical use of them; “cinnamon, odours”, and “frankincense”, may signify the perfumings and

censings used in churches, or the burning incense in imitation of the sweet incense under the law; and “ointments” may denote their chrism, or anointing with oil at baptism, imagining that Christ was anointed with material oil at his baptism, whereas it was with the Holy Ghost: moreover, these things may be mystically understood, “cinnamon” being used by harlots in perfuming their bed, (<sup><1077></sup>Proverbs 7:17) may intend the stews and brothel houses erected at Rome, and licensed by authority, each whore paying so much per week; the revenues of which would sometimes yearly amount to twenty thousand ducats: “ointments” may be understood of chrism in baptism, and extreme unction at death: “odours” and “frankincense” may mean their prayers and pater noster, their prayers for the dead, which were never made without the pence; hence that proverbial expression, no pence, no pater noster.

*And wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep:* things for civil use; these are things which belong to food, to eating and drinking, and are the most material and necessary things of life, (<sup><3907></sup>Psalm 4:7 <sup><6112></sup>Jeremiah 31:12 <sup><8121></sup>Hosea 2:21,22 <sup><0043></sup>Genesis 4:3 <sup><23213></sup>Isaiah 22:13).

Tyre had her merchants for these, (<sup><3277></sup>Ezekiel 27:17,18,21) and Mr. Brightman will have Italy to be Rome's merchant for wine and oil; Sardinia and Sicily her merchants for fine flour and wheat; Germany for beasts, and England for sheep: and with respect to the ecclesiastical use of these things, wine is for the chalice, used in daily Masses, and drank only by the priests; “oil” for chrism at baptism, and for the extreme unction: “fine flour” for the Mass, or to make their breaden god of; and “wheat, beasts, and sheep” for tithes for the clergy:

*and horses, and chariots, and slaves;* things for splendour, equipage, and attendance; horses and chariots for the popes, cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, to ride in state and grandeur, and slaves to wait upon them. Tyre had her merchants for these (<sup><3274></sup>Ezekiel 27:14,20) and Mr. Brightman's opinion is, that the French are Rome's merchants for horses and chariots, and the Swiss for slaves, or “bodies”, as the word may be rendered, who live by exercising their bodies, and hiring them out in war; and who are many of them the guards of the person of the pope of Rome: and last of all it is added,

*and souls of men;* still in allusion to the merchandise of Tyre, some of whose merchants are said to trade in the persons of men, (<sup><32713></sup>Ezekiel 27:13) which the Targum and Septuagint render, in the souls of men; the

popes have some of them sold their own souls to the devil, to get into the chair, and, when in, have been the means of destroying of thousands of others; they assume a power over the souls of men, of binding and loosing the consciences of men, imposing new laws upon them, and freeing them from obligation to the laws of God and men, to the ruin of their souls; and it has been said by their sycophants, that if the pope should send thousands of men to hell, no one should say to him, what dost thou? The Romish priests pretend to redeem souls out of purgatory for such a sum of money, and sell pardons and indulgences, say Mass, and promise heaven itself for money; and this they get at the expense of men's souls, by their false doctrine and superstitious worship, and so make merchandise of them, as is said of the false teachers, (~~608~~ 2 Peter 2:3) moreover, as by “slaves”, or bodies, in the preceding clause, are meant such who serve with their bodies, either by way of attendance, or in unnatural lust; so by “souls” of men may be meant men of soul, of great natural wit and understanding, of great parts, abilities, and learning, with which they serve the man of sin, and his interest, such as Bellarmine, and others.

**Ver. 14.** *And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee,* etc.] Or “the autumn of the desire of thy soul”; the desirable fruits which are then in season; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions render it “apples”, which are ripe in autumn; and may design all such fruit as Italy abounds with, which will now be destroyed; and seems to point at the time of year when Babylon's destruction will be: but, in the mystical sense, these fruits may intend universal dominion over nations and churches, the obedience of kings and princes, riches, honours, and pleasures of all sorts; things greatly affected by the Papacy, and of which a large harvest was expected, but now all will be at an end:

*and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee;* all that were palatable to the taste, and pleasant to the sight, that were excellent and desirable; as the triple crown, cardinalships, archbishoprics, bishoprics, deanaries, fat benefices, and good livings:

*and thou shalt find them no more at all;* for this will be an utter destruction; at the Reformation these desirable things were taken from her in several nations, and in some places she has recovered them again, as in Germany and other places; and the outward court, or the reformed church, sinking into an outward show and form, will be wholly given to the Gentiles, the Papists, and they will have these things in their hands again

before Rome's utter destruction, but after that they will no more be regained.

**Ver. 15.** *The merchants of these things*, etc.] Before mentioned, who have traded in them for themselves and for Rome:

*which were made rich by her*, (see <sup>668B</sup>Revelation 18:3)

*shall stand afar off for fear of her torment*; as the kings of the earth before, (<sup>668D</sup>Revelation 18:10) being conscious to themselves of their being partners in her crimes, and so might justly fear they should share in her punishment; and it may be, they will outwardly deny they are now of her religion, and will externally embrace the reformed religion; though they will be inwardly weeping and wailing for the destruction of Rome, and the loss of their merchandise and goodly things.

**Ver. 16.** *And saying, alas, alas! that great city*, etc.]. Using the same words the kings of the earth do, (<sup>668D</sup>Revelation 18:10) only adding, suitable to their characters as merchants, and the things they traded in with her,

*that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls*; (see Gill on "<sup>668E</sup>Revelation 18:12") (see Gill on "<sup>667D</sup>Revelation 17:4"), see also (<sup>267D</sup>Ezekiel 27:32).

**Ver. 17.** *For in one hour so great riches is come to nought*, etc.] That is, in a very short time, expressing the suddenness and speediness of Rome's destruction, the quick dispatch and expedition that will be made in it, by the instruments of it, as in (<sup>668D</sup>Revelation 18:10). Rome was always famous for its great wealth and riches; the Jews have a saying <sup>f420</sup>, that if ten kabs of riches descend into the world, the ancient Romans take nine of them, and the other the whole world:

*and every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off*; the lamentation of the kings and merchants of the earth being ended, masters of ships, sailors, and seafaring men begin theirs: by "ships" are meant dioceses, abbeys, priories, and monasteries; and by the masters, or governors of them, bishops, abbots, priors, the heads of monasteries, and of the several orders of the Franciscans, Dominicans, etc. and by "all the company in ships", or "every shipmate", the fellows that belong to every religious house and order; and by "sailors" and "traders at sea", all such who compass sea and land to



make proselytes to the Romish religion, like the Pharisees of old, and who, as they, make them two fold more the children of hell than themselves; and, in general, these traders abroad may design the pope's legates, sent by him into various parts, to collect his revenues, and the Jesuits, who are everywhere sent abroad to sow sedition and false doctrine, and the priests that travel about to sell pardons and indulgences: these

*stood afar off*; as the kings and merchants before, for fear of sharing in the condemnation and punishment of Babylon; knowing full well that they deserved it, having been associates with her in her crimes.

**Ver. 18.** *And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning*, etc.] (See Gill on "<sup><668D></sup>Revelation 18:9")

*saying, what city is like unto this great city?* as before for magnificence and grandeur, so now for sorrow, desolation, and ruin; nor was any city like it for power and authority, for pride and luxury, for idolatry and superstition, blasphemy and impenitence; the like the sailors say of Tyre, (<sup><327D></sup>Ezekiel 27:30) from whence this and other expressions are borrowed in this lamentation.

**Ver. 19.** *And they cast dust on their heads*, etc.] As the seafaring men on account of Tyre, (<sup><327D></sup>Ezekiel 27:30) this was a gesture used in mourning when persons were in afflicted and distressed circumstances, denoting disorder, confusion, and debasement; (see <sup><610D></sup>Joshua 7:6 <sup><812D></sup>Job 2:12)

*and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, alas, alas! that great city*; as in (<sup><68D></sup>Revelation 18:10,16) so it was once, though now in flames:

*wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea*; not only the merchants of the earth, as in (<sup><68B></sup>Revelation 18:3) the cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, but the governors of religious houses; these accumulated great wealth to themselves, and got the best of lands into their possession for the use and support of their abbeys and monasteries:

*by reason of her costliness*; or costly things; pardons, indulgences, absolution, saying Mass, and praying souls out of purgatory, all which are costly, and hereby these traders have been enriched; and now the remembrance of these things, of which they will be deprived, will affect and grieve them, as well as the suddenness of Rome's ruin:

*for in one hour is she made desolate*; her judgment come, and her riches come to nought, (<sup><6680></sup>Revelation 18:10,17).

**Ver. 20.** *Rejoice over her, thou heaven*, etc.] This is said by the voice from heaven, (<sup><6684></sup>Revelation 18:4) which having called upon the saints to come out of Babylon, and to take vengeance on her, now calls upon all good men to rejoice at her ruin, while others were weeping and wailing; not at that, simply considered, but as the justice of God is displayed therein: heaven may be literally understood, which sometimes is addressed when anything of very considerable note and moment is done or spoken of, whether it be something exceeding bad, as in (<sup><2002></sup>Isaiah 1:2 <sup><2422></sup>Jeremiah 2:12,13) or something exceeding great and good, as in (<sup><0961></sup>Psalms 96:11-13) or else the inhabitants of heaven, either the angels, who as they rejoice at the good and happiness of the saints, so at the confusion and destruction of their enemies; and the Syriac version reads, “heavens and angels”; or else the souls of men departed, particularly the souls under the altar, that have been long crying for vengeance on account of the shedding of their blood, (<sup><6609></sup>Revelation 6:9) who may be made acquainted with Rome's destruction; or rather the true church of Christ upon earth, which in this book often goes by the name of heaven, in opposition to the apostate church, called the earth, because its members, doctrines, and ordinances, are from heaven, and its happiness lies there:

*and ye holy apostles and prophets*; the Alexandrian copy and Complutensian edition read, “and the saints, and the apostles, and prophets”; making three distinct sorts of persons, of which heaven, or the church, consists: by “saints” may be meant private members of churches, who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, and live holy lives and conversations; and by “apostles”, not the twelve apostles, or persons in such an office as they were, but ordinary ministers of the word, who are sent forth to preach the Gospel, and will be upon the spot at the destruction of Babylon, and will be such as shall have preached and defended the pure apostolic doctrine; and by “prophets” are intended not the prophets of the Old Testament, nor such under the New who had the gift of foretelling things to come, but such who have a gift of interpreting the Scriptures and preaching the Gospel; the same with the two witnesses, who till this time will have prophesied in sackcloth, but shall now put it off, and put on the garments of praise and joy:

*for God hath avenged you on her*; or “judged your judgment on her”; that is, has executed righteous judgment on her, for all the evils done by her to the saints in ages past, the predecessors of the persons here mentioned, as well as to themselves: vengeance belongs to the Lord, and he will avenge his elect sooner or later.

**Ver. 21.** *And a mighty angel*, etc.] Not Christ, nor one of the ministering spirits, but some man or set of men, perhaps the same with him in (~~4681~~ Revelation 18:1)

*took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea*; just as Jeremiah took a stone and bound it to his book after he had read it, and cast it into the river Euphrates, as a sign and token of the destruction of old Babylon, (~~2606~~ Jeremiah 51:63,64 ~~2165~~ Exodus 15:5 ~~4691~~ Nehemiah 9:11)

*saying, thus with violence shall that great city be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all*; which is expressive of the utter destruction of Rome, and of the violence, force, and power with which it will be destroyed, and of the suddenness and swiftness of its destruction, and of the irrecoverableness of its state and condition.

**Ver. 22.** *And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters*, etc.] Which were for mirth, delight, and pleasure:

*shall be heard no more at all in thee*: the words seem to be taken from (~~2248~~ Isaiah 24:8 ~~2663~~ Ezekiel 26:13) and may not only regard the loss of every thing that was delightful and pleasant to the ear in private houses, at festivals, and nuptials, and the like, but the ceasing of church music; there will be no more bells, nor organs, or any other instruments of music; no more chanters, and sub-chanters, choristers, singing men and boys:

*and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be shall be, found any more in thee*; which are very useful and necessary in cities and societies; it is threatened to Judah, that the cunning artificer should be taken from her, (~~2188~~ Isaiah 3:3) and it is reckoned as a considerable part of the distress of the captivity that the carpenters and smiths were away from Jerusalem, (~~2401~~ Jeremiah 24:1) and this judgment may fall on Rome for her worshipping idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, the works of men's hands, artificers and craftsmen, and who are employed in making other trinkets and wares for antichrist:

*and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee*; to grind corn with, (see <sup><2450></sup>Jeremiah 25:10) there will be a famine at the time that Rome is besieged, (<sup><6808></sup>Revelation 18:8) and after it is destroyed, there will be no corn to grind, nor inhabitants to eat it, and so no use of the millstone; this is said in opposition to her luxurious and delicious living, (<sup><6808></sup>Revelation 18:3,7,9) and this may also refer to feasts and rich entertainments, for which spices were ground and prepared by an hand mill <sup>f421</sup> in the house; and so may signify here that there would be no more of such entertainments and rich living; with which sense agrees what follows. This clause is wanting in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions.

**Ver. 23.** *And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee*, etc.] Either for common use, or at feasts, or at marriages, which being kept at night, required candies, lamps, or torches; this shows that Babylon, or Rome, shall be deprived of everything, even of the least thing that is comfortable in life; (see <sup><2450></sup>Jeremiah 25:10) this will be a just punishment upon her for her abuse of this blessing of life; so where wax candles in great numbers have been burning in the daytime, there will not be so much as a single candle to give light in the night; and where candles have been lighted up for the dead, there will not be one for the use of the living:

*and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee*: there will be no marrying, nor giving in marriage; no procreation of children, or propagation of posterity, in this place; which denotes the utter extirpation of the inhabitants of it; the phrases are taken from (<sup><2473></sup>Jeremiah 7:34 16:19) (<sup><2450></sup>Jeremiah 25:10,11) and this will be in righteous retaliation for the prohibition of marriage; which God has instituted, and is honourable, (<sup><5042></sup>1 Timothy 4:2) the reasons of Babylon's destruction follow:

*for thy merchants were the great men of the earth*: in allusion to the merchants of Tyre, said to be princes, (<sup><2328></sup>Isaiah 23:8) for by trading and dealing in the wares and merchandise of Rome, persons of mean extract, and of very low circumstances of life, have grown exceeding rich, and have equalled the princes of the earth; as for instance, Cardinal Wolsey here in England, a butcher's son at Ipswich; and on the other hand, the princes and great men of the earth have become Rome's merchants, and have thought it an high honour to get a cardinal's hat, as the Cardinals Albertus duke of Austria, Bourbon, Pool, and others, mentioned by Brightman:

*for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived*; meaning her false doctrines, traditions, idolatry, superstition, and will worship, with which, as another Jezebel, she has bewitched, allured, and deceived the nations of the empire, and the kings thereof, (<sup>668B</sup>Revelation 18:3).

**Ver. 24.** *And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints*, etc.] Such as before mentioned, in (<sup>668D</sup>Revelation 18:20) this is another reason of her destruction, besides her luxury and idolatry, namely, her shedding the blood of the saints, with which she is said to be drunk, and therefore blood is now given her to drink, (<sup>667B</sup>Revelation 17:6 16:6) for she will now be found guilty of slaying the witnesses, who are meant by the prophets and saints, that have been from the beginning of the apostasy:

*and of all that were slain upon the earth*: not only of those that have been slain in the city of Rome, but of all those that have been slain throughout the empire; they being slain by her order, or with her consent, and she conniving at it, encouraging it, and therefore will be justly chargeable with it all; (see <sup>423B</sup>Matthew 23:31,32,35) the Ethiopic version adds, “for the name of Christ”.