1After this I saw **another angel** coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor. **2**With a mighty voice he shouted:

*v. 1 –* ***another angel*** *–This one appears to be similar to the one in Chapter 10, and comes directly from the Presence of God with His message. The 7 angels of the churches stand in for the churches as the recipients of God’s message.*

*V. 2 – Read Isaiah 21:9 and 47:1-15 – Babylon would fall centuries after Isaiah’s death; Rome would fall centuries after John’s death; yet both prophecies would be fulfilled (Remember that* ***Babylon:Old Testament ::Rome:New Testament****)*

***unclean*** *and* ***detestable*** *– because they eat carrion*

*v. 3 -* ***The kings of the earth. . . and the merchants of the earth*** *– particularly affected by the spiritual and imperial dominance of Babylon – nations flourish and diminish under the influence of kings and merchants.*

***excessive luxuries*** *–or better, “extravagant indulgences”*

*v.4 -* ***Come out of her*** *– “A person cannot share in the profits of domination without also sharing in responsibility for its crimes” (DeSilva, p. 69)*

*The people of God were likewise called to come out of Sodom and Egypt.*

“‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!’**[Isaiah 21:9; 47:1-15]**    She has become a dwelling for demons
and a haunt for every impure spirit,
    a haunt for every **unclean** bird,
    a haunt for every **unclean** and **detestable** animal.
**3**For all the nations have drunk
    the maddening wine of her adulteries.
**The kings of the earth** committed adultery with her,
    **and the merchants of the earth** grew rich from her **excessive luxuries**.”

**4**Then I heard another voice from heaven say:

“‘**Come out of her**, my people,’[Jer. 51:45]
    so that you will not share in her sins,
    so that you will not receive any of her plagues;
**5**for her sins are piled up to heaven,
    and God has remembered her crimes.

**6Give back to her** **as she has given**;
    pay her back **double** for what she has done.
    Pour her a double portion from her own cup.
**7**Give her as much torment and grief
    as the glory and luxury she gave herself.
In her heart she boasts,
    ‘I sit enthroned as queen.
I am not a widow;[Isaiah 47:7,8]
    I will never mourn.’
**8**Therefore **in one day** her plagues will overtake her:
    death, mourning and famine.
She will be consumed by fire,
    for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.

*v.6 -* ***Give back to her*** *– To whom is this addressed? Not God’s own people, but to His own chosen ministers of His vengeance (including, perhaps, contemporary “Assyrians,” “Persians,” and other “barbarians.”*

***as she has given*** *- at least in proportion to what she has done, if not “****double****”. Compare this with Isaiah 40:1-2*

*v. 7 – Read Isaiah 47:7-8*

*v. 8 -* ***in one day****– this is either “sudden destruction” or “the Day of the Lord” as in Joel 1:15, Zechariah 14:1, Malachi 4:5, Acts 2:20, 2 Peter 3:10 and others.*

*v.9 -* ***they will weep and mourn*** *-Read Ezekiel 27:1-36, especially 26-36*

*v. 10 –* ***Woe*** *– אוי = Oy! The first of three in this chapter.*

 *Rome wasn’t built in a day, but she will be destroyed* ***In one hour****! (also v.17 & 19)*

*v.11 –* ***merchants*** *– Ezekiel 27:36*

*The rest of this verse details Rome’s excesses by categories. Rome sucks away from the provinces not only luxury goods (“gold, silver, precious stones and pearls”) but also staples (“fine flour and wheat”).*

**9**“When the kings of the earth who committed adultery with her and shared her luxury see the smoke of her burning, **they will weep and mourn** over her. **10**Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry:

“‘**Woe**! Woe to you, great city,
    you mighty city of Babylon!
**In one hour** your doom has come!’

**11**“The **merchants** of the earth will weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargoes anymore— **12**cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble; **13**cargoes of cinnamon and spice, of incense, myrrh and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, of fine flour and wheat; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and human beings **sold as slaves**.

**14**“They will say, ‘The fruit you longed for is gone from you. All your luxury and splendor have vanished, never to be recovered.’ **15**The merchants who sold these things and gained their wealth from her will stand far off, terrified at her torment. They will weep and mourn **16**and cry out:

*v.13 -* ***sold as slaves*** *- The Romans bought and sold two types of slaves: people who were already slaves, and people who had been taken captive in war or by piracy. The latter slave trade was considered less “acceptable” and so the slaves from that market were considered inferior. But most ancient cultures kept slaves as a matter of course, including Israel.*

*v. 16 –* ***Woe*** *– אוי = Oy! The second of three in this chapter.*

*v.17 -* ***Every sea captain*** *–See Ezekiel 27:29*

*v. 18 –* ***Woe*** *– אוי = Oy! The third of three in this chapter.*

“‘**Woe**! Woe to you, great city,
    dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet,
    and glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls!
**17In one hour** such great wealth has been brought to ruin!’

“**Every sea captain**, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off. **18**When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, ‘Was there ever a city like this great city?’ **19**They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out:

“‘**Woe**! Woe to you, great city,
    where all who had ships on the sea
    became rich through her wealth!
**In one hour** she has been brought to ruin!’

**20**“Rejoice over her, you heavens!
    Rejoice, you people of God!
    Rejoice, apostles and prophets!
For God has judged her
    with the judgment she imposed on you.”

*v.21 -* ***a*** *– the Greek word is more definite: “one” mighty angel, but with the force of “a certain one” or “a specific one” or “a noteworthy angel.” See below.*

***great city****. . .* ***never to be found again*** *– Brighton notes that this makes Babylon into a ghost town.*

*v.22 & 23 –* ***will never*** *– note the repetition of this phrase. This is what an actual curse looks like.*

**21**Then **a** mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said:

“With such violence
    the **great city** of Babylon will be thrown down,
    **never to be found again**.
**22**The music of harpists and musicians, pipers and trumpeters,
    **will never** be heard in you again.
**No** worker of any trade / **will ever** be found in you again.
The sound of a millstone / **will never** be heard in you again.
**23**The light of a lamp / **will never** shine in you again.
The voice of bridegroom and bride / **will never** be heard in you again.
Your merchants were the world’s important people.
    By your magic spell all the nations were led astray.
**24**In her was found the blood of prophets and of God’s holy people,
    of all who have been slaughtered on the earth.”

**+++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++**

**THE FIVE NOTEWOTHY ANGELS IN REVELATION**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Verse** | **Appearance** | **Adjectives** | **Roles** | **Actions** |
| 5:2 |  | Mighty | Represent God | Introduces Lamb to heavenly hosts |
| 10:1 | Halo on head, clothed with cloud, face like the sun | Mighty | Clothing => represents God | Commands John to proclaim Gospel |
| 18:1 | Glory that illuminates the earth |  | Clothing => represents God | Announces judgment on Babylon |
| 18:21 |  | Mighty, “particular” | Represent God | Dramatizes Babylon’s judgment |
| 19:17 | Stands in the sun | “particular” | Clothing => represents God | Commands carrion birds to feast |

“Worship under the aspect of the Great Whore is **the commercialization of our great need and deep desire for meaning**, love and salvation, for the completion of ourselves from beyond ourselves. **Whore-worship thrives by naming the worst things about us – our pride, our lust, our envy, our greed, our anger – with the designation “God**,” and gathering depersonalized and depersonalizing crowds to pursue these divinized defects religiously. **The great danger that the world poses for us is not in its gross evils, but its easy religion.** The promise of success, ecstasy, and meaning that we can get for a price is Whore-worship. **It is the diabolical inversion of “you are bought with a price” to “I can get it for you wholesale.”** - Eugene Peterson, Reversed Thunder, page 147.

Peterson goes on to say that “the Great Whore is presented in implicit contrast to the Virgin Bride (Rev. 19)” (the following chart is based on his narration:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Whore-Worship** | **Bride-Worship** |
| Sex in the service of commerce | Sex devoted to love |
| Sex as a contract | Sex as a life commitment |
| Sex as a calculation | Sex as an offering |
| Moments and occasions | Every part of life into union |
| Principles of attraction and pleasure | “For better, for worse; in sickness and in health; till death do us part” |
| Indulgent and lustful getting | Sacrificial and faithful giving |
| Brings great gain (we get what we want when we want it) | An offering (we give of ourselves, not knowing how long we’ll wait for fulfillment) |

“In the great lament of Revelation 18 over the Great Whore’s demise, the longest and most detailed lament is from the merchants and sea traders (Rev. 18:11-19): in Whore-worship they got everything they wanted, their lives overflowed with things, and now it is gone, wasted, up in smoke. They are bereft of everything they were promised and invested in and enjoyed. **It is not their businesses that have collapsed, but their religion, a religion of self-indulgence, of getting.** Now it is gone: salvation-by-checkbook is gone, god-on-demand is gone, meaning-by-money is gone, religions-as-feeling is gone, self-as-(temporary)-god is gone. They are left with nothing but themselves, of whom after a lifetime in the whorehouse, they know nothing. (Peterson, Reversed Thunder, page 148)