9. “And over her shall weep and lament the kings of the earth  
who committed fornication with her and lived in luxury, when  
they see the smoke of her burning. 10. Standing far off, because  
of the fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, O great city Babylon, the strong city, for in one hour thy judgment came.’”  
  
 In these words concerning the kings of the earth we  
have a connection between this and the previous chapter.  
“The kings of the earth,” so conspicuous in the xviith  
chapter, reappear in this. But the intoxicated nations  
of the earth are confined to that chapter: and the  
sailors and merchants are peculiar to Babylon’s last  
phase. Another form of the same connection occurs  
in ver. 8. (1) “All the *nations* have drunk of the wine  
of the wrath of her fornication, and (2) the *kings of  
the earth* committed fornication with her, and (3) the  
*merchants* of the earth waxed rich through the excess  
of her luxury.” Here the first is peculiar to chapter  
xvii., the last to chapter xviii., the middle or connecting  
link, is common to both chapters.  
 They weep and lament (or “beat their breasts”) over  
her. ’Tis *passive* grief. And yet they are kings. Why  
do they not put forth *active* powers to aid her? Thousands await their commands; why do they not  
give orders to quench her burning? I suppose it is  
because it is divine devastation; ’tis a conflagration  
beyond human energies to stay.  
 Babylon’s destruction precedes that of Antichrist.  
She is destroyed finally at the seventh [bowl] vial. After *that*,  
the kings go up to battle. Perhaps their sorrow at her  
destruction turns into rage against God, her Destroyer.  
It may be that this is one of the motives alleged by  
evil spirits for the war of earth against the Lord of  
Hosts.  
 Their words express their feelings. They grieve  
over the lost city. Its sins they do not see: they  
regard only its worldly greatness and strength. It has