

## Revelation 18:6-8–The Scarlet Harlot–Judgment

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The first 5 verses of Revelation 18 taught of Christ's call to his people that they would take one last look at the wickedness his former Bride (the Scarlet Harlot, the new Babylon, Israel) and her resulting condition. When the people looked at her, she looked like hell... inundated 淹没 with demons. Christ then called on his people to head for the exits from her – leave in a hurry- for judgment was coming. But Christ wanted to be sure that his people had a good sense of the nature of this judgment that was coming on Israel. So as John continued to write, he pointed out that the judgment was fair, and that the judgment was with fearful force. We will take some time today to examine these 2 things.

Our headings are: Fair Judgment on Babylon, and Fearful Judgment on Babylon.

Our goals are: That you will see the fullness of God's judgment on those who reject him, and you will see his preserving love for those who are his through Christ.

### Fair Judgment on Babylon

6 "Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her.

1. "Render" is often used of the performance of your marriage duty to your spouse.

1Corinthians 7:3 Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

It is used in other ways, but the context is that of Christ's Bride abandoning him. So the word "render" fits a marriage context, except now Christ, the Bridegroom, is giving her what she is due... not affection now...but a divorce. She deserved to be divorce for spiritual adultery. This is not surprising. This was the language God used against old Babylon for her punishment of God people. It was a severe and deserved judgment for being extremely cruel to Israel.

Jeremiah 50: 14 "Put yourselves in array against Babylon all around, All you who bend the bow; Shoot at her, spare no arrows, For she has sinned against the LORD. 15 Shout against her all around; She has given her hand, Her foundations have fallen, Her walls are thrown down; For it is the vengeance of the LORD. Take vengeance on her. As she has done, so do to her. 29 "Call together the archers against Babylon. All you who bend the bow, encamp against it all around; Let none of them escape. Repay her according to her work; According to all she has done, do to her; For she has been proud against the LORD, Against the Holy One of Israel.

2. To further prove that this judgment was fair and that it was not more than what the criminal Bride (new Babylon) deserved, you must look to the law of God.

Exodus 21:22 "If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman's husband imposes on him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. 23 "But if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, 24 "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 25 "burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Exodus 22: 7 "If a man delivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, and it is stolen out of the man's house, if the thief is found, he shall pay double.

So this was restitution赔偿 justice. The stolen property (Christ's work) was found in the hands of the Bride. She had no right to claim salvation. She was unfaithful to her husband. And the Scripture demands that if the stolen property was found, the thief had to pay back double. This was "eye for eye." This was a strict, proportional accounting of wrath according to God's *lex talionis* (God's principle of retribution报偿.) Of course this system of justice existed during the time of Moses 1500 years BC and later also...even during the time of Jeremiah – 500 years BC.

Jeremiah 16: 18 "And first I will repay double for their iniquity and their sin, because they have defiled My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses (屠宰后)畜体 of their detestable and abominable idols."

So this was a consistent message in the Bible, and therefore not surprising for John to use it.

7 "In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.'

3. See the constant call by John that the Bride be judged fairly...with the same measure - fairly! And also notice the arrogance of the queen, new Babylon: **'I sit as queen, and am no widow,** and will not see sorrow.' And that is the exact arrogant language of old Babylon:

Isaiah 47: 6 I was angry with My people; I have profaned My inheritance, And given them into your hand. You showed them no mercy; On the elderly you laid your yoke very heavily. 7 And you said, **'I shall be a lady forever.'** So that you did not take these things to heart, Nor remember the latter end of them. 8 "Therefore hear this now, you who are given to pleasures, Who dwell securely, Who say in your heart, **'I am, and there is no one else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow,** Nor shall I know the loss of children'; 9 But these two things shall come to you In a moment, in one day: The loss of children, and widowhood. They shall come upon you in their fullness Because of the multitude of your sorceries, For the great abundance of your enchantments. 10 "For you have trusted in your wickedness; You have said, 'No one sees me'; Your wisdom and your knowledge have warped 使不正常 you; And you have said in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one else besides me.' 11 Therefore evil shall come upon you; You shall not know from where it arises. And trouble shall fall upon you; You will not be able to put it off. And desolation shall come upon you suddenly, Which you shall not know.

Tyre, a tiny country in the northwest of Israel, used similar arrogant language.

Ezekiel 27:3 "and say to Tyre, `You who are situated at the entrance of the sea, merchant of the peoples on many coastlands, thus says the Lord GOD: "O Tyre, you have said, **'I am perfect in beauty.'**

Ezekiel 28:2 "Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, `Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because your heart is lifted up, And you say, **'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods,** In the midst of the seas,' Yet you are a man, and not a god, Though you set your heart as the heart of a god

So this language isn't "end of day's" language denoting 指示 a super large empire...the United Nations...or European Union arrogantly pointing at the face of God. The key is that to the degree that the former Bride of Christ glorified herself, that would be multiplied X 2 and given back to her in judgment. That was fair. That was simply restitution. James gave Jerusalem the warning!

They should have strictly kept God's law...or if they sinned they should have repented.

James 4:9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

4. Simply put, new Babylon, like old Babylon, like the mother of Babylon, Eve, stood against God and committed the same sin. Look at what the Devil told Eve and she believed.

Genesis 3: 5 "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

There was no repentance, no godly sorrow, for their pride. But look at what God revealed to the Babylonians, Assyrians and others. Do you sometimes act this way today? Take warning!

Isaiah 43: 11 I, even I, am the LORD, And besides Me there is no savior.

5. In verse 7, just as God rescued Israel from Babylon later, so he was having to do...he had to rescue his church-his new people – from the new Babylon - Israel. See how Israel changed.

### **Fearful Judgment on Babylon**

8 "Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.

1. This is **an urgency and force here in this judgment...** This was consistent with language of judgment on old Babylon. So it is not surprising that it was used for new Babylon as well. Look...

Isaiah 47: 9 But these two things shall come to you In a moment, in one day: The loss of children, and widowhood. They shall come upon you in their fullness Because of the multitude of your sorceries, For the great abundance of your enchantments.

And the language is consistent with what Jesus Christ said would happen to Israel.

Luke 12:20 "But God said to him, **'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you;** then whose will those things be which you have provided?' 21 **'So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.'**

2. Israel would face **Death** (And what a destruction it would be!) as you have already seen in earlier chapters... where the bodies would litter the streets. Even their children would be killed. And this is similar language to what God used for Babylon's judgment in the past.

Psalm 137: 8 O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed, Happy the one who repays you as you have served us! 9 Happy the one who takes and dashes Your little ones against the rock!

3. **Mourning**... mourning that would be heard everywhere, when even the Sea of Galilee would become red with the blood of the wicked men of Israel. New Babylon's presumptuousness added to the punishment for her sins. This is similar language just like God spoke of Babylon 750 years BC.

Isaiah 47:1 "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; Sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called Tender and delicate. 2 Take the millstones and grind meal. Remove your veil, Take off the skirt, Uncover the thigh, Pass through the rivers. 3 Your nakedness shall be uncovered, Yes, your shame will be seen; I will take vengeance, And I will not arbitrate with a man."

4. **Famine**... famine that would be so severe that women of Israel, who were brought into the land of milk and honey, would turn and make their own children their food, roasting their meager 瘦的 bodies over fires and fight over the roasted limbs of their own children. All of this was to preserve God's holiness. He could not accept those who were impure.

5. **Fire**. Fire is always the quintessential 典型的 means of judgment. It pictures total annihilation 消灭 of God former Bride. Indeed, Rome threw fireballs into Jerusalem and started many fires. On top of that, the Jewish Zealots 狂热者, in an effort to force the Jews in Jerusalem to go out and fight the Romans, started fires in the city and burned up the food that was stored.

God had to do what he had threatened from the very beginning, to burn up the harlot.

Leviticus 21:9: "The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father. She shall be burned with fire."

Look at what God did to those who rejected his Son. So take warning! Love him, don't leave him!

6. The historian Josephus said that after Jerusalem was destroyed, if anyone came there they would not have thought that anyone lived there. Rome had become so angry at Israel that they wanted to destroy it, not just from its place, but from this history of man. Often, after Rome captured a nation they allowed local leaders to maintain some power (a trend used by the Babylonians, Persians, and Greek empires) and placed them under the oversight of the Roman Senate. But Israel had rebelled so much that the Romans decided to destroy them completely... like nobody ever lived there. At the same time they were simply doing God's work.

### **Conclusion:**

God was fair to the Scarlet Harlot. The Bride had said to God at Mt. Sinai: "Whatever you say we will do." But she became a law unto herself – made up her own laws - and ran after of gods. Her judgment became a fearful judgment and a judgment of great force. Her judgment wasn't one or the other...or the other...like when God gave King David a choice of 3 judgments. Rather it was death and mourning and famine, and fire. And all came true.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: 1. Just like these judgments were a warning to God's true people to separate from the Scarlet Harlot, so you must learn to move away from any and all things that will lead you away from Christ. 2. God would not allow those who are wicked to destroy his church. He would destroy them before they destroyed his church. Be comforted. Don't fear. 3. God wants his new Bride to be pure and be faithful to him. By God's grace, let us work together as members of New Horizon to live faithfully. Walk in his laws and enjoy his blessings, now and forevermore. Christ died for your freedom, you are his, and you are secured, so live in faith and obedience.

Finally, though God may have given you time to make your life right with him, as he did for Israel, this time will end. May you make your life right with God today. If you do, tomorrow will be yours – a new horizon you will see. Why not take this opportunity to pray and ask God to take away your sins, make you his child, and help you to live to please him. Without that eternal fires are on the horizon for you.