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# In One Day Her Plagues Will Overtake Her: Death, Mourning and Famine
# 18: 6-8

**In one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine DIG: How does God's perspective on Babylon differ from Babylon's self understanding? How does the law of retribution apply to Babylon the Great? Will her demise happen gradually or will it happen suddenly? Who judges Babylon? Why?**

**REFLECT: When has an important part of your life collapsed? What did others have to say about your demise? What perspective did the Lord bring to your fallen situation? What is the most important lesson you have learned from this passage? What actions will you take today based on this learning?**

It will seem for a long time like **Babylon** will be getting away with killing **the LORD's** people. **Her** day, however, will come, and when it does, **she** will be dealt with ruthlessly. Those who offer no mercy will receive no mercy. It will be true justice.

**Babylon's** judgment is defined as the angel **(18:4a)** now speaks not to **John**, but to **God**. His call for vengeance to **give back to her as she has given (18:6a)**, parallels the prayers of the martyred Tribulation believers **(6:9-10).** The angel's prayer for justice is based on the law of retribution, which is the principle of **an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth (Matthew 5:38; Exodus 21:23-24; Leviticus 24:19-20; Deuteronomy 19:21)**. **Babylon** has ignored the grace given to **her**. It will be time for vengeance.[390] Speaking through Moses the prophet about the end times, **ADONAI** said: **It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them (Deuteronomy 32:35).**

The angel's request that **God pay her back double**, literally *double the double things,* **for what she has done (18:6b)**, means that **Babylon's** punishment

should fit **her** crimes. **Double** has been **her** sin; **double** should be **her** punishment. **Babylon's sins** have been overflowing, like bricks of a *ziggurat*, they **are piled up to heaven (18:5).** So the angel calls for **God's** judgment to be in equal measure. **Double** has the sense of fullness or completeness.

**Mix her a double portion from her own cup (18:6c).** In the Torah, offenders were often required to pay **double** the restitution for their crimes **(Exodus 22:4-9)**. The prophets note that Isra'el received double for her sins **(Isaiah 40:1-2; Jeremiah 16:18)**. **Jeremiah** prayed that **ADONAI** would **bring on** Isra'el's **persecutors a day of disaster** and **destroy them with double destruction (Jeremiah 17:18).** This will be poetic justice (see **Obadiah 13-16**). The cup of **God's** wrath **(14:10, 16:19, 18:6)**, will be filled to the brim; when the last drop is poured in, it is passed to the lips of those who committed wickedness against **His** people. **The Psalter** rejoices, saying: **Babylon is doomed to destruction, happy is he who repays you for what you have done to** the sons and daughters of Isra'el **(Psalm 137:8-9). God** will be right and just in what **He** will do **(Jeremiah 50:15, 29)**.[391]

The prosperity of **Babylon** will blind her to **God's** judgment. The **angel** continued to speak to **the Lord**, saying: **Give her as much torture and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she boasts** when **she** says: **I sit as queen; I am not a widow, and I will never mourn (18:7).** The godless city will be filled with the proud and haughty. **Her** residents will declare **her** beauty, greatness, and **glory** over all the earth. They will think **she** is the **queen** and that **she** is married to the kings of the earth. As such, **she** is not a widow but a wealthy **queen** who has nothing to mourn about **(Isaiah 47:7-8; Zephaniah 2:15)**. This will be one of **His** standards of judgment when **He** remembers **Babylon**: the great **grief** of the godly will be turned into **glory**, and **the glory** of the godless will be turned into great **grief**.[392]

**Therefore, in one day her plagues will overtake her. Babylon** was brought down **in one day** before, during the reign of king Belshazzar **(Dani'el 5:1-30)**. It will be the same in the last days. **Her** destruction will not be progressive. The wicked city will be destroyed instantly **(Isaiah 47:9; Jeremiah 50:31-32)**. As the home of one-world government and global trade, **Babylon** will think **she** is very powerful. **She** will control powerful weapons and great armies. But compared to **God** who will judge **her**, **her** supposed strength will be worthless. What no earthly army can do, **the LORD** will accomplish **in one day**. First, the angel of **death** will pass over **Babylon**. Secondly, this city that just got through saying: **I will never**

**mourn**, will **mourn** bitterly. And thirdly, this rich city will suddenly run out of food and experience **famine**.[393]



Lastly, **she will be consumed by fire, because ADONAI, God, her Judge, is mighty (18:8 CJB).** No one can frustrate **His** plans, or keep **Him** from accomplishing what He purposes to do. **Job** said to **the LORD**: **I know that You can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted (Job 42:2)**. All the power of wicked men and demons will not be enough to deliver **Babylon** form **God's** judgment.[394] The Bible does not describe the source of such a devastating fire, but it surely will be no ordinary fire. It reminds us of the **burning sulfur** that **rained down from heaven on Sodom and Gomorrah** during Lot's day. When Lot **looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, all** he saw was **dense smoke rising from the land, like smoke from a furnace** (see the commentary on **Genesis, to see link click Fa – The LORD Rained Down Burning Sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah**). So it will be with **Babylon**.

Believing in **Jesus** cost the early believers dearly. It seemed unjust that they should lose everything when **ADONAI** was on their side. But as the book of **Revelation** circulated among the seven churches **(2:1-3:22)**, it helped them to understand why **God** did not immediately save them from Roman persecution. **The Holy Spirit** reassured them that they had not been forgotten. One day, they would see evil destroyed in the most swift, decisive, and one-sided Campaign of all time. At that time all the martyrs of every age will be vindicated, and **the LORD's** salvation will win out over the empty promises of the world's fleeting pleasures.

Throughout **Revelation**, **Babylon** the Great symbolizes the entire world system

that has set itself up against **the Kingdom** of **the Lord**. One day, the world will be judged according to **God's** will for creation, and an end will come to all the debates and opinions of right and wrong, moral and immoral. On that **day**, it will be made clear that all the **judgments** of **ADONAI are true and just (19:2)**.

*Dear Sovereign **King** and Heavenly **Father**, How powerful **You** are! There is no one nor kingdom that can come anywhere close to being as great and powerful as **You**! Praise **Your** infinite wisdom, mighty power and unmeasurable love!. **You** are Wonderful! Even in **Your** judgments, **You** are both merciful and very fair, for **Yo**u give so many chances for people to turn to **You. The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some consider slowness. Rather, He is being patient toward you – not wanting anyone to perish, but for all to come to repentance. (Second Peter 3:9). You** will open **Your** arms to all who choose to love and to follow **You**; but **You** will exclude all who choose to try to use their own good deeds as an entrance ticket to heaven. **You** will tell them to depart and that **You** never knew them! **Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord!" will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in Your name, and drive out demons in Your name, and perform many miracles in Your name?" Then I will declare to them, "I never knew you. Get away from Me, you workers of lawlessness" (Matthew 7:21-23)!** Heaven's door will be shut to them. People like to think only about **Your** love and forget that **You** are also totally holy and can tolerate no sin in heaven. Praise **You** that no one can fool you by saying they love **You** and doing good things, while they really love themselves as number one. **You** see the intentions of the heart. We love **You** and long to worship **You** for all eternity in heaven, as we live with **You** in eternal peace and joy, praising **Your** great name for all eternity! In **Your** holy **Son's** name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*

**Revelation** warns us to be alert to the influence of evil. Through the media, we are constantly enticed to live for ourselves and to accept ungodliness from a world that is increasingly against **God**. To counter this, we should fix our hearts on the beauty of **Messiah** and boldly speak out about **His** greatness. **He** wants us to distance ourselves from the allure of the world and to embrace **His** salvation **(First John 2:15-17)**. As we draw nearer to **ADONAI**, praise will erupt from our hearts. We will join with the heavenly hosts singing: **Salvation and glory and power to our God (19:1).** Let us rejoice today in our assurance that **the Lord** will ultimately triumph over every power opposed to **Him** and **His** children.

*Thank you, **God**, for inviting me to the wedding feast of **the Lamb**. I eagerly await the day that you overthrow evil. Until that day, I will take my stand with you in confidence, knowing that the victory is **Yours**.*[395]