

Revelation 18:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

Analysis

The command 'Reward her even as she rewarded you' invokes *lex talionis*—just recompense (Psalm 137:8, Jeremiah 50:29). 'Double unto her double' emphasizes complete retribution, not mathematical exactness. This represents perfect justice—Babylon receives punishment proportionate to her sins. Reformed theology affirms that God's justice is both retributive (punishing sin) and restorative (vindicating victims). The double portion may allude to Isaiah 40:2 or Jeremiah 16:18, where Israel received double for sins. Here, Babylon (representing worldly systems opposing God) faces comprehensive judgment for persecuting saints.

Historical Context

Ancient conquest often involved reciprocal treatment—invaders suffered what they inflicted. Double recompense appeared in Exodus 22:4 (theft restitution). This command, echoing Old Testament judgment oracles against Babylon and other nations, assured persecuted believers that Rome's apparent invincibility would end in just judgment. God's justice, though delayed, would be thorough.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the promise of just recompense ('double unto her double') satisfy your longing for justice when you see evil apparently prospering?
2. What does this judgment teach about God's perfect memory—He doesn't forget any sin or any suffering of His people?

Interlinear Text

ἀπέδωκεν	αὐτῇ	ὥς	καὶ	αὐτῇ	ἀπέδωκεν	ὕμῃν,	καὶ
Reward	her	as	and	her	Reward	you	and
G591	G846	G5613	G2532	G846	G591	G5213	G2532
διπλώσατε	αὐτῇ	διπλοῦν	κατὰ	τὰ	ἔργα	αὐτῇ	ἐν
double	her	double	according to	G3588	works	her	in
G1363	G846	G1362	G2596		G2041	G846	G1722
τῷ	ποτηρίῳ	ᾧ	κεράσατε	κεράσατε	αὐτῇ	διπλοῦν	
G3588	the cup	which	fill	fill	her	double	
	G4221	G3739	G2767	G2767	G846	G1362	

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 137:8 (Parallel theme): O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

Jeremiah 50:29 (Parallel theme): Call together the archers against Babylon: all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape: recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.

Jeremiah 50:15 (Parallel theme): Shout against her round about: she hath given her hand: her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down: for it is the vengeance of the LORD: take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her.

Revelation 16:19 (Parallel theme): And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

Revelation 14:10 (Parallel theme): The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

Jeremiah 51:24 (Parallel theme): And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD.

Revelation 17:4 (Parallel theme): And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

Jeremiah 17:18 (Parallel theme): Let them be confounded that persecute me, but let not me be confounded: let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed: bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with double destruction.

Jeremiah 16:18 (Parallel theme): And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things.

Zechariah 9:12 (Parallel theme): Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee;