

# THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

## JEREMIAH 50-51

An important characteristic of Bible prophecy is its dual nature. Many prophecies have an immediate and a future fulfillment embedded in the same passage.

One example are the prophecies that speak of the coming of the Messiah... Jesus comes twice. He came in first century Judea to save us. He'll come again to rule! These two comings are separated by at least 2000 years. Yet many of the biblical passages included elements of both comings in the same prophecy...

Luke 4 is a great example. In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus opened the scroll to read an OT description of His ministry. He turned to Isaiah 61:1-2...

It read, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God..." But Jesus stopped before He read that last line, "day of vengeance of our God..."

He read the part of the passage describing His first coming, but stopped in mid-sentence, because the next phrase was referring to His second coming.

Jesus realized there were two events, separated by many years, intertwined in the same prophecy.

And this is the case with many biblical prophecies...

In addition to two comings of Christ the Bible speaks of two forerunners, two destructions of Jerusalem, two re-gatherings of the Jews to their ancient homeland...

Teachers of Bible prophecy speak of this Scriptural tendency as **“The Law of Double Reference.”**

I have a hammock that I like to take out into the backyard, and look up into the tops of the trees.

From under the tree, gazing upwards, you lose depth perception. Limbs that are separated by 10-20 feet appear as if they're stacked on top of each other...

All you see is a maze of crisscrossed leaves and limbs - *and this is what it's like to study Bible prophecy!*

The OT prophets were given glimpses into the future, but they were all under the tree looking up.

They saw events, but found it hard to distinguish if what they were seeing was two similar events, or just one - and if they were looking at two events, they had a difficult time gaging how much distance separated them on the timeline - perhaps 10 years, maybe 1000?

And this is the scenario we have in Jeremiah 50-51.

The prophet sees two defeats of the city of Babylon. One was historical. The other is still future. But the details are all intertwined into one prophetic picture.

Remember the context of these chapters. Jeremiah was a prophet, not only to the Jews, but to all nations.

In Chapters 46-49 he uttered God's judgments on the nations surrounding Judah. He's moved from west to east -

from the Nile to the Euphrates, and declared God's displeasure on all the nations in between.

In fact, the sword by which God executed His punishment on the nations of the world, was the army of the Babylonians and their leader, Nebuchadnezzar.

On several occasions in the book, Jeremiah even refers to Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar as "the servant of Yahweh." And this was a strange use of the phrase. Usually, it's a name given to Judah, God's chosen people, not a idolatrous nation like the Babylonians.

But it goes to prove that God can use anybody. The Babylonians were ruthless and cruel, yet God used them as His sword - an instrument of His judgment.

And this also proves that just because God uses you, it doesn't mean He approves of *who you are* or *all you do*. In the previous four chapters He uses Babylon to judge the nations, but now He judges Babylon.

As the ole saying goes, "What goes around comes around" In chapters 50-51 we'll see that Babylon is destined to taste the same medicine she's dished out.

Chapter 50, "The word that the Lord spoke against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet. "Declare among the nations, proclaim, and set up a standard; proclaim - do not conceal it - say, 'Babylon is taken, Bel is shamed.

Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are humiliated, her images are broken in pieces.'

*Bel* and *Merodach* were the chief gods - the idols - of the ancient Babylonians. *Bel* was the god of the wind and storm. *Merodach*, known in secular history, as *Marduk* was the solar calf - *the bull-calf of the sun god*.

It's interesting the term "*idols*" in verse 2 is not the normal Hebrew word for idol. This word means, "logs, blocks, shapeless things" - the rabbis put it, "things of dung." The idols the Babylonians worshipped and revered are about to be shattered in thousand pieces.

Verse 3, "For out of the north a nation comes up against her, which shall make her land desolate, and no one shall dwell therein. They shall move, they shall depart, both man and beast." Before we go further, let me provide you a little background on the city of Babel.

One way of looking at the Bible is to view it as "a tale of two cities." The Bible chronicles the story of two kingdoms - *the Kingdom of God* and *the kingdom of Satan*. And every Kingdom has a capitol city...

These two kingdoms were no exception... In the OT God's headquarters on earth was Jerusalem, while Satan also had his headquarters, the city of Babel.

The founder of Babylon was a man named "*Nimrod*."

He was an expert archer. He taught men how to hunt and fend for themselves. He gave them power over nature, and encouraged them to rebel against God.

Nimrod led the very first organized revolt against God. The Lord told mankind to scatter and multiply.

Instead, under Nimrod's influence the people of the earth came together at Babel and built a tall tower.

The Tower of Babel served several purposes... **First**, it memorialized Nimrod's perceived greatness. **Second**, the tower became an observatory into the heavens. It gave birth to the occult practices of astrology - of discerning the future through the stars. And **third**, the Bible says Nimrod constructed it using "bricks for stone and asphalt for mortar" which can be translated "pitch."

It's the same word used for the water-proofing material used to cover the ark of Noah and prepare it for its voyage... So, *what is Nimrod doing, building a water-proof tower in the middle of the arid desert?*

Obviously, he refused to believe the rainbow and the promise of God it symbolized - that God would never judge the whole Earth will water again. In essence, Nimrod taught the people of Earth that God was their enemy. He would protect them from the big, bad God.

This is why God destroyed the Tower, and confused the languages - forcing people to scatter and repopulate the Earth... Yet Babel remained the seat of Satan - the hub of heathenism. For the next 2000 years Babylon would remain the center and the chief exporter of idolatry, and paganism, and occult practice.

Babylon reached its zenith, its golden age, under the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar. He ruled from 606-562 BC. He made Babylon great. Under Nebuchadnezzar, Babel dominated the world commercially and militarily.

It was Nebuchadnezzar that destroyed Jerusalem, burned the Temple, and deported the Jews to Babylon.

The capitol of Nebuchadnezzar was an extremely well fortified city. In fact, it was viewed as impregnable.

Babylon was surrounded by two walls - the highest was 311 feet, it had 250 watch towers, some soaring another 100 feet into the air. Babylon's ancient walls were an example of high-rise architecture.

And it was a double wall! The largest was 87' thick. You could line 11 cars abreast on top of the wall.

Underneath the walls flowed the Euphrates River, supplying the city its water... It was Nebuchadnezzar who built a 700 room palace, and the famous Hanging Gardens. The Greek historian, Herodotus, referred to Babylon's gardens as one the world's seven wonders.

This past week the United States remembered the bombing of Pearl Harbor. As Roosevelt said, December 7, 1941 ["is a day that will live in infamy."](#)

Well Babylon's Pearl Harbor occurred on October 12, 539 BC. This was the night the Babylonian emperor, grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, decided to throw a party. He invited a thousand guests to a drunken orgy. You can read about it in Daniel 5.

Belshazzar's party was in defiance of the Medes and Persians camped outside the city. Belshazzar partied in the face of danger, to show everyone his invincibility.



During the drink-feast Belshazzar called for the treasures his grandpa had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem - the bowls and saucers dedicated to God and used in the Jerusalem Temple. He took the holy bowls and used them as *beer mugs* and *shot glasses*.

He was thumbing his nose in God's face, mocking the one true God... *an always dangerous proposition*.

That's when suddenly, a man's hand appeared writing on the wall. I love to read Daniel 5 from the Old King James, "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against the other."

Did you catch the phrase, "*the joints of his loins were loosed*." His problem that night wasn't too many prunes. God's judgment scared the stuffing out of him.

Which reminds me of the of the captain of a British naval vessel. One day his cabin boy came running into his quarters to inform him that a Spanish galleon was nearing the ship. The captain barked his orders, "Fetch me my red vest and sound the battle stations."

A few days later the boy rushed in again with the message that two Spanish galleons were approaching the ship. Again the courageous captain shouted, "Fetch me my red vest and sound the battle stations."

One day the cabin boy asked the captain why he always wore his red vest into battle. The brave captain replied to his

admirer, "Sonny, I wear my red vest in case I sustain a hit in battle. I don't want the men to see me bleeding and it be a discouragement to them."

The next day the boy ran into his cabin shouting "Captain, Captain, the whole Spanish Armada is on the horizon." To which the captain replied, "Fetch my red vest, *my brown pants*, and sound the battle stations."

Daniel was actually called into Belshazzar's party to interpret God's handwriting on the wall. It revealed His judgment of Babylon, "Babel had been weighed in the balance, found lacking, and now her number was up."

Meanwhile, outside the city walls, a Persian General Ugbaru, sent a third of his troops upstream to divert the flow of the Euphrates River into a catch basin.

As the Babylonians partied-heartily and mocked God, the water level in the river kept getting lower and lower.

By midnight the riverbed was dry, which allowed the Persian army to march under the walls. As it turns out rather than go over, they went under the city's walls.

This so surprised the Babylonians, the Persians were able to conquer the city without firing a shot.

Today, you can visit the London museum and see a cylinder known as "the steel of Cyrus." It's the Persian king's boast of how he was able to humble the great city of Babylon and beat her without a battle...



The Jewish historian, Josephus, says when King Cyrus entered Babylon, he was greeted by an old man with a dusty scroll. Daniel had the scroll of Isaiah.

And it was Daniel who showed King Cyrus how God described his career, his methods, even his means of victory a hundred years before he was even born - a 160 years before Cyrus would come to power in Babel.

King Cyrus was so impressed he issued a decree allowing the Jews to return to their land, just as Isaiah prophesied. He even returned the Temple treasures.

Cyrus went so far as to finance their return from the coffers of the Persian empire... Cyrus wanted to fulfill God's calling on his life - to be "God's Shepherd," and help regather the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

This is why the next few verses tie together the fall of Babylon with the return of the Jews to Jerusalem...

Verse 4, "In those days and in that time," says the Lord, "the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together; with continual weeping they shall come, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces toward it, saying, 'come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that will not be forgotten.'

"My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds (the religious leaders - the priests and false prophets) have led them astray; they have turned them away on the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill; they have forgotten their resting place. All who found them have devoured them; and their adversaries said, 'We have not offended, because they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice,

the Lord, the hope of their fathers.’ The conquerors knew they were acting on behalf of God as they destroyed Jerusalem.

Now they encourage the Jews to head home. “Move from the midst of Babylon, go out of the land of the Chaldeans; and be like the rams before the flocks.

For behold, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country, and they shall array themselves against her; from there she shall be captured. Their arrows shall be like those of an expert warrior; none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall become plunder; all who plunder her shall be satisfied,” says the Lord.

Because you were glad, because you rejoiced, you destroyers of My heritage, because you have grown fat like a heifer threshing grain, and you bellow like bulls..”

God used Babylon to judge the Jews, but they never bothered to learn the reasons for His judgment... They too displeased the Lord. Rather than understand the sin that brought on His judgment, they replicated Judah’s transgressions, *and boasted in their victories.*

As a result, a coalition of great nations will gather in the north, and launch an assault of a haughty Babylon.

Verse 12, “Your mother shall be deeply ashamed; she who bore you shall be ashamed. Behold, the least of the nations shall be a wilderness, a dry land and a desert. Because of the wrath of the Lord she shall not be inhabited, but she shall be wholly desolate.” Babylon will be utterly destroyed - made uninhabitable.

Everyone who goes by Babylon shall be horrified and hiss at all her plagues. “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. 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.” Literally, “What goes around comes around.”

Now I hope you recognize from my brief background lesson a few minutes ago, that there’re some problems in Jeremiah’s account of the fall of the city of Babel...

**First**, he says as a result of the invasion she will no longer be inhabited. **Second**, her walls will be toppled.

Neither of these scenarios happened when the Persians conquered Babylon in 539 BC. The city continued to be inhabited for many centuries. In fact, it served as the capitol of Cyrus and the Persian empire.

Even the Greek General, Alexander the Great, 200 years later, made Babel an important city in his empire.

And neither did the walls fall as result of Persia’s triumph over Babylon. Remember the invaders came in under the walls through the dried-up riverbed. Over the sands of time the walls deteriorated and weathered away, but they were never destroyed by an invader.

The implication here is that Jeremiah’s prophecy against Babylon has a dual-fulfillment. Only a portion of the prophecy was accomplished by the Medo-Persian invasion. There are still elements that are unfulfilled.

Verse 16, “Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him who handles the sickle at harvest time. For fear of the oppressing sword everyone shall turn to his own people, and everyone shall flee to his own land.

“Israel is like scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away. First the king of Assyria devoured him; now at last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has broken his bones.” Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.” The Assyrians were conquered by Babylon, and now God will send an army to defeat Babylon.

Verse 19, “But I will bring back Israel to his home, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan; his soul shall be satisfied on Mount Ephraim and Gilead.” These were Israel’s best pasture-lands - the finest grazing.

“In those days and in that time,” says the Lord, “the iniquity of Israel shall be sought, but there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, but they shall not be found; for I will pardon those whom I preserve.” This is wonderful! People will try to dig up sins from Israel’s past, but *“they shall not be found.”* God blots out our sin. **When God forgives, it’s not only freely, but fully.**

“Go up against the land of Merathaim (this was a name for Babylon, it means **“double rebellion”**), against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod. Waste and utterly destroy them,” says the Lord, “and do according to all that I have

commanded you. A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction.” All of this is God’s judgment both past and future on the Babylonians.

“How the hammer of the whole earth has been cut apart and broken! How Babylon has become a desolation among the nations! I have laid a snare for you; you have indeed been trapped, O Babylon, and you were not aware; you have been found and also caught, because you have contended against the Lord.

The Lord has opened His armory, and has brought out the weapons of His indignation; for this is the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans.”

I wonder what appears when God “*opens His armory...*” - when He takes off the gloves, so to speak - when He unleashes “*the weapons of His indignation...*”

What are the weapons of His anger? *Smart bombs, stealth fighters, WMDs, meteors from the heavens?*

Whatever they are, they’ll be targeted on Babylon.

Verse 26, “Come against her from the farthest border; open her storehouses; cast her up as heaps of ruins, and destroy her utterly; let nothing of her be left.”

Babylon’s ancient adversaries, the Persians, were Middle Eastern neighbors - not from the farthest border. Again, this is looking toward something future.

Perhaps even more global in nature.

“Slay all her bulls, let them go down to the slaughter. Woe to them! For their day has come, the time of their punishment.

The voice of those who flee and escape from the land of Babylon declares in Zion the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of His temple.” Babylon destroyed God’s Temple. God will eventually take vengeance on Babylon for this atrocity.

“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.” It’s interesting, the Hebrew word “*bow*” could literally be translated “*launcher*.” The point being, when you read this text don’t rule out modern weaponry.

Verse 30, “Therefore her young men shall fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day,” says the Lord. “Behold, I am against you, O most haughty one!” says the Lord God of hosts; “for your day has come, the time that I will punish you.” God is always against the haughty. James 4:6 tells us, “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

“The most proud shall stumble and fall, and no one will raise him up; I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it will devour all around him.” Thus says the Lord of hosts: “The children of Israel were oppressed, along with the children of Judah; all who took them captive have held them fast; they have refused to let them go.

Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is His name. He will thoroughly plead their case, that He may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.” Looking at this



figuratively these verses make a powerful point. Babylon has always been a type of the lusts of the world. And those lusts can get a **vice-grip** on a person. That's why sin is called **vice**.

Yet Jeremiah says that our Redeemer is stronger!

Verse 35, "A sword is against the Chaldeans," says the Lord, "against the inhabitants of Babylon, and against her princes and her wise men. A sword is against the soothsayers, and they will be fools. A sword is against her mighty men, and they will be dismayed.

A sword is against their horses, against their chariots, and against all the mixed peoples who are in her midst; and they will become like women. A sword is against her treasures, and they will be robbed.

A drought is against her waters, and they will be dried up. For it is the land of carved images, and they are insane with their idols. "Therefore the wild desert beasts shall dwell there with the jackals, and the ostriches shall dwell in it. It shall be inhabited no more forever, nor shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbors," says the Lord, "so no one shall reside there, nor son of man dwell in it." Again, the demise of Sodom was nothing like the fall of Babel.

God sent fire from heaven on Sodom and incinerated the city - whereas, Babylon declined over centuries...

Also, when the Persians conquered Babylon, God used drought not fire... The river was dried up... *All affirming that here we have two destructions in view!*

Actually, Revelation 17-18 describe events still future to us. At the end of the Great Tribulation, prior to Jesus' second coming a "*Babylon*" will be destroyed in the same manner as the demise of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Revelation 18:15 reads, "The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment (perhaps her radiation), weeping and wailing , and saying, 'Alas, Alas, that great city..."

For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.' All who travel by ship... stood at a distance' and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning... 'What is like this great city?' Notice the phrases "*in one hour*" destruction comes - the "*smoke of her burning...*"

Babylon will have a fate similar to Sodom. It'll go up in fire and smoke. Perhaps, the city will be nuked.

Many Bible scholars believe the future Babylon that gets smoked won't be literal Babylon in Iraq, but a city that takes its pagan mantle - perhaps Rome or the US.

Yet, it is possible the historic city of Babylon may yet be rebuilt. It's interesting, before Sadaam Hussein was deposed, 62 miles south of Baghdad, he was re-erecting the ancient ruins - *Nebuchadnezzar's palace*, and *the Marduk Gate*. He even had plans to rebuild *the Tower of Babel*. It could be that a future leader resumes his project, and Babylon rises from the ruins.

Verse 41, "Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation and many kings shall be raised up from the ends of the earth." This could be speaking of the ancient

coalition that rallied together to take down Babel - the Medes, Persians, and Elamites.

But it sounds more global - like a final showdown.

“They shall hold the bow and the lance; they are cruel and shall not show mercy. Their voice shall roar like the sea; they shall ride on horses, set in array, like a man for the battle, against you, O daughter of Babylon. “The king of Babylon has heard the report about them, and his hands grow feeble; anguish has taken hold of him, pangs as of a woman in childbirth.

“Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the floodplain of the Jordan against the dwelling place of the strong; but I will make them suddenly run away from her. And who is a chosen man that I may appoint over her? For who is like Me? Who will arraign Me? And who is that shepherd Who will withstand Me?”

Therefore hear the counsel of the Lord that He has taken against Babylon, and His purposes that He has proposed against the land of the Chaldeans: surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; surely He will make their dwelling place desolate with them.

At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth trembles, and the cry is heard among the nations.”

Chapter 51, “Thus says the Lord: “Behold, I will raise up against Babylon, against those who dwell in Leb Kamai, a destroying wind.” - a nickname for Babel.

“And I will send winnowers to Babylon, who shall winnow her and empty her land. For in the day of doom they shall be

against her all around. Against her let the archer bend his bow, and lift himself up against her in his armor. Do not spare her young men; utterly destroy all her army. Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and those thrust through in her streets.

For Israel is not forsaken, nor Judah, by his God, the Lord of hosts, though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.” Even though Israel had sinned in the worse way, God had not forgotten them.

“Flee from the midst of Babylon, and every one save his life! Do not be cut off in her iniquity, for this is the time of the Lord’s vengeance; He shall recompense her.” Notice, God is warning those who do business in Babylon to get out of Dodge before judgment falls.

This is why it’s wise not to hang out with people who are under God’s judgment. *When your buddy gets pulled over, or gets busted by the cops - and you’re around, it’s trouble for you. Choose your friends wisely.*

Verse 7, “Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord’s hand, that made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore the nations are deranged.” God had used Babel, but... “Babylon has suddenly fallen and been destroyed. Wail for her! Take balm for her pain; perhaps she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed. Forsake her, and let us go everyone to his own country; for her judgment reaches to heaven and is lifted up to the skies.”

The Lord has revealed our righteousness. Come and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God.

Make the arrows bright! Gather the shields! The Lord has raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes. For His plan is against Babylon to destroy it, because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance for His temple.” When Belshazzar brought out the Temple vessels to mock God - *God knew... God saw...*

“Set up the standard on the walls of Babylon; make the guard strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the ambushes. For the Lord has both devised and done what He spoke against the inhabitants of Babylon.

O you who dwell by many waters, abundant in treasures, your end has come, the measure of your covetousness. The Lord of hosts has sworn by Himself: “surely I will fill you with men, as with locusts (swarming locust is another idiom of an invading army), and they shall lift up a shout against you.”

He has made the earth by His power; He has established the world by His wisdom, and stretched out the heaven by His understanding. When He utters His voice - there is a multitude of waters in the heavens: “He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He makes lightnings for the rain; He brings the wind out of His treasuries.” It’s not *Mother Nature* who causes it to rain and water the Earth - it’s *Father God*.

Whereas the Earth’s idols are futile. “Everyone is dull-hearted, without knowledge; every metalsmith is put to shame by the carved image; for his molded image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are futile, a work of errors; in the time of their punishment they shall perish. The Portion of Jacob is not like them, for He is the Maker of all things; and

Israel is the tribe of His inheritance. The Lord of hosts is His name.” **Idols are made, but God is the Maker!**

Verse 20, “You are My battle-ax and weapons of war: for with you I will break the nation in pieces; with you I will destroy kingdoms; with you I will break in pieces the horse and its rider; with you I will break in pieces the chariot and its rider; with you also I will break in pieces man and woman; with you I will break in pieces old and young; with you I will break in pieces the young man and the maiden; with you also I will break in pieces the shepherd and his flock; with you I will break in pieces the farmer and his yoke of oxen; and with you I will break in pieces governors and rulers.” God can pick up the pieces of a humble heart and bring healing, or He can shatter into pieces the proud and haughty.

“And I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all the evil they have done in Zion in your sight,” says the Lord. “Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, who destroys all the earth,” says the Lord. “And I will stretch out My hand against you, roll you down from the rocks, and make you a burnt mountain. They shall not take from you a stone for a corner nor a stone for a foundation, but you shall be desolate forever,” says the Lord.” A common practice in the Middle East is to build cities with stones from the ruins of other cities. Modern Baghdad was built with borrowed stones from ancient Babylon, 50 miles south.

The rubble of ancient Babylon was also used on other cities... Yet here, Jeremiah speaks of a future fulfillment where the city will be so decimated there’ll be nothing left that you’d want use in new construction.



Verse 27, “Set up a banner in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations! Prepare the nations against her, call the kingdoms together against her: Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz. Appoint a general against her; cause the horses to come up like the bristling locusts. Prepare against her the nations, with the kings of the Medes, its governors and all its rulers, all the land of his dominion. And the land will tremble and sorrow; for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without inhabitant. The mighty men of Babylon have ceased fighting, they have remained in their strongholds; their might has failed, they became like women (Only in modern times are women sent into combat. In antiquity, girls were raised to be civil - men fought. *Today, that’s changing and doesn’t bode well for either gender.*); they have burned her dwelling places, the bars of her gate are broken.”

The Greek historian, Herodotus, says the night Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians the gates of the city weren’t broken, but left open. Either the gatekeepers were bribed, a special ops team unlocked them, or it could’ve even been divine intervention.

But the fact Jeremiah speaks of the bars being broken, obviously speaks of a still future invasion.

Verse 31, “One runner will run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken on all sides; the passages are blocked, the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are terrified. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel:

“The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor when it is time to thresh her; yet a little while and the time of her harvest will come.”

Here the Jew in Zion speaks, “Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon has devoured me, he has crushed me; he has made me an empty vessel, he has swallowed me up like a monster; he has filled his stomach with my delicacies, he has spit me out. Let the violence done to me and my flesh be upon Babylon,” the inhabitant of Zion will say; “and my blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea!” Jerusalem will say. Therefore thus says the Lord: “Behold, I will plead your case and take vengeance for you. I will dry up her sea and make her springs dry.” Now this is exactly how ancient Babylon was conquered. Here springs, *the river*, were dried up.

“Babylon shall become a heap, a dwelling place for jackals, an astonishment and a hissing, without an inhabitant. They shall roar together like lions, they shall growl like lions’ whelps. In their excitement I will prepare their feasts; I will make them drunk, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep and not awake,” says the Lord.” History tells us the Persian invaders poured into the city, through the dried up riverbed, while Belshazzar feasted and got drunk.

Verse 40, “I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with male goats. “Oh, how Sheshach (a code name for Babylon) is taken!”

Oh, how the praise of the whole earth is seized! How Babylon has become desolate among the nations!”

The sea has come up over Babylon; she is covered with the multitude of its waves.” As we’ve mentioned, a flooding sea is a Hebrew idiom for an invading army.

“Her cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness, a land where no one dwells, through which no son of man passes. I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring out of his mouth what he has swallowed; and the nations shall not stream to him anymore.

Yes, the wall of Babylon shall fall.”

The conquering Babylonians had swallowed up the world’s riches, but God will retrieve them. He’ll cause Babylon to gag and cough up all she had stolen...

Read Ezra 1 and you’ll learn that King Cyrus’ first act was to empty the storehouses and restore to the Jews the treasures that Babylon stole from their Temple.

In a sense, Satan has swallowed, or stolen treasures from our lives - *talents, enthusiasm, optimism*. But if we put our trust in Jesus, He’ll retrieve and restore them.

Verse 45, “My people, go out of the midst of her! And let everyone deliver himself from the fierce anger of the Lord.” As *with the rapture*, here God’s people are encouraged to leave before the judgment comes.

“And lest your heart faint, and you fear for the rumor that will be heard in the land (a rumor will come one year, and after that, in another year a rumor will come, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler), therefore behold, the days are coming that I will bring judgment on the carved images of Babylon; her whole land shall be ashamed, and all her slain

shall fall in her midst. Then the heavens and the earth and all that is in them shall sing joyously over Babylon; for the plunderers shall come to her from the north,” says the Lord.”

This is similar to Revelation 19 where heaven sings an *“Alleluia”* chorus over news that Babylon has fallen.

“As Babylon has caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon the slain of all the earth shall fall.” The future fall of Babylon, as in Revelation 17-19, signals God’s global judgment... *“all the earth shall fall.”*

“You who have escaped the sword, get away! Do not stand still! Remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come to your mind. We are ashamed because we have heard reproach. Shame has covered our faces, for strangers have come into the sanctuaries of the Lord’s house. “Therefore behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “that I will bring judgment on her carved images, and throughout all her land the wounded shall groan. Though Babylon were to mount up to heaven, and though she were to fortify the height of her strength, yet from Me plunderers would come to her,” says the Lord. The sound of a cry comes from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans, because the Lord is plundering Babylon and silencing her loud voice, though her waves roar like great waters, and the noise of their voice is uttered, because the plunderer comes against her, against Babylon, and her mighty men are taken.”

“Every one of their bows is broken; for the Lord is the God of recompense, he will surely repay.” Jeremiah trumpeting this judgment against Babylon, would be like me pronouncing the

fall of New York City. Babylon was at it's peak. There were no clues of any weakness.

Yet God was planning His pay back! God settles all scores. Each one of us will one day get what's coming to us... Either the mercies offered to us in Christ, or if we stand on our own we'll be repaid justice for our sin.

In verse 57 Jeremiah brings the judgments to a close, “And I will make drunk her princes and wise men, her governors, her deputies, and her mighty men. And they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not awake,” says the King, Whose name is the Lord of hosts. Thus says the Lord of hosts: “The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; the people will labor in vain, and the nations, because of the fire; and they shall be weary.”

The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And Seraiah was the quartermaster.” This prophecy was actually delivered to the Babylonians on an official visit around 593 BC.

That's 54 years before the actual fall of Babylon.

Verse 60, “So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that would come upon Babylon, all these words that are written against Babylon. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, “When you arrive in Babylon and see it, and read all these words, then you shall say, ‘O Lord, You have spoken against this place to cut it off, so that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but it shall be desolate forever.’ Now it shall be, when

you have finished reading this book, that you shall tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates. Then you shall say, 'Thus Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her. And they shall be weary.'" Thus far are the words of Jeremiah."

Even the declaration of the prophecy on the streets and courts of Babylon was followed by some drama.

Jeremiah's book was read; then thrown into the river. The Lord says, "*Babylon shall sink and not rise.*"

*And when God says you shall sink - you're sunk!*