

## Jeremiah Chapter 50

**Jeremiah 50:1 "The word that the LORD spake against Babylon [and] against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet."**

“Against Babylon”: The subject (of chapters 50 and 51; compare Isa. 13:1 to 14:23; Hab. 2:6-17). Judgment focuses on Media Persia’s conquest of Babylon (in 539 B.C.). The prediction of elements of violent overthrow, which was not the case when Cyrus conquered since there was not even a battle, points to greater fulfillment near the coming of Messiah in glory when events more fully satisfy the description (compare Rev. chapters 17 and 18).

Jeremiah devotes two long chapters of divinely given messages to Babylon, the foremost power of his day. It is a prophecy of judgment for the mighty world conqueror, but of restoration for an exiled Israel.

In the last few chapters we have seen the Babylonians and Chaldeans used of God in judgement against Judah and Benjamin, and many other small countries. Now we see judgement against them.

Verses 2-3: The defeat of Babylon would be the defeat of its gods as well, “Bel” and “Merodach” (50:38; 51:34, 44, 47, 52). Babylon had not conquered Judah because its gods were not more powerful than the Lord.

**Jeremiah 50:2 "Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, [and] conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces."**

“Merodach” is Marduk, the old head of the Babylonian pantheon of their gods. “Bel” (the west-Semitic “Baal”), was the Babylonian equivalent of the earlier Sumerian storm god Enlil. Both the name and the powers of Bel became associated with Marduk, but the name Bel became the more common one in the Neo-Babylonian period (compare Isa. 46:1; Jer. 51:44; Dan. 5:1, 9, 22, 29).

“Idols”: First the idols of Babylon are discredited by Jeremiah’s using an unusual word for idols, meaning in Hebrew “dung pellets”.

We see from this that Jeremiah did not side in with the Babylonians. He would have preferred from the beginning, to prophesy against Babylon instead of his homeland. We can see from this, that even though judgement begins at the house of God, it finally reaches to everyone. God was never satisfied with the morals of the Babylonians, He just used them to accomplish His judgements. He now turns to them and judges them for their evil ways. Jeremiah does not just tell Babylon, but all who will hear. He is in total agreement that Babylon needed punishing. "Bel" and "Merodach" are names of false gods worshipped by the Babylonians. The statues of these false gods are broken in pieces. "Declare among the nations" means to tell everyone.

**Jeremiah 50:3 "For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast."**

“None shall dwell therein”: The far view (in verse 1), cites this as not yet fulfilled in a sudden way (compare 51:8). Media Persia came down from the north (in 539 B.C.), and armies in the years that followed, but only gradually brought the past Babylon to complete desolation (compare verses 12-13).

The end of the Neo-Babylonian Empire came with the fall of Babylon to Cyrus the Great (in 539 B.C.; compare 51:28). Babylon was to remain a seedbed of sedition within the Persian Empire. The city later fell to Alexander the Great (who died there in 323 B.C.). It remained a center of controversy until its capture by the Parthians in the second century B.C. It never fully recovered; and by the end of the second century A.D., it was in great eclipse. Its once proud walls were ultimately pulled down (in A.D. 363). The glory of Babylon thus faded, as both Isaiah (Isa. 13:19-22), and Jeremiah (verse 34; 51:58), had prophesied. The defeat of proud Babylon stands as a sobering example of the final defeat of the empires of this world at the Messiah’s second advent (compare Isa. 13:9-13 with Dan. 2:44; 7:26-28; Zech. 12:2-9; 14:1-4; Rev. chapters 17-19).

This nation that cometh from the north to attack Babylon is headed by Cyrus. This nation is the Persian Empire which Cyrus heads up. The “her” here, is Babylon. This does happen to the Babylonians. The city of Babylon will never be built again.

Verses 4-10: “Children of Israel shall come”: Jeremiah predicted a return for exiled Israel and Judah (verses 17-20, as chapters 30-33), as the scattered and penitent people were given opportunity to escape Babylon’s doom and return to Jerusalem and to the Lord in an eternal covenant (verse 5).

The defeat of Babylon would be the deliverance and vindication of Israel.

**Jeremiah 50:4 "In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God."**

The union of the divided sections of the people is significant as being that which the prophet had all along hoped for (Jer. 3:14-16). And the united people are to return with tears of mingled joy and penitence (compare Ezra 3:13; 8:21-23). No longer worshipping Baal and the queen of heaven (Jer. 7:18; 44:17), but “seeking Jehovah their God.”

This occurs at the end of the 70 year captivity of the Israelites. Specifically, to the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah. In a sense, Cyrus sets them free to go back into their homeland. This is a time of great rejoicing. They have repented and God has set them free. It would be of no help to

anyone to return to their homeland unless they return to their God. Home for the believer, is wherever God is.

**Jeremiah 50:5 "They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, [saying], Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant [that] shall not be forgotten."**

“In a perpetual covenant”: This is the New Covenant (summarized in 31:31).

Zion is the city of God but it is also His church. To "repent" means to turn in an opposite direction. This is not only for forgiveness of past sins, but to walk in newness of life in Christ. "Jesus said in the following Scripture in:

Matthew 7:7 "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:"

In verse 5 above they are seeking God and His city. "The perpetual covenant" is the covenant of grace.

Hebrews 8:10-12 "For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:" "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

**Jeremiah 50:6 "My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away [on] the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place."**

All men are compared to sheep that go astray (Isa. 53:6). Here it is applied to the Jews, who are called the Lord's people, by reason of the ancient covenant God made with their fathers. They are said to be lost, either with respect to their captivity, being cast out of the land which God gave them for pastures, or in respect of their idolatry.

"Their shepherds have caused them to go astray": Their civil and ecclesiastical governors have been a cause of it. The former by their wicked commands forcing them to idolatry and superstition. Or at least by their wicked example setting them an example, and by their ill government conniving at them in their idolatrous practices, for which they are gone into captivity. Their priests, and ecclesiastical governors, teaching them such practices. And encouraging them by their own examples, and promising them immunity and security in them.

"They have turned them away on the mountains": Either they have been a cause of their offering sacrifices to idols upon the mountains, or of their being carried into captivity over the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill; either wandering up and down in a strange land, or in their way hither, or running from one species of idolatry to another. They have forgotten their

resting place. They have forgotten the land of Canaan, which I gave them for a resting-place after their toilsome travel in the wilderness. Or (as some would have it), they have forgotten me who is their rest.

Never has there been a people more scattered than the Jews. They are returning to Israel today by the millions. They are coming home, just like these of Judah and Benjamin came home from Babylon. Their leaders (shepherds), had gone astray and taken the people with them. We read in the 34th chapter of Ezekiel that the Lord is going to take the people away from the shepherd that fleeces the sheep. The Lord Himself will be their great Shepherd.

**Jeremiah 50:7 "All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers."**

The king of Babylon was kind to Jeremiah, yet the prophet must foretell the ruin of that kingdom. If our friends are God's enemies, we dare not speak peace to them. The destruction of Babylon is spoken of as done thoroughly. Here is a word for the comfort of the Jews. They shall return to their God first, then to their own land. The promise of their conversion and reformation makes way for the other promises. Their tears flow not from the sorrow of the world, as when they went into captivity, but from godly sorrow. They shall seek after the Lord as their God, and have no more to do with idols. They shall think of returning to their own country. This represents the return of poor souls to God. In true converts, there are sincere desires to attain the end, and constant cares to keep in the way. Their present case is lamented as very sad. The sins of professing Christians never will excuse those who rejoice in destroying them.

The Babylonians did not want to take any blame because of what they did. They did capture them on the orders of God, but they had been deep in false worship themselves. Just because they were used of God to carry out His will on Judah, did not excuse their own sins.

**Jeremiah 50:8 "Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks."**

This, in the literal sense, is a call to the Jews in Babylon, and in other parts of Chaldea, to go out from that place upon the proclamation of Cyrus. And especially to the chief of them, to animate the rest, and set them an example. Such as Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Ezra, and others. And, in the mystical sense, is a call to the people of God in Rome, and the antichristian states, to come out from there, a little before the destruction thereof (as in Rev. 18:4). Which seems to refer to this passage.

"And be as the he goats before the flocks": Which walk stately and nimbly, cheerfully and readily. Without fear and dread, boldly and confidently, and encourage others to follow them. The Targum is, "as princes at the head of their people."

The he goat leads the flock and that is what they are to do. They must flee the city now, before Cyrus' army actually starts fighting.

**Jeremiah 50:9 "For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows [shall be] as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain."**

The desolation that shall be brought upon Babylon is set forth in a variety of expressions. The cause of this destruction is the wrath of the Lord. Babylon shall be wholly desolated; for she hath sinned against the Lord. Sin makes men a mark for the arrows of God's judgments. The mercy promised to the Israel of God, shall not only accompany, but arise from the destruction of Babylon. These sheep shall be gathered from the deserts, and put again into good pasture. All who return to God and their duty, shall find satisfaction of soul in so doing. Deliverances out of trouble are comforts indeed, when fruits of the forgiveness of sin.

These great nations are the group that make up the Persians. Each arrow that the Persians shoot, will find their mark is what is meant by "not return in vain".

**Jeremiah 50:10 "And Chaldea shall be a spoil: all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD."**

The land of the Chaldeans, as the Targum, should become a spoil to the enemy, and be plundered of all its riches and treasures. Not only Babylon principally, but the whole country it was the metropolis of;

"All that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord": For though spoilers are generally insatiable, yet so great should be the riches found in Babylon and in Chaldea, that they should have enough, and desire no more (see Rev. 18:17).

There would be great treasures to spoil from all she had attained, when plundering the nations.

Verses 11-16: Judgment on Babylon is the vengeance of God (verse 15), for her treatment of His people.

**Jeremiah 50:11 "Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage, because ye are grown fat as the heifer at grass, and bellow as bulls;"**

The Lord used the Babylonians to accomplish His purposes, but they remained culpable for their sinful actions, their violence, greed and motivating hunger for power and conquest.

You remember when they attacked Jerusalem, they went much further than the LORD had told them to. They have become fat with the wealth of other nations they defeated. The "grown fat as the heifer at grass" means they have had an abundance of food, while their neighbors have felt famine. "Bellow as bulls" means they have been boasting of their conquests.

**Jeremiah 50:12 "Your mother shall be sore confounded; she that bare you shall be ashamed: behold, the hindermost of the nations [shall be] a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert."**

Your chief City Babylon, or your country, which is the common mother of all the Chaldeans, shall be destroyed. Or:

"Shall be ashamed of you": Who are not able to defend her. The sense here seems a little difficult, because it appears no such strange thing that the hindermost of the nations should be a wilderness. It is therefore probable that the words "shall be" are to be understood before.

"The hindermost of the nations": Our translation supplies them after; so the reading will be, it shall be the hindermost of the nations, a wilderness, etc. That is, Babylon, that hath been so famous, and accounted the head of the nations, shall become the meanest of all nations, a mere wilderness, and a dry land, and a desert.

Not only will Babylon proper be destroyed, but the whole land. The land will be filled with shame. Babylon had been spoken of as one of the wonders of the world. Now that will be no more. It is destroyed. This becomes a desert area as the remains of Sodom and Gomorrah had.

**Jeremiah 50:13 "Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues."**

That is, Babylon; which the Targum expresses. "Because thou, Babylon, hast provoked the Lord;" by their idolatry, luxury, ill usage of his people, and profanation of the vessels of the sanctuary. Therefore, it should be destroyed, and left without an inhabitant in it.

"But it shall be wholly desolate": As it now is. Pausanias says, in his time there was nothing but a wall remaining. And Jerom says, he had it from a brother Elamite, or Persian, that Babylon was then a park or place for royal hunting. And that beasts of every kind were kept within its walls. Of mystical Babylon (see Rev. 16:19).

"Everyone that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues": Any traveler that had seen it in its glory would now be astonished to see the desolation of it. And, by way of scorn and derision, hiss at the judgments of God upon it, and rejoice at them, and shake their head, as the Targum.

The city of Babylon is never built again. The land of Iraq is in the same land as Babylon. Even today there is still astonishment at the destruction. It is also astonishing that it has never been rebuilt.

**Jeremiah 50:14 "Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD."**

This is directed to the Medes and Persians, to dispose of their army in proper places round about the city of Babylon, to besiege it. And to order their instruments of war, fit for that purpose. A convenient manner; since they might be sure of victory. The Lord being wroth with it, and having so severely threatened its ruin.

"All ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows": The Elamites, or Persians, as before observed, were well skilled in archery. And, as Xenophon reports, Cyrus had in his army, when he came to Babylon, a great number of archers and slingers. And the archers are called upon to draw the bow, who were expert at it, and not spare their arrows, since they would everyone do execution (as in Jer. 50:9). And the slingers to "cast their stones at her", for so may be rendered. And thus, it is interpreted by Jarchi and by Kimchi, of casting either arrows or stones.

"For she hath sinned against the Lord": Which brought the wrath of God upon her. And chiefly the ill treatment of his people was the sin against him he resented.

This is a direct statement to the Persian army who is come to destroy Babylon. The punishment comes, because she has sinned against the LORD. The Persians are to be just as aggressive fighting them, as they were fighting Judah and Jerusalem.

**Jeremiah 50:15 "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."**

Either as soldiers use to shout when they fall upon their enemy, or as they use to shout and triumph when they are entered into a city, or when their enemies flee.

"She hath given her hand": Either acknowledging themselves overcome, and yielding themselves to the power of their enemies. Or, as some think, confederating with the Lydians; but the former is more probable.

"Her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down": That is, she is wholly subdued and conquered. As if her walls were thrown down, for literally her walls were not beaten down by Cyrus, for he took the city by surprise.

"For it is the vengeance of the Lord": God is he who brings this vengeance upon Babylon, though it be by your hands.

"As she hath done, do unto her": It is very observable, that there is hardly any sins which the Lord so ordinarily punishes in the like kind, as those which are oftener against the laws of justice and charity. The common fate of cruel and uncharitable men is to meet with others to do to them as they have done to others. Unmerciful men find no mercy (see (Psalm 137:8-9; Jude 1:6-7).

This is quite a statement. The walls around Babylon were wide enough to have chariot races on the top of them. It would really be something for this wall to fall. In fact, there was an inner and an outer wall. Persia is fighting the battle, but this is really the vengeance of the LORD.

**Jeremiah 50:16 "Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land."**

We are told that Babylon was so large a city that within the walls of it there was much ploughed ground. Or else the threatening imports that God would deal more severely with Babylon, than conquerors use to do with places which they conquer. Who used to spare and leave behind them ploughmen, and such as use to till the ground. But in the destruction of Babylon it should not be so.

"They shall turn everyone to his people, and they shall flee everyone to his own land": Not those of other nations, as the Jews, who were detained captives there, as Kimchi thinks. For these were not in such fear of the Persians, nor did they flee because of them. But were let go by them, and sent into their own land honorably. But either such who, of other nations, were come to traffic at Babylon. Or rather the auxiliaries of other nations, who were either hired or forced into the service of Babylon. These, finding the city taken, would make the best of their way into their own country.

This is perhaps speaking of those who had been held captive. You remember, they built houses, and grew gardens, and had vineyards. This is speaking of them fleeing to their homeland which would indicate they were the captives.

Verses 17-20: This section summarized the divine interpretation of Israel's history:

- (1) Suffering and judgment on her (verse 17);
- (2) Judgment on those who afflicted Israel (verse 18);
- (3) Her return in peace and plenty (verse 19); and
- (4) The pardon of her iniquity (verse 20) under Messiah.

**Jeremiah 50:17 "Israel [is] a scattered sheep; the lions have driven [him] away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones."**

Or like a sheep that is frightened and drove from the fold, and is dispersed, and wanders about here and there. Israel includes all the twelve tribes.

"The lions have driven him away": From his own land, and carried him captive, and scattered him among the nations. These lions are afterwards interpreted of the kings of Assyria and Babylon. So the Targum, "kings have removed them;" comparable to lions for their strength, fierceness, and voraciousness.

"First the king of Assyria hath devoured him": Eaten up his flesh; meaning Shalmaneser king of Assyria, who carried captive the ten tribes, that never returned, and therefore said to be devoured.



"And last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones": Or, "deboned him"; took out his bones, all his strength and substance. Or took the flesh off of them, stripped him of all his wealth and riches, reduced him to his bones, and made a mere skeleton of him. We, with Kimchi and Ben Melech, and others, read "broke his bones"; to get the very marrow out, that nothing may be left of him. He took Jerusalem, burnt the temple, and carried captive the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, the strength of Israel. So, between the one and the other, all Israel were like scattered sheep, dispersed among the nations. Nebuchadrezzar was the then reigning king in Babylon when this prophecy was delivered, and therefore called "this Nebuchadrezzar".

Israel in this verse, is speaking of the 12 tribes. The ten tribes, spoken of as Israel had been captured by Assyria. Judah (the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin), are part of the Israel in verse 17 above. They were captured by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. "Lions", just means the attackers.

**Jeremiah 50:18 "Therefore thus saith 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."**

Because of this cruel treatment of his people, who's God he was. And being the Lord of hosts, and able to avenge himself on their enemies, he threatens as follows.

"Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land": Not Nebuchadnezzar, but a successor of his, Belshazzar, who was slain the night Babylon was taken.

"As I have punished the king of Assyria": Not Shalmaneser, that carried the tribes' captive. But a successor of his, Chynilidanus, the last king of Assyria. Who was killed when Nineveh was taken, the metropolis of Assyria, and which was done before this prophecy was delivered. Which is prophesied of in (Jer. 50:19).

This just means that it is God punishing them rather than Persia.

**Jeremiah 50:19 "And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gilead."**

Or "fold", or place of pasturage, for the metaphor of sheep is still continued. Israel designs not the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the Levites. And a few of the other tribes mixed with them only, but all Israel, together with Judah, as appears from (Jer. 50:20). And so, this prophecy had not its full accomplishment at the Jews' return from the Babylonish captivity. But respects their future conversion, when all Israel shall be saved, and they will return to their own land. Kimchi says this refers to time yet to come; which he prefers to the other sense he mentions, of the return of the captivity of Babylon.

"And he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon Mount Ephraim and Gilead. Which, as they were all fruitful places, and had good pasturage, so they belonged to the ten tribes. Which shows that it respects the return of them and the fullness of blessings, both temporal and spiritual, they shall then enjoy.

For the repentance and restoration of future "Israel" (see the note on 23:3).

All of these places, mentioned in the Scripture above, are wonderful places to graze sheep or cattle. Carmel is a beautiful green mountain often mentioned. "Habitation" is their place of permanent dwelling.

**Jeremiah 50:20 "In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and [there shall be] none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve."**

The formula is that which in prophetic language points to the far-off times of the Christ. Their restoration to their earthly homes was but a small thing. That which was to the prophet the great blessing of the future was that it would bring with it the New Covenant of (Jer. 31:31). Pardon and peace, iniquity and sin remembered no more.

"I will pardon them whom I reserve": The latter verb contains the root of the "remnant" which is so prominent in Isaiah (Isa. 1:9; 7:3), and expresses the same thought. "The remnant," the reserved ones, shall be pardoned.

They will be just as if they had never sinned, because they have repented and God has forgiven them. The iniquity will not be covered with animal's blood, but totally done away with.

Hebrews 10:17 "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

**Jeremiah 50:21 "Go up against the land of Merathaim, [even] against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod: waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the LORD, and do according to all that I have commanded thee."**

"Merathaim ... Pekod": This was a dramatic play on words emphasizing cause and effect. The first means "double rebellion" and named a region in southern Babylon near the Persian Gulf; the latter, meaning "punishment", was also in southern Babylon on the east bank of the Tigris River.

This is the only mention in the Bible of Merathaim. It seems not to be a place, but a condition. The word "Merathaim" means double bitterness. It is possibly speaking of the attitude of the Babylonians after their defeat. The word "Pekod" means punishment. It also seems to be a symbolic name for Babylon. The word is mentioned one other time, and it is in connection with the Chaldeans. This is speaking of destroying Babylon.

**Jeremiah 50:22 "A sound of battle [is] in the land, and of great destruction."**

In the land of the Chaldeans, as it is expressed in the Septuagint and Arabic versions. The noise of warriors, the clashing of arms, and sound of trumpets, both of the enemy entered into the land, and of the Chaldeans arming themselves in their own defense.

"And of great destruction": In the same land, or in Babylon, as Abarbanel supplies it. This is the consequent of the former.

This is speaking of that last decisive battle, which destroys Babylon.

Verses 23-28: The Lord had used Babylon as “the hammer of the whole earth” (51:21-23), but now He would wage war on Babylon and command the armies that besieged her (51:1-4). The Lord would bring “vengeance” on Babylon for how its armies had desecrated His holy “temple”.

**Jeremiah 50:23 "How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!"**

“Hammer of the whole earth”: The description was of Babylon’s former conquering force, and God’s breaking the “hammer” He had once used. The fact that God used Babylon as His executioner was no commendation of that nation (compare Hab.1:6-7).

Babylon was like a giant hammer that had come down on the nations around them. Now they are destroyed by the Persians with Cyrus leading them. The hammer is broken.

**Jeremiah 50:24 "I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD."**

Retorting to the stratagem that Cyrus used, in draining the river Euphrates, and marching his army up through it into the midst of the city of Babylon. And took it by surprise, while the inhabitants at night were feasting and reveling. This is said to be a snare laid by the Lord, because it was according to the counsel of his will, and through his directing and overruling providence.

"And thou wast not aware": Of what the enemy had done, of his march into the city, and taking of it. For, as Herodotus and Aristotle report, one part of the city was seized and taken before the other knew anything of it.

"Thou art found, and also caught": As wild beasts in a net, or birds in a snare. The Targum is, "thy sins are sought, and are found, and also thou art taken."

"Because thou hast striven against the Lord": As persons litigate a point with each other in courts of judicature, or as warriors strive against each other in battle. She sinned against the Lord, and offended him. Not only by her idolatry and luxury, but by her oppression of his people, and profaning the vessels of his house. As Belshazzar did, the night Babylon was taken. The Targum is, "for with the people of the Lord thou hast strove."

The snare that was set was a way into the heavily fortified walls of Babylon. They diverted the water and came in through the water ducts. They were in the city before anyone knew what had happened. I personally believe God gave Cyrus this plan of attack. He was with Cyrus for the punishment of Babylon as He had been with Nebuchadnezzar, when He used him to punish Judah.

**Jeremiah 50:25 "The LORD hath opened his armory, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this [is] the work of the Lord GOD of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans."**

Alluding to the manner of kings, who have some particular edifice built for an armory (see SOS 4:4). Wherein are provided and laid up all sorts of armor, small and great, which are fetched out from thence, in time of need. This armory is to be understood of Media and Persia, and other parts, from whence a mighty army, well equipped, was brought by the powerful providence of God. And indeed, the whole world is his armory, from where he can raise up instruments to do his will at pleasure; or, "his treasury"; so the Targum. And some think this is said with reference to the treasure of the Lord's house the king of Babylon had seized upon, and now by way of retaliation the Lord would open his treasury to his ruin.

"And hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation": As a king, when he goes to war, opens his armory, and takes out armor of every kind, both offensive and defensive, swords, spears, shields, etc. So the Lord would now bring the Medes and Persians, well-armed, to be the instruments of his wrath and vengeance on Babylon. Or, "the vessels of his indignation"; having some view to the vessels of the sanctuary, as some think. That the king of Babylon had taken away and profaned. These may well be applied to the vials of wrath poured out on the antichristian states by the angels, called forth out of the temple (Rev. 15:1).

"For this is the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans": Which he decreed and ordered to be done. And which, without his power and providence, could never have been done. Compare with this (Rev. 18:8).

This leaves no doubt where the ability to defeat Babylon came from. God was angry with the Chaldeans, and He is helping the Persians destroy them.

**Jeremiah 50:26 "Come against her from the utmost border, open her storehouses: cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left."**

The forces are mustered and empowered to destroy Babylon. Let them do what God demands, and they shall bring to pass what he threatens. The pride of men's hearts sets God against them, and ripens them apace for ruin. Babylon's pride must be her ruin; she has been proud against the Holy One of Israel. Who can keep those up whom God will throw down?

Earthly monuments cannot withstand God. In this very same area the people had decided to build a tower to heaven against the wishes of God. God confused their language and destroyed their tower. The tower of Babel was in the area we are calling Babylon here. The City was thought of as one of the wonders of the world. God tore it down. It glorified man and not God.

**Jeremiah 50:27 "Slay all her bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation."**

Or, "all her mighty ones", as the Targum and Vulgate Latin version. Her princes and great men, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbanel. Compared to bullocks for their strength, fatness, and fierceness

(see Psalm 22:12). This may well be applied to the slaughter of kings, captains, and mighty men, at the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:18).

"Let them go down to the slaughter": To the place slaughter, as oxen do, insensible, and whether they will or not.

"Woe unto them, for their day is come, the time of their visitation": The time of their destruction, of visiting or punishing them for their sins, appointed by the Lord, which they could not pass. And so a woeful and dreadful time to them.

The bullocks are the males. They were slain so there would be no calves. In battle most of those killed are of the male gender. Perhaps that is what is spoken here.

**Jeremiah 50:28 "The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of his temple."**

"Vengeance of his temple": This refers to their burning the temple in the destruction of Jerusalem (compare 51:11).

They had utterly destroyed the temple and Jerusalem. They had gone further than what God had intended them to do. Now it is their time to be destroyed. The Jews are fleeing back home and carrying with them the story of the destruction of Babylon.

**Jeremiah 50:29 "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."**

"Recompense her": God aimed to bless Israel and curse all who curse her (compare Gen. 12:1-3, Abrahamic Covenant). The judgment in Babylon (as in Hab. Chapter 2), was a repayment in view of Babylon's wrongs as God defends Israel's case (verses 34, 51:36, 56), particularly God's vengeance on her arrogance ("O thou most proud"; compare verses 31-32).

The archers surrounding Babylon shows that it is time for the battle to begin. They killed without regard so they will be killed the same way. "Being proud against the LORD" means she did not stay within the bounds of His instructions.

**Jeremiah 50:30 "Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD."**

Or "surely"; it is the form of an oath, according to Jarchi. Cyrus, when he took Babylon and ordered proclamation to be made that the inhabitants should keep within doors. And that whoever were found in the streets should be put to death, as doubtless many were.

"And all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the Lord": As Belshazzar and his guards were (see Dan. 5:30; compare with Rev. 19:18).

This is exactly what she did to Judah and Jerusalem, so her men will fall in battle as well.

**Jeremiah 50:31 "Behold, I [am] against thee, [O thou] most proud, saith the Lord GOD of hosts: for thy day is come, the time [that] I will visit thee."**

Or, O "pride", or O "man of pride". Intolerably proud, superlatively so, as the kings of Babylon were. As Nebuchadnezzar, and Belshazzar likewise, the present king. So the Targum interprets it of a king, "behold, I send my fury against thee, O wicked king." And is applicable enough to the man of sin. That monster of pride that exalts himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped (2 Thess. 2:4). And therefore, it is no wonder that the Lord is against him, who resists all that are proud. And woe to him and them that he is against.

"For the day is come, the time that I will visit thee": In a way of vindictive wrath and justice, for pride and other (see Jer. 50:27).

We have mentioned before that the time God will visit them, is their day of death. Their pride caused this to come upon them.

**Jeremiah 50:32 "And the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him."**

Or "pride", as before; "the man of pride", who is so proud that he may be called pride itself. The Targum, as before, interprets it a wicked king; and Abarbinel understands it of Belshazzar particularly. Who was slain the night that Babylon was taken. It may be understood of the whole kingdom and monarchy of Babylon, which was a superb state. But all its grandeur and glory was brought down and laid in the dust at once, as mystical Babylon will. When it will be said, "Babylon the great", the proud and the haughty, is fallen (Rev. 18:2).

"And none shall raise him up": The kingdom of Babylon shall not be restored, nor the king of it have any successor, nor the city be rebuilt (compare with this Rev. 18:21).

"And I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him": In Babylon, the metropolis of the kingdom, and in all others round about it. It denotes the utter destruction of the whole monarchy. It may be applied to the burning of Rome with fire, and the ruin of its whole jurisdiction. For, when that is destroyed, the cities of the nations all around shall fall, which belong unto it (see Rev. 18:8).

Pride comes before a fall. They will fall in their pride and not stand up as a city again. They will burn when the city burns.

**Jeremiah 50:33 "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The children of Israel and the children of Judah [were] oppressed together: and all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go."**

"Were oppressed together": Not together in respect of times, for there was one hundred and fifty years difference between the time of Israel's and Judah's captivity. Nor by the same enemy,

Israel was carried away captive by the Assyrians, Judah by the Chaldeans. "Together" in this place signifies no more than that they were both oppressed, or alike oppressed.

"And all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go": And some may think that my prophecies are but flatteries and vain words. For those who have them in their hands are able to keep them, and will not be willing to let them go.

Those of Judah and Israel that were taken, were kept under adverse circumstances. Their captors oppressed them. They did not set them free after a reasonable limit of time. They were like those in Egypt whom the Pharaoh refused to let go.

**Jeremiah 50:34 "Their Redeemer [is] strong; the LORD of hosts [is] his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon."**

"Redeemer": The Old Testament concept of kinsmen-redeemer included the protection of a relative's person and property, the avenging of a relative's murder, the purchase of alienated property and even the marriage of his widow (compare Lev. 25:25; Num. 35:21; Ruth 4:4).

The Lord would deliver the people of Israel, because He is their "Redeemer". In ancient Israel, a "redeemer" was one who acted on behalf of a family member in need (Lev. Chapter 25; Ruth chapters 2-4), and the Lord would act on Israel's behalf because of the family relationship He shared with His chosen people.

God is their Redeemer. He sent the person of Moses to represent Him in delivering them from Egypt. Jesus Christ is the true Redeemer of all the earth. LORD, in the verse above is speaking of Jehovah, the self-existent One. Jesus, in its extended form, means Jehovah Savior. This is the same. There is nothing or no one, so powerful that Jesus cannot deliver them from it.

Verses 35-38: The "sword" is mentioned 5 times (compare Ezek. Chapter 21).

**Jeremiah 50:35 "A sword [is] upon the Chaldeans, saith the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise [men]."**

Or, "shall be" or, "O sword, be thou on the Chaldeans"; that is, the sword of the Medes and Persians. Those that kill with the sword, as the Targum. In the mystic sense, the Christian princes that shall draw the sword against the antichristian states.

"And upon the inhabitants of Babylon": The metropolis of Chaldea; the common people in it, as distinguished from those of high rank and degree following.

"And upon her princes; Belshazzar and his nobles, who were slain the night Babylon was taken.

"And upon her wise men": Prime ministers, politicians, and counsellors of state. Neither high birth nor great wisdom can secure from the sword of the enemy, when it has a commission from God, as it had here.

**Jeremiah 50:36 "A sword [is] upon the liars; and they shall dote: a sword [is] upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed."**

The word here translated liars is by some translated bars, by some liars. And in the Hebrew it hath both significations; which makes some think it is to be understood of the chief men, who are the props, stays, and bars of a place. Whose wisdom God threatens should fail them, so as they should dote, and show themselves fools. Others translating it liars as we do, understand it of their soothsayers and wizards, whom he calls liars. Because they divined false, and saith they should dote, not foreseeing what should be.

"A sword is upon her mighty men": And they shall be dismayed. And though they were full of valiant, mighty men, yet their hearts should fail them when this day came, and all be destroyed amongst the rest.

**Jeremiah 50:37 "A sword [is] upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that [are] in the midst of her; and they shall become as women: a sword [is] upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed."**

Upon the horsemen, and those that rode in chariots": Upon the whole cavalry, which should fall into the enemies' hands, and be cut to pieces (see Rev. 19:18).

"And upon all the mingled people that are in the midst of her": Those of other nations that sojourned in Babylon, or came there for merchandise. The word having, as Kimchi observes, such a signification. Or rather her auxiliaries, troops consisting of other people that were her allies, or in her pay and service.

"And they shall become as women": Timorous, faint hearted, quite dispirited, unable to act, or defend themselves.

"A sword is upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed": Or they that slay with the sword, as the Targum. The soldiers, shall seize upon her treasures, and plunder them. Thus, should she be exhausted of men and money, and become utterly desolate.

The sword that is against the Chaldeans, even though it is in the hands of the Persians, is God's. This sword does not discriminate. Rich and poor, powerful and weak shall feel its cutting blade. The men are helpless as women before this sword. Her treasures shall be cut away from her (Babylon).

**Jeremiah 50:38 "A drought [is] upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it [is] the land of graven images, and they are mad upon [their] idols."**



Some think that this phrase hath a special reference to Cyrus's scheme used in the surprise of Babylon. One part of it was fortified by the great river Euphrates, running on one side, which Cyrus diverted by cutting several channels. Till he had drained it so low, that it became passable for his army to go over. Others think that a want of rain is here threatened.

"For it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols": God gives the reason of this judgment, which was their idolatry, and exceeding zeal for it.

Now we see the true reason for the punishment on Babylon. They worship idols (nothings). God will stop the water of life from flowing, because of their worship of images.

**Jeremiah 50:39 "Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell [there], and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation."**

Of these creatures (see Isa. 13:21-22).

"And the owls shall dwell therein": So mystical Babylon when fallen shall become the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird (Rev. 18:2).

"And it shall be no more inhabited for ever": Neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. Interpreters observe that this was gradually accomplished. It was taken by Cyrus, and made tributary to the Persians. The seat of the empire was removed from it; its walls were demolished by Darius. It was drained both of its inhabitants and its riches through Seleucus Nicator building the city Seleucia near it. In Adrian's time, there was nothing but an old wall left; and in Jerom's time it was a park for the king of Persia to hunt in (see Jer. 50:13; and Isa. 13:20).

This just speaks of the total devastation. Until this day, the city of Babylon has never been rebuilt. There is no city.

**Jeremiah 50:40 "As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbor [cities] thereof, saith the LORD; [so] shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein."**

"As God overthrew Sodom" (compare 50:1). What befell Sodom (compare Gen. chapter 19), was sudden and total destruction, not like the Media Persia takeover, but like an example for the future devastation that will overtake the final Babylon (compare Rev. Chapters 17 and 18).

Sodom and Gomorrah are desert areas. This Babylon will be a desolate area as well. It will be a place not suited to the habitation of man.

Verses 41-46: Compare 6:22-24; 49:19-21. The "lion" is Cyrus.

**Jeremiah 50:41 "Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth."**

"From the north" (Media Persia in 539 B.C.).

The Jewish people always thought of danger coming from the north. Persia was, in fact, made up of several nations.

**Jeremiah 50:42 "They shall hold the bow and the lance: they [are] cruel, and will not show mercy: their voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, [every one] put in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon."**

These were the two usual weapons of soldiers in those countries (Jer. 6:23). The Persians were a cruel, bloody people. These phrases signify no more than that the enemies should come upon Babylon in a terrible manner, and prepared to destroy them.

"They are cruel, and will not show mercy": Not even to infants, but dash them against the stones (Psalm 137:8; Isa. 13:17-18).

"Their voice shall roar like the sea": When there is a tempest on it. This does not design the shout of the soldiers, when beginning the onset in battle, or making an attack upon a city besieged. But the noise of their march, their foot, and horse, and chariots, and the clashing of their army. All which, by reason of their numbers, would be very clamorous and terrible.

"And they shall ride upon horses": The Persians had a large cavalry, their country abounding in horses.

"Everyone put in array like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon": Furnished with armor, and put in a proper disposition, all in rank and file. Well equipped, and full of spirit, prepared to engage in battle, with you, O ye inhabitants of Babylon.

Daughter of Babylon is probably speaking of the city of Babylon.

**Jeremiah 50:43 "The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble: anguish took hold of him, [and] pangs as of a woman in travail."**

The Medes shall not be more prepared to destroy the Babylonians, than they shall be unprepared to make any resistance. As God will animate their enemies, so he will dispirit them, so as they shall faint upon the report of their coming. And be like a woman upon whom strong pangs of travail are.

When they discovered that the aggressor was inside the walls of the city, the king knew all was lost. He feared for his own life. The comparison of a woman in travail is speaking of the suddenness and the severity of the fear and anguish that came upon the king.

**Jeremiah 50:44 "Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation 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? and who will appoint me the time? and who [is] that shepherd that will stand before me?"**

What is said of Nebuchadnezzar coming up against Edom is here said of Cyrus coming up against Babylon. For of a king it is to be understood. As the Targum, "behold, a king with his army shall come up against them, as a lion from the height of Jordan;" (see Jer. 49:19).

"Unto the habitation of the strong": To Babylon; where dwelt the king, his nobles, and his mighty men.

"But I will make them suddenly run away from her": As they did from her king Belshazzar, when Gobrias and Gadates entered the royal palace, and seized upon him.

"And who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her?" Or, "a young man"? Such a one Cyrus was, who, by divine appointment, became master and governor of Babylon.

"And who will appoint me the time?" To enter the lists with me, and litigate the point with me in a court of judicature, or contend with me in battle.

"And who is that shepherd that will stand before me?" Or king? Not Belshazzar, he could not stand before the Lord. So the Targum, "there is no king that hath strength before me." That is, to withstand him, or hinder what he has appointed and ordered to be done (see Jer. 49:19).

This is a repeat of a previous verse. We know that all will stand one at a time, before the Judge of all the earth on judgement day.

**Jeremiah 50:45 "Therefore hear ye the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make [their] habitation desolate with them."**

The same is said in (Jer. 49:20); only instead of Edom, Babylon is here put, and in the next clause.

"And his purposes that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans": Instead of the inhabitants of Teman, the land of the Chaldeans.

"Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out": The weakest and most feeble in the army of Cyrus should be more than a match for any in Babylon, and should draw them out, and devour them, as dogs and wolves the sheep out of the flock.

"Surely he shall make their habitation desolate with them": (see Jer. 49:20).

Babylon is thought of as all wicked cities, and also is thought of as hell in a symbolic way. Just as this literal Babylon is destroyed here, Hell will be thrown into the lake of fire for total destruction.

Revelation 20:14 "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

**Jeremiah 50:46 "At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations."**

It being so sudden and unexpected, and so very astonishing.

"And the cry is heard among the nations": That Babylon is fallen. Which, as applied to mystical Babylon, will be matter of joy to some, and of lamentation to others (see Rev. 14:8).

All I can say, is great is the fall of physical Babylon and spiritual Babylon. Both of them affected the whole earth.

### **Jeremiah Chapter 50 Questions**

1. Who is this prophecy against?
2. What is meant by "declare among the nations"?
3. We see from this, that Jeremiah did not side in with the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Even though judgement begins at the house of God, it reaches whom?
5. What are the names "Bel" and "Merodach"?
6. What happens to the statues of their false gods?
7. Who heads the army that comes from the north against Babylon?
8. When will the city of Babylon be rebuilt?
9. When does verse 4 occur?
10. In a sense, who sets the tribe of Judah that were captives free from Babylon?
11. They have repented of their sin, and \_\_\_\_\_ has set them free.
12. It would be of no help to anyone to return to their homeland, if they did not return to their \_\_\_\_\_.
13. In verse 5 Zion is the \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_.

14. What is the "perpetual covenant"?
15. There has never been a people more scattered than the \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Just because they were used of God, does not excuse their own \_\_\_\_\_.
17. These great nations make up the \_\_\_\_\_.
18. What does the statement "grown fat as the heifer at grass" mean?
19. Why is Babylon not to be inhabited again?
20. What happens to the giant walls of Babylon?
21. How wide were these walls of Babylon?
22. Who is the sower they cut off?
23. What happens to Israel?
24. What do Carmel, Bashan, Ephraim, and Gilead have in common?
25. What is "Merathaim"?
26. What does "Pekod" mean?
27. How did they penetrate the walls of Babylon?
28. The city was thought of as one of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world.
29. What do the archers surrounding the city show us?
30. What happens to the city?
31. Who is the great Redeemer?
32. LORD in verse 34 is who?
33. The sword against the Chaldeans is whose?
34. What is the real reason for God destroying them?
35. What do Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Babylon have in common?
36. Who is the daughter of Babylon?
37. What does Babylon symbolize?
38. Who does Babylon affect?

39.