

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 332 – Against Babylon Through Thus Shall Babylon Sink (Jeremiah 51:1-64)

1. What did God say He was going to raise up against the golden cup?

God was going to raise up a “destroying wind” against the golden cup [Babylon; vs. 7]: *“(1) Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will raise up against Babylon, and against them that dwell in the midst of them that rise up against me, a destroying wind; (2) And will send unto Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land: for in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about. (3) Against him that bendeth let the archer bend his bow, and against him that lifteth himself up in his brigandine: and spare ye not her young men; destroy ye utterly all her host. (4) Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and they that are thrust through in her streets. (5) For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel. (6) Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence. (7) Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad” (Jeremiah 51:1-7).*

- Similar discussion two chapters ago (**Jeremiah 49:36-38**).
- This is imagery of judgment blowing in (i.e. **Hosea 13:11-16**).
- The fanners is more imagery (**Isaiah 41:11-16**).
- The armies of the Chaldeans are no match against God's will (**Isaiah 45:9**).
- Though God sifted Israel, He did not forsake them utterly (**Amos 9:8-9**).
- Israel was told to get out of town when God was going to destroy Babylon (**Jeremiah 50:8** and **Zechariah 2:6-7**).
- God's vengeance renders recompense (**Ezekiel 11:21**).
- Babylon was the golden cup that God filled with His vengeance and poured out on sinful nations (**Jeremiah 25:9-27**). *Now, the tables have turned as Babylon's disobedience to God is being paid for in this prophetic chapter (**Jeremiah 50:29**).

2. Did the destruction of Babylon show God's power over men and idols?

Yes: *“(8) Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. (9) We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies. (10) The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God. (11) Make bright the arrows; gather the shields: the Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it; because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple. (12) Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon, make the watch strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the ambushes: for the Lord hath both devised and done that which he spake against the inhabitants of Babylon. (13) O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness. (14) The Lord of hosts hath sworn*

by himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillers; and they shall lift up a shout against thee. (15) He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding. (16) When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens; and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. (17) Every man is brutish by his knowledge; every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. (18) They are vanity, the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish” (Jeremiah 51:8-18).

- Sudden fall and destruction are things God certainly was willing to bring about upon the disobedient (**Deuteronomy 7:4** and **Proverbs 6:14-15**).
- No one could save the Chaldeans from the Lord’s judgment (**Psalms 50:22**).
- Now it is time to return to Zion and praise God for His work in deliverance, judgment, etc. (**I Chronicles 16:24**, **Psalms 9:14**, **Psalms 75:1**, and **Psalms 102:19-21**).
- The call to the Medes and preparation for them to fight His battle against Babylon for the sake of His people Israel (**Isaiah 45:1-5**).
- In comparison to man and idols, whom could possibly stand against the Lord or the people He choose to empower (**Psalms 135:1-21**).

3. How was Israel different than other nations?

They belonged to the Lord and were His rod, axe, etc.: “(19) The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things: and Israel is the rod of his inheritance: the Lord of hosts is his name. (20) Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms; (21) And with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider; (22) With thee also will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces old and young; and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid: (23) I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flock; and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers” (Jeremiah 51:19-23).

- The portion of Jacob [Israel] was the Lord (**Jeremiah 10:16** and **Lamentations 3:24**).
- Israel was God’s people, His tool, etc. (**Exodus 19:5-6**, **I Samuel 17:26**, **Psalms 74:2**, **Psalms 135:4**, **Micah 4:13**, and **Zechariah 9:13-14**).
- On the other hand, when God was NOT with them they were easy prey for their enemies (**Numbers 14:42**).

4. Why was God bringing His wrath against Babylon?

For what they did, in going too far against God’s will, to His people Israel: “(24) And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the Lord. (25) Behold, I am

against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain. (26) And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the Lord. (27) Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillers. (28) Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion. (29) And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. (30) The mighty men of Babylon have forborn to fight, they have remained in their holds: their might hath failed; they became as women: they have burned her dwellingplaces; her bars are broken. (31) One post shall run to meet another, and on messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, (32) And that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted. (33) For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; The daughter of Babylon is like a threshingfloor, it is time to thresh her: yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come. (34) Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out. (35) The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Zion say; and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. (36) Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry. (37) And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwellingplace for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant. (38) They shall roar together like lions: they shall yell as lions' whelps. (39) In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the Lord. (40) I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with he goats. (41) How is Sheshach taken! and how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! (42) The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. (43) Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby. (44) And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall" (Jeremiah 51:24-44).

- **Psalms 137:1-9, Jeremiah 50:29, and Daniel 5:1-31.**

5. When Babylon was to fall, what were the people of God supposed to do?

Come out from the midst of her: "(45) My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord. (46) And lest

your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumour that shall be heard in the land; a rumour shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler. (47) Therefore, behold, the days come, that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her. (48) Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for Babylon: for the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the Lord. (49) As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth” (Jeremiah 51:45-49).

- We discussed this in verse 6 of this chapter.
- Don't faint (**Isaiah 40:31**).
- The message – their judgment is coming (**Jeremiah 25:12**).
- The redemption of God's people and His righteous judgment is reason for rejoicing (**I Chronicles 16:23, Psalms 67:4, and Isaiah 49:13**).
- v. 49 may be better understood as “As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the land” (ASV). Cf. **Isaiah 3:10-11**.

6. For those who followed God's instructions and escaped the sword, what were they supposed to have in their minds and what were they to have cover their faces?

Jerusalem was to come into their minds and the reproach and shame that should be upon them for what had happened when strangers entered into the Lord's house. This is a basic statement of remember from where the past failures had come from: “(50) *Ye that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still: remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind. (51) We are confounded, because we have heard reproach: shame hath covered our faces: for strangers are come into the sanctuaries of the Lord's house” (Jeremiah 51:50-51).*

- “Let Jerusalem come into your mind “ (cf. **Lamentations 1:7**).
- Shame (**Psalms 44:13-16 and Jeremiah 3:25**).

7. What did God say concerning the built up images, strength, leaders, and walls of Babylon?

They all were to fall: “(52) *Wherefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will do judgment upon her graven images: and through all her land the wounded shall groan. (53) Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the Lord. (54) A sound of a cry cometh from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans: (55) Because the Lord hath spoiled Babylon, and destroyed out of her the great voice; when her waves do roar like great waters, a noise of their voice is uttered: (56) Because the spoiler is come upon her, even upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken, every one of their bows is broken: for the Lord God of recompences shall surely requite. (57) And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the*

King, whose name is the Lord of hosts. (58) Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary” (Jeremiah 51:52-58).

- The pride of nations oft deceives them (**Obadiah 1:1-4**).
- The LORD spoiled them, brought down their mighty ones, idols, etc. (**Isaiah 13:1-14:23**).
- The walls, gates, etc. burned (**Jeremiah 51:30**; cf. **Psalms 97:1-3**).

8. What did Jeremiah command Seraiah to do?

Take the prophesy about Babylon into captivity with him, read it, see what the future held, and then toss it into the river: *“(59) The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah into Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And this Seraiah was a quiet prince. (60) So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words that are written against Babylon. (61) And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words; (62) Then shalt thou say, O Lord, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever. (63) And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: (64) And thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall be weary. Thus far are the words of Jeremiah” (Jeremiah 51:59-64).*

- Seraiah brother of Baruch (**Jeremiah 32:12-16**, **Jeremiah 43:6**, and **Jeremiah 45:1**).
- He was a quiet [peacefully, eased] prince taken to Babylon in the fourth year of Zedekiah’s reign (**II Chronicles 36:18**).
- Jeremiah’s writing of the prophecies against Babylon and thus the freeing of Israel (**Jeremiah 30:2-3**).
- Writings of future judgments were to cause fear (**Habakkuk 2:2-3**).
- To be read when he went into Babylon like he did for others (**Jeremiah 29:1-12**).
- We see the throwing of prophesy into water in reference to the mighty nation of Rome, referenced as Babylon symbolically, in the book of Revelation (**Revelation 18:21**). *The two are only related symbolically. Literal Babylon fell in O.T. times. All O.T. prophecies were long fulfilled by the time Revelation was penned (**Matthew 5:17-18**).