

Message #54

Jeremiah 50:1-46

We come now to two of the longest chapters in the book of Jeremiah and they both have one central theme - **Babylon is going to be targeted by God for judgment and will be completely destroyed.**

Jeremiah specifically prophecies of a time which he says is “in those days and at that time” (v. 4) when Israel will be nationally traveling to her Promised Land and the covenant God made with Israel will be fulfilled forever.

This prophecy goes far beyond prophecy about the Medes and Persians who conquered the Babylonians; this prophecy takes us to a future time when Israel will have her Kingdom.

Other than Jerusalem, no city in the Bible commands as much attention as Babylon. **We specifically know that these prophecies were not all fulfilled in Jeremiah’s day because this same proper noun Babylon shows up in the book of Revelation.**

There are four major prophetic passages in the Bible that specifically and graphically set forth what God will do to Babylon. **Two chapters in the O.T. are Jeremiah 50 & 51. Two chapters in the N.T. are Revelation 17 & 18.**

In the Bible, Babylon is used in four different ways:

- 1) It refers to a nation - modern day Iraq.
- 2) It refers to a literal city. Located 55 miles south of Baghdad, Iraq.
- 3) It refers to a major political power that dominates God’s people, headed by one leader.
- 4) It refers to a false system of religion.

In fact, just the many false Babylonian gods show how corrupt it is:

- A. Bel - Jer. 50:2; 51:44
- B. Marduk - Jer. 50:2
- C. Nebo - Is. 46:1
- D. Succoth-benoth - II Kings 17:30
- E. Tammuz - Ez. 8:14

Now the king that brought Babylon into the national historical limelight was Nebuchadnezzar. As we have seen in Jeremiah, God permitted Nebuchadnezzar to conquer the world and take His people captive and destroy Jerusalem as judgment against His own people.

Now God has news for Babylon. **Verse 1** says the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah concerning what would happen to Babylon and its land. According to **verse 2**, what God predicts here He wants proclaimed to the nations.

Now some of the things that are predicted to happen did somewhat happen, but not all the things. So what these Chapters in Jeremiah and the two in Revelation tell us is that much of this is futuristic.

GOD VERY CAREFULLY AND VERY SPECIFICALLY PREDICTS THE HORRIBLE JUDGMENT HE WILL POUR OUT ON BABYLON AND HE WANTS THIS PROCLAIMED TO ALL THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD.

There are 25 specific prophecies given in this chapter:

Prophecy #1 – All idolatrous religion and religious artifacts will be totally destroyed. **50:2b**

This has not occurred yet. In fact, during the Gulf War, religious artifacts were protected.

Prophecy #2 – A powerful nation from the north will totally obliterate Babylon leaving no inhabitant. **50:3**

Now the initial nation from the north that came into Babylon to replace them was Medo/Persia. They were the ones initially used by God to remove the Babylonian power from being dominant. This conquest was predicted and described by Daniel in Daniel 5.

Now the text specifically says that there will be “no inhabitant” left in the land. That has never occurred yet. Some general key time elements pertaining to Babylon (Iraq) are important to see here on this. We can track history and at no point has this part of world had “no inhabitant:”

- 1) Sumerians invented writing and the wheel in this part of the world - BC 3500 - 3200
- 2) The Akkadians conquer the Sumerians under Sargon in Iraq BC 2330
- 3) The Assyrians conquer northern Iraq in BC 1900
- 4) Nebuchadnezzar becomes king of Babylon/Iraq BC 604
- 5) Cyrus the Great of the Persian Empire conquers Babylon in BC 539
- 6) Alexander the Great of Greece conquers the Persian Empire and takes Babylon BC 330
- 7) The Roman Empire under Trajan captures southern Iraq in AD 116
- 8) Arab Muslims conquer Iraq in AD 762
- 9) Baghdad is captured by the Turks in AD 1055
- 10) Iraq is conquered by the Ottoman Empire AD 1534 - divides Iraq - Mosul, Basra, Baghdad
- 11) WWI ends and Iraq is controlled by Britain AD 1919-1920
- 12) Iraq gains independence from Britain AD 1932
- 13) Iraq joins Arab league AD 1945
- 14) Iraq nationalizes and forms a government AD 1972
- 15) Saddam Hussein becomes dictator AD 1979
- 16) Iraq invades Kuwait AD 1990
- 17) Persian Gulf war begins, and Iraq is forced out of Kuwait AD 1991-1992
- 18) Saddam Hussein is executed for war crimes AD 2006
- 19) New Iraq government formed AD 2010
- 20) US Troops leave Iraq officially AD 2011

Dr. John Walvoord summed it up well when he wrote: “Because Babylon continued to figure in biblical history and prophecy unto the time of the second coming of Christ, some of these prophecies may have their ultimate fulfillment at that time (cf. Rev. 17-18)”: (*The Prophecy Knowledge Handbook*, p. 151).

Prophecy #3 – At the time this happens, all national Israel will be sorry for her sin and will seek the LORD. **50:4**

What is predicted to happen here is that both Israel and Judah will weep over their sin and seek the Lord. That certainly has not happened yet. Jesus predicted that He will not come until everyone in the nation says, “blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord” (Matt. 23:39).

Prophecy #4 – At the time this happens, national Israel will turn their faces to Zion and want to return to her land to share in the fulfillment of God’s covenant. **50:5**

There have been various times in history when Jewish people long to go to their Promised Land. But what is described here is a time when all Jews of the world are wanting to return because they want to join themselves to the Lord and the eternal covenant God made with Israel. So, when this is happening to Iraq, Israel will be restored and forgiven.

Prophecy #5 – At the time this happens, Israel will realize she has been led astray by false leaders who caused them to forget the importance of a relationship with God. **50:6**

We know one of the first things that will happen when God’s program swings back toward Israel is that there will be the surfacing of false Christ’s or false Messiahs (Matt. 24:5; Rev. 6:1-2).

Prophecy #6 – At the time this happens, Israel will be under great persecution from many adversaries as a result of their own sin. **50:7**

This will be a time when all people will be Israel’s adversaries and enemies.

Prophecy #7 – At the time this happens, God’s people need to get away from the Babylonian area. **50:8**

There are still a few hundred Jewish people who live in Iraq. When this prophecy is fulfilled, they will leave it.

Prophecy #8 – At the time this happens, many nations from the north will participate in destroying Babylon. **50:9**

In our assessing Iraq history, it is true that various forces have come against Iraq, but mostly one at a time. When this prophecy is fulfilled “a horde of great nations” will come from the north.

Prophecy #9 – At the time this happens, the Babylonian land will be plundered and the people who plunder her will reap plenty. **50:10**

Again there are things stated here that have not yet occurred.

Prophecy #10 – At the time this happens, God will cause this because of what Babylon did to His people. **50:11-12**

Nowhere in history has Iraq ever become a people greatly ashamed or a wilderness of parched land. This will occur at the time of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Prophecy #11 – At the time this happens, there will be no one left in the land as the result of the wrath of God. **50:13**

We would challenge anyone to find in history where this has been fulfilled.

Prophecy #12 – At the time this happens, God will cause many nations from all directions to take vengeance on Babylon. **50:14-15**

Nations will come at her from the north, south, east and west.

Prophecy #13 – At the time this happens, after the total destruction, each will return to his own people. **50:16**

This is a very interesting statement because things will be so bad in Iraq that people will want to go back to the land of their origination. There are many who are half-Jews and half-Persians or Iranians, and they will want to go back home when this judgment hits.

Prophecy #14 – At the time this happens, it will be a prelude to God bringing Israel back to her Promised Land. **50:17-19**

What is promised here is that when this happens, God will bring Israel back to the Promised Land and all foreigners will be out of the land.

Prophecy #15 – At the time this happens, there will be no sin found anywhere in Israel. **50:20**

If you want one verse that proves this has not happened yet, it is right here.

Prophecy #16 – At the time this happens, there will be total destruction and slaughter for all Babylon. **50:21-27**

Merathaim and Pekod were regions in Babylon. Merathaim was in southern Iraq near the mouth of the Euphrates River. Pekod was in eastern Iraq. God will completely destroy these areas.

Prophecy #17 – At the time this happens, there will be no escape. **50:28-30**

Israel will hear about the horrible things happening to those in Iraq. The Babylonians have done bad things to Israel, so Israel will hear about the bad things God is doing to Iraq.

Prophecy #18 – At the time this happens, God will target its leader and destroy his cities.
50:31-32

There are at least 126 main cities in Iraq right now. It is stated in these verses that when this is fulfilled God will “devour all” of the cities in this part of the world.

Prophecy #19 – At the time this happens, the Redeemer of Israel will destroy Babylon and all Israel’s enemies. **50:33-37**

Israel will be under tremendous oppression when this happens. The Redeemer, who is none other than Jesus Christ, will take care of this Himself.

Prophecy #20 – At the time this happens, God will dry up the waters. **50:38**

One of the main features of the Tribulation is that God will dry up water supplies so we believe this is when this will be specifically fulfilled.

Prophecy #21 – At the time this happens, the land will never be inhabited by people, but will be inhabited by wild animals. **50:39-40**

As we have pointed out, we are able to track history from this part of the world back to 3500 BC. There has never been a point in time when this land has not been inhabited. But the time will come.

Prophecy #22 – At the time this happens, world armies from the north and all over the world will converge to the area. **50:41**

God will bring many nations to this area for the purpose of destroying it.

Prophecy #23 – At the time this happens, no military power will show any mercy. **50:42**

Observe the emphasis on daughter of Babylon. That refers to people who are offshoots of the original. When we were in the war with Iraq, we were very merciful according to the war rules of the Geneva Convention. When this occurs, there will be no mercy.

Prophecy #24 – At the time this happens, the king of Babylon will be totally distressed and terrified. **50:43**

The political leader of Iraq right now is Barham Salih. When this occurs, whoever the leader is, he will be shaking. We know when Babylon was taken by the Persians, the king Belshazzar was throwing a party (Daniel 5) so he was not a complete fulfillment of this.

Prophecy #25 – At the time this happens, the Lion of God will destroy Babylon and shake the world. **50:44-46**

Notice **verse 45** says this is the plan of the Lord.

The destruction of Babylon is a very important event in Biblical prophecy. At the end of the Tribulation just before the time when Jesus Christ returns, these things will literally occur.