

Jer. 51:1 ¶ 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;

Jer. 51:2 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.

Jer. 51:3 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.

Jer. 51:4 Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and *they that are thrust through in her streets*.

Because of the length and repetitive nature of the prophecies declared against Babylon and the fact that it is addressed in both Old and New Testament scripture, I think speaks to the importance of these prophecies. Every prophecy of God is important, but some obviously stand out in more significance than others.

Babylon is known as the birthplace of false religion and of the first organized rebellion against God after the flood. That fact alone makes her accountable for the influence of all false religions and for all organized rebellion against God, which would include the mistreatment of His people.

I have heard scripture described as a tale of two cities—Jerusalem and Babylon—and I believe a case can be made to support that description. Jerusalem as representing true religion before God and Babylon as representing all false religions. Sadly, Jerusalem's testimony is also replete with the consequences of choosing to act in disobedience to God.

This section of verses continues with the theme of the future complete destruction of Babylon. The picture this time is that of a destroying wind, like the hot and powerful desert sirocco. Babylon is pictured being emptied like the chaff that is blow away when winnowing the harvest. This reminds me of a verse in the Psalms.

Psalms 1:4 "The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away."

No one is to be spared. The picture is that of so many killed that they fill the streets.

I hate to keep repeating myself, but this was not the case when Cyrus took control of Babylon. I believe the main thrust of this prophecy is yet future.

Jer. 51:5 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.*

The point is being emphasized that though God is judging Israel and Judah for their sins, He is not breaking covenant with them. In fact, He is acting according to the conditional covenant made with them through Moses that works in conjunction with the covenant made with Abraham. In the covenant made

through Moses the people were promised blessing for obedience and cursing for choosing to disobey and break covenant.

Deuteronomy 30:15–19 “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:”

Jer. 51:6 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.

Jer. 51:7 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.

These verses immediately brought to mind other verses from my study of Revelation.

*Revelation 17:4–6 “And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, **having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:** And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.”*

*Revelation 18:3–5 “For **all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication**, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”*

The context indicates that the call is for God’s people to flee for their life from Babylon because the time of God’s vengeance against her has come.

“Recompence” is a reference to getting what she deserves.

It is interesting to note that Babylon is identified as a “golden cup in the LORD’s hand.” The golden cup is a reference to her influence. That she has made the nations drunk is a reference to the effectiveness of her influence.

It is always hard to understand God’s use of the wicked in judging and purifying His people—both Israel and the church. I am reminded that it is through

adversity that the faith of God's people grows stronger and impostors are identified.

Zechariah 13:7–9 “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.”

Luke 22:31–32 “And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

Acts 15:8–9 “And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.”

Zechariah is speaking of the effect that the 70th week of Daniel will have on Israel. He is declaring that a full third of the Jewish people will emerge from that refining fire in righteousness and faith.

Luke is recording the words of Jesus to Peter regarding his coming trial of faith when confronted as being one of Jesus' followers during the time that he is on trial. Peter denied his Lord, but his faith emerged stronger than ever. His experience produced repentance and a unique reference through which he could strengthen the faith of others.

The strength of Peter's faith was in great evidence as he uttered the words recorded in Acts. He had personally experienced the power of the Holy Spirit as a purifying force of his faith.

Jer. 51:8 Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed.

Jer. 51:9 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.

Again the words echo from previous studies.

Isaiah 21:9 “And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.”

Revelation 14:8 “And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

In the passage from Isaiah the Lord has issued a call to the Medes and Persians to come and conquer Babylon, and a runner has come to tell the watchmen in Jerusalem that Babylon has fallen. This would appear to be the near application of this message. It wouldn't surprise me, however, to learn that there is similar application to the destruction of Babylon yet to come being heralded in the verses from Revelation.

In context with previous verses I believe that the primary application is yet future. The indication is that the nations would like to see Babylon healed, but that is not possible. They realize that her judgment has come from heaven. Why would they bemoan her fall? Because her fall has affected their prosperity.

Revelation 18:9–11 “And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more....”

Jer. 51:10 The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our Gods

I think it is fair to say that this is a valid response from both the Jews who were in captivity in Babylon and the future remnant of Jews that will suffer under the rule of the Antichrist. They are eager to praise God's judgment against Babylon and view it as victory for righteousness.

Jer. 51:11 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.

This verse is again confirming that God chose to use the Medes and Persians to conquer Babylon. At the time, Darius the Mede was the acting ruler.

Daniel 5:30–31 “In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.”

The purpose of God's judgment is declared to be an act of vengeance; an act that only God is authorized to take.

Psalms 94:1 “O LORD God, to whom vengeance longeth; O God, to whom vengeance longeth, shew thyself.”

Romans 12:19 “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”

Only God possesses the authority and moral integrity to act in vengeance according to a non-biased or self-serving view of right and wrong. Point is made

that God will be avenging Babylon's destruction of His temple through the kings of the Medes. Again, this would be referring to the near fulfillment of this prophecy.

Jer. 51:12 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.

Jer. 51:13 O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, *and* the measure of thy covetousness.

Verse 12 seems to be a call to Babylon to prepare for attack because the LORD has planned and implemented His judgment in vengeance against her. I think it is important to note that the wording is that of a done deed.

As He continued to address the people of Babylon in verse 13, my mind again made a direct connection with Revelation 17.

Revelation 17:1 "And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters...."

John goes on to identify the "many waters" as peoples and nations.

Revelation 17:15 "And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."

In other words, Babylon's riches have come at the expense of the nations over whom she has ruled. I believe this again to be applicable to both the Babylon of the 6th century BC as well as to Babylon of the 21st century (if I am reading the signs of the time correctly).

The last phrase in verse 13 makes me think of the following verses from Revelation that declare that Babylon is going to be judged in accordance with her treatment of others.

Revelation 18:5-6 "For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double."

Jer. 51:14 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.

Jer. 51:15 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.

Jer. 51:16 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.

The comparison of men to *caterpillers* is a reference to destroying locusts. The LORD is saying that He is going to see that Babylon is overrun by the enemy.

These verses are emphasizing the fact that though the enemy will come in the form of men, they are executing God's judgment according to His will.

The LORD identifies Himself as the Creator of earth and heaven through His wisdom and understanding. He declares Himself to be the power and authority behind the "waters in the heavens" (rain, ice and snow), the clouds, the lightning and the winds—in other words, the forces of nature. The creation is an awe-inspiring testimony to God's knowledge, judgment, and purposes. Scientists are still mystified at what holds the atom together and the intricate processes at work in every cell; there is still much they do not know regarding the far reaches of space and the depths of the oceans.

Jer. 51:17 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.

Jer. 51:18 They *are* vanity, the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish.

I liked the NLT translation of the first part of verse 17: "Compared to him, all people are foolish and have no knowledge at all!" This is evidenced by man's continuing efforts to make gods of his own to worship. These false gods are powerless on behalf of those who make them and worship them. Babylon's idols will be destroyed by the enemy along with the people.

Jer. 51:19 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.

Jer. 51:20 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;

Jer. 51:21 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;

Jer. 51:22 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;

Jer. 51:23 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.

Jer. 51:24 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.

Israel's God, "the portion of Jacob," is all powerful in contrast. He is the Creator of all things, including His chosen tribe or portion (from the Hebrew for "inheritance") among the nations on planet earth.

The commentators seem to agree that this section of verses is referencing either Nebuchadnezzar or Cyrus. That surprised me, because my first thoughts were that the context was identifying Israel as the weapon He would use to bring judgment upon Babylon. I am sure that the captives in Babylon would have made application to Cyrus, but from my perspective today I believe the primary context is yet future. It is through Israel that Messiah was birthed, and it is as the

King of kings who will rule from Jerusalem that He will return in judgment upon Babylon, the kingdom of Antichrist. The prophet Isaiah talked about Jesus as Israel; following is an excerpt from my journal in which I believe the context identifies Jesus as Israel.

Isaiah 49:3 "And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

Jesus knew from the beginning that He would be a special instrument in the hand of His Father and that He would bring great glory to His Father. In fact, He would be the testimony to the nations of the power of God in the life of a person or a nation that was obedient to the commands of the Father. He represented the true Israel (one that prevails with God) that would follow God in faith and obedience. Jesus was the Father's beautiful secret weapon brought forth at just the right moment in time to defeat the enemy. [end excerpt]

Jer. 51:25 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.
Jer. 51:26 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.

These verses reference Babylon as a "destroying mountain," a kingdom that had been formed by wreaking destruction throughout the earth. God is declaring that He will exact judgment on Babylon. As I looked at the Hebrew, it was a statement of removing Babylon as a stronghold by destroying it with fire. This again connects with the prophesied destruction of Babylon in Revelation.

Revelation 18:8–9 "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning...."

Point is made in verse 26 that not one stone will remain that can be used to reestablish a foundation for the rebuilding of Babylon. Babylon is to be destroyed never to rise again. Again, this goes hand-in-hand with the words of the Revelator.

Revelation 18:21 "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."

Jer. 51:27 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 caterpillars.

Jer. 51:28 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. Jer. 51:29 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.

The *standard* is a banner signaling a gathering together for war. The call is to go out to the kingdoms of Ararat (Armenia), Minni (another Armenian province), Ashchenaz (descendants of Japheth around the Black Sea), and the kings of the Medes (though a combined kingdom of Media-Persia, the Medes held the kingship when Babylon was conquered by Cyrus the Persian). I think these all identify stronger factions of those comprising the Medo-Persian empire.

Verse 29 declares that the land will “tremble and sorrow” in response to the judgment that comes at the hands of these conquerors. The fact that this judgment ends with Babylon desolated and without inhabitant tells me that the prophet is speaking with both near and far fulfillment—much as Isaiah did in chapter 61 in the section that Christ read from in the synagogue. When Babylon was conquered at the end of the 70-year captivity of the Jews, the land did not become desolate or without inhabitant. This part of the prophecy has to be referencing the future destruction described in Revelation 17-18. I have wondered when studying other sections of scripture whether the Medes might once again play a part when God executes that future judgment of Babylon.

Jer. 51:30 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.

Jer. 51:31 One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at *one* end,

Jer. 51:32 And that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted.

I think the NLT is a bit easier to understand: *Her mightiest warriors no longer fight. They stay in their barracks. Their courage is gone. They have become as fearful as women. The invaders have burned the houses and broken down the city gates. Messengers from every side come running to the king to tell him all is lost! All the escape routes are blocked. The fortifications are burning, and the army is in panic.*

Chuck Smith’s commentary on this section was interesting: “... this is a fascinating prophecy, because though Belshazzar was in the city of Babylon, his father was in charge of the Babylonian troops that were out in the fields and was not in the city of Babylon. Of course, when Babylon fell, they had to carry the news to him that the city was destroyed. And, of course, it totally demoralized him and his troops and the Medo-Persian conquest was then complete. But here he tells of how the news will be carried to the king by, of course, these messengers, one running to meet the other and carrying the post and the message.”

Jer. 51:33 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.

This verse is another statement of the LORD's intention to judge Babylon. She is pictured as a threshingfloor, a place where the chaff of the grain is blown away after the harvest, but the time of the harvest is yet future. I think the reference to the "daughter of Babylon" is a reference to the city of Babylon as the center of the kingdom, the "apple of the eye."

Jer. 51:34 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.

Jer. 51:35 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.

These verses are expressing the view of the Jews who had suffered greatly at the hand of Nebuchadnezzar and his armies. It expresses their desire that Babylon be made to suffer in the same way that she has caused the Jews to suffer.

Jer. 51:36 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.

Jer. 51:37 And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwellingplace for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant.

Jer. 51:38 They shall roar together like lions: they shall yell as lions' whelps.

Jer. 51:39 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.

Jer. 51:40 I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with he goats.

Again we encounter this strange dichotomy. Babylon is serving God in bringing judgment upon His people, yet He declares He will avenge the treatment His people have received at the hands of the Babylonians. This goes hand-in-hand with God's omniscience and how He formed His plans and purposes to work within the framework of choice with which He had gifted man. Even though acting in accordance with God's purposes, they were also acting according to their own sinful desires. They were still accountable for their actions. The LORD declares that Babylon will yet be brought to a place of utter destruction without a single human inhabitant. Point is made that He is ever in control; HE will bring them like lambs to the slaughter to meet their destruction.

Adam Clarke summarized nicely the near application of this portion of the prophecy: "It was on the night of a feast day, while their hearts were *heated* with wine and revelry, that Babylon was taken; see Daniel 5:1-3. This feast was held in honour of the goddess *Sheshach*, (or perhaps of *Bel*,) who is mentioned (Jeremiah 51:41) as being taken with her worshippers. As it was in the *night* the city was

taken, many had retired to rest, and *never awoke*; slain in their beds, *they slept a perpetual sleep.*"

How blessed to know that we can trust in the character of God as we see history unfold. We know that evil actions of men are a result of rejecting the Lordship of our Creator—from following the desires of the flesh and falling for the deceptions of the enemy. In spite of seemingly overwhelming odds, the LORD has promised that the one who places faith in Him can claim His promise that He will work everything that He allows to touch their lives for good.

Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

**Jer. 51:41 How is Sheshach taken! and how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!
Jer. 51:42 The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.**

Jer. 51:43 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.

"Sheshach" = According to Easton's Dictionary, this is a symbolic name of Babylon that substituted Hebrew letters when spelling the name according to a secret code.

There is no denying the parallel thought in Revelation.

Revelation 18:18–21 "And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."

Adam Clarke reminded me that Babylon was one of the wonders of the ancient world—"the praise of the whole earth," and I think she will once again rise to great prominence before her complete and final destruction.

Jer. 51:44 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.

The NIV Commentary sums this verse up as follows: "Two things Babylon was famous for were the god Bel and the great wall of the city. Bel will be compelled to disgorge the nations he has swallowed, and the great wall will collapse."

Jer. 51:45 My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD.

This verse also has a parallel in Revelation and will find fulfillment during the tribulation.

Revelation 18:4–5 “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”

This was not the message for the people of God when Babylon was conquered by Cyrus. In fact, God had prophesied through Isaiah that Cyrus had been chosen by God to ensure the Jews were allowed to return to their land and provide for the rebuilding of the city and the temple.

Isaiah 44:28 “That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.”

Jer. 51:46 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.

Jer. 51:47 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.

Jer. 51:48 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.

This section of verses basically tells the Jews in Babylon to expect to hear rumors of coming attack. They are not to be afraid. They can trust in the fact that the LORD is in control and He alone will determine when to exact judgment upon Babylon. Again I have to say that the description of the destruction of idols and the whole land being overwhelmed at the numbers of those slain does not fit the historical record of how Cyrus conquered Babylon. I believe the rejoicing of heaven and earth at the destruction of Babylon is a reference to her final judgment yet future.

Revelation 19:1–3 “And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia.”

Jer. 51:49 As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth.

Jer. 51:50 Ye that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still: remember the LORD afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.

Jer. 51:51 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.

The LORD is declaring through His prophet that Babylon will suffer just as she has caused God's people to suffer. The Jews in Babylon are encouraged to remember the LORD and think about Jerusalem. They should be greatly ashamed at the dishonor they have brought to the name of the LORD and how they had allowed His sanctuary to be defiled.

Jer. 51:52 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.

Jer. 51:53 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.

I think the wording of the NLT is clearer: *"Yes," says the LORD, "but the time is coming when Babylon's idols will be destroyed. The groans of her wounded people will be heard throughout the land. Though Babylon reaches as high as the heavens, and though she increases her strength immeasurably, I will send enemies to plunder her," says the LORD.*

I thought the wording of verse 53 was especially interesting in connection with the "spiritual" leader of Babylon, the true king of Babylon, Lucifer.

Isaiah 14:12-13 "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:"

Jer. 51:54 A sound of a cry cometh from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans:

Jer. 51:55 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:

Jer. 51:56 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.

Jer. 51:57 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.

Jer. 51:58 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.

The judgment of Babylon is seen as producing a great cry from among its people. When I looked at the Hebrew for "the great voice," it seemed to connect to an old prideful voice. This again made a connection to the verses from Isaiah 14 in the previous section. The attack against her is compared to the effects of a great

tsunami. I liked the translation from the NLT for the last part of verse 56: *“For the LORD is a God who gives just punishment, and he is giving Babylon all she deserves.”*

The LORD declares that He will ensure that the leaders of Babylon “sleep a perpetual sleep”; in other words, they will die. It is interesting to note that when Cyrus and his army marched into Babylon, the princes and rulers were drinking and partying. They did not, however, have to destroy the wall of Babylon, nor were the gates burned. In fact, the gates had not even been secured so sure were the Babylonian leaders that the perimeter security would never be breached.

The final destruction of Babylon as prophesied by John will, however, involve fire.

Revelation 18:17–18 “For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!”

Jer. 51:59 ¶ 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.

Jer. 51:60 So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, *even* all these words that are written against Babylon.

Jer. 51:61 And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words;

Jer. 51:62 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.

Jer. 51:63 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:

Jer. 51:64 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.

As this chapter closes, we are told that Jeremiah gave instructions to Seraiah, who was taken to Babylon with Zedekiah, to deliver this message concerning the fall of Babylon to the captives in Babylon. He is to read the scroll publicly and then weight it with a stone and toss it into the middle of the Euphrates River. He is then to declare that just as surely as you saw the written prophecy concerning Babylon sink to the bottom of the river, so will Babylon sink off the world scene and not recover from God’s judgment upon her. This thought again has its parallel in the words of John’s prophecy.

Revelation 18:21 “And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.”

Burton Coffman clarifies that this message was delivered during a trip that Zedekiah made to Babylon possibly in response to a request by Nebuchadnezzar. In quoting from Scribner's Commentary he states: "Zedekiah made that trip possibly with the hope of receiving some favor from Nebuchadnezzar, or because Nebuchadnezzar summoned him to be present for some state occasion; and it is even possible that Nebuchadnezzar suspected the loyalty of Zedekiah and demanded that he appear in Babylon with an explanation of why the ambassadors that year were assembled in Jerusalem from Moab, Ammon, Edom and Phoenicia."

Jeremiah then declares this to be the complete prophecy concerning the coming judgment of Babylon.