

Jeremiah Chapter 51 Continued

Jeremiah 51:34 "Nebuchadnezzar 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."

The evil nations that oppose the LORD are often depicted as dragons and sea monsters (Psalm 74:13-15; Isa. 51:9-11).

Babylon had violently "swallowed" and "cast ... out" Israel like a monster.

The four world empires that give way to the eternal kingdom of God (in Daniel chapter 7), are portrayed as hideous beasts that come out of the sea.

These evil powers are empowered by Satan, the great dragon who wages war on God's people (Rev. Chapter 12).

The sea would ultimately cover Babylon (51:42), and the LORD promises to one day destroy all of these evil powers (Isa. 27:1), including the Beast (Antichrist), who will preside over the final empire of Babylon (Rev. chapters 13, 16 to 19).

Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon when they destroyed Jerusalem and Judah.

He was like a dragon that could not stop finding more prey.

Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar symbolize evil.

He spoiled the land and the people, and took them back to Babylon to serve him.

Jeremiah 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."

That is, let the injuries done to Zion and her children, be avenged on Babylon.

The hurt done to their persons and families, and the spoiling of their goods, and destruction of their cities, houses, and substance.

"Shall the inhabitant of Zion say": By way of a spoken curse.

"And my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say":

Let the guilt of it be charged upon them, and punishment for it be inflicted on them.

The Targum is, "the sin of the innocent blood which is shed in me;" let that be imputed to them, and vengeance come upon them for it.

We see in this, violence done in Israel against God's people.

The Babylon (which symbolizes evil in our world today), does violence to God's church even now.

God holds them responsible for what they do to His family.

His family's blood is on them.

In this particular case, the blood of Jerusalem and Judah is on Chaldea or Babylon.

Jeremiah 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."

In answer to the prayers of the inhabitants of Zion and Jerusalem, cursing divine vengeance on Babylon.

"Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee":

Not by words only, but by deeds, inflicting punishment on their enemies.

"And I will dry up her sea":

The confluence of waters about Babylon.

The river Euphrates, the channel of which was drained by Cyrus, by which means he took the city.

And this may figuratively design the abundance of riches and affluence of good things in Babylon, which should now be taken from her.

"And make her springs dry":

Deprive her of all the necessities of life.

And stop up all the avenues by which she was supplied with them.

And cut off all communication of good things to her.

The springs are really speaking of places where water is stored.

God brings the drought, sometimes as a way of punishment.

Just as God turned the water to blood in Egypt.

He is going to stop the water supply of Babylon here.

Jeremiah 51:37 "And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, and a hissing, without an inhabitant."

The houses should be demolished, and the stones lie in heaps one upon another, and become mere rubbish.

"A dwelling place for dragons":

And other wild and savage creatures.

Dragons, as Aelianus observes, love to live in desert places, as such now Babylon is.

It lies in ruins; and even its palace is so full of scorpions and serpents, as Benjamin of Tudela says it was in his time, that men dare not to enter into it (see Jer. 50:39).

"An astonishment, and a hissing, without an inhabitant":

An astonishment to neighboring nations, and to all that pass by.

Who shall hiss at the destruction of it, and rejoice, there being not so much as a single inhabitant in it.

Which is its condition to this day (see Jer. 50:13).

Babylon will be destroyed and not rebuilt.

Sodom and Gomorrah are good examples of what happens to places when God's judgement is upon them.

Until this day, they are not habitable.

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

Some understand this of the Medes and Persians, and the shouts they made at the attacking and taking of Babylon.

But this does not so well agree with that, which seems to have been done in a secret and silent manner.

Rather according to the context, the Chaldeans are meant, who are represented as roaring, not through fear of the enemy, and distress by him; for such a roaring would not be fitly compared to the roaring of a lion.

But either this is expressive of their roaring and reveling at their feast afterwards at which time their city was taken.

Or else of the high spirits and rage they were in, and the fierceness and readiness they showed to give battle to Cyrus, when he first came with his army against them.

And they did unite together, and met him, and roared like lions at him, and fought with him.

But being overcome, their courage cooled and they retired to their city, and dared not appear more (see Jer. 51:30).

"They shall yell as lions' whelps":

Jarchi and other Rabbins interpret the word of the braying of an ass.

It signifies to "shake".

And the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "they shall shake their hair"; as lions do their manes; and young lions their shaggy hair.

And as blustering bravadoes shake theirs; and so might the Babylonians behave in such a swaggering way when the Medes and Persians first attacked them.

They roared into the countries, and captured them like a lion on the prowl.

Now they will be helpless as a very young lion.

Jeremiah 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."

"Drunken":

The allusion is possibly to Belshazzar's drunken feast (recorded in Dan. 5:1-4; compare verse 57).

The "perpetual sleep" here is speaking of death.

They will fear the army so much that they will get drunk to help them face the problems ahead.

Drinking does not help anyone.

It only brings their death a little sooner.

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

To the place of slaughter; who shall be able to make no more resistance than lambs.

This explains what is meant by being made drunk, and sleeping a perpetual sleep, even destruction and death.

"Like rams with he goats":

Denoting the promiscuous destruction of the prince and common people together.

This just shows the extent of their helplessness in the carrying out of judgement against them.

There is nothing they can do to stop it.

God has spoken and it shall be.

Jeremiah 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!"

"Sheshach" is a cryptogram for Babylon.

The literary device employed here is known as "athbash", a process by which the written letters represent the corresponding letters at the opposite end of the alphabet.

"Sheshach taken" is a symbolic name of Babylon (compare 25:26).

The miraculous way they were taken could have been thought up only by the LORD.

The earth is surprised, because everyone thought Babylon was so well fortified that no one could take them.

Only God could think to stop the water in the moat and attack by walking through the water lines.

Jeremiah 51:42 "The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof."

A vast army, comparable to the great sea for the multitude thereof, even the army of the Medes and Persians under Cyrus.

So the Targum, "a king with his armies, which are numerous like the waters of the sea, is come up against Babylon.

"She is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof":

Being surrounded, besieged, surprised, and seized upon by the multitude of soldiers in that army, which poured in upon it unawares.

Some think here is a beautiful antithesis, between the inundation of Cyrus's army and the draining of the river Euphrates, by which means he poured in his forces into Babylon.

This "sea" is not water but the enormous amount of army that comes over the land.

Jeremiah 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."

Which some understand of Babylon itself, divided into two parts by the river Euphrates running in the midst of it, called by Berosus the inward and outward cities.

Though rather these design the rest of the cities in Chaldea, of which Babylon was the metropolis, the mother city.

And the other her daughters, which should share the same fate with herself.

Be demolished, and the ground on which they stood become a dry, barren, uncultivated, and desert land.

"A land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby":

Having neither inhabitant nor traveler (see Jer. 50:12).

This explains again that it is not just the city of Babylon that is taken, but all the cities in the land of Babylon.

Jeremiah 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."

Bel was the principal Babylonian idol, of which see what is noted (Jer. chapters 1 and 2).

"And I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up":

All the vessels of the temple (2 Chron. 36:7), and whatever gifts the Babylonians had presented to him.

"And the nations shall not flow together any more unto him":

It was the custom of other nations to send presents to the gods of those nations whom they were in subjection to, or whom they would appease.

From where it is that we read the Philistines, when they had the ark, would not send it home without a present (1 Sam. 6:11).

God by His prophet foretold that the time should come when the nations should come no more to Babylon, neither to pay a homage to their chief idol, nor yet to bring offerings unto him.

"Yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall":

And the city of Babylon should be also ruined.

The huge wall around the city of Babylon will fall.

Bel in Babylon is the same as the false god Baal.

God will destroy this false god.

Bel had swallowed up not just the goods of foreign lands, but the people themselves.

This evil false god will have to give them up to the One True God.

The Israelites will go back to their homeland before the terrible fighting begins.

They will not only go home to their homeland, but to their God as well.

Verses 45-50

Again, the LORD's people were warned to flee.

Jeremiah 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."

The prophet repeats, with all the emphasis of iteration, the summons of (Jer. 50:8; 51:6).

The "fierce anger of the LORD" is that which was directed primarily against Babylon, but which would also fall on those who chose to remain and become "partakers in her plagues" (compare Rev. 18:4).

The key word in the above Scripture is "My".

This is true for the Israelites, who had been captives of these Babylonians.

They must leave to keep from being caught up in the battle.

This is true also of people now.

They must leave the world and the call of the flesh, if they are to serve God.

We may be in the world, but we must not be of the world.

Jeremiah 51:46 "And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumor that shall be heard in the land; a rumor shall both come [one] year, and after that in [another] year [shall come] a rumor, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler."

The rumor of war in the land of Chaldea.

The report of the Medes and Persians preparing to invade it, and besiege Babylon, in the peace of which city the Jews had peace.

And therefore, might fear they should suffer in the calamities of it.

But, lest they should, they are ordered to go and accept the liberty that should be granted by the conqueror, who would do them no hurt, but good.

And had therefore nothing to fear from him.

And, as a token, assuring them of this, the following things are declared; which, when they should observe, they need not be troubled, being forewarned.

Yea, might take encouragement from it, and believe that their redemption drew nigh.

"A rumor shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumor":

In one year there was a rumor of the great preparation Cyrus was making to invade Chaldea, and besiege Babylon.

In another year, that is, the following, as the Targum rightly renders it, there was a second rumor of his coming.

And who actually did come into Assyria, but was stopped at the river Gyndes, not being able to pass it for want of boats.

And, being enraged at the loss of a favorite horse in it, resolved upon the draining of it.

Which he accomplished, by cutting many sluices and rivulets; in doing which he spent the whole summer; and the spring following came to Babylon, as Herodotus relates.

When what is after predicted followed.

"And violence in the land, ruler against ruler":

The king of Babylon came out with his forces to meet Cyrus, as the same historian says.

When a battle ensues, in which the former was beat, and obliged to retire into the city, which then Cyrus besieged.

And thus, violence and devastation was made in the land by the army of the Medes and Persians; and ruler was against ruler.

Cyrus against Belshazzar, and Belshazzar against him.

Some read it, "ruler upon ruler"; that is, one after another, in a very short time.

So Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbanel; thus, two before Belshazzar, then Darius, and, after Darius, Cyrus.

This lets us know that the war will not be over in just one year.

There will be many rumors going ahead of the battles.

Jeremiah 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."

Because of the connection of these words, some understand (Jer. 51:46), of the report of the deliverance of the Jews time after time.

And yet nothing came of it, which disheartened them.

And they were used more cruelly, and with greater violence, by the Chaldeans and their kings, one after another.

And "therefore" the following things are said.

But the particle may be rendered "moreover", as some observe; or "surely", certainly, of a truth, as in (Jer. 5:2).

The time is hastening on, the above things being done, when judgment shall be executed, not only upon Bel the chief idol (Jer. 51:44); but upon all the idols of the Chaldeans.

Which should be broken to pieces, and stripped of everything about them that was valuable.

The Medes and Persians having no regard to images in their worship.

Though Dr. Prideaux thinks that what is here said, and in (Jer. 51:44); were fulfilled by Xerxes, when he destroyed and pillaged the Babylonian temples.

"And her whole land shall be confounded":

The inhabitants of it, when they see their images destroyed, in which they trusted for their safety.

"And all her slain shall fall in the midst of her":

In the midst of Babylon; where the king and his army were shut up, and dared not move out.

And where they were slain when the army of Cyrus entered.

Just as God defamed the false gods of Egypt, He will defame the false gods of Babylon.

The devastation will be throughout the land.

There will be many who fall in death.

Jeremiah 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."

At the destruction of her, rejoicing at it.

Not at the ruin of fellow creatures, simply considered; but relatively, at the righteousness of God in it.

And the glory of His justice, and the deliverance of many by it from tyranny and bondage.

This seems to be a figurative expression often used, in which the heavens and the earth are brought in as witnesses, approvers, and applauders, of what is done by the LORD.

Some indeed interpret it of the angels, the inhabitants of the heavens, and of the Jews, dwellers on earth.

And others of the church of God, in heaven and in earth.

Which, of the two, seems best?

The same will be done at the fall of mystical Babylon (Rev. 18:20).

"For the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the LORD":

The Medes and Persians that should and did spoil and plunder Babylon.

And who came from countries that lay north to it.

The Jewish people believed their trouble came from the north.

This is why this is repeated.

It strikes terror in the people.

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

In Jerusalem, when that city was taken by the Chaldeans, and destroyed.

"So at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth":

Or "land"; that is, the land of Chaldea.

The inhabitants of which fled to Babylon upon the invasion of the Medes and Persians, both for their own safety, and the defense of that city.

And where, being slain, they fell; and this was a just retaliation of them for what they had done to Israel.

These words may be considered, as they are by some, as the song of the inhabitants of heaven and earth, observing and applauding the justice and equity of divine Providence in this affair (see Rev. 13:7).

This judgement is an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.

Just as they have slain others, they will be slain.

Jeremiah 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."

The words call on the people to fulfil the prediction of (Jer. 50:4-5).

Even in that distant land, "afar off" from the Temple of Jehovah, they are to remember that they are Israelites, and to think of Jerusalem as their home.

In (Psalm 137:5-6), we have, as it were, by anticipation, the answer of the exiles.

They had not forgotten Jerusalem in the revelry of their conquerors.

They were not likely to forget her when their conquerors were, in their turn, conquered.

This is speaking of the saved of God.

Just because they were not killed at first, does not give them reason to stop moving forward for God.

They must get Jerusalem on their mind and keep it there until they return there.

Babylon symbolizes the evil in the world.

They must get the world off their mind.

Jeremiah 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."

These are the words of the Jews, either objecting to their return to their land; or lamenting the desolation of it.

And complaining of the reproach it lay under, being destitute of inhabitants.

The land in general lying waste and uncultivated.

The city of Jerusalem and temple in ruins; and the worship of God ceased.

And the enemy insulting and reproaching; suggesting, that their God could not protect and save them.

And, under these discouragements, they could not bear the thoughts of returning to it.

"Shame hath covered our faces":

They knew not which way to look when they heard the report of the state of their country, and the reproach of the enemy, and through shame covered their faces.

"For strangers are come into the sanctuaries of the LORD'S house":

The oracle, or the holy of holies; the temple, or the holy place, and the porch or court.

So Kimchi and Abarbanel; into which the Chaldeans, strangers to God and the commonwealth of Israel, had entered, to the profanation of them, and had destroyed them.

The shame was that not only had they come into God's house, but that they had taken the Godly things out with them.

"Strangers" in the verse above is speaking of committing adultery.

This is spiritual adultery.

They had no respect for God's sanctuary.

Jeremiah 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."

Destroy their gods, who have reproached the God of Israel, and profaned His sanctuaries.

And for that reason (see Jer. 51:47).

It is an answer to the objection and complaint of the Jews, and is designed for their comfort and encouragement.

"And through all her land the wounded shall groan":

Because of their wounds and pain.

And which their idols could not cure, ease, or prevent.

God is especially angered at the graven images.

They are inanimate objects that were being worshipped.

They had no life.

They are nothings.

God will destroy these graven images by breaking them up and burning them.

Jeremiah 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."

Could the walls of it, which were very high, two hundred cubits high, as Herodotus says, be carried up as high as heaven?

Or the towers of it, which were exceeding high, ten feet higher than the walls, as Curtius says, likewise be raised to the same height.

"And though she should fortify the height of her strength":

Make her walls and towers as strong as they were high.

Unless this is to be understood particularly of the temple of Bel, in which was a solid tower, in length and thickness about six hundred and sixty feet.

And upon this tower another; and so on to the number of eight, towers.

And in the last of them a large temple, as the above historian relates.

But if these towers could have been piled up in a greater number, even so as to reach to heaven, it would have availed nothing against the God of heaven, to secure from His vengeance.

The Targum is, "if Babylon should be built with buildings as high as heaven, and should fortify the strong holds on high."

"Yet from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the LORD":

The Medes and Persians, sent and commissioned by him, who would pull down and destroy her walls and towers, be they ever so high and strong.

This very same land had tried to build a tower to heaven once before.

God came in and confounded their language so they could go no further.

There is a time when God will intervene in the affairs of man.

She can fortify all she can, but God can destroy anything they can build.

He is Creator God and can do with His creation anything He desires to do.

Jeremiah 51:54 "A sound of a cry [cometh] from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans:"

To assure them that what God threatened should certainly be, he calls to the Jews to listen, as if already there was a cry from Babylon, and a sound of a great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans.

The cry is from the people.

Jeremiah 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:"

The sword is not so much the sword of the Medes, but the sword of the LORD.

It is he who is to be looked at, as the spoiler of Babylon.

"And destroyed out of her the great voice":

And hath made to cease in that great city the noise caused from the multitudes of people in it walking up and down, and trafficking together.

The noise of her enemies that shall break in upon her shall be like the noise and roaring of the sea, when it dashes upon the shore or upon some rocks.

That shall be the only noise heard in her, instead of the noises accustomed there to be made from the multitude of people, or from revelers.

The large city had many sounds coming from her.

Now all of that is stopped.

It is as silent as the grave.

Jeremiah 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 recompenses shall surely requite."

That is, Cyrus, with his army.

"And her mighty men are taken":

Unawares, and by surprise.

"Every one of their bows is broken":

They had no strength to withstand the enemy, and were obliged to yield at once; lay down their arms, and submit.

"For the LORD God of recompenses shall surely requite":

That God to whom vengeance belongs, and will repay it.

Who is a God of justice and equity, the Judge of all the earth.

He will render tribulation to them that trouble His people.

And requite His enemies and the enemies of His people, in a righteous manner, for all the evil they have done, as literal.

For mystical Babylon (see Rev. 18:6).

"Recompenses":

Means repayment.

"Requite":

Means return, reciprocate or repay.

Jeremiah 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."

With the wine of divine wrath; that is, slay them.

Though there may be an allusion to their being drunk with wine at the feast Belshazzar made for his thousand lords.

Which are the princes here intended, together with the king and his royal family (Dan. 5:1).

"And her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men":

The counsellors of state, priests, magicians, and astrologers.

Officers in the army, superior and inferior ones; and the soldiers and warriors, whom Cyrus and his men slew.

When they entered the city (compare with this Rev. 19:18).

"And they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awake":

Be all asleep in their drunken fits, and be slain therein.

And so never wake, or live more.

The Targum is, "and they shall die the second death, and not come into the world to come" (see Jer. 51:39).

"Saith the king, whose name is the LORD of hosts":

The King of kings and Lord of Lords.

The LORD of armies in heaven and earth.

And can do, and does, what he pleases in both worlds.

We dealt with this earlier.

This perpetual sleep is speaking of death.

The King of kings and Lord of lords is Jesus Christ.

Jeremiah 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 labor in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary."

The inner wall of the city was 21 feet thick and the outer wall almost 12 feet thick.

Nebuchadnezzar also built a moat around the walls, artificial lakes, and flooded areas to provide additional security.

The city walls also had numerous gates and as many as 250 towers.

Impressive fortifications would not protect the city from the LORD's judgment.

By the New Testament era, the great city of Babylon was an abandoned ruin.

"Shall labor in vain":

People from many nations enslaved in Babylon had built the wall for nothing.

These broad walls were a minimum of forty feet wide.

We have mentioned before that the enemy came inside this wall through the water ducts.

The people of Babylon were unaware they were there until they were already in control.

It appears that they cut off all exits, and then burned the city.

Verses 59-64

Baruch's brother "Seraiah" performs the final sign act in the book by tying a rock to the scroll of Jeremiah's oracles against Babylon and casting it into the Euphrates River, symbolizing the finality of Babylon's destruction.

Seraiah read the scroll and performed this act (in 593 B.C.), when "Zedekiah" was required to report to the Babylonians.

The LORD delivered this message of judgment before Jerusalem had even fallen, and Babylon was still at the height of its power.

Jeremiah 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."

"Seraiah was a quiet prince":

This man looked after the comfort of the king.

He may have been the brother of Baruch, Jeremiah's secretary (compare 32:12).

"Seraiah" was believed to be the brother of Baruch.

We know that Zedekiah was blinded and spent the rest of his time in Babylon in that condition.

Seraiah did not seem to be in severe bondage.

Verses 60-63

This royal official carried the scroll (verse 60), to read (verse 61), in Babylon and then dramatically illustrated the coming destruction.

Jeremiah 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."

The evil of punishment predicted and threatened.

This he delivered, not by word of mouth to Seraiah to relate when he came to Babylon; but he wrote it in a book for him to read.

And he wrote it himself; Baruch, his secretary, not being now with him.

"Even all these words that are written against Babylon":

In this and the preceding chapter.

This book written by Jeremiah was a copy of them.

It seems that Jeremiah recorded all that he had prophesied.

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

At the time he delivered the copy to him.

"When thou comest to Babylon":

Or are come to Babylon, to the city of Babylon, and to the captive Jews there.

"And shalt see":

The captives; or rather the great and populous city of Babylon, its high walls, gates, and towers, whose destruction is foretold in this book, and which might seem incredible.

Abarbanel interprets it as his looking into the book given him; which he thinks was not to be opened and read until he came to Babylon.

"And shalt read all these words":

Not before the king of Babylon and his princes, and yet not privately to himself.

But in some proper place, in the presence of the captive Jews, or the chief of them, convened for that purpose.

Jeremiah 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."

Acknowledging this prophecy to be of God; believing the accomplishment of it.

And praying over it, and for it, like a good man, as doubtless he was.

"Thou hast spoken against this place":

The city of Babylon, where Seraiah is now supposed to be.

"To cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever":

This is the substance of the whole prophecy, that the destruction of Babylon should be an utter and a perpetual one.

And which is expressed in the same words that are here used (Jer. 50:3).

It appears that Seraiah was like Baruch and carried the message of the destruction to Babylon. Jeremiah had recorded it and Seraiah took it, and read it.

Jeremiah 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:"

To the captive Jews; and having also said the above words by way of prayer and approbation.

"That thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates":

A river by which Babylon was situated.

The book, being read, was to be rolled up again, and then a stone tied to it, and cast into the middle of the river.

Where the waters were deepest, and from where it could not be taken up.

And this was a sign confirming the above prophecy.

Compare with this what was done by a mighty angel concerning mystical Babylon, in which there is an allusion to this (Rev. 18:21).

He was to read the prophecy and then cast it into the river so it could not be burned.

The wrath of God had been expressed in this book.

The casting of it into the Euphrates is symbolic of God casting our sins into the depth of the sea.

This shows the finality of the situation.

God will not alter the words in the book.

It is set and finished.

Jeremiah 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."

It hath been often said that Euphrates was that great river which ran by the walls of Babylon.

Into this Seraiah is commanded by Jeremiah to throw this roll of prophecy against Babylon, symbolically to teach the Jews, that according to the tenor of his prophecy the time should come, after some years, when Babylon should be destroyed never to rise again to any great view or degree of splendor.

No more than that roll with the stone tied to it should rise from the bottom of Euphrates.

"And they shall be weary":

Some read, though they weary themselves, that is, do what they can, or, (as it is here).

And they shall be weary with that weight of judgment which shall be upon them.

"Thus far are the words of Jeremiah":

Either the words of Jeremiah relating to Babylon reach thus far, or all the words of Jeremiah remaining on sacred record.

Babylon will never know its former greatness again.

In fact, the city of Babylon will never be rebuilt.

The wrath of God has fallen on them.

Seraiah spoke this but it was Jeremiah's words from God.

Jeremiah Chapter 51 Continued Questions

1. When was Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon?
2. Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar symbolize _____.
3. Who is the violence of verse 35 against?
4. Whose blood was on Chaldea?
5. What were the springs of verse 36?
6. What will Babylon become?
7. What had this mighty lion of war become?
8. What is the "perpetual sleep" speaking of?
9. What is "Sheshach" a symbol of?
10. What miraculous way did they attack the city of Babylon?
11. What is the "sea" in verse 42?
12. Who is taken besides the city of Babylon?
13. Who is "Bel"?
14. What will happen to the Israelite captives in the land of Babylon?
15. They will not only go home to their homeland, but to their _____ as well.
16. What is the key word in verse 45?
17. How long will the war last?
18. What will God defame, when He destroys the Babylonians?
19. Where did the Jewish people believe trouble came from?
20. What is their judgement?
21. They must get the evil world off their _____.
22. Remember the LORD afar off, and let _____ come into your mind.
23. Why had they covered their faces in shame?
24. Describe the graven images.
25. In verse 53, "mount up to heaven" is remembering what thing they had done in the past?

26. What happens to the bows of the mighty men of Babylon?
27. What does "recompenses" mean?
28. What does "requite" mean?
29. Who is the King in verse 57?
30. How broad were the walls of Babylon?
31. Who was "Seraiah"?
32. How did Jeremiah record the prophecies?
33. How was Seraiah like Baruch?
34. After the book was read, what was he to do with it?
35. What happens to Babylon and the city of Babylon?