

**Jeremiah's Prophecy Concerning the Nations: Babylon's Coming Fall (c. 597–596 BC)**

Jeremiah 51:1–58

**The Lord's Vengeance on Babylon**

1 Thus says the LORD:

“Behold, I am going to arouse against Babylon  
And against the inhabitants of Leb-kamai  
The spirit of a destroyer.

2 “I will dispatch foreigners to Babylon that they may winnow her  
And may devastate her land;  
For on every side they will be opposed to her  
In the day of *her* calamity.

3 “Let not him who bends his bow bend *it*,  
Nor let him rise up in his scale-armor;  
So do not spare her young men;  
Devote all her army to destruction.

4 “They will fall down slain in the land of the Chaldeans,  
And pierced through in their streets.”

5 For neither Israel nor Judah has been forsaken  
By his God, the LORD of hosts,  
Although their land is full of guilt  
Before the Holy One of Israel.

6 Flee from the midst of Babylon,  
And each of you save his life!  
Do not be destroyed in her punishment,  
For this is the LORD's time of vengeance;  
He is going to render recompense to her.

7 Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of the LORD,  
Intoxicating all the earth.  
The nations have drunk of her wine;  
Therefore the nations are going mad.

8 Suddenly Babylon has fallen and been broken;  
Wail over her!  
Bring balm for her pain;  
Perhaps she may be healed.

9 We applied healing to Babylon, but she was not healed;  
Forsake her and let us each go to his own country,  
For her judgment has reached to heaven  
And towers up to the very skies.

10 The LORD has brought about our vindication;  
Come and let us recount in Zion  
The work of the LORD our God!

11 Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers!  
The LORD has aroused the spirit of the kings of the Medes,  
Because His purpose is against Babylon to destroy it;  
For it is the vengeance of the LORD, vengeance for His temple.

12 Lift up a signal against the walls of Babylon;  
Post a strong guard,  
Station sentries,

Place men in ambush!  
For the LORD has both purposed and performed  
What He spoke concerning the inhabitants of Babylon.

- 13 O you who dwell by many waters,  
Abundant in treasures,  
Your end has come,  
The measure of your end.
- 14 The LORD of hosts has sworn by Himself:  
“Surely I will fill you with a population like locusts,  
And they will cry out with shouts of victory over you.”

#### **A Hymn of Praise to the Lord**

- 15 *It is* He who made the earth by His power,  
Who established the world by His wisdom,  
And by His understanding He stretched out the heavens.
- 16 When He utters His voice, *there is* a tumult of waters in the heavens,  
And He causes the clouds to ascend from the end of the earth;  
He makes lightning for the rain  
And brings forth the wind from His storehouses.
- 17 All mankind is stupid, devoid of knowledge;  
Every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols,  
For his molten images are deceitful,  
And there is no breath in them.
- 18 They are worthless, a work of mockery;  
In the time of their punishment they will perish.
- 19 The portion of Jacob is not like these;  
For the Maker of all is He,  
And of the tribe of His inheritance;  
The LORD of hosts is His name.

#### **God's Power against Enemies**

- 20 *He says*, “You are My war-club, *My* weapon of war;  
And with you I shatter nations,  
And with you I destroy kingdoms.
- 21 “With you I shatter the horse and his rider,  
And with you I shatter the chariot and its rider,
- 22 And with you I shatter man and woman,  
And with you I shatter old man and youth,  
And with you I shatter young man and virgin,
- 23 And with you I shatter the shepherd and his flock,  
And with you I shatter the farmer and his team,  
And with you I shatter governors and prefects.
- 24 “But I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all their evil that they have done in Zion before your eyes,” declares the LORD.
- 25 “Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain,  
Who destroys the whole earth,” declares the LORD,  
“And I will stretch out My hand against you,

And roll you down from the crags,  
And I will make you a burnt out mountain.

- 26 “They will not take from you *even* a stone for a corner  
Nor a stone for foundations,  
But you will be desolate forever,” declares the LORD.

### **Nations Summoned against Babylon**

- 27 Lift up a signal in the land,  
Blow a trumpet among the nations!  
Consecrate the nations against her,  
Summon against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni and Ashkenaz;  
Appoint a marshal against her,  
Bring up the horses like bristly locusts.
- 28 Consecrate the nations against her,  
The kings of the Medes,  
Their governors and all their prefects,  
And every land of their dominion.
- 29 So the land quakes and writhes,  
For the purposes of the LORD against Babylon stand,  
To make the land of Babylon  
A desolation without inhabitants.
- 30 The mighty men of Babylon have ceased fighting,  
They stay in the strongholds;  
Their strength is exhausted,  
They are becoming *like* women;  
Their dwelling places are set on fire,  
The bars of her *gates* are broken.
- 31 One courier runs to meet another,  
And one messenger to meet another,  
To tell the king of Babylon  
That his city has been captured from end *to end*;
- 32 The fords also have been seized,  
And they have burned the marshes with fire,  
And the men of war are terrified.

### **A Call for Retribution**

- 33 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:

“The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor  
At the time it is stamped firm;  
Yet in a little while the time of harvest will come for her.”

- 34 “Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has devoured me *and* crushed me,  
He has set me down *like* an empty vessel;  
He has swallowed me like a monster,  
He has filled his stomach with my delicacies;  
He has washed me away.
- 35 “May the violence *done* to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon,”  
The inhabitant of Zion will say;  
And, “May my blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea,”

Jerusalem will say.

### **God Answers the Call—Payback Time!**

36 Therefore thus says the LORD,

“Behold, I am going to plead your case  
And exact full vengeance for you;  
And I will dry up her sea  
And make her fountain dry.

37 “Babylon will become a heap *of ruins*, a haunt of jackals,  
An object of horror and hissing, without inhabitants.

38 “They will roar together like young lions,  
They will growl like lions’ cubs.

39 “When they become heated up,  
I will serve *them* their banquet  
And make them drunk, that they may become jubilant  
And may sleep a perpetual sleep  
And not wake up,” declares the LORD.

40 “I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter,  
Like rams together with male goats.

41 “How Sheshak has been captured,  
And the praise of the whole earth been seized!  
How Babylon has become an object of horror among the nations!

42 “The sea has come up over Babylon;  
She has been engulfed with its tumultuous waves.

43 “Her cities have become an object of horror,  
A parched land and a desert,  
A land in which no man lives  
And through which no son of man passes.

44 “I will punish Bel in Babylon,  
And I will make what he has swallowed come out of his mouth;  
And the nations will no longer stream to him.  
Even the wall of Babylon has fallen down!

### **An Appeal to Flee from Babylon**

45 “Come forth from her midst, My people,  
And each of you save yourselves  
From the fierce anger of the LORD.

46 “Now so that your heart does not grow faint,  
And you are not afraid at the report that *will be* heard in the land—  
For the report will come one year,  
And after that another report in another year,  
And violence *will be* in the land  
With ruler against ruler—

47 Therefore behold, days are coming  
When I will punish the idols of Babylon;  
And her whole land will be put to shame  
And all her slain will fall in her midst.

48 “Then heaven and earth and all that is in them

Will shout for joy over Babylon,  
For the destroyers will come to her from the north,”  
Declares the LORD.

### **Another Warning of Babylon’s Coming Destruction**

- 49 Indeed Babylon is to fall *for* the slain of Israel,  
As also for Babylon the slain of all the earth have fallen.
- 50 You who have escaped the sword,  
Depart! Do not stay!  
Remember the LORD from afar,  
And let Jerusalem come to your mind.
- 51 We are ashamed because we have heard reproach;  
Disgrace has covered our faces,  
For aliens have entered  
The holy places of the LORD’s house.
- 52 “Therefore behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD,  
“When I will punish her idols,  
And the mortally wounded will groan throughout her land.
- 53 “Though Babylon should ascend to the heavens,  
And though she should fortify her lofty stronghold,  
From Me destroyers will come to her,” declares the LORD.
- 54 The sound of an outcry from Babylon,  
And of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans!
- 55 For the LORD is going to destroy Babylon,  
And He will make *her* loud noise vanish from her.  
And their waves will roar like many waters;  
The tumult of their voices sounds forth.
- 56 For the destroyer is coming against her, against Babylon,  
And her mighty men will be captured,  
Their bows are shattered;  
For the LORD is a God of recompense,  
He will fully repay.
- 57 “I will make her princes and her wise men drunk,  
Her governors, her prefects and her mighty men,  
That they may sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake up,”  
Declares the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.
- 58 Thus says the LORD of hosts,  
“The broad wall of Babylon will be completely razed  
And her high gates will be set on fire;  
So the peoples will toil for nothing,  
And the nations become exhausted *only* for fire.”

**Zedekiah Travels to Babylon / Jeremiah Sends the Babylon Prophecy  
(Tishri [October] 595–Adar [March] 594 BC)**

Jeremiah 51:59–64

59 The message which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the grandson of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. (Now Seraiah was quartermaster.)

60 So Jeremiah wrote in a single scroll all the calamity which would come upon Babylon, *that is*, all these words which have been written concerning Babylon.

61 Then Jeremiah said to Seraiah, “As soon as you come to Babylon, then see that you read all these words aloud,

62 and say, ‘You, O LORD, have promised concerning this place to cut it off, so that there will be nothing dwelling in it, whether man or beast, but it will be a perpetual desolation.’

63 “And as soon as you finish reading this scroll, you will tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates,

64 and say, ‘Just so shall Babylon sink down and not rise again because of the calamity that I am going to bring upon her; and they will become exhausted.’” Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

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