

## August 16 Answers

- 1) When God gave Jeremiah the prophecy of Babylon's future doom, the Babylonian Empire was at the **height** of its power. Assyria and Egypt had been defeated, and Judah was firmly under the control of **Nebuchadnezzar**. Jerusalem had been sacked twice and most of the city's inhabitants were in exile. To them, it must have seemed as though Babylon would last forever. But God is sovereign! Babylon's days were numbered, and like the **scroll** that Seraiah threw into the Euphrates, it would "**sink** to rise no more" (Jer 51:64). How encouraging to know that although evil may triumph for a time, it is destined to vanish forever beneath the **waves** of God's judgment! Jeremiah's prophecy compressed events that are separated by time: Babylon was overthrown by the Medo-Persian Empire in 539 BC, but the utter destruction of the city (Jer 50:39–40; 51:6, 26) and the promised restoration of both Israel and Judah (Jer 50:4–5, 19–20) has not yet been fulfilled. Jeremiah looked beyond the destruction of the Babylon of old to an eschatological destruction of a future Babylon. The destruction of that wicked city will be the climax of God's judgment on the Gentile nations, and it will open the way for the fulfilling of God's promises to Israel. The oracle against Babylon teaches us several valuable lessons. First, God is **just**. He will repay the wicked for their evil deeds (Jer 51:56). Second, God is **all-powerful**. The destruction of Babylon is nothing for the God who created the earth! (Jer 51:15–16). Third, God answers **prayer**. It was right for the people to ask God for **vengeance**, and it was right for Him to answer them, for God is an avenger! (Jer 51:35–37).