

Journey through Jeremiah Part 54, Judgment Against Babylon Pt.2

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney, Th.D. – Wednesday, Jan. 10, 2018

† Jeremiah 50:6-46

In our last study we looked at the first 5 verses and spent about 30 minutes discussing the origins and history of Babylon. We pick up tonight where we left off last Wednesday, in verse six with the judgment of the LORD as given to the Prophet Jeremiah.

6 My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away *on* the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace.

Here the LORD is speaking about His people that were falsely led by their shepherds (or pastors). These bad shepherds are mentioned in Ezekiel's prophecy in

Ezekiel 34:1-6 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe *be* to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?

3 Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: *but* ye feed not the flock.

4 The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up *that which* was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.

5 And they were scattered, because *there is* no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.

6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek *after them*.

These "Shepherds," could be an Old Testament example of a New Testament "Elder or Bishop." Here in our church we refer to these as "Pastor." The shepherds in the days of Jeremiah were out for themselves. They have led the people astray.

If you remember the LORD had promised when he allows the Children of Judah to return from captivity that he would give them "good shepherds," **Jeremiah 3:15** And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

7 All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.

Because everyone knew that the Children of Israel and Judah had transgressed against the LORD and He was allowing them to be taken into captivity, they felt that they could do anything they wished to them. They felt they were justified to treat them badly since they had sinned against the LORD.

8 Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks.

This is a call for the Children of Israel and Judah to return to their lands, to flee from the land of the Chaldeans. Be the leaders like the he goats of the flocks.

9 For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows *shall be* as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain. 10 And Chaldea shall be a spoil: all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD.

The LORD says he will raise up nations against Babylon – of course he is referring to the Medes and Persians.

11 Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage, because ye are grown fat as the heifer at grass, and bellow as bulls; 12 Your mother shall be sore confounded; she that bare you shall be ashamed: behold, the hindermost of the nations *shall be* a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. 13 Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.

Though the LORD had used Babylon to be the chastening rod for his people, they had taken great pleasure in destroying them and their cities and lands. Too much enjoyment. Because of this the LORD will cause them to be confounded and turn their land into a waste land.

14 Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD. 15 Shout against her round about: she hath given her hand: her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down: for it *is* the vengeance of the LORD: take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her. 16 Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land.

This the call to war against Babylon. The LORD calls for all to set their sights on Babylon to destroy it. He tells them to "**spare no arrows**," in other words, give her all you've got.

17 Israel *is* a scattered sheep; the lions have driven *him* away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones. 18 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.

The LORD says that his people (Israel) are scattered like sheep. He first mentions the Northern Kingdom of Israel that was taken captive by the King of Assyria, which according to 2 Kings 17:3 was a man named, Shalmaneser. You can read in that chapter about the besiege of Samaria and the final fall of Israel. Then 125 years later the fall of Judah and captivity of the inhabitants happened under Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. Despite the fact God used these men, he is still going to punish them for the way they treated His people.

19 And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gilead. 20 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be* none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.

This is yet another promise or proclamation from the LORD that he will bless his people once again. This is also a look at future times in the Millennial Kingdom.

21 Go up against the land of Merathaim, *even* against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod: waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the LORD, and do according to all that I have commanded thee.

These cities that are named are places in Assyria and Babylon. The LORD is calling for the Medes and Persians to come against all of these lands and destroy them. Of course, their leader, Cyrus the Great, was just the man to get the job done. Cyrus and his Persian Empire would go on to be the biggest world-empire in existence to that day. He conquered every land that he entered.

22 A sound of battle *is* in the land, and of great destruction.

23 How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!

24 I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD.

25 The LORD hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this *is* the work of the Lord GOD of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans.

26 Come against her from the utmost border, open her storehouses: cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left.

27 Slay all her bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation.

Again, more destruction proclaimed. The LORD caused this to happen very suddenly. He says "I have laid a snare for thee." Before the Babylonians knew what had hit them, Cyrus swept across their land slaughtering and taking everything.

28 The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of his temple.

29 Call together the archers against Babylon: all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape: recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.

30 Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD.

31 Behold, I *am* against thee, O *thou* most proud, saith the Lord GOD of hosts: for thy day is come, the time *that* I will visit thee.

32 And the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.

Just as with nearly every nation we read about in the Bible that the LORD destroys, it all boiled down to their pride. If I've said it once, I've said it a thousand times, pride is the catalyst behind every sin. It was Lucifer's downfall, it was Adam's downfall, it was Cain's downfall, it has been the downfall of every nation that has fell. If we could ever conquer our pride we could live a sinless life. But, of course, we can't.

33 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The children of Israel and the children of Judah *were* oppressed together: and all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go. 34 Their Redeemer *is* strong; the LORD of hosts *is* his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

All of the enemies of Israel had tried to hold on to them. They hated them so much, they either wanted to destroy them or keep them as prisoners. But "Their Redeemer *is* strong; the LORD of hosts *is* his name."

My friend, the world and Satan hates you too and if he can't destroy you, he wants to make you his prisoner. But, our "Redeemer *is* strong; the LORD of hosts *is* his name." None can stand up before our Redeemer, He will destroy them all with His Sword, as we see from the next verses:

35 **A sword** *is* upon the Chaldeans, saith the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise *men*.

36 **A sword** *is* upon the liars; and they shall dote: **a sword** *is* upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed.

37 **A sword** *is* upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that *are* in the midst of her; and they shall become as women: **a sword** *is* upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed.

The LORD deals with his enemies with a sword! That is how he will deal with them when He returns in His 2nd Coming:

Revelation 19:11-16

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12 His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

14 And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15 And out of his mouth goeth **a sharp sword**, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16 And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Revelation 19:21 And the remnant were slain with **the sword** of him that sat upon the horse, **which sword** proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

38 A drought *is* upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it *is* the land of graven images, and they are mad upon *their* idols.

The Chaldeans were so steeped in idol worship that they were "mad" about it. They had lost their minds over the worship of their graven images and idols.

I'm going to preach a message one day titled "**America, Mad Upon Their Idols.**" It would suit this country to a T. People get more excited about a football game than they do the LORD Jesus. They would rather hear some profane, nasty pop song than a Christ honoring hymn. They would attend the concert of some wicked, perverted, sex addict than they would the House of God. I'm telling you friends, America is mad upon their idols.

39 Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell *there*, and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.

The LORD will decimate the Kingdom of the Chaldeans. It won't even be good enough for human habitation by the time he gets done with it.

40 As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour *cities* thereof, saith the LORD; so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein.

He compares their destruction to that of Sodom and Gomorrah. It doesn't get any worse than that except for the Lake of Fire.

41 Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. 42 They shall hold the bow and the lance: they *are* cruel, and will not shew mercy: their voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, *every one* put in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon.

The fierceness of the Medes and Persian would be like none other, even more so than that of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians. They will show absolutely no mercy to the inhabitants of Babylon.

43 The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble: anguish took hold of him, *and* pangs as of a woman in travail.

The very King of Babylon will be shaking in his slippers out of fear. We know this proved to be true of Belshazzar, as we read it in the Book of **Daniel 5:5-6**: *In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. 6 Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.*

44 Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong: but I will make them suddenly run away from her: and who *is* a chosen *man*, *that* I may appoint over her? for who *is* like me? and who will appoint me the time? and who *is* that shepherd that will stand before me?

The lion from the swelling of Jordan is referring to King Cyrus. It's interesting that the same thing was said about Nebuchadnezzar when he invaded the Land of the Edomites, as we studied in Jeremiah 49.

This may also be a double prophecy and referring to another lion that will rise up against His enemies – the Lion of the Tribe of Judah.

45 Therefore hear ye the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make *their* habitation desolate with them. 46 At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.

The LORD has purposed His wrath against the Chaldeans. That's one place you don't want to be, on the purpose side of the LORD's wrath.

Chapter 51 is much the same as 50 and it is very long – the longest chapter in Jeremiah in fact. Hopefully we will be able to get through it in a couple of more lessons and then that just leaves chapter 52.

† All Scripture from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible