

Jeremiah 51:1-58      “Politics and the Kingdom of God V: The Cup, the Banquet, and the Temple”  
Aug 28, 2016

As we come toward the end of the book of Jeremiah,  
we see the stark contrast between Zion and Babylon.  
Babylon (with all the nations of the earth) is under God's judgment,  
and those who belong to Zion must remember  
that the vengeance of the LORD is coming against Babylon.

Therefore, those who belong to Zion must "flee" from Babylon.

There are at least three different ways that this has been taken:

- 1) Some have said that Zion = Christendom, and Babylon = hostile nations –  
as Christianity triumphed in the Roman Empire (and beyond)  
it resulted in an identification of Jerusalem with Christian nations  
(so, for example, Eusebius identified Constantine as a new David.
- 2) Others have identified Zion as the Church, and Babylon as the State –  
for instance, many Anabaptists took this as saying  
that Christians should not be politically involved.  
The separatism of the Mennonites (and especially the Amish)  
is rooted in this understanding of the absolute contrast between Zion and Babylon.
- 3) A third model sees Zion as the city of God, and Babylon as the city of man –  
Augustine's formulation provides us with the best understanding of the two cities.  
They are formed by two different (and opposed) loves.  
Babylon is not exactly equal to any particular earthly city.  
It is rather the motive power of *every* earthly city –  
insofar as that city is hostile to God.  
At times Augustine can sound like Eusebius in his praise for Christian emperors –  
but at other times Augustine can sound like the (later) Anabaptists  
in the absolute antithesis that he draws between the two cities.

This is why we need to remember that Babylon is *not* referring to "political life" per se.  
No nation on earth can ever *become* Zion.

But at the same time, as we saw this morning in Psalm 22:27-28,  
*"All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD,  
and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.  
For kingship belongs to the LORD,  
and he rules over the nations."*

Contrary to the Anabaptist position, Zion does not simply equal the church,  
and Babylon does not simply *equal* "the nations."  
Babylon refers to *the nations insofar as they are in rebellion against God* –  
the nations insofar as they have joined Satan's rebellion against God.

This also explains why the Christian must "come out" of Babylon.  
The Christian may not participate in the rebellion against God.  
But that does not mean that the Christian must "come out" of all political involvement.

Certainly we must be wary of the Babylonian spirit that pervades politics in all ages –  
but then again, the Babylonian spirit pervades all of society (not just politics).  
[If you want to know what I mean by 'the Babylonian spirit' -- just read Revelation 18-19].

How can a nation avoid the judgment of Babylon?

In one sense they can't.

All of humanity – and thus, all of creation –  
participates in Adam's sin and guilt.

Only Zion can escape –  
because Zion is the heavenly city –  
the city whose founder and builder is God.

But insofar as cities and nations live according to the way that God calls us to live,  
they will at least be spared a certain measure of judgment.

If even Nebuchadnezzar can be called by God, "my servant,"  
then surely those who seek to govern in a manner pleasing to God  
are better than those who don't!

The three central themes in our passage tonight – the cup, the banquet, and the temple –  
remind us that Jeremiah's point is liturgical and eschatological.

It is liturgical – because *worship* is what forms each of these two cities.

The liturgies of these two cities are starkly opposed to one another.

The liturgies of Babylon celebrate the glory of the earthly city.

The liturgies of Zion celebrate the glory of the heavenly city.

It is eschatological – because Jeremiah is calling his hearers  
to see beyond what their eyes can take in.

If you just look around you, it will appear that Babylon is winning.

But that's only because you are not seeing the last-days purpose of God.

### **1. The Broken Cup: No Healing for Babylon (v1-33)**

We saw last time that Babylon *must* fall in order for God to bring rest –  
not just to Israel – but to all the earth.

Babylon is more than just the name of a city and a nation –

Babylon is that power that opposes the LORD and his purposes in every age.

And that is why there is *no* healing for Babylon.

I say this because there are other passages (for instance, Psalm 87)  
which speak of the salvation of Babylon!

If you think of Babylon simply as a city in modern Iraq,

then there is hope for Babylon's salvation

(and as I pointed out last time,

there was for many years a Christian bishop of Babylon!).

But if you think of Babylon as the embodiment of the city of man,

then there is no healing for Babylon.

**a. “The Spirit of a Destroyer” and the Winnowing of Babylon (v1-2)**

51 Thus says the LORD:

“Behold, I will stir up the spirit of a destroyer  
against Babylon,  
against the inhabitants of Leb-kamai,<sup>[a]</sup>  
<sup>2</sup> and I will send to Babylon winnowers,  
and they shall winnow her,  
and they shall empty her land,  
when they come against her from every side  
on the day of trouble.

The beginning and the end of this first section (verses 1-33)  
uses the language of harvest (winnowing in verse 2 and threshing in verse 33).  
God says that he will stir up the spirit of a destroyer against Babylon.

**b. “Devote Her to Destruction”: the Guilt of Babylon (v3-5)**

<sup>3</sup> Let not the archer bend his bow,  
and let him not stand up in his armor.  
Spare not her young men;  
devote to destruction<sup>[b]</sup> all her army.  
<sup>4</sup> They shall fall down slain in the land of the Chaldeans,  
and wounded in her streets.  
<sup>5</sup> For Israel and Judah have not been forsaken  
by their God, the LORD of hosts,  
but the land of the Chaldeans<sup>[c]</sup> is full of guilt  
against the Holy One of Israel.

And in the “b” sections (verses 3-5 and 12-24), God calls this destroyer  
to devote the army of Babylon to destruction  
for Babylon’s guilt “against the Holy One of Israel.”  
Here in verses 3-5, we only see the basic statement of guilt.  
In verses 12-24 we will hear the details.

But contrary to the opinion of most inhabitants of Jerusalem,  
“Israel and Judah have *not* been forsaken by their God, the LORD of hosts.”  
Yes, he brought judgment against them for their sin –  
but God does not forsake his people forever.  
As we saw this morning from Psalm 22,  
there are times when we *experience* God’s distance –  
when it appears that God is not listening!  
But Jeremiah promises us that the LORD of hosts has *not* forsaken his people –  
and he *will* make all things right.

**c. “Flee from the Midst of Babylon” – the Vengeance of the LORD (v6)**

<sup>6</sup> *“Flee from the midst of Babylon;  
let every one save his life!  
Be not cut off in her punishment,  
for this is the time of the LORD's vengeance,  
the repayment he is rendering her.*

Indeed, that is the point of the “c” sections (verse 6 and verses 9-11).  
The LORD is bringing vengeance against Babylon.  
Therefore, “Flee from the midst of Babylon.”

This is the same prophet who told the exiles – “Seek the welfare of the city” –  
even to the point of saying “Build houses and live in them;  
plant gardens and eat their produce...”  
In other words, build and plant – participate in the life of the city.

Now Jeremiah says – “Flee from the midst of Babylon; let every one save his life!”  
Do not become so attached to Babylon that you become like Lot’s wife –  
that your heart is drawn away by your love for the things that you have made.  
If you share in Babylon’s sins – if you forget the LORD your God,  
and if you love the creature more than the Creator –  
then you will fall together with Babylon!

#### **d. Babylon Was a Golden Cup – the Madness of the Nations**

**(v7-9a)**

<sup>7</sup> *Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD's hand,  
making all the earth drunken;  
the nations drank of her wine;  
therefore the nations went mad.*  
<sup>8</sup> *Suddenly Babylon has fallen and been broken;  
wail for her!  
Take balm for her pain;  
perhaps she may be healed.*  
<sup>9</sup> *We would have healed Babylon,  
but she was not healed.*

Indeed, the center of this opening section (verses 7-9),  
speak of Babylon as “a golden cup in the LORD’s hand,  
making all the earth drunken.

Scripture uses the language of wine – and the cup – in two ways:  
Wine was given by God to “gladden the heart.”  
Used responsibly, wine brings joy – and is a beverage of celebration and happiness.

But like with everything else that God created good –  
wine can also be twisted to evil.  
Babylon – the golden cup in the LORD’s hand –

has become the source of madness and drunkenness to the nations.  
 Think of how Revelation speaks of Babylon as a woman  
 “holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations  
 and the impurities of her sexual immorality.” (17:4)  
 John tells us that “all nations have drunk the wine  
 of the passion of her sexuality immorality,  
 and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her,  
 and the merchants of the earth have grown rich  
 from the power of her luxurious living.” (18:3)  
 And the voice from heaven replies in Revelation 18:4,  
 “Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins,  
 lest you share in her plagues;  
 for her sins are heaped high as heaven,  
 and God has remembered her iniquities.  
 Pay her back as she herself has paid back others,  
 and repay her double for her deeds;  
 mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed.”

But then at the end of verse 8 is a curious line:

“Take balm for her pain; perhaps she may be healed.  
 We would have healed Babylon, but she was not healed.”  
 I would suggest that this is the attitude cultivated by Jeremiah 29 –  
 “seek the welfare (the “Shalom” – the peace) of the city.”  
 (It is also a parallel to chapter 8, verse 22 – where *Jerusalem* was not healed)

We would have healed Babylon – but she was not healed.

### c’. “Forsake Her” – the Vengeance of the LORD for His Temple (v9b-

11)

*Forsake her, and let us go  
 each to his own country,  
 for her judgment has reached up to heaven  
 and has been lifted up even to the skies.  
<sup>10</sup> The LORD has brought about our vindication;  
 come, let us declare in Zion  
 the work of the LORD our God.*

And so the people of God agree with the call of verse 6 to “flee from the midst of Babylon.”

Let us go each to his own country.  
 Judgment has come upon Babylon – the LORD has vindicated us!  
 “Come, let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God!”

<sup>11</sup> *“Sharpen the arrows!  
 Take up the shields!*

*The LORD has stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, because his purpose concerning Babylon is to destroy it, for that is the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance for his temple.*

And this is explained further in verse 11,

as the people declare that God has stirred up the kings of the Medes against Babylon,  
and that this is the vengeance of the LORD for his temple  
(parallel to the point in verse 6).

Likewise, in verses 3-5, we had heard the summons to battle against Babylon for her guilt.  
Now in verses 12-24 we hear this fleshed out.

**b'. The Summons to War – against the Idolatry of Babylon (v12-24)**

<sup>12</sup> *“Set up a standard against the walls of Babylon;  
make the watch strong;  
set up watchmen;  
prepare the ambushes;  
for the LORD has both planned and done  
what he spoke concerning the inhabitants of Babylon.*

<sup>13</sup> *O you who dwell by many waters,  
rich in treasures,  
your end has come;  
the thread of your life is cut.*

<sup>14</sup> *The LORD of hosts has sworn by himself:  
Surely I will fill you with men, as many as locusts,  
and they shall raise the shout of victory over you.*

<sup>15</sup> *“It is he who made the earth by his power,  
who established the world by his wisdom,  
and by his understanding stretched out the heavens.*

<sup>16</sup> *When he utters his voice there is a tumult of waters in the heavens,  
and he makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth.  
He makes lightning for the rain,  
and he brings forth the wind from his storehouses.*

<sup>17</sup> *Every man is stupid and without knowledge;  
every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols,  
for his images are false,  
and there is no breath in them.*

<sup>18</sup> *They are worthless, a work of delusion;  
at the time of their punishment they shall perish.*

<sup>19</sup> *Not like these is he who is the portion of Jacob,  
for he is the one who formed all things,  
and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance;  
the LORD of hosts is his name.*

Verses 15-19 are a direct quotation from Jeremiah 10:12-16.

In chapter 10, this was the climax of Jeremiah’s indictment of Jerusalem!  
It was followed by God’s declaration that he was

“slinging out the inhabitants of the land” (10:18),  
and the warning that God would make the cities of Judah a desolation.

We have heard much of the guilt of Babylon and God’s coming wrath against Babylon.  
Now we finally hear that the reason for God’s coming wrath upon Babylon  
is *exactly the same reason* that he judged Jerusalem –  
given in *exactly the same words*.  
Why does God judge Babylon?  
Because of their idolatry.

You can see how Jeremiah’s message – “to the Jew first and also to the Greek” –  
will influence the apostle Paul.

Once Paul realizes that Jesus really was who he said he was –  
he immediately recognizes the implications!

Paul’s argument in Romans 1-3 is built on the foundation of what Jeremiah says here.

“For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him,  
but they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened.  
Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God  
for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.”  
(Romans 1:21-23)

<sup>20</sup> *“You are my hammer and weapon of war:*

*with you I break nations in pieces;*

*with you I destroy kingdoms;*

<sup>21</sup> *with you I break in pieces the horse and his rider;*

*with you I break in pieces the chariot and the charioteer;*

<sup>22</sup> *with you I break in pieces man and woman;*

*with you I break in pieces the old man and the youth;*

*with you I break in pieces the young man and the young woman;*

<sup>23</sup> *with you I break in pieces the shepherd and his flock;*

*with you I break in pieces the farmer and his team;*

*with you I break in pieces governors and commanders.*

<sup>24</sup> *“I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea before your very eyes for all the evil  
that they have done in Zion, declares the LORD.*

And so, after using Babylon as his hammer – as his weapon to break the nations in pieces –  
God now repays Babylon for all the evil that they have done in Zion.

**a’. “I Am Against You, O Destroying Mountain”: the Harvest of Babylon (v25-33)**

<sup>25</sup> *“Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain,  
declares the LORD,*

*which destroys the whole earth;*

*I will stretch out my hand against you,*

*and roll you down from the crags,*

*and make you a burnt mountain.*  
<sup>26</sup> *No stone shall be taken from you for a corner  
and no stone for a foundation,  
but you shall be a perpetual waste,  
declares the LORD.*

And so in verses 25-33, we hear of the end of the Destroying Mountain –  
the harvest of Babylon.

<sup>27</sup> *“Set up a standard on the earth;  
blow the trumpet among the nations;  
prepare the nations for war against her;  
summon against her the kingdoms,  
Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz;  
appoint a marshal against her;  
bring up horses like bristling locusts.*  
<sup>28</sup> *Prepare the nations for war against her,  
the kings of the Medes, with their governors and deputies,  
and every land under their dominion.*  
<sup>29</sup> *The land trembles and writhes in pain,  
for the LORD's purposes against Babylon stand,  
to make the land of Babylon a desolation,  
without inhabitant.*  
<sup>30</sup> *The warriors of Babylon have ceased fighting;  
they remain in their strongholds;  
their strength has failed;  
they have become women;  
her dwellings are on fire;  
her bars are broken.*  
<sup>31</sup> *One runner runs to meet another,  
and one messenger to meet another,  
to tell the king of Babylon  
that his city is taken on every side;*  
<sup>32</sup> *the fords have been seized,  
the marshes are burned with fire,  
and the soldiers are in panic.*  
<sup>33</sup> *For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:  
The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor  
at the time when it is trodden;  
yet a little while  
and the time of her harvest will come.”*

The LORD's purposes against Babylon stand –  
to make the land of Babylon a desolation without inhabitant.  
Again, if you take this to mean the historic city of Babylon,  
then this took more than a thousand years.



The attack of the Medes took the city with only minimal slaughter.  
And Babylon remained a powerful city for centuries.

But God's purpose is to overthrow *Babylon* and all that she stands for –  
as he restores *Zion*.

And we see this more clearly in verses 34-44:

**2. The Drunken Banquet: Babylon Deserted (v34-44)**  
**a. Nebuchadnezzar Has Swallowed Zion (v34-35)**

<sup>34</sup> *“Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon has devoured me;  
he has crushed me;  
he has made me an empty vessel;  
he has swallowed me like a monster;  
he has filled his stomach with my delicacies;  
he has rinsed me out.”*<sup>[d]</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *“The violence done to me and to my kinsmen be upon Babylon,”  
let the inhabitant of Zion say.  
“My blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea,”  
let Jerusalem say.*

The opening image of this second poem is that of Nebuchadnezzar the great monster  
swallowing Zion alive.

(I say “alive” because Zion is the one talking!)

**b. The Doom of Babylon (v36-37)**

<sup>36</sup> *Therefore thus says the LORD:  
“Behold, I will plead your cause  
and take vengeance for you.  
I will dry up her sea  
and make her fountain dry,  
<sup>37</sup> and Babylon shall become a heap of ruins,  
the haunt of jackals,  
a horror and a hissing,  
without inhabitant.*

In response, the LORD says in verses 36-37 that he will take vengeance on Babylon  
and that he will dry up her sea and make her fountain dry.

In other words, he will beach the sea monster –  
and leave her a heap of ruins, the haunt of jackals, a horror and a hissing,  
without inhabitant.

**c. The Feast of Slaughter (v38-40)**

<sup>38</sup> *“They shall roar together like lions;  
they shall growl like lions' cubs.*

<sup>39</sup> *While they are inflamed I will prepare them a feast  
and make them drunk, that they may become merry,  
then sleep a perpetual sleep  
and not wake, declares the LORD.*

<sup>40</sup> *I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter,  
like rams and male goats.*

Then in verses 38-40 the LORD says that while Babylon roars like a hungry lion,  
he will give them a feast to make them drunk –  
and then while they are making merry,  
he will make them sleep a perpetual sleep –  
so that they will not wake up.

This will be a feast of slaughter.  
The lion will become lambs for the slaughter!

### **b'. The Horror of Babylon (v41-43)**

<sup>41</sup> *“How Babylon<sup>[e]</sup> is taken,  
the praise of the whole earth seized!*

*How Babylon has become  
a horror among the nations!*

<sup>42</sup> *The sea has come up on Babylon;  
she is covered with its tumultuous waves.*

<sup>43</sup> *Her cities have become a horror,  
a land of drouht and a desert,  
a land in which no one dwells,  
and through which no son of man passes.*

And so the theme of horror returns from verse 37.  
The sea monster is now *drowned* in its tumultuous waves.  
She has become a land in which no one dwells –  
and through which no son of man passes (echoing chapter 50).

### **a'. “I Will Take Out of His Mouth What He Has Swallowed” (v44)**

<sup>44</sup> *And I will punish Bel in Babylon,  
and take out of his mouth what he has swallowed.*

*The nations shall no longer flow to him;  
the wall of Babylon has fallen.*

And so the LORD says that he will punish Bel – the god of Babylon.  
“I will take out of his mouth what he has swallowed.”

Babylon has swallowed Jerusalem –  
but that doesn't mean the story is over! –  
any more than Jonah being swallowed by the fish! –  
or Jesus being swallowed by the grave!

Over and over again throughout history  
it looks like Babylon has won!  
It looks as though things could not possibly get any worse!  
And then it does!  
“We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel” (Luke 24:21).  
But now he is dead...

But as Jesus would say to Cleopas and his friend,  
“O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!  
Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things  
and enter into his glory?” (Luke 24:26)

Right now, it sure looks like Babylon is winning in this country – and around the world.  
We watch as Babylon swallows our brothers and sisters alive.  
But from reports throughout the Muslim world,  
there may be more Muslim converts to Christianity in the last decade  
than there have been in the last millennium combined!

Think about the heavenly Jerusalem – our Mother.  
In Revelation 12, we see the heavenly Zion –  
the glorious woman who was attacked by the dragon.  
She gave birth to a male child – our Lord Jesus –  
and then fled into the wilderness –  
where she was protected by God – and by the earth itself!

After the dragon failed to destroy her,  
we are told that the dragon went to “make war *on the rest of her children* –  
on those who keep the commandments of God  
and hold to the testimony of Jesus.” (12:17)

The Jerusalem that is above – she is our mother (as Paul says in Galatians 4).  
She cannot be defeated.  
She cannot be swallowed up by Babylon (or the dragon) ever again!

Your mother is safe!  
And therefore, you are too.

And that is the message of our final poem (verses 45-58)

### **3. Remembering the Temple: Vengeance Belongs to God (v45-58)**

#### **a. “Go Out of the Midst of Her” – the Fierce Anger of the LORD (v45-46)**

<sup>45</sup> “Go out of the midst of her, my people!

*Let every one save his life  
from the fierce anger of the LORD!*

<sup>46</sup> *Let not your heart faint, and be not fearful*

*at the report heard in the land,  
when a report comes in one year  
and afterward a report in another year,  
and violence is in the land,  
and ruler is against ruler.*

The opening call is familiar by now:

“Go out of the midst of her, my people!

Let every one save his life from the fierce anger of the LORD!”

But now the LORD says “Let not your heart faint, and be not fearful.”

Do not be afraid of the reports that you hear of violence in the land.

### **b. Behold the Days Are Coming – Images Punished (v47-48)**

<sup>47</sup> *“Therefore, behold, the days are coming  
when I will punish the images of Babylon;  
her whole land shall be put to shame,  
and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her.*

<sup>48</sup> *Then the heavens and the earth,  
and all that is in them,  
shall sing for joy over Babylon,  
for the destroyers shall come against them out of the north,  
declares the LORD.*

Because the days are coming when I will punish the images of Babylon.

Idolatry cannot endure.

“Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets,  
for God has given judgment for you against her.” (Rev. 18:20)

### **c. Remember the LORD and His Temple from Far Away (v49-51)**

<sup>49</sup> *Babylon must fall for the slain of Israel,  
just as for Babylon have fallen the slain of all the earth.*

<sup>50</sup> *“You who have escaped from the sword,  
go, do not stand still!*

*Remember the LORD from far away,  
and let Jerusalem come into your mind:*

<sup>51</sup> *‘We are put to shame, for we have heard reproach;  
dishonor has covered our face,  
for foreigners have come  
into the holy places of the LORD's house.’*

Idolatry must fall because idolatry slanders God and produces all sorts of human misery.

“Remember the LORD from far away, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.”

(there are echoes here of Psalm 137 – let me not forget Jerusalem!)

Remember how foreigners came into the holy places of the temple.

Babylon *must* fall.

**b'. Behold the Days Are Coming – Judgment on Images (v52-53)**

<sup>52</sup> *“Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD,  
when I will execute judgment upon her images,  
and through all her land  
the wounded shall groan.*

<sup>53</sup> *Though Babylon should mount up to heaven,  
and though she should fortify her strong height,  
yet destroyers would come from me against her,  
declares the LORD.*

And so a second time, the LORD declares that “the days are coming”  
“when I will execute judgment on her images...”

Even if Babylon should try to mount up into heaven (like the Tower of Babel long ago),  
there is nothing that she can do to escape her coming judgment.

**a'. The LORD Is Laying Babylon Waste (v54-58)**

<sup>54</sup> *“A voice! A cry from Babylon!  
The noise of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans!*

<sup>55</sup> *For the LORD is laying Babylon waste  
and stilling her mighty voice.*

*Their waves roar like many waters;  
the noise of their voice is raised,*

<sup>56</sup> *for a destroyer has come upon her,  
upon Babylon;*

*her warriors are taken;  
their bows are broken in pieces,*

*for the LORD is a God of recompense;  
he will surely repay.*

<sup>57</sup> *I will make drunk her officials and her wise men,  
her governors, her commanders, and her warriors;  
they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake,  
declares the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.*

<sup>58</sup> *“Thus says the LORD of hosts:*

*The broad wall of Babylon  
shall be leveled to the ground,*

*and her high gates*

*shall be burned with fire.*

*The peoples labor for nothing,*

*and the nations weary themselves only for fire.”*

And so verses 54-58 describe the final calamity upon Babylon.

The images of the last two chapters are woven together –

destroyers and arrows – drunkenness and sleep –

the fire of God’s wrath poured out upon the City from the pits of Hell.

Do not be afraid.  
Your mother is safe.  
Zion will never again be swallowed up by Babylon.

And thus the great multitude can sing:  
“Hallelujah!  
Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,  
for his judgments are true and just;  
for he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality;  
and has avenged on her the blood of his servants.” (Revelation 19:1-2)

We often speak of the great wedding supper of the Lamb –  
but we can never forget the “great supper of God” in Rev. 19:17.

If you want God to make all things right and bring salvation to Zion –  
then you must want to see Babylon destroyed.

As our shorter catechism puts it,  
“In the second petition, which is, *thy kingdom come*,  
we pray that Satan’s kingdom may be destroyed...”  
And the destruction of Satan’s kingdom is described in Revelation 19:17-18  
as the “great supper of God,”  
wherein the birds of the heavens gather  
“to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men,  
the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men,  
both free and slave, both small and great” –  
all those who ally with the beast –  
all those who prefer Babylon to Zion.

So yes, we *want* to see Babylon destroyed –  
but we also want to see as few people left in Babylon as possible!

Which is why the catechism continues:  
“that the kingdom of grace may be advanced,  
ourselves and others brought into it and kept in it –  
and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.”

And this is why it is so important that we *live* as citizens of Zion!  
When the church is obsessed with wealth and power and stuff and nonsense –  
then it is no wonder that people look at us and say “why should we join you?!”  
But when the church is living as a colony of heaven –  
as an outpost of the kingdom of God –  
as the place where the family of Jesus takes shape on earth –  
then people *flee* from Babylon to take refuge here!