

9/29/02

Jeremiah 50:1-51:33

The judgment against Babylon is the longest of all the judgments against the nation. Jer. 46-51

The judgment against Babylon contains 110 versus in contrast to 121 versus, as a combined total of the judgments of the other nations. Jer. 46-49

The lengthy oracle is probably a combination of several proclamations, so the division of the two chapters is not the clearest at times, though there are definite grouping in the order of the material.

At times parallel passages are evident, giving the entire oracle a redundant sense, to emphasize the certainty and severity of the judgment against Babylon.

1. The Jew return to their God and the land. Jer. 50:4-51 19-20
2. The nation of Israel is conquered for her unfaithfulness. Jer. 50:6-7, 17-18
3. The attack of Babylon by the Medes and Persians. Jer. 50:8-10, 14-16
4. The Lord Himself is the One destroying Babylon. Jer. 50:11-13

The two-fold theme that intertwined in the two chapters is the judgment of Babylon and the restoration of Israel.

The seeming monotonous repetition of the judgment from different descriptions served a two-fold purpose.

1. To encourage the captives of Yahweh's love and faithfulness to deliver them in the future, giving them hope.

2. To emphasize the sure and long-deserved judgment of Babylon.

* The only clue for a date is found in chapter fifty-one, the fourth year of Zedekiah, 594-593 B.C. Jer. 51:59-60

50:1-20 The announcement of Babylon's judgment.

51:1-10 The doom of Babylon.

51:1-3 The proclamation was to be to all the nations.

- 1) The Divine authority is evident in the superscription which serve for both chapter is identified in three ways. Vs. 1
 - a) It was the word that the LORD.
 - b) It was spoke against Babylon to Jeremiah.
 - c) It was spoken by Jeremiah.
- 2) The judgment is against the land of Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans.
 - a) Modern day Iraq and the Saddam Hussian.

- b) The powerful empire of Hammurabi, 1793-1750 B.C.
 - c) Defeated by the Hittites, followed by Kssite ontrol from 1600-150 B.C.
 - d) Babylon cast off domination under Nebuchadnzzar I, 1124-1103 B.C., until it came under Assyrian control in the ninth century, till the Assyrian empire collapsed in 609 B.C.
 - e) In 626 B.C. Nabopolassar gained independence from Assyria, the empire reaching it height with Nebuchadnezzar II, 605-562 B.C.
 - f) His successors were not as wise and it declined to be overthrown by Medo-Persia.
- 3) The declaration was to be among the nations, as a lifted banner for all to see and know, so as to be unconcealed, that her chief god and idols would be humiliated and defeated. Vs. 2
- a) Bel, means lord, the storm god.
 - b) Merocach was the chief god of Babylon, Marduk
 - c) Images, literally mean “dung pellets”, ridiculing the idols.
- 4) God would call a nation out of the north against Babylon, namely Medo-Persia and none would escape. Vs. 3
- * Jeremiah had already mentioned this. Jer. 25:12, 25-26

- a) Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,' says the LORD; `and I will make it a perpetual desolation. Jer. 25:12
- b) All the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes; all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another; and all the kingdoms of the world which *are* on the face of the earth. Also the king of Sheshach shall drink after them. Jer. 25:25-26

50:4-5 The return of Israel.

- 1) The short-term fulfillment would be after seventy years. Vs. 4
 - a) The prophecy is marked by the phrase, “In those days and in that time”.
 - b) The authority is marked by the phrase, “says the LORD”,
 - c) Both Judah and Israel would come together; with continual weeping to seek the LORD their God and did so under the command of Cyrus in 536 B.C.
 - * They would repent of their sin and call on Yahweh!

2) They did so under Ezra, Zerubabel and Nehemiah and but the perpetual covenant is the long-term fulfillment in the millennial kingdom, after the seven years of Tribulation. Vs. 5

* Saying, `Come and let us join ourselves to the LORD In a perpetual covenant That will not be forgotten. Jer. 31:31-34

50:6-7 The condition of God's people.

1) His people have been lost sheep due to their shepherds or leader, civil and religious, turning away from God, to the idolatrous worship in the mountains, forgetting their resting place, Jerusalem. Vs. 6

* Jer. 23; Ezk. 34

2) Consequently they were devoured by the enemy and they had justified it by the fact that Israel had sinned in three ways. Vs. 7

a) They sinned against Yahweh.

b) They sinned against the habitation of justice, Jerusalem and the temple.

c) They sinned against the hope of their fathers.

* At time individuals take too much power and authority on themselves as persons of God and abuse their power over people but God will deal with

them in for their abuses and proud lordship in their little kingdoms!

50:8-10 The call for God's people to leave Babylon.

1) They were to go out of the land of the Chaldeans, leading like the rams rushing out of the sheepfold. Vs. 8

2) The reason is judgment in coming to her. Vs. 9

a) Yahweh said, "I will raise and cause" a confederacy of nations to come up against Babylon from the north country. Jer. 51:27-28

b) Babylon would be captured.

c) The arrows of the Medes and Persians would be of expert warriors, hitting their mark.

3) The plunder of the Chaldeans would bring satisfaction to the enemy. Vs. 10

50:11-16 *The sowing and reaping of Babylon.*

50:11-13 The reason for her punishment.

1) Because Babylon was glad and rejoiced, in destroying Yahweh's heritage and in her enrichment becoming like a heifer threshing grain and bellowing like bulls. Vs. 11

a) They had gone too far in their consuming of Israel arrogantly.

- b) So now heavenly justice would be administered on earth to them!
- 2) Speaking metaphorically Babylon's is personified as a mother who would be deeply ashamed; for she would be the least of the nations, a wilderness, a dry land and a desert. Vs. 12
- 3) Because of the wrath of the LORD She would not be inhabited, but entirely desolate, all who passed her would be horrified and kiss at all her plagues. Vs. 13

50:14-16 The command for battle.

- 1) Yahweh calls Medo-Persian to array herself with bow and arrows, sparing none, due to the fact that she sinned against the LORD. Vs. 14
- 2) Her devastation is described the surrender by the phrase "she has given her hand" and the ruin of her foundations and walls as the vengeance of the LORD, sowing to what she had reaped. Vs. 15
 - a) This is long-term for when Cyrus took Babylon in 538-39 B.C., he did it with very little resistance as prophesied by Isaiah. Is. 44:28-45:3
 - b) In fact Belshazzar had a drunken feast, confident that no one could penetrate the walls of Babylon! Dan. 5

- 3) She would suffer in her crops and harvest that she enjoyed by the aid of the Euphrates River, due to fear of the enemy, abandoning the fields. Vs. 16

50:17-20 *The restoration of Israel from Babylon.*

- 1) Israel is portrayed as scattered sheep that a lions had driven away. Vs. 17
 - a) First the king of Assyria devoured him.
 - * The death of Ashurbanapal in 627 B.C. brought rapid decline till the overthrow of Nineveh by Babylon in 612 B.C.
 - b) Now at last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has broken his bones.
- 2) Yahweh would be the defender of Israel. Vs. 18
 - a) The Captain of the armies of heaven.
 - b) The God of Israel would punish the king of Babylon and in his own land, even as He had punished the king of Assyria.
- 3) Yahweh would return Israel to her home, to feed on Carmel and Bashan; Her soul being satisfied on Mount Ephraim and Gilead. Vs. 19
- 4) Yahweh moves into the far future restoration of Israel by the phrase, "In those days and in that time", confirmed

by the fact that the iniquity and sin of Judah would not be found, implying forgiveness, pardoning those He preserves. Vs. 20; Jer. 31, 33

50:21-32 The wrath of God on Babylon.

- 1) Yahweh once again commands the instrument of His wrath to go up against the land of Merathaim, against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod to waste and utterly destroy them. Vs. 21
 - a) Merathaim was in southern Babylon at the mouth of the Tigris and Euphrates, known as Mat Maratin and it means “bitter river”.
 - b) Pekod was a tribe in eastern Babylon.
 - c) Both contain a play on words. Merathaim means “two rebellions” and Pekod means punishment or visitation.
- 2) The atmosphere is tense and with anticipation for of great destruction. Vs. 22
- 3) Yahweh declares mockingly the brokenness of Babylon as a powerful hammer in the earth, who would become desolate through the snare of Yahweh. Vs. 23

- 4) Babylon had been trapped, being unaware and caught because she had contended against the LORD. Vs. 24
- 5) Yahweh describes Himself as One opening His armory and bringing out the weapons of His indignation; reconfirming it was the work of the Captain of the armies of heaven against the Chaldeans. Vs. 25
- 6) The order to the armies from the farthest border are given to spoil her storehouses, utterly ruin and destroy her utterly; leaving nothing. Vs. 26
- 7) The strongest warriors were to be slain, symbolized by the word “bulls”, for the day of their judgment, the time of their punishment had come, so the proclamation “Woe”. Vs. 27
- 8) Those escaping from the land of Babylon would declare in Zion, that it was the vengeance of the LORD our God, The vengeance for defiling His temple. Vs. 28
 - * Ezekiel tells of the news coming to Babylon. Ezk. 33:21-2
- 9) The call to Yahweh’s instruments of judgment is once again stated, repaying her in kind, due to her pride against the Holy One of Israel. Vs. 29
 - * Babylon’s long history. Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21

- 10) The summary statement may sound redundant but it is to emphasize the well deserved and long coming judgment. Vs. 30-32
- a) Her young men shall fall in the streets, And all her men of war shall be cut off in that day,” says the LORD. Vs. 30
- b) Her enemy was Yahweh, “Behold, I [am] against you, O most haughty one!” says the Lord GOD of hosts; “For your day has come, The time that I will punish you. Vs. 31
* Jer. 21:13-14
- c) The most proud shall stumble and fall, And no one will raise him up; I will kindle a fire in his cities, And it will devour all around him.” Vs. 32

50:33-46 Israel’s kinsman redeemer
avengeous.

50:33-40 *The thoroughness of the vengeance.*

- 1) The Captain of the armies of heaven acknowledges the oppression of Israel and Judah by Assyria and Babylon, refusing to let them go. Vs. 33
- 2) Their Redeemer is strong is the Captain of the armies of heaven, who will thoroughly plead their case, to give them rests and silence Babylon. Vs. 34

- * The blood avenger of the Old Testament would be duty bound to avenge the slain family member, this is the background! Lev. 25:25; Num. 35:21; Ruth 4
- 3) The sword would be against the inhabitants, princes and wise men of Babylon. Vs. 35
- 4) The same sword would be against the soothsayers, who would be fools and against her mighty men, who would be dismayed. Vs. 36
- 5) The sword would be against their military might. Vs. 37
- a) The horses, their chariots.
- b) The mixed peoples they had acquired would become like women.
- c) Her treasures would be robbed.
- 6) The water supply would be dried up, due to her carved idles. Vs. 38
- 7) Therefore the wild desert beasts shall dwell there with the jackals, the ostriches, not to be inhabited forever, nor shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. Vs. 39
- a) The short-term fulfillment with Medo-Persian.
- b) The long-term fulfillment with the Anti-Christ. Is. 13:19-22

- 8) The likeness would be as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah And their neighbors. Vs. 40

50:41-46 *The fear and helplessness of Babylon.*

- 1) The enemy from the north would be comprised of many kings under the dual empire. Vs. 41
- 2) They are skilled worriers with the bow and the lance, cruel and merciless, fearfully intimidating like the sea, riding on their horses. Vs. 42
- 3) The king of Babylon hearing the report of the advancing armies would feel inadequate to defeat them with anguish like a woman in childbirth. Vs. 43
- 4) Medo-Persia is likened to a lion leaping on it's prey and Babylon fleeing, the point being that no one could stop what Yahweh had decreed by the four rhetorical questions. Vs. 44
 - a) And who is a chosen man that I may appoint over her?
 - b) For who is like Me?
 - c) Who will arraign Me?
 - d) And who is that shepherd Who will withstand Me?"
- 5) The concluding counsel of the LORD against Babylon would stand, included His purposes against the land of the Chaldeans, which would be

accomplished even by the least of the flock to make their dwelling place desolate with them. Vs. 45

- 6) The defeat of Babylon would be a memorable one, the earth trembling and their cry is heard among the nations. Vs. 46

51:1-14 The Lord's vengeance of Babylon.

* This is the longest chapter in the book.

51:1-2 *Babylon is to be sifted as wheat.*

- 1) The Medo-Persians would be God's wind against Babylon, raised up by Yahweh. Vs. 1

* Literally a destroying wind!

 - a) Thus says the LORD, the authority!
 - b) The reference to Leb Kamai is most likely for Babylon, it means "heart of corruption". literally, the heart of those who rise up against me.
- 2) The Medo-Persians are the send winnowers to Babylon. Vs. 2
 - a) As the wheat is separated from the husk, so Babylon from the land.
 - b) The day is a day of doom, surrounded all around.

51:3-5 *The intensity of the battle.*

- 1) The archer was to bend his bow and not spare her young men; but utterly destroy all her army. Vs. 3
- 2) They shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and those thrust through in her streets. Vs. 4
- 3) For Israel is not forsaken, nor Judah, By his God, the LORD of hosts, Though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel." Vs. 5

51:6-10 *The flight from the fury.*

- 1) Israel is called to flee the midst of Babylon, every one save his life, so as not to be killed by God's vengeance and recompense. Vs. 6
- 2) Babylon had been used as the golden cup in the LORD'S hand, to subdue all nations. Vs. 7
 - a) That made all the earth drunk. Jer. 25:12
 - b) The nations drank her wine; Therefore the nations are deranged.
- 3) Now it was Babylon's time of judgment. Vs. 8
 - a) She was suddenly fallen and been destroyed. Vs. 8a
 - b) The call to wail for her! Take balm for her pain; the opportunity to be healed was too late. Vs. 8b-d

- 4) God would of forgiven her if repentance would of taken place, even as Nineveh but it did not! Vs. 9
 - a) We would have healed Babylon, But she is not healed. Vs. 9a-b
 - b) Therefore the command to forsake her, and let us go everyone to his own country; Vs. 9c-d
 - c) For her judgment reaches to heaven and is lifted up to the skies. Vs. 9e
- 5) God's people acknowledge the Lord's faithfulness and proclaim it. Vs. 10
 - a) The LORD has revealed our righteousness. Vs. 10a
 - b) Come and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God. Vs. 10b

51:11-14 *The vengeance of God.*

- 1) The judgment is Yahweh's fiery wrath was for vengeance of His temple, through His chosen vessel the Medes. Vs. 11
 - a. It is holy and righteous.
 - b. It is punitive and the first time they mentioned by name as the instrument of God.
 - 1) The Medes had been allied with Babylon in the destruction of Nineveh in 612 B.C.
 - 2) Now they would join with Persia to defeat Babylon in 539 B.C.

- 2) Yahweh calls for Babylon to prepare for battle in her defense by doing four things but it would be in vain, mockingly. Vs. 12
- a) They were to set up the standard on the walls of Babylon. Vs. 12a
 - b) They were to make the guard strong. Vs. 12b
 - c) They were to set up the watchmen. Vs. 12c
 - d) They were to prepare the ambushes. Vs. 12d
 - e) But all would be futile, “For the LORD has both devised and done What He spoke against the inhabitants of Babylon. Vs. 12e
- 3) The strategic location of Babylon on the Euphrates made her a very fertile land, via her canals and wealthy in treasure but it would not save her from reaping to the measure of her covetousness. Vs. 13
- 4) The oath of the Captain of the armies of heaven by Himself guaranteed the swarm of Medes and Persian as locust all over her city. Vs. 14

51:15-26 The Omnipotent God and impotent idols.

50:15-19 *Yahweh created all things in contrast to idols.*

- 1) He has made the earth by His power; He has established the world by His wisdom, And stretched out the heaven by His understanding. Vs. 15
- 2) He is in control of the hydrological cycle and the wind currents and the weather. Vs. 16
- 3) Every idol maker who does not acknowledge Yahweh but idles is dull-hearted, without knowledge, being put to shame by the falsehood of his breathless image. Vs. 17
- 4) They are empty and a deviation from God, who will be unable to defend themselves in punishment. Vs. 18
- 5) The Portion of Jacob is not like them, but altogether different. Vs. 19
 - a) For He is the Maker of all things. Vs. 19a
 - b) Israel is the tribe of His inheritance. Vs. 19b
 - c) The LORD of hosts is His name. Vs. 19c

51:20-26 *Yahweh had chosen Media.*

- 1) Media would be the weapon of Yahweh to break Babylon and kingdoms. Vs. 20
- 2) Media would be Yahweh’s instrument of judgment on everything listed, from horses to the governors and rulers. Vs. 21-23

* Eight times “I will” is stated!

- 3) Yahweh would repay Babylon for all they had done in Zion by their excess. Vs. 24
- 4) Babylon was on a plain yet she is presented as a destroying mountain, symbolic of “power” that destroyed all but God would stretch His hand and consume her, leaving her desolate forever in the long-term fulfillment. Vs. 25-26

51:27-33 The nations summoned against Babylon.

51:27-29 *The call to battle against Babylon.*

- 1) They were to set up a banner in the land, Blow the trumpet among the nations, calling the kingdoms! Vs. 27
 - a) Ararat, which is Armenia or south-eastern Turkey, Minni were the Mannaeans of the Assyrian records, who lived south of Lake Urmia, and Ashkenaz were nomads of ancient Ashguzi living east of Lake Urmia in western Iran, some believe the Scythians.
 - b) Appoint a general against her; Cause the horses to come up like the bristling locusts.

- 2) They were to prepare with the kings of the Medes, it’s governors and all it’s rulers, under his dominion. Vs. 28
- 3) The outcome would be that the land would tremble and sorrow; accomplishing every purpose of the LORD against Babylon, making her desolation. Vs. 29

51:30-33 *The fear and brokenness in Babylon.*

- 1) The men are described vividly. Vs. 30
 - a) The mighty men of Babylon have ceased fighting. Vs. 30a
 - b) They have remained in their strongholds. Vs. 30b
 - c) Their might has failed. Vs. 30c
 - d) They became like women, under the strain of the battle. Vs. 30d
 - e) The reason is that they have burned her dwelling places, The bars of her gate are broken. Vs. 30e-f
- 2) Messengers will run to at rallying points to reach the king with the news that the city was taken on all sides. Vs. 31

* Babylon was know for her messenger system, to carry messages in just a couple of days throughout the empire.
- 3) But the passages are blocked, to intercept the runners and the reeds burned to find any hiding in fear. Vs. 32

- 4) Yahweh portrays the daughter of Babylon like a threshing floor, time to thresh her; reaping her harvest of judgment. Vs. 33