

(Through the Bible) Jeremiah 50-52

by Chuck Smith

The sermon explores the prophecy of Babylon's destruction and the twofold fulfillment of God's plan for Israel's restoration.

Duration: 1:20:18

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:34

Topics: "Gods Sovereignty", "True Worship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that there is only one way for sinful man to approach the eternal God. He highlights God's greatness in creating the earth, establishing the world, and controlling the elements. The preacher also references the story of Daniel and how he lectured a young king about glorifying the true God. The sermon concludes with a critique of the modern tendency to avoid offending others and make false promises of a utopian future, emphasizing the need for honesty and reliance on God's word.

Transcript

So we turn now to Jeremiah chapter 50. Chapter 50 begins with the words, the word that the Lord spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet. The end of chapter 51 declares, And thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her, and they shall be weary.

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah. In other words, this is the completion of the words of Jeremiah. Now, I only bring that up to show you the idiocy of what is known as higher criticism.

Because this is one of the passages of scripture of whose authorship is questioned by these men who call themselves the higher critics. They challenge the authorship of Jeremiah of these particular two chapters. The reason, of course, for the challenge is that Jeremiah gives some pretty interesting facts concerning the destruction of Babylon and the fall of Babylon.

And this is 65 years before the fall of Babylon. How could he know that that's the way it was going to happen? So surely Jeremiah could not have written it. And though Jeremiah declares it at the beginning of chapter 50 there by Jeremiah the prophet, and he concludes it by saying, Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

These men who declare themselves to be Bible scholars of great intellectual prowess, challenge the authorship of Jeremiah of this particular passage. Well, I have little or no respect, and that's putting it in a very positive way, for these men who claim to have such great understanding and all of the Bible, who take as their chief concern the challenging of everything in the Bible. It's a stupid waste of time.

Now, the problem is if you go to seminary or most seminaries today to study the Bible, when you study in Jeremiah, you will spend more time in their stupid speculations of why Jeremiah did not write these last two chapters than you will the study of the book of Jeremiah. And that's what the study of Jeremiah amounts to in so many seminaries today of how that it really wasn't Jeremiah that wrote it. And that is just, again, a waste of time and a waste of money.

It's just, I get so upset with these things that I just, and these fellows, I'd like to just do what Jeremiah told Zariah to do with the book, tie a rock around it and throw it in the river Euphrates and say, thus shall Babylon sink. And I'd like to tie a millstone about their necks and toss them in with a book. Of course, Jesus would be there cheering me on, for he said concerning those that would turn away the faith of a child, it were better for them that a millstone be hung around their neck and they tossed in the sea of Galilee than to offend the faith.

They're one of these little ones who believe in me. And these men who have destroyed the faith of so many young students who have gone to seminary to study the word of God, only to find that their faith in God has been destroyed through their seminary experience. I would like to take each one of those PhDs and follow the advice of the Lord.

So the word that the Lord spake against Babylon. Now, these are not really the words of Jeremiah. These are the words that the Lord has spoken, but Jeremiah was the instrument through which God spoke the words.

We so often make the statement, well, Jeremiah said, and that's probably a wrong way to put it. In the New Testament, we find that when David was quoting the Psalms, so often, rather than, I beg your pardon, Peter was quoting the Psalms of David. Peter would usually say, and the Holy Spirit spake by the mouth of David saying, attributing the true authorship to the Holy Spirit, recognizing that David was only the instrument through which the Spirit spoke.

So that Jeremiah was the instrument through which the Spirit gave forth the word. So the word of the Lord against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet. The Lord said to Jeremiah, declare ye among the nations and publish and set up a standard.

Publish and conceal it not. Say, Babylon is taken. Bel is confounded.

The Lord, the word means Lord, and is the chief God of. And Merodach, another God of the Babylonians, Marduk, is broken in pieces. Her idols are confounded.

Her images are broken in pieces. For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein. They shall remove, they shall depart both man and beast.

Now, as Jeremiah prophesies the destruction of Babylon, this is one of those interesting areas of Scripture where there is a twofold fulfillment. There is the actual destruction of Babylon as is prophesied here in these passages of Scripture. But then there is that looking forward into the yet future.

In Revelation chapters 17 and 18, where the Lord takes up again the destruction of Babylon, but he is talking in Revelation 17 and 18 of spiritual Babylon, the false religious system of the last days and the great commercial system of the last days. So in Revelation 17, the fall of the religious Babylonian system in chapter 18, the fall of the commercial system, which are titled Babylon in a spiritual sense, which means confusion. And so it is interesting that as you read Jeremiah 50-51, where he tells of the destruction and the fall of Babylon, that some of these passages are parallel passages to Revelation 17 and 18.

No doubt John in his writing, of course, familiar with Jeremiah and the Lord speaking again through John of the destruction of the religious system of Babylon and the commercial Babylon uses some of the same phrases that are used here as God here predicts the judgment of God that is coming upon this great nation, the first world governing empire, and perhaps the greatest of all world governing empires. Now you remember when Nebuchadnezzar had his dream and he saw the image, it had the head of gold. And he said, thou old Nebuchadnezzar are the head of gold in that your kingdom is superior to all kingdoms, but your kingdom is going to be replaced by an inferior kingdom in as much as silver is inferior to gold.

And you saw the test of silver, your kingdom will be replaced by an inferior kingdom. And so the Babylonian kingdom, the greatest kingdom in the history of the world, and yet so thoroughly destroyed according to the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah that I dare say, none of you have met a Babylonian. And if you did, you wouldn't know it because as a race of people, they do not exist anymore.

As God's word said, they would be completely wiped out. They were, it said the city of Babylon would be left to ruins. It would be a place for jackals and, and owls and so forth.

And if you go there today, you'll find it's just a place of ruins, wild animals dwelling among the ruins of a once great city, perhaps one of the greatest cities in the world, 12 miles square surrounded by walls that were 300 feet wide, high and 80 feet thick and a city of beautiful gardens and just glory, the glory of Babylon. But God declares he's going to bring destruction upon her. Now in those days when God brings his destruction against Babylon, God also declares that he is going to bring again his people from their captivity.

Now, again, there is a twofold fulfillment. The prophecy has both its near and yet it's yet future fulfillment because when the religious Babylon system is destroyed and the commercial Babylon system destroyed and the Lord comes again, he is going to gather together his people from all over the world and they are going to come and dwell there in Jerusalem. And so there is a twofold fulfillment of these prophecies that deal with Babylon and the regathering of God's people.

And what took place in history is only sort of a type of what will yet take place in the future as there is a twofold fulfillment to these prophecies. So when Babylon is destroyed in those days and at that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come and the children of Judah together. Now Israel was the ten tribes of the northern kingdom.

Judah was the two tribes of the southern kingdom. And the Lord said that when Babylon is destroyed, they are going to come together. There are those today who try to identify the Anglo-Saxon race of people with the tribes of Israel, and they have a phrase which they call the ten lost tribes.

That is not really a scriptural phrase. Actually, the Bible speaks of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but not lost tribes. They're not lost.

They never have been lost. God's always known where they were, and it would be wrong for God to talk of them as lost tribes. So he doesn't.

But they try to identify the Anglo-Saxons. So the Danish people, they say, are the tribe of Dan, settled in Denmark. And of course, it's close to Denmark.

And so they say that the word ish in Hebrew is man. So Danish people are Dan's men. And then, of course, they try to identify Sweden and England and all as other tribes.

Of course, Joseph Smith had an interesting, yeah, whatever he had. Nephi and so forth, you know, came across the Pacific in these reed rafts and settled in South America. And so the Indians and so forth are the lost tribes.

And yet, at this time, they were brought together, both Israel and Judah. It is prophesied that they would come together, going and weeping, they shall go and seek the Lord their God. So this marvelous restoration was promised, that though they have been driven away from the land and taken captive by Babylon, the day would come when with weeping they would return to seek the Lord.

And they shall ask the way to Zion. Actually, most of them were born in Babylon, had never seen Zion before. So really had no way to get there.

So as they were journeying, they would be asking people directions in how to get there. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward or turn towards Zion, saying, come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten. The reason for their being exiled was they had forgotten the covenant of God.

They had forsaken the covenant of God. And turned and worshiped other gods. But now the commitment to go back and to worship God in this perpetual covenant.

My people, God declares, have been lost sheep, still owning them as his people. Even though they have failed, even though they've been taken captive, God still recognizes as my people have been lost sheep. But their problem was, was their shepherds have caused them to go astray.

They have turned them away on the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill and they have forgotten their resting place. So God places the blame upon the shepherds.

James said, be not many masters knowing that you will receive a greater condemnation. God has some very unkind things to say about false prophets and false shepherds and people who pretend or presume to speak in the name of the Lord, but whose real motive is only their own well-being and enrichment. Who seek not the welfare of the flock of God, but really seek their own welfare above everything else.

And God has some very heavy indictments against those kind of shepherds, shepherds causing them to go astray, causing them to distrust the word of God, causing them to distrust God himself. All that found them have devoured them and their adversaries said, we're not offending because they've sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers. 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 for low.

I will rise and cause to come up against Babylon and assembly of great nations from the North country. And they shall set themselves in array against her from fence. She shall be taken.

Their arrows shall be as a mighty expert man. None shall return in vain. All of Chaldea shall be spoiled.

And that's the, and all that spoil her shall be satisfied, sayeth the Lord, because they were glad and they rejoiced in their destruction of God's heritage because you've grown fat as the heifer at grass and bellow as bulls. Your mother shall be sore, confounded. She, the barrier shall be ashamed.

Behold the hindermost of the nation shall be a wilderness and a dry land in a desert. This nation that was once the glory of the earth is going to become barren because of the wrath of the Lord. It shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate.

Everyone that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished and hiss at all her plagues. Put yourselves in array against Babylon roundabout all ye that bend the bow and shoot at her. Spare not arrows for she has sinned against the Lord.

Shout against her roundabout. She has 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 it under her.

Now that's a phrase that also comes up in a revelation 18, as God speaks of the destruction of that commercial system of Babylon as she has done. Do double, he declares unto her. And so here the destruction of Babylon is predicted.

The walls are to be destroyed. Walls again, as we made mention were 300 feet high and 80 feet thick. Yet the prophet Jeremiah had the audacity to say, they're going to tear down the walls.

They did cut off the sore from Babylon and him that handles the sickle in the time of harvest for fear of the oppressing sword. They shall turn everyone to his people and they shall flee everyone, his own land. Israel is a scattered sheep.

The lions have driven him away. First, the king of Assyria has devoured him. And last, this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has broken his bones.

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. And I will bring Israel again to his habitation and he shall feed on Carmel and bashing and his soul shall be satisfied upon Mount Ephraim and Gilead. Now that's Israel.

That's the Northern Kingdom. That is not Judah, the Southern Kingdom. And 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, they shall not be found for I will pardon them whom I reserve. That to me is a beautiful passage of scripture. In that day, you'll look for their sins, but you can't find them, not because they don't exist, but because God has pardoned them.

David said, Oh, how happy is the man whose transgressions are forgiven? Oh, how happy is the man whose sins are covered? How happy is the man to whom God does not impute iniquity? Paul, in quoting from the words of the Holy Spirit through the mouth of David in Romans chapter two, picks up that same refrain. Oh, how happy is the man to whom God does not impute iniquity. Who is that happy man? It is the man who is believing and trusting in Jesus Christ.

It's glorious to realize that as I walk in the light, as he is in the light, as I believe and trust in him, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's son is continually cleansing me from all of my sin. I have no sin. Why? Because God has pardoned me through Jesus Christ.

And there is that continual work of God's love being wrought in me as there is that continual cleansing from my sin. So with Judah and Israel, God said they'll search, but they can't find their sins because I've pardoned them. Now, the interesting thing, of course, is that Satan is called the accuser of the brethren.

It is declared in the scripture that he seeks to accuse them before God day and night. But he must have a wild time when he's trying to accuse us before the Lord. Because the Lord says, what sins? I don't know of any sins, you know.

Yeah, but didn't you see them last week? They really blew it, you know. Didn't see a thing. Oh, come on now, you know.

I've pardoned them. Because of your belief and trust in Jesus Christ. Oh, we only realize the marvelous grace of God towards us.

Now, it is wrong, absolutely wrong for us to then presume against that grace or to use the grace of God as a cloak for our lasciviousness. That is not what the scripture is referring to at all. Shall we sin freely that grace may abound? God forbid! How can we who are dead to sin live any longer therein? I am not to take advantage.

I really can't take advantage. God won't let me take advantage of his grace. If I'm just going out and sinning with the anticipation that God will forgive me, then I've got this whole thing totally wrong and I'm in serious trouble.

For whosoever is born of God does not live in the practice of sin. And the very fact that I can go out and deliberately and willfully practice sin would bring into question whether or not I am truly born again. The grace of God is not there for me to presume upon and just to make a covering so that I can sin with impunity and just say, well, you know, God's going to cover with his grace.

Never. But it's good to know that as I'm seeking the Lord and as I'm trying to follow after him through the weakness of my flesh, I may fail or I may fall. That as I am loving and serving the Lord, God doesn't impute iniquity against me.

He's not a Santa Claus in the sky who's making out a list, checking it twice, finding out who's naughty and nice. He has no list on me. He's thrown the record away.

Oh, how happy is the man to whom God does not impute iniquity, that man who is seeking to serve the Lord with his whole heart, who has denied himself to take up the cross to follow him. I will pardon them whom I reserve. Oh, I love that.

Go up against the land of Merathim, even against it and against the inhabitants of Pichad. Waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the Lord, and do according to all that I have commanded thee. A sound of battle is in the land and of great destruction.

How is the hammer of the whole earth? And of course, Babylon was the hammer that had bludgeoned the whole earth. How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken? How is Babylon become a

desolation among the nations? For I have laid a snare for thee and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou was not aware. Thou art found and you've been caught because you have striven against the Lord.

Isaiah said, Woe unto the man who strives with his maker. How foolish it is for a person to strive with God and yet how many people are guilty of that falling. But what a wonderful day when I quit striving with God and I just surrender and say, Oh God, I don't want to fight you anymore.

I don't want to run from you anymore. God, I'm on your side. I surrender.

Now what's so bad or difficult or hard about that? And yet, look how hard people fight from doing that. Look how hard they resist God. But when you're resisting God, you're really resisting your own good.

Because God's plan and purpose for you is the best that could ever happen to your life. And thus to strive with God, you're really striving against your own welfare, your own good. And that's sort of dumb.

But people do it. And why? I don't know. Because it is always such a glorious day when you quit striving with God and you just surrender and say, Oh God, not going to fight you anymore.

I just want to walk with you. I just want to live in fellowship with you. I just want to love you and know you more.

Oh, what a beautiful day. You know, there's got to be something. Well, I would say diabolical, but that's very obvious with anyone who would fight with God.

But here is Babylon being destroyed because they have striven against the Lord. The Lord has opened his armory. He has brought forth the weapons of his indignation.

For this is the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans. Watch out. God has gotten out his armory now against Babylon.

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.

Slay all of her bullocks. Let them go down to the slaughter. Woe unto them, for their day is come, the time of their visitation.

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. 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 has done. Do unto her the same phrase sort of repeated.

Do unto her as she has done. She destroyed the temple of God in Jerusalem. They took away all of the vessels from the temple of God and carried them to Babylon.

Well, not necessarily all, but many of them. The cups and so forth that were used. For she hath been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel.

Now, in the time that Babylon was destroyed, in the evening that Babylon was destroyed, Belshazzar, who was a co-regent with his father, was in the city of Babylon in a great feast unto the Lord's, which lasted

several days. And finally, during the midst of this drunken party, he ordered that they bring the gold and silver vessels that they had taken from the temple of Jerusalem and pour their wine into these gold and silver vessels that they might drink their wine out of these vessels that had been consecrated unto God in order that they might exalt themselves against the God of Israel. And as they were drinking out of these golden vessels and praising the gods of gold and silver, suddenly there came the appearance of a hand upon the wall and writing upon the plaster.

And oh, Belshazzar began to shake. And he called his wise men to tell him what the words said. None of them were able to do it until Daniel was finally brought in, the old man, probably in his nineties now.

And he gave this young king a real lecture. He said, you've praised the gods of gold and silver, but the very God in whose hand your breath is, you've not glorified. You didn't learn the lesson of your father Nebuchadnezzar, who was lifted up with pride.

And because of his pride was driven from the kingdom until he knew that it was God who ruled over the earth. And though you knew of his experiences, yet you've exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven. And therefore has this writing come and its interpretation is now weighed in the balances and found wanting.

And this night your kingdom will be divided between the Medes and the Persians, the solemn declaration of God, which was fulfilled that night. And Jeremiah's prophecies fulfilled because they were proud against the Lord, the Holy one of Israel. Therefore, shall her young men fall in the streets and all of her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the Lord.

Behold, I'm against thee, O thou most proud, saith the Lord God of hosts, for thy day is come and the time that I will visit thee 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 around about him. 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, but their Redeemer is strong. The Lord of hosts is his name and he shall thoroughly plead their cause that he may give rest to the land and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon. A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon and upon her princes and upon her wise men, a sword is upon the liars and they shall dote and a sword is upon her mighty men and they shall be dismayed.

A sword is upon their horses and upon their chariots, 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. A drought is upon her waters and they shall be dried up.

And of course, the interesting thing is that as Cyrus was conquering the city of Babylon, his method of conquest was to divert the river Euphrates into canals around the city of Babylon and in thus diverting the river Euphrates, the soldiers were able to come through on the riverbed under the walls of the city and then on up into the city and destroyed it. But here even the 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. Therefore, the wild beasts of the deserts with the wild beasts of the coast shall dwell there and the owls shall dwell therein and it shall no more be inhabited forever, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.

Now, the interesting thing is that last year, the Iraqi government allocated \$80 million to a team of Japanese engineers to draw up the plans for the rebuilding of the city of Babylon, intending to make it one of the most glorious cities of the world, intending to use all of the revenue from the vast oil reserves in Iraq to build this tremendous, glorious monument, you know, for the whole world to see. Of course, that was before Iraq got involved with the war with Iran and lost a great portion of her oil revenue and is still bogged down in this conflict with Iran and, of course, is in financial difficulty as a result of the whole thing. And so there's been a postponement on the rebuilding of the city of Babylon, and I would like to suggest to you that it will never be rebuilt.

As the Lord declares here, it shall not be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbor cities thereof, saith the Lord, so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein. Behold, a people shall come from the north, a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coast of the earth, and they shall hold the bow and the lance.

They are cruel, they'll not show mercy, their voice will roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, every one put in array like a man to the battle against the daughter of Babylon. 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. Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan under 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? Therefore, hear the counsel of the Lord that he hath taken against Babylon and his purposes that he has 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 him. At the noise of the taking of Babylon, the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations. The prophecy is continued through chapter 51.

Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up against Babylon and against them that dwell in the midst of them that rise up against me a destroying wind, and I will send unto Babylon the fanners, and they shall fan her and shall empty her land. For in the day of trouble they shall be against her roundabout, against him that let the archer bend his bow, against him that lifted himself up in his brigadine, and spare ye not her young men, destroy ye utterly all of her hosts. Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and they that are thrust through in her streets.

For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God of the Lord of hosts, though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel. Flee out of the midst of Babylon and deliver every man his soul. Be not cut off in her iniquity, for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance.

He will render unto her a recompense. Hear the warning to flee out of her, out of the midst of Babylon. In Revelation chapter 18, as God is speaking of the destruction that is going to come against this commercial Babylon, he again says for his people to flee out from her.

Come ye out from among her, saith the Lord, as he warns his people to come out from that godless commercialism which is to be destroyed. Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hands that made the earth drunken. The nations have drunken of her wine, therefore the nations are mad.

Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed. Howl for her. We read of course again in Revelation how that the merchants will stand afar off as they see burning and will howl and wail because of the loss of this

great commercial system.

Take balm for her pain if she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed. Forsake her and let us go everyone into his own country for her judgment reaches unto heaven and is lifted up even to the skies.

The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness. Come and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God. Make bright the arrows, gather the shields the Lord hath raised up in the midst of the kings of the Medes for his device is against Babylon.

Now Jeremiah by the word of the Holy Spirit names the Medes as the conquering nation and Cyrus who was the king of the Medes and the Persians came with this array of nations and destroyed Babylon. At the time that Jeremiah made the prophecy the Medes were still in a provincial state and no threat to Babylon at all. He was really going out on the limb and if you were speaking in a natural sense naturally Jeremiah didn't write it.

He was writing it from God and there's no fence at all. God knew from the beginning what was going to happen, but when you start making specifics and prophecies then you know if it is really God speaking it's got to be 100% accurate. If the Babylonians have been destroyed by some other nation other than the Medes or the Persians or the Medo-Persian empires then you'd say well you know that that isn't really God's word.

God really didn't say it because that would be an error and if God said it it couldn't be in error, but because God has said it it happened because it can't be in error if it is indeed God's word and that is why prophecy becomes one of the strongest apologetics. If one word of prophecy failed then it would mean that it wasn't really God's word. Now up until this point thousands of prophecies have already been completely fully literally fulfilled.

In fact 87% of the prophetic utterances in the Bible have already come to pass just as they were written. The 13% that remain are prophecies that will be fulfilled just before or during or right after the coming again of Jesus Christ. They are the only ones that are left.

So God's batting 100% up till now. Chances are he'll continue at this pace. It really wouldn't stand to reason to think that God's word would start failing now when it has been so totally accurate up until now.

There came a moment in history when the Jewish priest thought that God's word had failed and they put on sackcloth, ashes on their heads and they went wailing and mourning through Jerusalem because they thought God's word had failed. That was the day that the Roman government took away from Israel the power of capital punishment because Jacob in prophesying over Judah way back in Genesis declared that the scepter will not depart from Judah until Shiloh or the Messiah comes. And when they were deprived of the power of capital punishment by the Roman government they accepted that as the scepter they no longer had the power to rule.

The scepter has departed from Judah and the Messiah is not here and they went weeping and wailing through Jerusalem because God's word had failed. The eternal word of God has failed. What they didn't know is that that very time there was a little boy growing up in Nazareth about 12 years old who was God's appointed Messiah.

God did not fail to keep his word. The Messiah was already there among them. They just did not recognize him.

But that is the only place where it was thought that God's word failed to come to pass. Marvelous that God could speak with such accuracy and has spoken with such accuracy of so many things even here naming the Medes as the conquering nation. And of course God declares it's because of the vengeance of the Lord for what they did to his temple.

Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon, make the watch strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the ambushes for the Lord hath both devised and done that which he spake against the inhabitants of Babylon. O thou that dwellest upon many waters, built of course there upon the river Euphrates with canals and all throughout the city, beautiful, beautiful city, abundant in treasures, thine end is come and the measure of thy covetousness. The Lord of hosts hath sworn by himself saying, surely I will fill thee with men as with caterpillars and they shall lift up a shout against thee.

He hath made the earth by his power now declaring the greatness of God. He has made the earth by his power. He has established the world by his wisdom.

He has stretched out the heaven by his understanding. I love it when in the Psalms or when in Isaiah or here in Jeremiah, they begin to declare the glory of the God of Israel, the creator. Francis Schaeffer said that the time has come when we really should not just refer to God anymore because there are so many different gods that people worship today, but we should more or less define the God that we are talking about.

So rather than just saying, well God, we should say probably the eternal God, the creator of the heaven and the earth. Then you know the one we're talking about. He's the one that we worship.

He's the one that we serve. There are many gods in this world. People have submitted and yielded their lives to so many different philosophies, ideas, concepts, which are their gods.

And we hear the universalists declaring, well, all roads lead to God. You know, it doesn't really matter if you're a Buddhist or a Mohammed or all roads lead to God. Sure to some God, but they don't lead to the eternal God who created the heaven and the earth.

There's only one road that leads to him. And that road is by way of the cross of Jesus Christ. And that cross declares to you, there's only one road to him.

Jesus said, father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will, thy will be done. If what is possible, if salvation for man is possible, if the way to God is possible through any other means or methods or devices or schemes, then let's skip the cross.

But the cross is an offense to the person of the world today because the cross stands there as a singular testimony that there is only one way by which the man, a man can come unto the eternal God, the creator of the heaven and the earth. That's it. There is no other way.

Had there been another way, God surely would have taken the alternative plan. But there was no alternative plan. Only one way by which sinful man can approach the eternal God who created the heavens and the earth.

So Jeremiah begins to speak of his greatness. He's made the earth by his power. He's established the world by his wisdom.

He's stretched out the heaven by his understanding. When he utters his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens. He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth.

He makes the lightnings with rain and brings forth the wind out of his treasures. Every man is brutish in comparison to God's knowledge. You know, we man, as Shakespeare said, man, poor man, so ignorant in that which he knows best.

But it's amazing how wise people pretend that they are. But yet the wisdom of man, the scripture says, is foolishness with God. And who is man to contend with God? You know, there are people who try to argue with God.

People try to argue with the word of God. How foolish. Where every man's knowledge and wisdom, the greatest of man's wisdom and knowledge, is brutish in comparison to God.

Every founder, that is that man who works with metals and makes molten images, is confounded. For his molten image is a lie, a falsehood. There's no breath in them.

It's stupid to say that little idol is God. It can't even breathe. And you're just, you're filled with confusion if you call that a God.

If you bow down to that, if you worship that, if you kneel before it and show any kind of worship towards it, that's confusion. Every founder is confounded by the works of his own hands. Because these little molten images, there's no breath in them.

They are empty. They are the work of errors. And in the time of their visitation, they shall perish.

The portion of Jacob is not like them. That is the God of Jacob, the Lord of hosts. For he is the former of all things.

God has created all things. And Israel is the rod of his inheritance. The Lord or Jehovah of hosts is his name.

Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war. For with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms. And with thee will I break in pieces the horse and the rider, and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider.

With thee also will I break in pieces man and woman, and with thee will I break in pieces old and young, and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid. And I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flock, and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke, or the farmer with his yoke of oxen. And with thee will I break in pieces the captains and rulers.

And I will render unto Babylon and to all of the inhabitants of Chaldea all of their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the Lord. For behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyed all the earth, and I will stretch out my hand upon thee and roll thee down from the rocks and make thee a burnt mountain. And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations, but thou shalt be desolate forever, saith the Lord.

Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minai, and Ashkenaz. Appoint a captain against her, and cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars. Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the Medes." Again declaring the Medes actually to be the nation by which the others come.

The captains thereof and the rulers thereof in all of the land of his dominion. And the land shall tremble in sorrow. For every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant.

The mighty men of Babylon have forborn to fight. They have remained in their fortresses. Their might has failed.

They became as women. They've burned their dwelling places. Their bars are broken.

One post or messenger will run to meet another. And one messenger to meet another to show the king of posts. Of course, we get our word postman, the guy who's carrying the notices.

So run to meet another. One messenger to meet another to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end. Now, actually, it's an interesting, this is a fascinating prophecy because though Belshazzar was in the city of Babylon, his father was in charge of the Babylonian troops that were out in the fields and was not in the city of Babylon.

Of course, when Babylon fell, they had to carry the news to him that the city was destroyed. And of course, it totally demoralized him and his troops, and the Medo-Persian conquest was then complete. But here it tells of how the news would be carried to the king.

By, of course, these messengers, one running to meet the other and carrying the posts and the message. And that the passages are stopped. The reeds, they have burned with fire.

The men of war are frightened. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, the daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor. It's time to thresh.

Yet a little while in the time of her harvest shall come. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon has devoured me, hath crushed me. He has made me an empty vessel.

He has swallowed me up like a dragon. He's filled his belly with our delicacies. He has cast me out.

The violence done to me and to my flesh will be upon Babylon. So the inhabitant of Zion say, the people who have been destroyed in Israel and my blood upon the inhabitants of the Chaldea shall Jerusalem say, therefore, thus saith the Lord, behold, I will plead thy cause and take vengeance for thee. And I will dry up her sea and make her springs dry.

And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, a hissing without an inhabitant. And they shall roar together like lions. They shall yell as lions welts.

And in their heat will I make their feasts. And I will make them drunken that they may rejoice and sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake, saith the Lord. And it is interesting that it was in the midst of this drunken party that Belshazzar was slain and went into that perpetual sleep.

I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with the he goats. How is Shishak, another name for Babylon, taken? And how is the praise of the whole earth surprise? How is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations? The sea has come up upon Babylon. She is covered with a multitude of the waves thereof.

Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, a wilderness, a land where no man dwells. Neither doth any son of man pass by. And I will punish Bell, the God of the Babylonians, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he has swallowed up in the nation shall not flow together any more unto him.

Yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall. My people, go ye out of the midst of her and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord. Again, Revelation 18.4. Come ye out from among them, saith the Lord.

Lest your heart faint and ye fear for the rumor that shall be heard in the land. A rumor shall both come in one year and after that in another year shall come a rumor and violence in the land, ruler against ruler. Therefore, behold, the days come that I will do judgment upon the grave and images of Babylon.

Her whole land shall be confounded and her slain shall fall in the midst of her. Then the heaven and the earth and all that is therein shall sing for Babylon, for the spoiler shall come unto her from the north, saith the Lord. As Babylon has caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth.

Ye that have escaped the sword, go away. Stand not still. Remember the Lord afar off and let Jerusalem come into your mind.

We are confounded because we have heard reproach. Shame has covered our faces for strangers are coming to the sanctuary of the Lord's house. That was, of course, something that was totally forbidden, that God's house was a holy place.

And there were those places where the Jews, of course, they had the outer courts where the Gentiles could come, but then no Gentile could pass into the inner court. Only the Jews were allowed into that area. But then into the area of the holy place, only the priest could come.

And then, of course, into the holy of holies, only the high priest could come. And that only on one day of the year. But now the temple, the holy place, the place that they had kept from defilement, the strangers, the Babylonians had come right into the holy of holies and stripped it of its gold and tore it down, broke it in pieces and all, and destroyed it.

And here they profaned that holy place. And so the cry against it for the strangers are coming to the sanctuary of the Lord's house, the holy places. Wherefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will do judgment upon her graven images and through all of her land the wounded shall groan.

Though Babylon should mount up to heaven and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the Lord. A sound of a cry comes from Babylon and great destruction of the land of the Chaldeans because the Lord has spoiled Babylon and destroyed out of her the great voice. When her waves do roar like the great waves, the noise of their voices uttered because the spoilers come upon her, even upon Babylon and her mighty men are taken.

Every one of their bows is broken for the Lord God of recompenses shall surely requit. And I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her captains, and they were all drunk, read the account in Daniel,

and her rulers and her mighty men and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake, saith the king whose name is Jehovah of hosts. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the broad walls of Babylon, 80 feet thick, shall be utterly broken.

Her high gates shall be burned with fire and the people shall labor in vain and the folk in the fire and they shall be weary. The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Saraiah, the son of Neriah, the son of Messiah, means he must have been the brother of Baruch, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And this Saraiah was a quiet prince.

So Jeremiah wrote it in a book, all of the evil that would come upon Babylon, even all of the words that are written against Babylon. And Jeremiah said to Saraiah, when you've come to Babylon and you will see, read all of these words, then shalt thou say, O Lord, thou has spoken against this place to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither some man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate forever. And it shall be when you have made an end of reading this book, that you shall bind a stone to it and cast it into the middle of the Euphrates and thou shalt say, thus shall Babylon sink and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her.

And they shall be weary thus far, or thus ends the words of Jeremiah. So this binding a stone to the road, Jeremiah wrote the thing down, said, now Saraiah, you take it to Babylon. And when you get there, read it all of the destruction that God has proclaimed against this place.

Now Nebuchadnezzar had shown great favor to Jeremiah because Jeremiah had prophesied that Nebuchadnezzar would conquer Judah. And he encouraged the people of Judah to surrender and not to try to fight because God had purpose to deliver them into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. Now, because of this, Jeremiah was accused of treason.

He was accused of weakening the morale of the soldiers and was placed in prison. But Nebuchadnezzar had heard of the prophecies of Jeremiah and thus he had special treatment for Jeremiah. When you conquer them, treat Jeremiah well, give him a, you know, is tell him if he wants to come to Babylon, we'll set him up there.

Or if he wants to stay, let him do whatever he wants and, you know, give him, uh, enough to live on. And so Nebuchadnezzar treated Jeremiah very well, but Jeremiah is true to God. And though he now is prophesying this horrible destruction that is coming against Babylon, you know, thinking, wow, you know, Nebuchadnezzar get angry with me for this one, you know, uh, yet, you know, he's honest before God and goes ahead and sends this guy to read this prophecy in Babylon.

He's not a mercenary. He's not going to be bought. He's going to be faithful to the word of God that God has given to him.

And oh, how important this is for us to be faithful to the word of God. And though it may hurt, speak it forth. One of the weaknesses of our age is this kind of a polyandric attitude that we have, you know, well, don't want to offend anybody, you know, so, uh, just try and mellow things out and don't make people feel bad.

And, uh, yet, uh, that isn't being honest, you know, to say, well, don't worry, things are going to work out. You know, our government is the greatest government in the world, and we're surely going to solve our problems and great days are right around the corner. This new economic program is going to work and we're going to have prosperity.

We're going to move ahead. We're going to stop inflation. We're going to stop crime.

We're going to have a glorious utopia that you'll be able to live in this blessed America, you know, well, sounds good, but it's not true. Evil days are going to wax worse and worse. And, and we got to speak God's truth, even though it hurts, even though it cuts, we've got to speak the truth.

So Jeremiah sent Sariah to Babylon with this scroll, read it, then tie a rock to it and throw it in the river Euphrates. And as it sinks, say, that's the way Babylon's going to sink. Now, again, in comparing this with revelation and the prophecy of God in revelation against this commercial Babylon, the angel in revelation chapter 18, again, took and tied this thing to a millstone and cast it into the sea.

And again, cried of the destruction. Verse 21, a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea saying thus with violence. So that great city Babylon be thrown down and shall be found no more at all.

Now, if you'll read revelation 17, 18, you'll find tremendous parallels between that and Jeremiah 50, 51, as a Jeremiah speaks to the destruction of the kingdom of Babylon at that time. And it is a type of the destruction of the religious and spiritual commercial Babylon that is to be destroyed in the yet future. Now in the chapter 52 is just a page out of their history, and it is just sort of a review of the final days under Zedekiah, the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar and the carrying away into captivity.

It is also found in Jeremiah chapter 39, and historically it is found in Second Kings chapter 25. So he's just sort of giving now, and this is probably written not by Jeremiah. It doesn't say that it was Jeremiah, but just a page out of the history.

Zedekiah was 21 years old when he began to reign and he reigned for 11 years in Jerusalem, and it gives his mother's name and so forth. He did that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. For through the anger of the Lord, it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah till all till he had cast them out of the presence that Zedekiah rebelled against the King of Babylon.

So it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, the tenth day of the month, so close to the end of the ninth year of his reign in Jerusalem, that Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, came and all of his army against Jerusalem. They pitched against it and built forts round about it, so the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. So fourteen months, and in the fourth month, eighteenth month, so in a year and a half, the ninth day of the month, the famine was so bad in the city, there was no bread for the people of the land.

Actually, the method by which Babylon usually conquered was very cruel. That is, they would cut off all of the supplies to the city and they would just starve the people out. They would wait until they were too weak to fight or to defend.

So it was really a sort of a horrible way. You're in the city, there's no way you can get food, and so you just sort of cannibalize, eat the stuff that is there until it is gone, and then you starve, and finally, in your weakened conditions, they move their machines up, break down the walls, and come in and slaughter people. Nebuchadnezzar, of course, endeavored this type of a siege against Tyre, the port city.

He was besieging Tyre for thirteen years before it fell, but being a seaport, they were able to bring things in by the sea for a long time, but it took him thirteen years to conquer Tyre because of their ability to replenish their supplies. As we get in a few weeks into Ezekiel, though, you're going to find an extremely

fascinating prophecy that deals with the destruction of Tyre, and again, showing how that the Word of God is so exciting and marvelous whenever it deals in the realms of prophecy because it is so accurate. So, after eighteen months, in the ninth day of the month, the famine was sore so that there was no bread, and the city was broken up.

All of the men of war fled. They went out of the city at night by way of the gate that is between the two walls, which was by the king's garden. Now, the Chaldeans were by the city, and they went by way of the plain, but the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and he overtook Zedekiah down near Jericho, and his army was scattered from him.

And then they took the king and carried him unto Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, who was at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he gave judgment upon him. And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. He had to watch his own sons being slain, and also the princes of Judah.

And then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah, the king of Judah, and the king of Babylon bound him in chains and carried him to Babylon and put him in prison till the day of his death. Now, Zedekiah was told by Jeremiah, surrender, you know, give up and turn yourself over. The king, the Nebuchadnezzar will treat you well, and kept encouraging him to do that.

Zedekiah refused to do so. He said, if you try to resist, you're going to be destroyed. And Zedekiah would not listen to the word of God, and thus his horrible doom bound, carried to Babylon, his eyes gouged out, and died there in the prison in Babylon.

Now, in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, which was the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came Nebuchadnezzar, the captain of the guard, which served the king of Babylon, to Jerusalem. And he burned the house of the Lord and the king's palace and all of the houses of Jerusalem and all of the houses of the great men. He burned them with fire.

And all of the army of the Chaldeans that were with the captain of the guard, he broke down all the walls of Jerusalem round about. And Nebuchadnezzar then, the captain of the guard, carried away the captives, certain of the poor, the people, the residue of the people that remained in the city and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, those that surrendered, and the rest of the multitude. But Nebuchadnezzar then, the captain of the guard, left certain of the poor of the land for vinedressers and for the farmers.

Also the pillars of brass. Now, these great pillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord, they were there in the temple of Solomon. And the bases and that brass bowl that the priests used to bathe in.

The Chaldeans broke it up and carried the brass of them to Babylon. Also the caldrons and the shovels, the snuffers, the bowls, the spoons, and all of the vessels of brass were with a minister they took away. Earlier they had carried away the gold and silver vessels and now they're taking away all of the brass from the temple unto Babylon.

The two pillars and this bowl, this sea, the twelve brass bowls that were molded and were under this brass sea where the priests bathed, all of them were broken up and of course the weight of them was, you know, without measure. Now concerning these pillars that were there, the height of the pillars was 27 feet. They were 18 feet in circumference, so about six feet across, 27 feet high, but they were hollow.

But the brass was four inches thick. So you can imagine the weight of these pillars that were there in the temple that were broken up and carried away. I beg your pardon, rather than four inches, four fingers

thick, so about that thick.

And of course they had these filigreed works on them with the ornamentation, the pomegranates and all. And it goes on to describe these pomegranates, 96 of them on each side and all of the pomegranates in network were a hundred round about. And the captain of the guard took Zeriaah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest and the keepers of the door.

He took also out of the city a eunuch which had charge of the men of war and seven men of them that were near the King's person, which were found in the city and the principal scribe of the host who mustered the people of the land, 60 men of the people. And they were found in the midst of the city. They brought them to Nebuchadnezzar there at Riblah and the King of Babylon smote them, put them to death in Riblah.

And thus Judah was carried away captive out of his own land. This is the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive in the seventh year. That is of his reign, 3000 Jews, 3023 among those was Daniel.

In the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar, he carried away from captive another 832 persons. And then in the final carrying away the 23rd year of Nebuchadnezzar, they carried away of the Jews 745. All of the persons that were carried away 4,600, really not very many compared to the total population for most of them were destroyed or fled.

It came to pass in this 37th year of the captivity of Jehoiachin, the King of Judah in the 12th month, the 25th day of the month, that evil Merodach. A Merodach is a title given to their Kings. The King of Babylon in his first year of his reign lifted up the head of Jehoiachin, King of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison.

He spake kindly unto him, set his throne above the throne of the Kings that were with him in Babylon, and he ate at the King's table. So Jehoiachin the King ended his days more pleasantly than did Zedekiah. So we come to the end of Jeremiah.

We move now into lamentations. The idea is that of weeping near, well the place that they call Calvary or Golgotha is also called Jeremiah's grotto. It is thought that it is in one of these caves that comprise, if you're looking at the the cliff there and you're looking for the skull, the skull is formed by these caves or the appearance of the skull is formed by these caves which would be the sockets of the eyes of a skull.

But they're actually caves. And one of them is called Jeremiah's grotto. And it is thought that that is where Jeremiah sat as he looked from that position back over the city of Jerusalem.

And wept over its failure to serve God and over its impending doom. And Jeremiah was known as the weeping prophet. And of course we get into these lamentations, the weeping of Jeremiah over the people and over the destruction that is to come upon them as we move into this book of lamentations.

And so this is the area that we'll cover next Sunday night, the book of lamentations. That's your assignment to read. Then we get into that fascinating book of Ezekiel.

He is quite a prophet and did a lot of weird things. And some think that he saw flying saucers. And we'll be talking about Ezekiel's flying saucers and about flying saucers today in light of Ezekiel's revelations.

And now may the Lord be with you and bless you. And may the word of God dwell in your hearts richly through faith and being rooted and grounded. May you come into a broader comprehension of the fullness of God's love for your life.

May the Lord give you a beautiful week. May he watch over you and may he keep you with his arms of protection and love. In Jesus name.

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