

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing Part XCI: God's Sovereign Power Over Powerful Babylon In Judgment (Jeremiah 51:15-33)

I. Introduction

- A. Babylon overpowered many nations, including Judah, and it took the people of Judah captive, so Babylon was the great power that came to be feared by the people of Judah and many other nations around it.
- B. Thus, Jeremiah's description of Judah's Almighty God one day destroying this great and feared Babylon would become a description of hope and encouragement for Judah's people, and we view it for our application:

II. God's Sovereign Power Over Powerful Babylon In Judgment, Jeremiah 51:15-33.

- A. In preparing to predict powerful Babylon's fall, Jeremiah mentioned the massive power of Judah's God, showing His supremacy over the false gods of the Gentile nations, including that of Babylon, Jer. 51:15-19:
 - 1. Jeremiah declared that Judah's God made the earth by His power and wisdom and by His understanding stretched out the heavens in their massive distance, Jeremiah 51:15.
 - 2. When Judah's God uttered His voice there was a tumult of waters in the heavens in the form of a thunderstorm, and He made the mist to rise from the ends of the earth, formed lightning for the rain and brought forth the wind of the storm from His storehouses, Jeremiah 51:16 ESV. This description of Judah's God was a polemic against the pagan god Baal whom the Canaanites held to be the god of the storm, so Jeremiah likened Judah's God to be the true God of the thunderstorm as opposed to Baal.
 - 3. Jeremiah then described the stupidity and ignorance of each goldsmith who formed images of pagan gods, for there was not even the breath of life in them in contrast to Judah's Almighty Creator God, Jer. 51:17. Such idols were worthless, the work of deception that would perish in the time of judgment, Jer. 51:18.
 - 4. However, Judah's God in contrast formed all things, and Israel is the tribe of His inheritance as the Lord of hosts, the Lord of the armies of the earth, Jeremiah 51:19.
- B. The Lord then referred to powerful Babylon as His mere tool of judgment on the nations, noting that Babylon's power rested not in its innate power as a nation but in God's use of Babylon to judge, Jer. 51:20-23:
 - 1. God described Babylon as His hammer and weapon of war by which He broke in pieces the nations and the kingdoms of Jeremiah's day, Jeremiah 51:20.
 - 2. Nine times in Jeremiah 51:20-23 ESV does Jeremiah use the word "shatter" to "indicate the extent to which God had used Babylon for judgment" on the nations as God used her to shatter the horse and his rider, the chariot and charioteer, man and woman, old man and youth, young man and young woman, the shepherd and his flock, the farmer and his team, governors and commanders. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1202)
- C. However, Judah's Almighty God would destroy even powerful Babylon, making its king and soldiers terrified and leaving the city a place of utter desolation, Jeremiah 51:24-33:
 - 1. God declared that He would repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of her land before the eyes of men for all the evil they had done in Zion, Jeremiah 51:24.
 - 2. The Lord declared that He was against Babylon, referring to her as "O destroying mountain" which destroyed the whole earth around Judah, for He would stretch forth His hand against her, figuratively roll her down from her lofty crags and make her a burnt mountain in utter destruction, Jeremiah 51:25 ESV.
 - 3. The destruction would be so total that no stone would be taken from a corner of a building for use in another building and no stone for another foundation, but the city would be a lasting waste, verse 26 ESV.
 - 4. Accordingly, God called for the invading nations to prepare to attack Babylon (Jeremiah 51:27-28), noting that Babylon would tremble and writhe in pain since God had purposed to make her a desolation without inhabitant, Jer. 51:29 ESV. Babylon's warriors would cease fighting, their strength having failed, becoming as terrified women (Jer. 51:30 ESV) and her king would receive messenger after messenger bearing bad news of the city's complete fall (Jer. 51:31 ESV) and its panic in defeat, Jer. 51:32.
 - 5. God likened Babylon to a threshing floor that would truly become trodden, for the time of her harvest in judgment would surely come, Jeremiah 51:33 ESV.

Lesson: Though powerful Babylon destroyed many nations and Judah like an overpowering force, she was just a tool of judgment in God's hands that, after He had finished using, He would in turn utterly destroy it.

Application: May we not get dismayed at seemingly overpowering evil, for God is greater and will fully deal with it.