

# CHAPTER 50

In this chapter, and that which follows, we have the judgment of Babylon, which is put last of Jeremiah's prophecies against the Gentiles because it was last accomplished; and when the cup of God's fury went round (25:17) the king of Sheshach, Babylon, drank last. Babylon was employed as the rod in God's hand for the chastising of all the other nations, and now at length that rod shall be thrown into the fire. The destruction of Babylon by Cyrus was foretold, long before it came to its height, by Isaiah, and now again, when it has come to its height, by Jeremiah; for, though at this time he saw that kingdom flourishing "like a green bay-tree," yet at the same time he foresaw it withered and cut down. And as Isaiah's prophecies of the destruction of Babylon and the deliverance of Israel out of it seem designed to typify the evangelical triumphs of all believers over the powers of darkness, and the great salvation wrought out by our Lord Jesus Christ, so Jeremiah's prophecies of the same events seem designed to point at the apocalyptic triumphs of the gospel church in the latter days over the New-Testament Babylon, many passages in the Revelation being borrowed hence. The kingdom of Babylon being much larger and stronger than any of the kingdoms here prophesied against, its fall was the more considerable in itself; and, it having been more oppressive to the people of God than any of the other, the prophet is very copious upon this subject, for the comfort of the captives; and what was foretold in general often before (25:12 and 27:7) is here more particularly described, and with a great deal of prophetic heat as well as light. The terrible judgments God had in store for Babylon, and the glorious blessings he had in store for his people that were captives there, are intermixed and counterchanged in the prophecy of this chapter; for Babylon was destroyed to make way for the turning again of the captivity of God's people. Here is,

**I.** The ruin of Babylon (v. 1-3, 9-16, 21-32, and 35-46).

**II.** The redemption of God's people (v. 4-8, 17-20, and 33, 34). And these being set the one against the other, it is easy to say which one would choose to take one's lot with, the persecuting Babylonians, who, though now in pomp, are reserved for so

great a ruin, or the persecuted Israelites, who, though now in thralldom, are reserved for so great a glory.

## ~~251~~ JEREMIAH 50:1-8

### THE JUDGMENT OF BABYLON

**I.** Here is a word spoken against Babylon by him whose works all agree with his word and none of whose words fall to the ground. The king of Babylon had been very kind of Jeremiah, and yet he must foretel the ruin of that kingdom; for God's prophets must not be governed by favour or affection. Whoever are our friends, if, notwithstanding, they are God's enemies, we dare not speak peace to them.

**1.** The destruction of Babylon is here spoken of as a thing done, v. 2. let it be published to the nations as a piece of news, true news, and great news, and news they are all concerned in; let them hang out the flag, as is usual on days of triumph, to give notice of it; let all the world take notice of it: *Babylon is taken*. Let God have the honour of it, let his people have the comfort of it, and therefore do not conceal it. Take care that it be known, that *the Lord may be known by those judgments which he executes*, ~~196~~ Psalm 9:16.

**2.** It is spoken of as a thing done thoroughly. For,

**(1.)** The very idols of Babylon, which the people would protect with all possible care, and from which they expected protection, shall be destroyed. Bel and Merodach were their two principal deities; they shall be *confounded*, and the images of them *broken to pieces*.

**(2.)** The country shall be laid waste (v. 3) out of *the north*, from Media, which lay north of Babylon, and from Assyria, through which Cyrus made his descent upon Babylon; thence the nation shall come that shall make *her land desolate*. Their land was north of the countries that they destroyed, who were therefore threatened with evil from the north (*Omne malum ab aquilone — Every evil comes from the north*); but God will find out nations yet further north to come upon them. The pomp and power of old Rome were brought down by northern nations, the Goths and Vandals.

**II.** Here is a word spoken for the people of God, and for their comfort, both *the children of Israel* and *of Judah*; for many there were of the ten tribes that associated with those of the two tribes in their return out of Babylon. Now here,

**1.** It is promised that they shall return to their God first and then to their own land; and the promise of their conversion and reformation is that which makes way for all the other promises, v. 4, 5.

**(1.)** They shall *lament after the Lord* (as the whole house of Israel did in Samuel's time, <sup><001></sup>1 Samuel 7:2); they shall *go weeping*. These tears flow not from the sorrow of the world as those when they went into captivity, but from godly sorrow; they are tears of repentance for sin, tears of joy for the goodness of God, in the dawning of the day of their deliverance, which, for aught that appears, does more towards the bringing of them to mourn for sin than all the calamities of their captivity; that prevails to *lead them to repentance* when the other did not prevail to drive them to it. Note, It is a good sign that God is coming towards a people in ways of mercy when they begin to be tenderly affected under his hand.

**(2.)** They shall *enquire after the Lord*; they shall not sink under their sorrows, but bestir themselves to find out comfort where it is to be had: *They shall go weeping to seek the Lord their God*. Those that seek the Lord must *seek him sorrowing*, as Christ's parents sought him, <sup><028></sup>Luke 2:48. And those that sorrow must seek the Lord, and then their sorrow shall soon be turned into joy, for he will be found of those that so seek him. They shall *seek the Lord as their God*, and shall now have no more to do with idols. When they shall hear that the idols of Babylon are *confounded and broken* it will be seasonable for them to enquire after their own God and to return to him who lives for ever. *Therefore* men are deceived in false gods, that they may depend on the true God only.

**(3.)** They shall think of returning to their own country again; they shall think of it not only as a mercy, but as a duty, because there only is the *holy hill of Zion*, on which once stood *the house of the Lord their God* (v. 5): *They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward*. Zion was the city of their solemnities; they often thought of it in the depth of their captivity (<sup><001></sup>Psalm 137:1); but, now that the ruin of Babylon gave them some hopes of a release, they talk of nothing else but of going back to Zion. Their hearts were upon it before, and now they *set their faces*

*thitherward*. They long to be there; they set out for Zion, and resolve not to take up short of it. The journey is long and they know not the road, but they will *ask the way*, for they will press forward till they come to Zion; and, as they are determined not to turn back, so they are in care not to miss the way. This represents the return of poor souls to God. Heaven is the Zion they aim at as their end; on this they have set their hearts; towards this they have *set their faces*, and therefore they *ask the way* thither. They do not ask the way to heaven and set their faces towards the world; nor set their faces towards heaven and go on at a venture without asking the way. But in all true converts there are both a sincere desire to attain the end and a constant care to keep in the way; and a blessed sight it is to see people thus asking the way to heaven with their faces thitherward.

**(4.)** They shall renew their covenant to walk with God more closely for the future: *Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant*. They had broken covenant with God, had in effect separated themselves from him, but now they resolve to *join themselves* to him again, by engaging themselves afresh to be his. Thus, when backsliders return, they must *do their first works*, must renew the covenant they first made; and it must be a *perpetual covenant*, that must never be broken; and, in order to that, must never be forgotten; for a due remembrance of it will be the means of a due observance of it.

**2.** Their present case is lamented as very sad, and as having been long so: “*My people*” (for he owns them as his now that they are returning to him) “*have been lost sheep* (v. 6); they have *gone from mountain to hill*, have been hurried from place to place, and could find no pasture; *they have forgotten their resting-place* in their own country and cannot find their way to it.” And that which aggravated their misery was,

**(1.)** That they were *led astray by their own shepherds*, their own princes and priests; they turned them from their duty, and so provoked God to turn them out of their own land. It is bad with a people when their leaders cause them to err, when those that should direct them, and when those that should secure and advance their interests are the betrayers of them.

**(2.)** That in their wanderings they lay exposed to the beasts of prey, who thought they were entitled to them, as waifs and strays that had no owner (v. 7); it is with them as with wandering sheep, *all that found them have devoured them* and made a prey of them; and when they did them the greatest injuries they laughed at them, telling them it was what their own

prophets had many a time told them they deserved; that was far from justifying those who did them wrong, yet they bantered them with this excuse, *We offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord*; but they could not pretend that they had sinned against them. And see what notion they had of the Lord they had sinned against, not as the only true and living God, but only as *the habitation of justice and the hope of their fathers*; they had put a contempt upon the temple and upon the tradition of their ancestors, and therefore deserved to suffer these hard things. And yet it was indeed an aggravation of their sin, and justified God, though it did not justify their adversaries in what was done to them, that they had *forsaken the habitation of justice* and him that was *the hope of their fathers*.

**3.** They are called upon to hasten away, as soon as ever the door of liberty was opened to them (v. 8): “*Remove*, not only out of the borders, but *out of the midst of Babylon*; though you be ever so well seated there, think not to settle there, but hasten to Zion, and *be as the he-goats before the flocks*; strive which shall be foremost, which shall lead in so good a work:” a he-goat is *comely in going* (<sup>288B</sup>Proverbs 30:31) because he goes first. It is a graceful thing to be forward in a good work and to set others a good example.

## <sup>288B</sup>JEREMIAH 50:9-20

### THE JUDGMENT OF BABYLON

God is here by his prophet, as afterwards in his providence, proceeding in his controversy with Babylon. Observe,

**I.** The commission and charge given to the instruments that were to be employed in destroying Babylon. The army that is to do it is called *an assembly of great nations* (v. 9), the Medes and Persians, and all their allies and auxiliaries; it is called *an assembly*, because regularly formed by the divine will and counsel to do this execution. God will *raise them up* to do it, will incline them to and fir them for this service, and then he will *cause them to come up*, for all their motions are under his conduct and direction: he shall give the word of command, shall order them to *put themselves in array against Babylon* (v. 14), and then *they shall put themselves in array* (v. 9), for what God appoints to be done shall be done;

and *thence she shall be quickly taken*; from their first sitting down before it they shall be still gaining ground against it till it be taken. God shall bid them *shoot at her and spare no arrows* (v. 14), and then *their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man*, that has both skill and strength, a good eye and a good hand (v. 9); *none shall return in vain*. When God gives commission he will give success. Nay, they are bidden not only to *shoot at her* (v. 14), but to *shout against her* (v. 15) with a triumphant shout, as those that are already sure of victory. Those whom God directs to shoot may do so with shouting, for they are sure not to miss the mark.

**II.** The desolation and destruction itself that shall be brought upon Babylon. This is here set forth in a great variety of expressions.

- 1.** The wealth of Babylon shall be a rich and easy prey to the conquerors (v. 10): *Chaldea shall be a spoil* to all her destroyers, who shall enrich themselves by plundering her, and, which is strange, *all that spoil her shall be satisfied*; they shall have so much that even they themselves shall say that they have enough.
- 2.** The country of Babylon shall be depopulated and lie uninhabited: *It shall be wholly desolate* (v. 13) to such a degree that *every one who goes by* shall triumph in her fall, and, instead of condoling with them, shall *hiss at all her plagues*, v. 13.
- 3.** Their ancestors shall be ashamed of their cowardice, in fleeing from the first onset (v. 12), or, *Your mother*, Babylon itself, the mother-city, *shall be confounded*, when she sees herself deserted by those that should have been her guards. Thus the former ages of Christians may justly be confounded and ashamed to see how unlike them the latter ages are, and how wretchedly they have degenerated; and no sin brings a surer and sorer ruin upon persons, or people, than apostasy.
- 4.** The great admirers of Babylon shall see it rendered very despicable: the last of kingdoms, the very tail of the nations, *shall it be, a wilderness, a dry land, a desert*, v. 12. The country that was populous shall be dispeopled, that was enriched with a fertile soil shall become barren.
- 5.** The great city, the head of it, shall be quite ruined. *Her foundations have fallen*, and therefore *her walls are thrown down*; for how can the walls stand when divine vengeance is at the door and shakes the very

foundations? It is the vengeance of the Lord, which nothing can contend with either in law or battle.

**6.** There shall not be left in Babylon so much as *the poor of the land, for vine-dressers and husbandmen*, as there was in Israel (v. 16): *The sower shall be cut off from Babylon, and he that handles the sickle*; the country shall be so emptied of people that there shall be none to till the ground and gather in the fruits of it. Harvest shall come, and there shall be no reapers; seed-time shall come, but there shall be no sower; God will do his part, but there shall be no men to do theirs.

**7.** All their auxiliary forces, which they have hired into their service, shall desert them, as mercenary men often do upon the approach of danger (v. 16): *For fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people*. This was threatened before concerning Egypt, <sup>2466</sup>Jeremiah 46:16.

**III.** The procuring provoking cause of this destruction. It comes from God's displeasure; it is *because of the wrath of the Lord* that Babylon shall be wholly desolate (v. 13), and his wrath is righteous, for (v. 14) *she hath sinned against the Lord*, therefore *spare no arrows*. Note, It is sin that makes men a mark for the arrows of God's judgments. An abundance of idolatry and immorality was to be found in Babylon, yet those are not mentioned as the reason of God's displeasure against them, but the injuries they had done to the people of God, from a principle of enmity to them as his people. They have been *the destroyers of God's heritage* (v. 11); herein indeed God made use of them for the necessary correction of his people, and yet it is laid to their charge as a heinous crime, because they designed nothing but their utter destruction.

**1.** What they did against Jerusalem they did with pleasure (v. 11): *You were glad, you rejoice*. God does not afflict his people willingly, and therefore takes it very ill if the instruments he employs afflict them willingly. When Titus Vespasian destroyed Jerusalem he wept over it, but these Chaldeans triumphed over it.

**2.** The spoils of Jerusalem they made use of to feed their own luxury: *"You have grown fat as the heifer at grass, and bellow as bulls*; your having conquered Jerusalem has made you very wanton and proud, easy to yourselves and formidable to all about you, and therefore you must *be a spoil*." Those that have thus swallowed down riches must vomit them up again. Therefore they have *given their hand* (v. 15); they have surrendered

themselves to the conqueror, have tamely yielded so that now you may *take vengeance on her*, now you may make reprisals and *do unto her as she hath done*.

**3.** They aimed at nothing less than the utter ruin of God's Israel: *Israel is a scattered sheep*, as before (v. 6), that is not only barked at and worried by dogs, but even lions, the most potent adversaries, have roared upon him and *driven him away*, v. 17. One king of Assyria carried the ten tribes quite away and devoured them; another invaded Judah, and plundered and impoverished it, tore the fleece and flesh of this poor sheep; and now at last this Nebuchadnezzar, that is the terror and plague of all his neighbours, has taken advantage of the low condition to which he is reduced, and he has fallen upon him and *broken his bones*, has quite ruined him, and therefore the king of Babylon must be punished as the king of Assyria was, v. 18. Note, Those who pursue and prosecute the sins of their predecessors must expect to be pursued and prosecuted by their plagues; if they do as they did, let them fare as they fared.

**IV.** The mercy promised to the Israel of God, which shall not only accompany, but accrue from, the destruction of Babylon.

**1.** God will return their captivity; they shall be released out of their bondage, and *brought again to their own habitation* as sheep that were scattered to their own fold v. 19. They still retained a title to the land of Canaan; it is their habitation still. The discontinuance of their possession was not the destruction of their right. But now they shall recover the enjoyment of it again.

**2.** He will restore their prosperity; they shall not only live, but live comfortably, in their own land again; they shall *feed upon Carmel and Bashan*, the richest and most fruitful parts of the country. These sheep shall be gathered from the deserts to which they were dispersed, and put again into good pasture, which their soul shall be satisfied with though they shall come hungry to it, having been so long stinted, and straitened, and kept short, yet they shall find enough to satiate them and shall have hearts to be satiated with it. They *enquired the way to Zion* (v. 5), where God was to be served and worshipped. This was what they chiefly aimed at in their return; but God will not only bring them thither, but bring them also to Carmel and Bashan, where they shall abundantly feed themselves. Note, Those that return to God and their duty shall find true satisfaction of

soul in so doing; and those that *seek first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof*, that aim to make their habitation in Zion, the holy hill, shall have *other things added to them*, even all the comforts of *Ephraim and Gilead*, the fruitful hills.

**3.** God will pardon their iniquity; this is the root of all the rest (v. 20): *In those days the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none*. Not only the punishments of their iniquity shall be taken off, but the offence which it gave to God shall be forgotten, and he will be reconciled to them. Their sin shall be before him as if it had never been; it shall be blotted out as a cloud, crossed out as a debt, shall be cast behind his back; nay, it shall be cast into the depth of the sea, shall be no longer sealed up among God's treasures, nor in any danger of appearing again or rising up against them. This denotes how fully God forgives sin; he *remembers it no more*. Note, Deliverances out of trouble are then comforts indeed when they are the fruits of the forgiveness of sin, <sup><2317></sup>Isaiah 38:17. Judah and Israel were so fully forgiven when they were brought back out of Babylon that they are said to have *received of the Lord's hand double for all their sins*, <sup><3412></sup>Isaiah 40:2. This may include also a thorough reformation of their hearts and lives, as well as a full remission of their sins. If any seek for idols or any idolatrous customs among them, after their return, *there shall be none, they shall not find them*; their dross shall be purely purged away, and by that it shall appear that their guilt is so; *for I will pardon those whom I reserve; I will be propitious to them* (so the word is) and that must be through him who is the great propitiation. Note, Those whose sins God pardons he reserves for something very great; for *whom he justifies them he glorifies*.

## <sup><2512></sup>JEREMIAH 50:21-32

### THE JUDGMENT OF BABYLON

Here,

**1.** The forces are mustered and commissioned to destroy Babylon, and every thing is got ready for a descent upon that potent kingdom: *Go up against that land* by *Merathaim*, the country of the Mardi, that lay part in Assyria and part in Armenia; and go among *the inhabitants of Pekod*, another country (mentioned <sup><2323></sup>Ezekiel 23:23) which Cyrus took in his

way to Babylon. The forces of Cyrus are called to go up against Babylon (v. 21), to *come against her from the utmost border*. Let all come together, for there will be both work and pay enough for them all, v. 26. Distance of place must not be their hindrance from engaging in this work. *The archers* particularly must be *called together against Babylon*, v. 29. Thus *the Lord hath opened his armoury* (v. 25), *his treasury* (so the word is), and *hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation*, as great princes fetch out of their magazines and stores all necessary provisions for their armies when they undertake any great expedition. Media and Persia are now God's armoury; thence he fetches the weapons of his wrath, Cyrus and his great officers and armies, whom he will make use of for the destruction of Babylon. Note, Great men are but instruments which the great God makes use of to serve his own purposes. He has variety of instruments, has them at command, has armouries ready to be opened according as the occasion is. *This is the work of the Lord God of hosts*. Note, When God has work to do he will make it appear that he is *God of hosts*, and will not want instruments to do it with.

**2.** Instructions are given them what to do. In general, *Do according to all that I have commanded thee*, v. 21. It was said of Cyrus (<sup>248</sup>Isaiah 44:28), *He shall perform all my pleasure*, in his expedition against Babylon. They must *waste and utterly destroy after them*; when they have destroyed once they must go over them again, or destroy their posterity that should come after them. They must *open her store-houses* (v. 26), rifle her treasures, and turn her artillery against herself. They must *cast her up as heaps*; let all the wealth and pomp of Babylon be shovelled up in a heap of ruins and rubbish. *Tread her down as heaps* (so the margin reads it) *and destroy her utterly*. See how little account the great God makes of those things which men so much value and value themselves so much upon. Their princes and great men, who are fat and bulky, shall fall by the sword, not as men of war in the field of battle, which we call a bed of honour, but as beasts by the butcher's hand (v. 27): *Slay all her bullocks*, all her mighty men; *let them go down sottishly and insensibly*, as an ox *to the slaughter*. *Woe unto them!* their case is the more sad for the little sense they have of it. *Their day has come to fall, the time* when they must be reckoned with, and they are not aware of it.

**3.** Assurances are given them of success. Let them do what God commands, and they shall accomplish what he threatens. A *great destruction* shall be made, v. 22. *Babylon shall become a desolation* (v.

23); *her young men and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day* which should have been her defence, v. 30. God is *against* her (v. 31); he has *laid a snare for* her (v. 24); he has formed this enterprise against her, that she should be surprised as a bird taken in a snare. Cyrus shall no doubt prevail, for he fights under God. God *will kindle a fire* in the cities of Babylon (v. 32); and who can stand before him when he is angry, or quench the fire that he has kindled? 4. Reasons are given for these severe dealings with Babylon. Those that are employed in this war may, if they please, know the grounds of it, and be satisfied in the justice of it, which it is fit all should be that are called to such work.

**(1.)** Babylon has been very troublesome, vexatious, and injurious, to all its neighbours; it has been *the hammer of the whole earth* (v. 23), beating, beating down, and beating to pieces, all the nations far and near. It has done so long enough; it is time now that it be *cut asunder and broken*. Note, He that is the god of nations will sooner or later assert the injured rights of nations against those that unjustly and violently invade them. The God of the whole earth will break *the hammer of the whole earth*.

**(2.)** Babylon has bidden defiance to God himself: *Thou has striven against the Lord* (v. 24), *hast joined issue with him* (so the word signifies) as in law or battle, hast openly opposed him, set up rivals with him, raised rebellion against him; therefore *thou art now found, and caught*, as in a snare. Note, Those that strive against the Lord will soon find themselves over-matched.

**(3.)** Babylon ruined Jerusalem, the holy city, and the holy house there, and must now be called to an account for that. This is the manifesto published in Zion, in the day of Babylon's visitation; it is *the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of his temple*, v. 28. The burning of the temple, and the carrying away of its vessels, were articles in the charge against Babylon on which greater stress was laid than upon its being *the hammer of the whole earth*; for Zion was *the joy and glory of the whole earth*. Note, Whatever wrong is done to God's church (his temple in the world) it will certainly be reckoned for; and no vengeance will be sorer nor heavier than *the vengeance of the temple*.

**(4.)** Babylon has been very haughty and insolent, and therefore must have a fall; for it is the glory of God to *look upon those that are proud and to abase them*, <sup><SID></sup>Job 40:12. *I am against thee, O thou most proud!* v. 31 and again v. 32. *Thou pride* (so the word is), as proud as pride itself. Note, the

pride of men's hearts sets God against them and ripens them apace for ruin; for God *resists the proud* and will bring them down. *The most proud shall stumble and fall*; they shall fall not so much by others' thrusting them down as by their own stumbling; for they hold their heads so high that they never look under their feet, to choose their way and avoid stumbling-blocks, but walk at all adventures. Babylon's pride must unavoidably be her ruin; for *she has been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel* (v. 29), has insulted him in insulting over his people; she has made him her enemy, and therefore, when she has *fallen, none shall raise her up*, v. 32. Who can help those up whom God will throw down?

## 258 JEREMIAH 50:33-46

### THE JUDGMENT OF BABYLON

We have in these verses,

**I.** Israel's sufferings, and their deliverance out of those sufferings. God takes notice of the bondage of his people in Babylon, as he did of their bondage in Egypt; he has *surely seen* it, and has *heard their cry*. *Israel and Judah were oppressed together*, v. 33. Those that remained of the captives of the ten tribes, upon the uniting of the kingdoms of Assyria and Chaldea, seem to have come and mingled with those of the two tribes, and to have mingled tears with them, so that they were *oppressed together*. They were humble suppliants for their liberty, and that was all; they could not attempt any thing towards it, for *all that took them captives held them fast*, and were much too hard for them. But this is their comfort in distress, that, though they are weak, *their Redeemer is strong* (v. 34), *their Avenger* (so the word signifies), he that has a right to them, and will claim his right and make good his claim. He is stronger than their enemies that hold them fast; he can overpower all the force that is against them, and put strength into his own people though they are very weak. *The Lord of hosts is his name*, and he will answer to his name, and make it to appear that he is what his people call him, and will be that to them for which they depend upon him. Note, It is the unspeakable comfort of the people of God that, though they have hosts against them, they have *the Lord of hosts* for them and *he shall thoroughly plead their cause*, pleading he shall plead it, plead it with jealousy, plead it effectually, plead it and carry it, *that he may give*

*rest to the land*, and to his people's land, rest from all their enemies round about. This is applicable to all believers, who complain of the dominion of sin and corruption, and of their own weakness and manifold infirmities. Let them know that *their Redeemer is strong*; he is able to keep what they commit to him, and he will plead their cause. Sin shall not have dominion over them; he will *make them free*, and they shall be *free indeed*; he will give them *rest*, that *rest which remains for the people of God*.

## II. Babylon's sin, and their punishment for that sin.

1. The sins they are here charged with are idolatry and persecution.

(1.) They oppressed the people of God; they *held them fast*, and would not *let them go*. They *opened not the house of his prisoners*, <sup>2347</sup>Isaiah 14:17. This was God's quarrel with them, as of old with Pharaoh; it cost him dear, and yet they would not take warning. *The inhabitants of Babylon* must be *disquieted* (v. 34) because they have disquieted God's people, whose honour and comfort he is jealous for, and therefore will *recompense tribulation to those that trouble them*, as well as *rest to those that are troubled*, <sup>506</sup>2 Thessalonians 1:6, 7.

(2.) They wronged God himself, and robbed him, giving that glory to others which is due to him alone; for (v. 38) *it is the land of graven images*. All parts of the country abounded with idols, and they were mad upon them, were in love with them and doted on them, cared not what cost and pains they were at in the worship of them, were unwearied in paying their respects to them; and in all this they were wretchedly infatuated and acted like men out of their wits; they were carried on in their idolatry without reason or discretion, like men in a perfect fury. The word here used for idols properly signifies *terrors* — *Enim*, the name given to giants that were formidable, because they made the images of their gods to look frightful, to strike a terror upon fools and children. Their idols were scarecrows, yet they doted on them. Babylon was *the mother of harlots* (<sup>4175</sup>Revelation 17:5), the source of idolatry. Note, It is the maddest thing in the world to make a god of any creature; and those who are proud against the Lord, the true God, are justly given up to strong delusions, to be mad upon idols that cannot profit. But this madness is wickedness, for which sinners will be certainly and severely reckoned with.

2. The judgments of God upon them for these sins are such as will quite lay them waste and ruin them.

**(1.)** All that should be their defence and support shall be cut off by the sword. The Chaldeans had long been God's sword, wherewith he had done execution upon the sinful nations round about: but now, they being as bad as any of them, or worse, *a sword* is brought upon them, even *upon the inhabitants of Babylon* (v. 35), a sword of war; and, as it is in God's hand, sent and directed by him, it is a sword of justice. It shall be,

**[1.]** *Upon their princes*; they shall fall by it, and their dignity, wealth, and power, shall not secure them.

**[2.]** *Upon their wise men*, their philosophers, their statesmen, and privy-counsellors; their learning and policy shall neither secure them nor stand the public in any stead.

**[3.]** *Upon their soothsayers and astrologers*, here called *the liars* (v. 36), for they cheated with their prognostications of peace and prosperity; the sword upon them shall make them dote, so that they shall talk like fools, and be as men that have lost all their wits. Note, God has a sword that can reach the soul and affect the mind, and bring men under spiritual plagues.

**[4.]** *Upon their mighty men*. A sword shall be upon their spirits; if they are not slain, yet *they shall be dismayed*, and shall be no longer *mighty men*; for what stead will their hands stand them in when their hearts fail them?

**[5.]** Upon their militia (v. 37): *The sword shall be upon their horses and chariots*; the invaders shall make themselves masters of all their warlike stores, shall seize their horses and chariots for themselves, or destroy them. The troops of other nations that were in their service shall be quite disheartened: *The mingled people shall become as weak and timorous as women*.

**[6.]** Upon their exchequer: *The sword shall be upon her treasures*, which are the sinews of war, *and they shall be robbed*, and made use of by the enemy against them. See what universal destruction the sword makes when it comes with commission.

**(2.)** The country shall be made desolate (v. 38): *The waters shall be dried up*, the water that secures the city. Cyrus drew the river Euphrates into so many channels as made it passable for his army, so that they got with ease to the walls of Babylon, which, if was thought, that river had rendered inaccessible. "The water likewise that made the country fruitful shall *be dried up*, so that it shall be turned into barrenness, and shall be no more

inhabited by the children of men, but by *the wild beasts of the desert,*” v. 39. This was foretold concerning Babylon, <sup><2359></sup>Isaiah 13:19-22. It shall become like *Sodom and Gomorrah,* v. 40. The same was foretold concerning Edom, <sup><2498></sup>Jeremiah 49:18. As the Chaldeans had laid Edom waste, so they shall themselves be laid waste.

(3.) The king and kingdom shall be put into the utmost confusion and consternation by the enemies' invading them, v. 41-43. All the expressions here used to denote the formidable power of the invaders, the terrors wherewith they should array themselves, and the great fright which both court and country should be put into thereby, we met with before (<sup><2462></sup>Jeremiah 6:22-24) concerning the Chaldeans' invading the land of Judah. The battle which is there said to be *against thee, O daughter of Zion!* is here said to be *against thee, O daughter of Babylon!* to intimate that they should be paid in their own coin. God can find out such as shall be for terror and destruction to those that are for terror and destruction to others; and those who have dealt cruelly, and have shown no mercy, may expect to be cruelly dealt with, and to find no mercy. Only there is one difference between these passages; there it is said, *We have heard the fame thereof and our hands wax feeble;* here it is said, *The king of Babylon has heard the report and his hands waxed feeble,* which intimates that that proud and daring prince shall, in the day of his distress, be as weak and dispirited as the meanest Israelites were in the day of their distress.

(4.) That they shall be as much hurt as frightened, for the invader shall *come up like a lion* to tear and destroy (v. 44) and shall make them and their *habitation desolate* (v. 45), and the desolation shall be so astonishing that all the nations about shall be terrified by it, v. 46. These three verses we had before (<sup><2498></sup>Jeremiah 49:19-21) in the prophecy of the destruction of Edom, which was accomplished by the Chaldeans, and they are here repeated, *mutatis mutandis* — *with a few necessary alterations,* in the prophecy of the destruction of Babylon, which was to be accomplished upon the Chaldeans, to show that though the distributions of Providence may appear unequal for a time its retributions will be equal at last; when thou shalt make *an end to spoil thou shalt be spoiled,* <sup><2331></sup>Isaiah 33:1; <sup><630></sup>Revelation 13:10.