

No.

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"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

(Jer. 50 and 51)

An Address (revised) at

Forest Gate, London

14th September 1914

by

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An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,

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Jeremiah 50 and 51 (The Bible should be kept open while reading these notes, if possible, for much of the address is a running commentary.)

It is deeply important to realize concerning all Scripture prophecy that either it has been fulfilled, or it will be fulfilled. Scripture contains no extravagant figures, it is the word of **TRUTH**, and therefore, beloved friends, when by the grace of God, we come to such a passage as that which is in front of us, our thought is **NOT**: How can I fit this in with what has happened? Or how can I best explain this to suite past history? Rather we say: What does this mean? If there is anything in past history to which it refers I will accept that; but, if there is not, I am quite willing to wait for God's fulfillment in God's appointed time. A great deal more of Scripture than we are apt to realize has yet to be fulfilled. There are precious statements concerning the Lord's people which are yet to be fulfilled. Their wondrous glories in precious unity contained in the Lord's Prayer of John 17 must yet come to pass, yea, come to remain. There are many prophecies concerning Israel which will yet happen, there are many prophecies concerning the nations which though they have had partial illustrations cannot be said to be fulfilled. The word **FULLfil** has a double emphasis on completeness, and I suppose that the seeming "accident" of the language, for it is not Divine language, but human, that the "accident" of the language is Divinely overruled to remind us there are often-times partial "filments" before the "**FULL**-filment". God, again and again shows that history repeats itself. We look, therefore, at the book of Jeremiah, and we say: What has God set forth? It does not matter to us at all, primarily, what has happened in past history. We are not to twist Scripture to suite history. God will compel history to suite Scripture. Scripture is the rule, other things must come to this. I am persuaded that the man who will twist prophecy to suite certain events, will next twist commandments to suite his own ideas, and will not desire to be brought by the Holy Spirit into line with God's will. There is a dangerous

dishonesty in explaining away the words of the Lord. We look, therefore, at Jeremiah 50, and we see that this is a prophecy against the land of the Chaldeans, and not only against Babylon. Just as the land of Judah shall be blessed with Jerusalem, so the land of the Chaldeans shall be judged with Babylon. The first words of the prophecy are: “Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces, her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces”. Here we have a judgment upon Babylon and Babylon’s idols. Remember that Babylon is always seen in Scripture as a centre of idolatry. A large amount of the idolatry of Romanism (and the idolatry of the Protestantism, for there are still many relics) – a large amount of this idolatry descends directly from Babylon. There can be a tracing back historically, Babylon was the centre of Satan’s attempt to lead men away from God. Bel, and Merodach are two of the idols. Bel, possibly, is the idol associated with the very name “Babel”. You will recollect how in Isa. 46 we have Bel bowing down and Nebo stooping, and thus the man-humbling passage leads on to 47. “Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground, there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans”. Babylon is **ALWAYS** connected with idolatry, but there are not only idols which the eyes can see. “Son of man” was the utterance of the Lord to the prophet, “these men have set up idols in their heart”. In like manner money is a common idol, and pleasure one perhaps still more common. But why shall Babylon be so overthrown? Verse 3 says: “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”. Though we shall find afterwards that nations are mentioned, one special nation is here in front of us – this nation comes out from the north. It is remarkable that when Babylon attacked Jerusalem, Babylon’s power came out of the north against Jerusalem. Jer. 1.14: “Then the Lord said unto me, Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land”. And again, ch. 4.6: “Set up a standard toward Zion; retire, stay not, for I will bring evil from the north, a great destruction; the lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way, he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate”. Judgment came out of the north on Israel in the past. **TO** Israel Antichrist is the king of the north and indeed so is he marked out in Dan. 11, for all geography is in connection with Jerusalem. That is God’s earthly centre. It is therefore remarkable that if the king of the north comes against Jerusalem, sins brings a definite reply to itself, – a king of the north comes against the king of the north. Be sure your sin will find you out, is the solemn underlying thought. There is a wondrous exactness in retribution, but this nation shall make the land desolate that all will remove,

both man and beast. Has such destruction ever taken place in the past? That the city of Babylon has been brought very low, we acknowledge, – that at the present time there are, comparatively, mere villages and ruins on its site, we recognize, – that the land of Babylon is not yielding its increase, we must confess, – but is the land of Babylon in the depth of desolation here brought before us? Has it ever been in that depth of desolation? History replies: No. Scripture says it will be, therefore this is to be fulfilled in the **FUTURE**. The next verse, which does not need a paragraph mark, explains this: “In these days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping, they shall go and seek the Lord their God”. This is a prophecy of what shall be, and the refrain “in those days, and in that time” comes again in verse 20, linked with the precious promise that “the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found. For I will pardon them whom I reserve”. Is there any period in past history of which we can say: The children of Israel came, and the children of Judah together, going and weeping, going and seeking the Lord their God? We must reply: No. Then this is future! Are there any passages that show that this take place at the time of the Lord’s glory? Yes, Jer. 31 brings it before us, and in Isa. 52 we have those who are returning to Jerusalem, and who are met by those already at Jerusalem, and we remember Ezek. 37, where the two sticks become **ONE** in the hand of the prophet. “Ephraim will not envy Judah, in that day” as Isa. 11 marks out. God, therefore, has emphasized that the time of grief, and the time of unity between Israel and Judah is when Christ **COMES**. Thus the destruction of Babylon is when Christ comes, just at the same period. The next verse explains that they will ask the way to Zion with their faces **THITHERWARD**. They say every Passover: “Next year in Jerusalem”, but their faces are not truly thitherward. They will ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, and they will desire to be joined to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be broken. Thanks be unto God we have the spiritual parallel with this; and we would notice also how God introduces a few words about Israel to show His tender care for Israel all along the ages. Unless a believer has a warm heart toward Israel, the probability is he knows very little of the prophetic Scriptures. Scripture lays such a stress upon Israel: “My people have been lost sheep, their shepherds have caused them to go astray. They have turned them away on the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place”. Here is Israel’s history at the present time. God declares that they have forgotten Him, for “Resting Place” might be spelt with a capital letter. Is it not true that other nations have devoured them and that adversaries have distinctly said: “We offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord”? A

Jew to this day will complain that professing Christians are against the Jew because they say the Jew crucified the Lord of Glory and all along the ages those who have been intensely “religious” have been persecutors of the Jews. When there was a crusade there was a sweeping down upon the Jews, and this nominally, not truly, nominally in the name of Christ. The Jews have been cruelly persecuted. Men have practically said by their actions, times without number: We offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord. But in that coming Day God will be blessing Jerusalem as a praise in the earth, and therefore He must throw down Babylon. Verse 9 continues to tell us that an assembly of great nations will come from the north country upon Babylon, and they will set themselves in array against her. It is, therefore, evident that Antichrist will not have an undisputed sway in the world at the end of his kingdom. There will be certain kingdoms not subject to him which will rise up in the end against the city of Babylon. Whether, they will have yielded obedience to him before this though not within his federation is another matter altogether. At the end of his days there will be a manifest rising up of nations that are not subject to him. Chaldea shall be a spoil, all that spoil shall be satisfied, the land is to be affected, and we read that God will lay them low, because they were glad when they destroyed His heritage. We think of Isa. 10, where the king of Assyria, is proud because he lays low Jerusalem, and God rebukes him and punishes him for this. It is perfectly true that God punishes one nation by another, but the nation which is used to punish another does it wickedly and in its turn must be punished. Babylon will be compelled to work out God’s purpose. The Assyrian Antichrist himself will, like Nebuchadnezzar, be compelled to do certain things that God has appointed, but because his heart is against the Lord, there will be no goodness in his action, but he will be dealt with for his spiteful mind (cf. Ezek. 36.5). Oh how important it is not to have a wrong gladness! What a blessed contrast is the gladness and the rejoicing when the Lord graciously encourages His people, as many of the Psalms show. In verse 13 we read that “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”. God sent plagues on Egypt in the past, and will send plagues on Babylon in the future. Egypt held Israel at the beginning, Babylon will hold Israel in the future, and God asserts His claim in both cases. God, in verse 14, contrasts His utterance with the utterance of the nations. In verse 7 they say of Israel: Israel sinned. God says of Babylon: She hath sinned against the Lord. Shout against her round about, as she hath done, do unto her. The solemn utterance of verse 15 is: “It is the vengeance of the Lord”. And that expression must never be forgotten. More than once in this passage we are reminded, as ch. 51.6, and 51.11 put it, that

here is the vengeance of the Lord, yea the vengeance of **HIS TEMPLE**. It is holy vengeance. Isa. 66 shows us that God will in that day set up **HIS** temple **ON EARTH**. A voice from the temple of the Lord that rendereth recompence to His enemies. We turn again to Jer. 50: The sower and reaper will be cut off, and everyone who is engaged in this work will flee to his own land. Now what is the meaning of this expression? It is plainly a reference to the fact that Babylon will have other nations subject to her, will make other nations her servants. On this occasion such will flee to their own land. The contrast is when Christ shall reign. In that glorious Day Israel will have the nations for their husbandmen and vinedressers. They will take them captive whose captives they were. At once God again mentions Israel. Israel is a scattered sheep. There is the same thought, in verse 33. The children of Israel and the children of Judah were oppressed together. Their Redeemer is strong, verse 34. So 51.5: For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God. Now I beg you to notice that the blessing in these chapters is definitely for Israel **AND** Judah together. It is not simply for Judah, but Israel and Judah. We have seen that on each occasion they were oppressed together, and they shall be blessed together: – but when have Israel and Judah been thus blessed together? Why, beloved friends, even up to the time when the Lord Himself descends, the majority in the land of Palestine will belong to Judah. Zech. 12 gives us a description of those in the land of Palestine, and it makes clear they belong to Judah and Levi. But **ISRAEL** are to be blessed as well. This then refers to the way in which the Lord has descended. There will be the gathering of Israel and Judah, and all the tribes will be blessed together. The Lord will hasten it in its time, **HIS** time. In verse 17 that which I have just mentioned is emphasized. The king of Assyria did not deal so much with Judah but with Israel. Nebuchadnezzar did not deal so much with Israel but with Judah, both are mentioned, and then God adds: I will punish the king of Babylon as I have punished the king of Assyria, and I will bring Israel again to his habitations. His soul shall be satisfied. This is the second reference to satisfaction that the chapter has shown us. Oh the wonderful satisfactions of that day! Oh that we might feel a deep interest in poor Israel and the blessings to Israel! Beloved friends, the gifts and calling of God are without change of mind. Israel **SHALL** be restored. It is so cheering to notice God's love, although sin is so tremendous and must be punished. Verse 21 names the land of the Chaldeans. The land of rebellion, yea twofold rebellion, and the name Pekod, a name of Babylon, signifies "visitation", visitation in judgment. The word "waste" is, practically, the word for a "sword", and the word "utterly destroy" denotes an utter curse. "Do according to all that I have commanded thee", and so the hammer of the whole earth is to be cut asunder and broken. Why? Turn to chapter 51. God says of Israel, in verse 20:

Thou art **MY** battle-axe and weapons of war. The hammer of the whole earth is Babylon. **The times of the Gentiles began with Babylon and will end with Babylon.** It is true that there is an interval, yet Babylon begins and Babylon ends, but when God takes up His battle-axe, the hammer of the whole earth shall be thrown down. Israel is God's battle-axe. It is not for children of God to be battle-axes now. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God, but when the Lord returns, **ISRAEL SHALL BE HIS BATTLE-AXE,** and there will be Lord's holy war, that will be a manifestation of His tremendous power when He lays low everything before Himself, and so the hammer of the whole earth is to be cut asunder. A snare is to be laid for Babylon, because Babylon has striven, not simply against Israel, but against the Lord, and the Lord hath opened His armoury and brought His battle-axe out. Yea, from Israel they will waste the land of Nimrod, as Micah 5 (we have already seen this) makes clear. In verse 25 we read: This is the work of the Lord God of hosts in the **LAND** of the Chaldeans. In John 6 concerning a miracle of grace, the Lord Jesus said: "This is the work of God that ye may believe", but the future work is not a work of mercy, but a work of judgment. We can sing of mercy **and** judgment. Thanks be unto God, mercy precedes judgment, and mercy rejoiceth against judgment, but judgment will fall. God's holy judgment is as righteous as His wonderful mercy in the Righteous One. "Come against her from the utmost border" – that, I suppose, signifies there will be a coming against Babylon from the end of the land. There will be a coming from a distant district. Her storehouses will be opened, nothing will be left, their day is come, the time of their visitation, and we remember the word "visitation" is from the same root as "Pekod", in verse 21. Men will take up out of the land of Babylon to declare in Zion: "the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of His temple". One delights to see that the Lord's stress on His temple is brought out here with respect to Babylon and Jerusalem, for Babylon and Jerusalem will be the places of Satan's two temples, and then the Lord will assert His temple. There will be those that escape and bear the witness. In Rev. 18 we read of a flowing out from Babylon. The words "striven against the Lord" in verse 24 are echoed in 29, for she hath been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel. Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the Lord. Rev. 18 refers to that day, it says in verse 8: "Therefore shall her plagues come **IN ONE DAY.** Death and mourning and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her". You will notice here that we have brought before us the solemn fact that this must be fulfilled in the future. Babylon was never laid low **IN ONE DAY.** There have been a succession of troubles there, but here is a sudden judgment from the height of glory to the depth of degradation. What a

contrast when God raises up from the depth of degradation to the height of glory, and He can do it in one day, yea in one moment! Oh how blessed it is for those who have experienced this in the Lord Jesus! The passage continues in Jer. 50: I am against thee, Oh thou pride (another name for Babylon), for thy **DAY** is come, the special **DAY**, and the cities as well as the city will be brought low, as verse 32 puts it, but the remark is added: I will kindle a fire in his cities. What does this signify? Who is represented by the word “his”? To understand this we might look in the margin: “And pride shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up”. I take this as a prophecy of a personal Antichrist. He is called Pride. Babylon is called Pride, in verse 31; Antichrist is called Pride, in verse 32. Thus we have brought before us the city and the man. **His** cities, yea, for he will be king of the nations, and the cities of the nations will fall, as Rev. 16 shows. But do you notice it does not say that he will be in Babylon when he falls? The remarkable thing is this that whereas we have Babylon attacked, and destroyed, (down to the 32nd verse) yet we are not told of the king of Babylon being there! We continue in Jer. 50. God speaks in passing of more than a passing blessing to Israel, and He will disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon. A sword is upon the Chaldeans, a sword is upon her princes. But what means the absence of the reference to the king? We find that there are certain representatives of the king in Babylon, but the king is not there. A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up. To understand this we turn to Rev. 16, the waters of Euphrates have never yet been thus dried up. In the 12th verse we read: “And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up”. Therefore this shall be fulfilled at the sixth vial, – but the sixth vial is associated with the final climax, associated with the day when the great city shall be divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fall, and great Babylon come in remembrance before God. Every Scripture coincides. The remarkable fact about it is this that every Scripture is so written that if you do not read it carefully, you feel sure you have a contradiction, but if you look into it prayerfully a little more, you will see how the Holy Spirit is working. To return to Jer. 50, God declares that the wild beasts of the desert and the wild beasts of the islands will dwell there. The two words for the wild beasts come in Psalm 72 where we have both mentioned in connection with the Lord’s sovereignty. They will be laid low before Him. The two words are similar in sound. Rev. 18 says, this will take place, but here is a problem: The wild beasts will dwell there, yet we read in verse 3 that man and beast will be removed? The beast of burden in daily business will be removed, the wild beasts will be there, – and the wild beasts will be in connection with evil spirits who will be imprisoned at Babylon as Rev. 18 shows. Babylon shall become a cage of unclean birds reminding us of the

fowls of the air in Matt. 13. Verse 40 declares this will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbor cities, so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell there. Here is a definite parallel. How did God overthrow Sodom and Gomorrah? First, as to time there is no problem. He overthrows them suddenly, and there was no rising up. Babylon shall be so overthrown. Lot being brought out of Sodom just before, is parallel with the bringing out of Babylon in Rev. 18. But where are Sodom and Gomorrah? I believe that part of the site of these cities is under the Dead Sea. I do not say the whole of the site, but part of the site. There is nothing like the Dead Sea in any other part of the world. The river Jordan starts up in the White Mountains, suggestive of righteousness, and flows quickly down till by the time the Sea of Galilee is reached there is a depression about 700 feet below the Mediterranean, and still the land sinks, sinks, sinks, till at the Dead Sea there is a depression of something like 1400 feet! Here is a unique sinking into the earth. Now why is this? Jordan is marked out as a wondrous figure of judgment. In connection with this, when John preached baptism, he baptized in the water of Jordan. When Israel passed into the land, Jordan was divided for them. The waters speak of wrath; wrath starts in righteousness, it is the vengeance of God's temple, but wrath brings a man down! The Dead Sea has no outlet; there is no way out of judgment. The place of punishment is at the present time in the center of the earth, and the Dead Sea sinks into it, in measure. But there is a saltness there, for saltness is linked in Scripture with that which is perpetual ("a covenant of salt") and the judgment of God is perpetual. God will destroy Babylon in like manner. Babylon, with all its greatness, and its richness, and young men, will abide there. In verse 41 we read that many kings shall be raised up against Babylon, and they will come and roar like the sea and ride upon horses every one put in array. I want you to notice the expression that they will roar "LIKE the sea"; because people are very willing to tell us that where we read about the waters in connection with Babylon, there is the hint of crowds of men. I believe that in general when God has a figure He tells us, and in this very context when He uses a figure of the sea, He puts in the word "like" therefore we believe that the literal waters of a literal Babylon will be literally dried up. Now mark the strange statement. The king of Babylon appears before us, for the first time, in verse 43, and the king of Babylon hears their report. Now what does this signify? I suppose in the fullness of the next verse there is at least included a suggestion that the king of Babylon is in the neighborhood of Jordan when he hears the report. We turn to Dan. 11 concerning the last willful king. Just before the passage where we read: In that time Michael shall stand up, and Israel will "be delivered", we have the closing words in Dan.11 concerning the time of the end. Verse 44: But tidings out of

the east and out of the north shall trouble him. Therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many, and he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain, yet he shall come to his end. Thus Antichrist is away from his land, and hears the report. Scriptures fit in with one another. Undoubtedly the end of verse 44 speaks of our beloved Lord. The one like unto the Father who will be the Shepherd to stand before Him, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, shall lay low the lion of Babylon. In verse 46 we read: "At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations". The news quickly spread as to the taking of Babylon. In Rev. 18 we see what happens, in verse 9 we are told, the kings of the earth who live deliciously with her shall bewail her, and lament over her, when they see the smoke of her burning. You will notice that in **ONE DAY** her plagues come, death and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire. In other words she is attacked by tremendous powers of men in that day, and then the Lord steps in and gives His final judgment the same day, and many kings are amazed. They shall bewail her when they see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment. Then some of the kings of the earth will be nearer to Babylon. We must not imagine all the kings of the earth will be with Antichrist in Palestine. Scripture reveals to us that certain kings will be with him, but some are mentioned with respect to Babylon. We turn to the 51st chapter of Jeremiah. God says He will raise up against Babylon a destroying wind, and will send into Babylon fanners. Again we have the mention of the day of trouble, and the slain falling in the land of the Chaldeans, for Israel hath not been forsaken. There is always an emphasis on Israel. It is acknowledged that there is sin against the Holy One of Israel, but Oh what a contrast between 51.5 and 50.29! Israel hath not been widowed, as the word is literally. Contrast Isa. 47.9: – But these two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day, the loss of children and widowhood. But Israel, instead of losing children will find, in the words of Isa. 49.20: "The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these? Seeing I had lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro, and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these where had they been? Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the peoples: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders, and kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers, and they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, for

they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me. Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children". The children of Babylon taken away, but the children of Jerusalem blessed! Israel have not been forsaken, the Lord keeps to His purpose. Babylon is next seen as a "golden cup" in the Lord's hand, a striking expression; Cf. Nebuchadnezzar, "My servant"; Assyria, "the rod of Mine anger". Babylon a golden cup in the Lord's hand; the wrath of men shall praise Thee; the remainder of wrath shall Thou restrain. God is never defeated, everything must work out His purpose, and He will do His will.

You will notice in Jer. 51.8, that Babylon suddenly falls, and falls beyond healing, and others say: "Forsake her, and let us go every one to his own country". Babylon will be the centre of the earth. Men of all nations will be there, and they will forsake Babylon and seek to go to their own country. But there is a further thought: "The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness". **ISRAEL** are here before us. They did not go simply to their own country in this way and that way, but their own country is in southern Palestine, their own country is the Lord's land, the Holy Land, and they will come to declare in Zion the work of the Lord their God. Again we have the reference to the destruction of Babylon, as "the vengeance of the Lord". The Lord uses the spirit of the Medes. You will recollect that last week we noticed that with Gog there are the Persians, but not the Medes. In like manner with Gog there are found Phut and Cush, Togarmah, Magog as well as Meshech and Tubal, but Ashchenaz is left out. The Medes and Ashchenaz are specially **against** Babylon. Now, beloved friends, once acknowledge that Gog is Antichrist, that he is attacking Jerusalem with that evil thought, that wicked counsel against the Lord, – once acknowledge this, and you can see why those who are with Antichrist are not mentioned in Jer. 50 and 51. All Scripture agrees. God has marked out what nations will attack Babylon. "O thou that dwellest upon many waters", says verse 13, "Abundant in treasures, thine end is come". We think of the dwelling on waters in Rev. 17, both symbolically and literally true of Babylon. The Mighty God will cause His waters to go forth and lay low the power of man. Again we have the mention of idolatry in verses 17 and 18, and then the refrain concerning Israel as the Lord's people in verse 19. God's breaking in pieces with His battle-axe is the subject of verse 20-23. Beloved friends, this, as we have seen, has **NOT** been fulfilled. Therefore it must be fulfilled. Again in verse 25 we read that Babylon, which has been called Pekod, and Pride, is a destroying mountain. Babylon is associated with certain hills, and it has a mountain in governmental power also. But God will destroy the destroying mountain, for

the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established and this will be in the top of the mountains and God says that no more will the nations flow to Babylon, for they will flow upward to Jerusalem. "I will make thee a burnt mountain". There is a ruin at Babylon which has somewhat this appearance; it is called Birs Nimrod, which is supposed to be the Tower of Babel. It is a colossal mass of brickwork, and has the look of a burnt mountain of brick, but God will do this with all the greatness of Babylon, and men shall not take away a stone for a corner nor a stone for foundations. In the past Babylon was largely built of bricks, in the future stones will be employed. Jer. 51 continues: "Set up a standard in the land", and here we have the mention of the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni and Ashchenaz which will march against Babylon. We know the district of Ararat; Minni is said to be a section of the land of Armenia, Ashchenaz remains a problem. The Jewish interpretation is that Ashchenaz is Germany. All the Jews who are associated with the Northern part of Europe are called the "Ashchenazim Jews", the others the "Sephardim Jews". You may think it strange that the Dutch Jews are called "Sephardim". The reason is this: They came over from Spain when the Jews were sent out from that, as in the 15th century. The Sephardim Jews and the Ashchenazim Jews have a different pronunciation, and different ritual. The interpretation is worthy of consideration for Germany is undoubtedly outside the old Roman earth, and if Antichrist is to control the Revived Roman Empire, and if other lands are not to come into it unless specially mentioned, – (I believe Russia is especially mentioned) – if other lands are not to come into it unless specially mentioned, there may be some illustration of this marking off in the future Day by the present state of affairs amid the conflict of nations now. Continuing we find that the nations will be with the kings of the Medes, marching against Babylon, and the land will tremble, but behind the kings of the Medes there is the purpose of the Lord "to make the **LAND** of Babylon a desolation", not only the city but the land. The mighty men of Babylon will be helpless, but their king is not present. "One post shall run to meet another and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at an end". The king of Babylon is away from Babylon when the city is taken. I am not quite sure if the reference here to the posts *running* may not indicate that God will alter means of communication in the last days. "And that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted". And verse 33 says: "The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor, it is time to thresh her, the time of her harvest is come". In Rev. 14 we have the harvest; and so is it here. How blessed if we are in the Lord's harvest! The allusion to threshing reminds of Micah 4, where we read that nations shall be gathered round about Zion. "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion, for I will make thine

horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs copper, and thou shall beat in pieces many peoples". So we have the threshing at Babylon and the threshing at Jerusalem. These two cities Antichrist will have specially marked out as his own, the very two cities Satan wants, for when Satan took the Lord Jesus to two places, he picked out these two cities, no other cities, no other places! He met the Lord Jesus in the wilderness, and took the Lord Jesus to two cities, one was Jerusalem with the pinnacle of the temple; the other was Babylon, – for we read that he showed unto the Lord the kingdoms of the world, and **THEIR GLORY**. But what is the glory of kingdoms? **Babylon**, – Isa. 13 says so. Thus the two cities that Satan has set his hands upon, and his heart upon, will be the two cities where God will show his great judgment in that last day, and will manifest that the Lord must be exalted. And when the Lord exalts Himself, Jerusalem He makes His beautiful city. Babylon He makes an utter desolation, and no city at all. And, beloved friends, we are all like one of the two cities Satan laid his hands upon. Satan has sought to have us all, and ruin us all, and either we must be like Jerusalem, made the Lord's beautiful people, now and in that Day; – or we shall have an eternal judgment from which there is no escape. There is one of these two positions for all who are alike found in a position of turning after Satan. But if grace lays hold of us, grace will make us into 'Jerusalems', a praise and honour. But if there is not this deliverance, there is only one alternative – eternal separation from the presence of our glorious God. The passage continues to speak of drying up the "sea" of Babylon (verse 36). This is another reference to Euphrates, and Babylon becomes heaps without an inhabitant, and God shows us in verse 41 how Babylon shall be turned up-side-down, for the word "Sheshach" is the word Babylon spelled from the other end of the alphabet. This is a mode of spelling in Hebrew, taking anything from the other end of the alphabet to show it is turned up-side-down. The very word "Babel" itself, moreover, is the word "heart" in the Hebrew, turned round the wrong way, – and Babylon is the heart of men turned round the wrong way, and so God will turn Babylon round the wrong way, or round the right way of His righteous judgment against it. She shall become '*Sheshach*' and '*The praise of the whole earth surprised*' (verse 41). Contrast with this is Isa. 62: "Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence, and give Him no silence, until He establish, and until He make **JERUSALEM** a praise in the earth". Here is the Lord's answer to Babylon. "A praise in the **earth**". "The **sea** is come up upon Babylon". I believe, as I have already stated, this is literally to be fulfilled. Has it taken place? Never. "She is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof". But we recollect the words: "As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah". Then the sea must come up over Babylon. Scripture must be literally fulfilled. "Her cities are a desolation, a dry land" – but the sea is to

come up over **her**. “And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up”. Here God marks out the way in which He will lay low the glory of men, and the same thing is said concerning Antichrist in Zech. 9,7: “And I will take away his blood out of his mouth and his abomination from between his teeth”. The words of verse 46 would suggest that there will be a preparation for the destruction of Babylon. Here is the mention not of days, but of years. Why? The Lord’s people are to remove out of Babylon, not simply the last day or two before. The **DAYS** of God’s working of judgment are mentioned in verse 47, though in one **DAY** the plagues come. In verse 48 we are told that the heavens shall sing for Babylon. Has this taken place? When has the heaven sung concerning Babylon? No, beloved friends, this is to be fulfilled in that glorious time of which we read: “I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions” (Israel). I know we apply this as a beautiful Gospel promise and it is blessedly true in its application, but the continuation is: “O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me. I have blotted out as a thick cloud **THY** transgressions, and as a cloud **THY** sins, return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done; shout, ye lower parts of the earth, break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein, for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel”. The heavens will sing then, and the earth too, for they will be united. Jer. 51 proceeds: “As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth”. Rev. 18 reminds us how Babylon hath caused the slain to fall, and at Babylon there must be a laying low. You will notice the **nations** lay Babylon low, but the land of Nimrod is laid low by **Israel** according to Micah 5, and the **Lord** judges the city with fire. So everything will be strictly fulfilled. There are those who escape the sword and they are told to settle down nowhere else but Jerusalem, verse 50. The reference to these **DAYS** is again found in verse 52, and God repeats that though Babylon shall mount up to heaven yet she be brought low. A sound of a cry is heard from Babylon, **AND** great destruction from the **LAND** of the Chaldeans. Why? “Because the Lord hath spoiled Babylon, and destroyed out of her **THE GREAT VOICE**”. Here we have brought before us, not simply a reference to a general utterance of words, though undoubtedly men will be brought to silence in that day (Rev. 18 says how the voice of music shall be lost, and how there will be a great silence in Babylon) – but surely this 55th verse refers to Antichrist. The Lord will have destroyed out from Babylon “the great voice”. Antichrist will have a mouth speaking great things. “When her waves do roar like great waters, a noise of **their** voice is heard. Behold the spoiler is come upon her, mighty men are taken”. Antichrist is not said to be there, we have seen that the **LORD** particularly destroys him in Palestine. Wondrously indeed He destroys out of

her the great voice. In this way the great voice is brought away from his land, and then the Lord destroys him in the land to which he has come. The Lord God of recompenses will surely requite. The Lord of hosts, the King, in verse 57, lays low her princes within the city, but the king of Babylon is not there when the broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire. All her protection shall be brought down, and the result will be that the people will labour in the fire and be weary. They will try to escape with some of their goods, and will not be permitted to escape. A faint picture of the tremendous judgment when sinners are for ever away from God, and they shall be weary. The closing words of the chapter are summed up in verse 64. They shall say: Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise for the evil that I will bring upon her, and they shall be weary. Beloved friends, this has not yet taken place, it will take place, for God will do all that He has declared. From this we see how that history is no surprise unto the Lord, and we can have confidence in Him. From this we learn the iniquity of man's feasting, and the wickedness of man's self-confidence. From this we see the outline of a Divine purpose which chose Abraham and called him alone, and determined to make of him a great nation, and in him and in his seed to bless all the nations of the earth. God has not forgotten His plan, and has not altered His purpose. He chose Jerusalem of old, and He will not take another city instead, and if He has chosen us in His own love, He will not take others instead, for He loves with an everlasting love, and will keep the people of His choice. His purposes shall stand and He will do all His pleasure. This chapter is deeply solemn. It draws us aside from worldliness, and from engaging in the world's politics, and in the world's arrangements. It gives us a deep concern to use up the fleeting moments in making known the climax to which civilization is tending, and to remind men, and to impress before them that there is no hope if a man is a man of this world, but that the hope is linked with Him, Who having died for sinners is now gone to appear in the presence of God for such, even in Him, Who having graciously died for transgressors makes intercession for transgressors, and because of and unto Him there are still being brought out from all nations with His mighty power, a people to be around Him, who will for ever be to the praise of the glory of His grace.

Further addresses available:

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