

Jeremiah

The Fruitless Prophet

Dates and chronology are based largely on www.generationword.com/notes/jeremiah/prelim-notes.pdf Used by permission.

Lesson 14 – Prophecies against Babylon

Jeremiah 50-51

Date: 20 January 2021 - Jer20

1. Remember that Jeremiah 50-51 is prophecy

- a. (Jer 50:1-3) Jeremiah probably spoke these words in the fourth year of King Zedekiah (51:59) **593** BC. Their fulfilment would not take place for another 57 years.
- b. These promises were to encourage those who were suffering in the Babylonian captivity.
- c. We find several mentions of Israel in these chapters.
 - 1) They would eventually leave Babylon and return to Israel (50:4-8). Israel would be as the he goats that are first to leave the enclosure.
 - 2) God will punish Babylon and bring Israel home again (50:17-20).
 - 3) Israel's Redeemer is strong (50:33-34)
 - 4) Israel has not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God (51:5-10). They would one day flee from Babylon (51:6).
 - 5) The Lord is Israel's portion (51:19).
 - 6) Israel is crushed by Babylon, but the Lord has not forgotten (51:34-35).
 - 7) God will bring forth out of Babylon's mouth that which he had swallowed up [Israel] (51:44).
 - 8) Those who escaped the sword are to go away and remember Jerusalem (51:50).

Josiah 640-608
Jehoahaz 608
Jehoiakim 608-597
1 st Captivity 606
Jehoiachin 597
2 nd Captivity 597
Zedekiah 597-586
3 rd Captivity 586

These words to Israel are to encourage them during the years of captivity. Knowing that God had not forsaken them and that He would deal with Babylon in His good time was comforting. Psalm 73 has a similar message. Take heart! God will settle all injustices on Judgment Day.

2. Babylon will fall because of her evil ways

- a. The Persians would come from the North and destroy Babylon (50:3). That took place in 539 BC. (cf., Daniel 5:30-31).
- b. Chaldea (i.e., Babylonia) will be a spoil (50:10).
- c. She will be wholly desolate (50:13). Ryrie tells us that the Persians captured Babylon in 539. Darius Hystaspes partly destroyed the walls in 514. Xerxes demolished the walls and the temples of Babylon in 478. At the end of the twentieth century, Iran made another beginning attempt at restoration of Babylon.
- d. God describes for us the attack on Babylon (50:21-40). Though the Lord

used other nations, it was He that orchestrated the destruction (50:25, 28, 31).

- e. Truly, it was at the counsel of the Lord that Babylon would fall (50:45).
 - f. It is the LORD who will rise up against Babylon (51:1).
 - g. The destruction and fall of Babylon would be sudden (51:8). Daniel's account confirms this fact (Dan 5:30-31).
 - h. The Lord had sworn to fill Babylon with enemy soldiers like caterpillars (51:14).
 - i. It is interesting that in Hebrew Jeremiah 51:15 is identical with Jeremiah 10:12; however, in the KJV the last word is translated differently.
 - j. The power of the Lord to destroy Babylon is the same power used to create the universe and to control nature (51:15-16).
 - k. God, the Portion of Jacob, is not like the graven images of Babylon (51:19).
 - l. God's judgment on Babylon was just (51:24).
 - m. The capture of Babylon will be swift (51:31-32).
 - n. Even if Babylon should mount up to heaven, yet God will send spoilers against her (51:53).
- ### 3. Jeremiah sent this prophecy with Seraiah to Babylon (51:59-64)
- a. Seraiah was a quiet prince. He was the brother of Baruch (cf., 32:12).
 - b. Charles Ellicott states, "The beginning of Zedekiah's reign was memorable for the gathering at Jerusalem of ambassadors from the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Zidon, obviously for the purpose of forming a confederacy against Nebuchadnezzar, and Jeremiah had condemned all such schemes as contrary to the will of Jehovah (Jer. 27:1-13). It is probable that Nebuchadnezzar summoned the king of Judah to Babylon to question him as to this scheme, and to demand an act of renewed homage. On this journey he was accompanied by the brother of the prophet's friend and fellow-worker, and Jeremiah takes the opportunity of committing to his charge what we may call an esoteric prophecy, lifting up the veil of the future. He counselled submission for the present, because resistance was premature, and would prove futile."
 - c. After reading Jeremiah's prophecy to the Babylonian captivity, he was to throw it into the Euphrates River (51:63).

When we are tempted to feel that life is not fair, we must search the Scriptures for words of assurance, comfort and encouragement. God had Jeremiah write these two chapters to cheer the downhearted. He has written many other verses to cheer our hearts as well. Let's name a few!
— Ps 56:3; Jn 14:1-3; 1Pe 5:7; Is 40:31; Heb 13:5; Ps 1; Ps 23.