Jeremiah

Chapter 50

*A Message About Babylon*

**This is the word the LORD spoke through Jeremiah the prophet concerning Babylon and the land of the Babylonians: 2 “Announce and proclaim among the nations, lift up a banner and proclaim it; keep nothing back, but say, ‘Babylon will be captured; Bel will be put to shame, Marduk filled with terror. Her images will be put to shame and her idols filled with terror.’ 3 A nation from the north will attack her and lay waste her land. No one will live in it; both men and animals will flee away. 4 “In those days, at that time,” declares the LORD, “the people of Israel and the people of Judah together will go in tears to seek the LORD their God. 5 They will ask the way to Zion and turn their faces toward it. They will come and bind themselves to the LORD in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten. 6 “My people have been lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray and caused them to roam on the mountains. They wandered over mountain and hill and forgot their own resting place. 7 Whoever found them devoured them; their enemies said, ‘We are not guilty, for they sinned against the LORD, their true pasture, the LORD, the hope of their fathers.’ 8 “Flee out of Babylon; leave the land of the Babylonians, and be like the goats that lead the flock. and be like the goats that lead the flock. 9 For I will stir up and bring against Babylon an alliance of great nations from the land of the north. They will take up their positions against her, and from the north she will be captured. Their arrows will be like skilled warriors who do not return empty-handed. 10 So Babylonia will be plundered; all who plunder her will have their fill,” declares the LORD. 11 “Because you rejoice and are glad, you who pillage my inheritance, because you frolic like a heifer threshing grain and neigh like stallions, 12 your mother will be greatly ashamed; she who gave you birth will be disgraced. She will be the least of the nations— a wilderness, a dry land, a desert. 13 Because of the LORD’s anger she will not be inhabited but will be completely desolate. All who pass Babylon will be horrified and scoff because of all her wounds. 14 “Take up your positions around Babylon, all you who draw the bow. Shoot at her! Spare no arrows, for she has sinned against the LORD. 15 Shout against her on every side! She surrenders, her towers fall, her walls are torn down. Since this is the vengeance of the LORD, take vengeance on her; do to her as she has done to others. 16 Cut off from Babylon the sower, and the reaper with his sickle at harvest. Because of the sword of the oppressor let everyone return to his own people, let everyone flee to his own land. 17 “Israel is a scattered flock that lions have chased away. The first to devour him was the king of Assyria; the last to crush his bones was Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.” 18 Therefore this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “I will punish the king of Babylon and his land as I punished the king of Assyria. 19 But I will bring Israel back to his own pasture and he will graze on Carmel and Bashan; his appetite will be satisfied on the hills of Ephraim and Gilead. 20 In those days, at that time,” declares the LORD, “search will be made for Israel’s guilt, but there will be none, and for the sins of Judah, but none will be found, for I will forgive the remnant I spare. 21 “Attack the land of Merathaim and those who live in Pekod. Pursue, kill and completely destroy them,” declares the LORD. “Do everything I have commanded you. 22 The noise of battle is in the land, the noise of great destruction! 23 How broken and shattered is the hammer of the whole earth! How desolate is Babylon among the nations! 24 I set a trap for you, O Babylon, and you were caught before you knew it; you were found and captured because you opposed the LORD. 25 The LORD has opened his arsenal and brought out the weapons of his wrath, for the Sovereign LORD Almighty has work to do in the land of the Babylonians. 26 Come against her from afar. Break open her granaries; pile her up like heaps of grain. Completely destroy her and leave her no remnant. 27 Kill all her young bulls; let them go down to the slaughter! Woe to them! For their day has come, the time for them to be punished. 28 Listen to the fugitives and refugees from Babylon declaring in Zion how the LORD our God has taken vengeance, vengeance for his temple. 29 “Summon archers against Babylon, all those who draw the bow. Encamp all around her; let no one escape. Repay her for her deeds; do to her as she has done. For she has defied the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. 30 Therefore, her young men will fall in the streets; all her soldiers will be silenced in that day,” declares the LORD. 31 “See, I am against you, O arrogant one,” declares the Lord, the LORD Almighty, “for your day has come, the time for you to be punished. 32 The arrogant one will stumble and fall and no one will help her up; I will kindle a fire in her towns that will consume all who are around her.” 33 This is what the LORD Almighty says: “The people of Israel are oppressed, and the people of Judah as well. All their captors hold them fast, refusing to let them go. 34 Yet their Redeemer is strong; the LORD Almighty is his name. He will vigorously defend their cause so that he may bring rest to their land, but unrest to those who live in Babylon. 35 “A sword against the Babylonians!” declares the LORD— “against those who live in Babylon and against her officials and wise men! 36 A sword against her false prophets! They will become fools. A sword against her warriors! They will be filled with terror. 37 A sword against her horses and chariots and all the foreigners in her ranks! They will become women. A sword against her treasures! They will be plundered. 38 A drought on her waters! They will dry up. For it is a land of idols, idols that will go mad with terror. 39 “So desert creatures and hyenas will live there, and there the owl will dwell. It will never again be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation. 40 As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah along with their neighboring towns,” declares the LORD, “so no one will live there; no man will dwell in it. 41 “Look! An army is coming from the north; a great nation and many kings are being stirred up from the ends of the earth. 42 They are armed with bows and spears; they are cruel and without mercy. They sound like the roaring sea as they ride on their horses; they come like men in battle formation to attack you, O Daughter of Babylon. 43 The king of Babylon has heard reports about them, and his hands hang limp. Anguish has gripped him, pain like that of a woman in labor. 44 Like a lion coming up from Jordan’s thickets to a rich pastureland, I will chase Babylon from its land in an instant. Who is the chosen one I will appoint for this? Who is like me and who can challenge me? And what shepherd can stand against me?” 45 Therefore, hear what the LORD has planned against Babylon, what he has purposed against the land of the Babylonians: The young of the flock will be dragged away; he will completely destroy their pasture because of them. 46 At the sound of Babylon’s capture the earth will tremble; its cry will resound among the nations.**

**50:1–51:64** See Isa 13:1–14:23; 21:1–9. Jeremiah’s prophecy concerning Babylon is by far the longest of his oracles against foreign nations (chs. 46–51) and expands on his earlier and briefer statements (see 25:12–14, 26). Its date, in whole or in part, is 593 b.c. (see 51:59 and note). The two chapters divide into three main sections (50:2–28; 50:29–51:26; 51:27–58), each of which begins with a summons concerning war against Babylon, Judah’s mortal enemy (see 50:2–3; 50:29–32; 51:27–32). (CSB)

The Babylonian Empire was subject to God’s eternal purpose. It emerged on the scene when He needed “a servant” (25:9; 27:6; 43:10) to punish His apostate people. It sank beneath the sands of time because it sinned against the Lord (50:14), pursuing its own selfish interest and thus opposing the coming of the kingdom of God. (TLSB)

**50:1** *word.* Or “message” (as in 46:13), comprising chs. 50–51. (CSB)

*through.* See 37:2. The message would eventually be sent by the prophet to Babylon itself (see 51:59–61). (CSB)

It seems that the various prophecies against Babylon were collected at this time, to be sent as one message, partly to pronounce the doom of the oppressor, chap. 25, 12, partly to console the captive Jews and to remind them of the eventual end of their captivity. (Kretzmann)

**50:2** *Announce and proclaim.* See 4:5; 46:14. (CSB)

This means to call the attention of all men to the importance and the significance of this announcement. (Kretzmann)

*lift up a banner.* See note on Isa 5:26. The Hebrew for this phrase is translated “raise the signal” in 4:6. (CSB)

*Babylon will be captured.* Fulfilled in 539 b.c. (CSB)

It is a thing so firmly determined, that it is as good as already done. (ACC)

*Bel.* See 51:44; Isa 46:1 and note. (CSB)

The titelar deity of Babylon is confounded, because it cannot save its own city. (ACC)

MARDUK – Another of their idols, is broken to pieces; it was not able to save itself, much less the whole empire. (ACC)

*put to shame … filled with terror.* The repetition of each of these phrases emphasizes that the chief god of Babylon and his images and idols are alike doomed. (CSB)

*Her … her.* Babylon’s. (CSB)

*idols.* Lit. “little pellets of dung.” Derogatory references concerning idols and idolatry are common in the OT (see, e.g., Isa 44:9–20). (CSB)

Great and small, golden and wooden, are broken to pieces; even the form of them no longer appears. (ACC)

**50:3** *nation from the north.* In Jeremiah, the foe from the north is almost always Babylon (see, e.g., 1:14–15). Here, however, the reference is probably to Persia. Babylon’s nemesis is expanded to “an alliance of great nations” in v. 9, specified by name in 51:27–28. (CSB)

WASTE HER LAND – The city of Babylon, left intact by Cyrus the Mede at the time of its capture, was later reduced to desolation. (TLSB)

*men and animals will flee.* See 33:12. (CSB)

This war, and the consequent taking of the city, began those disasters that brought Babylon in process of time to complete desolation; so that now it is not known where it stood, the whole country being a total solitude. (ACC)

**50:4** *Israel and … Judah together.* See note on 3:18. (CSB)

In the times in which Babylon shall be opposed by the Medes and Persians, both Israel and Judah, seeing the commencement of the fulfilling of the prophecies, shall begin to seek the Lord with much prayer, and broken and contrite hearts. When the decree of Cyrus comes, they shall be ready to set off for their own country, deploring their offenses, yet rejoicing in the mercy of God which has given them this reviving in their bondage. (ACC)

*tears.* Of repentance (see 3:21–22; 31:9). (CSB)

**50:5** *everlasting covenant.* See 32:40 and note; see also 31:31–34; 33:20–21. (CSB)

All our former covenants have been broken; let us now make one that shall last for ever. He shall be the Lord Our God, and We will no more worship idols. This covenant they have kept to the present day; whatever their present moral and spiritual state may be, they are no idolaters, in the gross sense of the term. The description that is here given of the state of this people, their feelings and their conduct, finely exhibit the state of real penitents, who are fervently seeking the salvation of their souls. 1. In those days when Jesus Christ is manifested in the flesh; and in that time, when through him is preached the remission of sins, and the people who hear are pricked in their conscience. 2. The children of Israel and the children of Judah together.—No distinctions being then felt or attended to; for all feel themselves sinners, who have come short of the glory of God. Even national distinctions and religious differences, which bind men fastest, and hold them longest, are absorbed in the deep and overpowering concern they feel for their eternal interests. 3. Going and weeping shall they go.—Religious sorrow does not preclude activity and diligence. While they are weeping for their sins, they are going on in the path of duty, seeking the Lord while he may be found, and calling upon him while he is near. 4. They shall ask the way to Zion.—Real penitents are the most inquisitive of all mortals; but their inquiries are limited to one object, they ask the way to Zion. What shall we do to be saved? How shall we shun the perdition of ungodly men, etc. 5. With their faces thitherward.—They have turned from sin, and turned To God. They have left the paths of the destroyer, and their hearts are towards God, and the remembrance of his name. Thus they are profiting by that light which has convinced them of sin, righteousness, and judgment. 6. Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord.—Religion is a social principle, and begets a social feeling in the soul. No man who feels his own sore, and the plague of his heart, wishes to venture alone in the way to heaven. He feels he wants counsel, support, comfort and the company of those who will watch over him in love. Like David, the true penitent is a companion of all those who fear the Lord. These heavenly feelings come from one and the same Spirit, and lead to the same end; hence they say,— 7. Let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant. It is said, that to be undecided, is to be decided. They who are not determined to go to heaven, will never reach it. If the heart be not laid under obligation, it will do nothing. “I hope I am in earnest; I trust I shall be in earnest about the salvation of my soul, it is very proper I should be so;” and such like, show an irresolute soul. Such persons are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Let us therefore bind ourselves. We have trifled too long; been indecisive too long; have halted too long between two opinions. We know now that Jehovah is God; let us, therefore, enter into a covenant with him. Let this covenant be a perpetual one: let us not make it for a day, for any particular time, but for ever; and let it never be broken. Let our part be kept inviolable: we Are and Will Be thy people; and God’s part will never fail, I Am and Will Be your God. The covenant requires a sacrifice.—Hence ברית berith signifies both. Christ crucified is the great covenant sacrifice. By him God becomes united to us, and through him we become united to God. (ACC)

**50:6** *lost sheep.* See Jesus’ parable in Lk 15:3–7. (CSB)

He pities them; for their pastors, kings, and prophets have caused them to err. (ACC)

*shepherds.* Rulers (see note on 2:8). (CSB)

The very men who were entrusted with their care are guilty of this gross neglect. (Kretzmann)

*mountain and hill.* Places where pagan gods were worshiped (see note on 2:20). (CSB)

*their own resting place.* The Lord (see v. 7). (CSB)

**50:7** WE ARE NOT GUILTY – God has abandoned them; we are only fulfilling his designs in plaguing them. (ACC)

Their adversaries felt that they incurred no guilt, that they were, in fact, justified in taking advantage of the children of Israel. (Kretzmann)

*hope of their fathers.* See 14:8, 22; Ac 28:20. (CSB)

**50:8** FLEE OUT OF BABYLON – The sentence of destruction is gone out against it; prepare for your flight, that ye be not overwhelmed in its ruin. (ACC)

*like the goats that lead the flock.* Judah would be among the first of the captive peoples to be released from exile in Babylon. (CSB)

Who always run to the head of the flock, giving the example for others to follow. This may be addressed to the elders and persons of authority among the people. (ACC)

**50:9** *alliance of great nations.* See Isa 13:4. They are named in 51:27–28 (see note on v. 3). (CSB)

The army of Cyrus was composed of Medes, Persians, Armenians, Caducians, Sacae, etc. Though all these did not come from the north; yet they were arranged under the Medes, who did come from the north, in reference to Babylon. (ACC)

ARROWS…SKILLED – They are such expert archers, that they shall never miss their mark. (ACC)

*not return empty-handed.* See Isa 55:11. (CSB)

None of them would fail to perform its deadly work. (Kretzmann)

**50:10** WILL HAVE THEIR FILL – They were getting all that their heart desired in the way of rich booty. In this sense the Lord now turns directly to Babylon in pronouncing sentence upon the Chaldean Empire. (Kretzmann)

**50:11** *you.* Babylon. (CSB)

*my inheritance.* God’s land and people (see 2:7; 12:7 and notes). (CSB)

The Chaldeans called so on account of the pillage committed by them in destroying Judah. (Kretzmann)

*frolic like a heifer.* See Mal 4:2. (CSB)

They were skipping like a threshing calf or heifer, with proud insolence. (Kretzmann)

*stallions.* See note on 8:16. (CSB)

Neigh as steeds," in overweening, challenging pride. (Kretzmann)

**50:12** *mother.* Either (1) the city or, more likely, (2) the land (see Isa 50:1; Hos 2:5). (CSB)

Speaking to the Chaldeans: Babylon, the metropolis, or mother city, shall be a wilderness, a dry land, a desert, neither fit for man nor beast. (ACC)

*least.* Lit. “last.” As Amalek, “first among the nations” (Nu 24:20) to attack Israel, was destroyed, so Babylon, the last to attack Israel (up to Jeremiah’s time), would be destroyed. (CSB)

**50:13** *not be inhabited.* See Isa 13:20 and note. (CSB)

This was because His anger had caused the inhabitants to be driven away or slaughtered. (Kretzmann)

*All who pass … because of all her wounds.* Said of Jerusalem in 19:8 and of Edom in 49:17. (CSB)

This was in sneering derision. In order to carry out this judgment upon Babylon, the nations everywhere are now called upon to take the city. (Kretzmann)

**50:14** *you who draw the bow.* Including the Medes (see Isa 13:17–18). (CSB)

The archers represent the entire army of the enemy. (Kretzmann)

**50:15** *Shout.* Give the battle cry (see Jos 6:16). (CSB)

Encompass her with lines and with troops; let none go in with relief, none come out to escape from her ruin. (ACC)

*vengeance of the Lord.*† See v. 28; 51:11. It was often carried out by his people at his specific command (see Nu 31:3). (CSB)

**50:16** CUT OFF…THE SOWER – Both sowers and reapers would be destroyed, and there could be no harvesting in the entire country. (Kretzmann)

*sword of the oppressor.* See 46:16. (CSB)

*let everyone … to his own land.* The Hebrew for this passage has a parallel in Isa 13:14. The captive peoples are warned to flee Babylon in order to avoid being cut down by her invaders. (CSB)

The strangers in the country are getting ready to preserve their lives before the threatening catastrophe comes. Over against this fate of Babylon is placed the deliverance of Judah from oppression and exile. (Kretzmann)

**50:17** *scattered flock.* See Joel 3:2. (CSB)

All the descendants of Jacob have been harassed and spoiled, first by the Assyrians, and afterwards by the Chaldeans. They acted towards them as a lion to a sheep which he has caught; first he devours all the flesh, next he breaks all the bones to extract the marrow. (ACC)

*lions.* Symbolic of Assyria and Babylon (see 4:7; Isa 15:9 and notes). (CSB)

*The first … was the king of Assyria.* The Assyrians destroyed Israel (the northern kingdom) in 722–721 b.c. (CSB)

*the last … was Nebuchadnezzar.* The Babylonians destroyed Judah (the southern kingdom) in 586 b.c. (CSB)

**50:18** *I punished the king of Assyria.* Nineveh, the proud Assyrian capital, fell in 612 b.c., and Assyria herself was conquered by a coalition of Medes and Babylonians in 609. (CSB)

The Assyrians were overthrown by the Medes and the Chaldeans. The king is here taken for all their kings, generals, etc., Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, Esar-haddon, etc. To them succeeded the Chaldean or Babylonish kings. Nebuchadnezzar came against Judea several times; and at last took the city and burnt it, profaned and demolished the temple, wasted the land, and carried the princes and people into captivity. (ACC)

**50:19** *Carmel.* See Isa 33:9 and note. (CSB)

*Bashan.* See note on Isa 2:13. (CSB)

Territories in Israel, famous for their fertility. (TLSB)

*hills of Ephraim.* The lush mountainsides of central Israel (see Eze 34:13–14). (CSB)

*Gilead.* See Nu 32:1; Mic 7:14. (CSB)

**50:20** See 33:8 and note; see also 36:3; Mic 7:18–19. (CSB)

He grants them forgiveness and pardon by virtue of the Messiah's merits. If enemies of the Lord, whom He, for any reason whatever, has used as His instruments to carry out His plans, become overbearing and insolent as a consequence, He readily plunges them from the height of their pride to the depths of humiliation and confusion. (Kretzmann)

**50:21** *Merathaim.* Means “double rebellion [against the Lord],” perhaps referring to vv. 24, 29 (see Jdg 3:8; Isa 40:2 and notes). It is probably a pun on the Babylonian word *marratu*, which sometimes referred to a region in southern Babylonia that was characterized by briny waters. (CSB)

*Pekod.* See Eze 23:23; means “punishment [from the Lord],” a pun on *Puqudu,* the Babylonian name for an Aramean tribe living on the eastern bank of the lower Tigris River. (CSB)

*completely destroy.* See NIV text note; v. 26; 25:9; 51:3; see also note on Dt 2:34. (CSB)

The NIV note says, “The Hebrew term refers to the irrevocable giving over of things or persons to the Lord, often by totally destroying them, also in verse 26. (CSB)

**50:22** *great destruction.* See 4:6; 6:1; cf. 48:3; 51:54. (CSB)

The din of war can be heard everywhere. (Kretzmann)

**50:23** *hammer of the whole earth.* See note on Isa 10:5. (CSB)

Babylon is called on account of the fact that the Lord used it to strike and destroy many nations. (Kretzmann)

*How desolate … among the nations!* The Hebrew for this sentence is repeated verbatim in 51:41. (CSB)

It is so bad that men stand aghast at the horror of her downfall. (Kretzmann)

**50:24** *caught before you knew it.* The Persian attack in 539 b.c. would catch the city of Babylon completely by surprise (see 51:8; Isa 47:11). (CSB)

It was not by storm that Cyrus took the city. The Euphrates ran through it; he dug a channel for the river in another direction, to divert its stream; he waited for that time in which the inhabitants had delivered themselves up to debauchery: in the dead of the night he turned off the stream, and he and his army entered by the old channel, now void of its waters. This was the snare of which the prophet here speaks. (ACC)

**50:25** *weapons of his wrath.* The nations (see 51:27–28) that the Lord would use to conquer Babylon (see Isa 13:5 and note). (CSB)

*the … Lord… has work to do.* See 48:10. (CSB)

Jehovah Himself going forth to battle. (Kretzmann)

**50:26** *heaps of grain.* The Hebrew for this expression is used in Ne 4:2 to describe heaps of rubble that had been burned. (CSB)

At the time that Cyrus took the city, it was full of provisions and treasures of all kinds; the walls had suffered no injury; and when the inhabitants heard that the enemy was within, they thought they must have arisen out of the earth in the center of the city! (ACC)

*Completely destroy her.* By burning (see note on v. 21; see also Jos 11:11–13). (CSB)

The city with all its possessions and treasures was to be burned with fire. (Kretzmann)

**50:27** *young bulls.* The people of Babylon, including especially her fighting men (see Isa 34:6–7 and notes). (CSB)

*go down to the slaughter.* See note on 48:15 – (for war depicted as the slaughter of sacrificial animals.) (CSB)

*time for them to be punished.* See 11:23; 23:12; 46:21. (CSB)

This was their punishment at the hands of Jehovah. (Kretzmann)

**50:28** *fugitives and refugees.* Jewish exiles who had fled the destruction overtaking Babylon. (CSB)

*vengeance, vengeance for his temple.* See v. 15 and note; 46:10; 51:6. The conquest of Babylon was the Lord’s response to Babylon’s burning of the Jerusalem temple. (CSB)

Which Nebuchadnezzar had pillaged, profaned, and demolished, transporting its sacred vessels to Babylon, and putting them in the temple of his god Bel. (ACC)

Babylon’s guilt was the arrogant claim that the destruction of the Jerusalem temple proved Marduk’s superiority over Israel’s God. (TLSB)

**50:29** *Repay her for her deeds.* Echoed from 25:14 (see 51:24). (CSB)

*do to her as she has done.* See v. 15. (CSB)

*Holy One of Israel.* A title of God found frequently in Isaiah (see note on Isa 1:4), it occurs in Jeremiah only here and in 51:5. (CSB)

Their pride being the fundamental transgression and fault of Babylon, a form of blasphemy challenging the Lord's honor. (Kretzmann)

**50:30** Repeated almost verbatim from 49:26. (CSB)

Jeremiah repeats words he spoke in announcing the doom of Damascus. (TLSB)

**50:31–32** A distant echo of 21:13–14, spoken there to Jerusalem but here to Babylon. (CSB)

**50:32** ARROGANT ONE – זדון zadon, as before. Here pride is personified and addressed, as if possessing a being and rational powers. (ACC)

**50:33** *their captors.* See Isa 14:2. (CSB)

*refusing to let them go.* Reminiscent of Pharaoh’s repeated refusals before the exodus (see, e.g., Ex 7:14; 8:2, 32; 9:2, 7). (CSB)

**50:34** *Redeemer.* See 31:11 and note. (CSB)

The Commander of all the heavenly armies. (Kretzmann)

*defend their cause.* See 51:36. (CSB)

The Lord would take their part with all needed energy.

*bring rest.* See 31:2 and note; see also Isa 14:3, 7 and notes on Dt 3:20; Jos 1:13. (CSB)

Judah would once more enjoy peace and security. (Kretzmann)

**50:35–38** Cf. Eze 21. (CSB)

**50:35** A SWORD – This meant war and its calamities, or any grievous plague. (ACC)

The sword here means Medes and Persians. (TLSB)

OFFICIALS AND WISE – Chaldea was noted for its officials and wisemen. The sentence is really in the form of an exclamation, a call, bidding the sword do its work of slaughtering. (Kretzmann)

**50:36** *false prophets … will become fools.* See Isa 44:25; see also Nu 12:11 and NIV text note on Pr 1:7. (CSB)

This would include the idle talkers, the astrologers of Babylon who would become fools with their empty and deceitful statements. (Kretzmann)

**50:37** *against her horses and chariots.* See Isa 43:17; see also Ps 20:7. (CSB)

These were her boast in warfare. (Kretzmann)

*foreigners.* See 25:20, 24; Ne 13:3. (CSB)

These were her mercenaries and allies. (Kretzmann)

*will become women.* See Na 3:13. (CSB)

This meant that they would become weak and utterly unable for effective resistance. (Kretzmann)

WILL BE PLUNDERED – They would lose the wealth which they had accumulated in the course of their campaigns. (Kretzmann)

**50:38** DROUGHT ON HER WATERS – May not this refer to the draining of the channel of the Euphrates, by which the army of Cyrus entered the city. The original is, however, חרב chereb, a sword, as in the preceding verses, which signifies war, or any calamity by which the thing on which it falls is ruined. (ACC)

*idols.* See 51:52; see also note on Isa 21:9. (CSB)

Babylon’s idols are no match for almighty God. (TLSB)

*go mad.* See 25:16 and note. (CSB)

Literally, "their objects of horror or terror," for the images which are usually found in heathen sanctuaries are really more likely to frighten than to attract. They have indulged in gross and revolting idolatry and must therefore bear their iniquity. (Kretzmann)

**50:39** See Isa 13:20–22 and notes. (CSB)

*Notes from Isaiah 13…*

***13:20–22*** *See the similar description of the desolation of Edom in 34:10–15. Cf. Rev 18:2.* (CSB)

***13:20*** *never be inhabited. Babylon was completely deserted by the seventh century a.d.* (CSB)

*No, not by men, neither by sojourners nor strangers, but only by beasts that love the deserts, flying creatures of every kind and quadrupeds of every kind, which live by predation and shun the fellowship of men; and by hairy fauns and satyrs, in whose image demons appeared, as we believe, for the purpose of enticing men to idolatry. (Luther)*

*When Alexander the Great thought to rebuild Babylon, he employed ten thousand workmen for two months to clear away the rubbish from the foundations of a temple in Babylon. But Alexander never succeeded in rebuilding the city. God had reduced the once glorious an proud city to ruins. (PBC)*

***13:21*** *wild goats. This term is connected with demons (“goat idols”) in Lev 17:7; 2Ch 11:15. In Rev 18:2 fallen Babylon is described as a home for demons and evil spirits.*

**50:40** Repeated almost verbatim from 49:18 (see note there). (CSB)

As the very ground on which these cities stood, with all the plain, now lies under the Dead Sea; so Babylon and the adjacent country shall be rendered totally barren and unfruitful, and utterly incapable of being inhabited. And this is the fact concerning both countries. (ACC)

**50:41–43** Repeated almost verbatim from 6:22–24 (see notes there). The earlier oracle, referring to Jerusalem, is here applied to Babylon. (CSB)

**50:44–46** Repeated almost verbatim from 49:19–21 (see notes there). The oracle against Edom is here applied to Babylon. (CSB)

When that cry, "Babylon is taken," goes forth, the earth trembles, **and the cry is heard among the nations.** Cp. chap. 49, 19-21. In the history of nations, as well as in that of individual people, it is true that God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. (Kretzmann)