**Jeremiah 51 (Lesson 27a)**

**I. Text Of Chapter 51 – Judgment On Babylon Is Just (8 min. to read)**

*A. The Medes: God’s Newest Instrument (51:1-14)*

 1. A destroying wind and expert archer were coming to take Babylon.

 2. *Leb-kamai* and *Sheshak (cf. v. 41; 25:26)* are code for Babylon/Chaldea using the Hebrew cabalistic fromula known as Atbash.

 3. vv. 11-14 – the Medes (sp. Cyrus) is the destroyer (cf. Is. 45:1-5)

 *B. God Versus Idols (51:15-24; vv. 15-19 repeated from 10:12-16)*

 1. *“The magnificence of the Lord’s power, wisdom, and understanding in comparison to the nothingness of idols is itself overwhelming.”* (Harkrider, 123)

 2. *“God used Assyria as the ‘rod of His anger’ (cf. Isa. 10:5,15), and He used Babylon as the ‘hammer’ (cf. 50:23; 25:8-9), so now He will use the Medes as His ‘battle ax’ (cf. 50:41-44; 51:1,11,28).”* (Harkrider, 123)

*C. Doom for Babylon (51:25-58) – the monster of God’s people will be devoured!*

 1. Although Babylon had been the volcano to other nations & the battle ax of God, they will now be crushed & burned by God’s new battle ax.

 2. Several people groups of ancient Armenia will join the Medes & Persians including: Ararat, Minn, and Ashkenaz.

 3. Despite humiliation & desecration of the people, God promises vengeance on their enemies, encouraging them to flee the destruction of their destroyers. Babylon’s false gods will be humiliated and God’s people will be vindicated. Babylon will become a heap of ruins. The king will have runners from all directions crying out of the entire city falling.

 4. Nothing and no one will deliver Babylon. The enemy will come as a wave, wind, and fire. Babylon will drink the cup of God’s wrath & anyone who tries to help Babylon will only be building for fire (Hab. 2:13).

*D. Jeremiah’s Task for Seraiah (51:59-64) – intro for addition of 52 in 51:64f*

 1. Jeremiah commanded that the quartermaster Seraiah deliver a punitive verdict on Babylon aloud during trip w/ Zedekiah in 4th year of reign.

 2. Those who may have heard this message include: exiles (encouragement & a warning to flee Babylon at the proper time), citizens/royalty of Babylon (a rebuke of their activities), and the royal court traveling with Zedekiah (to emphasize the coming condemnation of Babylon after they destroy Jerusalem).

 3. Upon completion, he was to tie a stone around it & cast into Euphrates.

**II. Thought Questions For Chapter 51**

A. What empire would destroy Babylon? Who would help?

B. What chapters of Daniel provide insight into this transition of power?

C. What previous message of judgment from Jeremiah involved the Euphrates?

D. At what point should we “abandon Babylon” and save ourselves?

**III. Applications For Chapter 51**

A. God’s foreknowledge and appointment of Cyrus is an incredible string of fulfilled prophecies that aid the Christian historical apologetic.

B. God doesn’t force people to obey Him; He may hand them over to their own path.

C. Even though we may do good things and be involved in God’s work, that does not necessitate that we will not be affected by evil. In fact, quite the opposite is often true. Even so, comforts are afforded Christians that enable & empower.

**Jeremiah 52 (Lesson 27b)**

**I. Text Of Chapter 52 – Epilogue: Jerusalem Falls (4 min. to read)**

*A. Fate Of Zedekiah (52:1-11; cf. Jer. 39; 2Kgs. 24:18-25:30 almost word for word)*

 1. No reason is given for this addition, esp. in light of ch. 39. Probably to serve to highlight the fulfillment of Jeremiah’s most common prophecy: *“The message of Jeremiah, so long derided by his compatriots, has been translated almost coincidentally into history. God has finally brought the promised punishment upon His apostate and idolatrous people, and the chastening discipline of exile has begun. Despite this dreadful calamity there lingers the hope that God will restore His people, bringing a faithful remnant back to repopulate the homeland.”* (Harrison, *TOTC*, 192)

 2. Nebuchadnezzar had appointed Zedekiah (cf. 2Kgs. 24:17-20). Zedekiah’s vacillation powerfully illustrated in Ezekiel 17 imagery.

 3. Siege lasted 18 months & famine was severe (Lam. 2:20-22; 4). Zedekiah and officers attempt escape by night (cf. Ezek. 12:12). Quickly captured in Jericho plains. Officers & sons executed, blinded.

 *B. Jerusalem & Temple Destroyed (52:12-23)*

 1. Occurs a month later when Nebuzaradan (“chief butcher”) enters city and burns royal houses & temple & tears walls down. Special treatment of Jeremiah not detailed here.

 2. Captives prepared to go to Babylon; poorest will remain.

 3. Temple vessels broken apart and brought back to Babylon. Some vessels had already been taken (cf. 27:16-22; 28:1-16; 2Kg. 24:10-16; Dan. 5).

*C. Chief Officers Arrested & Killed (52:24-30)*

 1. Seraiah was grandson of Hilkiah who served under Josiah & also grandfather of Joshua (1Chron. 6:13-15; Ezra 3:2) & also an ancestor of Ezra (Ezra 7:1). For Zephaniah, cf. Jer. 21:1; 29:24-32; 37:3. These and other rulers were executed at Riblah (200 miles N).

 2. Gedaliah was appointed at this time (cf. 2Kgs. 25:22-26; Jer. 40:7-43:7).

 3. The deportations here are similar & different to those detailed in 2Kgs. 24- 25 & 2Chron. 35-36. Usually, alternative numbering & dating methods observed. Seems like a total of 5 major exiles to Babylon (see PPT).

*D. Jehoiachin’s Favor (52:31-34; cf. 2Kgs. 25:27-30)*

 1.Evil-Merodach’s freeing and exaltation of Jehoiachin happened 37 years after he was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar.

 2. Babylonian tablets have been found detailing these rations.

 3. Jehoiachin’s exaltation would not undo his condemnation (cf. 22:30). Even so, this esteemed treatment is reflective of the fact that God had not forgotten His covenant w/ David (cf. 23:5; 33:14-26; 2Sa. 7:11-16).

**II. Thought Questions For Chapter 52**

A. What happens to Zedekiah? Compare his end to other Judean kings at this time.

B. Where in 2 Kings does Jeremiah/the chronicler borrow from for this chapter?

C. What archaeological find corroborates the rations and eminence of Jehoiachin?

**III. Applications For Chapter 52**

A. Our peers, family, and friends can be HUGELY impacted by our choices.

B. You reap what you sow (Gal. 6). The way of the transgressor is hard (Prov. 13:15).

C. God can do incredible things with you and for you in the heart of difficulty.