

Jeremiah 51
God Will Never Abandon You
J.D. Farag

KAPONO: Would you join me in a word of prayer?

Lord, what a time that we can gather here every Thursday, Lord. Look to Your word for guidance, Lord. So would You please help us to understand what it is that You have for us this evening, Lord?

We have such a way with when we come, Lord, we have such a way of looking at other people. And seeing the message as if it's speaking to somebody else, Lord. We have such a way of picking out the things that we want to pick out, Lord. But would You have Your way this evening?

May we be receptive, Lord, ready, with our eyes open, our ears ready to hear what it is that You have for us, Lord. So bless this time, bless the teaching in the book of Jeremiah, Lord. Thank You. And we ask this in a mighty name, the only name of Jesus, we say, amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. All right, good evening!

Hey, before you're seated, if you haven't already, you might want to get the elements for communion at the conclusion of our Bible study tonight. And while you're doing that, I want to remind you that this upcoming Tuesday, actually the 7th of February.

Can you believe it's February already? Okay, well, I can't. It's already February. Next time I ask that I'll be asking you can you believe it's March already? And then April and then May and then the rapture hopefully by that time. Yeah. Oh, there you go. That worked. All right.

So 7:00 p.m. here in the sanctuary is our prayer meeting, really encourage you to come out and join with us. Always look forward to our prayer meetings and what God does in and through our prayer meetings.

So *Chapter 51* tonight, also for those of you online, welcome. And also, you might want to have the elements ready if you plan to partake with us at the conclusion of the Bible study tonight.

So you realize, of course, that there's only one more chapter after tonight in Jeremiah. We did it, man! Well, in a week, we did it, man! So next week, Lord willing, we'll finish the Book of Jeremiah.

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Now do you also know that after the Book of Jeremiah is a very interesting book called Lamentations? That's what I thought. Okay. Well, we'll talk about that more next week maybe or the week after, so...

No, actually, wow, what a book! So I know I say about every book, but...

All right, let's pray. That was a really good prayer, by the way, Kaponu. Thank you for that.

I was just thinking about that ironically enough. You know how that when you're sitting under the teaching of God's word, there's this proclivity, this propensity within all of us to say, man, so-and-so needs to hear this.

Really? No, you need to hear this.

So great prayer. Thank you for that conviction, Kaponu. So let's pray. I'm not going to pray that, by the way, but let's pray and ask God's blessing on our Bible study.

Father, thank You so much. Oh, Lord, we are just so grateful to You for Your Word and this amazing Book of Jeremiah. It's been really quite a journey through this book. And God, You've just revealed Yourself in new ways and fresh ways along the way.

And Lord, here we are tonight, *Chapter 51*, really a continuation of last week in Chapter 50. But Lord, there's just so much here, and tonight, Lord, we're not only looking forward to what You have for us in Your Word, but we're so looking forward to the communion celebration, that time where we can just in remembrance of You, celebrate what You did for us.

So Lord, thank You're in advance for what You're going to do in our time together tonight. Bless it, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen and amen.

All right. So again, last week, Chapter 50, a continuation this week in *Chapter 51*. It's a prophecy against Babylon.

But so, too, is it a fulfillment of God's promise to Israel, namely that of Israel never being forsaken by God, despite their chastisement due to their land being filled with sin against God.

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I think somebody needs to hear this word tonight. That no matter how bad you are or how bad you've been it cannot, will not, will never change how good God always is. God loves you. He will never forsake you. He's a merciful God, He's a restoring God, He's a loving God. He's a fulfilling God, a forgiving God. Well, a fulfilling God too, but a forgiving God. And that's going to come leaping off the pages of this chapter tonight.

And as we go through this and I got to say, it's an intense chapter. It's an ominous chapter, for lack of a better word. And those of you that read ahead to stay ahead know what's ahead.

But what I'm hoping is going to happen tonight is that all of us, myself included, by the way, will see God's mercy on His people. Now it's going to get graphic. It's a very poetic and prophetic passage, but it's so powerful, and there's so much here.

And so by the grace of God and the help of the Holy Spirit, we're going to glean all of the riches and mine all the riches from the text that we have before us tonight.

So you're ready? Let's jump in.

Verse 1, "Thus says the Lord: "Behold, I will raise up against Babylon, against those who dwell in Leb Kamai..." *[No relationship to Kamehameha]*

Okay. Actually, Leb Kamai is a poetic reference to Babylon, meaning "the midst of those who rise up against Me." And that's what Babylon did.

And so the Lord now is saying, **"Behold, I will rise up against Babylon and against those who dwell in the Leb Kamai, a destroying wind. And I will send winnowers to Babylon..."**

The imagery is just poignant, and I think we would do well to use our God-given imagination, because when you paint a picture, it is so much more powerful visually. And we're going to see that, certainly at the end of the chapter.

"I will send [Verse 2] winnowers to Babylon who shall winnow her and empty her land. For in the day of doom they shall be against her all around. Against her let the archer bend his bow and lift himself up against her in his armor. Do not spare her young men. Utterly destroy all her army.

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Thus [Verse 4] the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and those thrust through in her streets. [And verse 5 tells us why] For Israel is not forsaken, nor Judah, by his God, the Lord of hosts, though [Listen] their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.”

Stop right there. That's it. That's the whole point. This judgment on Babylon, this rising up against Babylon, who has risen up against the Lord. And this is God's judgment on them as evidence to them that He does not forsake His people no matter what.

Yeah, but their land has been filled with sin and they filled it up to overflowing. You would think that they would think that God had forsaken them.

Who's they?

The Babylonians, for sure.

Oh, no! God's through with His people. We can do with them as we please, which is — that's going to come up here in a moment.

And even Judah doubtless believed God's through with us. We have sinned so greatly against God. And truly, He has forsaken us because of our sin.

No, He's not forsaken you. He's forgiven you.

Now why is this so important?

Because is this not what the enemy does? The enemy is right there a thousand times a day in thousands of ways rubbing our face in *verse 5*, the last part. Your land was filled with sin against the Holy One, against the Lord.

You know, I think you blew it this time. This was the last time. God's not going to forgive you this time. God's through with you now. This is it. He's forsaken you.

No, He will never leave me, nor forsake me. But the enemy does not want me to know that. And we need to be reminded of that.

Because see, there's this condemnation. We're going to actually be, in a very fascinating way from Scripture, be talking about this both in the Update on Sunday and then also the 2 *Peter* teaching, which sort of go together. **“But there is therefore [Romans 8:1] now no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus.”**

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You know, *Roman 6:14*, a very misunderstood verse that can change your life. I mean, this is not just a game-changer. This is a life-changer because Paul says that **“sin shall no longer have dominion over you.”**

Wait, what? You mean I'll no longer be mastered by sin? Wait a minute, I still sin.

Yeah. I mean, you'll never be sinless. You'll sin less.

But I mean, sin is still ever-present and pronounced in my life. And even John said as much that if you say that you're without sin, you're a liar. And he said it just like that, too, by the way.

You know we, in these tents, this flesh, we will always have sin because we're fallen. So how is it possible that sin will no longer have dominion over you? Does that mean the temptation of sin?

It cannot. Because Jesus was tempted but did not sin. And it is not a sin to be tempted. James settles that. It's a sin when you give in and acquiesce to the enticement of sin, the temptation.

But what Paul is saying there is it's not that it's the temptation to sin that no longer masters you or has dominion over you. It's the condemnation of sin. You're no longer under that condemnation. The condemnation of sin will no longer have dominion over you and master you and continue to crush you under the weight of your sin because your life has been filled with sin against God.

I mean, I imagine the picture, again, the imagery of my life, I mean, full to the brim with sin. And yet God is not going to forsake me. No, that's not who He is. That's not how He is.

Now, this is going to be germane to our understanding of this very graphic and poetic and intense and ominous chapter.

Verse 6, “Flee from the midst of Babylon, and every one save his life! Do not be cut off in her iniquity, for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance. He shall recompense her.”

[Compense, compensate, repay]

Well, again, herein lies the point of this prophecy, such that despite Israel filling their land and their lives with sin, God would never abandon them, never forsake them. And this is

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going to be a testimony not only to Judah as God's people, but Babylon, whom God is judging.

Verse 7, "Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord's hand that made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine. Therefore, the nations are deranged. Babylon [Verse 8] has suddenly fallen and been destroyed. Wail for her! Take balm for her pain. Perhaps she may be healed."

Do you sense a sanctified sarcasm in that? You should because that's what it is.

Verse 9, "We would have healed Babylon [Is the response] but she's not healed. Forsake her [You're not going to forsake us] Forsake her, and let us go, everyone to his own country. For her judgment reaches to heaven and is lifted up to the skies."

Verse 10, [Watch this] "The Lord has revealed our righteousness. Come and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God."

There's a twofold dynamic here if I could say it like that. You've got the judgment of Babylon that is in concert with the restoring of Judah. So God is not going to forsake His people, but He's going to judge Babylon. It's kind of a two-for-one. That's kind of a crass way to illustrate it, but God's doing both at the same time, and one is reinforcing the other.

I want to talk more about this in a moment.

Verse 11, "Make the arrows bright! Gather the shields! The Lord has raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes."

This is the Medo Persian Empire. We know it today as modern-day Iran. Back in the early 1900s in the last century, it was named Persia. The name was changed to Iran. In 1979 it was changed to the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is ancient Persia, and the Medes, this area would have been a region in what's known as modern-day Iran.

"For his plan is against Babylon to destroy it because it is [And here it is again] the vengeance of the Lord. The vengeance for His temple. Set up the standard on the walls of Babylon. Make the guard strong. Set up the watchmen. Prepare the ambushes. For the Lord has both devised and done what He spoke against the inhabitants of Babylon."

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Another thing that's coming out of this is the specificity, the details, which is going to come into play as well here shortly.

O [Verse 13] you who dwell by many waters, [Speaking of the Euphrates and its tributaries] abundant in treasures, your end has come, the measure of your covetousness.

[Covetousness, greed, harshness, evil]

Verse 14, "The Lord of Hosts has sworn by Himself."

He's God. Who else is He going to swear to? He can't say "I swear to God" because He is God. So that's what He's saying here: I swear. I swear, well, to Me; I swear to Me, Myself.

"Surely I will fill you with men, as with locusts, [Again, the imagery just blanketing and consuming everything in its path] and they shall lift up a shout against you.

He has made the earth by His power. He has established the world by His wisdom and stretched out the heaven by His understanding. [That's actually a Proverb.]

[Verse 16] When He utters His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens. "He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth. He makes the lightnings for the rain. He brings the wind out of His treasuries."

I love it when God does this. Kind of like bragging on Himself. I created everything. I just speak and it comes into existence. I just utter My voice. And oh, that lightning, that rain, that thunder? I did that. What do you think? I did that, yeah. Oh, from the ends of the earth, the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is? I did that. Okay, God, so where are You going with this?

Verse 17, "Everyone is dull-hearted, without knowledge. Every metalsmith is put to shame by the carved image. For his molded image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are futile, a work of errors. In the time of their punishment they shall perish."

Translated: What did your God do? Oh, I'm sorry, that's... Excuse me...Yeah. Your god can't do anything because it's a false god.

And by the way, if I'm not mistaken, I think there's somewhere we read last week where they had to take care of their gods. Well, my God takes care of me. You're in deep kimchi if you have to take care of your god.

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I am God. And I did all of this. And I'm sure you're very embarrassed right now because you put your god up to Me as God, and how's that working out for you? That's what He's saying here.

Verse 19, "The Portion of Jacob is not like them, for He is the Maker of all things. And Israel is the tribe of His inheritance. The Lord of hosts is His name. You, [Verse 20 - this is interesting] are my battle-ax and weapons of war."

Who's He talking to?

Oh, the instrument in God's hand to bring judgment and destruction on Babylon. And listen to what He's going to have them do as the battle-ax and weapons of war in His hand against Babylon.

"For with you, I will break the nation in pieces."

By the way, spoiler alert: the "For with you" - there's 10 of them. That was just one; you got nine to go. Ready? Okay.

"With you, I will destroy kingdoms. With you I will break in pieces the horse and its rider. With you I will break in pieces the chariot and its rider.

With you also [Verse 22] I will break in pieces man and woman. With you I will break in pieces old and young. With you I will break in pieces the young man and the maiden.

With you also [Verse 23] I will break in pieces the shepherd and his flock. With you I will break in pieces the farmer and his yoke of oxen. And with you I will break in pieces governors and rulers."

Well, that's pretty thorough. Did we miss anyone? I don't think we did. Wow!

"And [Verse 24] I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all the evil they have done in Zion in your sight," says the Lord.

Okay, we got a problem here because didn't God sort of license Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, to be the instrument in His hands to mete out this chastisement and discipline of His children by having them taken captive into Babylon in the first place?

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And now, all of a sudden, now I'm going to use the Medo Persians as an ax, hammer in My hand to basically crush you into pieces?

Why?

Oh, because of what you did to My people. You took it too far. You went beyond. You must have misunderstood Me. Because I only gave them into your hands to discipline them. But you took way too much pleasure in doing it. You enjoyed it way too much, and you took it way too far.

And you forgot one thing. Those are My children. This is My inheritance. These are My people. I have not forsaken them.

Oh, yeah, they've sinned. And now they're going to suffer the consequences and learn the lesson. But you seem to think that I'm done with them, and you can do whatever you want with them. And for that, I'm going to repay you for all the evil you've done to them.

Again, this is that twofold dynamic. Just kind of stay with me and be patient with me. I'll try to explain this as easily as I can.

We have a question here of why the strength and the length of this chapter, I mean, 64 verses, and by the way, this is before chapter breaks. In the original manuscripts and scrolls, this was just a contiguous narrative and prophecy. There were no chapter and verses.

Thankfully there are. Could you imagine? Turn to where we left off in Jeremiah. No. *Chapter 51*. Oh, I know where to go in verse...this.

So there were no chapter breaks; this was a contiguous prophecy. So you take 64 verses in what we know as *Chapter 51*, and you put it with I think it was 54 verses in Chapter 50. And that's kind of long, the strength and the length of it.

Why?

Here's why. I mean because think about it like this. Couldn't God have just maybe, you know, a few verses, one chapter, just, I'm going to crush Babylon. So have a nice afternoon. And I'm going to restore Israel because I will never forsake My people.

And then, you know, *Chapter 52*.

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Why two very long and very strong chapters?

Because again, it's reinforcing God's promise to God's people because of the evil of the Babylonians against His people.

It's again, a twofold dynamic where He's showing His people, I haven't forsaken you. Watch what I'm going to do to the Babylonians.

You are?

Yeah.

Thank You, God. Thank You, God.

And the Babylonians are like, whoa, I thought You were through with these people. That's how we were treating them.

I know. Big mistake, huh? Oh, it's not going to end well for you, basically.

But there's two things going on here. It's the restoration of God's people whom He's not forsaken despite their sin. And it's the judgment against the people who have done this evil to His people.

Verse 25, "Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, who destroys all the earth," says the Lord. "And I will stretch out My hand against you, roll you down from the rocks, and make you a burnt mountain. They shall not take from you a stone for a corner, nor a stone for a foundation, but you shall be desolate forever," says the Lord.

Set up a banner in the land, [Verse 27] blow the trumpet among the nations! Prepare the nations against her, call the kingdoms together against her: Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz.

[These were all, again, regions in what we know as modern-day Iran]

Appoint a general against her. Cause the horses to come up like the bristling locusts. Prepare against her the nations, with the kings of the Medes, its governors and all its rulers, all the land of his dominion.

And [Verse 29] the land will tremble and sorrow. For every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon to make the land of Babylon a desolation without inhabitant.

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The mighty men [Verse 30] of Babylon have ceased fighting. They have remained in their strongholds. Their might has failed; they became like women. They have burned her dwelling places; the bars of her gate are broken.”

It's really hard to grasp the enormity of this. You have to understand that these walls were, I mean, it was inconceivable that they would ever come down. The Babylonians themselves fancied themselves as being invincible.

And now God says, well, I don't think you're invincible because when I'm against you, you're done. And I'm against you. So you're done.

And when they come to that realization, their hearts fail them for fear. These are mighty men, warriors.

And they become like — this is — I hope you don't see this — well, I'm just quoting the verse.

They become like women.

I didn't — that was — I shouldn't emphasize that.

The point is, is that you're no longer — I'm going to quit right there because that is unredeemable. There is no way I'm crawling out of that puka I dug for myself.

Okay, you got the point, right? Just say you did. Now, it's important to understand, and this is, again, just a reminder that this is a dual prophecy.

What do you mean?

Well, it's a prophecy concerning Babylon in Jeremiah's day, but because of the aforementioned specificity, this has not yet been fulfilled, and as such, will yet future be fulfilled in the 7-year tribulation.

And there's another two chapters in Revelation, Revelation Chapter 17 and Chapter 18. I tell you; Babylon rises to the level of needing two chapters. Two times: Jeremiah and Revelation. There's other places, obviously, but Babylon has fallen, and we're going to see a lot of the same verbiage and, again, imagery here from both Jeremiah and Revelation.

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Now, *verse 31*. **“One runner will run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken on all sides. [What, he didn't know?]**

Yeah, Babylon was huge, one of the Seven Wonders of the World for its Hanging Gardens, I mean, breathtaking, spectacular. And remember, the walls were so high and so wide and impenetrable, or so they thought, that they actually had chariot races on top of the wall. That's how thick it was.

And that's coming down?

Yeah.

How?

Because God said so.

Oh, okay.

But let's get back to this. So what's up with this runner running to meet another to take a message? Well, this is before email. Just work with me, okay?

So the city is now being taken, but they don't know yet. Because as we're going to see in a moment, it's mentioned twice, actually, they're partying, they're drunk. They're having this huge feast. And they're in another part of the city of Babylon.

And the guys — what they would do, they would take messages and give them to these runners, these fast runners, to get the message to the king, to bring them news about what was happening on the battlefield.

And so this is the runners now taking the message to Belshazzar, who's the king of Babylon at the time, going, dude, well, not dude, but we're being taken. And you know, Belshazzar is like (drunk talking) what did you say? What? What are you doing here?

Wait, aren't you one of the runners that brings — is this too much? I'm just trying to get you into the text. This is what happened exactly as God said it would happen with specificity.

That's the thing about prophecy. It's 100%, not 99.999999999. In fact, that's the litmus test by which you know that it's of God or not.

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So somebody has a prophecy. I make a prediction, and then you know how they twist it into a prophetic pretzel to make it fit, you know, because they're very vague?

There's going to be a storm.

Really? Wow! Oh, amazing. Wow!

And then there's a storm.

See, I told you.

No.

But how about these false prophets? They predict, they prophesy, and then it comes to pass with 99.98%. You're a false prophet.

You know what they would do in the Old Testament to false prophets? It's known as a deterrent. They would kill them, stone them to death. Yeah, it kind of made you think twice before you started prophesying. If it wasn't the Lord, and it did not come to pass, which is how you knew it was the Lord if it came to pass with 100% accuracy.

By the way, just parenthetically, no other religious text has prophecy. Think about that. The Koran? No prophecy.

Why?

Because Muhammad is a false prophet and Allah a false God. And only the true and living God can know the end from the beginning and prophesy with 100%. I'm not upset. Maybe I am.

But this is God with 100% accuracy and specificity saying this is a prophecy that's going to happen, By the way, He even named Cyrus, which is why I mean, people just — their minds are blown, and they can't wrap their mind around it.

So they think, oh, there's two Isaiahs that you know, one was after. There's no way. No way.

Way. Way.

Well, no, there had to be.

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Well, then that can't be either because Jesus quoted Isaiah, singular. So there's not two Isaiahs. Nice try, though. No.

100% accuracy down to *[I haven't used this one for a while, so I'm going to use it]* the gnat's eyebrow, and gnats have eyebrows, okay? That's how specific it is. So there's no mistaking it. There's no mistaking.

So when it comes to pass with that accuracy, based on the prophecy specificity, there's no question mark. It's not like well...

No, I mean, this is pretty specific. I mean, this is very exacting. These runners are going to run on all sides, bringing a message to the king of Babylon to tell him the city is taken on all sides. And it exactly happened exactly that way.

Did I say “exactly”? Okay.

Verse 32, “The passages are blocked, the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are terrified. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor when it is time to thresh her. Yet a little while and the time of her harvest will come.” *[They're getting crushed]*

“Nebuchadnezzar [Verse 34] the king of Babylon has devoured me.”

Now, we turned kind of an interesting corner here and there's a personification of Judah as a whole. Broadly speaking, this is what they did to us, Father, as Your children. Oh, no, that's not okay. I will repay.

“Nebuchadnezzar [Verse 34] the king of Babylon has devoured me; he has crushed me; he has made me an empty vessel; he has swallowed me up like a monster; he has filled his stomach with my delicacies; he has spit me out.

Let the violence done to me [Verse 35] and my flesh be upon Babylon,” the inhabitant of Zion will say. [That's who's saying that] “And my blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea!”

Jerusalem will say. Wow! I wonder what God's going to say.

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Oh, *verse 36*, there it is. **“Therefore thus says the Lord: Behold, I will plead your case and take vengeance for you. I will dry up her sea and make her springs dry.”**

I got this. It's kind of a legal feel to this. I'll not only take your case because you have a case, I'll plead your case, and I'll win your case, and I will mete out just justice and vengeance, says the Lord.

And this, again, is a very important principle, and we know it well. We may not like it, but “Vengeance belongs to the Lord.”

Let the Lord mete out a righteous and just vengeance. Because if we take vengeance and revenge into our own hands, we will make it infinitely worse. And it's not just. God says no, I am just. I will mete out this vengeance. Vengeance belongs to the Lord.

And at the end of the day, we want the Lord being the one to mete out and take vengeance on our enemies.

Verse 37, **“Babylon shall become a heap, a dwelling place for jackals, an astonishment, and a hissing, without an inhabitant.**

They [*Verse 38*] shall roar together like lions. They shall growl like lions' whelps. In their excitement I will prepare their feasts. I will make them drunk, that they may rejoice and sleep a perpetual sleep and not awake,” says the Lord.

[They'll go to sleep because the city was taken at night]

[And they will not wake up because they'll be killed in their sleep]

I will bring them down [*Verse 40*] like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with male goats. “Oh, how Sheshach [*Its kind of an a.k.a, a nickname for Babylon*] “Oh, how Sheshach is taken! Oh, how the praise of the whole earth is seized! How Babylon has become desolate among the nations!

The sea [*Verse 42*] has come up over Babylon. [*This is figurative*] She is covered with the multitude of its waves. Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land where no one dwells, through which no son of man passes.

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I will punish Bel [That was one of their gods] in Babylon, and I will bring out of his mouth [This is a little graphic] what he has swallowed."

I'm going to make you — I don't know why I do that — I get myself — I'm going to make you regurgitate what you tried to consume.

"And the nations shall not stream to him anymore. Yes, the wall of Babylon shall fall. My people, go out of the midst of her! And let everyone deliver himself from the fierce anger of the Lord."

There's another verse that comports with Revelation. "Come out of her." "Come out of her, My people." Get out of there before I completely crush and devastate this place.

And [Verse 46] lest your heart faint, and you fear for the rumor that will be heard in the land (A rumor will come one year, and after that, in another year a rumor will come, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler)"

This, again, very specific, and it came to pass exactly. There are so many rumors about Babylon and the king of Babylon.

Therefore behold [Verse 47], the days are coming that I will bring judgment on the carved images of Babylon. Her whole land shall be ashamed, and all her slain shall fall in her midst."

Man, I would love to see that! We're talking about those idols. Remember now, this Babylon was idolatry, capital of the world.

And God, because Judah was steeped in idolatry, God's like, well, you like idols, do you? You are given over to idolatry, are you? Well, I'm going to send you to the idolatry mecca of the world. And you will get your fill of idolatry to where you'll want nothing more to do with idolatry ever again.

Verse 47, "Therefore."

Oh, we already — I love it so much I want to do it again.

"Her whole land shall be ashamed, and all her slain shall fall in her midst." The [Verse 48] the heavens and the earth and all that is in them shall sing joyously over Babylon."

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They're gonna — this is my story, and I'm sticking with it. If it sounds like I'm enjoying this too much, verse 48 is my reason. Oh, there's a rejoicing joyously over Babylon. Babylon is getting what Babylon deserves.

“For the plunderers shall come to her from the north,” says the Lord. [And here's why] As Babylon [Verse 49] has caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon the slain of all the earth shall fall.”

“God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.”

And you come against God's people, you come against God. This is not between you and them. This is between you and Me. What you've done against them You've done against Me. You've slain them. I will slay you.

“For you [Verse 50] who have escaped the sword, get away! Do not stand still! Remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come to your mind.” [Because you're going back there]

Now, verse 51 is — we need to spend the needed time on this because it's really going to be — I mean, I love it when only God can do this. Our communion celebrations are in concert with chapters like this and passages like this. Listen to this from Judah.

“We are ashamed because we have heard reproach. Shame has covered our faces, for strangers have come into the sanctuaries of the Lord's house.”

This is known as sanctified shame. This is the godly sorrow that Paul talks about to the Corinthians that leads to a genuine repentance. There's genuine repentance here.

Why?

Because there's godly sorrow here. They have repented of their idolatry. They're ashamed of their sin. Shame has covered their faces. There's such a thing as a healthy shame. And then there's an unhealthy shame. There's a godly shame and an ungodly shame.

And I'll explain to you the litmus test to know the difference. A godly sorrow, a sanctified shame always brings conviction and brings you closer to the Lord, back to the Lord. Whereas conversely, an unhealthy shame always leads to condemnation, which drives you further away from the Lord.

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And this is why it is that it's so important to understand and not be ignorant of the devil's strategies because his number one strategy in the life of a believer is to build this infrastructure of guilt and condemnation in our lives.

Because he knows if he can do that, he can distance us from God. And as long as he can get away with that and keep us crushed under that condemnation, we're not coming to the Lord.

Whereas the Holy Spirit — so let me — I need to take it a little bit further. Just stay with me and bear with me.

Condemnation says this: Wow! I don't know, man. That was pretty bad. Shame on you. You're a disgrace. You're a disappointment. You know, if I were you, I would not go to church this week. Sure would not show up at the mid-week Bible study Thursday night.

So good, good to see you here tonight. You know what? I don't know. I would kind of lay low. I don't know. I don't think you should pray right now because, like, God's going to listen to you after what you did? And you know, as far as reading your Bible, come on. You hypocrite. Really? You call yourself a Christian? That's condemnation.

Here's conviction by contrast. Conviction is: You're forgiven. If you'll just but confess your sins [1 John 1:9] God is faithful. He will forgive you and not just forgive you, which is instantaneous, by the way.

There's not like a waiting period where, man, you better let God cool down on this one. He's going to need a few days on this one.

No, it's instant. You're forgiven. And not only forgiven instantly, but He will cleanse you of all unrighteousness, **“Though your sins be as scarlet. He'll make them white as snow.” “He will remove them as far as the East is from the West and remember them no more.”**

Stop reminding Him. He forgot. That's conviction.

Because you see what's happened here? Condemnation has driven me further away from the Lord. And conviction has drawn me closer to the Lord. I can't wait to get to the cross.

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See, Satan doesn't want me to go to the cross because he knows as soon as I get to the cross, that infrastructure of condemnation is completely dismantled and destroyed. And he can't get away with it. That's Romans 6:14.

No longer does the condemnation of sin have dominion over you. You're free from that. You're forgiven for that. Just get to the cross.

And never imagine — here's another thing Satan does. I know this all too — I could write the next chapter on this one. Here's another one. This one's interesting. I can't believe I go for it and I buy it.

It's kind of like, so JD, if you go and ask for forgiveness for that and you go to the cross, I don't know. The jury's out. I think you probably should expect the other shoe to drop.

No, this is for real. And I would venture to say, you know, exactly what I'm talking about, and what this sounds like and looks like in your life because instead of the other shoe dropping, because you're just waiting.

This is law, by the way. You mess up, you blow it, and you're like, okay, God's going to get me now. And you're just waiting in fear. God's going to — man, I'm going to — I'm going to get it, man. And then it never happens.

And then all of a sudden, instead of the other shoe dropping, I get a new pair of shoes. That's the grace of God. "Where did sin abound, there did grace much more abound."

What kind of God is this? Wait, God, You... You mean, I don't have to pay for that?

No. Jesus paid for that already. It's already paid for. Why are you trying to pay for it again? It's already been paid for.

You mean I don't have to — don't You like to have to punish me?

Oh, there's consequences, certainly. Sin is its own reward. But I love you so much that I can't stand to see you suffer unnecessarily the consequences of your sin. I've forgiven you for it. I'm not going to — there's no other shoe to drop on this. No, I just have grace for you.

Yeah, but I'm so ashamed. Lord, I feel so dirty.

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No, I'm going to clean you. I'm going to make you white as snow. You're going to be justified.

I love that we're justified. You know why? Because it's — means you're — it's just if I never sinned, justified. It's one of those words that means what it says and says what it means. It's like atonement — “at one” ment.

I'm now not separated from God. I'm reconciled, at one, atonement. I'm justified. It's just if I'd never sinned. He's justified it. He's reconciled it. He's settled the account. He's paid the sin debt. There's no debt to pay. There's no shoe to drop. It's grace. And if that sanctified shame drives you to the cross for grace, that's good.

But don't let the enemy cover you with shame to distance you from the place, the cross where that was paid for in the blood of Jesus Christ. Well, I should have saved that for communion.

Verse 52. We're almost there. Another hour or so we'll be done.

“Therefore behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “That I will bring judgment on her carved images, and throughout all her land the wounded shall groan.

Though Babylon [Verse 53] were to mount up to heaven, and though she were to fortify the height of her strength, yet from Me plunderers would come to her,” says the Lord.

The sound of a cry comes from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans because the Lord is plundering Babylon and silencing her loud voice, though her waves roar like great waters, and the noise of their voice is uttered, because the plunderer comes against her, against Babylon, [You get the impression that the plunder is coming?] and her mighty men are taken. Every one of their bows is broken for the Lord is the God of recompense, He will surely repay.

“And I will make drunk her princes and wise men, her governors, her deputies, and her mighty men. And they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not awake,” says the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts.

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Thus says the Lord of hosts: “The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire. The people will labor in vain, and the nations, because of the fire. And they shall be weary.”

Daniel Chapter 5, with every detail, specific detail, it records the exact details of the fulfillment of this prophecy that we've just read now for the second time in this chapter. They're going to be drunk.

God makes them drunk. I guess God is going to throw them a party and then take the city. And they won't know it, so they got to send the messengers and let them know, hey, we're — by the way, it's game-over. You've been found wanting, the handwriting on the wall.

And oh, by the way, I noticed that you're getting drunk out of the vessels that came from the temple in Jerusalem. You probably shouldn't have done that. Because those are sanctified and holy vessels used in the service of the temple in Jerusalem that you destroyed and took. And that's not okay. And I guess you're going to have to give them back now.

And oh, by the way, I hope you enjoyed the party. It'll be your last one.

Am I taking this too far? Maybe I am. I've gotta be careful here.

Daniel 5. Read it. I encourage you before you go to bed. No, don't do it before you go to bed. Wait till the morning.

But it happened exactly this way. They were so drunk, and these parties that they had they lasted for days. Okay.

Verse 59. I feel a little bit better now. **“The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And Seraiah was the quartermaster.**

So [Verse 60] Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that would come upon Babylon, all these words that are written against Babylon.”

No less than 70 years prior this chapter that we're reading was written, and it was given by Jeremiah to Seraiah, and he took it to Babylon, about Babylon. They had this before we got it. Well, I guess they should. It's about them.

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“And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, [Verse 61] “When you arrive in Babylon and see it, and read all these words, then you shall say, ‘O Lord, You have spoken against this place to cut it off, so that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but it shall be desolate forever.”

Wow! You know what this means, right? They had this prophecy 70 years prior to, actually more, not much, prior to the fulfillment of this prophecy.

Can you imagine? You're a Jew in captivity in Babylon. And Seraiah says, hey, by the way, you guys, remember this? And he reads this whole thing.

You go, oh, yeah, whoa! I remember when Jeremiah was prophesying this, and a bunch of guys wanted to kill him for it, and they were like, you know, stop, you doom-and-gloom prophecy guy. Every week you're killing us. (Chuckling)

And we want to listen to the false prophets that tell us all these smooth things and just lie to us. And we would love to have it so.

And tell us no, you're not going to be taken captive into Babylon. Nah, don't listen to Jeremiah, and wait, maybe we should have listened to Jeremiah. And it happened exactly that way.

And not just Judah. Watch this: Babylon, the Chaldeans.

They're like, wait a minute. Could you go back and read that part again? Because I think I'm in that because I'm one of the watchmen on the wall. And I guess — and this other guy pipes up and goes, Well, I'm one of the runners. You mean I'm in there, too?

Yeah, you're going to run, take the message, and say we're toast.

How about that?

Now, what would that have done?

Exactly what God purposed it to do.

It was a judgment on Babylon reinforcing His promise to His people that He would never forsake them despite their sin.

Wow! I mean, I just — that's chicken skin! And what a great way to segue into the rest of the chapter.

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“Now it shall be, when you have finished reading this book, that you shall tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates. Then you shall say, ‘Thus Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her. And they shall be weary.’ “ Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.”

Remember those visual prophecies? Here's another one. So after he reads it, he's to take and tie a rock to it, and sink it to the bottom of the Euphrates. And it's a visual prophecy. You see this prophecy, this scroll, and this rock that has sunk to the bottom of the River Euphrates? That's what is going to happen to you.

Well, wait a minute, that sounds a little bit familiar with Revelation 18:21. That's because it is. **“Then a mighty angel [Revelation 18:21] took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, “Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore.”**

That's what I'm talking about. Wow, God! God said it. That settles it. I'm so glad I'm Your child, God. So glad I'm a child of God.

Luke 22 beginning in *Verse 14*, we affectionately refer to this account as The Last Supper. Luke writes by the Spirit **“When the hour had come, He [Speaking of Jesus] sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He said to them, “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”**

Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves. For I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” And He took bread, gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

For those of you that are here, if you'll take and peel back the top part of the packaging, you'll have the bread. Just hold on to it for a moment.

We hold in our hands a symbol of the body of Jesus Christ that was broken for us as a reminder to us that He died for us. And we need to remember that, especially when we're prone to believe that God has forsaken us, that God is angry with us, that God is going to punish us, that God's through with us.

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No, He's not. He loves you. Maybe someone needs to hear that. Maybe someone needs to hear this. God likes you. He's not mad at you. He took all of His anger, and He put it on His only begotten Son, whom He gave to us to die for us because of His love for us.

That whosoever would believe would not perish but have everlasting life. And so this is a reminder, a much-needed reminder to do in remembrance of Him.

It's a celebration, a commemoration, a memorial really, a memory to be reminded that we're forgiven. The price has been paid. There's nothing else that has to be done. It is finished.

There's nothing I can do to make God love me less. There's nothing I can do to make God love me more. That's works. It's all of grace. We're saved by grace. It's not of works, lest any man should boast.

It's the gift of God. He purchased the gift, and He gives us the gift that He purchased, the gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

You know, every time we partake together of communion, and I pray, and I hope and I trust that it never becomes rote or just this formality, this routine that we do because it's the first Thursday of the month.

No, I pray every time we partake, it is fresh fire on the altar. It's fresh fire. It's a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a baptism, a baptism anew in the Holy Spirit, with the Holy Spirit, to be filled afresh with the Holy Spirit because it points us to that day soon and very soon.

And Jesus said it twice just in this passage "I fervently desire." And another translation renders it, "I eagerly await." I can't wait until what we're doing here tonight is fulfilled in My kingdom. He's talking about the wedding feast of the Lamb.

What we're doing here tonight we're going to do this with the Lord as His bride by His side at the wedding feast. And He can't wait! We can't wait!

Oh, Lord, thank You for giving us this. Would you partake with me?

Thank You, Lord.

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Oh, (Sighing) thank You for Your body broken for us, Jesus.

Thank You for the price You paid for us, Jesus.

Thank You for Your death in our place, Jesus.

Thank You for the gift of eternal life, Jesus.

Luke goes on to write. **“Likewise He [Again speaking of Jesus] also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.”**

So again, for those of you that are here, if you'll peel back the remainder of the packaging, you'll find the cup.

And again, just hold on to it for a moment before we partake A symbol certainly, but I think impossible to adequately express the power that this cup represents, the power of the blood of Jesus.

This cup represents the New Covenant in His blood. See, His blood was shed in our stead because there's no remission of sin without the shedding of blood. And for us here tonight and every time we partake of communion, this is a much-needed reminder that all of our sins have been paid for.

Listen, have you brought with you to the Bible study tonight some heavy, weighty burden and condemnation because of sin? It ends right here and right now. You better not take it with you when you leave. There's no need. It's done. It's finished. It's paid for. It's forgiven. And this cup is a reminder of that.

Would you partake with me?

Please stand when you're done, and Kapono, come on up. Let's close in prayer.

Father, again, there's just no words. There are no words in the English language as faulty as it is, inadequate as it is to even begin to express to You how thankful we are, how grateful we are, Lord. We need this, oh, we need this and some maybe more than others tonight. This was so needed.

Because the enemy's just had almost free reign to just do untold damage to our relationship with You, Lord, under the banner of condemnation and guilt and shame.

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But You, O Lord, took that shame. You took that guilt. You took that condemnation. And now in You, Jesus, there is no condemnation. There is no guilt. And there's no thing that could ever separate us from the love that You have for us. **“No greater love have any man that he would lay down his life for another.”** And that's what You did for us.

Oh, Jesus, thank You! Thank You, thank You, thank You! We love You so much! In Jesus' name. Amen.