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JEREMIAH 50: 1 The word that the LORD spoke concerning Babylon, concerning the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet.

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This and the following chapter contain a prophecy relating to the fall of Babylon, interspersed with several predictions relative to the restoration of Israel and Judah, who were to survive their oppressors, and, on their repentance, to be pardoned and brought to their own land. This chapter opens with a prediction of the complete destruction of all the Babylonish idols, and the utter desolation of Chaldea, through the instrumentality of a great northern nation, Jer 50:1-3. Israel and Judah shall be reinstated in the land of their forefathers after the total overthrow of the great Babylonish empire, Jer 50:4, Jer 50:5. Very oppressive and cruel bondage of the Jewish people during the captivity, Jer 50:6, Jer 50:7. The people of God are commanded to remove speedily from Babylon, because an assembly of great nations are coming out of the north to desolate the whole land, Jer 50:8-10. Babylon, the hammer of the whole earth, the great desolator of nations, shall itself become a desolation on account of its intolerable pride, and because of the iron yoke it has rejoiced to put upon a people whom a mysterious Providence had placed under its domination, vv. 11-34. The judgments which shall fall upon Chaldea, a country addicted to the grossest idolatry, and to every species of superstition, shall be most awful and general, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, Jer 50:35-40. Character of the people appointed to execute the Divine judgments upon the oppressors of Israel, Jer 50:41-45. Great sensation among the nations at the very terrible and sudden fall of Babylon, Jer 50:46.

#### Verse 1

The Word that the Lord Spake Against Babylon - This is also a new head of discourse.

The prophecy contained in this and the following chapter was sent to the captives in Babylon in the fourth year of the reign of Zedekiah. They are very important; they predict the total destruction of the Babylonish empire, and the return of the Jews from their captivity. These chapters were probably composed, with several additions, out of the book that was then sent by Jeremiah to the captives by the hand of Seraiah. See Jer 51:59-64.

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JEREMIAH 50: 2 Declare among the nations and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and don't conceal: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is disappointed, Merodach is dismayed; her images are disappointed, her idols are dismayed.

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#### Verse 2

Declare ye among the nations - God's determination relative to this empire.

Set up a standard - Show the people where they are to assemble.

Say, Babylon is taken - It is a thing so firmly determined, that it is as good as already done.

Bel - The tutelar deity of Babylon is confounded, because it cannot save its own city.

Merodach - Another of their idols, is broken to pieces; it was not able to save itself, much less the whole empire.

Her idols are confounded - It is a reproach to have acknowledged them.

Her images - Great and small, golden and wooden, are broken to pieces; even the form of them no longer appears.

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JEREMIAH 50: 3 For out of the north there comes up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and no one shall dwell therein: they are fled, they are gone, both man and animal.

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#### Verse 3

Out of the north there cometh up a nation - The Medes, who formed the chief part of the army of Cyrus, lay to the north or north-east of Babylon.

Shall make her land desolate - 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.

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JEREMIAH 50: 4 In those days, and in that time, says the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together; they shall go on their way weeping, and shall seek the LORD their God.

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#### Verse 4

In those days, and in that time - 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.

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JEREMIAH 50: 5 They shall inquire concerning Zion with their faces turned toward it, saying, Come, and join yourselves to the LORD in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten.

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#### Verse 5

Let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant - 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.

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JEREMIAH 50: 6 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.

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Verse 6

My people hath been lost sheep - He pities them; for their pastors, kings, and prophets have caused them to err.

They have gone from mountain to hill - In all high places they have practiced idolatry.

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JEREMIAH 50: 7 All who found them have devoured them; and their adversaries said, We are not guilty, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of righteousness, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.

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Verse 7

Their adversaries said, We offend not - God has abandoned them; we are only fulfilling his designs in plaguing them.

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JEREMIAH 50: 8 Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and go out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the male goats before the flocks.

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Verse 8

Remove out of the midst of Babylon - The sentence of destruction is gone out against it; prepare for your flight, that ye be not overwhelmed in its ruin.

Be as the he-goats before the flocks - 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.

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JEREMIAH 50: 9 For, behold, I will stir up and cause to come up against Babylon a company of great nations from the north country; and they shall set themselves in array against her; from there she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of an expert mighty man; no one shall return in vain.

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Verse 9

An assembly of great nations - 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.

Their arrows - They are such expert archers, that they shall never miss their mark.

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JEREMIAH 50: 10 Chaldea shall be a prey: all who prey on her shall be satisfied, says the LORD.

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Verse 10

Chaldea shall be a spoil - She has been a spoiler, and she shall be spoiled. They had destroyed Judea, God's heritage; and now God shall cause her to be destroyed.

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JEREMIAH 50: 11 Because you are glad, because you rejoice, O you who plunder my heritage, because you are wanton as a heifer that treads out the grain, and neigh as strong horses;

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Verse 11

As the heifer at grass - Ye were wanton in the desolations ye brought upon Judea.

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JEREMIAH 50: 12 your mother shall be utterly disappointed; she who bore you shall be confounded: behold, she shall be the least of the nations, a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.

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Verse 12

Your mother - 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.

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JEREMIAH 50: 13 Because of the wrath of the LORD she shall not be inhabited, but she shall be wholly desolate: everyone who goes by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.

JEREMIAH 50: 14 Set yourselves in array against Babylon all around, all you who bend the bow; shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she has sinned against the LORD.

JEREMIAH 50: 15 Shout against her all around: she has submitted herself; her bulwarks are fallen, her walls are thrown down; for it is the vengeance of the LORD: take vengeance on her; as she has done, do to her.

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Verse 15

Shout against her round about - Encompass her with lines and with troops; let none go in with relief, none come out to escape from her ruin.

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JEREMIAH 50: 16 Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him who handles the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn everyone to his people, and they shall flee everyone to his own land.

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Verse 16

Cut off the sower - Destroy the gardens and the fields, that there may be neither fruits nor tillage.

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JEREMIAH 50: 17 Israel is a hunted sheep; the lions have driven him away: first, the king of Assyria devoured him; and now at last Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has broken his bones.

Verse 17

Israel - 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.

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JEREMIAH 50: 18 Therefore thus says the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel: Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.

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Verse 18

As I have punished the king of Assyria - 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.

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JEREMIAH 50: 19 I will bring Israel again to his pasture, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied on the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead.

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Verse 19

I will bring Israel again - This seems to refer wholly to the ten tribes; for Carmel, Bashan, Mount Ephraim, and Gilead, were in their territories.

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JEREMIAH 50: 20 In those days, and in that time, says the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be no one; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I leave as a remnant.

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Verse 20

In those days and in that time - This phrase appears to take in the whole of an epoch, from its commencement to its end. See Jer 50:4.

I will pardon them - So as to deliver them from their captivity, and exact no more punishment from them whom I reserve, namely, the remnant left in the Babylonish captivity.

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JEREMIAH 50: 21 Go up against the land of Merathaim, even against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod: kill and utterly destroy after them, says the LORD, and do according to all that I have commanded you.

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**Verse 21**

Go up against the land of Merathaim - and against the inhabitants of Pekod - No such places as these are to be found any where else; and it is not likely that places are at all meant. The ancient Versions agree in rendering the first as an appellative, and the last as a verb, except the Chaldee, which has Pekod as a proper name. Dr. Blayney translates: - "Against the land of bitternesses, go up:

Upon it, and upon its inhabitants, visit, O sword!"

Dr. Dahler renders thus: - "March against the country doubly rebellious,

And against its inhabitants worthy of punishment."

The latter of these two versions I take to be the most literal. The words are addressed to the Medes and Persians; and the country is Chaldea, doubly rebellious by its idolatry and its insufferable pride. In these two, it was exceeded by no other land.

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JEREMIAH 50: 22 A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction.

JEREMIAH 50: 23 How is the hammer of the whole earth cut apart and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!

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**Verse 23**

The hammer of the whole earth - Nebuchadnezzar dashed to pieces the nations against whom he warred. He was the scourge of the Lord.

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JEREMIAH 50: 24 I have laid a snare for you, and you are also taken, Babylon, and you weren't aware: you are found, and also caught, because you have striven against the LORD.

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**Verse 24**

I have laid a snare for thee - 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. See Nerodotus, lib. i., c. 191.

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JEREMIAH 50: 25 The LORD has opened his armoury, and has brought out the weapons of his indignation; for the Lord, the LORD of Armies, has a work to do in the land of the Chaldeans.

JEREMIAH 50: 26 Come against her from the utmost border; open her storehouses; cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly; let nothing of her be left.

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Verse 26

Open her store-houses - 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!

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JEREMIAH 50: 27 Kill all her bulls; let them go down to the slaughter: woe to them! for their day has come, the time of their visitation.

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Verse 27

Slay all her bullocks - Princes, magistrates, etc., etc.

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JEREMIAH 50: 28 The voice of those who flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of his temple.

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Verse 28

Declare in Zion the vengeance of the Lord - Zion was desolated by Babylon; tell Zion that God hath desolated the desolator.

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

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JEREMIAH 50: 29 Call together the archers against Babylon, all those who bend the bow; encamp against her all around; let none of it escape: recompense her according to her work; according to all that she has done, do to her; for she has been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.

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Verse 29

Call together the archers - The preceding verses are the prediction: here, God calls the Medes and Persians to fulfill it.

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JEREMIAH 50: 30 Therefore her young men will fall in her streets, and all her men of war will be brought to silence in that day, says the LORD.

JEREMIAH 50: 31 Behold, I am against you, you proud one, says the Lord, the LORD of Armies; for your day has come, the time that I will visit you.

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Verse 31



O thou most proud - זדון. Pride in the abstract; proudest of all people.

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JEREMIAH 50: 32 The proud one shall stumble and fall, and no one shall raise him up; and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all who are around him.

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Verse 32

And the most proud - זדון, as before. Here pride is personified and addressed, as if possessing a being and rational powers.

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JEREMIAH 50: 33 Thus says the LORD of Armies: The children of Israel and the children of Judah are oppressed together; and all who took them captive hold them fast; they refuse to let them go.

JEREMIAH 50: 34 Their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of Armies is his name: he will thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the earth, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

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Verse 34

Their Redeemer is strong - And it was not that he wanted power, and that Nebuchadnezzar had much, that Jerusalem was taken; but because the people had sinned, and would not return; and therefore national sins called for national punishments. These have taken place; and now the Lord of hosts shows them that the power of the Chaldeans is mere weakness against his might.

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JEREMIAH 50: 35 A sword is on the Chaldeans, says the LORD, and on the inhabitants of Babylon, and on her princes, and on her wise men.

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Verse 35

A sword - War and its calamities, or any grievous plague; and so in the following verses.

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JEREMIAH 50: 36 A sword is on the boasters, and they shall become fools; a sword is on her mighty men, and they shall be dismayed.

JEREMIAH 50: 37 A sword is on their horses, and on their chariots, and on all the mixed people who are in the midst of her; and they shall become as women: a sword is on her treasures, and they shall be robbed.

JEREMIAH 50: 38 A drought is on her waters, and they shall be dried up; for it is a land of engraved images, and they are mad over idols.

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Verse 38

A drought is upon her waters - May not this refer to the draining of the channel of the Euphrates, by which the army of Cyrus entered the city. See on Jer 50:24 (note). The original is, however, **כרעב** chereb, a sword, as in the preceding verses, which signifies war, or any calamity by which the thing on which it falls is ruined.

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JEREMIAH 50: 39 Therefore the wild animals of the desert with the wolves shall dwell there, and the ostriches shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited forever; neither shall it be lived in from generation to generation.

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#### Verse 39

The wild beasts of the desert - Dahler translates these various terms, "The wild cats, the jackals, and the ostriches." And Blayney the same. Wicklif, "Dragons, woodewoses, and ostriches." Coverdale, "Wild beestes, apes, and estriches."

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JEREMIAH 50: 40 As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities of it, says the LORD, so shall no man dwell there, neither shall any son of man live therein.

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#### Verse 40

As God overthrew Sodom - 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. See Jer 49:18.

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JEREMIAH 50: 41 Behold, a people comes from the north; and a great nation and many kings shall be stirred up from the uttermost parts of the earth.

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#### Verse 41

Behold, a people shall come from the north - This and the two following verses are nearly the same with Jer 6:22-24. But here, destroyers against Babylon are intended; there, destroyers against Jerusalem.

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JEREMIAH 50: 42 They lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roars like the sea; and they ride on horses, everyone set in array, as a man to the battle, against you, daughter of Babylon.

JEREMIAH 50: 43 The king of Babylon has heard the news of them, and his hands wax feeble: anguish has taken hold of him, pains as of a woman in labour.

JEREMIAH 50: 44 Behold, the enemy shall come up like a lion from the pride of the Jordan against the strong habitation: for I will suddenly make them run away from it; and whoever is chosen, him will I appoint over it: for who is like me? and who will appoint me a time? and who is the shepherd who can stand before me?

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Verse 44

Behold, he shall come up like a lion - The same words as in Jer 49:19 (note), etc., where see the note.

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JEREMIAH 50: 45 Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD, that he has taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he has purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely they shall drag them away, even the little ones of the flock; surely he shall make their habitation desolate over them.

JEREMIAH 50: 46 At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth trembles, and the cry is heard among the nations.

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Verse 46

At the noise of the taking of Babylon - See the note on the parallel place, Jer 49:21 (note). In the forty-ninth chapter, these words are spoken of Nebuchadnezzar; here, of Cyrus. The taking of Babylon was a wonder to all the surrounding nations. It was thought to be impregnable.