

Bible Study # 54
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Major Prophets Series—Jeremiah 35—52

We are ready to finish up the book of Jeremiah. The first 11 chapters that we are going to cover this evening, **Jeremiah 35-45, provide a historical inset to the theme of the prophecy.** What we primarily have in these chapters is a historical account of the events of Jeremiah's ministry. We have the account of his warning to the governmental leaders in his day, the story of his subsequent arrest and, finally, the story of the Babylonian invasion of Judah and subsequent captivity of Jerusalem and Judah. We have the account of those Jews who were left behind and their electing to move to Egypt in spite of Jeremiah's warnings to the contrary. We have the consequences of that.

These chapters deal primarily with contemporary events and, yet, they also provide lessons for us today. There is a lot of insight, a lot of things that we can gain and learn from parallels with the work that God did through Jeremiah, the work that God is doing in our day and on out ahead of us. Also, these historical inset chapters provide kind of a summary or setting to help us to understand the context in which Jeremiah was writing.

One of the things about prophecy is that much of it is dual. To a great extent, what the prophet was writing or delivering had certain meaning and application for his contemporaries, for those people there at that time and that day. However, the prophecies that were written down generally had implications way beyond that day and down to the end time. That's one of the reasons that certain prophecies are written and recorded and preserved for us, while other prophecies are not. Men such as Elijah, Elisha, Nathan, Gad and many others are mentioned in the Bible as prophets. Yet the prophetic messages that they delivered evidently had primary implications to their day and their society because those messages were not written down and preserved for us.

But when we come to something like the book of Jeremiah, it clearly was preserved for us today. The implications of the book are things of which we need to take heed. Even the events that were contemporary accounts of Jeremiah's life, or things that he was going through, provide a background setting and stage and help us to

understand the circumstances of what happened. Many times when you understand the way it happened the first time (when you understand the circumstances and background of it), it helps you to have a clearer picture of the way some of these things may have implications for us today.

Jeremiah 46-51 provides an insight into God's punishment on the surrounding nations. You have the Egyptians, the Philistines, the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, Damascus, Kedar, the Elamites and the Babylonians. These are all focused on and they all have their fates outlined. God will not only punish Judah.

Acts 10:34 KJV, "God is no respecter of persons." God will ultimately punish all nations for their sins. We have this brought in. We can understand some things as we note the modern identity of some of these nations that come down to us today.

Let's note in Jeremiah 35 an example and illustration that is given. We read of an interesting account of a group of people known as the Rechabites who are addressed here. The Rechabites were, in one sense, related to the Israelites in that they were descendants of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law. Jethro himself was a Midianite. The Midianites were descendants of Abraham through his son Midian who he had with Keturah (Genesis 25) after Sarah's death. The Midianites were a kindred people. They were also descendants of Abraham. The Rechabites were descended specifically from Jethro, Moses' father-in-law.

God calls the Rechabites to Jeremiah's attention. What we are told about them is that they had kept and observed from generation to generation precepts that were laid down by their human ancestor Jonadab, the son of Rechab. Jonadab had established a rule for his family. That rule was that his family was not to consume alcohol and they would not settle in towns and in fixed dwellings. They would live as nomads and they would forbear the use of alcoholic beverages.

Now, interestingly enough, you find the descendants of those people in the Middle East still doing the same thing. They are still nomads and they still don't drink alcohol. One thing you have got to hand it to them for is that they have a knack for consistency. They are not a people who are given to a lot of radical innovation. They are rather consistent from one generation to the next.

The Rechabites had come inside the wall of Jerusalem. The Babylonians were laying siege and set up camp inside the walls of Jerusalem.

God told Jeremiah he wanted him to do something. 'I want you to invite the leader of the Rechabites and some of the chief men. I want you to invite them into the temple and set a meal and wine before them. Invite them to sit down and have a nice meal.' Jeremiah did this. When it came to the occasion, the leader of the Rechabites told him he couldn't do this because it was not their custom to drink wine.

Verses 6-9, he said, 'We have not done this [by this time about three centuries] going back to the time of our father Jonadab, the son of Rechab. He established the rule for our family and we have all adhered to it ever since.'

Verses 13-16, God told Jeremiah, 'I want you to notice what has occurred. Notice how these Rechabites have observed the commandment of their ancestor. What about Israel observing My commandments? These people have such honor and veneration for their human ancestor. He laid down a humanly-devised rule and his children and his descendants for generations down all observe the rule. He established a rule for the family and it was observed out of honor and veneration for him. It was observed for generations to come. I gave rules to My people, My children Israel, and they didn't last "until the water got hot." They didn't honor Me at all. These people honor their human ancestor and Israel did not honor Me.'

Interestingly, God made a promise to the Rechabites. God was impressed at the dedication that those people had.

Jeremiah 35:18-19, "And Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechabites, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts and done according to all that he commanded you, therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not lack a man to stand before Me forever.'"""

In other words, 'I am going to preserve this little tribe; I am going to preserve it as a witness. I am going to preserve them because I am impressed that a group of people who have had such an attitude of respect and such a tenacity, that I point them out as an example to Israel. I am going to make a promise to you that this tribe will never cease. It is not going to die out. It is not going to be wiped out by all the invading armies.'

They were never a great nation. They were never a mighty people. Many of the mighty peoples of the past have come and gone. Here is a group

what is still today a small Bedouin tribe, probably about the same size they always were. Here is just one more little Bedouin tribe out there in the desert regions in the Middle East.

It's an interesting commentary. God pointed it out as an example to Jeremiah for the fact that all they had was a human instruction and commandment; yet, they were faithful to it. They acted on what they knew and held on to it. They had a respect there. God said to Israel, 'You had so much more. You didn't simply have a humanly-devised set of rules.'

Actually, it is interesting if you go back to the context in which Jonadab lived. It was a time when there was a lot of social strife. A lot of things were going on in Israel and Judah. In effect, what Jonadab did was to say, 'We are getting out of this. We see the vice and the luxury. We see the problems; we see the materialism, the idolatry, all of these things. We're going to leave city life behind us. We're going from the things that I view as a corrupting influence. We're going to go out of here, mind our own business, leave everybody alone and live our lives.'

Now God has not called us as His people to go off and hide in a cave and wait for the end. But we have the commandments of God. Israel had the commandments of God. Judah had the commandments of God Himself. They weren't as faithful to what God said as these people had been to what their own simple human ancestor had said.

Jeremiah 36 is kind of an interesting story.

Verses 1-2 are the account during the fourth year of King Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah. Jeremiah was told to take a scroll and to write all the things that he had been told to say from the day that God had first spoken to him. Really, what he was doing was writing the book of Jeremiah.

Verse 10, he was writing the book and Baruch, who was his assistant, actually wrote the words down. He copied the words and went in and read those words in the temple. This created quite a stir when he went through and read all the prophecies and all the things Jeremiah had said. Some of the princes were a little bit upset. They had Baruch come in and read the book to some of them.

Jeremiah 36:15, "...So Baruch read it in their hearing."

Verses 16-17, they were a little bit taken aback and said, 'We really better take this to the king because there were some very strong things that were said.' So they had Baruch come in.

Notice, I think this is kind of funny. People who are in charge, or think they are in charge, of some level of functioning like to give the idea that they have some important questions to ask and that they are really making a determination. I think it is kind of humorous. Since they did not want to appear overly impressed, they said they needed to ask something.

Verse 17, “And they asked Baruch, saying, ‘Tell us now, how did you write all these words—at his instructions [KJV, “at his mouth”]?’” What do you say after you have just gotten through having the first two-thirds of Jeremiah read to you and you’re told all the things that are going to happen to you? Well, they said, ‘Tell us now, are you the one who wrote this? How did you exactly write all these words at his mouth?’

Verse 18, “So Baruch answered them, ‘He proclaimed with his mouth all these words to me, and I wrote them with ink in the book.’” Baruch said, ‘It wasn’t really hard. He pronounced all these words with his mouth. That was the first step; he just kind of said the words [pronounced it with his mouth]. I took some ink and I wrote it in this book. Is it really difficult to figure out how I managed to write this thing down?’ I think there was maybe just a tinge of sarcasm that Baruch had when he answered that and kind of described it in graphic detail. What it gets back to is a stupid question deserves a stupid answer. They asked a silly, self-evident question, and he just gave it back to them.

I think you will notice that Jesus dealt with people in that way. For people who asked sincere questions, Jesus always had time to explain in clear terms. He never put them down for asking. But some of these self-important individuals whose attitudes were wrong, when they asked the question, they were trying to be argumentative anyway. They were pompous and trying to appear important. He didn’t have any problem at really “pricking their balloon.” There were times when He answered in a sarcastic manner because they asked the question that way. He never answered people who were sincere in that way; they simply wanted to know. There were times when people simply needed to be answered that way.

Proverb 26:5, He applied, “Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes [KJV, “conceit”].”

Jeremiah 36:19, they told Baruch, ‘You and Jeremiah had better lay low. We are going to take this book in and we’re going to read it to the king.’ They read it to the king.

Verse 22, “Now the king was sitting in the winter house in the ninth month [this would be December], with a fire burning on the hearth before him.” There was a fire there in the hearth. He was sitting there in front of the fireplace and they were reading this to him. They’d read a little ways—this was a scroll—and they would unroll it.

Verse 23, “And it happened, when Jehudi had read three or four columns, that the king cut it with the scribe’s knife and cast it into the fire....” He took his knife, cut it and pitched it into the fire. He didn’t pay any attention to this stuff. He wasn’t impressed.

Word came to Jeremiah.

Verses 27-28, “Now after the king had burned the scroll with the words which Baruch had written at the instruction of Jeremiah, the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying: ‘Take yet another scroll, and write on it all the former words that were in the first scroll which Jehoiakim the king of Judah has burned.’” “Take another roll and write on it everything you said the first time; then we have a few things to add.’ One thing is evident—God ensures the preservation of His word in spite of human efforts to destroy it.

People ask, ‘How can you be sure that we really have the Bible? How can you be sure that some of it didn’t get lost in the shuffle?’ Well, how can you be sure there is a God? If you can prove there is a God (and that is something that clearly can be done), God is certainly capable of preserving His word. He did right here in Jeremiah 36.

The king said he’d show them; he’d burn up the scroll. God said, ‘Big deal! I’ll just have it written down again. You won’t destroy it at all.’ Plus they added in a few details—a few little points about what was going to happen to the king, which were none too good.

Verses 30-31 record the punishment that happened to Jehoiakim. It records how he died. He was not even to be given a decent burial and his descendants would not sit on the throne.

Verse 32, “Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote on it at the instruction of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And besides, there were added to them many similar words.” They added in the rest of the story.

In Jeremiah 36, we have the story of Jehoiakim who was king and being replaced.

Nebuchadnezzar came in and put Jehoiakim out of business. He went out of the “king” business really quickly. He was gotten rid of and Zedekiah, his brother, was placed on the throne instead. Jehoiakim was dealt with.

In Jeremiah 37, we pick up the story a few years later after Jehoiakim has been gotten rid of and his brother Zedekiah has been made king by Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuchadnezzar had three invasions of Jerusalem. He came in 604 B.C. He came back in 596 B.C. Finally he returned in 587 B.C. and wiped out the place. He burned the temple and ended the Jewish independence. Nebuchadnezzar came in; his first step was to collect tribute money and to set up a vassal king. When he kept having trouble from the Jews, he finally came back and decided to put a stop to it.

Jeremiah delivered a message. He was willing to speak God’s word and tell it like it was. When you tell it like it is, that is not popular. God’s servants have never won popularity contests. They are never going to win some great popularity contest in their own societies. When you deliver an unpleasant and unpopular message, people don’t like what’s said. There were a lot of people who liked Jesus Christ personally. He was a very likeable individual, but they didn’t like what He said. They didn’t like what Jeremiah said, to the point that when Jeremiah called it like it was, they got mad and threw him in prison.

Jeremiah 37:15-16, “Therefore the princes were angry with Jeremiah, and they struck him and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe. For they had made that the prison. When Jeremiah entered the dungeon and the cells, and Jeremiah had remained there many days.” They kept him in a dungeon and he stayed there for quite a while.

Verse 17, Zedekiah the king called him out privately and asked him if he had heard any word from the Lord. ‘Got any news?’ Zedekiah was not a very courageous sort. He was kind of an opinion-poll politician; they have to read the opinion polls to find out what they are for and against. Their position on the issue changes somewhat from day to day. They’re rather intimidated by others around them. Zedekiah seems to have been this sort of fellow.

Can you imagine what some kind of an old dug-earth cellar that they had Jeremiah in down there? Then they put him in the court of the prison. They moved him upstairs.

Verse 21, “Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah to the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread from the bakers’ street, until all the bread in the city was gone. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.”

There was a famine. They gave him a little bit of bread every day and moved him out of the dungeon. They really had him in just a terrible situation where he was, and he was anxious to get out of it. He was accused of all sorts of things.

Verse 13-14, they accused him of being in league with the enemy saying, ‘You are falling away to the Chaldeans.’ Again, he was falsely accused.

People suspect our motives. This is something that happened historically to Jeremiah. We, brethren, should not be surprised or shocked to realize the time is coming when we’re going to be vilified, accused and have our motives suspected. We’re going to have things said about us in terms of why we’re doing what we’re doing. People tend to want to accuse and be suspicious of motives.

For years people said of Mr. Herbert Armstrong that he was in it for the money. Now they never could explain why he was in it for so many years when there wasn’t any money. Nevertheless, that was what they said. Some of you were associated with the work and go back to a time when there wasn’t any money to be in it for. People look for a reason to accuse.

They accused Jeremiah and said, ‘You’re in league with the enemy. You’re on the payroll from King Nebuchadnezzar. You’re just trying to subvert the nation.’ In reality, Jeremiah wanted to save the nation. He told them the only way to salvation was repentance. If they didn’t repent, they were all going to be wiped out. People didn’t like to hear it. It’s kind of interesting the way Jeremiah was treated by his own people (the Jews) and by his own government. They threw him into prison.

In Jeremiah 38, the siege continues. They threw Jeremiah back into the dungeon, a different dungeon.

Jeremiah 38:6, “So they took Jeremiah and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the king’s son, which was in the court of the prison, and they let Jeremiah down with ropes. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire. So Jeremiah sank in the mire.” It was like throwing somebody into the swamp. Actually, when you check it out, it was an area where there was refuse. It was kind of the worst sort of fate. Actually, what they put him in

had originally been dug as a cistern to store water. But there wasn't any water there. There was mud and all kinds of gunk.

Verses 10-13, finally the king did have Jeremiah taken out before he died. You keep going through this. The king really didn't have the courage to listen to Jeremiah and act on what he had to say.

Jeremiah 39 is the story of the final invasion in 587 B.C.

Jeremiah 39:2, "In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, the city was penetrated." The enemy came in and burned the walls.

Verses 6-7, "Then the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes in Riblah; the king of Babylon also killed all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with bronze fetters to carry him off to Babylon." This was a very horrible punishment. They burned the city. They did all of these things, but, interestingly enough, Jeremiah was freed.

Verses 11-12, "Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, 'Take him and look after him, and do him no harm; but do to him just as he says to you.'" You talk about "carte blanche!"

King Nebuchadnezzar told the commanding general, 'Look, this Jeremiah, you get him out of the prison and you treat him well. And you let him do whatever he wants. He's got "carte blanche.'" This was significant because what really occurred, in effect, Jeremiah was given a passport.

Jeremiah 40:4-5, "'And now look, I free you this day from the chains that were on your hand. If it seems good to you to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will look after you. But if it seems wrong for you to come with me to Babylon, remain here. See, all the land is before you; wherever it seems good and convenient for you to go, go there.'...So the captain of the guard gave him rations and a gift and let him go."

What in effect happened was that Jeremiah, if you remember, had a commission. This commission was given at the beginning of the book of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 1:10, it was detailed, "...to root out, to pull down, to destroy, to throw down...." But he was also "to build and to plant." Jeremiah's commission involved both tearing down and building up. He was responsible to prophesy about the tearing down of Jerusalem, the rooting

out of the people from that area, the overthrow of the throne and the transfer of it. But he was also responsible to build and to plant.

The final part of his ministry involved building and planting, which he had not done up until then. Actually, building and planting involved removing the throne of David from Jerusalem to the British Isles. If you check it out, the actual location to which it was transferred was to Tara, Ireland.

This was the seat of the old high kings of Ireland. Ireland was divided up into several component parts (each of which had a king), and there was a high king who dwelt in Tara. The throne was transferred there. Then quite a few centuries later, it was transferred from Tara, Ireland, to Scone, Scotland. That was at the time of Kenneth McElvyn, King of Scotland, about 800 A.D.

Then several centuries later, it was transferred a third time from Scone, Scotland, down to London, England, at the time of King Edward. That's why there is a stone called the "Stone of Scone." The Queen of England was crowned on it. It's called King Edward's chair. It was built for the coronation of King Edward. The stone was transferred from Scotland and is the symbol of the house of David. The rulers of the house of David have been crowned on it going all the way back to antiquity.

I made comment on it when we went through the book of Chronicles. There are several different places where it describes the fact that during the king's coronation, he stood upon the pillar or stood upon this stone. This was the custom that is identified.

The king's sons were killed before him (Jeremiah 39:6), but we read of the king's daughters in Jeremiah 41:10. We also read of them a little later in Jeremiah 43:6-7. We read that they were taken down into Egypt. Jeremiah went down to Egypt and from Egypt he took at least one of the daughters of the king and maybe more. They traveled with him. They went from Egypt, crossed the Mediterranean and went to the southern tip of Spain. From there, they sailed up to Ireland.

Jeremiah, here in chapters 39 and 40, was given a "carte blanche." He was given a passport from the king of Babylon, along with expense money, to enable him to carry out the job. He was now under the personal protection of the king of Babylon. He was basically free to travel wherever he wanted to go by order of the king of Babylon. If you "messed" with Jeremiah, you

weren't "messing" with Jeremiah—you were "messing" with the king of Babylon.

He gave specific instructions. It now enabled Jeremiah to carry out the job God had given him. God opened that door for Jeremiah to be able to travel and to carry out the job he had been given to do. It points out to us how God can work through circumstances—sometimes in the most improbable circumstances—to make it possible for His servants to accomplish the job He has set before them.

We don't know what parallels that we may find. In effect, Nebuchadnezzar was the leader of the Beast power of his day. He was the original Beast, if you want to look at it that way. What is the answer to the booklet, *Who is the Beast?* Well, if you had lived in the days of Jeremiah, you could have answered it very succinctly. It was King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel told him that. Remember?

Daniel 2:37-38, ““You, O King...are that head of gold.” ‘You’re the one.’ Everything since then has been the succession because the Beast system is symbolized both by the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in Daniel 2, as well as the creatures that Daniel saw in Daniel 7. They reflect a succession of empires that date from the time of ancient Babylon, all the way down to our day and to the time immediately ahead of us.

The point we can realize is that God can work through circumstances, sometimes in the most improbable of ways. We don't want to limit God by determining ahead of time how God has to do things. God can work things out. People have wondered sometimes how are we going to get here or there? How is this going to happen? How in the world could the Church ever get to a place of safety? God doesn't tell us the details because it's not the physical details that He wants us to focus on.

Luke 21:36, Christ told His disciples to pray, to stay close to God, to be watchful and to be vigilant so that they might be accounted worthy to escape the events of the Great Tribulation.

Revelation 12:14 talks about the woman (the Church) being taken into the wilderness into her place (a specific location) where she is nourished there for a time, times and a half time (the duration of the Tribulation) and protected from the face of the serpent. We're not given the specifics in terms of how it is going to happen. We're not given all the details. There may be certain indications here and there, but you have to be careful of being overly dogmatic

on some of those indications. Nevertheless, they are there.

The real point is that God has a variety of ways He can work out the details and He hasn't seen fit to reveal all of that. We see some examples and realize that God could do it in a lot of ways. God can sometimes give us favor in the most improbable of people. God gave Jeremiah great favor with King Nebuchadnezzar. Later, God gave Daniel great favor with King Nebuchadnezzar. God sometimes has ways of working things out we don't expect. We want to look to God and not limit God by our own humanly-devised things. Jeremiah was now free to go and do the job God set him to do.

In Jeremiah 42:1-6, the Jews wanted Jeremiah to pray for them. They said, ‘We will do what God says; we just want you to tell us.’ Jeremiah told them under God's inspiration.

Jeremiah 42:19-21, ““The Lord has said concerning you, O remnant of Judah, “Do not go to Egypt!” Know certainly that I have admonished you this day. For you were hypocrites in your hearts when you sent me to the Lord your God, saying, “Pray for us to the Lord our God, and according to all that the Lord your God says, so declare to us and we will do it.” And I have this day declared it to you, but you have not obeyed the voice of the Lord your God, or anything which He has sent you by me.”

‘Don't go to Egypt.’ He said, ‘I know you're going to do it because you never listen. But that's what you're supposed to do—don't go to Egypt.’ In Jeremiah 43:1-2, when they heard a message they didn't want to hear, they got mad and said, ‘You're not telling us the truth.’

Verses 4-7, they said, ‘We're going to do it. We're going to show them.’ Here's the attitude. People want to know. You tell them and then they don't want to know. They are not going to do it. They don't believe it. They don't accept it. They are self-willed. This is pointed out. And, again, as God's servants today, we can't expect a whole lot better response or a whole lot better reaction.

They didn't believe Jeremiah and said, ‘We'll go down and the Egyptians will take care of us.’ Jeremiah said, ‘Guess again! Guess where Nebuchadnezzar's going next? Egypt is next on his list’ (vv. 10-11). People found it difficult to believe. Egypt had been a dominant, independent nation for centuries and centuries and centuries. It was the oldest nation. They couldn't believe that anything could happen to Egypt. Surely not!

Egypt had been a major power since antiquity. Well, it did happen.

Jeremiah 43:6, we specifically call attention here to, "...the king's daughters..." This shows that all of the royal family was not wiped out; the king's daughters were spared. That's the way the line of David was continued.

Jeremiah 44 shows how God dealt with the Jews that went down to Egypt and why He did it.

Jeremiah 44:12-13, ""And I will take the remnant of Judah who have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed and fall in the land of Egypt. They shall be consumed by the sword and by famine. They shall die, from the least to the greatest, by the sword and by famine; and they shall be an oath and an astonishment and a curse and a reproach! For I will punish those who dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.""

'I am going to punish them because they wouldn't listen. They went down there and they wouldn't listen. They just "tuned it out." If they couldn't hear what they wanted to hear, they would ignore it. God said, 'I am going to take care of that.'

This is a reference and certainly a parallel to what happens. Our people today have that same obstinate approach. They are going to do it their way and don't see why their ways won't work. The only way that works in the long run is God's way.

Beginning in Jeremiah 46, we notice over the next few chapters that we have specific statements about various foreign nations. We start out dealing with the Egyptians. This is against Egypt.

Jeremiah 46:2, "Against Egypt..." Certainly it has an application to that time and day. It was a reference to what God was going to do to Egypt through the Babylonians.

But as we come down to verse 10, we will see that the prophecy and the significance of what was told to the Egyptians went beyond that time. It comes down to our day and on beyond.

Verse 10, ""For this is the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, that He may avenge Himself on His adversaries. The sword shall devour; it shall be satiated and made drunk with their blood; for the Lord God of hosts has a sacrifice in the north country by the River Euphrates."" It talks about the day of the Lord of hosts.

Verse 27, ""But do not fear, O My servant Jacob, and do not be dismayed, O Israel! For behold, I will save you from afar, and your offspring from the land of their captivity; Jacob shall return, have rest and be at ease; no one shall make him afraid.""

That did not occur in that time and in that day; it is sometime yet future. It describes a successful invasion and destruction. It describes that there were implications of that invasion of Egypt on beyond our time. Read in the book of Daniel where the Beast power comes into the Middle East.

Daniel 11:42, "...and the land of Egypt will not escape." They are going to invade Egypt. In a sense, there are implications that modern Babylon is going to invade modern Egypt, just like ancient Babylon invaded ancient Egypt.

In Jeremiah 47, we focus on the Philistines. The term "Palestine" is simply an alternate spelling. It is an English form of the Greek form "Philistine." It is kind of derived from that with a little different ending. That's why you will never hear a Jew use the term "Palestine." The Arabs refer to it as "Palestine." If you've heard Yassar Arafat interviewed, he will talk about Palestine. "Palestine" means "the land of the Philistines." "Israel," of course, means "Israel."

That's what the whole dispute is. To whom does it belong? Well, some of the descendants of the Philistines are right there and have always been there. That's why the Gaza strip is such a problem. If you go back and find out where the ancient city of the Philistines was, it was Gaza. If you look on a map of the area there, you will find those little villages. They probably haven't changed much—the same bunch of people and the same place. They are still mad; they are still fussing—same old thing.

Some of the descendants of the Philistines left from there. In fact, some of the Berbers of North Africa are descended from them. The Berbers are there in North Africa, particularly in the area of Libya. I haven't done any research on it to see Khadafy's ancestry, but it wouldn't surprise me that he is of Berber extraction. That is one of the dominant people in Northern Libya, which would make him a Philistine by ancestry. He certainly is by temperament and inclination. What you have, in a lot of cases, is the same people getting along just the same as they always did. There's no new thing under the sun.

Then God talks about the consequences of things that were going to happen anciently to Gaza. The Egyptians were coming in and they took over

Gaza. They ruled Gaza until the Israelites took it away from them back in the time of the Six-Day War. The Philistines (the Palestinians) have been living there all along.

In Jeremiah 48 and 49, Moab and Ammon are addressed: Moab in Jeremiah 48 and Ammon in Jeremiah 49. The Moabites and the Ammonites are pretty much located in the area of Jordan and a portion of Iraq. The modern capital of Jordan, Amman, takes its name from Ammon in the Bible; it's the same people. The Ammonites and Moabites are kindred peoples. Some of these tribes you find concentrated primarily in the area of Jordan and a portion of Iraq. The Moabites concentrated perhaps more in the area of Iraq and perhaps some of them in Jordan. The Ammonites more directly centered in Jordan. We find them addressed and some of the things we see prophesied. They will suffer destruction. Jeremiah 48:47 and Jeremiah 49:6 show this.

Jeremiah 48:47, “‘Yet I will bring back the captives of Moab in the latter days,’ says the Lord...”

Jeremiah 49:6, “‘But afterward I will bring back the captives of the people of Ammon,’ says the Lord.” They are going to face the Babylonian invasion that is going to come in.

Jeremiah 48:25-26, “‘The horn [leader] of Moab is cut off...for he magnified himself against the Lord....”

In verse 29, it talks about the pride of Moab.

One of the ancient locations of Moab was the area of the modern Petra. Petra is a Greek name. The Jews call it Sela. The Greeks call it Petra. It basically has the same meaning in Hebrew or Greek. It is located in Jordan and it is known by the name that the Greek geographers gave it in the time of Alexander the Great. It was the ancient location of many of the Moabites.

Jeremiah 48:40, there is an interesting allusion to it, “‘For thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, one shall fly like an eagle, and spread his wings over Moab.’” Some have taken that as an allusion to the place where God would protect His people in the end time.

Compare it with Revelation 12:14 and how the woman will be taken into her place in the wilderness on the wings of a great eagle. Also compare that with other scriptures.

Isaiah 16:1, “‘Send the lamb to the ruler of the land, from Sela [KJV margin, “Petra”] to the wilderness, to the mount of the daughter of Zion.’” Sela was the Old Testament name. Petra is the modern name. There is a reference in Isaiah

16:1-2 to someone who is the ruler in that area, and it talks about the daughters of Moab.

Verse 4, “‘Let My outcasts dwell with you, O Moab; be a shelter to them from the face of the spoiler....” Some of these things are taken together.

Jeremiah 48:28, “‘You who dwell in Moab, leave the cities [talking about after Nebuchadnezzar’s invasion] and dwell in the rock [or dwell in Sela], and be like the dove which makes her nest in the sides of the cave’s mouth.’” “‘You who dwell in Moab’”—Speaking of the Moabites.

This is what the Moabites did anciently when the Babylonians invaded. Those Moabites who escaped fled from the cities of Moab and went there into the area of Petra. They did do that, so there has been an allusion from this. “‘...dwell in the rocks [in Sela or Petra], and be like the dove....” It describes the making of a nest.

Isaiah 16:4, “‘Let My outcasts dwell with you Moab, be a cover to them from the face of the spoiler.’” If you put this together with Jeremiah, several of these verses have been taken as an allusion to the place where God would protect His people in the end time. Certainly, it cannot conclusively prove that is the location. There are a couple of others in the book of Isaiah that even appear a little bit stronger than that. When you take them all together, they may give an indication, but they certainly are not total conclusive proof.

Nevertheless, it is the basis of why we have felt for many years that the spot that seemed most likely indicated by the Bible as the place where God would protect His people in the end time is the area there of Petra. That, together with a number of other scriptures in Isaiah, has been where the idea came about or why we’ve speculated along that line for many, many years. In Jeremiah 49:1, we come to the Ammonites.

Jeremiah 49:7, “‘Against Edom....” We pick up the Edomites. There are several groups that are descendants of the Edomites. We have felt that many of the modern-day Turks trace their ancestry back to at least some of the tribes of Edom. The Amalekites were also the descendants of Edom. Many of them intermarried with the Philistines in the Middle East as well as in North Africa. Many of the Palestinians trace back to the Philistines and the Amalekites who are descendants of the Edomites. It describes the destruction that is going to come upon them. We also find that alluded to in the book of Obadiah.

Jeremiah 49:11, 17-18 show that the Edomite men will simply be totally destroyed. The women

and children will be left alive, but the male population will be destroyed.

In verse 23, Damascus is addressed. Damascus is the ancient capital of Syria and also the modern capital of Syria.

Verse 28 picks up the story of Kedar. Kedar would be primarily identified with Saudi Arabia. A lot of people don't realize that Ishmael also had 12 sons; Jacob's not the only one who had 12 sons. There are 12 tribes of Arabs, just as there are 12 tribes of Israelites. The primary tribe of the Arabs in Arabia is the tribe of Kedar. They are the ones who are the dominant tribe there in Saudi Arabia. We would take the reference in verse 28 to perhaps be referring to the European invasion of Saudi Arabia as they pour into the Middle East.

The Elamites are addressed in verse 34. They were anciently neighbors of the Babylonians. To a great extent, the Slavic people in Eastern Europe are descendants of Elam. Many of the Slavic peoples trace back to the Elamites.

In verse 36, it describes the Elamites anciently being scattered; this is what happened. They were scattered and basically went into Europe as a captive people, captive to the Assyrians (Germans). They have kind of always lived there, sandwiched in and dominated by either the Germans on the west or the Russians on the east. It's been the story of Middle Europe in the area of Poland and down through Czechoslovakia and some of that area. It is kind of a tragic story because their whole history has been one of being sandwiched between two strong and aggressive peoples.

Jeremiah 50 has prophecies of Babylon and God dealing with Babylon. We find that Babylon is going to be utterly destroyed.

Verses 9-15 describe Babylon being destroyed and not inhabited.

Jeremiah 50:39, "Therefore the wild desert beasts shall dwell there with the jackals, and the ostriches shall dwell in it. It shall be inhabited no more forever, nor shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation." Ancient Babylon was overthrown. The city of Nimrod was overthrown.

Now, interestingly enough, some of the statements here in Jeremiah 50 are paraphrased back in Revelation 18 when it describes Babylon the Great being overthrown. Just as ancient Babylon was overthrown by the Medes and the Persians coming in, so the allusion is to modern Babylon (Babylon the Great and coming down to modern Rome) will be overthrown by an attack

by the modern descendants of the Medes and the Persians. This will ultimately be fulfilled with a Russian counterattack (a pendulum swing) that is going to occur. There is going to be a Russian falling out with the Beast power and destruction.

When you read Revelation 18, you read of something in terms of destruction that went beyond the implication of anything available in the time that John wrote it because it was really a nuclear destruction. It describes the ships and the sea standing afar off for fear of her torment. They saw the smoke of her burning coming up and they stayed afar off for fear of her torment (Revelation 18:9-10). A very apt description of what you would see in a nuclear attack. What do you see? You see a mushroom-shaped cloud and you stay far off for fear of her torment, the fallout that comes as a result—a very apt description.

Jeremiah 50 describes what is going to occur to Babylon.

Verse 15, "...her foundations have fallen, her walls are thrown down; for it is the vengeance of the Lord. Take vengeance on her. As she has done, so do to her."

Verse 23, "...How Babylon has become a desolation among the nations...."

Verse 31, "...for your day has come, the time that I will punish you."

Verse 38, we find a description, "...For it is the land of carved images, and they are insane with their idols."

How is God going to deal with Babylon?

Verses 9-15 show that Babylon will be utterly destroyed and will no more be inhabited.

Verse 23, "...has become a desolation...."

Verses 35-39 show God's dealing with Babylon and show that Babylon will be utterly destroyed to be no more inhabited.

God is going to use the Medes and the Persians to inflict this (vv. 41-42).

Verse 41, "...a people shall come from the north, and a great nation and many kings shall be raised from the ends of the earth."

Verse 42, "...they are cruel...."

Jeremiah 51:11, "...The Lord has raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes. For His plan is against Babylon to destroy it...." It describes the destruction.

Verses 27, "Set up a banner in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations! Prepare the nations against her, call the kingdoms together against her: Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz...." This is describing certain geographical areas between the Black and the Caspian Seas, Soviet Central

Asia, some of that area where there is a lot of trouble and strife going on right now—the area of Soviet Armenia. “...the area of Ararat, Minni and Ashchenaz....”

It describes these people being allied with the king of the Medes who is going to come and make Babylon a desolation (vv. 28-29). The kings of the Medes would trace back to modern Ukrainians; some of the modern peoples of the Soviet Union and European Russia go back to the ancient Medes. They all go back to the ancient Medes. The Medes did it anciently and they are going to do it again.

I think what we are clearly seeing is a transition that is taking place in Europe. There is a vacuum being created by the falling apart of a strong, unified, cohesive, dominant Soviet Union. We are seeing a fracturing taking place. I think that it is very likely that portions of the Soviet Union will come into the orbit of the Beast power, at least for a period of time. It's not clear to what extent some portions of it will be formally part of the Beast power and to what extent some will simply be allied with it. But the Beast could never rise or have risen had the Soviet Union stayed the dominant power that it was.

What we are seeing is a fracturing. We are seeing disillusionment with Communism. What's going to occur yet future is disillusionment with the resurging Catholic Europe that is going to take place. We are going to see a pendulum swing, a reaction that is going to take place at least in some of the nations that were constituents of the Soviet Union. Whether they come back together again in exactly the same configuration, we don't know. But there will be an alliance of many of those nations that are going to turn on that end-time Beast power and are going to attack it. The modern descendants of the Medes are going to literally sack modern Babylon (Rome) and leave it absolutely totally desolate, as Revelation 18 describes in detail.

Clearly, Revelation 18 is describing our time today because the ancient city of Babylon that Jeremiah is discussing here was destroyed. John was not talking about the ancient Babylon. He was talking about a modern end-time event.

Revelation 17:2, Jeremiah describes the Beast power, ““with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.””

Jeremiah 51:7, it's a paraphrase of, ““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.””

Revelation 18:2-4, “And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.’ And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.’”

That great city, Babylon the Great, is the name that is written in Revelation 17.

Revelation 17:5, “And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”

Revelation 17:2, ““with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.””

Jeremiah 51:7-9, now compare that with, “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 has suddenly fallen and been destroyed. Wail for her! Take balm for her pain; perhaps she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed. Forsake her, and let us go everyone to his own country; for her judgment reaches to heaven and is lifted up to the skies.” What John wrote in Revelation 17 is a paraphrase of Jeremiah 51:7.

Let's go on a little further.

Revelation 18:2-4, “And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.’ And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.’”

Verse 10, “standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’” John paraphrased some of

the statements that Jeremiah made in Jeremiah 51:6-8.

Jeremiah 51:11, “Make the arrows bright! Gather the shields! The Lord has raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes. For His plan is against Babylon to destroy it, because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance for His temple.”

It describes this destruction.

Verse 27, “Set up a banner in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations! Prepare the nations against her, call the kingdoms together against her: Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz [this would refer to certain areas actually descriptive geographically of the areas between the Black and the Caspian Seas, Soviet Central Asia, some of that area where there is a lot of trouble and strife going on right now, the area of Soviet Armenia]...”

Verses 28-29 describe these people being allied, “Prepare against her the nations, with the kings of the Medes, its governors and all its rulers, all the land of his dominion. And 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.”

“The kings of the Medes”—the ancient Medes we would basically trace back to modern Ukrainians and some of the modern peoples of the Soviet Union and European Russia. They go back to the ancient Medes. So we see a destruction that is going to come. The Medes did it anciently; they are going to do it again. I think we are clearly seeing a transition taking place in Europe. There is a vacuum being created by the falling apart of a strong, unified, cohesive dominant Soviet Union. We are seeing a fracturing taking place. I think it is very likely that portions of the Soviet Union will come into the orbit of the Beast power, at least for a period of time. To what extent some portions of it will be formally part of the Beast power and to what extent they will simply be allied with it, I don’t know, but the Beast could never rise or have risen had the Soviet Union stayed the dominant power that it was. What we are seeing is a fracturing. We are seeing a disillusionment with Communism. What’s going to occur yet future is a disillusionment with the resurging Catholic Europe that is going to take place. We are going to see a pendulum swing, a reaction that is going to take place at least in some of the nations that were constituents of the Soviet Union—whether they come back together again in exactly or what configuration—but an alliance

of many of those nations that are going to turn on that end-time Beast power and are going to attack it. The modern descendants of the Medes are going to literally sack modern Babylon (Rome) and leave it as absolutely totally desolate as Revelation 18 describes in detail. Clearly Revelation 18 is describing our time today because the ancient city of Babylon that Jeremiah is discussing here was destroyed. John was not talking about ancient Babylon. He was talking about a modern end-time event. Jeremiah describes the Beast power.

Revelation 17:2 is a paraphrase of Jeremiah 51:7.

Revelation 18:2-3, “And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.’” That great city, Babylon the great. That is the name that’s written in Revelation 17:5, “...BABYLON THE GREAT...”

Revelation 17:2, notice, “with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”

Jeremiah 51:7, now compare that with, “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.”

Verse 8-9, “Babylon has suddenly fallen and been destroyed. Wail for her! Take balm for her pain; perhaps she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed. Forsake her, and let us go everyone to his own country; for her judgment reaches to heaven and is lifted up to the skies.”

What John wrote in Revelation 17:2 is a paraphrase of Jeremiah 51:7.

Let’s go a little further.

Revelation 18:4, “And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.’”

Verse 10, coming on down, “standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’”

Jeremiah 51:6-8, “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. 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 has suddenly fallen and been destroyed. Wail for her! Take balm for her pain; perhaps she may be healed."

John basically paraphrased some of the statements that Jeremiah said.

Verse 11, "Make the arrows bright! Gather the shields! The Lord has raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes. For His plan is against Babylon to destroy it, because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance for His temple."

So it was to be the king of the Medes who was to come and to destroy Babylon. The quotation in Revelation shows that the main application is to the end time and the end-time Babylon because Revelation 18 clearly has the context of the end time. But there is a reference and an allusion in Revelation 18 back to Jeremiah 50 and 51.

Isaiah 21:9, in fact, we would also note, "And look, here comes a chariot of men with a pair of horsemen! And he answered and said, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen! And all the carved images of her gods He has broken to the ground.'" "Babylon is fallen, is fallen!"

Revelation 18:2, "And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!'"

Notice any similarities? You think John ever read the book of Isaiah or Jeremiah? You find that one prophet picks up and goes into greater detail where the other one left off.

Isaiah and Jeremiah looked forward to the literal destruction of the literal city of Babylon, but what they said went beyond their time and day and had implications for the future. John, in the book of Revelation, saw an event on out beyond. He saw events of modern Babylon, the daughter of Babylon, as it is sometimes called in prophecy (Isaiah 47:1; Jeremiah 50:42; Jeremiah 51:33)—Modern Babylon, Babylon the Great.

John picks up and quotes or paraphrases a quotation from Isaiah and Jeremiah and gives more details. So you have to go back to Isaiah and Jeremiah to understand part of it. When does this destruction come? When does this fire come on Babylon? Her plagues as we are told in Revelation 18:8 are going to come in one day. Death, mourning and famine mean she is going to be utterly burned with fire (v. 18). It describes this fiery destruction of Babylon.

Verses 9-10, it is going to have smoke that ascends so high that ships way out at sea see it from a distance and stay far off for fear of her torment.

In reading it today, we can see it in the context of modern technology; we realize that's what happens if you drop a nuclear bomb on a place. The ships that are at a far distance see that mushroom-shaped cloud on the horizon and they keep their distance. Who is going to do that? Who is going to drop it? When we fit in the book of Isaiah, we see that the allusion is clearly the Medes or the end-time descendants of the Medes.

Jeremiah 50:18-20, another indication, "Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria. But I will bring back Israel to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan; his soul shall be satisfied on Mount Ephraim and Gilead. In those days and in that time,' says the Lord, 'The iniquity of Israel shall be sought, but there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, but they shall not be found; for I will pardon those whom I preserve.'"

This is the end time. This is future. This is the time when Israel and Judah are going to be pardoned, the time when they are both going to be brought back. Israel is going to come back to their habitation. It ranks the destruction of Babylon with the redemption of Israel.

In verse 20, it mentions both Israel and Judah. It will be a time when they are going to be pardoned and their sins are going to be forgiven. Israel and Judah are going to be re-gathered. Clearly, this shows Babylon's punishment in the light of God's deliverance of Israel at Christ's second coming.

We see that while there was a literal fulfillment, it also looked beyond their day to our day and beyond. It is important for us to realize these things are sure. They are going to happen, and God provides word of it here through His prophets.

Jeremiah 52 concludes the book of Jeremiah. This is just kind of a historical inset. It shows the total destruction that the Babylonians wreaked upon Judah, Jerusalem and the temple.

Jeremiah 52:10-11, "Then the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. And he killed all the princes of Judah in Riblah. He also put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in bronze fetters, took him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his

death.” They killed the sons of King Zedekiah, slew the princes, blinded Zedekiah and took him as a slave to Babylon.

Verses 12-13, “Now in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month (which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), Nebuchadnezzar, the captain of the guard, who served the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. He burned the house of the Lord and the king’s house, all the houses of Jerusalem....”

They burned the city, destroyed the temple and the palace and, verse 14, they broke down the walls.

Verse 15, “Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive....”

They totally destroyed that area. We get a little bit of insight into the destruction that the Babylonians wreaked upon ancient Jerusalem. Interestingly enough, the Romans, the successors of ancient Babylon, did the same thing to Jerusalem and Judah in 70 A.D. And, ironically, they did it on the same day. They did it on the anniversary of the destruction—the tenth day of the fifth month, the ninth and tenth of Ab. Ab is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar, which corresponds to our July/August (latter part of July, first part of August). The Jews, in commemoration of the Babylonian destruction, made the ninth day of Ab a day of national fasting and mourning—kind of like the Fourth of July in reverse. It was a day of mourning for the destruction of their nation, loss of independence and the destruction of the temple. They read the book of Lamentations and fasted on that day.

When the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D., they did it on the same day. The Orthodox Jews to this day continue to observe it as a day of mourning. It now commemorates the destruction of both temples.

Next time, we will get into the book of Ezekiel. We are now two-thirds through. We have just the book of Ezekiel left. There is an awful lot that is packed into these Major Prophets and these things that God has inspired to be recorded. Ultimately, the Bible has been preserved for us. It has been preserved for our admonition that we might study it and learn from it. Some things may have direct reference in terms of prophecy. Other things we may learn simply by example and illustration—seeing examples of what has happened to God’s people and God’s servants in the past and realizing that God’s people today, undoubtedly, will face parallel things between now and the end of the age. There will be many things that we will face and go through.