

Lift Up a Banner in the Land, Blow the Shofar Among the Nations

51: 27-44

DIG: Who are the Gentiles who rise up and fight against Babylon and the antichrist? How will those loyal to the antichrist behave? What will happen to the land of Babylon? Who will live there? How long will her condition last? What is significant about the owl in the Bible? What is the Law of Double Reference? How is it applied here?

REFLECT: Is there a problem in your life that is so overwhelming that you have stopped fighting? Can you give it to the Lord? Is there a heap of ruins in your life that you need to leave behind? Can you give it to Jesus?

These prophecies were made in 594-593 BC during the eleven-year reign of Zedekiah

This is the word ADONAI spoke through Yirmeyahu the prophet concerning **far eschatological** Babylon and the land of the Babylonians (50:1 and 51:1a):

The lead nation will be the **Medes** (see below), but an alliance of nations will be involved in the destruction of Babylon at the end of the Great Tribulation. **Lift up a banner in the Land! Blow the shofar among the nations! Prepare the [Gentile] nations for battle against her: summon against her these kingdoms: Ararat** (Armenia in turkey and southern Russia today), **Minni** (Lake Van in Turkey and Lake Urmia in northwestern Iran near the Turkish border) and **Ashkenaz** (Germany and the Baltic region). **Appoint a commander against her; send up horses like a swarm of locusts (51:27).**

YHVH declares: Prepare the nations for battle against her - **the lead nation**, the kings of the **Medes**, their governors and all their officials, and all the countries they rule because His purpose is to destroy Babylon (51:28 also see 50:41 and 51:11a). We are told elsewhere in Scripture that the antichrist rules all the nations of the world. So how can these other nations come up against him? The word nations means *goyim* or **Gentiles**. Even though the antichrist will control all the governments of the world there will be believing **Gentiles** (see the commentary on **Revelation Fc- The Sheep and the Goats**) who will not go along with the party line of these governments who will be subservient to him. These pro-Jewish **sheep** Gentiles will form underground guerilla-warfare type groups. So the

word **kings** here is used loosely as **leaders**. For example in **Joshua**, the term **king** is used of one city-state rather than the **king** of an entire nation. We saw something similar in World War II when Germany captured France, Poland and Holland. The official governments were pro-Nazi, but there were underground forces such as the French and Polish.

The land trembles and writhes, for ADONAI's purpose against Babylon stand - to lay waste the land of Babylon so that no one, not one single person, will live there (51:29). The **far eschatological judgment** of the city of Babylon (see the commentary on **Revelation Er - Babylon Will Never Be Found Again**) can be found in **Jeremiah** itself (51:39-43, 61-64). There we find the owl (see Ad - **The Owl as a Symbol of Judgment**).

Babylon's warriors become panic stricken. They withdraw to their strongholds. Their power of resistance gone, their strength exhausted, they became weak and stop fighting. Paralyzed with fear, they see their houses set on fire and the bars of her gates broken. The utter collapse of **Babylon's warriors** is referred to several times in these chapters (51:30, 36-37 and 43, 51:30 and 32). However, when Cyrus the Great captured Babylon in 539 BC there was no fighting because the city was taken unopposed (see Ez - **A Message Against Babylon**).

A message is sent out to the **antichrist** because he is attacking **Jerusalem** when **Babylon** is destroyed. He will probably remove virtually all of his army out of **Babylon**, leaving only a small auxiliary force behind. The underground guerilla-warfare groups will take advantage of that opportunity to attack and destroy **Babylon**. One courier follows another and messenger follows messenger. The messengers bring news of defeat after defeat. They seem to meet the king from all sides. As one messenger who has already given the bad news leaves, he is met by another messenger bringing more bad news. To announce to the king of Babylon that his empire city is captured, the river crossing seized, the marshes set on fire, and the soldiers terrified (51:31-32).

This is what ADONAI-Tzva'ot, the God of Isra'el says: Daughter of Babylon (the people of **Babylon** loyal to the antichrist) is like a threshing floor at the time it is trampled. When an area for threshing was trampled down to prepare it for winnowing, then the people knew that the time to harvest her will soon come (51:33). Likewise when the city of **Babylon** will be trampled down by these invaders, then the people will know that God's harvest of judgment was just around the corner.³⁰⁹

The fact that **51:37** below is placed in the context of this verse places it in the **far eschatological future**. But then **Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon** is mentioned! This verse says that **Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has devoured (killed) us, he has thrown us into confusion, and he has made (our City) like an empty jar**. Then more figurative language: **Like a serpent he has swallowed (killed) us and filled his stomach with our delicacies, and then has spewed us out into captivity (51:34)**. This might be confusing if it were not for *the Law of Double Reference*.

This law observes the fact that often a passage of a block of Scripture is speaking of two different persons or two different events that are separated by a long period of time. In the passage itself they are blended into one picture, and the time gap between the two persons or two events is not presented by the text itself. The fact that a gap of time exists at all is known because of other Scriptures. But in that particular text itself the gap of time is not seen. A good illustration of this law would be **the king of Tyre in Ezekiel 28**. There was a real **king of Tyre**, but **he** and **Satan** are blended together into one picture.

Another example of this law is some of the prophecies of the TaNaKh regarding the First and Second Coming of **the Messiah**. Often these two events are blended into one picture with no indication that there is a gap at all. **Zechariah 9:9-10** is a good example of *The Law of Double Reference*. **Verse 9** is speaking of the First Coming, but **verse 10** is speaking of the Second Coming. These two comings are blended into one picture with no indication that there is a separation of time between them. Another example is **Isaiah 11:1-5**. **Verses 1-2** speak of the First Coming, while **verses 3-5** speak of the Second Coming. Again, the two are blended into one picture with no indication of a gap of time between the two.

Because many of the prophetic passages follow this principle of *the Law of Double Reference*, this is an important law to know. Hence, as **the king of Tyre** was representative of Satan, **Nebuchadnezzar** is representative of the antichrist.

For such unspeakable viciousness **Yerushalayim** calls for vengeance upon **her** captors. **"May the violence done to our flesh be on Babylon,"** say the inhabitants of Zion. **"May our blood be on those who live in Babylonia,"** says Tziyon (**51:35**).

Therefore this is what ADONAI says to the Jews in Bozrah: See, I will defend your cause and avenge you; I will dry up her sea [Euphrates] (See the commentary on **Revelation Eg - The Sixth Angel Poured Out His Bowl and I Saw Three Evil Spirits That Looked Like Frogs**), and make her springs dry (**Jeremiah 51:36**; also see **Psalm 107:33-35**; **Isaiah 45:8**; **John 7:37-38**; **Revelation 21:6**).

Far eschatological prophecy: Babylon will be a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals, an object of horror and scorn, a place where no one lives (51:37, also see the commentary [Isaiah Dk - Babylon, the Jewel of Kingdoms, Will Be Overthrown](#)).

At first all her people pretend like they are very brave and roar like a pride of young lions, they growl like lion cubs. But it's all a bluff. But while they are aroused, I will set out a feast for them and make them drunk with the cup of My wrath (25:1ff), so that they shout with laughter - then they will die, and sleep forever and not awake, declares the LORD. The lion cubs will be as sacrificial lambs led to the slaughter, like rams and goats (51:38-40). Just as lambs do not resist their own slaughter, even so, **far eschatological** Babylon will not resist.

How Sheshak (a cryptic name for Babylon, an *atbash*) will be captured, the boast of the whole earth seized! How desolate Babylon will be among the nations (51:41)! An *atbash* was a code in which the letters of a name counted from the end of the alphabet are substituted for the corresponding letters from the beginning of the alphabet. For example, in English the letter "z" would replace the letter "a," the letter "y" would replace the letter "b," and so on. The name "Abby" as an *atbash* would become "zyyb."

The sea has flooded Babylon; overwhelmed her with its raging waves. Whenever the Bible uses symbols, it uses them consistently. When the picture of a flood is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of a military invasion. Her cities will be desolate, a dry and desert land, a land where no one lives or travels through (51:42-43 CJB and see 51:37 above). Whether swallowed by the sea or scorched by the sun, Jeremiah's point was the same . . . Babylon would be destroyed.

Once again we see the law of Double Reference (see above). I will punish Bel in Babylon and make him spew out what he has swallowed. The nations will no longer stream to him. And the wall of Babylon will fall (51:44). Bel was judged when Cyrus the Great conquered Babylon in 539 BC and Satan will be judged when the antichrist and his armies fall when Messiah returns (see the commentary on [Isaiah Kg - The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to Bozrah](#)).