

**Verse-by Verse Studies of
Selected Prophetic Passages from
the Book of Jeremiah**

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I’ll quote from the New American Standard Bible, 1995 edition, unless otherwise noted. Frequently I’ll make comments in the middle of quotations in brackets [] or [] to make them more obvious.

Introduction

I’ll comment briefly on the content of each of the chapters of this paper:

Jeremiah chapter 3. This chapter is typical of much of the prophecy of the Old Testament. There is a strong emphasis on the seriousness of the sin problem of large numbers of the people of Israel/Judah, very much including the serious sin of “worshipping” other gods along with Yahweh, which was rebellion against God and His Law and spiritual adultery against Him. To make matters even worse, their worship of the other gods often involved things like demonic immorality, and even human sacrifice along with the idolatry. And there is an emphasis on God’s intense judgments that came on the northern kingdom (often called Israel) and the southern kingdom (often called Judah) because of their sin. (The nation Israel split into two kingdoms after the death of King Solomon.)

Also, as is typical for many such prophecies, there is hope for the future. Eventually the end-time remnants of both kingdoms will repent and return to God (after His end-time shaking), and they will be saved with a very full salvation. They will be saved with new-covenant salvation in the Messiah (see Jer. 31:27-34, for example). In Jeremiah 3:16 Yahweh says, “they will no longer say, ‘The ark of the covenant of the LORD [Yahweh].’ And it will no longer come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor will they miss *it*, nor will it be made again.” The ark of the covenant, which played a major role in the old covenant, will not be needed in the new covenant, which goes very far beyond the old covenant in glory and is able to solve the sin, spiritual death, bondage to sin problem; to totally overthrow Satan and his hosts; and to ultimately take us to God’s new heaven and new earth with its new Jerusalem, where we (true Israel) will reign with God and His Son forever (see Revelation chapter 22, for example). True Israel embraces all of the believers from the Old Testament and all true Christians.

This chapter includes the common prophetic theme that God will also save the repentant remnant of the other nations at the end of this age (after His end-time judgment of the world). This chapter doesn’t mention God’s end-time judgment of the world that is often mentioned by the Old Testament prophets and in the New Testament. Sometimes these prophecies don’t make it clear that they have jumped from dealing with things that were happening in the days of the prophets (like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, or Zechariah, for example), or things that were prophesied to happen in subsequent years, to the end of this age, but this happens quite often in these prophecies, which becomes obvious when you study these prophecies from our present point of view, which includes the light we

have from the New Testament. And these prophecies often make it clear that they are speaking of things that will come to pass at the end of this age by using words like in the last days, at the time of the end, or by saying things like God will make His people righteous and they will never go astray again.

Jeremiah 16:14-21. These verses, like so many of the verses we are studying in this paper, look to the end of this age when God will save the repentant end-time remnant of the people of Israel after intensely judging them. These verses also include the familiar prophetic theme that He will save the repentant end-time remnant of the nations after His end-time judgment of the world. God will awaken the end-time remnant of the nations and bring them to repentance through the things that He does, which includes His powerful acts of saving and judging.

Jeremiah 23:1-8. Yahweh starts out in this passage rebuking the shepherds (leaders) of Israel, who played such a major role in the sinfulness and consequent judgment of the people of Israel. (Verse 6 shows that this passage includes the people of Israel and Judah). But then He comes to the familiar good news that the time will come (at the end of this age) when He will gather and save the repentant remnant of Israel and He will raise up righteous and good shepherds for them. Those shepherds center in the Lord Jesus Christ. I'll quote verses 5, 6. " 'Behold days are coming,' declares the LORD [Yahweh], 'When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch [which prophesies of the Lord Jesus Christ (who in one sense is a descendant of King David), who is the only one able to save God's people]; and He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. (6) In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD [Yahweh] our righteousness.' " The Lord Jesus Christ is the only one able to solve the spiritual death, bondage to sin problem and make believers righteous with the imparted righteousness of Yahweh, through His atoning death, resurrection, and subsequent ministry. So too, He is the only one able to overthrow the enemies of God's people, starting with the devil.

Jeremiah Chapter 30. The prophecies contained in this chapter look to the end of this age when God will judge Israel (both the northern and southern kingdoms are mentioned) and then save the remnant of Israel with a very full salvation through the Messiah, and judge their enemies. I'll read verse 7, "Alas! For that day is great, There is none like it: And it is the time of Jacob's [Israel's] distress, but he will be saved from it." The great distress (or we could translate, the great tribulation) that Jeremiah prophesied about for Israel here has a lot in common with what Daniel prophesied in Dan. 12:1, which includes the words, "there will be a time of distress (or, tribulation) such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time...."

There is widespread agreement that Jesus words about the short great tribulation of Matt. 24:21, 22 build on Dan. 12:1. That time of distress/tribulation will start for Israel at the time of Antichrist's abomination (about a month before the middle of Daniel's 70th week), and it will be over by the time the Lord Jesus returns and the rapture takes place, right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week. Based on Zech. 13:8, we can apparently see that some two-thirds of the people of Israel will be cut off at that time, but the third (the end-time remnant of Israel) will be saved by the Messiah (the Lord Jesus). They will be

saved, but not in time to be taken in the mid-week rapture. Daniel 12:1 and all of these details are discussed in my book, “The Mid-Week Rapture.” Also see my papers that deal with the end times on my internet site.

Jeremiah 30:9, 21 prophesy of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. I’ll quote these verses, “But they [the repentant, saved end-time remnant of Israel] shall serve the LORD [Yahweh] their God [God the Father] and David their king.” “David their king” here refers to the Lord Jesus Christ (as in Ezek. 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25; compare Jer. 23:5; 33:15, 16; Hos. 3:5; see under Jer. 30:9 in this paper). And I’ll read Jer. 30:21, “Their leader [referring to the Lord Jesus Christ] shall be one of them, And their ruler shall come forth from their midst; And I will bring him near and he shall approach Me; For who would dare to risk His life to approach Me?” declares the LORD [Yahweh].” Once we understand that the Lord Jesus Christ is God the Son, who became a man, the God-man (a Jew in physical descent), we can fully appreciate these prophetic words. What a salvation plan! What a Savior!

Jeremiah Chapter 31. The words of the first line of verse 17 summarize a big part of God’s prophetic message for the future of Israel (including both kingdoms), “ ‘There is hope for your future,’ declares the LORD [Yahweh].” This chapter puts some emphasis on God’s saving the remnant of the northern kingdom, but Judah is very much included in this chapter. Ultimately the end-time remnant of the people of Israel will return to God, and He will save them, and they will be faithful to Him. There is widespread agreement that the unusual words at the end of verse 22 prophesy of that faithfulness. I’ll quote verse 22, “How long will you go here and here, O faithless daughter [referring to the people of Israel]? For the LORD [Yahweh] has created a new thing in the earth—A woman will encompass a man.”

Verses 31-34 show how God will change the heart of the repentant people of Israel at the end of this age and make them righteous and holy—through new-covenant salvation. I’ll quote these super-important verses, “ ‘Behold, days are coming,’ declares the LORD [Yahweh], when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, (32) not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt, My covenant which they broke [God didn’t give the old covenant to fully solve the spiritual death, bondage to sin problem. The new birth didn’t become available until the Lamb of God had solved the spiritual death, bondage to sin problem through His all-important atoning death.], although I was a husband to them,’ declares the LORD [Yahweh].’ (33) But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,’ declares the LORD [Yahweh], ‘I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it [This saving work of God is accomplished through the Lord Jesus Christ and His atoning death. After His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God the Father, He received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit to pour out on all those who repent and submit to God’s new covenant plan of salvation in faith. This saving work redeems believers from spiritual death and bondage to sin and enables them to live in the righteousness and holiness of God. For one thing, instead of giving them the Law (as at Mt. Sinai) and telling them to take the Law into their hearts and to live in line with that Law, He puts His moral Law into their hearts through new-covenant salvation. In Hebrews chapters 8 and 10 the writer of Hebrews quotes and discusses these prophetic words and confirms this interpretation.

See my book, *Holiness and Victory Over Sin* on pages 159, 160 and 156-163.]; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. (34) They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD [Yahweh],’ for they will all know Me [as His born-again, sanctified children], from the least of them to the greatest of them,’ declares the LORD [Yahweh], ‘for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.’ ” Total forgiveness is an important part of new-covenant salvation, but the new birth and transformation to the righteousness and holiness of God are even more important. Total forgiveness and the new birth and transformation to the righteousness and holiness of God come by the saving grace of God in Christ, based on the atoning death of the Lamb of God.

Jeremiah 32:36-44. These verses prophesy of God’s gathering His people out of all the lands where He had driven them in judgment and His giving them “one heart and one way, that they may fear [Him] always, for their own good...” (Jer. 32:39). He “will make an everlasting covenant with them” (Jer. 32:40), the new covenant of Jer. 31:31-34, that will once-for-all solve the sin problem.

Jeremiah Chapter 33. I’ll quote verses 15, 16, which are verses of key importance, “In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch of David to spring forth [These words refer to the Lord Jesus Christ, who in one sense was a descendant of King David.]; and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth. [In this context, one of the first things He will do is to save the end-time remnant of Israel/Judah and make them righteous with new-covenant salvation. By the time He has finished His end-time work of saving and judging worldwide, He will have established righteousness throughout His worldwide kingdom. The unrepentant will have be removed by judgment, and the end-time remnant of the nations will be converted and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ and the One who sent Him.] (16) In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell in safety; and this is the name by which she [referring to Jerusalem] will be called: the LORD [Yahweh] is our Righteousness.”

God is the only source for righteousness, holiness, life, real love, etc. He will make His people (which includes the end-time remnant of Israel/Judah and the end-time remnant of the nations) righteous by forgiving them and imparting His righteousness to them through “the righteous Branch of David.” By the time His work is finished, God will have established His new heaven and new earth with its new Jerusalem, where everything will be permeated with His righteousness. No one will have a place in that eternal kingdom whose name is not found in the Lamb’s book of life (Rev. 21:27), which means that they have been saved through the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jeremiah 48:47; 49:6, 38, 39. These verses prophesy of God’s salvation of the end-time remnants of Moab, Ammon, and Elam after His end-time judgment of the world. These three ancient nations are representative of the end-time remnant of the nations worldwide that God will save after His end-time judgment of the world. This remnant of the nations will enter the millennial kingdom pictured, for example, in Rev. 15:4; 20:3.

Jeremiah chapters 50, 51. Jeremiah chapters 50 and 51 prophesy at some length of God’s judgment of ancient Babylon, the nation that destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and

carried Judah into exile.¹ (The Assyrians had already carried the people of the northern kingdom into captivity before the days of Jeremiah; Samaria, the capital city of the northern kingdom, fell in 722/721 BC.) One feature that makes these prophetic chapters so interesting and important is that a large number of these verses prophesy of things that will not come to pass, or will not come to pass in a full sense, until the end of this age,² when God judges the world (*Babylon* is used as a symbol for the world-kingdom; cf., e.g., Isaiah chapters 13, 14; Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:1-19:6³) and saves the end-time remnants of Judah and Israel (cf. Jer. 50:4, 5, 20, 33, 34; 51:5) and the remnant of the nations (cf. Jer. 50:3, 8, 16, 28, 34; 51:6, 9, 10, 44, 45 with verses like Jer. 3:17).

The book of Revelation devotes some three prophetic chapters to God's judgment and total removal of Babylon the great, where Babylon is a symbol for the world (whose god is the devil). Those prophecies build (to some extent) on Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 and on other Old Testament prophecies. The book of Revelation shows that God uses Antichrist and his associates and forces to destroy Babylon (Rev. 17:16-18). After that He destroys Antichrist and his followers, after gathering them to Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-16; 19:11-21), He will cast the devil (and undoubtedly the evil angels and demons) into the abyss for the duration of the millennial kingdom. These judgments constitute a big part of what God's end-time judgment of the world is all about.⁴

I'll quote a few sentences from what Derek Kidner says here.⁵ "...Revelation 17-18 opens our eyes to another dimension of the Babylon of these chapters: as the embodiment of this world's corrupt power and glory, and the archetypal opposite of Zion the city of

¹ It is clear that the prophetic words contained in Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 include God's judgment of ancient Babylon. Consider, for example, Jer. 50:17, 18; (which mention Nebuchadnezzar [also see Jer. 51:34] and speak of God's judgments of ancient Assyria and Babylon); Jer. 51:11, 28 (which mention the Medes, who played a major role in the overthrow of ancient Babylon); Jer. 50:2; 51:44 (which mention *Bel*, the chief god of the Babylonians); and Jer. 51:59-64 (verses that include God's judgment of ancient Babylon, but these prophetic words will not come to pass in a full sense until God judges the world at the end of this age).

² I am not suggesting that Jeremiah fully understood that God would judge Babylon in the near future (cf. Jer. 25:12; 29:10) but that much of his prophecy of Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 (for example) would not be fulfilled until the end of this age. I don't know how much he understood, but the important thing is that God, who gave these prophecies to Jeremiah, fully understood. Sometimes, for example, the Old Testament prophets would combine in one prophecy things that would come to pass at Jesus' first coming with things that will come to pass at His second coming, with no apparent recognition of His two very different comings (cf., e.g. Isa. 9:1-7; 11:1-10; and 61:1-3). The prophets were dependent on how much God chose to reveal to them. God's revelation is progressive. From our perspective, now that Jesus' first coming has been accomplished, we can better understand many Old Testament prophecies, but we still are dependent on God to enable us to fully understand many prophecies. It's important for us to understand just how dependent we are on God and His grace in every area.

³ Isaiah 13:6-13 and chapter 14 are discussed verse-by-verse in my paper dealing with selected eschatological prophecies of Isaiah. Revelation 14:6-19:21 are discussed verse-by-verse in another paper. Both papers are included on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching).

⁴ God will leave true Israel (which includes all true Christians, including the end-time remnant of Israel, and all the believers from the days of the Old Testament) and the remnant of the nations to enter the millennial kingdom. I believe all the members of true Israel will be glorified by the time the millennial kingdom begins. (See pages 243-247 of my book, *The Mid-Week Rapture*.) After dealing with the Gog and Magog rebellion at the end of the millennium, casting Satan (and his followers) into the eternal lake of fire, and the great white throne judgment of Rev. 20:11-15, God will have completed his judging of Satan and his kingdom, including his kingdom of this world.

⁵ *Message of Jeremiah* (Inter-Varsity Press, 1987), page 149.

God. That passage borrows directly from these oracles [in Jeremiah chapters 50, 51], speaking of the *golden cup* with which she makes the nations drunk [Jer. 51:7; Rev. 17:2, 4]; of her judgment reaching up to heaven [Jer. 51:9; Rev. 18:5 (her sins)]; of her fall, to rise no more [Jer. 51:63-64; Rev. 18:21]; summoning God's people to flee from the midst of her, lest they share her punishment [Jer. 50:8; 51:6; Rev. 18:4]. In this capacity, the Babylon of these visions will have no gentle [gradual or incomplete] downfall, but one as catastrophic as anything that the language of ancient warfare can depict."

I'll quote a few sentences from what John L. Mackay says here.⁶ "...Babylon...became the epitome of evil in the New Testament (Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:1-24). What was revealed to Jeremiah regarding its future often anticipates this eschatological world view, so that what the prophet is seeing is a vision not simply of the end of Babylon, but through that, or against that background, of the total destruction of all that opposes God and his people. A similar vision had earlier been granted to Isaiah in terms of the destruction of Edom, which is also set against a much broader background (Isa. 34 [also see Isa. 63])." Edom serves as a symbol for the kingdom of the world in Isaiah chapters 34 and 63.

I am putting most of the emphasis of this study of Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 on the verses that clearly look to God's saving and judging at the end of this age. Especially see Jer. 50:4, 5, 8, 19, 20; 51:6, 15-24, 45, and 58. But also see Jer. 50:2, 3, 12, 13, 21-27, 38-40; 51:24-26, 29, 36-44, 54-58, and 62-64; these verses are also very important to demonstrate that much of the prophecy of Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 looks beyond God's judgment of ancient Babylon to His *total* destruction of the devil's world-kingdom of Babylon in His end-time judgment of the world. God's judgment of ancient Babylon didn't even destroy the city, much less did it totally destroy and remove forever that kingdom and those committed to that kingdom.

⁶ *Jeremiah*, Vol. 2 (Mentor, 2004), page 517.

JEREMIAH CHAPTER 3

God says, “If a husband divorces his wife And she goes from him And belongs to another man, Will he still return to her? [cf. Deut. 24:1-4] Will not that land [with its people] be completely polluted? But you are a harlot *with* many lovers [Compare, for example, Jer. 2:20; Ezek. 16:26, 28, 29. Judah (and Israel, the northern kingdom) had played the harlot with several nations; and worse, they were worshipping the gods of the nations instead of being faithful to God.]; Yet you turn to Me [They would *turn* to God to ask Him for rain in a time of drought (see verse 3), and in other times of need, and they would “worship” Him in the temple on their own terms, but God made it very clear that He would not listen to their requests or accept their “worship” while they were living in sin/wickedness and being unfaithful to Him (cf., e.g., Isa. 1:1-31). We cannot truly worship God if we are not living for Him from our hearts in accordance with His Word.],” declares the LORD [Hebrew *Yahweh*; cf. Ex. 3:13-15⁷]. (2) “Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see [It was on “the bare heights” (and other places, including, on occasion, in the temple at Jerusalem [cf., e.g., Ezekiel chapter 8]) where many of the people of Judah worshipped pagan gods. Compare Deut. 12:2; Jer. 2:20. “So profligate [immoral and shameless] had the nation become that the evidence of her apostasy was to be seen on the bare hilltops, where shrines abounded for the practice of the immoral rites of the fertility cult.”⁸]; Where have you not been violated? By the roads you sat for them Like an Arab in the desert⁹ [cf. Gen. 38:14-22; Ezek. 16:25], And you have polluted a land [“the land” (KJV; NKJV; and NIV); cf. Jer. 2:7] With your harlotry and with your wickedness. (3) Therefore the showers have been withheld, And there has been no spring rain¹⁰ [cf. Lev. 26:19; Deut. 28:23, 24 (contrast Deut. 28:12); Jer. 14:1-6.]. Yet you had a harlot’s forehead; You refused to be ashamed [cf. Jer. 6:15; 8:12]. (4) Have you not just now called to Me, ‘My Father [cf. Jer. 2:27; 3:19; and 31:9], You are the friend of my youth [cf. Psalm 71:17; Jer. 2:2; and Hos. 2:15]? (5) Will He be angry forever [cf. Jer. 3:12]? Will He be indignant to the end? Behold you have spoken And have done evil things [“This is how you talk, but you do all the evil you can” NIV], And you have had your way.” [Their words (quoted by God in verses 4 and 5) amounted to a hypocritical religious complaint against God for not being quick to take away the penalties for their sins that had come upon them when they came to Him with their requests and their “worship,” *with very little, or no, true repentance*. The sin problem in Judah was so great at that time that God was on the verge of pouring out much greater judgment rather than responding to their requests. As the book of Jeremiah shows, He was on the verge of sending the Babylonians to destroy

⁷ These verses and the super-important names *I am* and *Yahweh* are discussed at the beginning of my article titled, “The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son.”

⁸ J. A. Thompson, *Book of Jeremiah* (Eerdmans, 1980), page 192.

⁹ There is widespread agreement in the commentaries that the Arabs were known for waiting in the desert to plunder those passing by.

¹⁰ The “spring rain” (Hebrew *malqosh*) is the “latter rain” (KJV; NKJV), the showers that come in March and April in Israel. The word “showers” used earlier in this verse is translated from the Hebrew noun *rebibim*, which means *copious/abundant* showers. Merrill F. Unger (*Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. II [Moody Press, 1981], page 1353) mentions that these showers are “the early rains in October and November.” On the early and latter rain, see Deut. 11:14.

Jerusalem and the temple and to carry Judah into exile. However, the passages we are studying from the book of Jeremiah in this paper also show that *God will not be angry forever*. The time will come (at the end of this age) when the *repentant, believing* remnants of Judah and Israel will be saved with new-covenant salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ, a salvation that will solve their sin problem.] **(6) Then the LORD [Yahweh] said to me in the days of Josiah the king** [Jeremiah 1:2 shows that the word of the LORD [Yahweh] first came to Jeremiah in the thirteenth year of King Josiah (who reigned, in Jerusalem, over Judah from 640-609 BC), which would have been 627 BC. Josiah was a good king, but the repentance of the people of Judah that took place during his reign was for the most part shallow and unacceptable. After the untimely death of Josiah, Jeremiah ministered through the reigns of Jehoiakim (609-597 BC), Jehoiachin (597 BC), and Zedekiah (597-587/586 BC), kings of Judah, and beyond. The Babylonians destroyed the temple and the city wall and carried King Zedekiah and many other Jews into exile in 587/586 BC. This came as judgment from God for their persistent rebellion against Him. Daniel and his three friends (and others) were carried into exile by the Babylonians earlier, in 605 BC. King Jehoiachin and many other Jews were exiled to Babylon in 597 BC (2 Kings 24:8-17).], **“Have you seen what faithless [apostate] Israel did?** [Israel here refers to the northern kingdom, which had fallen to Assyria (as judgment from God for their persistent rebellion against Him) about a hundred years earlier. The Assyrians had carried most of the Israelites into exile. The capital city of the northern kingdom, Samaria, fell to the Assyrians in 722/721 BC. (See 2 Kings 17:5-23.)] **She went up on every high hill and under every green tree [cf. Jer. 17:2], and she was a harlot there.** [That is, the Israelites were committing spiritual adultery against God with their pagan idolatrous practices.¹¹ Furthermore, they looked to the nations to give them what only God could give them (protection from other nations, for example).] **(7) I thought** [God is still speaking.], **‘After she [Israel (the northern kingdom)] has done all these things she will return to Me’; but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it.** [As verses 8, 10 show, Judah (the southern kingdom) saw God’s very intense judgment of her sister to the north, but she still continued to follow Israel in committing harlotry against God, with only superficial repentance. Verse 11 goes on to show that the fact that Judah saw God’s judgment of Israel and was rebellious enough to continue in the sins of Israel, and other factors, rendered Judah (in some ways) more guilty than Israel before God.] **(8) And I saw** [Some translate “she [Judah] saw,” including the RSV, NRSV, NAB, NEB, and NLT.¹²] **that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce [cf. Deut. 24:1], yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also.** [Although the wording is a little difficult here, the primary idea seems to be that even though God had very severely judged the northern kingdom for her adulterous unfaithfulness, and that Judah was fully aware of what had happened to Israel, He saw that Judah was nevertheless following Israel in her adulterous unfaithfulness. The Hebrew reading “I saw” fits well here, and I assume this was the

¹¹ I’ll quote a few sentences from what J. A. Thompson says under verses 6, 7, and 9 (*Book of Jeremiah*, pages 195, 196). “The reference is to her involvement with the fertility cult (2:20; 3:2, 8, 21; etc). The hilltops and the leafy trees seem to have held a special attraction for those who practiced fertility rites. ... The stones and trees were significant instruments in the fertility cult (cf. 2:27).”

¹² J. A. Thompson (*Book of Jeremiah*, page 194) translates “she saw.” I’ll quote the footnote he has here, “MT [the Hebrew Masoretic text] reads ‘I saw,’ which does not suit the context. We follow LXX [Septuagint] mss., Syr.; see BHS [*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*].”

original reading.¹³], **(9) Because of the lightness of her harlotry** [The NIV translates, “Because Israel’s immorality mattered so little to her.” However, the idea here seems to be that Judah’s harlotry mattered so little to her.¹⁴], **she polluted the land** [cf. Jer. 2:7; 3:2] **and committed adultery with stones and trees** [cf. Isa. 57:6; Jer. 2:27]. **(10) Yet in spite of all this** [in spite of the seriousness of her sin¹⁵] **her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather in deception** [“but only in pretense” NIV; cf. Jer. 12:2; Hos. 7:14;], **declares the LORD [Yahweh]. (11) And the LORD [Yahweh] said to me, “Faithless [apostate] Israel has proved herself more righteous [less sinful] than treacherous Judah** [cf. Ezek. 16:47; 23:11]. [God’s words through Jeremiah powerfully warned the people of Judah that they must repent, or else. As the following verses show, God also had words of hope for Israel (the northern kingdom) and for Judah.] **(12) [Verses 12-18 prophesy of God’s ultimate salvation of the end-time repentant remnants of Judah and of Israel.¹⁶ Verse 18 speaks of the repentant end-time remnants of Judah and Israel coming together to God at Jerusalem. They are pictured coming from the places they have been taken captive by the nations (as judgment from God). Verse 17 includes the common prophetic theme that (the remnant of the peoples of) the nations will also come to Jerusalem to worship God in the last days, after His end-time judgment of the world (see Rev. 15:4; 20:3, for example). Verse 16 confirms that the context of these prophetic words is the end times, when Judah and Israel experience new-covenant salvation, as in Deut. 30:1-6; Jer. 30:4, 8-11; 31:27-34, for example. At that time the ark of the covenant (and all of the other ceremonial features of the old covenant), which was based on the Mosaic Law, will have been forgotten because of the far greater glories of new-covenant salvation through and in the Lord Jesus Christ.] Go and proclaim these words toward the north and say, ‘Return, faithless [apostate] Israel [cf. verses 14, 22],’ declares the LORD [Yahweh]; ‘I will not look upon you in anger [cf. verse 5]. For I am gracious,’ declares the LORD [cf., e.g., Psalm 86:15; Jer. 12:15; 31:20; and 33:26]; ‘I will not be angry forever. [God doesn’t have a problem forgiving those who truly repent and submit to Him and His Word.] (13) Only acknowledge your iniquity [cf. Jer. 3:23-25], That you have transgressed against the LORD [Yahweh] your God And have scattered your favors to the strangers under every green tree [cf. Jer. 2:20, 25; 3:2, 6; and Deut. 12:2], And you have not obeyed**

¹³ “What God saw is not the adultery and rejection or divorce of Israel, but that Judah nevertheless had no fear in committing and persisting in the self-same sin.” C. F. Keil, Volume 8 of the *Commentary on the Old Testament* by Keil and Delitzsch (Eerdmans), page 86.

¹⁴ I’ll quote part of what J. A. Thompson says here, “The explanation of Judah’s behavior was simple. Her apostasy was so great that her sensitiveness to the demands of her covenant with Yahweh had become dulled so that she regarded adultery as something insignificant.”

¹⁵ C. F. Keil says, “But even with all this, i.e. in spite of this deep degradation in idolatry, Judah returned not to God sincerely, but in hypocritical wise” (page 87).

¹⁶ Verse 12 starts out speaking to the people of the northern kingdom, who had been carried into captivity by the Assyrians, but as these verses continue it becomes clear that the people of Judah are included in much of this prophecy. (The fact that verse 11 mentions “faithless Israel” and “Judah” seems to rather strongly confirm that the words “faithless Israel” in verse 12 refer to the northern kingdom.) This prophecy anticipates the fact that the people of Judah will also be carried into captivity, and that God will save a repentant remnant of both kingdoms at the end of this age. This does not mean, of course, that God didn’t call the people of Israel/Judah to repent in Jeremiah’s day, or in the years following, but the sin problem will not be solved for the people of Israel/Judah until the end-time remnant submits to the Lord Jesus Christ and new-covenant salvation in Him.

My voice,' declares the LORD [Yahweh]. (14) 'Return, O faithless sons [cf. Jer. 3:12, 22],' declares the LORD [Yahweh]; 'For I am a master to you, And I will take you one from a city and two from a family [“one from a town and two from a clan” NIV. Numbers like “one from a town and two from a clan” show that God is speaking of a (relatively small) remnant repenting and returning to Him (mostly after His end-time judgments) (cf. Jer. 23:3).], And I will bring you to Zion [cf., e.g., Jer. 31:6, 12].’ (15) Then I will give you shepherds [leaders, including religious leaders (centering in the Lord Jesus Christ)] after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding [“who will lead you with knowledge and understanding” NIV. Compare Jer. 23:4; 30:9, 21; 33:15, 16; Ezek 34:23, 24; and 37:24.]. (16) It shall be in those days when you are multiplied and increased in the land,” declares the LORD [Yahweh], “they will no longer say [cf. Jer. 23:7], ‘The ark of the covenant of the LORD [Yahweh].’ And it will not come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor will they miss it, nor will it be made again. [See at the beginning of verse 12. The ark of the covenant has (apparently) been missing since the time the temple was destroyed by the Babylonians. The temple that was built to replace Solomon’s temple after the return from the Babylonian captivity (including Herod’s later reconstruction and glorification of that temple) did not contain the ark of the covenant.¹⁷] (17) At that time they will call Jerusalem ‘The Throne of the LORD [Yahweh],’ [The Lord Jesus Christ (and true Israel) will reign from exalted Jerusalem throughout the millennial kingdom (cf., e.g., Zech. 14:9, 16-21; and Rev. 20:9). God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (and the saints with them) will reign from new Jerusalem in the eternal state that follows the millennial kingdom (cf. Rev. 21:22, 23; 22:1-5).] and all the nations will be gathered to it [The (remnant of the peoples of the) nations will gather to God at Jerusalem after His end-time judgment of the world (cf., e.g., Isa. 2:1-4; 60:1-14; Jer. 4:2; 16:19; Mic. 4:1-4; Zech. 2:11; 8:22, 23; 14:16-19; and Rev. 15:4; 20:3).¹⁸ Glorified true Israel will reign with Christ throughout the millennium (cf., e.g., Rev. 20:4-6) and forever (cf. Rev. 22:5). See under Jer. 31:7 (including the relevant footnote) for more details on God’s end-time salvation plans for the nations; and see on Jer. 16:19-21; 48:47; 49:6, 11, 19, 38, 39 in this paper.], to Jerusalem, for the name of the LORD [cf. Isa. 60:9]; nor will they

¹⁷ “The last historical reference to [the ark] is in 2 Chronicles 35:3. It was probably taken to Babylon in 586 B.C. Strangely enough, it is not mentioned among the spoils listed in [Jeremiah] 52:17-23. It was lost in 586 B.C. and never found or replaced” (Charles Feinberg, *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6 [Zondervan, 1986], page 402). It is possible, of course, that the ark was hidden by the Jews before the Babylonians destroyed the temple (cf. 2 Macc. 2:4-8). If so, it could still exist in our day, but I doubt that it does. It is significant that the ark of the covenant was not present in the most holy place in the temple that was rebuilt when many of the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity (finished in 516 BC), and it was not present in the temple in the days that Jesus visited the temple. I am quite sure that the Jews would have put the ark in the temple if it had been possible for them to do so. The ark of the covenant was a big part of what the temple was all about. This does not prove that the ark did not still exist in those days, but it is super strong evidence that the Jews could not get their hands on the ark if it did exist. I have a very hard time believing, for example, that the Jews knew where the ark was hidden but chose to leave it hidden.

¹⁸ See my paper titled, “Verse-by-Verse Studies of Selected Eschatological Prophecies from the book of Isaiah (Most of These Prophecies Deal with God’s Salvation Plans for the Remnants of Israel and of the Nations after His End-Time Judgment of the World).” Isaiah chapter 2 is one of many passages discussed verse-by-verse in that 112 page paper. Between my book, *The Mid-Week Rapture* and papers on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching), the book of Zechariah and the book of Revelation are discussed in some detail.

walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart [cf. Jer. 11:8]. **(18) In those days the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel, and they will come together from the land of the north¹⁹ to the land that I gave your fathers as an inheritance** [cf., e.g., Isa. 11:11-16; Jer. 16:14, 15; 23:5-8; 30:3; 50:4, 5; and Ezek. 37:1-28]. **(19)** [There is some discontinuity between verses 15-18 and verses 19-23 in that verses 15-18 are prose in the Hebrew and verses 19-23 are poetry (as shown by the format of the NASB; NIV; and the NKJV).²⁰] **Then I said, ‘How I would set you among My** [“Lit. *the*, not ‘My’ ” (margin of NASB)] **sons And give you a pleasant land** [referring to the pleasant (very good) land that God allotted to the people of Israel/Judah (cf. Jer. 11:5; Ezek. 20:6; and Dan. 11:16)], **The most beautiful inheritance of the nations!’** [The “sons” here are the nations worldwide, including Israel/Judah. This is somewhat unexpected, because the Bible typically speaks only of Israel’s being God’s people, and they (all the members of God’s true Israel) are His people in a special sense, but the Bible also has quite a bit to say about God’s interaction with and concern for the peoples of the other nations—He is their Creator, for one thing, and their Judge, etc. Jeremiah 3:17 speaks of the familiar theme that the repentant remnant of the nations will turn to God at the end of this age. (See under Jer. 3:17.) God called the nations His “congregation” in Jer. 6:18 and in Psalm 82:1. The nation of Ammon is called a “backsliding” daughter” in Jer. 49:4, and Sodom is called a sister of Judah and Israel in Ezek. 16:48, 52, 55.

It always was God’s plan for Israel/Judah to have the privileged status of a firstborn son in relation to the other nations (cf., e.g., Ex. 4:22) and to be a witness for Him and a priest to the nations (cf., e.g., Ex. 19:5, 6), but to the extent Israel was unfaithful to God, they could not enjoy much of a privileged status in relation to the nations, and their witness and ministry to the nations was quite ineffective. Typically, the Israelites were under the nations who subjected them. After God’s end-time judgment of the world, however, everything will come into divine order, and God’s true Israel (which includes all new-covenant believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, along with the believers of Israel/Judah of Old Testament days) will reign (with the privileged status of the firstborn son) and will be an effective witness and minister to the repentant remnant of the peoples of the nations (cf., e.g., Isa. 61:6, 7 with Deut. 21:17). That reign of God’s true Israel will continue into the eternal state after the millennial kingdom, as pictured in Revelation chapters 21, 22.] **And I said, ‘You shall call Me, My Father, And not turn away from following Me.’** [As we saw in verse 4 (and as we will see in verses 20 and in many other verses), although the people of Judah/Israel were often “religious” and did things like calling God their Father, all-to-often they did not continue to follow Him in truth, righteousness, and holiness.] **(20) Surely, as a woman treacherously departs from her lover, So you have**

¹⁹ Israel had already been carried into captivity by the Assyrians when God spoke these words through Jeremiah, and Judah would soon be carried into captivity by the Babylonians. Subsequent events showed that the story didn’t end there. For example, the Greeks were yet to savagely attack Judah (especially during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, who was a forerunner of Antichrist and had his abomination of desolation in the temple at Jerusalem), and the Romans were yet to destroy the temple again and send many Jews into captivity, etc. The Bible frequently speaks of Israel and Judah being brought back from a worldwide dispersion in the last days. It is typically understood that the end-time remnant of Israel/Judah must repent (cf., e.g., Deut. 30:1-6), and that God must judge the nations before His people can return to the land of Israel/Judah.

²⁰ The NIV; NKJV also have verse 14 as prose, not poetry.

dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel,” declares the LORD [Yahweh]. [Compare, for example, Jer. 3:1-10; Isa. 48:8.] **(21) A voice is heard on the bare heights, The weeping and the supplications of the sons of Israel; Because they have perverted their way. They have forgotten their God** [cf. Isa. 17:10; Jer. 2:32; and 13:25].] **(22) “Return, O faithless sons, I will heal your faithlessness.”** [The repentant end-time remnant of Israel/Judah will be ready to submit to God and His offer of new-covenant salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ at the end of this age, and He will forgive, cleanse, sanctify them, etc. See, for example, Jer. 31:31-34; 32:39, 40; 33:6, 8, 14-16; Ezek. 11:19, 20; 36:25-27; 37:23, 24; Hos. 6:1; 14:4; Zech. 12:10-13:6; and Rom. 11:26, 27.] **“Behold, we come to You; For You are the LORD [Yahweh] our God.** [These words in the second half of verse 22 and the words of verse 23 speak of sincere repentance. The end-time remnant of Israel/Judah will be ready to turn from their rebellion and turn wholeheartedly to God.] **(23) Surely, the hills are a deception, a tumult on the mountains** [referring to the hills/mountains where the people of Israel/Judah had been worshipping pagan gods and being totally unfaithful to God (cf. Jer. 2:20; 3:2, 6; 17:2, 3; and Deut. 12:2-4)]. **Surely in the LORD [Yahweh] our God** [and certainly not in the gods of the nations] **Is the salvation of Israel** [cf. Psalm 3:8; Isa. 12:2, 3; Jer. 17:14; and 31:7-9]. **(24) But the shameful thing** [referring to (their worship of) Baal; cf. Jer. 11:13; Hos. 9:10] **has consumed the labor of our fathers since our youth, their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters.** [They had been offering animals of their flocks and herds, and even their sons and daughters, as sacrifices to the pagan gods. “From our youth shameful gods have consumed the fruits of our fathers’ labor—their flocks and herds, their sons and daughters” NIV.] **(25) Let us lie down in our shame, and let our humiliation cover us; for we have sinned against the LORD [Yahweh] our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even to this day. And we have not obeyed the voice of the LORD [Yahweh] our God.”** Compare Ezra 9:6, 7; Jer. 22:21. We can see genuine repentance in verses 24, 25, as in verses 22b, 23.

JEREMIAH 16:14-21

[These verses, like so many of the verses we are studying in this paper, look to the end of this age when God will save the repentant end-time remnant of the people of Israel. These verses also include the familiar prophetic theme that He will save the repentant end-time remnant of the nations.] **“Therefore behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD [Yahweh], “when it will no longer be said, ‘As the LORD [Yahweh] lives, who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt [at the exodus from Egypt, under the leadership of Moses.],’ (15) but, ‘As the LORD [Yahweh] lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where He had banished them.’ For I will restore them to their own land which I gave to their fathers.”** [These verses speak of God’s restoring the remnant of Israel at the end of this age. Compare, for example, Isa. 11:11-16; Jer. 3:18; 23:7, 8; 24:6; 30:3, 18; and 32:37.] **(16) “Behold, I am going to send for many fishermen,” declares the LORD [Yahweh], “and they will fish for them [cf. Amos 4:2; Hab. 1:14, 15]; and afterwards I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain and every hill and from the clefts of the rocks [cf. Amos 9:1-4].** [Verses 16-18 revert back to the negative message of the intense judgments that will come before God’s end-time salvation of His people. See Jer. 16:9-13. I’ll quote Jer. 16:13, “So I will hurl you out of this land into the land which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers; and there you will serve other gods day and night, for I will grant you no favor.” God’s people were, of course, responsible for the serious sin of continuing to serve other gods before and after He hurled them out of their land.] **(17) For My eyes are on all their ways [cf. 2 Chron. 16:9; Job 34:21, 22; Prov. 5:21; 15:3; Jer. 23:23, 24; 32:19; and Zech. 4:10]; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity concealed from My eyes. (18) I will first doubly repay their iniquity and their sin [Compare Isa. 40:2; Jer. 17:18; and Rev. 18:6. I’ll quote part of what Charles Feinberg says here.²¹ “The double penalty has been understood by some scholars to mean double punishment...as though his judgment was in excess of what the nation deserved. But this...does not harmonize with the biblical doctrine of God. The word *mishneh* (‘double’) cannot be understood outside the context of the Hebrew viewpoint, which used the term to express ample, full, complete punishment (cf. Isa. 40:2) (so Harrison, KD). According to an Alakakh (in the plain of Antioch in Syria) tablet, the word may be better rendered ‘proportionate’ (so Wiseman, cited in Harrison)...so the punishment will be commensurate in full with the offense.”], because they have polluted My land [cf. Num. 35:33, 34; Isa. 24:5; Jer. 2:7; and 3:9]; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses [The BDB Hebrew Lexicon gives the basic meaning of the Hebrew noun used here (*nibelah*) as *carcass, corpse*, but takes the meaning here in the special sense of *lifeless* idols. The NIV translates, “the lifeless forms of their vile images.” I’ll quote part of what J. A. Thompson says here.²² “The expression *the corpses of their detestable idols*...is a suggestive one. The idols which were used in worship were lifeless, and seemed to Jeremiah [God is the One speaking here] like so many corpses defiling Yahweh’s land (cf. Lev. 26:30).” I’ll quote Lev.**

²¹ *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, page 481.

²² *Book of Jeremiah*, page 412.

26:30 from the NIV and NASB, “I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars and pile your dead bodies on the lifeless forms of your idols, and I will abhor you” NIV; “I then will destroy your high places, and cut down your incense altars, and heap your remains on the remains of your idols, for My soul shall abhor you” NASB; the margin of the NASB mentions that the more literal meaning of the Hebrew noun translated *remains* twice in Lev. 26:30 (which happens to be a different Hebrew noun than the one used in Jer. 16:18) is *corpses*. This verse makes it quite clear that the idols polluted God’s land—like corpses, they were defiling, but more so.] **of their detestable idols and with their abominations** [cf. Jer. 7:30, 31; Ezek. 11:18, 21].” (19) [The format of the NASB; NIV; and NJKV show that verses 1-18 are prose in the Hebrew and that verses 19-21 are poetry.] **O LORD [Yahweh], my strength and my stronghold, And my refuge in the day of distress** [Compare Psalms 18:1-3; 28:7, 8; 59:9, 16, 17; Isa. 25:4; and Nah. 1:7. Jeremiah is the one speaking here.], **To You the nations** [Typically (but not always), as here, *the nations* in the Old Testament refer to all the nations excluding Israel/Judah, the Gentile nations. Jeremiah is prophesying here of the repentant end-time remnant of the nations. The following words of this verse and the words of the next verse show that this remnant will be repentant. The things that God does at the end of this age will suffice to awaken this remnant and lead at least most of them to repent and submit to Him, including the visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the rapture; His salvation of the end-time remnant of Israel; His judgment and removal of Babylon the great harlot and of Antichrist and his followers; and very much including the fact that He has left them as a remnant and is calling them to repentance and salvation.] **will come From the ends of the earth** [cf., e.g., Psalm 22:27; Isa. 2:2-4; Jer. 3:17 (see under Jer. 3:17); and Rev. 15:4; 20:3] **and say, “Our fathers have inherited nothing but falsehood, Futility and things of no profit.”** [Compare, for example, Isa. 44:9, 10; 1 Pet. 1:18. Verse 20 confirms that Jeremiah was speaking here of the idolatrous religions of the Gentiles that are worthless, and worse than worthless, in that they are not of God (many of them came directly from the devil and his hosts) and actually lead people further away from God.] (20) **Can man make gods for himself? Yet they are not gods!** [Compare, for example, Psalm 115:4-8; Isa. 37:18-20; 45:14-25; Jer. 2:11; 5:7; 10:1-16; Hos. 8:4-6; and Gal. 4:8. Men can make idols (and religions) for themselves, but idols are not gods. There were, however, evil beings (fallen angels and demons) behind the idols of the Gentiles (cf., e.g., 1 Cor. 10:19-22), but those beings were all in rebellion against the one true God (the God who created every being that exists; the fallen angels and demons were not created evil, but they rebelled against God), and it is totally inappropriate for men to worship anyone but God. The worship of beings in rebellion against God certainly constitutes rebellion against God.] (21) **“Therefore behold, I am going to make them know—This time I will make them know My power and My might; And they shall know that My name is the LORD [Yahweh].”** [Compare, for example, Psalms 9:16; 83:18; and Ezek. 36:22, 23. God is going to make the people worldwide (very much including the people of Israel) know that He, and He alone, *is God* through His mighty works of judging and saving. The name *Yahweh*, which is translated LORD by the NASB and some other Bibles, and is used over 6,800 times in the Old Testament, includes the ideas that He, and He alone, is God and that He always existed as God and always will exist as God. Everything (including every being that exists) was created by Him and for Him. On the name *Yahweh* see at the beginning of my article titled, “The Name Yahweh and God the Father

and God the Son: The Name Yahweh and a Listing of Some of the Large Number of Passages in the Hebrew Old Testament Where We Can See God the Son Along with God the Father.”

From our new-covenant perspective we also know, of course, that many Gentiles have been repenting and turning to God and submitting (in faith) to His new-covenant plan of salvation throughout this present age.]

JEREMIAH 23:1-8

“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!” declares the LORD [Yahweh]. [Compare Isa. 56:9-12; Jer. 10:21; 50:6, 7; and Ezek. 34:1-24. The “shepherds” are the leaders of the people of God, starting with the kings,²³ but the prophets and priests also bore much responsibility for destroying and scattering the sheep (see Jer. 23:9-40). Since Judah and Israel are both mentioned in verse 6, we should probably think of the faithless “shepherds” of both Judah and Israel here.] **(2) Therefore thus says the LORD [Yahweh] God of Israel** [Apparently *Israel* here (and *My people* and *My flock* later in this verse) includes the northern and southern kingdoms.] **concerning the shepherds who are tending My people: “You have scattered My flock** [see verse 1] **and driven them away** [They had *driven them away* in the sense that their sinful, inadequate leadership had been a key factor in the backslidden condition and exile of God’s people, which came as judgment for their persistent sin (without serious repentance).] **and have not attended to them; behold, I am about to attend to you for the evil of your deeds** [cf. Jer. 21:11, 12],” **declares the LORD [Yahweh].** [Verses 3-8 show that the primary fulfillment of these prophetic words will come to pass at the end of this age when God judges the world (including Israel and Judah) and saves the repentant remnant of Israel and Judah with new-covenant salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, as in Jer. 3:15-18; Jer. 30:3-31:40; 32:37-40; and 50:4, 5, for example.] **(3) “Then I Myself will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them** [cf. Deut. 28:64] **and bring them back to their pasture** [cf. Isa. 11:11, 12, 16; 27:12, 13²⁴; Jer. 16:14, 15; 30:3, 10, 18; 31:2, 7-24; 32:37; 46:27, 28; and Mic. 2:12, 13] **and they will be fruitful and multiply** [cf., e.g., Ezek. 36:1-38; Amos 9:11-15; and Zech. 8:1-23²⁵]. **(4) I will also raise up shepherds over them** [The ultimate Shepherd that God the Father will raise up is the Lord Jesus Christ (see verse 5)] **and they will tend them** [cf. Isa. 32:1-8; Jer. 3:15; 23:5; 30:9, 21; Ezek. 34:23, 24; and Zech. 10:1-12] **and they will not be afraid any longer** [cf. Jer. 30:10; 46:27, 28], **nor be terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the LORD [Yahweh].** **(5) “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD** [cf. Jer. 33:14], **“When I** [Yahweh is speaking. The name Yahweh refers to God the Father here, as it typically does throughout the Old Testament. The name is used of God the Son several places in the Old Testament too, but not in a way that confuses Him with the Person of God the Father. See my article titled, “The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son.”] **will raise up for David a righteous Branch** [“Lit. sprout” (margin of NASB); cf. Isa. 4:2; 11:1, 10; 53:2; Jer. 30:9; 33:15, 16; Zech. 3:8; and 6:12, 13] **And He will reign as king and act wisely** [“Or *succeed*” (margin of NASB). Compare, for example, Isa. 9:2-7; Ezek. 34:23, 24; and Luke 1:32, 33, 69] **And do justice and righteousness** [cf., e.g., Psalm 72:2; Isa. 9:7; 32:1; and Dan. 9:24] **in the land.** [The “righteous Branch,” this descendant of King David, who

²³ Jeremiah chapters 21, 22 speak much of the unrighteous reigns of the last few kings of Judah (Shallum/Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah).

²⁴ Isaiah chapters 11 and 27 are discussed in my paper titled, “Verse-by-Verse Studies of Selected Eschatological Prophecies from the Book of Isaiah.”

²⁵ Zechariah 8:1-23 are discussed in my paper titled, “Verse-by-Verse Studies of Zechariah Chapters 1-8 and Malachi 2:17-4:6.”

“will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land [and universe wide],” is the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son. The *reign* spoken of here will not begin until His second coming (cf., e.g., Rev. 11:15, 17). For one thing, Israel/Judah rejected Christ at His first coming.] **(6) In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely** [They will be saved spiritually, which will lead to their being saved in every other way too (cf., e.g., Jer. 30:9, 10; Zech. 14:11; and Rom. 11:25-27).]; **And this is His name by which He will be called** [cf. Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Matt. 1:21-23], **‘The LORD [Yahweh] our righteousness.’** [Compare, for example, Isa. 45:24; 53:11²⁶; Jer. 31:31-34; 33:16; Ezek. 36:25-27; 37:24-28; Dan. 9:24; Rom. 1:16, 17; 3:22; 10:3, 4; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 3:9; and 1 Pet. 2:24. See under Jer. 33:16 in this paper. The Lord Jesus Christ will make the repentant end-time remnant of Judah/Israel righteous through new-covenant salvation, which includes imputing and imparting the righteousness of God to them. And it was understood that with the full righteousness of God comes the full blessings of God. Everything in God’s eternal kingdom will be in divine order and saturated with the righteousness of God.] **(7)** [Compare Isa. 11:11, 12; 27:12, 13; 43:14-21; 51:9-11; Jer. 16:14, 15; 23:3; Ezek. 34:11-16; and Amos 9:14, 15.] **Therefore behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD** [see verse 5], **“when they will no longer say, ‘As the LORD [Yahweh] lives, who brought up the sons of Israel [including Judah] from the land of Egypt,’ (8) but, ‘As the LORD [Yahweh] lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ Then they will live on their own soil.”**

²⁶ On Isa. 53:11 see pages 26-29 of my book *Holiness and Victory Over Sin*.

JEREMIAH CHAPTER 30

The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD [Yahweh], saying, (2) “Thus says the LORD [Yahweh], the God of Israel, ‘Write all the words which I have spoken to you in a book²⁷ [cf. Isa. 30:8; Jer. 25:13; and 36:2, 4, 17, 18, 28, 32]. [I’ll quote part of what Charles Feinberg says under verses 1-3.²⁸ “These verses constitute the introduction to chapters 30-31 and in all probability for chapters 32-33 as well (so Harrison). They strike the hopeful theme of the nation’s restoration. . . .the words ‘the days are coming’ look toward eschatological times (cf. 3:16; 16:14; 23:5; 31:27, 31).” I’ll also quote two sentences from what Charles Dyer says under verses 1-3.²⁹ “This day has an eschatological perspective. It is the day when God will fulfill the blessings of restoration promised in Deuteronomy 30:1-10.”] (3) For behold, days are coming,’ declares the LORD [Yahweh], ‘when I will restore the fortunes of My people [cf. Jer. 30:18; 31:23; 32:44; 33:7, 11, 26; Ezek. 39:25; Joel 3:1³⁰; Amos 9:14; and Zeph. 3:20] Israel [the elect end-time remnant of the northern kingdom] and Judah.’³¹ [Those “days are coming” at the end of this age when Israel and Judah are saved through the Lord Jesus Christ, as in Jer. 3:15-18 and 23:3-8.] The LORD [Yahweh] says, ‘I will also bring them back to the land that I gave to their forefathers and they shall possess it [cf., e.g., Jer. 3:18; 16:14, 15; 23:3, 7, 8; Ezek. 20:41, 42; and 36:24].’ ” (4) Now these are the words which the LORD [Yahweh] spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah: (5) “For thus says the LORD [Yahweh], ‘I have heard a sound of terror, Of dread, and there is no peace. [Verses 6-24 show that verses 4, 5 speak (at least for the most part) of the intense shaking that Israel and Judah will experience in the last days, before God saves them through the Lord Jesus Christ.] (6) Ask now, and see If a male can give birth. Why do I see every man With his hands on his loins, as a woman in childbirth [cf. Jer. 4:31; 6:24; 13:21; 22:23; 49:24; and 50:43]? And why have all faces turned pale? (7) Alas! for that day is great [cf. Joel 2:1, 2, 11], There is none like it [cf., e.g., Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21]; And it is the time of Jacob’s [*Jacob* here undoubtedly includes *Israel* and *Judah*, who are mentioned in verses 3, 4.] distress [The Hebrew noun (*tsarah*) translated *distress* here is also used in Dan. 12:1, where it is translated *distress* by the NASB; NIV. It could be translated *tribulation* here (Jer. 30:7) and in Dan. 12:1. There is widespread agreement that the great *tribulation* of Matt. 24:21 builds on the unequalled *tribulation* of Dan. 12:1. I believe “Jacob’s distress [tribulation]” of Jer. 30:7 will take place (in large part) during the time of the great tribulation of Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21 (which will begin about the time of Antichrist’s abomination of desolation [cf. Matt. 24:15]), but it is important to see that the great tribulation will involve the nations and not just Israel/Judah. The great tribulation will be centered in that part of the world

²⁷ “The word translated book (*sepher*) has a wider meaning, denoting a document of some kind. In any case Jeremiah’s words were recorded on a roll (*megillah*, 36:2, 4, 20, 21, 23, 28, 32)” (J. A. Thompson, *Book of Jeremiah*, page 553). The NASB and NIV translate “scroll” in Jer. 36:2, 4, 20, 21, 23, 28, and 32.

²⁸ *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6 (Zondervan, 1986), page 558.

²⁹ *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Old Testament (Victor Books, 1985), page 1167.

³⁰ Joel 3:1 and Zeph. 3:20 mention only God’s restoring the fortunes of Judah (not Judah and Israel)

³¹ The reader should also be aware that God delivered Judah from the Babylonian captivity (when Babylon was overthrown by the Persians and Medes in 539/538 BC) and that He had Cyrus (the Persian king) permit (and even help) the Jews return to Judah and Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.

that includes Israel/Judah (and Jerusalem) and Israel/Judah will be directly involved, but the great tribulation involves Antichrist and intense warfare of nations against nations.

The warfare of the great tribulation will be so intense that if God didn't cut those days short mankind would apparently annihilate mankind on the earth (cf. Matt. 24:22). I believe we can see this intense warfare in Dan. 11:44 (cf. Dan. 11:40-45), Joel 2:30, 31, and in Rev. 9:13-21 (the warfare of the sixth trumpet of the book of Revelation, warfare that kills one third of mankind in a short period of time, warfare that undoubtedly uses weapons of mass destruction). For a start see under Dan. 11:40-12:1 on pages 137-161 of my book, *Mid-Week Rapture*.

There is widespread agreement that the great tribulation will begin about the time of Antichrist's abomination of desolation (see Matt. 24:15-22; Mark 13:14-20) and that it will continue to the end of Daniel's 70th week. I agree that the great tribulation will begin about the time of Antichrist's abomination of desolation, but I believe Dan. 12:11 (and other considerations) shows that Antichrist will initiate the abomination of desolation about a month before the middle of Daniel's 70th week. And I believe that the *short* great tribulation (of Dan. 12:1; Joel 2:30, 31; Matt. 24:21; and Rev. 9:13-21; cf. Zech. 14:1, 2; Rev. 7:14) will be finished before the Lord Jesus Christ returns and the rapture takes place right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week (cf. Matt. 24:29-31). For a start see pages 129-132 of *Mid-Week Rapture*.

As I understand these prophecies, Israel/Judah will be reduced to a repentant remnant (for the most part) during the very intense days of the short great tribulation. Zechariah 13:8 shows that some two-thirds of the Israelites living in Israel/Judah will be "cut off and perish" in the last days. I believe that most of that cutting off will take place during the days of the short great tribulation. Daniel 12:1 mentions that the elect remnant of the Israelites will escape—they will escape being killed and will remain to receive the Lord Jesus Christ when He comes in the middle of Daniel's 70th week (cf., e.g., Zech. 12:10-13:1; 14:3-6), but they will not be saved in time to be taken in the rapture. Joel 2:32; Zech. 14:1, 2 mention this same remnant.³²

Romans 9:27-29 (with Isa. 10:20-23) and 11:25-27 are important New Testament verses regarding Israel's being reduced to a repentant remnant through intense shaking in the last days and then being saved through new-covenant salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. Malachi chapters 3, 4 have a lot to say about God's purifying Judah in the last days through the ministry of Elijah the prophet before He comes to judge His people.³³

It seems that Rev. 16:19 serves as an important cross-reference for the cutting-off of *two-thirds* of the people of Israel/Judah in the last days, which will leave a repentant remnant that will be ready to receive the Lord Jesus Christ when He returns in the middle of Daniel's 70th week. I'll quote the first sentence of Rev. 16:19, "The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell." I believe the "great city" is Jerusalem (cf. Rev. 11:8). The fact that Jerusalem is split into three parts, whereas the cities of the nations (totally) fall, communicates the idea that though the people of Israel/Judah will

³² These verses (and others) are discussed in some detail under Dan. 12:1 in *Mid-Week Rapture*.

³³ These verses from Isaiah and Romans are discussed in my paper titled, "Verse-by-Verses Studies...from the Book of Isaiah" and "A Verse-by-Verse Study of Romans Chapter 9-11." Malachi chapters 3, 4 are discussed verse-by-verse in my paper titled, "Verse-by-Verse Studies of Zechariah Chapters 1-8 and Malachi 2:17-4:6."

experience great shaking in God's end-time judgment of the world, the city (which represents the nation and the people of the nation) still stands to some extent when God's end-time judgments are finished. That is, some one-third of the people remain as a remnant for God. Zechariah 13:8 fits the idea that two of the three parts into which Jerusalem splits will fall, but the one part (the one-third) stands and remains as a repentant saved remnant for God.³⁴

Daniel 12:1; Joel 2:32; Zech. 13:8; and 14:1, 2 (verses where we can see the elect end-time remnant of Israel/Judah [cf. Matt. 24:15-22]) speak (at least for the most part) of the remnant of Israel/Judah living in the land of Israel/Judah at the time of the end. It is quite possible though that a similar two-thirds reduction of the people of Israel/Judah to a repentant remnant will take place during the same period of time *worldwide*. Note that Jer. 30:1-11 (and many other prophetic passages) deal, at least to some significant extent, with the people of Judah and Israel who are scattered across the world (and not living in the land of Israel/Judah).

I have expressed the viewpoint that Israel/Judah will (at least for the most part) be reduced to the repentant end-time remnant during the days of the short great tribulation and that they (at least many of them) will be ready to receive Christ by the time He returns in the middle of Daniel's 70th week (but that they will not become Christians until after the rapture). But won't this elect end-time remnant of Israel/Judah experience great travail/tribulation/distress during the reign of Antichrist throughout the second half of Daniel's 70th week? It is clear that they will experience significant travail and refining fires (cf. Isa. 66:8; Dan. 7:21, 25; 12:7; Zech. 13:9; Rev. 12:6, 13-17; 13:5, 7-10; and 15:2) and that there will be martyrs (cf. Rev. 20:4) during the three and one-half year reign of Antichrist, but those three and one-half years will be very different for the end-time elect remnant of Israel/Judah than the terrible shaking that will take place for Israel/Judah during the short great tribulation that will cut off some two-thirds and leave the repentant remnant.

The fact that the end-time remnant of Israel/Judah will be right with God and partakers of new-covenant salvation in Christ Jesus when they are attacked by the devil and Antichrist (cf. Rev. 12:12-13:18) throughout the second half of Daniel's 70th week will make all the difference. Revelation 12:6, 14-16; Zech. 12:3-13:6; and 14:3-5, 12-15; and other verses show that God will care for and protect those saints in spectacular ways throughout those three and one-half years. They will know that they are suffering (to the extent they do suffer) in the will of God and that they are glorifying God; they will be so thankful to be saved at the last minute that their trials will seem relatively trivial, and they be glad to suffer for Him.

They will know that this time of trial will be relatively brief and that *eternal* glory is *very* close at hand. They will understand that the refining fires will work for the glory of God and for their good. (All faithful Christians know something of God's refining fires; trials/testings come throughout our Christian lives, but the saints who live on the earth during the second half of Daniel's 70th week will have intense refining fires for a brief time.) They will understand that they are *victorious* (right in the center of the will of God, which is the only safe place to be, as were the three Jewish young men in the fiery furnace or Daniel in the lion's den, for example), *not defeated*, very much including those who die as martyrs, glorifying God in their deaths (cf., e.g., Rev. 14:12, 13; 20:4).

³⁴ Revelation 16:19 is discussed with Zech. 13:8 on page 227 of *Mid-Week Rapture*.

Revelation 15:2-4 picture the end-time remnant of Israel/Judah (speaking of people who become Christians after the mid-week rapture; the multitude pictured in these verses is not limited to martyrs) as they arrive in eternal glory about the time of the end of Daniel's 70th week. (They will join the rest of the glorified members of God's true Israel, who were caught up to eternal glory and began to reign with Christ in the middle of Daniel's 70th week.) Revelation 15:2 refers to them as "those who had been victorious over the beast [Antichrist] and his image and the number of his name." They were *victorious* (not defeated) in that they stayed faithful to God and lived in His truth and righteousness (by grace through faith) for His glory.

Who are the people of the ancient northern kingdom of Israel that God will save in the last days? Most of the people from the northern tribes of ancient Israel had already been assimilated with the Gentiles long before the days the Lord Jesus Christ lived on the earth, and now another two thousand years have passed. After all the years of intermarrying with the Gentiles and living as Gentiles how can they (at least most of them) be meaningfully distinguished from the rest of the Gentiles? Of course God knows who the descendants of those people are.

Under Zech. 10:6 on page 200 of my book, *Mid-Week Rapture*, I SUGGESTED that many of the people that constitute the end-time remnant of Israel from the northern tribes that will be saved in the last days could be Gentiles (Gentiles who are not necessarily limited to descendants of the northern tribes of ancient Israel), Gentiles who respond to God's call to repent and submit (in faith) to the Lord Jesus Christ after the rapture and thus become part of God's true Israel. They would be part of the Christians pictured in Rev. 12:6 through 13:10, for example. Apparently many Gentiles will answer the gospel call in the days after the rapture (cf. Rev. 14:6, 7), and it is clear, I believe, that that they are part of God's true Israel, even as we Gentiles who become Christians in the days before the rapture are part of God's true Israel (cf., e.g., Rom. 11:17-24).

I'll quote two paragraphs from what I said under the words "Because I have had compassion on them; and they will be as though I had not rejected them" of Zech. 10:6 (on page 200 of *Mid-Week Rapture*). "Hosea 1:2-9 speak of God's (temporary) rejection of the northern kingdom. In Hos. 1:6 God said: '...I will no longer have compassion on the house of Israel [referring to the northern kingdom]....' And in Hos. 1:9 He said to them: '...you are not My people and I am not your God.' But He also gave them hope [for the future], telling them in Hos. 2:23 (cf. Hos. 1:10, 11; 2:21, 22) that the time would come when He would 'have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion' and when He would say 'to those who were not [His] people, "You are My people!" ' And they will say, "[Thou art] my God!" Hosea chapters 1 and 2 also show that the people will come back to the land.

In their present state (since the time they have been rejected), these sons of the northern kingdom are in a state very similar to that of the Gentiles. In fact, the apostle Paul could apply Hos. 1:10 and 2:23 to the Gentiles who were called into fellowship with God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 9:24-26). Many Gentiles are probably included with those of the northern kingdom in Zech. 10:6-12. We can probably say that all those who respond to the invitation of Zech. 10:1, 2 become part of God's true Israel (see under Zech. 10:1, 2 in *Mid-Week Rapture*)."

Revelation 7:1-8 serve to confirm the idea contained in many Old Testament prophecies that God will save the remnant of the northern kingdom of Israel in the last days, by mentioning twelve tribes of Israel, obviously including those of the northern kingdom. Also, significantly, the book of Revelation mentions in several places that God will fulfill the covenant promises He made to Israel (the entire nation), which would include the salvation of the remnant of Judah and Israel (and the salvation of the remnant of the nations) in the last days (cf. Rev. 10:7; 11:19; 15:2-4; 16:19; 20:2, 3; 21: 2, 10 (here we see *new Jerusalem*), 12, 24; 22:2).], **But he will be saved from it.** [The repentant end-time remnants of Judah and Israel will be saved spiritually when they submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, starting right after the mid-week rapture (cf., e.g., Jer. 31:31-34; Zech. 12:10-13:1; Rom. 11:25-27; Rev. 11:13; and 12:6-17). They will have been saved in every sense, including being saved from all trials and being glorified to reign with the Lord Jesus Christ forever by the time the millennial kingdom begins.] **(8) It shall come about on that day,' declares the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts, 'that I will break his yoke from off their neck and will tear off their bonds [cf. Isa. 9:4; Jer. 2:20; and Ezek. 34:27]; and strangers will no longer make them their slaves.** [The last words of this verse (and the next verse, etc.) demonstrate that these prophetic words deal with the end-time salvation of Israel and Judah. Breaking the yoke of the nations from Israel and Judah will come to pass through God's end-time judgment of the nations (see verse 11).] **(9) But they shall serve the LORD [Yahweh] their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.** ["David their king" refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, as in Ezek. 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25; and Hos. 3:5 (cf. Isa. 9:7; Jer. 30:21; 33:15, 16; Luke 1:32, 33, 69; Acts 2:30-36; and 13:22, 23).³⁵] **(10) Fear not, O Jacob [Jacob here (and later in this verse) undoubtedly includes *Israel* and *Judah*, as in verse 7 (see verses 3, 4).] My servant [cf. Isa. 41:8; 42:19; 43:10; and 44:1, 2], 'declares the LORD [cf. Isa. 41:10, 13, 14; 43:5; 44:2; and Jer. 46:27, 28], 'And do not be dismayed, O Israel [*Israel* here undoubtedly is the equivalent of *Jacob* used earlier in this verse.]; For behold, I will save you from afar And your offspring from the land of their captivity [cf., e.g., Jer. 3:18; 16:14, 15; 23:3, 7, 8; 29:14; and 30:3, 8]. And Jacob will return and will be quiet and at ease, And no one will make him afraid [cf. Jer. 33:16; Hos. 2:18; and Mic. 4:4]. **(11) For I am with you,' declares the LORD [Yahweh], 'to save you; For I will destroy completely all the nations where I have scattered you [Compare Jer. 46:28. A large number of prophetic verses show, however (including in the book of Jeremiah), that God will save a remnant of the nations after His end-time judgment of the world (cf., e.g., Jer. 3:17; Rev. 15:2; 20:3).], Only I will not destroy you completely [cf. Amos 9:8]. But I will chasten you justly And will by no means leave you unpunished [cf., e.g., Jer. 30:4-7].' **(12) "For thus says the LORD [Yahweh], 'Your wound [see verses 14, 17] is incurable And your injury [see verse 15] is serious.** [Verses 13-15 show that this *wound* and *injury* speak of the judgments God has inflicted on Israel and Judah as a penalty for persistent sin without meaningful repentance. Eventually, however, the end-****

³⁵ "The [Jewish] Targum, though interpretative, is correct in identifying this ideal King as 'Messiah, the son of David.' Among the Jews the name David came to be used of royalty, much as Pharaoh, Caesar, or Czar, but only in the highest and final sense" (Charles Feinberg, *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, page 561). And I'll quote part of what C. F. Keil says under verse 9, "...and David the king who will be raised up to them, *i.e.*, the Messiah, the righteous sprout that Jahweh [Yahweh] will raise up to David; cf. 23:5. The designation of this sprout as 'David their king,' *i.e.* the king of the Israelites, points us back to Hos. 3:5" [*Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 8], page 7.

time remnant of Israel will repent and submit to God and His new-covenant salvation in and through Christ Jesus, and they will be healed (see verse 17).] **(13) There is no one to plead your cause; No healing for your sore, No recovery for you.** [Compare Jer. 14:19. The healing/recovery cannot come in any full sense until the remnant of Israel/Judah repent and are healed of their rebellion by God’s new-covenant salvation.]; **(14) All your lovers have forgotten you** [The *lovers* here are the nations which Judah/Israel had looked to, and had improper relationships with, instead of God. And, significantly, these relationships with the nations often included worshipping the gods of the nations, instead of being faithful to God. As this verse shows, their lovers forgot them because they became undesirable after God had judged them intensely *because their iniquity was great and their sins numerous*. After Judah/Israel lost their fame, wealth, etc., they were no longer desirable to the nations.], **They do not seek you; For I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy** [cf. Lam. 2:1-10], **With the punishment of a cruel one** [“I have struck you as an enemy would, and punished you as would the cruel” NIV. Many of God’s judgments against Israel/Judah came through cruel rulers of cruel nations, including the kings of Assyria and Babylon, and Antichrist is yet to come.], **Because your iniquity is great And your sins are numerous.** **(15) Why do you cry out over your injury? Your pain is incurable. Because your iniquity is great And your sins are numerous, I have done these things to you.** [One key point that God makes in this verse, as He speaks to Israel/Judah, is that He is the One who has judged them severely. It wasn’t the nations (or anyone or anything else, including blind chance) that had caused their serious wounds and injuries. He wanted to make it clear that He was the One who had been judging them (often judging them through the nations) for their great iniquity and sins. As the next verse shows, God can deal with the nations who had been devouring Israel/Judah at any time, and He *will* deal with them *after* Israel/Judah finally repents in the last days and is saved through new-covenant salvation.] **(16) Therefore all who devour you** [cf. Jer. 10:25] **will be devoured; And all your adversaries, every one of them, will go into captivity; And those who plunder you will be for plunder, And all who prey upon you I will give for prey.** [See under verse 15.] **(17) For I will restore you to health And I will heal you of your wounds** [cf. Jer. 33:6; Hos. 6:1], **declares the LORD** [Yahweh], **‘Because they have called you an outcast, saying: “It is Zion; no one cares** [“Lit. *is seeking*” (margin of NASB)] **for her.”** [See under verse 15, and see verses 3, 7-11, 18-22. God always has cared for Zion (Israel/Judah—true Israel), and He will demonstrate this care in a very substantial way when He saves Zion at the end of this age. However, when Israel/Judah was being severely chastened by God it looked as if He didn’t care for Zion.] **(18) Thus says the LORD** [Yahweh], **‘Behold, I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob** [cf. Jer. 30:3; 31:23] **And have compassion on his** [Jacob’s] **dwelling places** [cf. Psalm 102:13; Isa. 60:10; and Zech. 1:12]; **And the city will be rebuilt on its ruin**³⁶ [Compare Jer. 31:4-6, 12, 23, 38-40. Jerusalem was rebuilt after the return from the Babylonian exile (as were many other

³⁶ “The word ‘ruins’ [The NIV translates “ruins”] is the well-known term *tēl* (‘tell,’ ‘mound,’ ‘heap’), now used by Arabs for the ruined mounds of Palestine” (Charles Feinberg, *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, page 564). In a footnote on page 564 Feinberg adds, “The Hebrew... (*tēl*, ‘mound’ of a ruined city) corresponds to the Arabic *tell*. New towns in the Near East were frequently built on the ruins of the previous settlements. Notice how *tēl* (*tell*) formed a part of place names: Tel Aviv (Ezek 3:15), Tell el-Amarna (in Egypt), Tel Assar (2 Kings 19:12), Tel Melah, and Tel Harsha (Ezra 2:59).”

cities), but this prophecy looks (at least for the most part) to the end of this age when Jerusalem will be rebuilt, exalted, and glorified after God's end-time judgment of the world (cf., e.g., Isa. 2:2-4; 60:1-22; and Zech. 14:8-21).], **And the palace will stand on its rightful place** [Apparently the "palace" is the dwelling place of the "ruler/leader" mentioned in verse 21. As we have seen, the Lord Jesus Christ is that ruler (the King-High Priest).] **(19) From them will proceed thanksgiving And the voice of those who celebrate**[cf. Isa. 12:1; 35:10; 51:3, 11; Jer. 31:4; and Zeph. 3:14] **And I will multiply them** ["I will add to their numbers" NIV] **and they will not be diminished** [For one thing, God will add large number of Gentiles to His true Israel (the Gentiles who become part of true Israel by salvation through faith in Christ Jesus).³⁷]; **I will also honor them and they will not be insignificant.** [These verses speak of the people of Israel/Judah after they have been saved by the Lord Jesus Christ in the last days.] **(20) Their children also will be as formerly** [It is probably better (with J. A. Thompson and the NEB, for example) to translate "sons" instead of "children" here. Apparently *children* are not specifically mentioned in this verse.³⁸ These verses are poetry in the Hebrew as indicated in the format of the NASB; NIV, for example, and the two lines "their sons also will be as formerly" and "And their congregation shall be established before Me" are parallel statements (with "their sons" being equivalent to "their congregation"); parallel statements are very common in Hebrew poetry.], **And their congregation shall be established before Me** [cf. Isa. 54:14]; **And I will punish all their oppressors** [cf. Jer. 30:11, 16, 23, 24]. **(21) Their leader** [the Lord Jesus Christ] **shall be one of them** [See verse 9.], **And their ruler** ["their ruler" is the equivalent of "their leader"] **shall come forth from their midst; And I will bring him [Him] near and he [He] shall approach Me; For who would dare to risk his life to approach Me?' declares the LORD** [Yahweh]. [From our new-covenant perspective, we can see that this particular Ruler has a right to approach God the Father like no other person in the universe, being deity Himself, God the Son, who became the God-man, the Lamb of God, the only Savior from sin and death, and our great High-Priest.] **(22) You shall be My people, And I will be your God.'** [Compare Ex. 6:7; 19:5, 6; Jer. 32:38; Ezek. 36:28; Hos. 2:23; Zech. 13:9; and Rev. 22:3-5.] **(23) Behold, the tempest of the LORD [Yahweh]! Wrath has gone forth, A sweeping tempest; It will burst on the head of the wicked.** [Compare Jer. 23:19, 20; 25:30-38. God's wrath will go forth in His end-time judgment of the world. All the people (including the people of Israel/Judah) who are committed to wickedness (the unrepentant) will be removed by judgment.] **(24) The fierce anger of the LORD [Yahweh] will not turn back** [cf. Jer. 4:8] **until He has performed and until He has accomplished The intent of His heart; In the latter days you will understand this.** [Compare Jer. 23:20. In the latter days, God's people will be able to fully understand His

³⁷ Apparently many Gentiles will answer the gospel call after the mid-week rapture; they will become part of God's true Israel; they will become part of the elect end-time remnant of God's true Israel.

³⁸ Compare Isa. 60:22; 65:17-22; and Jer. 33:22. For the record (based on subsequent prophecy, especially the all-important book of Revelation), I believe all the members of God's true Israel will be glorified by the time the millennial kingdom begins. (Start with "A Study of Isaiah 65:17-25" at the end of the chapter dealing with Isaiah chapter 25 in my paper titled, "Verse-by-Verse Studies of Selected Eschatological Prophecies from the Book of Isaiah".) If that is true, the people of God's true Israel won't be having children in the millennial kingdom (cf. Luke 20:34-36), but (apparently) the remnant of the nations (e.g., Rev. 20:3) will continue to have children throughout the millennium.

plans to save and to judge, because these things will have fully come to pass (in accordance with His prophetic word).]

JEREMIAH CHAPTER 31

I'll quote the introductory paragraph that F. B. Huey has for Jeremiah chapter 31.³⁹ "The main theme of this chapter is that a restored and reunited Israel [including Israel/Ephraim and Judah] would enjoy a new covenant relationship with God. The people would be spiritually as well as physically restored. The theme is expressed succinctly in the first verse, which serves as an introduction to the chapter. Verses 2-22 speak of the future of the Northern Kingdom. Verses 23-26 anticipate the Southern Kingdom's restoration. Verses 27-40 describe coming days of blessing for both Israel and Judah." I'll also quote a sentence from what Huey says under verses 7-9 (page 272), "This was to be a new exodus on a grander scale in which God would judge the nations, deliver and regather his people from the ends of the earth, and shepherd them through the wilderness into the promised land of rest."⁴⁰

I'll also quote part of what C. F. Keil says here.⁴¹ "All the families of Israel' [verse 1] are the families of the whole twelve tribes—of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, separated since the death of Solomon. After this announcement of deliverance for the whole of Israel, the address turns first to Israel of the ten tribes, and continues to treat longest of them, 'because, judging from appearances, they seem irrecoverably lost—for ever rejected by the Lord' (Hengstenberg)."

"At that time," declares the LORD [Yahweh], "I will be the God of all the families of Israel [referring to Judah and Israel/Ephraim], and they shall be My people [cf., e.g., Jer. 30:22; Ezek. 37:15-28]." [The words "at that time" refer to the time at the end of this age spoken of in the last verses of Jeremiah chapter 30.⁴² God will have reduced the people of Israel/Ephraim and Judah to a repentant remnant (through a powerful end-time shaking that will begin about the time of Antichrist's abomination of desolation; through the ministry of the two prophets of Revelation chapter 11; etc) and will have saved them (and He will have judged the nations and left a repentant remnant of the nations too). The time setting here is about the end of Daniel's 70th week (Dan. 9:27). I should point out that verse 1 is prose in the Hebrew and verses 2-22 are poetry, as indicated by the format of the NASB; NIV, for example.] **(2) Thus says the LORD [Yahweh], "The people who survived the sword [Compare "the remnant of Israel" in verse 7.] Found grace in the wilderness ["will find favor in the desert" NIV]—Israel, when it went to find its rest [cf. Jer. 16:14, 15; 23:7, 8; and Hos. 2:14, 15]."** ["The people who survived the sword" is the end-time remnant of Israel scattered across the earth. (Apparently the past tenses of verses 2, 3 are *prophetic* perfects in the Hebrew.) They are "in the wilderness" on their way to find rest in the land of Israel, building on the fact that Israel was "in the wilderness" after the exodus from Egypt on their way to the promised land.

³⁹ *Jeremiah, Lamentations* (Broadman Press, 1993), page 268.

⁴⁰ Huey has a footnote here, "R. E. Watts, 'Consolation or Confrontation? Isaiah 40-55 and the Delay of the New Exodus,' *TB* 41 (1990); 32-35. Cf. Isa. 27:12, 13; 35:1-19; 43:14-21; 48:20-21; 51:9-11; 52:11-12; Jer. 23:7; Hos. 2:14-23; 11:5-11; Amos 9:7-15."

⁴¹ *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 8 (Eerdmans, 1978 reprint), page 16.

⁴² Some Hebrew manuscripts have this verse (Jer. 31:1) as the last verse of chapter 30.

Coming just after Jer. 30:1-31:1 and with Jer. 31:27-34, and considering verses like Jer. 3:18; 23:1-8; and 50:4, 5 (all five passages just cited speak of God's saving all Israel [Israel/Ephraim and Judah] at the end of this age), I expect *Israel* to refer to all Israel here in verse 2, but I have to agree with most of the commentators that verses 2-22 deal (at least for the most part) with God's salvation of the northern kingdom (sometimes called Ephraim/Israel).⁴³ Verses 4-6 (or at least verses 5, 6) are clearly addressed to (the end-time remnant) of the northern kingdom, and the name *Ephraim* (which is clearly associated with the northern kingdom) is used in verses 6, 9, 18, and 20. Furthermore, the fact that Judah (the southern kingdom) is given separate treatment in verses 23-25 further substantiates the idea that verses 2-22 deal (at least for the most part) with the northern kingdom.⁴⁴ *Zion* (a name associated with the temple mount and Jerusalem) is mentioned in verses 6, 12. It seems to be taken for granted that Judah will have been saved and God will be dwelling in Jerusalem when the end-time remnant of the northern kingdom come to Jerusalem to worship God, etc.

It was reasonable to put all the emphasis on God's salvation of the northern kingdom in verses 2-22. The people of that kingdom (sometimes called Israel/Ephraim) departed from God first and were carried into captivity about a hundred years before Jeremiah's ministry began, while Judah still existed as a nation dwelling in their land throughout most of Jeremiah's ministry (before Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Babylonians in 587/586 BC). Furthermore, the people of the northern kingdom did not return from captivity (at least not in substantial numbers) while many of the people of the southern kingdom did return from the Babylonian captivity after seventy years (as God had prophesied that they would). Then too, the northern kingdom embraced *ten* tribes while the southern kingdom embraced only *two* tribes, Judah and Benjamin (cf., e.g., 1 Kings 11:29-36; 12:21).] **(3) The LORD [Yahweh] appeared to him** ["Lit. *me*" (margin of NASB); the Septuagint (Greek translation) has "to him"] **from afar** [probably meaning *from Zion*; cf. Jer. 30:10], **saying, "I have loved you with an everlasting love** [cf. Deut. 4:37; 7:8; and Mal. 1:2]; **Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness** [Compare Psalm 25:6; Jer. 9:24; 32:18; Lam. 3:32; and Dan. 9:4. God draws them to Himself to save them spiritually and to take them back to the land of Israel/Judah (cf., e.g., Jer. 30:3).] **(4) Again I will build you and you will be rebuilt** [cf. Jer. 24:6; 30:18; and 33:7], **O virgin of Israel! Again you will take up your tambourines** [Compare Ex. 15:20; 1 Sam. 18:6. J. A. Thompson translates, "Once again you will adorn yourselves with timbrels," and regarding *timbrels*, he says, "adornment with small pieces that tinkled in the dance was common all over the Near East in ancient times and still is today."⁴⁵], **And go forth to the dances of the merrymakers** [cf. Jer. 30:19]. **(5) Again you will plant vineyards** [cf. Isa. 65:21; Ezek. 28:26; and Amos 9:14] **On the hills of Samaria** [The "hills of Samaria" here and the "hills of Ephraim" of verse 6 refer to land of the northern kingdom. This viewpoint is confirmed by the fact that the last words of verse 6 speak of the people living in the north going up to Zion (they *go up* to Zion/Jerusalem because the city is some 2,500 feet above sea level; cf. "height of Zion" [Jer. 31:12];

⁴³ Jeremiah 3:12-14 deal with God's salvation of the end-time remnant of the northern kingdom.

⁴⁴ If it weren't for the emphasis on the northern kingdom (Israel/Ephraim) in verses 2-22 and the use of Ephraim in verse 9, verses 7-17 would fit better with God's end-time salvation of the entire nation (Israel/Ephraim and Judah).

⁴⁵ *Book of Jeremiah*, page 567.

Ezek. 17:23) to Yahweh, their God. The fact that they go up to Zion shows that Judah will have been saved through the Lord Jesus Christ too and that Israel/Ephraim and Judah will have been reunited (cf., e.g., Jer. 30:3, 7-9, 18-22; 31:1).]; **The planters will plant And will enjoy them.** [In the past God's people would often plant but others would end up enjoying the produce.] **(6) For there will be a day when watchmen⁴⁶ On the hills of Ephraim call out, 'Arise, and let us go up to Zion, To the LORD [Yahweh] our God.'** ” [See under verse 5.] **(7) For thus says the LORD [Yahweh], “Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob** [The names *Jacob* and *Israel* (God changed Jacob's name to Israel) can be confusing in that both names can be used for the entire nation (in that Jacob/Israel was the father of all twelve tribes of the nation), and they can also be used of the northern kingdom, as they (apparently) are in this verse.], **And shout among** [The Hebrew preposition “b” translated “among” by the NASB here could also be translated “for” (NIV; NRSV); the Hebrew preposition “l” was translated “for” earlier in this verse.] **the chief** [or, head] **of the nations** [Compare Amos 6:1. The chief/foremost of the nations (from God's point of view) is Israel/Jacob, referring to the whole nation (cf. Deut. 26:19), but most agree that the northern kingdom is spoken of here. Note that Ephraim (referring to the northern kingdom) is called God's *firstborn* in verse 9 (being God's *firstborn* nation and being the *chief/head* of the nations is comparable in meaning) – see under verse 9.

But who is God speaking to here in verse 7? Who is He telling to “sing aloud with gladness for Jacob” and “to shout among (for) for the chief of the nations”? It isn't all that obvious, but I assume God is speaking to the nations (or, more precisely, to the end-time remnant of the nations, not including Israel/Judah) that He has left after His end-time judgment of the world. Note that He speaks to the nations (the end-time remnant of the nations) in verse 10 and tells them to declare Israel's salvation “in the coastlands afar off.”

God appointed Jeremiah a prophet to the nations (see Jer. 1:5, 10) and he (like Isaiah the prophet) frequently spoke to the nations and/or prophesied about the nations in his prophecies (cf., e.g., Jer. 3:17; 4:1, 2; 6:18-21 [In Jer. 6:18-21 God called the nations His “congregation” and spoke to them of His bringing disaster on Judah because of their persistent sinfulness; He also called the nations His “congregation” in Psalm 82:1; cf. Psalm 7:7]; 12:14-17; 16:19-21; 18:7-10; 25:8-38; 27:1-11; 33:9; 36:2; 46:1-51:64.)

Why would the remnant of the nations rejoice because God (judges the world and) saves the repentant end-time remnant of Ephraim (and Judah)? Because at that time the end-time remnant of the nations will realize that the God of Israel/Judah (the God of true Israel) *is God* and that He has removed the unrepentant rebels (who were committed to continue in rebellion forever) from the earth and is offering salvation to the repentant remnant of the nations too. There are many prophetic verses that speak of God's saving the repentant end-time remnant of the nations after His end-time judgment of the world and of their having a place in His millennial kingdom. (See, for example, Psalm 47; Isa. 2:2-4; Jer. 3:17; 4:1, 2; 16:19-21; 33:9; 48:47; 49:6 [God calls Ammon a “backsliding daughter” in 49:4], 11, 38, 39; 50:2-8 [There is widespread agreement that Jer. 50:8 (cf. Jer. 51:9) shows that the peoples of other nations will be set free too (not just

⁴⁶ “...the watchmen who were posted on the mountains, that they might observe and give notice of the first appearance of the crescent of the moon after new-moon, so that the festival of the new-moon and the feasts connected with it might be fixed...” (C. F. Keil, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 8 [Eerdmans, 1978 reprint], page 19).

Israel/Judah) when God judges Babylon/the world and that His people will be able to lead them (eventually lead them to God). Verses like Jer. 50:4, 5, 20 demonstrate that God's *end-time* judgment of the world is in view.], Zech. 2:11; 8:22, 23; 9:10; and 14:16.⁴⁷) In fact, quite a few prophetic verses even speak of the repentant end-time remnant of the nations bringing the scattered sons of Israel/Judah to God at Jerusalem after His end-time judgment of the world (cf. Isa. 14:1, 2; 49:22 [cf. Isa. 11:10-12]; 60:4-9; 66:20-23; and Zeph. 3:8-11).]; **Proclaim, give praise and say, 'O LORD [Yahweh], save Your people** [I prefer the translation, "The LORD [Yahweh] has saved His people." The *Amplified Bible* has, "The Lord has saved His people"; the NEB; RSV have, "The LORD has saved his people"; J. A. Thompson and the *Jerusalem Bible* have, "Yahweh has saved his people"; and the NAB has, "The LORD has delivered his people."⁴⁸], **The remnant of Israel.**' [This is the repentant end-time remnant of the northern kingdom that is scattered across the earth (see verse 8). On God's saving the end-time remnant of Israel/Judah, compare, for example, Isa. 11:11, 16; 10:20-23; Jer. 3:14-18; 23:3; 30:3, 11; 50:20; Mic. 2:12, 13; and Rom. 9:27-29; 11:25-27.] **(8) Behold, I am bringing them from the north country** [cf., e.g., Jer. 3:18], **And I will gather them from the remote parts of the earth** [Compare, for example, Deut. 30:1-5; Jer. 23:8; 30:3; and Ezek. 34:13.], **Among them the blind** [cf. Isa. 42:16] **and the lame** [cf. Mic. 4:6], **The woman with child and she who is in labor with child, together; A great company, they will return here** [to the land of Israel/Judah]. **(9) With weeping** [tears of repentance and joy] **they will come** [cf. Jer. 50:4], **And by supplication I will lead them** ["they will pray as I bring them back" NIV]; **I will make them walk by streams of waters** [cf. Isa. 35:6-8; 43:20; and 49:10], **On a straight path in which they will not stumble** [cf. Isa. 63:13]; **For I am a father to Israel, And Ephraim is My firstborn.**" [See on "the chief [head] of the nations" under verse 7. Compare Deut. 7:6; 32:6-9; Isa. 64:8; Jer. 3:4, 19; and Hos. 11:1. Exodus 4:22 says, "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'thus says the LORD [Yahweh], 'Israel is My firstborn.' "] It is clear that *Israel* refers to all the tribes of Israel/Ephraim and Judah in Ex. 4:22, but it seems that both names, *Israel* and *Ephraim*, are used here in Jer. 31:9 of the northern kingdom. The northern kingdom (with its ten tribes) was an important part of the people of God. The point here is that Israel/Ephraim is God's *firstborn son* in that it has a privileged position *with respect to all the other nations*, not that it was born or existed before all the other nations. And, significantly, Israel/Ephraim

⁴⁷ Prophecies like Isa. 2:2-4 (and Mic. 4:1-5) had been given long before the days of Jeremiah. Three of my papers are especially relevant to the topic of God's salvation of the end-time remnant of the nations: "Verse-by-Verse Studies of Selected Eschatological Psalms"; "Verse-by-Verse Studies of Selected Eschatological Prophecies from the Book of Isaiah" and "A Verse-by-Verse Study of Six Important Eschatological Chapters of the New Testament: 1 Corinthians 15; Matthew 24, 25; and Revelation 20-22; this Paper Deals Extensively with the Topic of God's Ultimate Salvation Plans for the Nations." This last paper is split up into several parts on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching).

⁴⁸ J. A. Thompson (*Book of Jeremiah*, page 568) has a footnote for the word "his," "MT [The Hebrew Masoretic Text] has 'your,' LXX [the Septuagint] and Targ. [Jewish Targum] *his*." Gerald Keown, Pamela Scalise, and Thomas Smothers (*Jeremiah 26-52* [Word, Inc., 1995], page 11) have two footnotes regarding the text here. The first footnote mentions the LXX and Targum readings (that were mentioned by Thompson), then says, "Therefore, *BHS* [*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*] recommends revocalizing to the perfect... 'saved' [instead of the imperative 'save']." The second footnote reads, "*BHS* follows LXX and Tg [Targum] again, recommending ... 'his people,' as the object of the perfect [Hebrew] verb."

was not God's *firstborn son* over, or apart from, Judah.⁴⁹] **(10) Hear the word of the LORD [Yahweh], O nations [See under verse 7.], And declare in the coastlands afar off [cf. Isa. 66:19], And say, “He who scattered Israel [the northern kingdom] will gather him And keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock [cf. Isa. 40:11; Jer. 3:16-18; 16:14, 15; 23:7, 8; 31:8; 50:19; Ezek. 34:11-16, 23, 31; and Mic. 2:12; 5:4].” (11) For the LORD [Yahweh] has ransomed Jacob [the northern kingdom] And redeemed him from the hand of him who was stronger than he. [Compare Isa. 43:1; 44:23; 48:20; Jer. 15:21; and 50:34. God redeems Jacob/Israel/Ephraim through the Lord Jesus Christ (based on His atoning death). God *redeems him* [Jacob/Israel/Ephraim (ultimately all the members of God's true Israel) *from the hand of him* [the ruler(s) of the kingdom(s) of this world (including the devil, the evil angels, and Antichrist) *who was stronger than he* (stronger than Jacob/Israel/Ephraim; cf. Psalms 18:17; 142:6).] (12) “They [the repentant and saved end-time remnant of the northern kingdom] will come and shout for joy on the height of Zion [cf. Isa. 2:2; Jer. 3:14-18; 31:6; Ezek. 17:23; and Mic. 4:1], And they will be radiant over the bounty of the LORD [Yahweh]—Over the grain and the new wine and the oil [cf. Jer. 31:5; Hos. 2:22; and Joel 3:18], And over the young of the flock and the herd [cf. Jer. 31:24; 33:12, 13]; And their life will be like a watered garden [cf. Isa. 58:11], And they will never languish again. [Compare Isa. 35:10; 60:20. The last words of this verse confirm that God's saving of (the remnant of) Israel/Ephraim (and of Judah) at the end of this age is in view, which will eventually culminate in the eternal state of eternal glory with its new heaven, new earth, and new Jerusalem. The scene here shows that the people of Zion, Jerusalem, Judah (the southern kingdom) will have been saved at this time.] (13) Then the virgin will rejoice in the dance [cf. Psalm 30:11], And the young men and the old, together, For I will turn their mourning into joy And will comfort them and give them joy for their sorrow [cf. Isa. 51:11; 61:3; 65:19]. (14) I will fill the soul of the priests with abundance, And My people will be satisfied with My goodness [cf. Jer. 50:19],” declares the LORD [Yahweh]. (15) Thus says the LORD [Yahweh], “A voice is heard in Ramah [The Hebrew could also be translated, “on the height” instead of “in Ramah.”⁵⁰], Lamentation**

⁴⁹ There is a sense in which *Ephraim* could be called the preeminent tribe of the twelve tribes (or thirteen if you include the tribe of Levi), but I don't believe that sense is relevant here in Jer. 31:9. *Judah* became the dominant tribe. I'll quote 1 Chron. 5:1, 2, “Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel [Reuben was the firstborn son of the twelve sons of Jacob/Israel (see Gen. 29:31, 32)] (for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed [Gen. 35:22; 49:4], his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph [Joseph's firstborn son was Manasseh, then Ephraim was born] the son of Israel; so that he [Reuben] is not enrolled in the genealogy according to the birthright. Though Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him *came* the leader, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph [and therefore to his son Ephraim].” Genesis 48:13-20 explain how Ephraim (the second-born son of Joseph) came to be exalted over Manasseh, the firstborn son of Joseph.

⁵⁰ William L. Holladay (*Jeremiah 2* [Fortress Press, 1989], pages 153, 186, 187) translates “on the height” and discusses this translation in some detail. He points out that the Jewish Targum and the Latin Vulgate have “height,” not Ramah. He refers to 1 Sam. 22:6, which uses the same Hebrew preposition (“b”) and noun (“ramah”) used here in Jer. 31:15; the NASB translates “on the height” in 1 Sam. 22:6. Holladay also says, “Rachel's bewailing her childlessness on the height is reminiscent of Jephthah's daughter bewailing her virginity on the mountains (Judg. 11:37-38). . . .”

Ramah was a town some 5 miles north of Jerusalem (cf. Josh. 18:25; Judg. 4:5). Some assume Rachel was buried at Ramah, but the Bible doesn't say that (cf. 1 Sam. 10:2). Based on Gen. 35:16-20; 48:7 she could have been buried a few miles north of Jerusalem or a few miles south of Jerusalem (footnote

and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; She refuses to be comforted [cf. Gen. 37:35; Psalm 77:2] **for her children, Because they are no more** [cf. Jer. 10:20].” [This verse, which takes a lot of poetic license, effectively communicates the low state of Rachel’s children for whom she was weeping, who were bearing the penalty for their sins.⁵¹ The next two verses (along with many other prophetic verses in Jeremiah and other books of the Bible) show that there was hope for her children. For one thing, (the remnant of) her children will be saved in the last days and return to the land that God gave them for an inheritance.

Most commentators believe Rachel’s children here (as throughout verses 2-22) are limited to the people of the northern kingdom of Israel, and (because of the use of *Ephraim* in verses 6, 9, 18, and 20 and other considerations – see under verse 2) I have to agree with them. Rachel was the mother of Joseph, and the grandmother of his sons *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, which were dominant tribes in the northern kingdom. It should be understood though that verses 15-17 by themselves would fit just as well for the combined kingdoms of Israel/Ephraim *and* Judah in that Rachel was also the mother of Benjamin. The tribe of Benjamin was aligned with Judah in the southern kingdom (see, for example, 1 Kings 12:21, 23; 2 Chron. 11:1, 3; and Ezra 1:5). Rachel was the favored wife of Jacob (who was later named Israel), the wife he had chosen (cf. Gen. 28:1-5; 29:1-30).

I’ll quote part of what Merrill F. Unger says under verses 15-17.⁵² His heading for these verses is “Divine Grace Assures Hope for Israel’s Future.” Under verse 15, he says, “In an imaginative poetic and prophetic touch, Rachel, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, from whom the leading tribes in the Northern Kingdom descended, is pictured as weeping in Ramah because of the captivity of Israel, that is, her children (descendants). Ramah, about five miles north of Jerusalem, was evidently the place where the captives [of the southern kingdom] were gathered before being carried away to Babylon (Jer. 40:1).

Rachel’s lamentation, and bitter weeping presaged the chastenings of Israel through the centuries at the hands of her Gentile overlords and tyrants (cf. Matt. 2:17-18), culminating in the cruelties of the Antichrist in the nation’s final time of supreme Tribulation preceding establishment of the Kingdom (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21-22).”

continues), near Bethlehem. Some believe Rachel was buried near Bethlehem, and Rachel’s tomb in Israel today is near Bethlehem. There is no need to picture Rachel weeping from the place of her burial; she wasn’t in the tomb. Ramah is mentioned in Jer. 40:1 as a staging area for the Babylonian’s deportation of the Jews after Jerusalem fell in 587/586 BC.

Matthew 2:18 quotes Jer. 31:15, applying these prophetic words to King Herod’s slaying all the male children from two years old and under in the vicinity of Bethlehem in an attempt to eliminate the “King of the Jews” (Matt. 2:2). This application of Jeremiah’s prophetic words was appropriate in that Rachel, the favored/chosen wife of Jacob/Israel and the mother of Joseph *and* Benjamin (Benjamin was part of the southern kingdom), would have been concerned about the people of the northern *and* southern kingdoms. Matthew’s application of the prophetic words of Jer. 31:15 would have been all the more appropriate if Rachel was buried near Bethlehem.

⁵¹ This verse (with verse 16) doesn’t teach that Rachel’s weeping, after her death, is the cause of the ultimate salvation of her children. As I mentioned this verse takes a lot of poetic license. J. A. Thompson equates Rachael with “personified Israel.” Eventually the *repentant, believing*, end-time remnant of her children will be saved with new-covenant salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁵² Unger’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. II (Moody Press, 1981), pages 1421, 1422.

I'll also quote his first three sentences under verse 16, "Only at Christ's second advent...[For Unger Christ's second advent takes place at the end of Daniel's 70th week and the rapture takes place before that seven-year period begins.] will God's promise of comfort, eventuating in conversion and restoration, be fully realized.... Then the faith and work of the saved remnant, purged out of the apostate mass of the nation, will be rewarded (Ruth 2:12; Heb. 6:10), for at the Messiah's second advent His reward will be 'with him' (Isa. 40:10).

And they (the exiles) from Babylon (Ezra 1:5) [people of the southern kingdom], and ultimately from Israel's final worldwide scattering (Jer. 23:3; 29:14; Ezek. 11:17-18; Hos. 1:11), shall come again to their homeland from the land of the enemy...." Unger includes the salvation and return of the remnant of the southern kingdom here too. They certainly will return, but it's not clear to me that we can see the salvation and return of the remnant of the southern kingdom here in verses 15-17, which is part of verses 2-22. Unger commented (on page 1420) that "Verses 1[2]-22 concern principally the ten northern tribes, while verses 23-26 deal with the other two tribes (cf. Isa. 11:12; Ezek. 37:15-28)." Unger comments under verse 18 that Ephraim is "the representative of the ten tribes." **(16) Thus says the LORD [Yahweh], "Restrain your voice from weeping And your eyes from tears [cf. Isa. 30:19]; For your work will be rewarded [cf. Ruth 2:12], declares the LORD [Yahweh], "And they will return from the land of the enemy.** [See under verses 7-9. Many of the people of the southern kingdom returned to Judah some seventy years after being taken captive by the Babylonians, but no such return is mentioned for the people of the northern kingdom. The primary return for the remnant of both kingdoms will take place at the end of this age.] **(17) There is hope for your future [still speaking to Rachel] declares the LORD [Yahweh], "And your children will return to their own territory.** [I'll quote Jer. 29:11-14, " 'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD [Yahweh], 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find *Me* when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you,' declares the LORD [Yahweh], 'and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,' declares the LORD [Yahweh], 'and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.' "] **(18) I have surely heard Ephraim grieving** [The name *Ephraim* was also used in verses 6, 9, and 20, The *grieving* here goes with the people of Israel/Ephraim's bearing the penalty for their sin and the chastening of God that is mentioned later in this verse. The weeping of Rachel correlates with the weeping (and grieving) of her children.] **'You have chastised me, and I was chastised** [It must be recognized that God's chastening of the people of Israel was extremely severe and long lasting. For one thing, many of the sons of Israel were not part of God's true Israel (cf. Rom. 9:6).], **Like an untrained calf** [cf. Hos. 4:16]; **Bring me back** [The NIV translates "restore me"; "cause me to come back [to You in a spiritual sense]" is the idea here. And the NIV translates the following words, "and I will return."] **that I may be restored** [Compare Psalm 80:3, 7, 19; Jer. 17:14; Lam. 5:21; and Acts 3:26.], **For You are the LORD [Yahweh] my God.** [Israelites (or Gentiles) being brought back to God is totally dependent on the saving grace of God, but it must also be understood that the people themselves (as free moral agents [men still have some freedom after the fall]) must ultimately repent and submit to God in faith; see verse 19. We desperately need the

balanced truth of what the Bible teaches.] **(19) For after I turned back** [which includes God’s role and man’s role], **I repented** [cf. Ezek. 36:31; Zech. 12:10]; **And after I was instructed, I smote on my thigh** [“after I came to understand, I beat my breast” NIV. Compare Ezek. 21:12; Luke 18:13]; **I was ashamed and also humiliated** [cf. Jer. 3:25] **Because I bore the reproach of my youth.’ (20) Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a delightful child? Indeed, as often as I have spoken against him, I certainly still remember him; Therefore My heart yearns for him** [cf. Hos. 11:8 (which speaks of the northern kingdom)]; **I will surely have mercy on him** [cf. Isa. 55:7; Mic. 7:18],” **declares the LORD** [Yahweh]. **(21) “Set up for yourself roadmarks, Place for yourself guideposts; Direct your mind to the highway** [Compare Isa. 11:16; 19:23; 35:8-10; and Jer. 50:4, 5. “The virgin of Israel is urged to send out an advance party to set...up waymarks and signposts to direct the returning exiles on their way home.”⁵³ “The guideposts should be understood as poetic figures of speech.”⁵⁴], **The way by which you went** [when you were exiled]. **Return, O virgin of Israel, Return to these your cities** [cf. Isa. 48:20; 52:7-12]. **(22) How long will you go here and there, O faithless daughter?** [cf., e.g., Jer. 3:14, 20-25] **For the LORD** [Yahweh] **has created a new thing in the earth—A woman will encompass** [“surround” NIV. One meaning given in the BDB Hebrew Lexicon (under *sabab* on page 686) is, “with affection *press round* her divine husband.” J. A. Thompson (*Book of Jeremiah*, page 576) cites the view of G. P. Couturier,⁵⁵ which is essentially the same as the viewpoint just mentioned, “The ‘woman’ personified Israel and the ‘man’ personified Yahweh. The adulterous wife, Israel, who had to be divorced by Yahweh her husband, now returns to him and clings to him (Hos. 1:3; Jer. 2:20-21). This would be something new, something unheard of in all Israel’s history.” And essentially the same view is mentioned by Gerald Keown, Pamela Scalise, and Thomas Smothers (*Jeremiah 26-52*, page 123), “The people will ‘assemble around’ (*sabab*) God in worship (cf. Psalm 26:6).” There are quite a few different opinions on the meaning of these last words, but I believe this view is the correct view; that is, the people of Israel (referred to as “a woman” here) will finally become faithful to God through submitting to Him, His Christ, and His new-covenant plan of salvation at the end of this age.] **a man.” (23) [After speaking (at least for the most part) of God’s end-time salvation of the remnant of the people of the northern kingdom in verses 2-22, verses 23-25 very briefly speak of His end-time salvation of the remnant of the people of the southern kingdom of Judah, when He restores their fortunes.] Thus says the LORD** [Yahweh] **of hosts, the God of Israel, “Once again they will speak this word in the land of Judah and in its cities when I restore their fortunes** [cf. Jer. 29:14; 30:3, 18; and 32:44], **‘The LORD** [Yahweh] **bless you, O abode of righteousness** [cf. Isa. 1:26; Jer. 50:7], **O holy hill!**’ [referring to Jerusalem and the temple mount (cf. Psalms 2:6; 43:3; 48:1; 87:1; Isa. 66:20; and Zech. 8:3)] **(24) Judah and all its cities will dwell together in it, the farmer and they who go about with flocks.** [Compare, for example, Zech. 8:4-8.] **(25) For I satisfy the weary ones and refresh everyone who languishes** [cf. Psalm 107:9; Jer. 31:12, 14].” **(26) At this I awoke and looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me.** [Compare Zech. 4:1. We are not informed where the revelation began, which apparently Jeremiah received while experiencing this particular “sleep.” That

⁵³ C. Paul Gray, *Beacon Bible Commentary*, Vol. IV (Beacon Hill Press, 1966), page 428.

⁵⁴ Andrew W. Blackwood, *Commentary on Jeremiah* (Word Books, 1977), page 222.

⁵⁵ “Jeremiah,” *Jerome Bible Commentary* (1969), page 326.

revelation could have begun at Jer. 30:1 or at Jer. 31:1 or 2.] (27) **“Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD [Yahweh], “when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast [Compare Ezek. 36:8-12; Hos. 2:23. Growth and multiplication result from God’s *sowing*]. (28) As I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster [cf., e.g., Jer. 44:27; Dan. 9:12-14], so I will watch over them to build and to plant [cf. Jer. 1:10; 18:5-12; and 24:6, 7],” declares the LORD [Yahweh]. (29) “In those days they will not say again, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children’s teeth are set on edge.’ [Compare Lam. 5:7, but especially Ezek. 18:2 with all of Ezekiel chapter 18.] (30) But everyone will die for his own iniquity [cf. Deut. 24:16; Isa. 3:11; and Ezek. 18:4, 20]; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge [see verse 29]. (31) [Verses 31-34 are extremely important. They prophesy of the all-important new covenant that has now been inaugurated, based on the incarnation, sinless life, atoning death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ (God the Son). New-covenant salvation became available in a full sense starting on the day of Pentecost, when the Lord Jesus poured forth the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, which enabled believers to be born again and sanctified in the full new-covenant sense (and to function in the charismatic gifts, as the Spirit distributes the gifts). As these verses show, the new covenant was designed to solve the serious sin problem that existed on an all-to-consistent basis for the people of Israel (the entire nation) under the old covenant (and for the Gentiles).**

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews quotes Jer. 31:31-34 in Heb. 8:8-12 and he quotes a key part of these verses in Heb. 10:16-17. In Hebrews chapters 8-10 (and in other parts of the epistle), he emphasizes the all-important point that the new covenant in the blood of Christ has been given to fully solve the sin problem, through complete forgiveness and especially through enabling believers to live in the righteousness and holiness of God, with the victory over spiritual death, sin, and the demons that have been defeated through the all-powerful saving grace of God in Christ.

The *new* covenant wasn’t an afterthought in God’s salvation plans: Before the foundation of the world, He had already planned to sacrifice His Son to accomplish full salvation (new-covenant salvation) for those who would submit to the gospel in faith, and to totally remove sin and all unrepentant sinners (starting with the devil and his angels) from His kingdom forever (see 1 Pet. 1:14-21, for example; cf. Gen. 3:15). On pages 156-162 of my book *Holiness and Victory Over Sin*, I discuss some of the most relevant verses from Hebrews chapters 8-10, verses that put the emphasis on holiness and victory over sin through new-covenant salvation in the all-powerful shed blood of the Lamb of God.] **“Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD [Yahweh], “when I will make a new covenant [cf. Jer. 32:40; 33:14-16; Ezek. 37:24-28; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6; Heb. 8:6-13; and 10:9-18] with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah [These verses are of key importance to explain the salvation of Israel and Judah that is prophesied in Jer. 30:1-31:26, for example. Although many Israelites became Christians in the early years of Christianity (through submitting in faith to the gospel of the new-covenant) and some have become Christians throughout the last two thousand years, the Bible (both the Old and the New Testaments) show that Israel/Judah will not be saved as a nation (more specifically, as a remnant of the nation) until the end of this age, and after intense shaking (cf., e.g., Matt. 23:37-39; 24:15-31 [with Dan. 11:36-12:13; Joel**

2:30-32; and Zech. 12:1-14:21, for example]; Rom. 9:27-29; 11:25-27; Rev. 7:1-8; 10:7; 11:13; 12:6-13:10; and 15:2-4).], **(32) not like the covenant** [the old covenant based on the Mosaic Law] **which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt** [cf. Ex. 19:5, 6; 24:6-8; and Deut. 5:2, 3], **My covenant which they broke** [cf., e.g., Jer. 11:6-8.], **although I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD** [Yahweh]. [The fact that they consistently broke the covenant was the problem. The old covenant was from God and was good, of course, but God never intended that covenant to be the full answer to the spiritual death, bondage to sin problem. The old covenant didn't have the authority or power to dethrone sin, spiritual death, or the devil. As I mentioned, God always intended to fully solve the sin problem (at a high cost to Himself and His Son) through the new covenant. For men to think and live as God (and divine order) requires us to think and live, we are dependent on the enabling grace/Spirit of God in Christ. We were not created to be independent beings; we are dependent on the enabling grace/Spirit of God in Christ. When mankind died spiritually (through the rebellion of Adam and Eve), we lost the life-flowing relationship we had with God and His enabling grace—we must be born again and enabled (by the Holy Spirit of God) to live in the righteousness and holiness of God.

God gave the old covenant as a major step in His plan to bring about new-covenant salvation. Through the old covenant He taught us a lot about sin (and His wrath against sin) and about righteousness and of our need for new-covenant salvation. He taught us about sacrificial offerings and atonement, which enables us to understand the all-important Sacrifice of the Lamb of God. He gave us the Old Testament (which included all the prophecies of the Messiah/Christ and new-covenant salvation, for one thing) through the people of the old-covenant, and He gave us the Messiah/Christ, the twelve apostles, etc. The people of the old-covenant experienced quite a bit of God's enabling grace under the old covenant to the extent they were faithful to Him, and He always kept a faithful remnant of the nation.

The people of the old covenant didn't have the new birth and sanctifying grace of the new covenant available to them, but (as God repeatedly informed them) there was no excuse for the almost continuous rebellion by so many of the Israelites. For one thing, many of the people of Israel were not the people of God—they were not true believers; they were not part of God's true Israel. God took Israel's rebellion seriously and often chastened them. How much more does He take seriously the sin of new-covenant believers, and there has been much such sin throughout the history of the Christian church, and much of the Christian church of our day has a serious sin problem. We must address this problem with the highest priority—we don't get by with sin.] **(33) “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel** [Judah and Israel united] **after those days,” declares the LORD** [Yahweh], **“I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it** [cf. Psalm 40:8; 2 Cor. 3:3] **and I will be their God, and they shall be My people** [cf. Jer. 24:7; 30:22; and 32:38]. [The words of this verse are of key importance to understand the glorious focus of new-covenant salvation. Instead of God's giving Israel His law at Mt. Sinai and telling the Israelites to take the law into their hearts and to think and live in accordance with those righteous laws (those righteous laws which the Israelites have rather consistently broken [verse 32]), this time (as a major aspect of new-covenant salvation) He puts His law within them—He writes it on their hearts. In other words He transforms them; He sets them free from sin, spiritual death,

and the devil; He puts His Righteous and Holy Spirit within them; He imparts His righteousness and holiness to them—He makes them righteous and holy. Ezekiel 36:26, 27 are a very important cross-reference, “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.” We Gentiles can, and we must, be very thankful for the fact that God offers this new-covenant salvation to us too. We are grafted into God’s true Israel (see Rom. 11:17-24, for example).

It must be understood that though the Bible speaks quite a bit about God’s making His people righteous and holy in the new covenant, and of the fact that He must receive all the glory for the Christian’s righteousness and holiness, the New Testament also makes it clear that Christians have a definite role in their becoming righteous and holy and in their continuing to abide in that glorious state. We must resist sin and walk in the righteousness and holiness of God on a consistent basis by the enabling grace and Spirit of God through faith, in accordance with the teaching of the New Testament, or we won’t be righteous and holy. See, for example, Rom. 6:1-23; 8:12-14; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:17-5:21; and 1 Pet. 1:13-19, and there are *many* more such exhortations and warnings throughout the New Testament. As Gal. 5:16, for example, shows, we are required to walk by the Holy Spirit on a continuous basis (by faith). These super-important passages, and many more like them, are discussed in some detail in my book *Holiness and Victory Over Sin* and in my papers.] **(34) They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD [Yahweh],’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them [Compare Isa. 11:9; 54:13; Jer. 24:7; Hab. 2:14; and John 17:3 (“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent”). Christians come to know God the Father as His born again children.]**,” **declares the LORD [Yahweh], “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”** [Compare Isa. 43:25; Jer. 33:8; 50:20; Mic. 7:18, 19; Heb. 8:12; and 10:17. Complete forgiveness is a glorious and necessary part of the good news of the new-covenant gospel. In my opinion, however, about ten percent of the emphasis should be placed on forgiveness and about ninety percent on being transformed and walking in the righteousness and holiness of God with the victory over sin, by grace through faith. It takes a lot more than the knowledge of forgiveness of sins for Christians to have faith for righteousness, holiness, and victory over sin—and we must be motivated to make God and His righteousness top priority and to fear sinning against Him.] **(35) Thus says the LORD [Yahweh], Who gives the sun for light by day And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night [cf. Gen. 1:14-18; Psalm 136:7-9], Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar [cf. Isa. 51:15]; The LORD [Yahweh] of hosts [armies] is His name [cf. Jer. 10:16; 32:18; and 50:34]; (36) “If this fixed order departs From before Me,” declares the LORD [Yahweh], “Then the offspring of Israel also will cease From being a nation before Me forever.”** [Compare Psalms 89:34-37; 148:6; Jer. 33:20-26; and Amos 9:8-15.] **(37) Thus says the LORD [Yahweh], “If the heavens above can be measured And the foundations of the earth searched out below [cf. Isa. 40:12], Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel For all that they have done,” declares the LORD [Yahweh].** [Compare Rom. 11:2-5, 25-27.] **(38) “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD [Yahweh], “when the city [Jerusalem] will be rebuilt for the LORD [cf. Jer. 30:18]**

from the Tower of Hananel [cf. Zech. 14:10; Neh. 3:1; and 12:39] **to the Corner Gate** [cf. Zech. 14:10; 2 Kings 14:13; and 2 Chron. 26:9]. **(39) The measuring line** [cf. Zech. 1:16] **will go out farther straight ahead to the hill Gareb; then it will turn to Goah.** [I'll quote a sentence from what Merrill F. Unger says here,⁵⁶ "The hill Gareb, and Goah are unknown, but the line to the west is presumably described [the western boundary of the city], for verse 40 deals with the southern and eastern parts of the city." Under verse 38 he mentions that the "Tower of Hananel" was at the northeast corner and that the "Corner Gate" was apparently on the northwest corner. "...the Horse Gate [see verse 40], which lay on the southeast corner of the temple courts (Neh. 3:28). Omitted from this description is the eastern periphery round the Temple where the Kidron Valley itself formed the boundary."⁵⁷] **(40) And the whole valley** [referring to the Hinnom Valley; cf. Jer. 7:31-33; 19:2-13] **of the dead bodies and of the ashes** [J. A. Thompson translates "greasy ashes."⁵⁸], **and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron** [cf. 2 Sam. 15:23; 2 Kings 23:6, 12; and John 18:1], **to the corner of the Horse Gate** [cf. 2 Chron 23:15; Neh. 3:28] **toward the east, shall be holy to the LORD** [cf. Joel 3:17; Zech. 14:20, 21]; **it will not be plucked up or overthrown anymore forever** [These last words confirm that God is speaking of the restoration of Jerusalem (and the salvation of the people of Israel and Judah) at the end of this age (cf., e.g., Jer. 3:15-18).].”

⁵⁶ *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. II, page 1424.

⁵⁷ John L. Mackay *Jeremiah*, Vol. 2, page 243.

⁵⁸ *Book of Jeremiah*, page 583. In a footnote Thompson says, "The word *deshen* is used in Lev. 1:16; 4:12; 6:8-9; 1 Kings 13:3, 5 of the burnt wood of the fire soaked in fat." The *fat* came from sacrificial offerings. Since Jeremiah refers to the Jews offering pagan sacrifices (including human sacrifices) in the Valley of Hinnom (cf. Jer. 7:31; 19:4; 2:23), I assume these "greasy ashes" resulted from those sacrifices. C. F. Keil (*Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. VIII, page 45) says, "According to Lev. 6:3 [6:10] *deshen* means the ashes of the burnt-offerings consumed on the altar." Gerald Keown, Pamela Scalise, and Thomas Smothers (*Jeremiah 26-52*, page 138) say, "The *deshen*, 'fatty ashes,' of the sacrificial victim (Lev. 6:3 [English 6:10]) would refer to their remains."

Jeremiah 32:36-44

“Now therefore thus says the LORD [Yahweh] God of Israel concerning this city of which you say [This “you” is plural in the Hebrew.], ‘It is given into the hand of the king of Babylon by sword, by famine and by pestilence.’ [See verse 24. As verses 1-35 show, God was speaking here of Jerusalem’s being given into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, in the days of Jeremiah. At the time Jeremiah received these prophetic words, the army of the king of Babylon was already besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah had been “shut up in the court of the guard, which *was in* the house of the king of Judah, because Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up” (Jer. 32:2, 3; see 2 Kings 25:1, 2; Jer. 32:1-5; and 33:1). The city fell and the temple was destroyed in 587/586 BC. “Jerusalem, as the capital, represents the whole kingdom.”⁵⁹] **(37) Behold, I will gather them out of all the lands** [These words “I will gather them out of all the lands” along with the words of verses 38-40 confirm that these prophetic words refer (for the most part) to God’s end-time salvation of Judah.] **to which I have driven them in My anger, in My wrath and in great indignation; and I will bring them back to this place and make them dwell in safety** [on “dwell in safety,” cf. Jer. 23:6; 33:16; Ezek. 34:25, 28, 29; and Zech. 14:11]. [Compare, for example, Deut. 30:1-10; Isa. 11:11-16; Jer. 3:12-18; 16:14, 15; 23:1-8; 30:3, 8-11, 18-22; 31:1-40; Ezek. 11:17-20; Hos. 1:10, 11; and Amos 9:11-15. Many of the people of Judah came back to Jerusalem and the land of Judah after Cyrus, the Medo-Persian king, overthrew the Babylonians in 539/538 BC and permitted the Jews to return (he even helped them return to rebuild the temple, etc.), all in accordance with God’s prophetic words through His prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others. That return from captivity, however, was only a small part of the fulfillment of the prophetic words we are studying here (Jer. 32:36-44). These verses, like so many of the verses we have already studied from Jeremiah chapters 3, 16, 23, 30, and 31 (and like so many other prophetic passages in the Old Testament), will not receive their primary fulfillment until the end of this age when the remnant of Judah (and Israel) will be saved and brought back from their worldwide dispersion. The following verses in this chapter (especially verses 39, 40) confirm the end-time perspective of these prophetic words.] **(38) They shall be My people, and I will be their God** [cf. Jer. 7:23; 24:7; 30:22; 31:33; Ezek. 14:11; and Zech. 8:8.] **(39) and I will give them one heart and one way** [Compare Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 11:19, 20; 36:26, 27. This sanctifying change will come to pass through new-covenant salvation (cf., e.g., Jer. 31:31-34; 32:39, 40) in the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Isa. 55:3-5; Jer. 23:5, 6; 30:9, 21; Ezek. 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25; Hos. 3:5; Luke 1:69; Acts 2:17-26; and 13:23, 24).], **that they may fear Me always, for their own good** [see verse 40] **and for the good of their children after them.** [The Old and New Testaments speak much of the need for God’s people to fear Him (cf., e.g., Ex. 20:20; Lev. 25:17; Deut. 5:29; 6:2, 13, 24; 8:6; 10:12; 17:19; Jer. 32:40; Psalms 33:18; 34:7, 9; Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:5; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:21; 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:17; Rev. 11:18; and 19:5); that is, they must fear sinning against Him; God’s people sinning against Him (and all sin is against God, one way, or another) never works for the *good* of God’s people, and it always robs Him of glory (but He will be fully glorified in the end). God went out of His

⁵⁹ C. F. Keil, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. VIII, page 59.

way to inform Israel again and again that righteousness brings blessings and sin brings curses. We must love God (to the extent we really love God, we won't sin against Him), but we must also fear Him—the Bible teaches both. The Bible has a lot to say about the God's love, but it also (very much including the New Testament) has a lot to say about His wrath. We cannot abide in His love unless we are keeping His commandments (cf., e.g., John 14:21, 23; 15:10; and Jude 1:21).] **(40) I will make an everlasting covenant with them** [cf. Isa. 55:3-5; Jer. 31:31-34; 50:5; Ezek. 16:60; and 37:26-28] **that I will not turn away from them** [cf. Ezek. 39:29], **to do them good** [see verse 39]; **and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me** [see under verse 39]. **(41) I will rejoice over them to do them good** [cf. Deut. 30:9; Isa. 62:5; 65:19; and Zeph. 3:17] **and will faithfully plant them in this land** [cf. Jer. 24:6; 31:28; and Amos 9:15] **with all My heart and with all My soul. (42) For thus says the LORD [Yahweh], 'Just as I brought all this great disaster on this people, so I am going to bring on them all the good that I am promising them.** [Compare Jer. 31:28; Zech. 8:14, 15; and Jer. 33:14.] **(43) Fields will be bought in this land** [cf. Jer. 32:6-15] **of which you say** [This "you" is plural in the Hebrew (cf. verse 36).], **"It is a desolation, without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans."** [See Jer. 32:25; cf. Jer. 33:10. The words of verses 43, 44 have much application for the days after the return from the Babylonian captivity.] **(44) 'Men will buy fields for money, sign and seal deeds, and call in witnesses** [cf. Jer. 32:10] **in the land of Benjamin** [Note "the land of Benjamin" in verse 8 (see verses 6-15).], **in the environs of Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah, in the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the lowland and in the cities of the Negev** [cf. Jer. 17:26; 33:13]; **for I will restore their fortunes** [cf. Jer. 29:14; 30:3, 18; 31:23; and 33:11, 26], **' declares the LORD [Yahweh]."**

JEREMIAH CHAPTER 33

Then the word of the LORD [Yahweh] came to Jeremiah the second time, while he was still confined in the court of the guard [The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah the *first* time while he was confined in the court of the guard, as recorded in Jeremiah chapter 32 (see Jer. 32:2).], **saying, (2) “Thus says the LORD [Yahweh] who made the earth** [“Lit *it*” (margin of NASB); the context shows that mankind (and the nations) is included as part of what “the earth” means here.⁶⁰ Compare Jer. 10:16; 32:17; and 51:19.], **the LORD [Yahweh] who formed it to establish it, the LORD [Yahweh] is His name** [Yahweh created the world to be in divine order, and (even though the world has been out of divine order because of the rebellion of Satan, a third of the angels, and most of mankind—rebellion leads to *temporary* chaos) everything will be in divine order when He has completed His work of saving and judging. When He has completed His work, (true) Israel (and the repentant remnant of the nations) will have been saved and glorified and all unrepentant rebels (starting with the devil) will have been removed from His world/kingdom by judgment.], **(3) ‘Call to Me** [cf. Psalm 50:15; 91:15; Isa. 55:6 (with 55:7-13); and Jer. 29:12 (with verses 13, 14)] **and I will answer you** [The context and the Hebrew here (including the masculine singular pronoun “you” twice) show that God is speaking to Jeremiah.], **and I will tell you great and mighty** [“unsearchable” NIV; “hidden” NRSV and others] **things** [cf. Jer. 32:17, 27], **which you do not know** [cf. Isa. 48:6.]’ [God challenges Jeremiah to call to Him for revelation, and He will tell him great and hidden things, things which he doesn’t know, things that deal with His plans to save Israel (in the last days) with a very full salvation. Apparently God is referring to the things He will go on to tell Jeremiah (and his readers) to the end of this chapter—He goes on to tell of His plans to save Israel (Judah and Israel [see verses 7, 14]). Verses 4, 5 are introductory; they don’t speak of God’s plans to save Israel; they powerfully demonstrate how badly Israel needs salvation. (This information about God’s saving Israel isn’t unique to Jeremiah chapter 33 in that much of this information is contained in other prophecies in the book of Jeremiah, and in other prophetic books.) It is understood that God’s saving the end-time remnant of Israel/Judah will involve His judging Israel/Judah and the other nations of the world, which will also lead to the salvation of the remnant of Israel/Judah and the remnant of the other nations (compare Jer. 33:9; see under Jer. 3:17; 31:7 in this paper).] **(4) For thus says the LORD [Yahweh] God of Israel concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah which are broken down to make a defense against the siege ramps** [cf. Isa. 22:10; Jer. 32:24; Ezek. 21:22; and Hab. 1:10] **and against the sword, (5) ‘While they are coming to fight with the Chaldeans and to fill them with the corpses of men whom I have slain in My anger and in My wrath, and I have hidden My face from this city** [cf. Isa. 8:17; Jer. 18:17; 21:10; and Mic. 3:4] **because of all their wickedness** [Compare, for example, Jer. 21:4-7; 32:5. The Jews, having broken down the houses of the city and the houses of the kings of Judah to make a defense against the siege ramps and against the sword *are coming* to try to stop the Chaldean (Babylonian) soldiers from taking the city, but because of God’s judgment of the people of Judah, they end up filling the demolished

⁶⁰ The Septuagint has “the earth.”

houses of Jerusalem with their own dead bodies.]: **(6) Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them** [cf. Jer. 30:17; and Hos. 6:1]; **and I will reveal to them** [“and will let them enjoy” NIV] **an abundance of peace and truth** [cf. Isa. 66:12]. **(7) I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel** [Compare Jer. 30:3 (see under 30:3 in this paper), 18; 32:44; and 33:26.] **and will rebuild them as they were at first** [cf. Isa. 1:26; Jer. 31:4, 38; and Amos 9:14, 15]. **(8) I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned against Me and by which they have transgressed against Me.** [Compare, for example, Psalm 51:2; Isa. 44:22; Jer. 23:6; 31:23, 31-34; 32:39, 40; 50:20; Ezek. 36:25-27; Mic. 7:18, 19; and Zech. 13:1 (with Zech. 12:10-14).⁶¹] **(9) It will be to Me a name of joy, praise and glory before all the nations of the earth which will hear of all the good that I do for them** [Compare, for example, Isaiah chapters 60, 62; Jer. 3:17; 4:2; 16:19; and 32:37-44], **and they will fear and tremble** [This *fear and trembling* on the part of the remnant of the nations after God’s end-time judgment of the world and His full salvation of Israel will lead to their salvation (see under verse 3). The saved remnant of the nations will, however, always be distinct from the people of true Israel; the people of true Israel will reign with the Lord Jesus Christ forever.] **because of all the good** [cf. Jer. 24:6; 32:42] **and all the peace that I make for it.’** **(10) Thus says the LORD** [Yahweh], **‘Yet again there will be heard in this place, of which you say** [This “you” is plural in the Hebrew (cf. Jer. 32:36, 43).], **“It is a waste, without man and without beast,” that is, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and without beast** [cf. Jer. 26:9; 34:22], **(11) the voice of joy and the voice of gladness** [cf. Isa. 35:10; 51:3, 11], **the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride** [contrast Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10; and Rev. 18:21-23], **the voice of those who say, “Give thanks to the LORD** [Yahweh] **of hosts, For the LORD** [Yahweh] **is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting”** [cf. 1 Chron. 16:34; 2 Chron. 5:13; 7:3; Ezra 3:11; Psalms 100:4, 5; 106:1; 107:1; 118:1; and 136:1]; **and of those who bring a thank offering** [cf. Lev. 7:12, 13; Psalms 107:22; 116:17; and Jer. 17:26] **into the house of the LORD** [Yahweh]. **For I will restore the fortunes of the land as they were at first** [See verse 7.], **’ says the LORD** [Yahweh]. **(12) Thus says the LORD** [Yahweh] **of hosts, ‘There will again be in this place which is waste, without man or beast** [cf. Jer. 32:43; 33:10; 36:29; and 51:62], **and in all its cities, a habitation of shepherds who rest their flocks** [cf. Isa. 65:10; Jer. 31:12; and Zeph. 2:6, 7]. **(13) In the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the lowland, in the cities of the Negev, in the land of Benjamin, in the environs of Jerusalem and in the cities of Judah** [cf. Jer. 17:26; 32:44], **the flocks will again pass under the hands of the one who numbers them** [Compare Lev. 27:32. “In ancient Israel and Judah, shepherds counted their sheep as they came to the fold at night.”⁶²], **’ says the LORD** [Yahweh]. **(14) ‘Behold, days are coming** [cf. Jer. 23:5], **’ declares the LORD** [Yahweh], **‘when I will fulfill the good word which I have spoken**

⁶¹ It is important to see that the *cleansing* of Ezek. 36:25-27 and Zech. 13:1 involves a lot more than just washing away the pollution that had come upon the people of Israel because of their past transgressions. These verses (and many others) speak of the new-covenant *cleansing* that comes through the shed blood of the Lamb of God in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit that enables born-again believers to stop sinning—they are *cleansed* from sinning. Romans 11:25-27, for example, speaks of God’s *removing ungodliness from Jacob* through new-covenant salvation. Also see under Jer. 31:33.

⁶² Charles Lee Feinberg, *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, page 590.

concerning the house of Israel and the house of Judah. [Compare Jer. 32:42. See verse 7.] **(15) In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch of David** [See under Jer. 23:5, 6. The righteous Branch of David is the Lord Jesus Christ (cf., e.g., Isa. 32:1; Ezek. 34:23, 24; and Rev. 22:16). The primary time setting in view here is at the end of this age, when Christ comes to save the repentant end-time remnant of Israel/Judah and to establish righteousness on the earth (cf., e.g., Zech. 9:9, 10; 12:10-13:1; and 14:3-21).] **to spring forth; and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth.** [“in the land” NIV. Compare, for example, Psalm 72:1-17; Isa. 9:1-7; and 11:1-16.] **(16) In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell in safety** [“Safety” and every other blessing will result from the fact that God’s people are right with Him and living as He requires them to live (in divine order) through new-covenant salvation in Christ Jesus.]; **and this is the name by which she** [referring to Jerusalem; eventually new Jerusalem, which is the city of God and His saints; the city and the saints are righteous with the (imparted) righteousness of God (the triune God), who receives all the glory forever] **will be called: the LORD [Yahweh] is our righteousness.** [See Jer. 23:6; 31:31-34. Compare, for example, Isa. 1:26; 53:11; Rom. 1:16, 17; 3:21, 22; 10:3, 4; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21; and Phil. 3:9.⁶³ Through the atoning death of Christ Jesus and by the power of the indwelling Righteous and Holy Spirit, born-again believers are made righteous and holy with (they partake of) the righteousness and holiness of God. God (the triune God) is the only source of truth, righteousness, holiness, love, divine order, peace, and everything else that is good.] **(17) For thus says the LORD [Yahweh], ‘David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel** [Compare 2 Sam. 7:16; 1 Kings 2:4; 8:25; 1 Chron 17:11-14; Psalm 89:19-37; Luke 1:32, 33; and Acts 2:22-36. From our perspective we can see that these prophetic words are fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was born (in one sense) of the lineage of King David.]; **(18) and the Levitical priests shall never lack a man before Me to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings and to prepare sacrifices continually** [cf. Num. 3:5-10; 25:12, 13; and Deut. 18:1, 2].’” [The New Testament shows that the old-covenant ministry of sin offerings came to an end with the once-for-all atoning death of the Lamb of God and the establishing of new-covenant salvation on the basis of His shed blood (cf., e.g., Heb. 7:1-10:39; 13:9-16). Christ is the great high priest of new-covenant believers (see Psalm 110:4; Zech. 6:13; and Heb. 7:1-10:39), and Christ’s people (which includes all the members of God’s true Israel) will reign with Him throughout the millennial kingdom and forever (cf. 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21; 12:5; 20:4; and 22:5) and they will function as priests throughout the millennial kingdom and probably forever (cf. Ex. 19:6; Isa. 61:6; 66:21⁶⁴; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6; and 22:3-5).

⁶³ Most of these verses are discussed in my book *Holiness and Victory Over Sin*.

⁶⁴ I briefly discussed Isa. 61:1-11 on pages 102, 103 of my paper titled, “A Verse-by-Verse Study of Six Important Eschatological Chapters of the New Testament: 1 Corinthians 15; Matthew 24, 25; and Revelation 20-22,” dated November 1998. That paper is split up into four parts on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching). On the internet site see “More Regarding God’s Salvation Plans for the Nations,” page 10. I’ll quote the relevant part of what I said there, “True Israel will be ‘priests of the LORD [Yahweh]’ (Isa. 61:6). Cf. Rev. 1:6; 5:10; and 20:6. I assume this priesthood will continue into the eternal state of Revelation chapters 21, 22. Revelation 22:5 shows that the reigning continues. The ‘double portion’ given to (true) Israel (Isa. 61:7) fits the idea of (true) Israel being God’s first-born son, with a privileged position (cf. Deut. 21:15-17; Ex. 4:22; Psalm 89:27; Jer. 31:9; and Heb. 12:23). Hebrews 12:23 speaks of

I'll quote a paragraph from what John L. Mackay says here.⁶⁵ "Indeed there can be little doubt that both the Davidic and the Levitical aspects of the promise are to be understood in the same way. Using language drawn from the past and present theocratic institutions, the LORD assured the people of Jeremiah's day [and all of Jeremiah's readers] of his continued provision for them of suitable rulers and of legitimate priests. With the greater light given by New Testament revelation it can be seen that just as it was indicated that the provision of rulers would culminate in the 'righteous Branch' (v. 15) who is the consummation of the Davidic promise and 'king of kings' (Rev. 19:6), so too it has become clear that the consummation of the priestly promise is also to be found in the Messiah. Furthermore, because of the union between Christ and his people, they are granted the same status he himself has. 'You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth' (Rev. 5:10)."] **(19) The word of the LORD [Yahweh] came to Jeremiah, saying, (20) "Thus says the LORD [Yahweh], 'If you can break My covenant for the day and My covenant for the night, so that day and night will not be at their appointed time, (21) then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant** [I'll quote a few sentences from what John L. Mackay says here.⁶⁶ "David is called 'my servant' twenty-one times in the Old Testament, particularly in Samuel, Kings and Psalms. It is used in Jeremiah only in this chapter (vv. 21, 22, 26). The phrase 'my servant' was used of Abraham (Gen. 26:24) and Moses (Num. 12:7), where it denoted their privileged relationship with the LORD, and the place they occupied in his purposes (see also 25:9)." The primary reason I wanted to quote what Mackay said regarding the word *servant* here is to refer the reader to the glorious fact that all the glorified members of God's true Israel, who are reigning with Him in a never-ending reign in new Jerusalem, are called His "bond-servants" NASB; "servants" NKJV in Rev. 22:3.

I'll quote Rev. 22:3-5, "There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God [the Father] and of the Lamb [God the Son] will be in it [in new Jerusalem], and His bond-servants [that's us, all the members of God's true Israel] will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name *will be* on their foreheads. And there will no longer be *any* night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever."] **so that he will not have a son to reign on his throne [cf. 2 Chron. 7:18], and with the Levitical priests, My ministers. (22) As the host of heaven cannot be counted [cf. Gen. 15:5; Jer. 31:37] and the sand of the sea cannot be measured [cf. Gen. 22:17], so I will multiply the**

the 'church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven.' In the Greek 'first-born' is plural; each member of God's true Israel has the privileged position of a first-born son."

On Isa. 66:21 see pages 109, 110 of my paper titled, "Verse-by-Verse Studies of Selected Eschatological Passages from the Book of Isaiah." I'll quote a few sentences from what I said on page 109, "I assume that these words, 'priests' and 'Levites,' like the sacrificial offerings of Isa. 19:21 [see under Isa. 19:19-21 in that paper]; 56:7; and 60:7, are not to be understood in a literal old-covenant sense. Words that were appropriate for old-covenant worship are being used here (as they often are) to describe worship that supersedes that dispensation. [I have a footnote here, "In the same way, we can be confident that the nations won't be limited to the forms of transportation listed in Isa. 66:20. The Old Testament prophecies couldn't be expected to speak of things and concepts not understood yet, and for which there were no words."] All true Christians will be priests (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; and 20:6; cf. 1 Pet. 2:5, 9); all the members of God's true Israel will be priests (Isa. 61:6; cf. Ex. 19:6)."

⁶⁵ *Jeremiah*, Vol. 2, page 280.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, page 281.

descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.’ ” [Compare Jer. 33:25, 26.] **(23) And the word of the LORD [Yahweh] came to Jeremiah, saying,** **(24) “Have you [This “you” is masculine singular, referring to Jeremiah.] not observed what this people have spoken, saying, ‘The two families which the LORD chose, He has rejected them’?** [The “two families” are the two kingdoms (Israel/Ephraim and Judah) into which the one nation (Israel) had split after the death of King Solomon (cf. 1 Kings 11:43-12:24). The people were saying that God had rejected both kingdoms, but these verses (Jer. 33:24, 25) and many of the prophetic verses we have already looked at from the book of Jeremiah (and many other prophetic verses in the Old Testament) show that God has promised to not only save the remnants of both kingdoms but also to reunite them into one kingdom (cf. Deut. 30:1-10; Jer. 3:15-18; 23:1-8; Jer. 30:1-31:40; 32:36-44; 33:1-26; and Ezek. 37:1-28).] **Thus they despise My people, no longer are they as a nation in their sight.** [They were *despising* God’s people (Israel/Judah) by saying that God had totally rejected them and that He had no future for them, even though He had made many promises to them for their future salvation and exaltation. Also, God always continued to take care of the individual Israelites who were faithful to Him (the faithful remnant that included people like Jeremiah).] **(25) Thus says the LORD [Yahweh], ‘If My covenant for day and night stand not, and the fixed patterns of heaven and earth I have not established [cf. Gen. 8:22; Jer. 31:35, 36; 33:20, 21; and Psalm 74:16, 17], (26) then I would reject the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, not taking from his descendants rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob [see verses 14-22]. But I will restore their fortunes [the fortunes of Israel and Judah (see, for example, verses 7, 14); on “restore their fortunes,” see Jer. 29:14; 30:3, 18; 31:23; 32:44; 33:7, 11; Ezek. 39:25; Joel 3:1; Amos 9:14; and Zeph. 3:20] and will have mercy on them.’ ”**

JEREMIAH 48:47; 49:6, 38, 39

I listed these verses, along with a large number of other verses, under the heading “Some Passages that Demonstrate that God Will Leave Many People from the Nations after His End-Time Judgment (at the end of Daniel’s 70th week); this remnant of the nations will enter the millennial kingdom, and they (at least many of them) will be converted. [Those who don’t repent and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ and stay faithful to Him will be removed by judgment.] Ultimately the nations will have a place in God’s eternal kingdom (which starts after the millennium)” in my paper titled, “A Verse-by-Verse Study of Six Important Eschatological Chapters of the New Testament: 1 Corinthians 15; Matthew 24, 25; and Revelation 20-22,” dated November 1998. This heading covers pages 97-105. On my internet site this heading is contained in the article titled, “More Regarding God’s Salvation Plans for the Nations,” on pages 5-11.

These verses (Jer. 48:47; 49:6, 38, 39) rather clearly prophesy of God’s end-time salvation of the remnant of the nations (which is a familiar theme in the book of Jeremiah; see under Jer. 3:17 for a start; and see the reference cited in the preceding paragraph; cf. Jer. 12:14-17), but they are set in contexts that deal mostly with the judgments that took place at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians (cf., e.g., Jer. 25:21). These verses mention the salvation of the remnants of Moab (Jeremiah chapter 48 deals exclusively with God’s judgment of Moab through the Babylonians except for the last verse, which I’ll quote as we continue.), Ammon, and Elam after judgment, especially referring to God’s end-time judgment of the world that will leave a worldwide remnant of the nations. (Edom, the tribe of Kedar, the kingdoms of Hazor, and the city of Damascus are also mentioned in Jeremiah chapter 49.) Elam, which was a country located east of Babylon in what is now southern Iran, is something of an exception in that apparently it was not attacked by Nebuchadnezzar.⁶⁷ The capital city of Elam was Susa.

Jeremiah 48:47 **“Yet I will restore the fortunes of** [These words (“I will restore the fortunes of”), which are used for the end-time remnants of Moab, Ammon, and Elam in Jeremiah chapters 49, 50 (these three nations are representative of all nations), are used several times in the book of Jeremiah of God’s salvation of the end-time remnants of Israel/Judah (see under Jer. 30:3). The repentant end-time remnant of the nations will be saved with a very full salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, but true Israel will reign (cf., e.g., Rev. 3:21; 5:10; 20:4; and 22:5).] **Moab In the latter days** [These words help confirm that the fulfillment of these prophetic words will come to pass at the end of this age. I’ll quote what Merrill Unger says under this verse.⁶⁸ “A territorial restoration of a remnant of Moab is promised in the latter days (...Jer. 49:6, 39), that is, in millennial times. Where such a remnant is, or how the LORD is going to accomplish such a restoration, we do not know. We do know He will fulfill His own Word in His own omniscient and omnipotent way.” I’ll quote what H. A. Ironsides says here.⁶⁹ “In the

⁶⁷ Elam had been conquered by the Assyrians in 640 BC, and later it became united with Media and then Persia. The Elamites were noted for their skill with the bow (cf. Isa. 22:6).

⁶⁸ *Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament*, page 1455.

⁶⁹ *Jeremiah* (Loizeaux Brothers, 1986 printing of 1906 book), page 264.

millennium, when the Lord, in His own times, shall show who is that blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, Moab shall rejoice with His people, a remnant being spared to enter into the world-kingdom of our God and His Christ.” I’ll also quote what Arno C. Gaebelein says here.⁷⁰ “The last verse speaks of a territorial restoration of Moab, not of a restitution of that wicked generation, as some teach. We do not know where a remnant of Moab is today, to possess in millennial times their former land; nor do we know how the Lord is going to accomplish it. But we know He will fulfill His own word and we do not need to invent some scheme of how it will be done.”],” **declares the LORD [Yahweh]. Thus far the judgment on Moab.** [“Here ends the judgment on Moab” NIV. Compare Jer. 51:64. As I mentioned, all of Jeremiah chapter 48 deals with God’s judgment of Moab.]

Jeremiah 49:6 **“But afterward I will restore The fortunes of the sons of Ammon** [See above under Jer. 48:47. I’ll quote what Merrill Unger says here (page 1456). “As in the case of Moab (Jer. 48:47), the prophecy ends with a promise of restoration, apparently—as in Moab’s case—in the millennial Kingdom (v. 39).” I’ll also quote what Arno Gaebelein says here (page 598). “Where is Ammon today? In what tribe or nation is a remnant preserved? Only the Omniscient One knows. But their captivity, like that of Moab, will be brought back again in the days when Israel becomes the head of the nations.”],” **declares the LORD [Yahweh].**

Jeremiah 49:38, 39 **“Then I will set My throne** [which means that God (mostly in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ) will begin to fully reign there, as He will worldwide.] **in Elam And destroy out of it king and princes”** [The main idea here is that God must remove those reigning in the nations so that He Himself and His people, true Israel, can reign over the repentant remnant of the nations. I’ll quote what Merrill Unger says here (page 1459). “Promise of blessing in the latter days (48:47) comprehends millennial times, when Israel will be restored and the nations blessed through her.” I’ll also quote part of what A. R. Fausset says here.⁷¹ “God will soon set up His throne on earth (v. 38), and make all men to know that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. The issue [outcome] of the conflict between light and darkness is not doubtful. All the events of history and politics are, in spite of the intrigues of ambitious and unscrupulous men, and the commotions of earthly affairs, being overruled to the grand end of setting up the throne of Him to whom the kingdom of right belongs. Let us see that we are decidedly on the Lord’s side, and, let us by faith see Him who is invisible to the men of the world, and look for the blessed day when His people shall see Him in glory, and at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.”] **Declares the LORD [Yahweh]. (39) “But it will come about in the last days That I will restore the fortunes of Elam** [see above under Jer. 48:47],” **Declares the LORD [Yahweh].**

⁷⁰ *Gaebelein’s Concise Commentary* (Loizeaux Brothers, 1970, 1985), page 597.

⁷¹ *Commentary on Old and New Testaments*, by R. Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and D. Brown, Vol. 2 (Eerdmans reprint, 1984), page 167.

JEREMIAH CHAPTER 50

Prophecy against Babylon

Jeremiah chapters 50 and 51 prophesy at some length of God's judgment of ancient Babylon, the nation that destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and carried Judah into exile.⁷² (The Assyrians had already carried the people of the northern kingdom into captivity before the days of Jeremiah; Samaria, the capital city of the northern kingdom, fell in 722/721 BC.) One feature that makes these prophetic chapters so interesting and important is that a large number of these verses prophesy of things that will not come to pass, or will not come to pass in a full sense, until the end of this age,⁷³ when God judges the world (*Babylon* is used as a symbol for the world-kingdom; cf., e.g., Isaiah chapters 13, 14; Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:1-19:6⁷⁴) and saves the end-time remnants of Judah and Israel (cf. Jer. 50:4, 5, 20, 33, 34; 51:5) and the remnant of the nations (cf. Jer. 50:3, 8, 16, 28, 34; 51:6, 9, 10, 44, 45 with verses like Jer. 3:17).

The book of Revelation devotes some three chapters to God's judgment and total removal of Babylon the great, where Babylon is a symbol for the world (whose god is the devil). Those prophecies build on Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 and on other Old Testament prophecies. The book of Revelation shows that God uses Antichrist and his associates and forces to destroy Babylon (Rev. 17:16-18). After that He destroys Antichrist and his followers, after gathering them to Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-16; 19:11-21). Then He will cast the devil (and undoubtedly the evil angels and demons) into the abyss for the duration of the millennial kingdom. These judgments constitute a big part of what God's end-time judgment of the world is all about.⁷⁵

⁷² It is clear that the prophetic words contained in Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 include God's judgment of ancient Babylon. Consider, for example, Jer. 50:17, 18 (which mention Nebuchadnezzar [also see Jer. 51:34] and speak of God's judgments of ancient Assyria and Babylon); Jer. 51:11, 28 (which mention the Medes, who played a major role in the overthrow of ancient Babylon); Jer. 50:2; 51:44 (which mention *Bel*, the chief god of the Babylonians); and Jer. 51:59-64 (verses that include God's judgment of ancient Babylon, but these prophetic words will not come to pass in a full sense until God judges the world at the end of this age).

⁷³ I am not suggesting that Jeremiah fully understood that God would judge Babylon in the near future (cf. Jer. 25:12; 29:10) but that much of his prophecy of Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 (for example) would not be fulfilled until the end of this age. I don't know how much he understood, but the important point is that the God who gave Jeremiah his prophecies fully understood. Sometimes, for example, the Old Testament prophets would combine in one prophecy things that would come to pass at Jesus' first coming with things that will come to pass at His second coming, with no apparent recognition of His two very different comings (cf., e.g. Isa. 9:1-7; 11:1-10; and 61:1-3). The prophets were dependent on how much God chose to reveal to them. From our perspective, now that Jesus' first coming has been accomplished, we can better understand many Old Testament prophecies, but we still are dependent on God to enable us to fully understand many prophecies. It's important for us to understand just how dependent we are on God and His grace in every area.

⁷⁴ Isaiah 13:6-13 and chapter 14 are discussed verse-by-verse in my paper dealing with selected eschatological prophecies of Isaiah, dated August 2000. Revelation 14:6-19:21 are discussed verse-by-verse in my paper, dated January 1999. Both papers are included on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching).

⁷⁵ God will leave true Israel and the remnant of the nations to enter the millennial kingdom. I believe all the members of true Israel will be glorified by the time the millennial kingdom begins. (See pages 243-247 of my book, *Mid-Week Rapture*.) After dealing with the Gog and Magog rebellion at the end of the

I'll quote a few sentences from what Derek Kidner says here.⁷⁶ "...Revelation 17-18 opens our eyes to another dimension of the Babylon of these chapters: as the embodiment of this world's corrupt power and glory, and the archetypal opposite of Zion the city of God. That passage borrows directly from these oracles [in Jeremiah chapters 50, 51], speaking of the *golden cup* with which she makes the nations drunk [Jer. 51:7; Rev. 17:2, 4]; of her judgment reaching up to heaven [Jer. 51:9; Rev. 18:5 (her sins)]; of her fall, to rise no more [Jer. 51:63-64; Rev. 18:2]; summoning God's people to flee from the midst of her, lest they share her punishment [Jer. 50:8; 51:6; Rev. 18:4]. In this capacity, the Babylon of these visions will have no gentle [gradual or incomplete] downfall, but one as catastrophic as anything that the language of ancient warfare can depict."

I'll quote a few sentences from what John L. Mackay says here.⁷⁷ "...Babylon...became the epitome of evil in the New Testament (Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:1-24). What was revealed to Jeremiah regarding its future often anticipates this eschatological world view, so that what the prophet is seeing is a vision not simply of the end of Babylon, but through that, or against that background, of the total destruction of all that opposes God and his people. A similar vision had earlier been granted to Isaiah in terms of the destruction of Edom, which is also set against a much broader background (Isa. 34 [also see Isa. 63])." Edom serves as a symbol for the kingdom of the world in Isaiah chapters 34 and 63.

I am putting most of the emphasis in this study of Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 on the verses that clearly look to God's saving and judging at the end of this age. Especially see Jer. 50:4, 5, 8, 19, 20; 51:6, 15-24, 45, and 58. But also see Jer. 50:2, 3, 12, 13, 21-27, 38-40; 51:24-26, 29, 36-44, 54-58, and 62-64; these verses are also very important to demonstrate that much of the prophecy of Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 looks beyond God's judgment of ancient Babylon to His *total* destruction of the devil's world-kingdom of Babylon in His end-time judgment of the world. God's judgment of ancient Babylon didn't even destroy the city, much less did it totally destroy and remove forever that kingdom and those committed to that kingdom.

The word which the LORD [Yahweh] spoke concerning Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, through Jeremiah the prophet [This heading covers Jeremiah chapters 50, 51.]: (2) "Declare and proclaim among the nations. Proclaim it and lift up a standard. Do not conceal it but say, 'Babylon has been captured [cf. Jer. 51:31], Bel has been put to shame, Marduk has been shattered ["Marduk filled with terror" NIV. I'll quote part of what J. A. Thompson says here.⁷⁸ "Marduk (Merodach) was the chief god of Babylon and head of the Babylonian pantheon. Bel became an appellation for Marduk, and here Bel and Marduk are the same as the poetic parallelism demonstrates. Marduk was the creator-god of the Babylonian Creation Epic who emerged as 'king of the gods.' "]; Her images have been put to shame, her idols have been shattered.' [Compare Isa. 46:1, 2; Jer. 51:47.] (3) For a nation has come up against her out of the

millennium, casting Satan (and his followers) into the eternal lake of fire, and the great white throne judgment of Rev. 20:11-15, God will have completed his judging of Satan and his kingdom, including his kingdom of this world.

⁷⁶ *Message of Jeremiah* (Inter-Varsity Press, 1987), page 149.

⁷⁷ *Jeremiah*, Vol. 2 (Mentor, 2004), page 517.

⁷⁸ *Book of Jeremiah*, page 732.

north [cf. Jer. 50:9, 41; Isa. 13:1-5, 17]; **it will make her land an object of horror, and there will be no inhabitant in it.** [Compare, for example, Isa. 13:18-22; 14:22, 23; Jer. 50:13, 39, 40; and 51:29, 37, 43, 62. It is significant that this prophecy regarding the complete destruction of Babylon and the fact that no one would live there was not fulfilled when Babylon was taken by the Persians and Medes under King Cyrus. Significantly, the primary fulfillment of these prophetic words will come to pass when the kingdom of this world is completely destroyed and totally removed in God's end-time judgment of the world.

I'll quote part of what A. R. Fausset says here.⁷⁹ "The devastation of Babylon here foretold includes not only that of Cyrus, but also that more utter one by Darius, who took Babylon by artifice, when it had revolted from Persia, and mercilessly slaughtered the inhabitants, hanging 4,000 of the nobles; also the final desertion of Babylon, owing to Seleucia having been built close by, under Seleucus Nicator [the founder of the Seleucid (Greek) dynasty]." Derek Kidner mentions that "the city of Babylon still had inhabitants in the first century AD." John L. Mackay adds the details that Babylon "enjoyed a brief recovery of its fortunes under Alexander the Great" and that "the city was in ruins by AD 200" (pages 516, 517). C. F. Keil⁸⁰ points out that "Cyrus appointed Babylon, after Susa and Ecbatana, the third city in the kingdom, and the winter residence of the Persian kings (according to Xenophon, *Cyrop.* viii.6.22)" and that "Alexander the Great had intended...to make [Babylon] the capital of his empire; but he was prevented by his early death from carrying out this plan."

I'll also quote part of what Charles H. Dyer says under verses 1-5.⁸¹ "...when Cyrus took Babylon he did not lay waste her land or destroy the city so that no one would live in it. ... The city was spared and made one of the ruling centers for the Persian Empire with Daniel serving there in an administrative position (cf. Dan. 5:30; 6:1-3). ... Jeremiah's prophecy looks beyond the destruction of Babylon in 539 to an eschatological destruction that will reverse the fortunes of Israel and Judah. Possibly this prophecy represents a blending of the near and the far." As Dyer continues he mentions that "the city of Babylon will be rebuilt only to be destroyed at the end of the Tribulation period...." I don't agree with that viewpoint.] **Both man and beast have wandered off, they have gone away! (4) In those days and at that time," declares the LORD** [Yahweh], **"the sons of Israel will come, both they and the sons of Judah as well** [cf., e.g., Isa. 11:11-13; Jer. 3:18; and 30:3]; **they will go along weeping as they go** [cf. Jer. 31:9], **and it will be the LORD** [Yahweh] **their God they will seek** [cf. Hos. 3:5]. [Israel and Judah are both mentioned in Jer. 50:33 too.⁸² Part of the idea here is that once Babylon has been judged at the end of this age the people of Judah and Israel will be free to return to the land of Judah/Israel. Furthermore, they will have been awakened through God's end-time judgment of the world (and other things that God will do, like His ministry of the two end-time prophets of Revelation chapter 11) and they will be repentant and looking to God.

⁷⁹ *Commentary* by Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, Vol. 2, page 168.

⁸⁰ Under Jer. 51:59-64 (pages 320, 321).

⁸¹ *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, New Testament, page 1199.

⁸² When Cyrus overthrew the ancient Babylonian kingdom it opened the door for the people of Judah to return to their land to rebuild the temple, etc., and some of them did return, but it did not lead to the exiled people of the northern kingdom's returning to God or to their land.

I'll quote a sentence from what Merrill Unger says here.⁸³ "The restoration of *all* Israel from mystical Babylon at the end time, preceding the millennial Kingdom (Isa. 11:12; Jer. 31:9; Ezek. 37:11-28; Hos. 1:11; Zech. 12:10; Matt. 24:31), again comes into the full prophetic foreview." **(5) They will ask for the way to Zion, turning their faces in its direction; they will come that they may join themselves to the LORD [to Yahweh] in an everlasting covenant [cf. Isa. 55:3; Jer. 31:31-34; 32:40; and Ezek. 37:26] that will not be forgotten.** [Compare, for example, Isa. 35:8-10. These verses (Jer. 50:4, 5) focus on the repentant end-time remnants of Judah and Israel returning to God and to the land of Israel/Judah at the end of this age. The fact that the sons of the northern kingdom of Israel are included here fits the end of this age in that they had been taken captive by the Assyrians, not the Babylonians, and the people of the northern kingdom did not return from captivity like many of those of the southern kingdom did after Babylon fell to the Persians and Medes. And, much more importantly, the fact that the people of Judah and Israel will be joined to God "in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten" shows that the end of this age is in view, when the people of both kingdoms will be saved by the Lord Jesus Christ with new-covenant salvation. We have spoken of these things repeatedly throughout this study of Jeremiah. (See, for example, Jer. 3:15-18; 16:14, 15; 30:3, 8-11, 21, 24; 31:1, 27-34; 32:37-40; 33:8, 14-16.)] **(6) My people have become lost sheep; Their shepherds have led them astray.** [Compare Isa. 53:6; Jer. 23:1, 2; Ezek. 34:1-16; and Matt. 10:6]; **They have made them turn aside on the mountains** [cf. Jer. 2:20; 3:2, 6, 23, 24]; **They have gone along from mountain to hill And have forgotten their resting place.** **(7) All who came upon them have devoured them** [cf. Jer. 50:17; 51:34]; **And their adversaries have said, 'We are not guilty, Inasmuch as they have sinned against the LORD [Yahweh] who is the habitation of righteousness, Even the LORD [Yahweh], the hope of their fathers** [cf. Psalm 22:4; Jer 14:8; and 17:13].'⁸⁴ [It is true, of course, that God's people *had sinned against Yahweh* and forsaken *the habitation of righteousness*, and it is clear that God sent nations like Assyria and Babylon against Israel/Judah in judgment of His people, but it is also clear that God considered nations like Assyria and Babylonia to be very guilty for their pride and arrogance, their idolatry and unfaithfulness to Him, and for the way they treated Israel/Judah and others (cf., e.g., Isa. 10:5-34; Jer. 50:1-3, 9-18, 21-46; and most of the verses of chapter 51).] **(8) Wander away from the midst of ["Flee out of" NIV] Babylon And go forth from the land of the Chaldeans** [Compare Isa. 48:20; Jer. 51:6; Zech. 2:7, 8; and Rev. 18:4-8. God calls for His people (ultimately the repentant end-time remnant of Israel/Judah) to go forth from the sinful world-kingdom of Babylon before He totally destroys that kingdom in His end-time judgment of the world. Apparently it is to be understood that the circumstances of God's sending intense judgment against Babylon makes it possible for the peoples (like Judah and the other captive peoples) to go forth from Babylon *before* it is annihilated. *After* the Persians and Medes overthrew the Babylonians in 539/538 BC, they permitted the people of Judah (and others) to return to their land and rebuild the temple.]; **Be also like male goats at the head of the flock.** [Compare Jer. 50:16. "Once the sheepfold was opened the male goats would rush to leave the enclosure first. So Judah would be in the forefront of captive peoples breaking loose from Babylon to return home."⁸⁴ In this eschatological context (e.g., verses 2-5, 20),

⁸³ Unger's *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 2, page 1460.

⁸⁴ J. A. Thompson, *Book of Jeremiah*, page 734.

God's people (true Israel) will lead the peoples (the remnant) of other nations to God (cf., e.g., Isa. 2:2-4). I'll quote part of what C. F. Keil says here.⁸⁵ "...Israel is to flee from Babylon; for the judgment of conquest and plunder by enemies is breaking over Babylon. The summons to flee out of Babylon is reminiscence of Isa. 48:20. ... The simile, 'like he-goats before the flock,' does not mean that Israel is to press forward that he may save himself before any one else...but that Israel is to go before all, as an example and leader in the flight...."] **(9) For behold, I am going to arouse and bring up against Babylon** [cf. Isa. 13:17; Jer. 51:1] **A horde of great nations from the land of the north** [cf. Jer. 51:27, 28], **And they will draw up their battle lines against her; From there she will be taken captive. Their arrows will be like an expert warrior Who does not return empty-handed.** [Those that God sends against Babylon will effectively destroy her. God will send Antichrist and his associates and forces against Babylon the great harlot of the book of Revelation (Rev. 17:16, 17), then He will destroy Antichrist and his forces after gathering them to Armageddon (Rev. 16:12-16; 19:11-21). These judgments constitute major features of God's end-time judgment and removal of the kingdom of the world (which is headed up by the devil).] **(10) Chaldea** [referring to Babylon] **will become plunder** [cf. Hab. 2:7]; **All who plunder her will have enough," declares the LORD** [Yahweh]. **(11) "Because you are glad, because you are jubilant, O you who pillage My heritage** [Compare Zech. 2:8. Ancient Babylon had pillaged God's heritage by destroying the cities of Judah, especially Jerusalem with the temple, and by carrying His people into exile.], **Because you skip about like a threshing heifer And neigh like stallions, (12) Your mother** [" 'Your mother' is the whole body of the people, the nation considered as a unity (cf....Hos. 2:4 [2:2-5]; 4:5), the individual members of which are called her sons...."⁸⁶] **will be greatly ashamed, She who gave you birth will be humiliated. Behold, she will be the least of the nations, A wilderness, a parched land and a desert** [cf. Jer. 50:13; 51:43]. **(13) Because of the indignation of the LORD** [Yahweh] **she will not be inhabited, But she will be completely desolate** [cf. Isa. 13:20; Jer. 50:3, 39, 40; and 51:26, 29, 62]; **Everyone who passes by Babylon will be horrified And will hiss because of all her wounds** [cf. Jer. 18:16; 25:38; 49:17; 51:37; and Lam. 2:15]. **(14) Draw up your battle lines against Babylon on every side, All you who bend the bow; Shoot at her, do not be sparing with your arrows, For she has sinned against the LORD** [Yahweh]. **(15) Raise your battle cry against her on every side! She has given herself up** [that is, she has surrendered], **her pillars have fallen, Her walls have been torn down** [cf. Jer. 51:44, 58]. **For this is the vengeance of the LORD** [cf. Jer. 46:10; 50:28; and 51:11]: **Take vengeance on her; As she has done to others, so do to her** [cf. Psalm 137:8; Jer. 50:29; Hab. 2:8, 17; and Rev. 18:6]. **(16) Cut off the sower from Babylon And the one who wields the sickle at the time of harvest; From before** ["Because of" NIV] **the sword of the oppressor They will each turn back to his own people And they will each flee to his own land** [cf. Isa. 13:14; Jer. 50:8; and 51:9]. [I'll quote a sentence from what Charles Feinberg says under verses 11-16.⁸⁷ "Cyrus [a Persian], who unified the Medo-Persian Empire and then overwhelmed Babylon (ZPED, 1:1054-56), was careful to spare the country; so the references (v.16) must be to a later attack."] **(17) Israel is a scattered flock** [cf., e.g., Joel 3:2], **the lions**

⁸⁵ *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. VIII, page 272.

⁸⁶ C.F. Keil, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. VIII, page 275.

⁸⁷ *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, page 674.

[cf. Jer. 2:15; 4:7] **have driven them away. The first one who devoured him was the king of Assyria** [The Assyrians had carried the people of the northern kingdom of Israel into captivity. Samaria, the capital city, was destroyed by the Assyrians in 722/721 BC (cf. 2 Kings 17:1-18; 18:9-12). They also attacked the southern kingdom of Judah (e.g., 2 Kings 18:13-16), but God did not permit them to conquer Judah.], **and this last one who has broken his bones is Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon** [Nebuchadnezzar carried some Jews (from the southern kingdom of Judah) into captivity in 605 BC, including Daniel and his three friends; he took King Jehoiachin and others into captivity in 597 BC (cf. 2 Kings 24:10-12); and he destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and carried more Jews into captivity in 587/586 BC (cf. 2 Kings 25:1-21).] **(18) Therefore thus says the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I am going to punish the king of Babylon and his land, just as I punished the king of Assyria.** [God used the Babylonians to overthrow the Assyrians. Nineveh, the capital city of the Assyrians, fell to the Babylonians in 612 BC, and the Assyrians were totally conquered after a battle in 609 BC.] **(19) And I will bring Israel back to his pasture and he will graze on Carmel and Bashan** [cf. Mic. 7:14], **and his desire will be satisfied in the hill country of Ephraim** [cf. Jer. 31:6] **and Gilead** [cf. Num. 32:1; Mic. 7:14]. [Compare Ezek. 34:11-16. *Bashan* and *Gilead* were both territories east of the Jordan River. The territory specifically mentioned here belonged to the tribes of the northern kingdom, who had been carried into captivity long before the days of Jeremiah the prophet. The name *Israel* clearly includes both kingdoms in verse 17 and apparently also in verse 18 and here in verse 19 (the three verses are closely related), but it refers to the northern kingdom in verses 4, 20.] **(20) In those days and at that time** [see Jer. 33:15; 50:4; cf. Jer. 3:17, 18], **’ declares the LORD [Yahweh], ‘search will be made for the iniquity of Israel, but there will be none; and for the sins of Judah, but they will not be found; for I will pardon those whom I leave as a remnant.’** [Compare, for example, Isa. 43:25; Jer. 31:34; and Mic. 7:19. The verses I just cited all speak of God’s *pardoning* the repentant, believing, *end-time* remnant of Israel/Judah. Even more important than the *pardoning*, *they will be sanctified* through new-covenant salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ (cf., e.g., Isa. 53:11; Jer. 31:31-33; Ezek. 36:26, 27; Zech. 12:10-13:6; Rom. 11:26, 27; and 1 Pet. 2:24, 25). The sin problem isn’t really solved until God’s people stop sinning against Him (by His grace).] **(21) Against the land of Merathaim** [“*Or Double Rebellion*” (margin of NASB)], **go up against it, And against the inhabitants of Pekod** [“*Or Punishment*” (margin of NASB); cf. Ezek. 23:23). I’ll quote part of what J. A. Thompson says here.⁸⁸ “*Merathaim* was the region...at the head of the Persian Gulf where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers meet. ... But there is a play on words here, for the root...means ‘to rebel’ and the form of the word is a dual, meaning ‘(land of) double rebellion,’ or ‘twofold rebel,’ that is ‘rebel of rebels.’ The second region Pekod...lay in eastern Babylonia. But the root...means ‘to punish.’ Hence the land of Pekod is the ‘land of doom.’ ”]. **Slay and utterly destroy** [“*Lit put under the ban* (margin of NASB)] **them,” declares the LORD [Yahweh], “And do according to all that I have commanded you.** [The context shows that it is the world-kingdom of Babylon that is to be attacked and destroyed (cf. verses 22-32). God is speaking to the attackers here (cf. verses 3, 9, 41). The total destruction prophesied here did not take place when the Persians and Medes conquered Babylon. It will come to pass at the end of this age when God totally destroys and removes the kingdom of this world.]

⁸⁸ *Book of Jeremiah*, page 741.

(22) The noise of battle is in the land, And great destruction [cf. Jer. 51:54-56]. **(23) How the hammer of the whole earth** [referring to Babylon (cf. Isa. 14:5, 6)] **Has been cut off and broken! How Babylon has become An object of horror among the nations** [cf. Jer. 50:3; 51:37, 41, 43]! **(24) I set a snare for you** [cf. Jer. 48:43, 44] **and you were also caught, O Babylon, While you yourself were not aware** [“and you were caught before you knew it” NIV; cf. Jer. 51:8]; **You have been found and also seized Because you have engaged in conflict with the LORD** [cf. verses 28, 29, 33].” **(25) The LORD** [Yahweh] **has opened His armory And has brought forth the weapons of His indignation** [cf. Isa. 13:5], **For it is a work of the Lord GOD of hosts** [cf. Jer. 48:10] **In the land of the Chaldeans** [cf., e.g., Jer. 51:12, 25, 55]. **(26) Come to her from the farthest border; Open up her barns, Pile her up like heaps** [“Break open her granaries; pile her up like heaps of grain” NIV.] **And utterly destroy her** [“*Lit put under the ban*” (margin of NASB); see verse 21], **Let nothing be left to her** [cf., e.g., Isa. 14:23; Jer. 50:21-32; “Completely destroy her and leave her no remnant” NIV]. [It seems that this verse speaks (using figurative language) of the total destruction of the kingdom of this world in the last days, including the fact that no people will be left of that kingdom. Under verses 26, 27 J. A. Thompson says “the end of Babylon is likened to the breaking open of granaries and piling up of looted grain for destruction.”] **(27) Put all her young bulls** [apparently referring to the young men/soldiers of Babylon (cf., e.g., Isa. 34:6, 7; Jer. 48:15; 50:30, 36; 51:3, 4, 38-40; and Psalm 22:12)] **to the sword; Let them go down to the slaughter! Woe be upon them, for their day has come, The time of their punishment** [cf. Psalm 37:13; Jer. 46:21; and 48:44]. **(28) There is a sound of fugitives and refugees from the land of Babylon** [cf. Isa. 48:20; Jer. 50:8], **To declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD** [Yahweh] **our God** [cf. Jer. 50:15; 51:6, 10, 11], **Vengeance for His temple.** [The Babylonians destroyed the temple in Jerusalem in 587/586 BC (cf. Jer. 51:11; 52:13); they also took many sacred items that were in the temple to Babylon (cf. 2 Kings 24:13; 2 Chron. 36:18; Ezra. 1:7-11; Jer. 52:17-23; Dan. 1:2; and 5:2, 3).] **(29) “Summon many against Babylon, All those who bend the bow: Encamp against her on every side, Let there be no escape. Repay her according to her work; According to all that she has done, so do to her** [cf. Psalm 137:8; Jer. 50:15; 51:56; and 2 Thess. 1:6] **For she has become arrogant against the LORD** [cf., e.g., Ex. 10:3; Isa. 2:11-22; 10:12-15; 13:11; Jer. 49:16; and 50:24, 31, 32], **Against the Holy One of Israel** [cf. Jer. 51:5]. **(30) Therefore her young men will fall in her streets, And all her men of war will be silenced in that day** [cf. Isa. 13:17, 18; Jer. 49:26; 50:27; and 51:4],” **declares the LORD** [Yahweh]. **(31) “Behold, I am against you** [cf. Jer. 21:13; Nah. 2:13], **O arrogant one** [see verse 29],” **Declares the Lord GOD of hosts, “For your day has come, The time when I will punish you** [cf. verse 27]. **(32) The arrogant one** [see verses 29, 31] **will stumble and fall With no one to raise him up; And I will set fire to his cities And it will devour all his environs** [cf. Jer. 21:14; 51:58; Rev. 17:16; 18:8; and 19:3].” **(33) Thus says the LORD** [Yahweh] **of hosts, “The sons of Israel are oppressed, And the sons of Judah as well; And all who took them captive have held them fast, They have refused to let them go** [cf. Isa. 14:17]. [The fact that the sons of Israel and Judah are both mentioned in this verse further confirms that the judgment of Babylon pictured in Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 goes far beyond the literal judgment of the ancient world-kingdom of Babylon (see verse 4). Babylon had taken Judah captive; Assyria had taken Israel (the northern kingdom)

captive. The wording of this verse makes it clear that more than one nation was involved in taking captive the sons of Israel and Judah and in refusing to let them go (cf. Jer. 50:17). Egypt had refused to let the people of Israel go too (cf., e.g., Ex. 7:14), until God intervened in the days of Moses.] **(34) Their Redeemer is strong** [cf. Ex. 6:6; 15:13; Prov. 23:11; Isa. 43:14; Jer. 31:11; and Rev. 18:8], **the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts is His name** [cf. Isa. 47:4; Jer. 32:18; and 51:19]; **He will vigorously plead their case** [cf. Jer. 51:36; Mic. 7:9] **So that He may bring rest to the earth** [Compare Isa. 14:3-7. Since Babylon (and especially the world-kingdom headed up by Satan) had dominated the entire world, her total destruction will bring rest to the earth (worldwide).], **But turmoil [unrest] to the inhabitants of Babylon. (35) A sword against the Chaldeans** [referring to the Babylonians],” **declares the LORD [Yahweh], “And against the inhabitants of Babylon And against her officials and her wise men!** [Compare Jer. 47:6; 50:27, 36, 37.] **(36) A sword against the oracle priests, and they will become fools! A sword against her mighty men** [“warriors” NIV], **and they will be shattered** [cf. Jer. 50:30; 51:3, 4, 38-40]! **(37) A sword against their horses and against their chariots** [cf. Jer. 51:21, 22] **And against all the foreigners** [J. A. Thompson translates “hired soldiers.”] **who are in the midst of her, And they will become women** [Compare Jer. 51:30; Nah. 3:13. The foreigners in their midst who will become women undoubtedly refers to non-Babylonian soldiers (mercenaries) in their ranks who fail to fight for Babylon when the attack(s) comes.]! **A sword against her treasures, and they will be plundered** [cf. Jer. 50:10]! **(38) A drought on her waters** [Compare Jer. 51:13. Some translate “sword” instead of “drought.” The consonants are the same for both Hebrew nouns.], **and they will be dried up! For it is a land of idols, And they [the Babylonians] are mad over fearsome idols.** [Compare Isa. 44:27. We could think of the kingdom of this world’s waters being dried up in a *literal* and in a *figurative* sense (cf. Jer. 51:36), leaving her lifeless and dead. Note that the next verse speaks of the *desert* creatures living there. Part of the reason the kingdom of this world must be completely destroyed forever is her total (unrepentant) commitment to idolatry and every other form of false religion and sinfulness, while excluding God and the things of God, and even fighting against His divine order, His righteousness, and His people. Verses 39, 40 go on to further speak of the total destruction of the world-kingdom of Babylon.] **(39) Therefore the desert creatures will live there along with the jackals; The ostriches also will live in it, And it will never again be inhabited Or dwelt in from generation to generation** [cf. Isa. 13:20-22; 34:8-17 (note “desert creatures” in verse 14); Jer. 50:3, 26, 40; 51:26, 29, 37, 43; and Rev. 18:2, 21-24.] **(40) As when God overthrew Sodom And Gomorrah with its neighbors** [cf. Gen. 19:24-29; Isa. 13:19; Jer. 49:18; Luke 17:26-37; 2 Pet. 2:6; and Jude 1:7],” **declares the LORD [Yahweh], “No man will live there, Nor will any son of man reside in it** [see under verse 39]. **(41) Behold, a people is coming from the north, And a great nation and many kings** [“The *many kings* (cf. 51:27) refer to vassal kings assisting their overlord.”⁸⁹] **Will be aroused from the remote parts of the earth.** [Compare Jer. 50:3, 9, 29; 51:1, 2, 11, 27, 28.] **(42) They seize their bow and javelin** [cf. Jer. 6:23]; **They are cruel and have no mercy** [cf. Isa. 13:17, 18; 47:6]. **Their voice roars like the sea; And they ride on horses, Marshalled like a man for the battle Against you, O daughter of Babylon. (43) The king of Babylon has heard the report about them** [cf. Jer. 51:31], **And his hands hang limp; Distress has gripped him,**

⁸⁹ J. A. Thompson, *Book of Jeremiah*, page 746.

Agony like a woman in childbirth [cf., e.g., Jer. 30:6; 49:24]. **(44)** [See Jer. 49:19-21, which are quite similar to Jer. 50:44-46.] **Behold, one will come up like a lion from the thicket of the Jordan to a perennially watered pasture** [“to a rich pastureland” NIV; “perennial pasture” NRSV. The perennial pasture represents the Babylonian world-kingdom here. Apparently the *one who will come up like a lion* represents God⁹⁰ (cf. Jer. 25:30, 38). From our perspective we can see that it could represent God the Son, who is coming at the end of this age to reign over and judge the world.]; **for in an instant I will make them** [the Babylonians] **run away from it, and whoever is chosen I will appoint over it.** [The Lord Jesus Christ and the people of true Israel will reign over God’s worldwide millennial kingdom (cf., e.g., Dan. 7:13, 14, 18, 22, 27; Matt. 5:5; Rom. 4:13; Rev. 1:6; 2:26, 27; 3:21; 5:10; 12:5; and 20:4-6). Then they will reign forever in His eternal kingdom (Rev. 22:5).] **For who is like Me** [cf. Isa. 46:9], **and who will summon Me into court? And who then is the shepherd who can stand before Me** [“Who is like me and who can challenge me? And what shepherd can stand against me? NIV]?” [Verses 44-46 speak of God’s destroying Babylon/the kingdom of this world. There is no shepherd (king/ruler, or religious leader, including Antichrist and the devil, who gives Antichrist “his power and his throne and great authority” [Rev. 13:2]), who can stand before God (very much including God the Son) or prevent His will from coming to pass.] **(45) Therefore hear the plan of the LORD [Yahweh] which He has planned against Babylon, and His purposes which He has purposed against the land of the Chaldeans** [cf. Isa. 14:24]; **surely they will drag them off, even the little ones of the flock; surely He will make their pasture desolate because of them.** **(46) At the shout, “Babylon has been seized!” the earth is shaken** [cf., e.g., Jer. 10:10], **and an outcry is heard among the nations** [cf. Jer. 51:54].

⁹⁰ So J. A. Thompson; Jack R. Lundbom (*Jeremiah 37-52*); and F. B. Huey (*Jeremiah, Lamentations*).

JEREMIAH CHAPTER 51

Babylon Judged for Sins against Israel

Thus says the LORD [Yahweh]: **“Behold, I am going to arouse against Babylon And against the inhabitants of Leb-kamai** [“a cryptogram [cryptic name] for Chaldea, that is Babylonia” (margin of NIV)] **The spirit of a destroyer** [“Or a *destroying wind*” (margin of NASB)]. [Compare Jer. 4:11, 12; 23:19; and Hos. 13:15.] **(2) I will dispatch foreigners to Babylon that they may winnow her** [cf. Isa. 41:16; Jer. 15:7; 51:33; and Matt. 3:12] **And may devastate her land** [Many verses of Jeremiah chapters 50 and 51 speak of God’s devastating the land of Babylon.]; **For on every side they will be opposed to her In the day of her calamity. (3) Let not him who bends his bow bend it, Nor let him rise up in his scale-armor** [Apparently these words at the beginning of verse 3 exhort the Babylonian soldiers to not even bother to fight against their attackers; God has determined the total destruction of the kingdom of this world.]; **So do not spare her young men; Devote all her [the Babylonian] army to destruction** [Compare Jer. 50:27, 29, 30, 35-37. The Hebrew verb used here (*charam*), which was also used in Jer. 50:21, 26, means to place under the ban (to devote to total destruction, annihilate, exterminate). This did not come to pass when God judged Babylon through the Medes and Persians, but it will come to pass when God judges the world at the end of this age, when He removes all the people committed (without repentance) to continue to side with the devil against God.] **(4) They [the Babylonians] will fall down slain in the land of the Chaldeans, And pierced through in their streets.”** [Compare Isa. 13:9-12, 15, 16; Jer. 49:26; and 50:30, 37.] **(5) For neither Israel nor Judah has been forsaken By his God** [Compare, for example, Jer. 33:24-26; 50:4, 5, 20, 33, 34. The idea that the kingdom of this world has to be totally destroyed so that Israel and Judah (and the remnant of the nations) can be totally saved is included in the prophecies of Jeremiah chapters 50, 51.], **the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts, Although** [“And.” The Hebrew has the conjunction *ki* here, the same conjunction used at the beginning of verse 5 that was translated “for” by the NASB; NIV; KJV; and NKJV. I believe both clauses of verse 5 give reasons for God’s destroying Babylon. I believe we should translate “and” instead of “although” here.⁹¹] **their land** [I believe “their land” here refers to the land of the Babylonians.⁹²] **is full of guilt Before the Holy One of Israel.** [The fact that God had not forsaken Israel or Judah is one reason He must destroy Babylon, but God’s judgments are righteous, and He doesn’t totally destroy kingdoms unless they are in total rebellion against Him and His righteousness.

I’ll quote part of what C. F. Keil says here.⁹³ “In verse 5, two reasons are given for God’s determination to destroy Babylon. The Lord is induced to this (1) by His relation to Israel and Judah, whom Babylon will not let go; (2) by the grave offense of Babylon. ... ‘Their land’—the land of the Chaldeans—‘is full of guilt before the Holy One of

⁹¹ The *Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* by Koehler and Baumgartner (Brill, 2001, page 470) gives examples where *ki...ki* are used (as in Gen. 3:19, for example) for “two arguments in succession” and is translated “for...and.”

⁹² The NEB translates the second half thusly, “but the land of the Chaldaeans is full of guilt, condemned by the Holy One of Israel.”

⁹³ *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. VIII, page 201.

Israel, partly through their relation to Israel (50:21), partly through their idolatry (50:2, 38).”] **(6) Flee from the midst of Babylon** [cf. Jer. 50:8, 16, 28; 51:45; and Rev. 18:4], **And each of you save his life! Do not be destroyed in her punishment** [Babylon/the kingdom of this world is to be totally destroyed in God’s end-time judgment of the world. The repentant end-time remnant of Israel/Judah (cf. Jer. 50:20) are warned to flee from Babylon before she is destroyed. Those who remain part of the Babylonian world-kingdom (which is headed up by the devil [cf., e.g., 2 Cor. 4:4]) will be destroyed along with Babylon (even as those who stayed in Sodom, or who looked back toward Sodom because their heart was oriented toward Sodom [cf. Gen. 19:17, 26], were destroyed with Sodom). Regarding ancient Babylon, the people of Judah (or the people of other nations) were not free to flee from that kingdom until *after* it had been overthrown by Cyrus, the Medo-Persian king.], **For this is the LORD’S** [Yahweh’s] **time of vengeance** [cf. Isa. 34:8; Jer. 50:15, 28; and 51:11, 36]; **He is going to render recompense to her** [cf. Jer. 25:14; 50:29; and 51:24]. **(7) Babylon has been a golden cup** [The *golden* cup goes with the great wealth of Babylon (cf. Jer. 51:13; Rev. 17:4).] **in the hand of the LORD** [cf. Isa. 51:17, 22, 23], **Intoxicating all the earth** [cf. Jer. 25:15, 16, 27]. **The nations have drunk of her wine; Therefore the nations are going mad.** [Compare Jer. 25:15, 16; 50:38. I’ll quote Jer. 25:15, 16, “For thus the LORD [Yahweh], the God of Israel, says to me [to Jeremiah], ‘Take this cup of the wine of wrath [cf. Rev. 16:19] from My hand and cause all the nations to whom I send you to drink it. They will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them.’” These verses (with Jer. 25:12-38) prophesy of God’s using Babylon to judge the other nations in the days of Jeremiah and then of His judgment of Babylon (in 539/538 BC). These prophetic words of Jeremiah 25:12-38 undoubtedly include God’s end-time judgment of the world (very much including His total destruction of Babylon the great harlot), when He will use Antichrist in His judgment of Israel and the other nations and then will totally destroy Antichrist and his forces after gathering them to Armageddon. (See on Zechariah chapter 11 in chapter 14 of my book, *Mid-Week Rapture*, including the endnotes.)] **(8) Suddenly Babylon has fallen** [cf. Isa. 21:9; Rev. 14:8; 18:2; and many verses of Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 speak of the fall of Babylon using different words] **and been broken** [cf. Jer. 50:23]; **Wail over her** [cf. Isa. 13:6; Rev. 18:9-19]! **Bring balm for her pain; Perhaps she may be healed.** **(9) We applied healing to Babylon, but she was not healed** [We have already been informed that God has destined Babylon for total destruction.]; **Forsake her and let us each go to his own country** [cf. Isa. 13:14; 50:16], **For her judgment has reached to heaven And towers up to the very skies.** [Babylon’s judgment reaches to the heavens, even as her sins reached to the heavens (cf. Ezra 9:6; Rev. 18:5). “The expression *Her judgment has reached the heavens and has been carried up to the skies* is proverbial and like many such expressions in the OT indicates that the judgment was of vast proportions (cf. ...Deut. 1:28).”⁹⁴] **(10) The LORD** [Yahweh] **has brought about our vindication** [cf. Jer. 50:15, 28, 34; 51:5, 24, 34-40, 49, 56; and Mic. 7:9]; **Come and let us recount in Zion The work of the LORD** [Yahweh] **our God** [cf. Jer. 50:28]! **(11) Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers! The LORD** [Yahweh] **has aroused the spirit of the kings of the Medes** [cf. Isa. 13:17; Jer. 51:28], **Because His purpose is against Babylon to destroy it; For it is the vengeance of the LORD** [Yahweh], **vengeance for His temple**

⁹⁴ J. A. Thompson, *Book of Jeremiah*, page 750.

[cf. Psalm 74:4-7; Jer. 50:28]. **(12) Lift up a signal against the walls of Babylon** [Compare Isa. 13:2. The words of verses 11, 12 are addressed to the soldiers attacking Babylon.]; **Post a strong guard, Station sentries, Place men in ambush! For the LORD [Yahweh] has both purposed and performed What He spoke concerning the inhabitants of Babylon** [cf. Jer. 51:29]. **(13)** [God now addresses the people of Babylon.] **O you who dwell by many waters** [cf. Jer. 50:38], **Abundant in treasures** [cf. Isa. 45:3], **Your end has come, The measure of your end** [“the time for you to be cut off” NIV]. **(14) The LORD [Yahweh] of hosts has sworn by Himself** [cf., e.g., Gen. 22:16; Isa. 45:23; and Jer. 49:13]: **“Surely I will fill you with a population like locusts** [referring to the large number of soldiers attacking Babylon (cf. Jer. 46:23)], **And they will cry out with shouts of victory over you.”** **(15)** [Jeremiah 51:15-19 are the equivalent of Jer. 10:12-16 (except for omitting “Israel” in 51:19).] **It is He who made the earth by His power** [cf. Gen. 1:1; Jer. 27:5; and 32:17], **Who established the world by His wisdom** [cf. Psalm 93:1], **And by His understanding He stretched out the heavens.** [Compare Isa. 40:22. The gods/idols of the nations, by contrast, have not created anything, except rebellion, chaos, etc.] **(16) When He utters His voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens** [“When he thunders, the waters in the heavens roar” NIV; “(Gen. 1:7), waters above the firmament; heavy rains accompany thunder”⁹⁵; cf. Job 37:2-6; Psalm 18:13], **And He causes the clouds to ascend from the end of the earth** [cf. Job. 36:27-29; Psalm 135:7]; **He makes lightning for the rain And brings forth the wind from His storehouses** [cf. Psalm 135:7; Jonah 1:4]. **(17) All mankind is stupid** [I believe it would be better to translate “Every man is stupid” (the NIV has, “Every man is senseless”), which is the way the NASB translates the same Hebrew words in Jer. 10:14. Jeremiah 10:12-16 are in context with Jer. 10:1-11, verses that speak of the foolish pagan idolatry of the peoples of the nations. Jeremiah 10:1-16 and the content of Jer. 51:17-19 help show that these words at the beginning of verse 17 speak only of the stupidity of those who worship idols⁹⁶ (which included many of the people of ancient Israel/Judah), and do not include the people who truly worship the God of Israel, who is also the God who created every being and thing that exists. I’ll quote Jer. 10:8 (which is one verse in the midst of many verses where God mocks those who worship idols; cf. Isa. 44:9-20; Hab. 2:18, 19), “They are altogether stupid and foolish *In their* discipline of delusion—their idol is wood!”], **devoid of knowledge** [I’ll quote part of what J. A. Thompson says here.⁹⁷ “The man who lacks ‘knowledge,’ probably here the knowledge of God, is now described as brutish. The context seems to draw very sharply the contrast between those who know God and those who do not. . . . Men who lack such knowledge are stupid and will have recourse to all kinds of stupid and shameful things. . . .”]; **Every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols, For his molten images are deceitful, And there is no breath in them.** **(18) They are worthless** [cf. Isa. 41:24], **a work of mockery; In the time of their punishment they will perish.** [Compare Jer 51:52. The idols (and the evil angels and demons behind those idols [cf. 1 Cor. 10:20-22]) will be removed in God’s

⁹⁵ A. R. Fausset, *Commentary by Jamieson, Fausset, Brown*, Vol. 2 (Eerdmans, 1984 reprint), page 38.

⁹⁶ “Every idolater is declared to be stupid...” (Merrill Unger, *Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 2, page 1375). “Those who worship such gods are as ‘senseless’ [The NIV translates “senseless” instead of “stupid.”] (or, ‘brutish,’ i.e., like dumb animals) as the gods themselves” (F. B. Huey, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, [Broadman, 1993], page 127). It is true, of course, that all men are stupid in comparison with God.

⁹⁷ *Book of Jeremiah*, page 331.

end-time judgment of the world (cf., e.g., Isa. 2:12-22, especially verses 18-20). There will be no room for idols (or for the devil [cf. Rev. 20:1-3, 10; Matt. 25:41, 46] or those who follow him) in *God's eternal kingdom.*] **(19) The portion of Jacob** [which is God Himself; the NIV has, "He who is the portion of Jacob."] **is not like these** ["not like these [idols]."] Compare, for example, Psalms 16:5; 73:26; 119:57; and Lam. 3:24]; **For the Maker of all** ["All" includes all the beings and things that have ever been created. Apparently this word "Maker" includes far more than the fact that God created every being and thing that exists. The participle of the Hebrew verb used here (*yatsar*) includes the ideas of God's *forming* and *fashioning*, as He deals with all peoples and saves and prepares the people of true Israel to reign with Him forever. In the margin the NASB has "Lit. *Fashioner*" instead of "Maker."] **is He, And of the tribe of His inheritance** [referring to Israel/Judah; cf., e.g., Deut. 32:9; Psalm 74:2]; **The LORD [Yahweh] of hosts is His name** [cf. Jer. 31:35; 32:18]. **(20)** [It is important to know, but it isn't all that obvious, who God is addressing in verses 20-23. Some think He is addressing Cyrus (the king of the Medo-Persian kingdom), who conquered Babylon in 539/538 BC. Many think He is addressing the kingdom of Babylon, which God used to chasten nations.⁹⁸ I believe God is addressing the people of (true) Israel.⁹⁹ Verse 19 spoke of the very special relationship that God has with Israel/Judah (with those who truly are part of His true Israel), and it seems clear that God goes on to speak to His people (true Israel) in verse 24. One reason that God's true Israel is so important is that it is headed up by the Lord Jesus Christ, who is (part of) God's true Israel (see Isa. 49:3). These verses (20-23) prophesy, I believe, of God's using the people of true Israel in His end-time judgment of the world. True Israel will begin to reign and judge with the Lord Jesus Christ when He returns (in the middle of Daniel's 70th week) to judge the world (and to save His elect). We'll discuss this important concept in some detail as we continue.

It is quite possible, even probable, that God's "war-club" of verse 20 builds on the use of the Hebrew noun translated "tribe" in verse 19 ("the tribe of His inheritance"). The Hebrew noun (*shebet*) translated *tribe* in verse 19 (it is translated tribe(s) 123 times by the NASB) has another common meaning; it is often translated *rod, staff, club, scepter*. It is translated *club* four times by the NASB (2 Sam. 23:21; 1 Chron. 11:23; Isa. 10:15; and Isa. 28:27), and when it is translated *rod* (it is translated *rod* 27 times by the NASB), it often refers to a *rod for smiting*. See, for example, Psalms 2:9 ("You [Christ and the people of true Israel] shall break [or, rule] them with a rod of iron"; the *rod of iron* will be used in subduing and removing by judgment those committed to evil); 23:4; 89:32; Prov. 26:3; Isa. 10:5; 11:4 ("And He [the Lord Jesus Christ] will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked"); and Lam.

⁹⁸ The verbs of verses 20-23 could be translated "I shattered," etc., referring to things that had taken place already.

⁹⁹ C. F. Keil thinks these verses address Babylon, but he mentions that Ewald "understands 'the true Israel.'" One view cited by John L Mackay is that "It may be Israel that is being called on to act as the LORD's instrument of judgment in the foretold period of their restoration. Holladay identified the hammer as Israel, pointing out that different words are used here and in 50:23... [Holliday said a lot more than that on this topic.]" (*Jeremiah*, Vol 2, page 556). Mackay prefers the view that Babylon is addressed here. And I'll quote a sentence from what Donald Wiseman says regarding verses 20-24 (*New Layman's Bible Commentary* [Zondervan, 1979], page 849), "Those who would interpret this as Israel must do so in a spiritual sense for otherwise such action was never literally fulfilled." These verses look to the end of this age, I believe, and include God's judgment of the world.

3:1. I am not suggesting that *shebet* should have been translated *club* or *rod* in verse 19, but that it was well understood by Jeremiah's Hebrew readers that this Hebrew noun had that other meaning.

There are quite a few prophetic passages that speak of the glorified members of God's true Israel reigning with the Lord Jesus Christ when He judges the world at the end of this age, very much including His destroying Babylon the great and then destroying Antichrist and his forces after gathering them to Armageddon. I believe this reign will begin at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet of the book of Revelation (cf. Rev. 11:15), right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week, at the time Jesus returns and the resurrection and glorification of all the members of God's true Israel who will have been saved before that time takes place. Jeremiah 51:18 refers to the time of God's end-time judgment of the world, when all idols (and all forms of idolatry) and those who persist in worshiping them will be totally removed from His kingdom.

On this reign of the Lord Jesus Christ and God's true Israel (as I mentioned, the Lord Jesus Christ is part of God's true Israel), which includes much judging, see Psalms 2; 110; Zech. 14:3-15; Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Rev. 2:26, 27; 12:5 (Rev. 2:26, 27; 12:5 mention our *reigning with a rod of iron*, and, significantly, these prophecies build on Psalm 2:9); Rev. 13:6; 17:14; 19:11-21; and 20:4 (which pictures the glorified saints on their thrones; they have been reigning with the Lord Jesus Christ since the time of His mid-week return; regarding these *thrones*, see Dan. 7:9). Also see Zech. 12:4-9; 14:14. (I believe these verses in Zechariah prophesy regarding the Israelites who will be living on the earth [still living in their natural bodies, before they are glorified] during the second half of Daniel's 70th week; they will not become Christians until after the rapture.) Essentially every passage I cited in this paragraph is discussed in some detail in my book, *Mid-Week Rapture*, and some are discussed in subsequent writings.

Also see Isa. 11:14; 41:8-16; and Mic. 4:11-13. I'll quote Isa. 41:15, 16, verses that prophesy of God's using His people, (true) Israel, in His end-time judgment of His (and their) enemies, "Behold, I have made you a new, sharp threshing sledge with double edges; You will thresh the mountains and pulverize *them*, And will make the hills like chaff. You will winnow them, and the wind will carry them away, And the storm will scatter them; but you will rejoice in the LORD [Yahweh], You will glory in the Holy One of Israel." God's (and true Israel's) enemies will be removed from the scene by that end-time judgment of the world. I'll quote Isa. 41:11b, 12 to establish that point. "Those who contend with you will be as nothing and will perish. You will seek those who quarrel with you, but you will not find them, Those who war with you will be as nothing and non-existent." And I'll quote Mic. 4:13, another verse that compares with God's saying that (true) Israel is His *war-club*, "Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion, For your horn I will make iron And your hoofs I will make bronze, That you may pulverize many peoples, That you may devote to the LORD their unjust gain And their wealth to the Lord of all the earth." The preceding verses, Mic. 4:11, 12, deal (at least for the most part) with God's gathering the nations in the last days to judge them (cf. Joel 3:1-21; Rev. 16:16; and 19:19-21).] **He says, "You are My war-club, My weapon of war; And with you I shatter** [or, "I smash"; or, "I will shatter/smash] **nations** ["I will break nations in pieces" NEB; "will I break in pieces the nations" KJV; "I will break the nation (plural noun in Hebrew) in pieces" NKJV; these *future* verbs continue through the first verb in verse 24 (the NASB has, "I will repay" in verse 24; all of these verbs are the same form in the

Hebrew going from “I will shatter/smash” through “I will repay”). Some commentators agree that these verbs should be translated as futures, including W. Holladay and G. Keown, P. Scalise, and T. Smothers.], **And with you I [“will”] destroy kingdoms.** [The language used to describe this judgment may seem rather severe, but the Bible often uses very intense language when speaking of God’s ultimate judgment of those who insist on their right to rebel against Him (and to attack His people) and to follow His archenemy, the devil (cf., e.g., Matt. 25:30, 41, 46; Rev. 6:15-17; 14:9-11, 19, 20 [regarding “the great wine press of the wrath of God” (Rev. 14:19), compare Isa. 63:1-6; Rev. 19:13, 15]; 15:1, 7; 16:1 – 19:21; 20:9, 10, 14, 15; 21:8; and 22:15). Also consider, for example, God’s judgment of the flood; His judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah; and His judgment of the people of ancient Jericho (cf. Josh. 6:17-25).

Many Christians have a view of God that is far from the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches: They know that God is love, but they have a hard time accepting the fact that the Bible also has a whole lot to say about His intense wrath against and judgment of those who persist in sin (without true repentance). A big part of the problem is that many Christians have very little conception of the seriousness of sin and rebellion against God, His righteousness, and His divine order. God’s end-time judgment of the world will fall on all the people who are committed to the devil and his kingdom who will not repent and submit to God and His Son.] **(21) With you [true Israel] I [“will”] shatter [or, “smash”] the horse and his rider, And with you I [“will”] shatter the chariot and its rider, (22) And with you I [“will”] shatter man and woman, And with you I [“will”] shatter old man and youth, And with you I [“will”] shatter young man and virgin, (23) And with you I [“will”] shatter the shepherd and his flock, And with you I [“will”] shatter the farmer and his team, And with you I [“will”] shatter governors and prefects. (24)** [The formats of the NASB; NIV show verse 24 as prose (in the Hebrew), and verses 1-23 and 25-58 as poetry. I assume that verse 24 has some continuity with verses 20-23; apparently verse 24 includes the idea that God will repay Babylon, destroying the devil’s world kingdom *through His true Israel*, which is headed up by the Lord Jesus Christ; but verse 24 also seems to set the stage for the following verses. “Verse 24 is a prose transition, connecting two independent oracles.”¹⁰⁰] **But** [I would translate “And” with the KJV; NKJV, or leave the Hebrew “w” untranslated with the NIV.] **I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all their evil that they have done in Zion** [cf. Jer. 50:17, 28; 51:10, 34-36, 56; Lam. 1:10; Rev. 6:9-11; 17:6; and 18:24] **before your eyes** [I assume the words “before your eyes” speak of the fact God will repay Babylon *before the eyes* of His people (true Israel),¹⁰¹ especially referring to His end-time judgment of the world through the people of true Israel, but it is also true that the people of Israel/Judah saw God overthrow the Babylonian kingdom at the hands of Cyrus, who allowed them to return to their land and to rebuild the temple.], **declares the LORD [Yahweh]. (25) “Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain** [The *destroying mountain* is the Babylonian world-kingdom; a mountain can stand as a symbol for a kingdom (cf. Isa. 2:2; 11:9; Dan. 2:35; and Mic. 4:1).], **Who destroys the whole earth** [Ancient Babylon caused much destruction in the ancient world, but it didn’t come

¹⁰⁰ Andrew W. Blackwood, *Commentary on Jeremiah* (Word Books, 1977), page 316.

¹⁰¹ The NIV removes any ambiguity with its translation, “Before your eyes I will repay....” Some think these words speak of the fact that the eyes of the people of Judah/Israel saw the evil that Babylon had done in Zion.

close to affecting the whole earth. Babylon the great harlot of the book of Revelation does have a true worldwide destructive affect on the whole earth. The devil's world-kingdom (including Antichrist and his world-kingdom and Babylon the great harlot) will be totally destroyed in God's end-time judgment of the world.

I'll quote part of what Derek Kidner says regarding the meaning of Babylon under verses 25, 26.¹⁰² "Once again the Babylon which is the city of man [worldwide] looms up behind the local power-base [referring to the ancient kingdom of Babylon], doomed as she [ancient Babylon] was doomed.

"The world passes away, and the lust of it' [1 John 2:17], together with the earth itself in the day of the Lord, 'burned up' [2 Pet. 3:10] like the destroying mountain of this passage. It is no object to give one's heart to [cf. 1 John 2:15, Phillips translations]."

declares the LORD [Yahweh], "And I will stretch out My hand against you, And roll you down from the crags, And I will make you a burnt out mountain [on "burnt out mountain," cf. Jer. 51:58; Rev. 17:16; 18:8, 9; and 19:2, 3]. **(26) They will not take from you even a stone for a corner Nor a stone for foundations, But you will be desolate forever," declares the LORD [Yahweh].** [Every being or thing contaminated by the devil's rebellion against God that isn't cleansed by repentance and the blood of the Lamb of God will be isolated forever from God's eternal kingdom.] **(27) Lift up a signal in the land, Blow a trumpet among the nations! Consecrate the nations against her** [cf. Jer. 50:29], **Summon against her the kingdoms of Ararat** [cf. Gen. 8:4; 2 Kings 19:37; and Isa. 37:38], **Minni and Ashkenaz** [Compare Gen. 10:3. Charles Feinberg points out that "the people north of Babylon, who were conquered by the Medes early in the sixth century B.C., are named: Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz."]; **Appoint a marshal** ["commander" NIV] **against her, Bring up the horses** [cf. Jer. 50:42] **like bristly locusts** ["horses like a swarm of locusts" NIV; cf. Jer. 51:14. "The reference to *bristling locusts* is apparently to a highly destructive stage of locust life during which the wings are encased on the back in rough horny covers."¹⁰³]. **(28) Consecrate the nations against her, The kings of the Medes** [cf. Isa. 13:17; Jer. 51:11; and Dan. 5:28], **Their governors and all their prefects, And every land of their dominion.** [Compare Isa. 13:1-5, 17-22; Jer. 50:9, 26, 29, 41-43; and 51:2, 11.]. **(29) So the land quakes and writhes** [cf. Jer. 8:16; 10:10], **For the purposes of the LORD [Yahweh] against Babylon stand, To make the land of Babylon A desolation without inhabitants** [cf. Isa. 13:19-22; Jer. 50:3, 13, 26, 27, 39, 40; 51:26, 37, 41-43, and 62-64]. **(30) The mighty men** [cf. Jer. 50:36; 51:56] **of Babylon have ceased fighting, They stay in the strongholds; Their strength is exhausted, They are becoming like women** [cf. Jer. 50:37; Nah. 3:13]; **Their dwelling places are set on fire** [cf. Jer. 50:32; 51:58], **The bars of her gates are broken** [cf. Isa. 45:1, 2]. **(31) One courier** ["Lit *runner*" (margin of NASB)] **runs to meet another, And one messenger to meet another, To tell the king of Babylon That his city has been captured from end to end; (32) The fords** ["river crossings" NIV] **also have been seized, And they have burned the marshes with fire, And the men of war are terrified. (33) For thus says the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts, the God of Israel: "The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor At the time it is stamped firm** [It was stamped firm to prepare the ground to be a threshing floor. John L. Mackay says, "Threshing floors were prepared for use by being swept clean and hollows filled and then

¹⁰² *Message of Jeremiah*, page 153.

¹⁰³ R. K. Harrison, *Jeremiah & Lamentations* (Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), page 188.

male goats [led to the slaughter]. **(41) How Sheshak** [“Cryptic name for Babylon” (margin of NASB); cf. Jer. 25:26] **has been captured, And the praise** [“boast” NIV] **of the whole earth** [again referring to Babylon/the world-kingdom; cf. Isa. 13:19] **been seized! How Babylon has become an object of horror among the nations** [cf. Jer. 50:13, 23; 51:37, 43]! **(42) The sea has come up over Babylon; She has been engulfed with its tumultuous waves.** [This verse, like many other verses, uses symbolic language to speak of the total destruction destined for Babylon and the kingdom of this world. Compare Jer. 51:55, 63, 64; Dan. 9:26.], **(43) Her cities have become an object of horror** [see verse 41], **A parched land and a desert** [cf. Jer. 50:12, 38, 39; 51:36], **A land in which no man lives** [see under Jer. 51:29] **And through which no son of man passes.** **(44) I will punish Bel** [cf. Isa. 46:1; Jer. 50:2 (see under Jer. 50:2)] **in Babylon, And I will make what he** [Bel; what Babylon swallows, Bel swallows] **has swallowed** [see verse 34] **come out of his mouth** [The captive peoples and the property he had taken captive will be set free. This was true when the ancient Babylonian kingdom fell to the Medo-Persian kingdom, and it will be true in a greater sense for the remnants of Israel and of the nations after God’s end-time judgment of the world.]; **And the nations will no longer stream to him** [to Bel (and Babylon)]. [After God’s end-time judgment of the world, the (remnant of the) nations will stream to God and Jerusalem (cf. Isa. 2:2).] **Even the wall of Babylon has fallen down** [cf. Jer. 50:15; 51:58]! [“Two things for which Babylon was famous were the god Bel and the great wall of the city”¹¹⁰] **(45) Come forth from her midst, My people** [cf. Isa. 48:20; Jer. 50:8 (see under Jer. 50:8), 28; 51:6 (see under Jer. 51:6); Zech. 2:7; and Rev. 18:4.] **And each of you save yourselves From the fierce anger of the LORD** [Yahweh]. [Those who don’t forsake Babylon (the sinful kingdom of this world) will be destroyed along with Babylon when God judges the world. These words don’t have much (if any) application for the days of God’s judgment of ancient Babylon at the hands of Cyrus, because, for one thing, the captives who left didn’t leave until after Babylon had fallen to the Medes and Persians. Large numbers of the Jews stayed in Babylon after Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to rebuild the temple, etc, and it doesn’t seem that God exhorted all of them (including Daniel) to go back to their homeland at that time—it wasn’t a matter of go back now or forfeit any claim to being My people and face My fierce anger.] **(46) Now so that your heart does not grow faint, And you are not afraid at the report that will be heard in the land—For the report will come one year, And after that another report in another year, And violence will be in the land With ruler against ruler** [I prefer the translation of the NIV here, “Do not lose heart or be afraid when rumors are heard in the land; one rumor comes this year, another the next, rumors of violence in the land and of ruler against ruler.” There will be reports and rumors, but God’s word will come to pass at the right time (cf., e.g., verses 47-49), including His word regarding His judgment of ancient Babylon and His judgment of the world at the end of this age. Compare Matt. 24:6, 7. “Many commentators believe the verse eschatological and altogether beyond the historical framework.”¹¹¹]—**(47) Therefore behold, days are coming When I will punish the idols of Babylon** [see Isa. 21:9; 46:1, 2; Jer. 50:2; and 51:52; cf. Isa. 2:8, 18-20; Rev. 9:20]; **And her whole land will be put to shame** [cf. Jer. 50:12] **And all her slain will**

¹¹⁰ Charles Feinberg, *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, page 684.

¹¹¹ Andrew W. Blackwood, *Jeremiah*, page 318.

fall in her midst. [I'll quote part of what John L. Mackay says here.¹¹² “This description again raises the problem of the timescale involved in that Cyrus’ invasion did not bring widespread havoc. There is prophetic foreshortening throughout this description (cf. v. 52) where Babylon’s downfall is presented against a backdrop of the final overthrow of the powers of evil.”] **(48) Then heaven and earth and all that is in them Will shout for joy over Babylon** [cf. Psalm 96:11-13; Isa. 14:7; 44:23 (with Isa. 44:21-45:13); 49:13 (with Isa. 49:1-26); 55:12; Rev. 18:20 (with Rev. 18:1-19:6)], **For the destroyers will come to her from the north** [cf. Jer. 50:3, 9, 41], **Declares the LORD [Yahweh]. (49) Indeed Babylon is to fall for the slain of Israel** [cf. Psalm 137:8; Jer. 50:29; and 51:4, 5, 10, 24, 34-36], **As also for Babylon the slain of all the earth have fallen** [“just as the slain in all the earth have fallen because of Babylon” NIV. Compare Jer. 50:15; 51:25. First we think of the people of the other nations besides Israel that had been slain by ancient Babylon. Looking at it from the point of view that Babylon is a symbol for the world, see Rev. 18:24.]. **(50) You who have escaped the sword, Depart! Do not stay! Remember the LORD [Yahweh] from afar** [cf. Deut. 4:25-31], **And let Jerusalem come to your mind.** [In this context (verses 49-51), “you who have escaped the sword” refers to the people of Judah/Israel—the surviving remnant—that has not been killed by the Babylonians (see verse 40). Looking at it from the end-time point of view that is so common in the prophecies of Jeremiah (and even more common in the prophecies of Isaiah, and common in other prophets) where Babylon serves as a symbol for the world, these words refer to the end-time remnant of Judah/Israel, who are called to flee from the sinful world (the devil’s world) lest they be destroyed along with the world (cf. Jer. 50:8; 51:6, 45; and Rev. 18:4). On the repentance and salvation of the end-time *remnant* of Judah/Israel, compare, for example, Jer. 50:20. Many verses prophesy of their return to Jerusalem and the land of Judah/Israel.] **(51) We are ashamed because we have heard reproach; Disgrace has covered our faces, For aliens have entered The holy places of the LORD’S [Yahweh’s] house** [cf. Psalm 74:1-11; Jer. 50:28; and Lam. 1:10; 2:6, 7]. [The people of Judah/Israel had borne much reproach and disgrace since they had been conquered; many had been killed and many had been carried into captivity, and they had suffered the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, all at the hands of the Babylonians. Even more important, the name of the God of Israel/Judah (the God of creation) was defamed through these humiliating defeats (which made it look to most people like the God of Israel had been overpowered by the gods of Babylon) that had come to pass (as judgments from God) because of the persistent sinfulness of His people. Apparently these words express a genuine repentance on the part of God’s people.] **(52) “Therefore behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD [Yahweh], “When I will punish her idols** [Compare Jer. 50:2, 38; 51:17, 18, 44, 47. When God judges the world at the end of this age, He will totally remove every god and every trace of false and/or demonic religion.], **And the mortally wounded will groan throughout her land.** [See under verse 29 for some cross-references. All the people committed to remain part of the devil’s world kingdom will be “mortally wounded” and removed from God’s kingdom in His end-time judgment of the world.] **(53) Though Babylon should ascend to the heavens** [which includes Babylon’s manifesting the root sin (and the devil’s sin) of *pride*; cf. Gen. 11:4; Job 20:6; Isa. 2:11-22; 14:12-14; Jer. 49:16; Amos 9:2; Obad. 1:4; and 1 Tim. 3:6], **And though she should fortify her lofty stronghold, From Me destroyers will come**

¹¹² *Jeremiah*, Vol. 2, page 573.

to her,” declares the LORD [Yahweh]. [No matter how impregnable and strong ancient Babylon or the kingdom of this world became/becomes with their defenses, weapons, arrogant boldness, and supernatural help of the devil (cf. Rev. 13:2-6), she quickly falls before God’s judgments.] **(54)** [Many verses of Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 speak of the destruction of Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans/Babylonians, including almost every verse that follows to the end of chapter 51.] **The sound of an outcry from Babylon** [cf. Jer. 50:22, 46], **And of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans!** **(55)** **For the LORD [Yahweh] is going to destroy Babylon, And He will make her loud noise vanish from her.** [After Babylon is destroyed and desolate by the judgment of God, it will be very quiet there (cf. Rev. 18:22, 23).] **And their waves will roar like many waters** [Compare Psalm 124:2-5. Apparently these words speak of the waves of enemy soldiers as they break over and totally destroy Babylon and the Babylonian kingdom (cf. verse 42).]; **The tumult of their voices** [the voices of those destroying Babylon] **sounds forth. (56) For the destroyer** [cf., e.g., Jer. 51:48, 53] **is coming against her, against Babylon, And her mighty men will be captured, Their bows are shattered; For the LORD [Yahweh] is a God of recompense, He will fully repay** [cf., e.g., Deut. 32:35; Psalm 94:1, 2; Jer. 50:15, 29; 51:6, 24, 35-37; Rev. 20:12-15; and 22:12, 15]. **(57) “I will make her princes and her wise men drunk** [cf. Jer. 25:27; Babylon will drink of the cup of the wrath of God, and the world-kingdom (the kingdom of this world) will be totally destroyed], **Her governors, her prefects and her mighty men, That they may sleep a perpetual sleep** [cf. Jer. 51:39] **and not wake up** [In other words, they will be killed (cf. Psalm 76:5, 6).],” **Declares the King, whose name is the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts** [cf. Jer. 46:18; 48:15]. **(58) Thus says the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts, “The broad wall of Babylon will be completely razed** [“Babylon’s thick wall will be leveled” NIV; cf. Jer. 50:15] **And her high gates will be set on fire** [“When Cyrus took Babylon in 539 B.C., he did not demolish the city walls or burn the high gates with fire...”¹¹³]; **So the peoples will toil for nothing, And the nations become exhausted** [cf. Jer. 9:5; 51:64] **only for fire.”** [The words of this verse look to the culmination as God judges the world at the end of this age. I’ll quote Hab. 2:12-14 and make a few comments in brackets, “Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed And founds a town with violence! [The same woe applies to all the people who are committed to reject God and to live in sin, whether they are guilty of the sin of shedding innocent blood/violence, or not. The city being spoken of in the book of Habakkuk is Babylon, but the statement is general and applies to every such city (or town) and to the kingdom/city of this world that has the devil for its god (cf. 2 Cor. 4:4).] (13) Is it not indeed from the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts That peoples toil for fire, And nations grow weary for nothing? [The point is that those who continue to reject God, His truth, His righteousness, and His salvation are rebelling against what they were created for. At the end their works will be destroyed with *fire*, and they themselves will be removed from God’s kingdom and cast into the eternal *fire* that has been prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41; cf., e.g., Rev. 20:14, 15). But, on the other hand, those who repent and submit (in faith, from the heart) to God, to His Word, and to His plan of salvation will be saved now and will begin to experience eternal glory when the Lord Jesus Christ returns to glorify His own and to judge the world. The following verse in Habakkuk prophesies of the glories of God’s eternal kingdom that will start to some extent with the millennial kingdom and be brought

¹¹³ Jack. R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 37-52*, page 499.

to completion in the eternal state that follows the millennial kingdom.] (14) For the earth [and especially the new earth with its new Jerusalem] will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD [Yahweh], As the waters cover the sea.”] **(59) The message which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah** [Compare Jer. 32:12 (This verse shows that Baruch, who was a scribe for Jeremiah (for one thing), was a brother of Seraiah; they had the same father and grandfather, Neriah and Mahseiah); 36:4; and 45:1], **the grandson of Mahseiah** [cf. Jer. 32:12], **when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign** [594/593 BC. This journey is not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. Zedekiah became king in 597 BC, at the age of 21, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. In the ninth year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar came and began a siege of Jerusalem; the city fell to the Babylonians in the eleventh year of his reign (cf. Jer. 52:1-16)]. **(Now Seraiah was quartermaster** [“staff officer” NIV¹¹⁴].) **(60) So Jeremiah wrote in a single scroll all the calamity which would come upon Babylon, that is, all these words which have been written concerning Babylon** [cf. Jer. 30:2, 3; 36:1-32; and chapters 50, 51]. **(61) Then Jeremiah said to Seraiah, “As soon as you come to Babylon, then see that you read all these words aloud** [cf. Jer. 36:5-10], **(62) and say, ‘You, O LORD [Yahweh], have promised concerning this place** [Babylon, ultimately the kingdom of this world, which is headed up by the devil] **to cut it off, so that there will be nothing dwelling in it, whether man or beast** [“animal” NIV. Compare Jer. 50:3 (“Both man and beast [animal] have wandered off, they have gone away”). Apparently this speaks of domesticated animals and does not include wild beasts (see the references cited at the end of this verse).¹¹⁵], **but it will be a perpetual desolation** [cf. Isa. 13:1-22; 14:22, 23; Jer. 50:3, 13, 39, 40; and 51:26, 29, 37, 43].’ **(63) And as soon as you finish reading this scroll, you will tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates, (64) and say, ‘Just so shall Babylon sink down and not rise again because of the calamity that I am going to bring upon her; and they will become exhausted** [on *exhausted*, cf. verse 58].’ ” **Thus far are the words of Jeremiah** [“ ‘Thus far [are the words of Jeremiah]’ is a colophon or editorial note to mark off Jeremiah’s own words from the appendix (chapter 52) which was taken from other historical sources (2 Kings 24-25).”¹¹⁶ “The chapter closes with, ‘The words of Jeremiah end here.’ J. Lundbom has pointed out that this phrase forms an inclusion with 1:1 that begins, ‘The words of Jeremiah.’ ”¹¹⁷].

It is significant that Rev. 18:21 builds on these two verses. I’ll quote Rev. 18:21-24, “Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, ‘So will Babylon, the great city [God’s end-time judgment of Babylon, the great harlot, is a major feature of His end-time judgment of the world: Some three chapters of the book of Revelation are devoted to her destruction (Rev. 14:8; 14-16; 16:19; and 17:1-19:4). Babylon, the great harlot, is a symbol for the world that embraces all the things the

¹¹⁴ “...staff officer who was responsible for looking after the comfort of the king of Judah whenever he stopped for the night” (Charles Feinberg, *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, page 687). J. A. Thompson points out the Septuagint reads “officer of the (tribute) gifts.”

¹¹⁵ The BDB Hebrew Lexicon shows that the Hebrew noun (*behemah*) translated “animals” by the NIV and “beasts” by the NASB is often used of domesticated animals in the Old Testament. The NASB translates *behemah* as *animal(s)* 60 times; as *cattle* 49 times; and as *beast(s)* 75 times.

¹¹⁶ Donald Wiseman, *New Layman’s Bible Commentary* (Zondervan, 1979), page 850.

¹¹⁷ F. B. Huey, *Jeremiah, Lamentations* (Broadman Press, 1993), page 431.

devil uses to seduce men from God to himself, including all false religion, which includes apostate Christianity. As Rev. 18:24 shows (cf. Rev. 17:6), she is also responsible for the “blood of prophets and saints and of all who have been slain on the earth.” We can probably say that she was responsible for all the innocent blood that has been shed throughout the history of man.], be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer. [The words of this verse build on Jeremiah chapters 50, 51, including the emphasis on the *total* destruction and removal of Babylon with all of her evil, including her evil influences. And it seems obvious that the strong angel’s throwing a stone like a great millstone into the sea here builds on what Seraiah was commanded to do in Jer. 51:60-64. These verses in the book of Revelation serve as a significant confirmation that the prophecy of Babylon’s destruction in Jeremiah chapters 50, 51 goes far beyond God’s judgment of the ancient Babylonian kingdom.] (22) And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer; (23) and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and the bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery.[Verses 22, 23 emphasize the point that the kingdom of this world with all of its activities that formerly took place (the activities mentioned here were not evil in themselves, but everything becomes evil when men live for those things instead of living for God, in His divine order) will be totally shut down through God’s total judgment and removal of that kingdom. The only kingdom that will remain after God’s end-time judgment of the world is God’s kingdom. There was much literal occult *magic* in ancient Babylon and in the Babylon of the book of Revelation, but it seems that the primary idea behind the word *magic* here is that the peoples of the nations were/are deceived into thinking that the system of the world and money and the things that money can buy are something worth living for in themselves, and they become a substitute for the one true God.] (24) And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints and of all who have been slain on the earth.” See above under Rev. 18:21. This one charge against the Babylon of the book of Revelation would be sufficient in itself to require the total removal of this evil kingdom that has existed throughout the history of man on the earth. And this charge is sufficient to demonstrate that this Babylon embraces much more than any literal city.

I’ll quote part of what Arno Gaebelien says regarding chapters 50, 51.¹¹⁸ “...God’s dealing in judgment is wonderfully told out, prophetic of that coming day when the Lord will deal with the world in judgment. This must be the reason why such an extended prophecy is given [in Jeremiah chapters 50, 51]. It all goes beyond the judgment of literal Babylon. [Then, after commenting on what Seraiah was commanded to do with the scroll in Jer. 51:59-64, Gaebelien quotes Rev. 18:21 and says:] That great predicted end of all God-defiance and opposition, typified by Babylon and its past glory, will surely come.”

I’ll quote a paragraph from what Charles R. Erdman says here.¹¹⁹ “It is well to remember that Babylon was not only a city but also a symbol. It was, indeed, the mighty

¹¹⁸ *Gaebelien’s Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Loizeaux Brothers, 1970, 1985), pages 599, 600.

¹¹⁹ *Books of Jeremiah and Lamentations* (Baker, 1955), page 102.

capital built by Nebuchadnezzar on the banks of the Euphrates [The city existed before Nebuchadnezzar, but he carried out extensive building projects.], the very embodiment of splendor and power, of cruelty and pride. Such was the historic and heartless foe of Israel. Yet, it also was the type of every tyrant or state or system which is opposed to God and is the enemy of His people.”

I'll also quote part of what A. R. Fausett says here.¹²⁰ “God throws the persecutors of Israel and His Church ‘as a stone into the mighty waters.’ Those who, like Babylon, oppose the Lord and His people, shall sink under the weight of God’s curse upon their sin, and shall not rise again forever (vv. 63, 64). The threats of God’s judgments to come are as necessary parts of Scripture as the promises. Let us learn from both to serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; so shall our eyes see, without our sharing in, the reward [wages] of the wicked (Psalm 91:8).”

¹²⁰ *Commentary by Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown*, Vol. 2, page 182.