**Jeremiah 50-52**

A Message About Babylon

**50**This is the word the Lord spoke through Jeremiah the prophet concerning Babylon and the land of the Babylonians:

**2**“Announce and proclaim among the nations,
    lift up a banner and proclaim it;
    keep nothing back, but say,
‘Babylon will be captured;
    Bel will be put to shame,
    Marduk filled with terror.
Her images will be put to shame
    and her idols filled with terror.’
**3**A nation from the north will attack her
    and lay waste her land.
No one will live in it;
    both people and animals will flee away.

**4**“In those days, at that time,”
    declares the Lord,
“the people of Israel and the people of Judah together
    will go in tears to seek the Lord their God.
**5**They will ask the way to Zion
    and turn their faces toward it.
They will come and bind themselves to the Lord
    in an everlasting covenant
    that will not be forgotten.

**6**“My people have been lost sheep;
    their shepherds have led them astray
    and caused them to roam on the mountains.
They wandered over mountain and hill
    and forgot their own resting place.
**7**Whoever found them devoured them;
    their enemies said, ‘We are not guilty,
for they sinned against the Lord, their verdant pasture,
    the Lord, the hope of their ancestors.’

**8**“Flee out of Babylon;
    leave the land of the Babylonians,
    and be like the goats that lead the flock.
**9**For I will stir up and bring against Babylon
    an alliance of great nations from the land of the north.
They will take up their positions against her,
    and from the north she will be captured.
Their arrows will be like skilled warriors
    who do not return empty-handed.
**10**So Babylonia[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+50-52&version=NIV#fen-NIV-20177b)] will be plundered;
    all who plunder her will have their fill,”
declares the Lord.

**11**“Because you rejoice and are glad,
    you who pillage my inheritance,
because you frolic like a heifer threshing grain
    and neigh like stallions,
**12**your mother will be greatly ashamed;
    she who gave you birth will be disgraced.
She will be the least of the nations -
    a wilderness, a dry land, a desert.
**13**Because of the Lord’s anger she will not be inhabited
    but will be completely desolate.
All who pass Babylon will be appalled;
    they will scoff because of all her wounds.

**14**“Take up your positions around Babylon,
    all you who draw the bow.
Shoot at her! Spare no arrows,
    for she has sinned against the Lord.
**15**Shout against her on every side!
    She surrenders, her towers fall,
    her walls are torn down.
Since this is the vengeance of the Lord,
    take vengeance on her;
    do to her as she has done to others.
**16**Cut off from Babylon the sower,
    and the reaper with his sickle at harvest.
Because of the sword of the oppressor
    let everyone return to their own people,
    let everyone flee to their own land.

**17**“Israel is a scattered flock
    that lions have chased away.
The first to devour them
    was the king of Assyria;
the last to crush their bones
    was Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.”

**18**Therefore this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says:

“I will punish the king of Babylon and his land
    as I punished the king of Assyria.
**19**But I will bring Israel back to their own pasture,
    and they will graze on Carmel and Bashan;
their appetite will be satisfied
    on the hills of Ephraim and Gilead.
**20**In those days, at that time,”
    declares the Lord,
“search will be made for Israel’s guilt,
    but there will be none,
and for the sins of Judah,
    but none will be found,
    for I will forgive the remnant I spare.

**21**“Attack the land of Merathaim
    and those who live in Pekod.
Pursue, kill and completely destroy[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+50-52&version=NIV#fen-NIV-20188c)] them,”
declares the Lord.
    “Do everything I have commanded you.
**22**The noise of battle is in the land,
    the noise of great destruction!
**23**How broken and shattered
    is the hammer of the whole earth!
How desolate is Babylon
    among the nations!
**24**I set a trap for you, Babylon,
    and you were caught before you knew it;
you were found and captured
    because you opposed the Lord.
**25**The Lord has opened his arsenal
    and brought out the weapons of his wrath,
for the Sovereign Lord Almighty has work to do
    in the land of the Babylonians.
**26**Come against her from afar.
    Break open her granaries;
    pile her up like heaps of grain.
Completely destroy her
    and leave her no remnant.
**27**Kill all her young bulls;
    let them go down to the slaughter!
Woe to them! For their day has come,
    the time for them to be punished.
**28**Listen to the fugitives and refugees from Babylon
    declaring in Zion
how the Lord our God has taken vengeance,
    vengeance for his temple.

**29**“Summon archers against Babylon,
    all those who draw the bow.
Encamp all around her;
    let no one escape.
Repay her for her deeds;
    do to her as she has done.
For she has defied the Lord,
    the Holy One of Israel.
**30**Therefore, her young men will fall in the streets;
    all her soldiers will be silenced in that day,”
declares the Lord.
**31**“See, I am against you, you arrogant one,”
    declares the Lord, the Lord Almighty,
“for your day has come,
    the time for you to be punished.
**32**The arrogant one will stumble and fall
    and no one will help her up;
I will kindle a fire in her towns
    that will consume all who are around her.”

**33**This is what the Lord Almighty says:

“The people of Israel are oppressed,
    and the people of Judah as well.
All their captors hold them fast,
    refusing to let them go.
**34**Yet their Redeemer is strong;
    the Lord Almighty is his name.
He will vigorously defend their cause
    so that he may bring rest to their land,
    but unrest to those who live in Babylon.

**35**“A sword against the Babylonians!”
    declares the Lord -
“against those who live in Babylon
    and against her officials and wise men!
**36**A sword against her false prophets!
    They will become fools.
A sword against her warriors!
    They will be filled with terror.
**37**A sword against her horses and chariots
    and all the foreigners in her ranks!
    They will become weaklings.
A sword against her treasures!
    They will be plundered.
**38**A drought on her waters!
    They will dry up.
For it is a land of idols,
    idols that will go mad with terror.

**39**“So desert creatures and hyenas will live there,
    and there the owl will dwell.
It will never again be inhabited
    or lived in from generation to generation.
**40**As I overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah
    along with their neighboring towns,”
declares the Lord,
“so no one will live there;
    no people will dwell in it.

**41**“Look! An army is coming from the north;
    a great nation and many kings
    are being stirred up from the ends of the earth.
**42**They are armed with bows and spears;
    they are cruel and without mercy.
They sound like the roaring sea
    as they ride on their horses;
they come like men in battle formation
    to attack you, Daughter Babylon.
**43**The king of Babylon has heard reports about them,
    and his hands hang limp.
Anguish has gripped him,
    pain like that of a woman in labor.
**44**Like a lion coming up from Jordan’s thickets
    to a rich pastureland,
I will chase Babylon from its land in an instant.
    Who is the chosen one I will appoint for this?
Who is like me and who can challenge me?
    And what shepherd can stand against me?”

**45**Therefore, hear what the Lord has planned against Babylon,
    what he has purposed against the land of the Babylonians:
The young of the flock will be dragged away;
    their pasture will be appalled at their fate.
**46**At the sound of Babylon’s capture the earth will tremble;
    its cry will resound among the nations.

**51**This is what the Lord says:

“See, I will stir up the spirit of a destroyer
    against Babylon and the people of Leb Kamai.
**2**I will send foreigners to Babylon
    to winnow her and to devastate her land;
they will oppose her on every side
    in the day of her disaster.
**3**Let not the archer string his bow,
    nor let him put on his armor.
Do not spare her young men;
    completely destroy her army.
**4**They will fall down slain in Babylon,
    fatally wounded in her streets.
**5**For Israel and Judah have not been forsaken
    by their God, the Lord Almighty,
though their land is full of guilt
    before the Holy One of Israel.

**6**“Flee from Babylon!
    Run for your lives!
    Do not be destroyed because of her sins.
It is time for the Lord’s vengeance;
    he will repay her what she deserves.
**7**Babylon was a gold cup in the Lord’s hand;
    she made the whole earth drunk.
The nations drank her wine;
    therefore they have now gone mad.
**8**Babylon will suddenly fall and be broken.
    Wail over her!
Get balm for her pain;
    perhaps she can be healed.

**9**“‘We would have healed Babylon,
    but she cannot be healed;
let us leave her and each go to our own land,
    for her judgment reaches to the skies,
    it rises as high as the heavens.’

**10**“‘The Lord has vindicated us;
    come, let us tell in Zion
    what the Lord our God has done.’

**11**“Sharpen the arrows,
    take up the shields!
The Lord has stirred up the kings of the Medes,
    because his purpose is to destroy Babylon.
The Lord will take vengeance,
    vengeance for his temple.
**12**Lift up a banner against the walls of Babylon!
    Reinforce the guard,
station the watchmen,
    prepare an ambush!
The Lord will carry out his purpose,
    his decree against the people of Babylon.
**13**You who live by many waters
    and are rich in treasures,
your end has come,
    the time for you to be destroyed.
**14**The Lord Almighty has sworn by himself:
    I will surely fill you with troops, as with a swarm of locusts,
    and they will shout in triumph over you.

**15**“He made the earth by his power;
    he founded the world by his wisdom
    and stretched out the heavens by his understanding.
**16**When he thunders, the waters in the heavens roar;
    he makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth.
He sends lightning with the rain
    and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

**17**“Everyone is senseless and without knowledge;
    every goldsmith is shamed by his idols.
The images he makes are a fraud;
    they have no breath in them.
**18**They are worthless, the objects of mockery;
    when their judgment comes, they will perish.
**19**He who is the Portion of Jacob is not like these,
    for he is the Maker of all things,
including the people of his inheritance -
    the Lord Almighty is his name.

**20**“You are my war club,
    my weapon for battle -
with you I shatter nations,
    with you I destroy kingdoms,
**21**with you I shatter horse and rider,
    with you I shatter chariot and driver,
**22**with you I shatter man and woman,
    with you I shatter old man and youth,
    with you I shatter young man and young woman,
**23**with you I shatter shepherd and flock,
    with you I shatter farmer and oxen,
    with you I shatter governors and officials.

**24**“Before your eyes I will repay Babylon and all who live in Babylonia for all the wrong they have done in Zion,” declares the Lord.

**25**“I am against you, you destroying mountain,
    you who destroy the whole earth,”
declares the Lord.
“I will stretch out my hand against you,
    roll you off the cliffs,
    and make you a burned-out mountain.
**26**No rock will be taken from you for a cornerstone,
    nor any stone for a foundation,
    for you will be desolate forever,”
declares the Lord.

**27**“Lift up a banner in the land!
    Blow the trumpet among the nations!
Prepare the nations for battle against her;
    summon against her these kingdoms:
    Ararat, Minni and Ashkenaz.
Appoint a commander against her;
    send up horses like a swarm of locusts.
**28**Prepare the nations for battle against her -
    the kings of the Medes,
their governors and all their officials,
    and all the countries they rule.
**29**The land trembles and writhes,
    for the Lord’s purposes against Babylon stand -
to lay waste the land of Babylon
    so that no one will live there.
**30**Babylon’s warriors have stopped fighting;
    they remain in their strongholds.
Their strength is exhausted;
    they have become weaklings.
Her dwellings are set on fire;
    the bars of her gates are broken.
**31**One courier follows another
    and messenger follows messenger
to announce to the king of Babylon
    that his entire city is captured,
**32**the river crossings seized,
    the marshes set on fire,
    and the soldiers terrified.”

**33**This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says:

“Daughter Babylon is like a threshing floor
    at the time it is trampled;
    the time to harvest her will soon come.”

**34**“Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has devoured us,
    he has thrown us into confusion,
    he has made us an empty jar.
Like a serpent he has swallowed us
    and filled his stomach with our delicacies,
    and then has spewed us out.
**35**May the violence done to our flesh be on Babylon,”
    say the inhabitants of Zion.
“May our blood be on those who live in Babylonia,”
    says Jerusalem.

**36**Therefore this is what the Lord says:

“See, I will defend your cause
    and avenge you;
I will dry up her sea
    and make her springs dry.
**37**Babylon will be a heap of ruins,
    a haunt of jackals,
an object of horror and scorn,
    a place where no one lives.
**38**Her people all roar like young lions,
    they growl like lion cubs.
**39**But while they are aroused,
    I will set out a feast for them
    and make them drunk,
so that they shout with laughter -
    then sleep forever and not awake,”
declares the Lord.
**40**“I will bring them down
    like lambs to the slaughter,
    like rams and goats.

**41**“How Sheshak will be captured,
    the boast of the whole earth seized!
How desolate Babylon will be
    among the nations!
**42**The sea will rise over Babylon;
    its roaring waves will cover her.
**43**Her towns will be desolate,
    a dry and desert land,
a land where no one lives,
    through which no one travels.
**44**I will punish Bel in Babylon
    and make him spew out what he has swallowed.
The nations will no longer stream to him.
    And the wall of Babylon will fall.

**45**“Come out of her, my people!
    Run for your lives!
    Run from the fierce anger of the Lord.
**46**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.
**47**For the time will surely come
    when I will punish the idols of Babylon;
her whole land will be disgraced
    and her slain will all lie fallen within her.
**48**Then heaven and earth and all that is in them
    will shout for joy over Babylon,
for out of the north
    destroyers will attack her,”
declares the Lord.

**49**“Babylon must fall because of Israel’s slain,
    just as the slain in all the earth
    have fallen because of Babylon.
**50**You who have escaped the sword,
    leave and do not linger!
Remember the Lord in a distant land,
    and call to mind Jerusalem.”

**51**“We are disgraced,
    for we have been insulted
    and shame covers our faces,
because foreigners have entered
    the holy places of the Lord’s house.”

**52**“But days are coming,” declares the Lord,
    “when I will punish her idols,
and throughout her land
    the wounded will groan.
**53**Even if Babylon ascends to the heavens
    and fortifies her lofty stronghold,
    I will send destroyers against her,”
declares the Lord.

**54**“The sound of a cry comes from Babylon,
    the sound of great destruction
    from the land of the Babylonians.
**55**The Lord will destroy Babylon;
    he will silence her noisy din.
Waves of enemies will rage like great waters;
    the roar of their voices will resound.
**56**A destroyer will come against Babylon;
    her warriors will be captured,
    and their bows will be broken.
For the Lord is a God of retribution;
    he will repay in full.
**57**I will make her officials and wise men drunk,
    her governors, officers and warriors as well;
they will sleep forever and not awake,”
    declares the King, whose name is the Lord Almighty.

**58**This is what the Lord Almighty says:

“Babylon’s thick wall will be leveled
    and her high gates set on fire;
the peoples exhaust themselves for nothing,
    the nations’ labor is only fuel for the flames.”

**59**This is the message Jeremiah the prophet gave to the staff officer Seraiah son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went to Babylon with Zedekiah king of Judah in the fourth year of his reign. **60**Jeremiah had written on a scroll about all the disasters that would come upon Babylon - all that had been recorded concerning Babylon. **61**He said to Seraiah, “When you get to Babylon, see that you read all these words aloud. **62**Then say, ‘Lord, you have said you will destroy this place, so that neither people nor animals will live in it; it will be desolate forever.’**63**When you finish reading this scroll, tie a stone to it and throw it into the Euphrates. **64**Then say, ‘So will Babylon sink to rise no more because of the disaster I will bring on her. And her people will fall.’”

The words of Jeremiah end here.

The Fall of Jerusalem

**52**Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother’s name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah; she was from Libnah. **2**He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, just as Jehoiakim had done. **3**It was because of the Lord’s anger that all this happened to Jerusalem and Judah, and in the end he thrust them from his presence.

Now Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

**4**So in the ninth year of Zedekiah’s reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. They encamped outside the city and built siege works all around it. **5**The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

**6**By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city had become so severe that there was no food for the people to eat. **7**Then the city wall was broken through, and the whole army fled. They left the city at night through the gate between the two walls near the king’s garden, though the Babylonians[[m](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+50-52&version=NIV#fen-NIV-20284m)]were surrounding the city. They fled toward the Arabah,[[n](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+50-52&version=NIV#fen-NIV-20284n)] **8**but the Babylonian[[o](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+50-52&version=NIV#fen-NIV-20285o)]army pursued King Zedekiah and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered, **9**and he was captured.

He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he pronounced sentence on him. **10**There at Riblah the king of Babylon killed the sonsof Zedekiah before his eyes; he also killed all the officials of Judah. **11**Then he put out Zedekiah’s eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon, where he put him in prison till the day of his death.

**12**On the tenth day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard, who served the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. **13**He set fire to the temple of the Lord, the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem. Every important building he burned down. **14**The whole Babylonian army, under the commander of the imperial guard, broke down all the walls around Jerusalem. **15**Nebuzaradan the commander of the guard carried into exile some of the poorest people and those who remained in the city, along with the rest of the craftsmen[[p](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+50-52&version=NIV#fen-NIV-20292p)] and those who had deserted to the king of Babylon. **16**But Nebuzaradan left behind the rest of the poorest people of the land to work the vineyards and fields.

**17**The Babylonians broke up the bronze pillars, the movable stands and the bronze Sea that were at the temple of the Lord and they carried all the bronze to Babylon. **18**They also took away the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, sprinkling bowls, dishes and all the bronze articles used in the temple service. **19**The commander of the imperial guard took away the basins, censers, sprinkling bowls, pots, lampstands, dishes and bowls used for drink offerings - all that were made of pure gold or silver.

**20**The bronze from the two pillars, the Sea and the twelve bronze bulls under it, and the movable stands, which King Solomon had made for the temple of the Lord, was more than could be weighed. **21**Each pillar was eighteen cubits high and twelve cubits in circumference; each was four fingers thick, and hollow.**22**The bronze capital on top of one pillar was five cubits high and was decorated with a network and pomegranates of bronze all around. The other pillar, with its pomegranates, was similar. **23**There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; the total number of pomegranates above the surrounding network was a hundred.

**24**The commander of the guard took as prisoners Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the priest next in rank and the three doorkeepers. **25**Of those still in the city, he took the officer in charge of the fighting men, and seven royal advisers. He also took the secretary who was chief officer in charge of conscripting the people of the land, sixty of whom were found in the city. **26**Nebuzaradan the commander took them all and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.**27**There at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, the king had them executed.

So Judah went into captivity, away from her land. **28**This is the number of the people Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile:

in the seventh year, 3,023 Jews; **29**in Nebuchadnezzar’s eighteenth year,

832 people from Jerusalem; **30**in his twenty-third year,

745 Jews taken into exile by Nebuzaradan the commander of the imperial guard.

There were 4,600 people in all.

Jehoiachin Released

**31**In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the year Evil-Marduk became king of Babylon, on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, he released Jehoiachin king of Judah and freed him from prison. **32**He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat of honor higher than those of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. **33**So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes and for the rest of his life ate regularly at the king’s table. **34**Day by day the king of Babylon gave Jehoiachin a regular allowance as long as he lived, till the day of his death.