

CHAPTER FOUR
Great Babylon
The Harlot of the Nations

The Harlot of The Nations

One of the most puzzling subjects of biblical prophecy is that on Babylon. Numerous interpreters have made major differences in symbolic assignment over the centuries. Many believe the prophecies in the Old Testament are not symbolic, that they refer to ancient Babylon. The prophecies in Jeremiah fall deep within a context of other pronouncements against that ancient land. It is natural to assume that Jeremiah had a constant object in mind when he wrote his work. This view is contradicted by prophecies in Isaiah 13 and 14, which, many believe, were written a century or more before the Babylonian conquest and disaster. In order to reconcile the Isaiah Babylon prophecies to this view some godless scholars assume those portions of Isaiah were written at the time of the Babylonian conquest.

Further controversy arises from the Babylonian prophecies in the *Book of Revelation*. The apostle John could not possibly have intended ancient Babylon for his descriptions; therefore his use of the word must carry a symbolic, not literal, meaning. Again some godless scholars propose that John merely copied pieces out of the Old Testament and reworked them according to his notions of their symbolic content. In proposing this explanation they reject John's deep love for Jesus, and his personal integrity. Other persons believe the symbolic meaning is intended to convey revelation about the Roman Catholic Church. Countless books and papers have been written from this view.

I shall not review these various interpretations of the Babylon prophecies. I shall go directly to their symbolic significance, describing a nation that has now appeared at the end of the planetary age.

Such view is consistent from Isaiah to Revelation. There is no need to excuse contradictions from one Babylon prophecy to another; those contradictions evaporate when viewed from a proper perspective. This nation carries a critical role in unfolding planetary destiny.

The Meaning of the Name

The word *Babylon* is Greek. It is used in the New Testament. It is the Greek form of the Hebrew word *Babel* used in the Old Testament.

English dictionary definitions of these two words are instructive.

Other than reference to the ancient city —

Babel: A confused mixture of sounds or voices. A scene of noise and confusion.

Babylon: Any rich and magnificent place believed to be excessive in luxury and wickedness.

The symbolism of these two words is highly appropriate to the subject of the prophecies, which is the same nation in both the Old and New Testaments.

The name *Babel* (or *Babylon*) was chosen for the following reasons:

1. Prophecy could not use the actual name of the future land; people of ancient times would not have known what the name meant. It would have been a nonsense word; it would have been regarded with extreme skepticism and doubt, even as Satanic.

2. Prophecy could not use the actual name because this would have forewarned men. A condition on prophecy is that the subject not be recognized until the time of fruition. Otherwise mankind would divert the predictions, and thus act contrary to God's will.

3. The combination of these two elements made it necessary that the word *Babel* imply the ancient city, thus to rivet the attention of men. They would speculate over application of the prophecies, while puzzling over those items which did not fit their logical schemes. The countless interpretive books and papers written throughout the past two thousand years demonstrate this incongruity.

4. Recognizing that the prophecies were holy, and that the conditions of the prophecy had not been truly fulfilled, many people would preserve them against future expectation.

5. At the time of fruition, when the ripeness of the age had come to pass, the true significance of the prophecies would be made known. This would place on mankind a test of their devotion to God. Could they see through the symbolism to the meaning of the revelation? Would they make decisions based on faith in God's purpose? The symbolism thus became a critical element in the screening of mankind to find those with a more devout faith in God.

In this chapter I shall consider the prophecies contained in

Isaiah 13 and 14,

Isaiah 47 and 48,

Jeremiah 25, and especially

Jeremiah 50 and 51, as well as those found in

Revelation 17 and 18.

Where necessary I shall refer to a few other verses not included in those chapters.

The Great Harlot

Rev 17:1-6 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who is seated upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the dwellers on earth have become drunk." And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and bedecked with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication; and on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of harlots and of earth's abominations." And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the consecrated ones and the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her I marveled greatly.

The apostle John could not have expected this revelation to mean ancient Babylon. He would not provide prophecy for a nation had long since passed out of existence.

Nor could he have expected it to mean a Church, or other social institution. He would have been acutely aware of its future application. He would have known that the setting was geographical, not institutional. He designed his symbolism in order that his audience sense the geographical application. The context of Rev 17 and 18 clearly shows it to be a nation. Every person giving serious attention to the revelation has recognized that the tone is cosmic; the depiction vast.

The location of Great Babylon is marked by intense persecution of God's people. John *saw the woman drunk with the blood of the consecrated ones and the blood of the witnesses of Jesus*. These are individuals who are truly dedicated to God. They have given themselves to new revelations. They are willing to engage in reaffirmation of the old covenant. In this land arises a bloodlust for the slaughter of countless people devoted to God. This is a prophecy for the end of the age.

John was carried away in the spirit to a wilderness where he saw this Great Harlot. She was not located in the Near East, nor in some neighboring land, nor distributed around the world through some institutional organization. John's use of the word *wilderness* denotes a place then unrecognized to the Roman world.

Wilderness refers to a land that then was truly wilderness.

Her name is one of mystery; the name is not openly evident that all may see. The symbolism of Great Babylon, a great nation, portrays her nature.

She was bedecked with gold and jewels and pearls, arrayed in the royal colors of purple and scarlet, all symbols of great wealth.

I shall, for the moment, pass over a detailed discussion of the scarlet beast with seven heads and ten horns. The statement is an intrusion into the text which diverts attention from more rigorous examination of the essential kernel of the revelation. This includes the entire portion of text from Rev 17:7-18. Refer to the Chapter on *Seven Heads and Ten Horns*.

I make this assertion:

The New Testament *Book of Revelation* was badly corrupted by an early Christian editor who removed text, altered text, and inserted his personal interpretations. We must exercise great caution in study of this corrupt text. As we are told in the *Urantia Papers*:

UP 1555 - When in temporary exile on Patmos, John wrote the Book of Revelation, which you now have in greatly abridged and distorted form. This Book of Revelation contains the surviving fragments of a great revelation, large portions of which were lost, other portions of which were removed, subsequent to John's writing. It is preserved in only fragmentary and adulterated form.

The textual difficulties may be discerned by noting that in 17:7 the beast with seven heads and ten horns carry the Great Harlot. In 17:12 the ten horns are ten kings whose relationship to the Harlot are not identified. In 17:16 the ten horns hate the Harlot and will destroy her. These statements seem mutually incompatible.

In 17:1 the Great Harlot is seated on many waters. This passage has no condition that would prevent us from assuming that the waters are literal, composed of oceans, lakes, and rivers, although the internal interpretation states that these waters are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. This is part of the textual difficulty.

The symbolism of 17:15 is based on the notion that the sea represents humanity, and that peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues rise up out of this symbolic sea. This view then forces an interpretation of many different nations and languages scattered across the planet. As a logical consequence many interpreters have not considered the possibility that the Harlot herself is composed of many different peoples, nationalities and tongues gathered in one nation.

The sense of specific geographical location, rather than a general symbolism for mankind, is denoted by other phrases in both Chapters 17 and 18.

“All the nations have drunk the wine of her impure passion . . .”

“The kings of the earth have committed fornication with her . . .”

“The merchants of the earth have grown rich with the wealth of her wantonness.”

“Her destruction comes in a single day.”

“She shall be burned with fire.”

“In one hour her judgment has come.”

These statements do not imply the general body of mankind; they imply a specific national identity.

The list of merchandise in 18:11-13 shows a great commercial enterprise; one would expect this for a specific nation who leads the world in mercantile exchange.

Rather than attempting to further define the character of the Great Harlot from the confusing material of Revelation it is more helpful to turn to the Old Testament prophecies.

Many Waters

Jer 51:13 O you who dwell by many waters, rich in treasures, your end has come, the thread of your life is cut.

This compares directly with Rev 17:1; the phrase *many waters* is used in both. Here this Babylon “dwells by many waters”; in Revelation she “sits on many waters.” This does not compare with the interpretation of Rev 17:15.

In order to explain this difficulty I shall now go directly to the nation which is the subject of the “Babylon” symbolism.

Geographically the United States sits among many waters. These are the Atlantic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and the Great Lakes, as well as many rivers, including the Hudson, Delaware, Susquehanna, Potomac, Savannah, the Great Mississippi with its many branches draining major portions of her land through the Ohio, Red, Arkansas, and the Missouri, as well as those of her western lands, including the Colorado, Sacramento, and the Columbia.

The Hammer of the Earth

Jer 50:23 How the hammer of the whole earth is cut down and broken!
How Babylon has become a horror among the nations!

Jer 51:20 “You are my hammer and weapon of war: with you I break nations in pieces; with you I destroy kingdoms.

The United States held a prime position in world affairs since World War I and the early years of the twentieth century. Without her contribution to European and Asiatic warfare the shape of world destiny would have taken an altogether different turn. After World War II she took a more forceful hand in the management of those affairs.

1. Immediately after World War II she initiated and financed the Marshall plan for the economic rehabilitation of Europe and Japan.

2. She was a major driving force behind the creation of the United Nations, in the original organizing activities, continuing financial support, and in hosting the world headquarters.

3. She became the major world element in opposing the communist philosophy of human society, through economic policies and in armed forces.

4. Through the vehicle of the United Nations she attempted to stop the communist takeover of Korea. This resulted in a stalemate that divided the land between the two opposing economic and political philosophies.

5. She attempted to stop the communist takeover of Viet Nam. This ended in failure, and set the tone for a disapproving world attitude about her heavy handedness in world affairs.

6. She continued to intervene militarily in the affairs of various countries in attempt to protect capitalistic free enterprise, or to protect her sources of energy and trade. The list is long but more recently include Panama, Somalia, Haiti, Kuwait, and Bosnia.

7. She also continued to provide economic support for various countries who were based on the capitalistic form of government, to ensure against their loss to other political or economic philosophies.

Her location in the New World, relatively isolated from the rest of the world, gave her a unique position to determine policy devoid of intimidating influence from those other countries. She also enjoyed great material resources and wealth to make her the most powerful nation ever to exist on the face of the globe. She had the option to determine the form of her influence upon the world as no other nation ever enjoyed. She chose a militant and forceful economic course. She became the hammer of the earth, wielding her will upon other nations. She will become the hammer for warfare the like of which has never been. She will break in pieces many nations.

Praise of the Whole Earth

Jer 51:41 How Babylon is taken, the praise of the whole earth seized!
How Babylon has become a horror among the nations!

Great Babylon was the praise of the entire earth. Never, in all of human history, did a nation enjoy such fortune. Her bountiful land provided the natural resources for great wealth and luxury. She was the land of golden opportunity, the shining beacon of economic freedom. Unfortunately, she permitted that freedom to be exploited through the greed of those who selfishly perverted her natural profusion and abundance.

A Golden Cup

Jer 51:7 Babylon was a golden cup in Yahweh's hand, making all the earth drunken; the nations drank of her wine, therefore the nations went mad.

Rev 17:4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and bedecked with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication.

What was the wine by which the nations went mad? What were the abominations and impurities of her fornications?

They were her scientific discoveries and technological inventions. They were also her social techniques for economic power.

Never, in the history of mankind, has one nation contributed so mightily to scientific and technological developments, and to new social methods.

The history of mechanical inventions is complex and blends into the mists of the past. The United States cannot claim originality to many important technological discoveries. This complex history was illustrated in a fascinating book by the Frenchman, Gerald Messadie, *Great Inventions Through History*, published in English by W. & R. Chambers, Edinburgh, 1991. On the other hand the United States was unique in its development of mechanical inventions, shaped by the lack of social inhibitions in the new society, and the spirit of discovery kindled by the vast wilderness of the new continent. This spirit is captured in descriptive phrases like, "Frontier self-reliance, foundation for an inventive future." The blending of more adventurous European genetic elements also contributed to this amazing phenomenon. The unique contribution of the United States to the new technological world order has been described in many books and reviews. One example is *Those Inventive Americans*, published by the National Geographic Society, Washington, 1971.

The list of inventions created and developed in the United States is long. I shall illustrate only a few.

1. The development of steam power goes back to the beginning of the eighteenth century and Thomas Newcome in England. Although the first steam engines were crude and cumbersome in comparison to later developments they greatly enhanced the employment of mechanical power over those of water wheels and wind mills. A few of these engines were introduced into the Americas before the War for Independence, but that war shut off communication from the developments then taking place with James Watt in England. As a consequence parallel developments were undertaken in the New World by such men as John Fitch, James Rumsey, John Fulton and Oliver Evans.

2. The cotton gin was improved by Eli Whitney in 1792. This permitted high volumes of cotton processing. In 1795 southern planters grew eight million pounds; by 1807 they were growing eighty million pounds per year.

3. The reaper by Cyrus McCormick and Obed Hussey revolutionized grain harvesting. With the first model introduced for sale in 1840, by 1851 McCormick received world publicity through the London Crystal Palace Exhibition. By 1861 the reaper had spread into eastern Europe, the vast grain lands of Russia, and throughout the world.

4. The telegraph came into existence through much labor and exploration, in Europe and the United States. But it was the work of Samuel Morse who brought it into practical reality with first transmissions from Washington, DC to Baltimore in 1844. His encoding technique was used around the world for a hundred years until advances in radio made it obsolete in the mid-twentieth century.

5. The work of Benjamin Franklin, Michael Faraday, Joseph Henry and others led to developments in the control and transmission of electric energy. These techniques were then used by Alexander Bell, and others of his day. The telephone, patented in 1876, became a miracle of communication which eventually entered well-nigh every home in the civilized countries of the world. It was long considered the single most important invention of modern civilization.

6. Thomas Alva Edison was the most famous and most productive of all inventors, with nearly a eleven hundred patents to his name. His gift of insight into mechanical processes and relationships, despite a lack of formal education, was the genius behind his amazing abilities. The list of his inventions is nearly a recount of modern western civilization, with the light bulb, phonograph, motion picture techniques, power generators, transmission of electricity, and a host of other famous inventions.

The list could go on and on, from the development of mass production techniques, air flight, vacuum tubes, radio, television, transistors, integrated circuits, satellite communication, computers, and, regrettably, nuclear weapons.

Why is this such a bitter wine?

The answer is materialism. It carried the seeds of ultimate destruction. Technology emphasized material developments over spiritual growth. The drive for physical survival in the new world, and the natural bounty of the land, led to concentration on material gratifications over spiritual relationships.

Technology also opened the doors for social perversions. As mechanical advantage increased, manpower could be directed to other avenues. If the grain reaper could replace twenty men those men could engage in other activities. They could be placed into factories. Industrialization then had a base for expansion.

As a result human beings more and more lost contact with the natural world. In increasing numbers they entered the artificial world of city environments.

Industrial complexes, with their abuse of child and female labor, were used for the concentration of wealth into the hands of a few.

Stock markets, mercantile exchanges, and other financial systems were used to manipulate investment methods and then perverted into avenues for personal wealth accumulation.

The economic philosophy of free enterprise was used as a psychological weapon to justify personal greed and abuse of social equity.

Political philosophies could be prosecuted with intense technical power. Warfare became more deadly. Human value declined, until, by the mid-twentieth century, millions upon millions of human beings were slaughtered in gas chambers and by firing squads.

Increasing industrialization and abuse of natural resources created mass pollutions of the world.

Concentration of production, of energy, and of communication pushed the social order to ever more precarious positions. A small trigger event could cause disruption and breakdown of the entire system.

The ultimate of this deadly wine was nuclear weaponry. Now the will of any nation or any distorted personality could be imposed upon the world.

What began as bright promise and sublime hope ended in terror and horror.

The nations drank of this wine, and the nations went mad.

The United States was a golden cup in the hand of God. She had the greatest opportunity for righteousness of any nation in historic times. She was isolated from the Old World. She defined her own way. She had a gift of highly intelligent and perceptive men who founded her social order, with Franklin, Jefferson, Adams, and many others in a rare assembly of social insight. But she filled that cup with the impurities of her fornications. She traded indiscriminately with all the merchants of the world. What industrial baron did not want his name emblazoned on the pages of history? What Rockefeller, or Carnegie, or Morgan did not view his financial and commercial power with pride? The commercial kings of the United States went to bed with anyone, for greed, personal gain, and self-aggrandizement.

Thomas Lawson, a Rockefeller lieutenant who organized a major commercial operation for those men, published his personal experiences under a title, *Frenzied Finance, The Crime of Amalgamated*. It was an informative series of articles published in 1904 that later became a book. He recounted his experiences with men who used the trappings of civilized manners, calm speech, and manipulation of the financial system to rob other human beings. The spiritual concerns of mankind were far from the minds and hearts of men who went to church on Sunday morning and spent the rest of their days devising means to satisfy their greed and power hunger through the physical labors of other human beings. The philanthropy of those men were afterthoughts, means of assuaging their feelings of guilt.

And then, in concern for preservation of such an adulterous system, that social order devised methods for ultimate human destruction.

The Proud One

Jer 50:31 Behold, I am against you, O proud one, says the Lord GOD of hosts; for your day has come, the time when I will punish you.

Never, for any nation on earth, was one so proud as the United States. But now the true harvest has come.

Isa 47:10-11 You felt secure in your wickedness, you said, "No one sees me." Your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray. You said in your heart, "I am, and there is no one besides me." But evil shall come upon you, for which you cannot atone; disaster shall fall upon you, which you will not be able to expiate; ruin shall come on you suddenly, of which you know nothing.

She truly became a Great Babylon, a harlot to the nations. She was a rich and magnificent land, excessive in luxury and wickedness. Her great wisdom led her astray. She was truly proud. She said there never was a nation like her. Gross deterioration of her morals and human relationships were the result of her great sins. But now disaster shall fall upon her. Ruin shall come upon her of which she had not the slightest inkling.

Mounting Up To Heaven

Jer 51:53 Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify her strong height, yet destroyers would come from me upon her, says Yahweh.

Russia may have mounted into space with her orbiting vehicles, but it was the United States who went to the moon, and who entertains the notion of exploration of the solar system, and perhaps even of the stars.

Mother Ashamed

Jer 50:12 Your mother shall be utterly shamed, and she who bore you shall be disgraced. Lo, she shall be the last of the nations, a wilderness dry and desert.

The United States was, indeed, the last of the nations, being founded in a land that saw no civilization until the seventeenth century. The hammering of her will upon the world, and her crude frontier styles, left a distaste around the planet. Her mother, England, and Europe, is truly ashamed of her.

God's Vengeance

Repeatedly, in many verses, God left no doubt about Babylon's great sin.

Jer 50:15 Raise a shout against her round about, she has surrendered; her bulwarks have fallen, her walls are thrown down. For this is the vengeance of Yahweh: take vengeance on her, do to her as she has done.

Jer 50:24 I set a snare for you and you were taken, O Babylon, and you did not know it; you were found and caught, because you strove against Yahweh.

Jer 50:28-29 Hark! they flee and escape from the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of Yahweh our God, vengeance for his temple. Summon archers against Babylon, all those who bend the bow. Encamp round about her; let no one escape. Requite her according to her deeds, do to her according to all that she has done; for she has proudly defied Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel.

Jer 51:24-25 I will requite Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea before your very eyes for all the evil that they have done in Zion, says Yahweh. "Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain," says Yahweh, "which destroys the whole earth. I will stretch out my hand against you, and roll you down from the crags, and make you a burnt mountain."

Jer 51:34-35 Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon has devoured me, he has crushed me; he has made me an empty vessel, he has swallowed me like a monster; he has filled his belly with my delicacies, he has rinsed me out. The violence done to me and to my kinsmen be upon Babylon. Let the inhabitant of Zion say. "My blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea."

Jer 51:49 Babylon must fall for the slain of Israel, as for Babylon have fallen the slain of all the earth.

Why is God bringing retribution?

We should not be repelled by the words of vengeance. These are human words, in order for human mortals to understand. God does not carry vengeance in his heart. But he does hold justice and righteousness within himself, and justice is the meaning of the action he brings against Great Babylon.

Why is it retribution? Because Great Babylon will bring the destruction of modern Israel, and all the nations round about. The United States will bring nuclear destruction to Jerusalem, Judea, and the surrounding countries, an action which, in her eyes, will end that continual strife once and forever.

The Most Highs rule in the kingdoms of men. Little did Great Babylon pay heed to such revelations. God set a snare for her. If she had turned her heart to righteousness and justice she would not have fallen into that mire. But because she went her own wanton and willful way she was found and caught.

Desolations Are Decreed

Jer 50:13 Because of the wrath of Yahweh she shall not be inhabited, but shall be an utter desolation; every one who passes by Babylon shall be appalled, and hiss because of all her wounds.

Jer 50:22-23 The noise of battle is in the land, and great destruction! How the hammer of the whole earth is cut down and broken! How Babylon has become a horror among the nations!

Jer 50:30 Therefore her young men shall fall in her squares, and all her soldiers shall be destroyed on that day, says Yahweh.

Jer 51:29 The land trembles and writhes in pain, for Yahweh's purposes against Babylon stand, to make the land of Babylon a desolation, without inhabitant.

Jer 51:37 Babylon shall become a heap of ruins, the haunt of jackals, a horror and a hissing, without inhabitant.

Jer 51:47 Therefore, behold, the days are coming when I will punish the images of Babylon; her whole land shall be put to shame, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her.

Jer 51:54-56 Hark! a cry from Babylon! The noise of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans! For Yahweh is laying Babylon waste, and stilling her mighty voice. Their waves roar like many waters, the noise of their voice is raised; for a destroyer has come upon her, upon Babylon; her warriors are taken, their bows are broken in pieces; for Yahweh is a God of recompense, he will surely requite.

Isa 47:11 But evil shall come upon you, for which you cannot atone; disaster shall fall upon you, which you will not be able to expiate; and ruin shall come on you suddenly, of which you know nothing.

Isa 47:14 Behold, they are like stubble, the fire consumes them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame. No coal for warming oneself is this, no fire to sit before!

Rev 18:2-3 And he called out with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! It has become a dwelling place of demons, a haunt of every foul spirit, a haunt of every foul and hateful bird, for all the nations have drunk the wine of her impure passion, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich with the wealth of her wantonness."

Rev 18:6-8 Render to her as she herself has rendered, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double draught for her in the cup she mixed. As she glorified herself and played the wanton, so give her a like measure of torment and mourning. Since in her heart she says, "A queen I sit, I am no widow, mourning I shall never see," so shall her plagues come in a single day, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she shall be burned with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.

Destroyers Out Of The North

Those who destroy Great Babylon will come out of the north. These will not be lands north of ancient Israel or ancient Babylon, but north of North America. They will come with their weapons of war, their great ballistic missiles, over the north pole, and perhaps from their submarines.

Jer 25:9-12 Behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north, says Yahweh, and for Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these nations round about. I will utterly destroy them, and make them a horror, a hissing, and an everlasting reproach. . . . This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, says Yahweh, making the land an everlasting waste.

If Jeremiah 25 provides instruction on the sequence of events about to unfold now, at the end of the age, and if Rev 17 deals with the same sequence of events, then we should expect to find parallels and compatibility of Jeremiah 25 with Rev 17. If the two passages are incompatible we either do not understand, or the passages have suffered distortion or corruption. In order to clarify and further define the meaning of these revelations I shall now proceed into the relevant references of Jeremiah 50 and 51.

Jer 50:3 For out of the north a nation has come up against her, which shall make her land a desolation, and none shall dwell in it; both man and beast shall flee away.

Jer 50:9 For behold, I am stirring up and bringing against Babylon a company of great nations, from the north country; and they shall array themselves against her; from there she shall be taken. Their arrows are like a skilled warrior who does not return empty-handed.

Jer 50:26 Come against her from every quarter; open her granaries; pile her up like heaps of grain, and destroy her utterly; let nothing be left of her.

Jer 50:41 Behold, a people comes from the north; a mighty nation and many kings are stirring from the farthest parts of the earth.

Jer 51:11 Sharpen the arrows! Take up the shields! Yahweh has stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, because his purpose concerning Babylon is to destroy it, for that is the vengeance of Yahweh, the vengeance for his temple.

Who are the Medes? In ancient times they included those lands surrounding and north of Lake Van and Lake Urmia to the Caucasus Mountains and which are now the southernmost provinces of Russia, Georgia and Azerbaidzhan.

Jer 51:27-28 Set up a standard on the earth, blow the trumpet among the nations; prepare the nations for war against her. Summon against her the kingdoms, Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz. Appoint a marshal against her, bring up horses like bristling locusts. Prepare the nations for war against her, the kings of the Medes, with their governors and deputies, and every land under their dominion.

Ararat and Minni were adjacent to Lake Van and Lake Urmia. Ashkenaz was an ancient kingdom in eastern Armenia, again the same general location. Their "deputies and governors and every land under their dominion" denotes an association of ethnic tribes or provinces, certainly the nature of the modern state of Russia and its provinces.

Jer 51:48 Then the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them, shall sing for joy over Babylon; for the destroyers shall come against them out of the north, says Yahweh.

Destruction By Fire

The destructions will be by fire, the awesome fire of nuclear weapons.

Jer 51:48 Then the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them, shall sing for joy over Babylon; for the destroyers shall come against them out of the north, says Yahweh.

Jer 51:30 The warriors of Babylon have ceased fighting, they remain in their strongholds; their strength has failed, they have become women; her dwellings are on fire, her bars are broken.

The strongholds are all those caves and holes they created for their retreat. Little good they will do for a land that is destroyed.

Jer 51:32 The fords have been seized, the bulwarks are burned with fire, and the soldiers are in panic.

Jer 51:58 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: "The broad wall of Babylon shall be leveled to the ground and her high gates shall be burned with fire. The peoples labor for naught, and the nations weary themselves only for fire."

Jer 50:39-40 Therefore wild beasts shall dwell with hyenas in Babylon, and ostriches shall dwell in her; she shall be peopled no more for ever, nor inhabited for all generations. As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbor cities, says Yahweh, so no man shall dwell there, and no son of man shall sojourn in her.