

Jeremiah 50:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Your mother shall be sore confounded; she that bare you shall be ashamed: behold, the hindermost of the nations shall be a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.

Analysis

Your mother shall be sore confounded; she that bare you shall be ashamed—'Your mother' refers to Babylon itself as the mother-city of the empire. Bosh (בוֹשׁ, confounded) means put to shame, humiliated, disappointed in expectation. Chapher (חָפַר, ashamed) intensifies this—disgraced, reproached. The personification makes the judgment vivid: the proud city will experience shame as profound as a mother whose children bring disgrace.

Behold, the hindermost of the nations shall be a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert—'hindermost' (achariyth, אַחֲרִית) means last, rearmost, least important—a shocking reversal for the world's greatest empire. From first to last, from fertility to desert (midbar, מִדְבָּר), from abundant waters to dry land (tsiyah, צִיָּה)—complete desolation. This reversal demonstrates God's sovereignty: He raises up and brings down kingdoms according to His purposes (Daniel 2:21). Revelation 17-18 applies Babylon's judgment typologically to all anti-God systems that oppose His people.

Historical Context

Babylon was famed for its grandeur—hanging gardens, massive walls, the Ishtar Gate. Yet Jeremiah prophesied it would become a desolate wilderness. After conquest by Persia (539 BC), Babylon gradually declined. Alexander the Great planned to rebuild it but died before doing so. By the time of Christ, ancient

historians described Babylon as largely abandoned. Today the archaeological site sits in a desolate region of Iraq—literally a wilderness, exactly as prophesied.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Babylon's fall from 'first among nations' to 'hindmost' illustrate God's power to humble the proud?
2. What does this reversal teach about the temporary nature of earthly power and the danger of building security on anything other than God?
3. How should the certainty of judgment on Babylon-like systems of power shape Christian engagement with political and economic structures today?

Interlinear Text

הִנֵּה	יּוֹלֶדֶתָּךְ	הַ	חִפְּךָ	מֵאֵד	אִמְּךָ	בַּ	וְשָׁה
H2009	she that bare		you shall be ashamed	H2659	shall be sore	Your mother	confounded
	H3205				H3966	H517	H954
וְעִרְבָהּ:	צִי הַ	מִדְבָּר	גּוֹיִם	אַחֲרֵי יֵת			
and a desert	a dry land	shall be a wilderness	of the nations	behold the hindmost			
H6160	H6723	H4057	H1471	H319			

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 51:43 (Parallel theme): Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.

