

# Jeremiah 51:54

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

A sound of a cry cometh from Babylon, and great destruction  
from the land of the Chaldeans:

## Analysis

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**A sound of a cry cometh from Babylon** (קול זְאָה מִבָּבֶל, qol z'aqah miBavel)—The z'aqah (outcry/shriek) is Babylon's death wail. This cry contrasts with Babylon's earlier arrogant boasts (Isaiah 47:8, 'I am, and none else beside me'). Pride's voice becomes terror's shriek. **And great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans** (וְשִׁפּוּר גָּדוֹל מֵאֶרֶץ כַּשְׁדִּים, v'shever gadol me'erets Kasdim)—shever (breaking/ruin) of catastrophic proportions engulfs Chaldea.

The brevity is poignant: two clauses capture civilization's collapse. This compression suggests suddenness—Babylon fell in a night (Daniel 5:30). The 'sound' (auditory) and 'destruction' (visual) engage multiple senses, creating vivid picture of calamity. Revelation 18:10, 15, 19 echo this with 'Alas, alas, that great city!' The archetypal oppressor's cry becomes paradigm for all future judgments. Every rebel system will eventually emit this same death-shriek.

## Historical Context

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October 12, 539 BC: Cyrus's general Ugbaru entered Babylon. Belshazzar was slain (Daniel 5:30). The 'cry' was literal—chaos as regime fell and new order began. Later destructions (revolts and reprisals under Xerxes, etc.) added to the 'great destruction' chorus.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. Why does Scripture record the 'cry' of judged powers—what purpose does documenting their distress serve?
2. How does Babylon's cry prefigure the lament over eschatological Babylon in Revelation 18?
3. What does the contrast between pride's boast and judgment's shriek teach about the trajectory of human autonomy?

## Interlinear Text

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ק וֹל	זַעֲקָה	ה	מִבָּבֶל	ל	וְשִׁבְרָה	וֹל	גְּדוֹלָה	מִן	הָאֲרֶץ
A sound	of a cry		cometh from Babylon		destruction		and great		from the land
H6963	H2201		H894		H7667		H1419		H776
כַּשְׁדִּים:									
of the Chaldeans									
H3778									

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 50:22** (Parallel theme): A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction.

**Jeremiah 50:46** (References Babylon): At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.