

Jeremiah 51:63

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates:

Analysis

And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book (וְהָיָה כִּכְלִיתָהּ) v'hayah k'khalloṭ'kha liqro et-hasefer hazzeh—After completing the reading, Seraiah must perform symbolic act. **That thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates** (וְקָשַׁרְתָּ עָלָיו אֶבֶן וְהִשְׁלַכְתָּ אֶל-תּוֹךְ פְּרַת) v'qasharta alav even v'hishlakhto el-tokh P'rat)—Tying a stone ensures the scroll sinks. The Euphrates River was Babylon's lifeblood, source of irrigation, transportation, drinking water, defensive moat. Casting the prophecy into Euphrates dramatizes Babylon's drowning in judgment.

This enacted parable visually communicates what words declare: Babylon will sink, never to rise. The scroll's descent into river depths prefigures the empire's descent into historical oblivion. Revelation 18:21 echoes this: an angel throws a millstone into the sea, declaring, 'Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.' Jeremiah's acted prophecy establishes the archetype for eschatological judgment.

Historical Context

The Euphrates was central to Babylon's identity and economy (see Isaiah 13:1, the 'burden' against 'the desert of the sea'—perhaps referencing the vast marshlands around Babylon). Cyrus later diverted this river to conquer the city—ironic fulfillment of waters becoming instrument of doom.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What is the theological significance of prophetic symbolic acts—how do they differ from mere illustration?
2. Why cast the scroll into the Euphrates specifically rather than destroying it another way?
3. How does this act prefigure Revelation 18:21's angel casting a millstone into the sea?

Interlinear Text

וְהָיָה H1961	כְּכֵל תֵּגֵב H3615	לְקֹרֵא H7121	אֶת H853	הַסֵּפֶר H5612
And it shall be	when thou hast made an end	of reading	this book	
הַה H2088	תִּקְשֶׁר H7194	אֶבֶן H68	וְהִשְׁלַכְתָּ H7993	אֵלָיו H413
that thou shalt bind	a stone	to it and cast	it into the midst	
פְּרָתָּהּ H6578	of Euphrates			

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 18:21 (Parallel theme): And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

