

BINNS

~~BINNS continued.~~

This prophecy is distinguished from those previous to it by its much greater length, by the numerous repetitions it contains, and by its being dated - if 51:59 refers as is generally supposed to the present prophecy - in the fourth year of Zedekiah. Following are the main arguments against the genuineness of the prophecy:

(i) The historical situation. In view of 50:8, 19, 28 and c, k it appears that the exile must have already taken place. The temple has fallen and the prophet calls for vengeance for its violation (50:28, 51:11, 51). It is possible that the language used refers merely to the deportation of 597 B.C., though some grater and more lasting disaster seems needed to account for it.

(ii) The point of view is different from that of Jeremiah at the date when the prophecy was supposed to have been written, for the prophet was then urging the exiles to accept residence in Babylon as their fate for the next seventy years (25:11, 29:10), whereas in the present passage the Israelites are repeatedly bidden to flee out of the doomed city.

(iii) This prophecy has been chosen out by a recent writer (H.P. Smith, Rel. of Israel, p. 247) as a specimen of the bitterness with which the exilic Jews regarded Babylon, and of their exultation over the thought of vengeance upon the oppressing nation. No such exultation is found in the genuine writings of Jeremiah, ...

(iv) The style and arrangement of the passage are suspicious: too long, too repetitious; also close parallels to late writings (eg. 50:27, 51:40 and Is. 34:6 ff., 50:39 f. and Is. 13:19 ff., 34:14, & c),

Ewald would add the use of words belonging to the later development of the language, e.g., יָדָה וְיָדָה וְיָדָה.

Many words and phrases common in genuine writings of Jerm. are found in these chapters but they are generally regarded as borrowed.

Conclusion: that the passage is not the work of Jeremiah, and the date usually assigned to it is the time when Cyrus was advancing against Babylon and its destruction seemed imminent, that is somewhere about 538 B.C.

Dr. Peake: the prophecy was written for those whose faith was perplexed by the continued existence of Babylon after its conquest by Cyrus. 'To such perplexity our oracle seems to give an answer.'