

permission to excavate the hill. It did not cost much, but the negotiations were a great nuisance, and if Dr. Albright had not possessed a wide knowledge of native customs and been willing to take a great deal of time and bother in carrying the thing through to a conclusion, the expense might have been prohibitive. Such problems frequently arise when one desires to excavate in a populated area. Jeremiah's prophecy about the cities of Babylonia has never been applicable to Palestine.

But Jeremiah made this prediction not about Palestine but about Babylonia. Today there are great cities along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. These cities are centers of busy, teeming life, but they are not located where the great cities of Jeremiah's time stood. If one visits the area where the great cities of ancient Babylonia were situated he will find it to be utterly desolate. When one of these cities is excavated it is sometimes necessary to carry all the drinking water as far as twenty miles. It is an excavator's paradise because there are no multitudes of local people to demand exorbitant rentals or to be constantly in the way of the work. It is "a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby."

No such change occurred in the case of Palestine, or Egypt, or of almost any other area. Jeremiah could not possibly have known that the cities of Babylonia would come into such a situation. One who knows the future spoke through Jeremiah.

God knew that hundreds of years after Jeremiah spoke the river Euphrates would open a new channel in the mountains hundreds of miles north of Babylon, cutting across into a different valley, and thus eventually forming a new channel for itself through the flat country farther south. Where the Euphrates formerly ran there is now only an empty channel through a very dry and parched region. Without the river for irrigation there is no possibility of a decent life in that area. Twenty miles away the great river runs through a new channel and along its course many new cities have come into existence.