

Ezek. 25:1 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

Ezek. 25:2 Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them;

In this chapter of Ezekiel he records yet another message from the LORD, but this time it is to enemies of Israel. The first group of people singled out is the Ammonites. We have learned previously that the Ammonites were descended from Lot through his younger daughter. According to Easton's dictionary, they lived in the land that is east of the Jordan River and north of Moab and the Dead Sea in part of what is today known as Jordan.

Ezekiel is told to set his face *against* the Ammonites and prophesy *against* them. Although the word *against* is not in the Hebrew, the context of the following verses shows that it is a message of judgment from God *against* the Ammonites.

Ezek. 25:3 And say unto the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel, when it was desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity;

Ezek. 25:4 Behold, therefore I will deliver thee to the men of the east for a possession, and they shall set their palaces in thee, and make their dwellings in thee: they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk.

Ezek. 25:5 And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couchingplace for flocks: and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Verse three states the reasons that the Ammonites have incurred God's judgment.

- They took smug pleasure at the defilement of the temple in Jerusalem, God's chosen dwelling place on earth.
- They took smug pleasure in the desolation of the land of Israel.
- They took smug pleasure in the fact that the people of Judah were taken into captivity.

Although they were cousins of the Israelites, there was a history of animosity between the nations. In fact, 2Kings 24 identifies the Ammonites as being in league with the armies of Nebuchadnezzar. By taking delight in the misfortune of God's people and the abuse of His temple, they were showing lack of respect and reverence for God. Their judgment is listed as four-fold.

- They would fall captive to the men of the east.
- Their land would be invaded and usurped by their captors.
- The produce of the land would be taken and consumed by those of their captors who chose to make their homes in Ammon.
- Rabbah was the capital city of Ammon. Verse 5 is basically saying that the land of the Ammonites would only be good as a place for taking care of camels and resting flocks.

Although they were in league with the Babylonians for a time, the Ammonites eventually fell captive to them as well.

God's promise to Abraham clearly stated that He would bless those that blessed him (and his descendants) and curse those that cursed him. History is full of proofs of the fact that God keeps His word.

Again, the ultimate goal of all God's working among the nations, as well as His people, is to cause them to KNOW that He is LORD.

Ezek. 25:6 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast clapped *thine* hands, and stamped with the feet, and rejoiced in heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel;

Ezek. 25:7 Behold, therefore I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the heathen; and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

Verse six reiterates the truth that the Ammonites rejoiced at the misfortunes of the people of Israel. Their arrogance led to judgment at the mighty hand of God. Although judgment came at the hands of men, it is God who was in control.

Verse seven declares a fifth part to their judgment. Not only will they be conquered by another Gentile nation; they will lose their status as a nation among the nations on earth.

Constable quoting Davidson: "Ammon no longer existed as a nation after Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it and Bedouins from the east plundered it."

Though Israel has endured great judgment at the hand of God through the years, been evicted from their land for thousands of years, and many nations have tried to wipe the Jews out of existence, God has faithfully preserved His people and reestablished them as a nation among the nations, with their original language—just as His word foretold (cf chapters 36-37).

Ezek. 25:8 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because that Moab and Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah *is* like unto all the heathen;

Ezek. 25:9 Therefore, behold, I will open the side of Moab from the cities, from his cities *which are* on his frontiers, the glory of the country, Bethjeshimoth, Baalmeon, and Kiriathaim,

Ezek. 25:10 Unto the men of the east with the Ammonites, and will give them in possession, that the Ammonites may not be remembered among the nations.

Ezek. 25:11 And I will execute judgments upon Moab; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

The next nations targeted for judgment from God are Moab, descendants of Lot though his older daughter, and Seir, synonymous with Edom and the descendants of Esau. They too were cousins of the Israelites; they too had a history of animosity with the Israelites. Their sin—not recognizing Judah as a people set apart by God and claiming that they were no different from any of the other heathen, Gentile, nations before God. Their contempt of God's people showed their contempt for the God of Israel.

“open the side...on his frontiers” – It would seem that the cities of Moab named in verse nine were located on the eastern border of the land. These important cities of defense would be “given” to the men of the east. Again, point is made that God’s sovereign hand is the authority that will bring this judgment to pass. The wording is difficult, but because the Lord is equating the judgment of Moab with the judgment of the Ammonites, it would seem that He is saying that Moab will also be abolished as a nation—and history seems to support that truth. Though there are people today who could, if possible, trace their ancestry to the Ammonites and Moabites, there is no longer a group of people or a nation that is identified with these names.

Again, the ultimate goal of all God’s working among the nations, as well as His people, is to cause them to KNOW that He is LORD.

Ezek. 25:12 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them;

Ezek. 25:13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman; and they of Dedan shall fall by the sword.

Ezek. 25:14 And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel: and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury; and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord GOD.

As noted above, Edom was a nation descended from Esau. Both Moab and Edom were located south of Ammon in the area that is now known as Jordan. Along with their contempt for God’s people, and in turn God Himself, the Edomites had taken advantage of the Israelites when they were down.

God’s judgment for Edom was that they would suffer in the same way that Judah had suffered. The whole country would experience judgment—from Teman (in the south) to Dedan (in the north). Vengeance belongs to God; and He will avenge His people without mercy—with anger and fury. He doesn’t declare that Edom will know that He is LORD; He declares that Edom will know His vengeance. To know His vengeance is to know He is LORD.

“I will lay my vengeance...by the hand of my people Israel” – You can’t help but notice this phrase. This seemed to reference more than just being conquered by the men of the east. This seems to connect to a prophecy by Isaiah that, in context, is talking about the future in preparation for the kingdom of Messiah.

Is. 11:13 The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

Is. 11:14 But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

Ezek. 25:15 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy *it* for the old hatred;

Ezek. 25:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims, and destroy the remnant of the sea coast.

Ezek. 25:17 And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.

The Philistines lived on the western border of Israel on the Mediterranean coast—in the general area that we call the Gaza strip today. Although the wording is a bit difficult, the context of the chapter clarifies that the one the Philistines have dealt revenge with the intent to destroy references the people of Judah. It is very interesting that the same situation exists today. The focus of the Palestinians, who represent today's Philistines, is on possession of Judah and Jerusalem, though they want to eliminate Israel completely from the map. It seems that Israel's main enemies from biblical times are some of their main enemies today.

“Cherethims” – The Hebrew for this word describes one who is a “life-guard” or “bodyguard.” Scripture indicates that they were among the bodyguards of David and were loyal men who left with David when he had to flee from Absalom.

2Sam. 15:18 And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.

I would think that they were singled out by the Lord because they were probably the mighty men upon whom the Philistines trusted for their protection. God is basically saying that your mighty men are nothing against me; they will be destroyed along with the rest of the Philistines.

Again, the mantra—They will KNOW that I AM LORD when God acts on behalf of his people against them.

In studying prophecy one has to remember that sometimes the message applies to more than one situation. I think that is true in this instance. According to Eerdman's Dictionary, “the end for the Philistines came in 604 with the attack of Nebuchadnezzar II and subsequent deportation.” Just as surely as the Philistines were destroyed by God's vengeance in ancient times, the Palestinians of today will also experience God's vengeance because they have sought to destroy God's people.

The truth that stands out in this chapter:

- God is a covenant-keeping God.
- He has purposed that everyone will have to acknowledge Him as LORD.
- He will avenge His people.
- Those that curse the children of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, the Israelites, will be cursed.
- The mightiest of men on earth are not capable of thwarting the will of God.