

Jer. 49:1 ¶ Concerning the Ammonites, thus saith the LORD; Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why *then* doth their king inherit Gad, and his people dwell in his cities?

Jer. 49:2 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in Rabbah of the Ammonites; and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, saith the LORD.

This chapter opens with a message from God to the Ammonites. This nation also descended from Lot through incest with his daughter and is part of current day Jordan. The prophet is making reference to the fact that Ammon had taken over control of the land allotted to Gad after they had been taken captive by Assyria. This, of course, was acting with pride and insolence against the God of Israel. Who should have been the rightful heirs of the land? The Jews in the Kingdom of Judah.

In consequence of their actions, the LORD declares that Ammon will be destroyed and her towns and villages burned with fire. Rabbah is identified in scripture as a royal city and is today known as Amman, Jordan.

He also declares that Israel will once again take possession of her land from those that had robbed her.

Jer. 49:3 Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled: cry, ye daughters of Rabbah, gird you with sackcloth; lament, and run to and fro by the hedges; for their king shall go into captivity, *and* his priests and his princes together.

Jer. 49:4 Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys, thy flowing valley, O backsliding daughter? that trusted in her treasures, *saying*, Who shall come unto me?

Heshbon and Ai both reference cities in Moab, cousins to the Ammonites. This indicates that both Ammon and Moab would fall to Babylon as part of the same campaign. Several translations identify the “king” as making reference to Molech, the false god of both nations, known as Chemosh to the Moabites. The main point being that the false god would go into captivity with the people that worship him, because it is only through the misguided faith of the people that he has status to begin with.

The people of Ammon took pride in their wealth and the abundance produced by her lands, as did their cousins in Moab. They thought they were invincible, but they would soon realize that their confidence was totally misplaced. They were both “backsliding daughters” in that they descended from a “just” man, a man described in scripture as righteous, a man who believed in Almighty God.

2 Peter 2:6–8 “And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)”

Jer. 49:5 Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts, from all those that be about thee; and ye shall be driven out every man right forth; and none shall gather up him that wandereth.

Jer. 49:6 And afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.

The LORD is declaring that His judgment against the Ammonites as carried out by the Babylonians will cause great terror. In their attempt to flee from the danger, they will find that no one is willing to take them in. In other words—you cannot escape God's judgment. According to Josephus, Ammon experienced God's judgment at the hands of the Babylonians five years after the destruction of Jerusalem.

In light of such an alarming message, the LORD provides a ray of hope for the people of Ammon; He will one day bring them back to possess their land once again along with Moab.

Jeremiah 48:47 "Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the LORD."

According to the book of 1Maccabees, Ammon once again existed as a mighty people after falling to the Babylonians: "5:6 Afterward he passed over to the children of Ammon, where he found a mighty power, and much people, with Timotheus their captain."

The wording of verse 6, however, indicates that the true fulfillment of this prophecy will occur "in the latter days," which I believe is a reference to the coming Messianic Kingdom.

Jer. 49:7 ¶ Concerning Edom, thus saith the LORD of hosts; Is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished?

The LORD now directs the prophet's message to the people of Edom. They too were cousins of the people of Israel since they descended from Jacob's brother Esau. God poses a question, "Does wisdom still exist in Edom?" Evidently, Teman in Edom was recognized as the home of men of wisdom. Obadiah seems to support this same conclusion.

Obadiah 1:8 "Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?"

I am reminded that one of Job's "wise" friends and presumptuous counselors was identified as a Temanite. I like the wording of the CJB for verse 7: "Is there no wisdom left in Teman? Have her wise men forgotten how to counsel? Has their wisdom vanished?"

Jer. 49:8 Flee ye, turn back, dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan; for I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him, the time *that* I will visit him.

Jer. 49:9 If grapegatherers come to thee, would they not leave *some* gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough.

Jer. 49:10 But I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself: his seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his neighbours, and he *is* not.

The people of Dedan were descendants of Abraham through Keturah and lived near the territory of Edom. The message is for the people of Dedan to hide themselves so that they don't suffer the fate of the Edomites. Point is made that the destruction of Edom is to be thorough. The prophet paints a word picture. Those that gather grapes usually leave some grapes on the vine. Thieves who come in the night usually are satisfied before taking everything. Again, the message connects with that of Obadiah.

Obadiah 1:5 "If thieves came to thee, if robbers by night, (how art thou cut off!) would they not have stolen till they had enough? if the grapegatherers came to thee, would they not leave some grapes?"

The LORD declares that this will not be the case with the destruction of Esau; Esau will be made bare. In other words, nothing will be left. No hiding place will remain undiscovered. The conqueror will be so thorough in destroying the people that even their neighbors will be in danger; thus, the warning to the people of Dedan.

Jer. 49:11 Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve *them* alive; and let thy widows trust in me.

As always, the LORD declares His compassion and concern for the helpless—the orphans and the widows. He promises to take care of the orphans and of the widows who will trust in Him. This also seems to imply that God's judgment will result in their being many more orphans and widows.

Jer. 49:12 For thus saith the LORD; Behold, they whose judgment *was* not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken; and *art* thou he *that* shall altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink of it.

The CJB for verse 12 is a bit clearer: *"Those who do not deserve to drink from this cup will have to drink it anyway, so should you go unpunished? No, you will not go unpunished; you will certainly drink it."*

It is sad but true that usually the innocent are made to suffer with the wicked just as surely as the wicked benefit from God's blessings.

Matthew 5:45 "...for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Jer. 49:13 For I have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes.

Bozrah was one of the capital cities of Edom and was located in the mountain district of Petra. The LORD is declaring that Bozrah and all the cities of Edom will become desolate and exist in a state of ruin for a long time (one of the choices from the Hebrew). It obviously could not mean forever since some of these places exist in Jordan today.

Bozrah and Petra are significant in the study of prophecy. We are told that Messiah will actually come to Jerusalem from Bozrah when He returns as King.

Isaiah 63:1 "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

This would seem to support the belief that the territory of biblical Edom will be the land of refuge for the Israelites during the last 3.5 years of the tribulation. (See journal notes on Revelation 12:6)

Jer. 49:14 I have heard a rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent unto the heathen, saying, Gather ye together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle.

Jer. 49:15 For, lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men.

When Jeremiah hears a rumor from the LORD, it is a reference to a prophetic message—not a speculation as to what might be. Verse 14 seems to be a call to the heathen nation of Babylon to conquer Edom. It is God's purpose to humble the proud Edomites and make them contemptible before the other heathen nations.

Obadiah utters very similar words in his prophecy against Edom, and isn't that to be expected since the Holy Spirit inspired the words of both.

Obadiah 1:1–2 "The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning Edom; We have heard a rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle. Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen: thou art greatly despised."

Jer. 49:16 Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the LORD.

Jer. 49:17 Also Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.

Jer. 49:18 As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.

These verses are basically saying that Edom had become overconfident in its pride which was rooted in its skill and accomplishments as evidenced in the building of the great rock city of Petra. According to Eerdman's Dictionary, "Guarded on the east and west by mountain ranges, with a defensible cleft as an entry and ample springs, and adjacent to the major trade routes of the day, Petra provided both security and potential for commercial enterprise."

Verse 16 again finds a mirror in the words of Obadiah.

Obadiah 1:3–4 "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD."

God has determined that Edom be totally ruined and that everyone that passes by respond with astonishment at the destruction of the once great nation. God has determined that it will suffer destruction as devastating as that experienced by Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring cities. Man does not dwell in Petra to this day, but this is not true of all the cities of Edom. I think the main point is that Edom would never again emerge as a distinct nation. I think this is supported by the words of Obadiah.

Obadiah 1:10 "For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever."

There is no hope for the future in the message to Edom.

Principle: No matter how strong and fortified you may think you are, you are never beyond the reach of God—whether for judgment or for blessing.

Jer. 49:19 Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan against the habitation of the strong: but I will suddenly make him run away from her: and who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her? for who is like me? and who will appoint me the time? and who is that shepherd that will stand before me?

I like the wording from the NLT for this verse: "I will come like a lion from the thickets of the Jordan, leaping on the sheep in the pasture. I will chase Edom from its land, and I will appoint the leader of my choice. For who is like me, and who can challenge me? What ruler can oppose my will?"

The LORD is comparing His attack on Edom through the Babylonians to that of a lion attacking sheep in the pasture. He is going to chase the Edomites out of their land and give it to His chosen leader—Nebuchadnezzar. As LORD and

Creator, there is no other being like Him, and He can do as He pleases with His creation. There is no power in creation that can thwart His purposes.

Jer. 49:20 Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Edom; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make their habitations desolate with them.

Jer. 49:21 The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, at the cry the noise thereof was heard in the Red sea.

Jer. 49:22 Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah: and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

The prophet goes on to emphasize the message of judgment against Edom. God has purposed to destroy Edom, so it doesn't even require a lion to attack them; His purpose would be accomplished had He chosen to use a much weaker nation.

The fall of the high and mighty Edomites is described as causing such a noise that the earth moves, and it can be heard as far away as the Red sea.

Verse 22 pictures the LORD as a great eagle scouting its prey and causing fear that is compared to that of a woman in childbirth. I think this comparison probably doesn't resonate as much with us today with the wonderful advances that have been made in the medical field. I am sure that each and every birth during bible times was anticipated with a healthy dose of fear since it wasn't uncommon for women to die in childbirth.

Jer. 49:23 ¶ Concerning Damascus. Hamath is confounded, and Arpad: for they have heard evil tidings: they are fainthearted; *there is* sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet.

Jer. 49:24 Damascus is waxed feeble, *and* turneth herself to flee, and fear hath seized on *her*: anguish and sorrows have taken her, as a woman in travail.

Jer. 49:25 How is the city of praise not left, the city of my joy!

The LORD now directs His attention to Damascus, representative of the nation of Syria. Arpad and Hamath are both cities north of Damascus and would, therefore, be subject to the attack of Babylon first. The news is so bad that the people are pictured in great distress that can't be calmed, like mighty ocean waves. Again, the description compares their emotional makeup to that of a woman in childbirth.

It seems that the destruction of this city is one that is especially disturbing to the prophet.....or is it the Lord. It is described as a city of "my joy."

Jer. 49:26 Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD of hosts.

Jer. 49:27 And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall consume the palaces of Benhadad.

Men, both young and old, will meet their death at the hands of the enemy. For God to kindle a fire means that He is the power behind their destruction. To destroy the king's palaces indicates that He intends to take away their ruling authority.

Though no word is given regarding the future of Damascus, we know that the people were allowed to rebuild. It was in the city of Damascus that Saul was commissioned as God's servant to the Gentiles.

I think it is clear that this judgment is different from that prophesied by Isaiah (chapter 17). In that prophecy, Damascus, known as the oldest continually inhabited city in the world, will no longer exist as a city. Even though Isaiah's prophecy seems to be yet future, the LORD does declare that a remnant will emerge and will respect the God of Israel. Syria is a Muslim nation, so we know that to be describing a time yet future. I believe it to be a reference to the time that Jesus returns to reign as King.

Jer. 49:28 ¶ Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon shall smite, thus saith the LORD; Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and spoil the men of the east.

Jer. 49:29 Their tents and their flocks shall they take away: they shall take to themselves their curtains, and all their vessels, and their camels; and they shall cry unto them, Fear is on every side.

Research indicates that Kedar and Hazor are referencing the peoples of Arabia. They too will be judged by God and fall prey to the Babylonians. The people of Kedar were descended from Ishmael and were a nomadic people that lived in tents in the desert. They too will experience the terror associated with the attack of the enemy who will take great spoil from their possessions.

Jer. 49:30 Flee, get you far off, dwell deep, O ye inhabitants of Hazor, saith the LORD; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived a purpose against you.

Jer. 49:31 Arise, get you up unto the wealthy nation, that dwelleth without care, saith the LORD, which have neither gates nor bars, *which* dwell alone.

Jer. 49:32 And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of their cattle a spoil: and I will scatter into all winds them *that are* in the utmost corners; and I will bring their calamity from all sides thereof, saith the LORD.

Jer. 49:33 And Hazor shall be a dwelling for dragons, *and* a desolation for ever: there shall no man abide there, nor *any* son of man dwell in it.

It would seem that Hazor was the place where the leaders of the desert peoples lived. The wording is certainly confusing, but it seems that the LORD is telling the people of Hazor that their only hope is to find refuge in the "deep," which would seem to be a reference to mountain caves. Nebuchadnezzar has determined to take a spoil of this desert nation that dwells confidently without concern and no perceived need for fortifications. They evidently assumed that living in the desert would serve as a deterrent to enemy armies. Verse 32 is clear

in declaring that Nebuchadnezzar is serving the Lord's purpose. He intends to destroy Hazor and make it unfit as a dwelling place for man.

Jer. 49:34 ¶ The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against Elam in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying,

Jer. 49:35 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will break the bow of Elam, the chief of their might.

Jer. 49:36 And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come.

Jer. 49:37 For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, and before them that seek their life: and I will bring evil upon them, *even* my fierce anger, saith the LORD; and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them:

Jer. 49:38 And I will set my throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the LORD.

Jer. 49:39 But it shall come to pass in the latter days, *that* I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.

The last prophecy in this chapter is directed toward Elam, the land known as Iran today. The LORD is declaring His intention to destroy the might of Elam, a people known to be expert in the use of the bow and arrow. He has purposed to disperse the people of Elam throughout the nations of the world. He has determined to completely destroy them in His "fierce anger."

Verse 38 declares that God intends to be the ruling authority in Elam. In other words, the judgment of Elam will declare His authority over the land and its people. It is interesting to note that Nebuchadnezzar is not referenced in this prophecy.

Elam is also given a message of hope for the future; God is going to raise them up as a nation once again in the latter days. Every time the LORD makes this statement I believe it is meant to reference being reestablished in submission to the LORD during the millennium.