

God's Judgment: Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia

Ezekiel 25

Ezekiel 25:1-7 – *“The word of the Lord came to me, saying, ²“Son of man, set your face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them. ³ Say to the Ammonites, ‘Hear the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God: “Because you said, ‘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, ⁴ indeed, therefore, I will deliver you as a possession to the men of the East, and they shall set their encampments among you and make their dwellings among you; they shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk. ⁵ And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels and Ammon a resting place for flocks. Then you shall know that I am the Lord.”*

⁶ ‘For thus says the Lord God: “Because you clapped your hands, stamped your feet, and rejoiced in heart with all your disdain for the land of Israel, ⁷ indeed, therefore, I will stretch out My hand against you, and give you as plunder to the nations; I will cut you off from the peoples, and I will cause you to perish from the countries; I will destroy you, and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

Background Notes

Ezekiel 25 begins the second half of this book of 48 chapters. Ezekiel 1-24 was written before the fall of Jerusalem, and chapters 25-48 were written after the fall of Jerusalem.

The final siege of Jerusalem began in 588 BC. The siege lasted for 1½ terrible years, and Jerusalem finally fell in 586 BC. The Temple of the Lord was destroyed, the city was burned, many Jews were killed and many were taken to Babylon as captives.

Chapters 25-32 are a subsection of the book that could be entitled “Prophecies against the Foreign Nations.” These chapters were God’s pronouncements of judgment against seven foreign nations that surrounded Israel to the east, west, north, and south.

In chapter 25 God’s judgment was pronounced on Ammon, Moab, and Edom (east of Jerusalem), and Philistia (west of Judah). In chapters 26-28, God’s judgment was pronounced on Tyre (north of Israel). And then in chapters 29-32 God’s judgment was pronounced on Egypt (south of Judah).

All the nations surrounding God’s people Israel would experience the judgment of God because of how they mistreated God’s chosen people. This judgment was certainly a fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, an unconditional covenant made by God with Abraham in Genesis 12:2-3. Concerning Abraham and his descendants God said: *“I will make you a*

great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you.”

The Abrahamic Covenant has never been changed or rescinded, and thus it is still in effect today. God will judge those nations who treat Israel and the land He has given them in unfair and unjust ways. The Abrahamic Covenant and Ezekiel 25-32 should be solemn warnings. Our nation should carefully watch its words and actions in regard to Israel.

Doctrinal Points

1. The Lord pronounced judgment on Ammon.

God pronounced judgment on the nation of Ammon in verses 1-7. Why? The answer is found in verses 3-4: *“Say to the Ammonites, ‘Hear the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God: “Because you said, ‘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. Indeed, therefore, I will deliver you as a possession to the men of the East, and they shall set their encampments among you and make their dwellings among you; they shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk.”*”

When the Babylonian army besieged and burned Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple of the Lord, devastated Judah and took the people into captivity in 586 BC, the nation of Ammon did not come to Judah's aid. In fact, they were glad. They gloated, and they even participated in the spoil (v6). Even though God was using Babylon to discipline His people, Ammon's behavior was wrong. In the same way, we should not be glad and gloat with malicious joy when individuals or nations suffer - even when the suffering is the discipline of God.

Do you remember, back in chapter 21, Ezekiel gave a sign to the people when he acted out Nebuchadnezzar coming to a crossroads and deciding to conquer Jerusalem rather than Rabbah? The Ammonites were happy then - but not for long. God said that Ammon would be defeated by a nation from the east. Rabbah, the capital of the nation, would be destroyed, and would become a pasture for camels and sheep. The Babylonians brought their war machine through Rabbah, and destroyed the nation of Ammon. Ammon was subject to the Babylonians by the year 581 BC, and was further plundered by Bedouin tribes from the east. The Lord pronounced judgment on Ammon.

2. The Lord pronounced judgment on Moab.

Ezekiel 25:8-11 - *“Thus says the Lord God: “Because Moab and Seir say, ‘Look! The house of Judah is like all the nations,’⁹ therefore, behold, I will clear the territory of Moab of cities, of the cities on its frontier, the glory of the country, Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon, and Kirjathaim.¹⁰ To the men of the East I will give it as a possession, together with the Ammonites, that the Ammonites may not be remembered among the nations.¹¹ And I will execute judgments upon Moab, and they shall know that I am the Lord.”*

Both of the nations of Moab and Ammon were descended from Lot through his incestuous relationship with his two daughters. Moab was to meet the same fate as Ammon. The Babylonians would conquer the nation, and then nomadic desert tribesmen would overrun the land.

Why? Verse 8 gives the answer: *“Because Moab and Seir say, ‘Look! The house of Judah is like all the nations.’”* The people of Moab denied that the Jews were God’s special people. They said that Israel was just like any other nation.

That attitude towards Israel and the Jewish people will bring God’s judgment upon any nation - then or today! As Ezekiel predicted (v10), the nation of Ammon and the nation of Moab do not exist today - **but Israel does!** The Lord pronounced judgment on Moab.

3. The Lord pronounced judgment on Edom.

Ezekiel 25:12-14 - *“Thus says the Lord God: “Because of what Edom did against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and has greatly offended by avenging itself on them,”¹³ therefore thus says the Lord God: “I will also stretch out My hand against Edom, cut off man and beast from it, and make it desolate from Teman; Dedan shall fall by the sword.¹⁴ I will lay My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel, that they may do in Edom according to My anger and according to My fury; and they shall know My vengeance,” says the Lord God.”*

The nation of Edom was located south of Moab and south of the Dead Sea. The Edomites were descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob, so Edom and Israel were blood relatives. The Lord denounced Edom for taking vengeance on Judah. How and when was Edom guilty of this sin? When the fugitives of Judah were fleeing before the Babylonians, Edom set up roadblocks to prevent their escape rather than helping the Jewish refugees. (Read Obadiah 10-14 in this connection.) Because Edom took vengeance on God’s people, God took vengeance on Edom.

The ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy may still be ahead in the last days, and the same is true for Ammon and Moab. Jeremiah 48-49 indicate that there will be a national restoration of these nations in the End Times, but all unbelievers will be judged. Verse 14 says that Edom will be judged at the hands of God’s people, Israel. The Lord pronounced judgment on Edom.

4. The Lord pronounced judgment on Philistia.

Ezekiel 25:15-17 - *“Thus says the Lord God: “Because the Philistines dealt vengefully and took vengeance with a spiteful heart, to destroy because of the old hatred, therefore thus says the Lord God: “I will stretch out My hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethites and destroy the remnant of the seacoast.¹⁷ I will execute great vengeance on them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I lay My vengeance upon them.””*

Philistia was located southwest of Judah along the Mediterranean Sea, where Gaza is today. “Cherethites” was another name for the Philistines, likely because they had roots in the island of Crete. The Philistines were longtime enemies of God’s people, as far back as the time of the Conquest in the days of Joshua. Throughout Israel’s history, the Philistines were a constant thorn in Israel’s side. Remember Samson and the Philistines? And the Philistine army that captured the Ark of the Covenant? And David fighting Goliath the Philistine? And the Philistines who hung the bodies of King Saul and his sons on the city wall of Beth Shan?

Notice that the Philistines were denounced for their acts of revenge, but they were also denounced for even *thinking* of trying to destroy God’s people and wiping Israel off the map (v15). This Scripture should certainly be a warning to all the nations today that have tried - and continue to try - to eliminate Israel and the Jewish people. God has His ways of taking vengeance on such nations. The Philistine nation disappeared during the inter-testamental period. The Lord pronounced judgment on Philistia.

Practical Application

Know the Lord *now* rather than later.

Notice the recurring phrase at the end of each of these pronouncements of judgment. In reference to Ammon (v7): *“I will destroy you and you shall know that I am the Lord.”* In reference to Moab (v11): *“And I will execute judgments upon Moab, and they shall know that I am the Lord.”* In reference to Edom (v14): *“According to My anger and according to My fury; and they shall know My vengeance,” says the Lord God.* In reference to Philistia (v17): *“And they shall know that I am the Lord when I lay My vengeance upon them.”*

This judgment is true for all people who turn away and refuse to believe: **“they shall know that I am the LORD.”** Someday all unbelievers will come to know the Lord they rejected - but they will come to know Him as their Judge. They will bow the knee in subjection (Philippians 2:10).

Wouldn’t it be better to come to the Lord now, believe in Him as your Savior, and submit to Him as your Lord? Come to know the Lord **now** - rather than **later!**