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Jeremiah 45 - 49



Jeremiah - Steve Gregg

Steve Gregg delivers an exhaustive analysis of Jeremiah chapters 45 to 49, highlighting the prophecies of judgment against several nations, such as Babylon, Moab, Ammonites, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, and Elam. Offering words of encouragement for Jeremiah, Gregg notes that God rewards those who align themselves with His will, even if it means standing alone. The speaker sheds light on historical and cultural contexts necessary to understand the poetic illustrations used in the text, noting that some of the prophecies had both an immediate and future fulfillment. Overall, the segment highlights the ever-present need for repentance and obedience to God's commands to avoid facing His wrath.

Transcript

We left off last time at the beginning of Jeremiah 45, which is the shortest chapter. It's only five verses long. And it is a word of encouragement to Baruch, the son of Nehariah, who was the most loyal friend of Jeremiah, it would appear.

And it is very much like another positive prophecy that was given to another friend, Abed-Melech, in chapter 39, verses 15 through 18. And it's short like that, but it's essentially an encouragement to the man who risked his life, really, to stand by Jeremiah. Remember, Baruch is the one who wrote this book.

Jeremiah spoke the prophecies, but Baruch wrote them down. And so it's by his hand that the book came to exist. And he had gone and read the book in the presence of the rulers, who then took it to King Jehoiakim, who wanted to arrest Baruch and Jeremiah.

So it was at some risk that this man served Jeremiah, and so he is given a word of encouragement in this chapter 45. It says, the word that Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch, the son of Nehariah, when he had written these words in a book at the instruction of Jeremiah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, to you, O Baruch. You said, Woe is me now, for the Lord has added grief to my sorrow.

I fainted in my sign, and I find no rest. This may be the attitude that Baruch had when he

realized that there was a warrant out for his arrest, because of what he had done, because Jehoiakim had sought to arrest both Baruch and Jeremiah, but they went into hiding and were not discovered. But Baruch may have felt very afraid at that time, and he said he's got grief added to his sorrow, and he finds no rest.

He's not relaxed. He's hiding out, and he's under stress. But the word of comfort to him is, Thus you shall say to him, Thus says the Lord, Behold, what I have built I will break down, what I have planted I will pluck up.

That is this whole land. And do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them, for behold, I will bring adversity on all flesh, says the Lord. But I will give your life to you as a prize in all places wherever you go.

This is the same promise he made to Abed-Melek, that he'd give his life as a prize to him. That is a reward, a reward for having been on the right side of the aisle, on God's side, on Jeremiah's side, at a time when everybody else was not. So he is rewarded by being given his life, as opposed to the great many who were slain with the sword, or died of pestilence, or other causes that Jeremiah predicted.

So this man was rewarded for his faithfulness to God. When he says, Do you seek great things for yourself? Don't seek them. This may be because Baruch had come from a rather important family.

His grandfather is Meaziah, as we are told elsewhere in chapter 32, verse 12. And that man was the governor of Jerusalem at the time when the scroll was found in the reign of Josiah. When Hilkiyah the priest found the scroll, Meaziah the governor was also involved in presenting that to Josiah and was, you know, an important man, obviously governor of the city.

And that was the grandfather of Baruch. So he had connections, important family connections, and perhaps had thought maybe he'd amount to something too. Maybe he'd hold a government post at some point.

He says, Will you seek great things for yourself? I don't think you want them. I don't think you want to seek a great thing here in Jerusalem, because it's going to be plucked up and adversity is going to be its experience. So just be glad to have your life, because that's more than many people are going to get away with.

Now when we come to chapter 46 and all the way through chapter 51, we have a segment here that is prophecies against pagan nations. First against Egypt, then against the Philistines, then against Moab, and so forth. These nations around Israel are each prophesied against, and judgments are going to come upon them.

And this block of chapters is very much like this group of chapters in Isaiah, chapter 13 through 23, which is also a group of similar prophecies against the nations around Israel.

Like those chapters, there's often not much that we can say about them. We can say that judgment came upon them through Babylon for the most part.

There's a few of these lands that actually were judged by Arabian tribes, but for the most part these nations were conquered by Babylon, until you get to chapter 50 and 51, which is against Babylon itself. And it is said there that the kings of the Medes will conquer Babylon. And of course, as it turned out, that the king of the Medes was Cyrus the Persian.

The Persians and the Medes were together, and it was a Persian king leading the Medes and the Persians that came and destroyed Babylon. So chapters 50 and 51 are about the fall of Babylon, but the other chapters before are mostly about lands that were conquered by Babylon. And some of them are very long prophecies.

I mean, chapter 48, for example, which is about Moab. Now you'd think that Moab is not a very important country, but nonetheless chapter 48 is very long about Moab. The prophecy against Egypt is not short, and some of the chapters against Babylon are very long.

I mean, chapters 50 and 51, one of those has 46 verses, another has 64 verses. So you've really got some long denunciations. But they are poetic.

In many cases, they are repetitious because poems sometimes have a refrain that you come back around to and so forth. Generally speaking, the thought of the prophecy is a simple one that is basically spread out with a lot of poetic imagery. And so it won't be possible or necessary to make a lot of commentary on these except to point out the basic facts and then to simply read the verses.

With poetry, of course, the main purpose of poetry is not to get information across, although it often will get information across, but it is to give a feeling and make an impression. If you just want to give information, you don't have to write poetry. When you write something in poetry, it's because you're trying to get across a feeling and an emotion.

So reading the poetry rather than commenting on it is often the best way for the poetry to have its proper effect, just to read the graphic images and things like that without trying to analyze them too much. So Chapter 46, verses 1 and 2, I believe, are sort of a title that Baruch must have written before recording the prophecy to tell us what it was about and so forth. Some of these prophecies, most of them actually, do have some kind of information given about the time or the reason that it was written.

For example, Chapter 47 begins, The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Philistines before Pharaoh attacked Gaza. So Baruch is telling us when the prophecy was written. There are many other notations like that.

For example, in Chapter 50, verse 1, The word that the Lord spoke against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet. And it gives it. Or in Chapter 49, verse 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.

So not all the prophecies, but some of them were actually told when they were uttered. And other times were told when they were fulfilled. In Chapter 46, verses 1 and 2, Baruch tells us when it was fulfilled, though not necessarily when it was uttered.

The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the nations, against Egypt, concerning the army of Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, and which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah. So this prophecy is fulfilled with the battle of Carchemish when Pharaoh Necho was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar. So we're told in hindsight.

Baruch, when writes this, he knows when this was fulfilled, but it was predicted before that. And so we have this prophecy against Egypt. Order the buckler and the shield and draw near to battle.

Harness the horses and mount up, you horsemen. Stand forth with your helmets. Polish the spears.

Put on the armor. Why have you seen them dismayed and turned back? Their mighty ones are beaten down. They have speedily fled and did not look back, for fear was all around, says the Lord.

Do not let the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape. They will stumble and fall north by the river Euphrates. This is, of course, the Egyptian armies retreating in defeat before Babylon at Carchemish.

Who is this coming up like a flood, whose waters move like the rivers? Egypt rises up like a flood, and its waters move like rivers. And he says, I will go up and cover the earth. I will destroy the city and its inhabitants.

Come up, O horses, and rage, O chariots, and let the mighty men come forth. The Ethiopians and the Libyans who handle the shield and the Lydians who handle and bend the bow. These would be the mercenaries that were hired by Egypt to join them.

By the way, it mentions Egypt coming up like a river, probably likened to the Nile, which was Egypt's main claim to fame was the Nile, and like an overflowing flood, hoping to flood the whole earth. And that suggests that as the Assyrians had been likened to a flooding river back in Isaiah chapter 10, coming and flooding through Syria and Israel and Judah, so Egypt had the desire to do what Assyria had done, basically to conquer all the regions around. What happened was that prior to this, Babylon had conquered the

Assyrian Empire, had conquered Nineveh, and therefore that created a power vacuum.

Assyria had really pretty much ruled the whole region for almost 300 years at this time, and now it was fallen to Babylon. But Babylon had not yet picked up all the pieces of the empire, and therefore there was still some of it was up for grabs. And the two most powerful kingdoms were Babylon and Egypt, and they were vying for the position of the successor to Assyria.

Assyria had ruled the whole region. Egypt wanted to do that. Babylon wanted to do that.

So we read of Egypt's ambitions. It's going up to fight against Babylon, hoping to defeat them at Carchemish and gain ascendancy in the region. It was not yet known that Babylon would conquer the region.

Babylon was still rising at this time, and Egypt was hoping to rise also. So it says in verse 8 that Egypt says, I will go up and cover the earth. I will destroy the city and its inhabitants.

But, of course, that's not what happened. They fled instead. Verse 10, For this is the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge himself on his adversaries.

The sword shall devour. It shall be satiated and made drunk with their blood. It's like the sword is drinking their blood, the poetic imagery.

For the Lord God of hosts has a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates. He's going to sacrifice the Egyptians. Go up to Gilead and take Balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt.

In vain you will use many medicines. You shall not be cured. The nations have heard of your shame, and your cry has filled the land.

For the mighty man has stumbled against the mighty. They both have fallen together. I would just point out in verse 10 that it says, This is the day of the Lord, an expression that is used in the New Testament almost always to refer to the second coming of Christ, except in New Testament passages that are quoting from the Old Testament.

For example, when Peter quotes Joel, chapter 2, he talks about the day of the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, but Joel is talking about the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. But in the later writings of the New Testament, the apostles spoke of the second coming of Christ as the day of Christ or the day of the Lord, or Peter calls it the day of God. In 2 Peter, chapter 3, it's a day of judgment.

In the Old Testament, the term day of the Lord is used generically. In this case, it's the day of the Lord against Egypt. In chapter 13 of Isaiah, it was the day of the Lord against

Babylon.

In Isaiah, chapter 2, and verse 11, well, we have the expression, or verse 12, For the day of the Lord of hosts shall come upon everything proud and lofty. This is talking about the Assyrians coming against the northern kingdom of Israel. So the day of the Lord of hosts in Isaiah 2.12 is, you know, when Assyria defeats Israel.

In Isaiah, chapter 13, verse 6 and 9, it is when Babylon falls. Here, it's the day of the Lord against Egypt. So it should not be thought that the day of the Lord is a technical term in the Old Testament for a particular day.

It's a day of judgment, which applies to different kingdoms at different times, different days. Each kingdom has its day in which God brings it down. And that's the day of the Lord for them.

Now, verse 13, The word that the Lord spoke to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, would come and strike the land of Egypt. So again, Baruch apparently gives us sort of a summary of what this next prophecy is about. It's about Nebuchadnezzar striking Egypt.

Declare in Egypt and proclaim in Migdal, proclaim in Noph and in Topanis. Say, stand fast and prepare yourselves for the sword devours all around you. Why are your valiant men swept away? They did not stand because the Lord drove them away.

He made many fall. Yes, one fell upon another. And they said, rise, let us go back to our own people and to the land of our nativity from the oppressing sword.

They cried there, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, is but a noise. He has passed by his appointed time. As I live, says the king, whose name is the Lord of hosts, surely as Tabor is among the mountains and as Carmel is by the sea, so he shall come.

As surely as Tabor is a mountain and Carmel is by the sea, surely as that is true, so Babylon will come. Oh, you daughter dwelling in Egypt, prepare yourself, go into captivity, for Noph shall be waste and a desolate without inhabitant. Noph, by the way, is the ancient name for Memphis in Egypt.

And another ancient name we'll run into is No, N-O, which is the ancient word for Thebes in Egypt. These are ancient names for these cities as we know by other names today. Verse 20.

Egypt is like a very pretty heifer, but destruction comes. It comes from the north. Also her mercenaries are in her, like fat bulls, for they also are turned back.

They have fled away together. They did not stand, for the day of their calamity had come upon them, the time of their punishment. Her noise shall go like a serpent, for they shall

march with an army and come against her with axes, like those who chop wood.

They shall cut down her forest, says the Lord, though it cannot be searched, because they are innumerable and more numerous than grasshoppers. The daughter of Egypt shall be ashamed. She shall be delivered into the hand of the people of the north.

The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel says, behold, I will bring punishment on Ammon of Noah. Now, Ammon is a god, the sun god of the Egyptians, and Noah is Thebes, which was a city devoted to the sun god. And Pharaoh in Egypt, with their gods and their kings, Pharaoh and those who trust in him.

You know, when God judged Egypt back in Exodus, in the days of Moses, He said that this was a judgment He was bringing on the gods of Egypt. It's not just a judgment on the people who worship the gods, but on the gods themselves. He says that in Exodus 12, 12, He says, I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike the firstborn of the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment.

I am the Lord. You know, God sees Himself as engaged in a spiritual warfare between false gods, whom the Bible identifies as demons. Deuteronomy and the New Testament both say that the heathen who offer sacrifices to idols are worshiping demons.

Paul said that in 1 Corinthians 10, 20, and he's really just quoting from Deuteronomy more than once. The false gods are called demons. So God is at war against the demonic powers that are worshiped by the heathen.

This warfare often took the form of Israel, or somebody else under God's command, like Babylon, coming and judging a nation that was the patron nation of those gods, and reducing those gods' influence tremendously. And so God makes reference to the fact that He's judging Pharaoh, and He's judging Egypt, but He's also judging Ammon of Noah, that is, this god of Thebes. Verse 26, And I will deliver them into the hand of those who seek their lives, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and the hand of his servants.

Afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old, says the Lord. Now many of these judgments against nations end up with this statement, that afterward God will bring some of them back. In other words, none of these nations are reaching their full end.

They will go into Babylon, or they will suffer defeat at the hands of Babylon, but someday it will get better. Of course, Babylon did fall, and to the Persians, the Persians did allow people who were taken captive from different lands to go back. So the prophecy is correct in the detail, that there is a judgment that befalls them, but also there's a return of some of the exiles, some of the remnant.

Now verses 27 and 28 is just a repeat of what is said in chapter 30, verses 10 and 11,

and it's made to Israel. This is hope for the exiles, and like I said, Jeremiah 30, verses 10 and 11, have the same words. But do not fear, O my servant Jacob, and do not be dismayed, O Israel, for behold, I will save you from afar, and your offspring from the land of their captivity.

Jacob shall return, have rest, and be at ease. No one shall make him afraid. Do not fear, O Jacob, my servant, says the Lord, for I am with you, for I will make a complete end of all the nations to which I have driven you, but I will not make a complete end of you.

I will rightly correct you, for I will not leave you wholly unpunished. So, this is a promise of the Israelites being allowed to return from the exile in Babylon. Why would that be mentioned here? This is not in a context that's talking about the fall of Babylon, it's actually in a context talking about the fall of Egypt to Babylon.

But it is mentioned at the end of that, that afterward they shall be inhabited, that is Egypt shall be inhabited as in the days of old. So, in other words, that does look forward to a time when not only Israel, but also the Egyptians will be able to recover somewhat from this Babylonian dominance. And having mentioned that about Egypt, it apparently seemed appropriate to stick in there that, of course, Israel will also benefit at that time.

Israel will also be able to return to their land. And so he takes a prophecy that he gave earlier in chapter 30 and he inserts it here. Now chapter 47, the word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Philistines before Pharaoh attacked Gaza.

Now Gaza is one of the primary, there were five Philistine cities in the land of Palestine and Gaza is an important one, but there are other ones mentioned in this prophecy, including Ashkelon and you'll find that as we read through some of the other cities of the Philistines are mentioned. It is not known exactly when this took place. We don't know of a specific attack of the Philistines on Gaza, but it's not unlikely that the Babylonians came in and attacked them as they were sweeping through the area in general.

They were in Palestine and so there must have been an attack on Gaza and notice this is written after Pharaoh had attacked Gaza. That is, the comment is. The prophecy is written before, but the comment obviously knows about the invasion of Gaza and the invasion of Gaza is not mentioned in the prophecy.

So, Baruch writing after Philistines had conquered Gaza, I mean Babylon had conquered Gaza, recognized it as significant to this prophecy, so he gives this as a heading for it. So, in other words, we know that it happened or else Baruch would not make reference to it in verse 1 as something that is not even mentioned in the prophecy, but he mentions that before that happened this prophecy was given. Pharaoh attacking Gaza is therefore from his point of view, from Baruch's point of view at the time of composition of the book something that's an accomplished fact, and this was written before that.

Thus says the Lord, behold waters rise out of the north and shall be an overflowing flood. They shall overflow the land and all that is in it. The city and those who dwell within.

Then the men shall cry and all the inhabitants of the land shall wail. At the noise of the stamping of hooves of strong horses, at the rushing of his chariots, at the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers will not look back for their children, lacking courage. These men running away from the invasion will be so terrified they won't even look back to see if their children are behind them or safe.

That's how cowardly they'll be, lacking courage. Because of the day that comes to plunder all the Philistines, to cut off from Tyre and Sidon every helper who remains, for the Lord shall plunder the Philistines, the remnant of the country of Kaphtor. Now Kaphtor, the margin of the new King James identifies it with Cappadocia in Asia Minor, but scholars, I don't know why it does, because scholars all seem to agree in all the commentaries that Kaphtor is a term for Crete, the island of Crete, which is where the Philistines came from.

When they came and settled the coast of Palestine, they came from Crete by ship. They were sea mariners, and I do not know why the marginal reference says Cappadocia, because that isn't something that any of the commentators agree with. This is the place of origin of the Philistines before they lived in Israel or in Palestine.

Verse 5, Baldness has come upon Gaza. Ashkelon is cut off. With the remnant of the valley, how long will you cut yourself? O you sword of the Lord, how long until you are quiet? Put yourself up into your scabbard.

Rest and be still. And the answer to that comes, how can it be quiet, seeing the Lord has given it a charge against Ashkelon and against the seashore? There he has appointed it. Chapter 48, against Moab.

This is a really long one. Babylon invaded and destroyed Moab more than once in its career. In 588 to 586, which was, of course, at the same time that he was besieging Jerusalem, but also later.

In 582 and 581, there was another invasion of Moab, so one of these two is probably the occasion for this prophecy. Woe to Nebo, for it is plundered. Kirgithaim is shamed and taken.

The high stronghold is shamed and dismayed. Of course, those are Moabite towns. No more praise of Moab and Heshbon.

They have devised evil against her. Come and let us cut her off as a nation. You also shall be cut down, O mad men.

The sword shall pursue you. A voice of crying shall be from Horonaim, plundering and

great destruction. Moab is destroyed.

Her little ones have caused a cry to be heard, for in the ascent of Luhith, they ascend with continual weeping. In the descent of Horonaim, the enemies have heard a cry of destruction. Flee, save your lives, and be like the juniper in the wilderness, for because you have trusted in your works and your treasures, you also shall be taken, and Chemosh shall go forth into captivity, his priests and his princes together.

Chemosh was the national god of the Moabites. He was essentially the same god as Moloch. But the Ammonites were positioned across the Jordan from Israel to the east, and in the southern region.

If you went north from there, you'd come to the region of the Ammonites. The Ammonites worshipped Milcom, or Moloch. The Ammonites and the Moabites were kind of brother nations.

They were both descended from Lot's two sons. They were remotely related, of course, to the Jews, because Lot was the nephew of Abraham. But there was not a very close kinship, and there was never very much friendliness.

Although Ruth had come from Moab and was a great grandmother of David, and on one occasion, David, when he was pursued by Saul, took his family members, his father and his brothers, and deposited them with the king of Moab for safekeeping. As a sanctuary. So Moab, on occasions, especially in the day of David, was sometimes friendly with Israel, but not most of the time.

However, they were worshippers of Chemosh, and Chemosh, like Moloch, to the north, was a god that required infant sacrifices, and this is something that God often spoke against with great disgust. And now he says Chemosh is going into captivity along with his priests and his princes together. Verse 9, Give wings to Moab, that she may flee and get away.

For her cities shall be desolate without any to dwell in them. Cursed is he who does the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed is he who keeps back his sword from blood. Now this word deceitfully is probably not a very good translation.

Almost all translations differ from the New King James on this. Young's literal translation says slothfully, and that seems to agree in meaning with most modern translations. The New American Standard says negligently.

ESV says with slackness, and the NIV says cursed is he who is lax in doing the work of the Lord. So this isn't really talking about doing something deceitfully. This is talking about doing something slothfully or with slackness negligently.

And what it's referring to is the work of the Lord here is the slaughter of the Moabites by

the Babylonians. The Babylonians are the ones doing the work of the Lord, and it's basically saying don't be slothful about this. Don't let your sword hold back from blood.

This is basically wishing evil on the Moabites and saying cursed is the Babylonian who doesn't do this with zeal and doesn't do this thoroughly, but who does it negligently or slothfully. So the Babylonians are encouraged basically to be aggressive and enthusiastic in their conquest of Moab because this is the work of the Lord. This is God's judgment on Moab.

In verse 11, Moab has been at ease from his youth. He has settled on his dregs and has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, nor has he gone into captivity. Therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent has not changed.

Therefore, behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will send him wine workers who will tip him over and empty his vessels and break the bottles. Now this is obviously an imagery of wine. Moab is likened to wine, and some of the practices of making wine are alluded to here.

When they would bring the grape juice in and put it in bottles, they would let it just set so that gravity would pull the dregs, the bits of skin and seeds and things like that that don't belong in the wine. Gravity would pull them down to the bottom, and you'd have wine that had most of the dregs down at the bottom. Then they would pour off the wine, being as careful as possible, into another jar to avoid pouring the dregs off into it.

Then they let it set again and let dregs settle. Then when they had settled, they poured off again into other jars. This is how they would refine the wine and get all the dregs out.

As it would sit there on its dregs, it would be mellowing. Its flavor would be developing. It would be fermenting.

What it's saying here is that Moab has been like wine sitting in a pot that's never been poured out. They've just been fermenting. Their aroma and their taste has not changed, has not improved because they haven't poured it from vessel to vessel.

Therefore, they need to be poured out. Now that they haven't been poured from vessel to vessel is explained in verse 11 as they haven't gone into captivity. They've never been poured out of their land.

They've never been thrown out. Israel had been thrown out. That was how God changed them through dealing with them with captivity and so forth.

This is God's discipline of them that makes them change, but he had never done that to Moab. Moab had been content and had been secure and had never known any exile. They'd been invaded a few times, but they'd never been taken away into exile.

Therefore, they never improved. A child that's never disciplined will never improve. The wine that's not poured from bottle to bottle will not improve.

Therefore, God's going to come and he's going to send wine workers who will empty his bottles. That means he'll go off into captivity. Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, which means disappointed with Chemosh.

Chemosh will not be able to help them. Although they've worshipped Chemosh faithfully, Chemosh will not return the favor, will not help them in the time of trouble. They'll be ashamed of Chemosh.

As the House of Israel was ashamed of Bethel, their confidence. Bethel was a place where Jeroboam had set up a gold calf when the northern kingdom was established. When Israel was invaded by the Assyrians, they found that the gold calf at Bethel was not able to help them either.

Just as Bethel couldn't help the Israelites, so Chemosh cannot help the Moabites in time of God's judgment. How can you say we are mighty and strong men of war? Moab is plundered and gone up from her cities. Her chosen young men have gone down to the slaughter, says the king, whose name is the Lord of hosts.

The calamity of Moab is near at hand, and his affliction comes quickly. Bemoan him, all you who are around him, and all you who know his name. Say, how are the strong staff, how the strong staff is broken, the beautiful rod.

O daughter inhabiting Dibon, come down from your glory and sit in thirst, for the plunderer of Moab has come against you. He has destroyed your strongholds, O inhabitant of Aror. Stand by the way and watch, ask him who flees, and her who escapes.

Say, what has happened? Moab is shamed, for he is broken down. Wail and cry, tell it in Arnon that Moab is plundered. And judgment has come on the plain country, on Holon and Jaza and Mepheoth, on Dibon and Nebo and Beth-Diblatheum, or Kirgatheum, excuse me, on Kirgatheum, on Beth-Gamul and Beth-Meon, on Kiriath and Bozrah, these are all of course Moabite cities, and on all the cities of the land of Moab, far and near.

The horn of Moab is cut off. A horn in Old Testament prophecy simply means power, usually political power. The political strength of the city has been cut, of the country has been cut off.

And his arm is broken, says the Lord. Make him drunk, for he magnified himself against the Lord. Moab shall wallow in his vomit, and he shall also be in derision, for was not, let me just say this, that that's harking back to a chapter you might remember, Jeremiah 25, where Jeremiah was to take a wine cup and go around to the various nations and make them drink the wine cup, which was the wine cup of God's wrath.

And he said, they will drink it and they will reel and they'll stumble and things like that, like a drunk man. The wrath of God is likened to intoxicating drink. People may sometimes think of getting intoxicated as a way of having fun, but basically it's a way of destroying yourself and God's wrath disorients them and makes them stumble and all that stuff, like a drunkard.

And that's what's being described here. Verse 27, for was not Israel a derision to you? Was he not found among thieves? For whenever you speak of him, you shake your head in scorn. You who dwell in Moab, leave the cities and dwell in the rock, and be like the dove which makes her nest in the sides of the cave's mouth.

We have heard of the pride of Moab. He is exceedingly proud of his loftiness and arrogance and pride and the haughtiness of his heart. I know his wrath, says the Lord, but it is not right.

His lies have made nothing right. Therefore I will wail for Moab. I will cry out for all Moab.

I will mourn for the men of Kir Heres. O vine of Sidma, I will weep for you with the weeping of Jaser. Your plants have gone over the sea.

They reach to the sea of Jaser. The plunderer has fallen in your summer fruit and your vintage. Joy and gladness are taken from the plentiful field and from the land of Moab.

I have caused wine to fail from the wine presses. No one will tread with joyous shouting, not joyous shouting. From the cry of Heshbon and Elilah and to Jahaz they have uttered their voice from Zohar to Horeneum like a three-year-old heifer for the waters of Nimrim also shall be desolate.

Moreover, says the Lord, I will cause to cease in Moab the one who offers sacrifices in the high places and burns incense to his gods. Therefore my heart shall wail like flutes for Moab and like flutes my heart shall wail for the men of Kir Heres. Therefore the riches they have acquired have perished.

For every head shall be bald, every beard clipped, on the hands shall be cuts and on the loins sackcloth." This is how those men were described who were killed by Ishmael in the previous section we read coming to bring sacrifices to the Lord, but this is the way men on high places come to their gods, to worship their gods, cutting themselves and so forth. A general lamentation on all the housetops of Moab and on its streets for I have broken Moab like a vessel in which is no pleasure, says the Lord. They shall wail how she is broken down, how Moab has turned her back with shame.

So Moab shall be a derision and a dismay to all those about her. A derision means an object of scorn. So back when he said in verse 27 was not Israel a derision to you? It means didn't you scorn Israel, didn't you mock Israel when they were going into captivity and now Moab will be a derision and a dismay to all those about her.

Verse 40, for thus says the Lord behold one shall fly like an eagle and spread his wings over Moab. Kiriath is taken and the strongholds are surprised. The mighty men's hearts in Moab on the day shall be like the heart of a woman in birth pangs and Moab shall be destroyed as a people.

There aren't any more Moabites because he has magnified himself against the Lord. Fear in the pit and the snare shall be upon you, O inhabitant of Moab, says the Lord. He who flees from the fear shall fall into the pit and he who gets out of the pit shall be caught in the snare.

For upon Moab, upon it I will bring the year of their punishment says the Lord. Now of course it is the Babylonians initially who are the plunders of Moab but about a century or so later Moab and Ammon and Edom, all these neighbor nations on the other side of the Jordan from Israel were overrun by Arabian tribes that basically ended the autonomy of these nations permanently and so not only did the Babylonians conquer them and bring pain and suffering to them but they were actually wiped out not very much afterward by Arabian tribes. Those who fled stood under the shadow of Heshbon because of exhaustion but a fire shall come out of Heshbon a flame from the midst of Sihon and shall devour the brow of Moab the crown of the head of the sons of Tumult.

Woe to you oh Moab, the people of Chemosh perish for your sons have been taken captive and your daughters captive. But then there's this little ray of hope at the end like there is on most of them yet I will bring back the captives of Moab in the latter days says the Lord. Thus far is the judgment of Moab.

Now in the latter days it could just mean days of a later time perhaps it's talking about after Babylon would fall then some of the Moabites who had survived would be able to be peaceably restored to their land not permanently of course but in better circumstances. The same thing is said about Egypt as we saw. Now of course the latter days could refer to the Messianic days and we do know that people you know from all nations are restored to the Lord through the gospel.

Although Moabites don't exist anymore it's possible that it's just using them as it often does of an example of Gentiles God saves. But I think it's probably talking about a temporal restoration of some of the remnant to Ammon I mean to Moab to after Babylon fell. Now the Ammonites come up next and in this chapter 49 actually we have judgments against the Ammonites against Edom against Damascus which is the capital of Syria and against Kedar and Hazor and against Elam.

So there's short prophecies against all of these in this one chapter. The Ammonites like the Moabites and like the Edomites all were eventually wiped out by Arabian tribes although they also suffered under Nebuchadnezzar in the shorter term. The Ammonites in particular suffered reprisals from Nebuchadnezzar because the king of Ammon had hired Ishmael to kill Gadaliah the governor of Israel that Nebuchadnezzar had appointed

and therefore in reprisals against them Nebuchadnezzar came and punished them but they also were wiped out eventually by Arabian tribes the same ones that wiped out Moab and Edom.

And these were the ones who worshipped Moloch or here he might be called Milcom which is Moloch is more of a term of derision for that god that the Hebrews adopted. To their mind it sounded like the word Bosheth which means shame. A lot of the names of persons who had the name Baal in them in later times had their name changed to Bosheth instead of Baal like Mephibosheth his name was Mephibael man of Baal or no Ishbael Ishbael was man of Baal Mephibosheth also had the name Baal Mephibael Ishbael, Mephibael these were their original names but later Jews called them Ishbosheth and Mephibosheth because Bosheth means shame and later Jews didn't want the name Baal didn't want to even name the name Baal so even when it was part of a person's name they'd replace the name Baal with the word for shame.

Likewise Moloch was to the Jewish ear sounded more like Bosheth than the actual name of that god which is Milcom so Moloch is really kind of a derisive nickname for that god but that's what we mostly know him as in the Bible, Moloch Against the Ammonites, thus says the Lord has Israel no sons? Has he no heir? Why then does Milcom or Moloch inherit Gad and his people dwell in his cities? Gad was the tribe of Israel that had inhabited that northern region of Transjordan after the settlement of Canaan Gad and Manasseh and Reuben all settled on the east side of the Jordan and Gad was up in the region that the Ammonites later conquered and here they are. He says well doesn't Israel have any heirs to inherit his own land? How come Gad's cities are not inhabited by Gad? Gad was overrun by the Ammonites and therefore they lost their territory they actually ceased to exist as a tribe Therefore behold the days are coming says the Lord that I will cause to be heard an alarm of war in Rabah of the Ammonites. It shall be a desolate mound and her villages shall be burned with fire.

Then Israel shall take possession of his inheritance says the Lord. I don't know much about how this was but in the days of Jesus this region didn't have Ammonites in it but it did have Jews in it this region had the Decapolis the ten cities which were actually ten Greek cities or Gentile cities in Jewish territory but apart from in those cities the region was Israeli I'm not sure exactly how they came in I suppose it was after the Babylonian exile when they came back they came to that part of the land as well as the other parts of Israel. Wail O Heshbon for Ai is plundered.

Cry you daughters of Rabah. Gird yourselves with sackcloth. Lament and run to and fro by the walls for Milcom shall go into captivity just like it said about Chemosh he'd go into captivity with his priests and princes together.

Same statement exactly verbatim was made about Chemosh when talking about the Moabites. Why do you glory in the valleys your flowing valley O backsliding daughter

who trusted in her treasures saying who will come against me. Behold I will bring fear upon you says the Lord God of hosts from all those who are around you and you shall be driven out everyone headlong and no one will gather those who wander off but afterward I will bring back the captives of the people of Ammon says the Lord.

The same thing he says at the end of almost all of them. He doesn't say that about the Edomites but he does say that about most of the others. About Edom verse 7 thus says the Lord of hosts now this prophecy especially verses 7 through 16 of it which is about half of it is directly parallel to Obadiah.

Obadiah is a prophet that prophesied against Edom and it's only a short book one chapter and it parallels almost point by point this section the relationship of Obadiah to Jeremiah is not known whether Obadiah wrote his prophecy first and Jeremiah incorporated it since he was prophesying against many nations he simply quoted from Obadiah for part of his prophecy against Edom which is you know it's not strange for a prophet or somebody to quote from another prophet Micah quoted from Isaiah and or whether Obadiah quoted from Jeremiah we don't know which was first here Obadiah or Jeremiah because we don't know exactly when Obadiah wrote but needless to say there was some literary relationship between this section and the book of Obadiah verses 7 through 16 here parallel Obadiah a few things are in different order but still the same same thoughts and same material thus says the Lord of hosts is wisdom no more in Timan now Timan was one of the sons of Esau and one of the cities therefore or tribes of Edom and Job's friend Eliphaz was a Timanite so we know that Job lived at least after the time of Esau when there were Timanites because one of his friends was a Timanite and Job's friends were no doubt considered to be wise men from the region Job was a wise man himself and the book of Job seems to be the discussion between a bunch of wise men philosophers speculating about why things were happening to Job and one was a Timanite it's possible that Timan was known for being a place of wise men there were cities in Israel that were known for their wisdom like a city called Adam that says when people wanted to inquire they'd go to Adam this city and there would be wise people there Timan might have been that way the way it's spoken of here makes it sound that way and that would explain why Eliphaz the Timanite was one of the wise counselors that came to Job wasn't real wise in the counsel he gave but he was regarded to be a wise man in his time Is wisdom no more in Timan? Has counsel perished from the prudent? Has their wisdom vanished? Flee! Turn back! Dwell in the depths O inhabitants of Dedan that means in the depths of the desert get away from the cities and get as far from the places that are going to be attacked as possible into the wilderness for I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him the time that I will punish him if grape gatherers came to you would they not leave some gleaming grapes if thieves by night would they not destroy until they have had enough but I have made Esau bare I have uncovered his secret places and he shall not be able to hide himself his descendants are plundered his brethren and his neighbors as he is no more leave your fatherless children I will preserve

them alive and let your widows trust in me now the Arabian tribes that I mentioned that invaded Edom which was to the south and east of Israel actually part of what's now Saudi Arabia the Arabians drove the Edomites that survived into southern Judah and they were somewhat incorporated into Israel and Edom otherwise lost its identity as a people the ones in Israel were called Idumeans and we know that Herod and his family were Idumeans from Edomite descent but the nation of Edom had come no longer to really be a nation verse 12 for thus says the Lord behold those whose judgment was not to drink the cup have I surely drunk and are you one who will altogether go unpunished you shall not go unpunished but you shall surely drink it for I have sworn by myself says the Lord that Bozrah shall become a desolation a reproach a waste and a curse and all its cities shall be perpetual wastes I have heard a message from the Lord and an ambassador has been sent to the nations gather together come against her and rise up to battle for indeed I will make you small among nations despised among men your fierceness has deceived you the pride of your heart oh you who dwell in the clefts of the rock just referring to the rock city of Petra which was high on a cliff and carved into the rock and it was considered to be impregnable so they were very they felt that they were quite unconquerable because of this rock city says oh you who dwell in the clefts of the rock who hold the height of the hill though you make your nest as high as the eagle I will bring you down from there says the Lord Edom also shall be an astonishment everyone who goes by it will be astonished and will hiss at all its plagues as in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbouring cities says the Lord no one shall abide there nor shall a son of man dwell in it behold he shall come up like a lion from the flooding of the 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 who will arraign me who is that shepherd who will withstand me so God is coming up like a lion actually whatever invaders are in view here are God's agents coming like a lion and no shepherds can stop him no one can be appointed over Moab to defend her from the lion coming to steal the flock of Moab the people therefore hear the counsel of the Lord that he has taken against Edom and his purpose is that he has proposed proposed against the inhabitants of Teman surely the least of the flock shall draw them out surely he shall make their habitations desolate with them that is the least of the flock of those who are invading the weakest of them will take the Edomites off in captivity the earth shakes at the noise of their fall at the cry of its noise is heard at the Red Sea behold he shall come up and fly like the eagle and spread his wings over Bosra the heart of the mighty men of Edom in that day shall be like the heart of a woman in birth pangs a lot of imagery that's repeated from previous prophecies Damascus was the capital of Syria there's a short prophecy against it against Damascus Hamath and Arpad are shamed for they have heard bad news they are faint hearted there is trouble on the sea it cannot be quiet Damascus has grown feeble and turns to flee and fear has seized her anguish and sorrow have taken her like a woman in labor why is the city of praise not deserted the city of my joy therefore her young men shall fail in her streets and all the men of war shall be cut off in that day says the Lord of hosts I will kindle a fire in the wall

of Damascus and it shall consume the palaces of Ben Hadad that little doublet there couplet is from Amos chapter 1 verses 3 through 5 there's this form of prophecy given against seven different nations including Damascus and so you find that Jeremiah is quoting Amos an earlier prophet here so he might have quoted Obadiah earlier when talking about Edom as well against Kedar and against the kingdoms of Hazar which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon shall strike now these are desert tribes they were unlike the other places mentioned they were not settled communities these were like Bedouins these were nomadic desert tribes a Babylonian chronicle actually records an expedition of Babylon against these people in 599 BC so probably this is predicting the Babylonian coming against them you'd think that if you're just wandering around in the desert without a building or without walls you'd be left alone but the Babylonians knew that these people had actually been a bit of a problem to the Assyrians before and so the Babylonians probably didn't want to have the same problems with them so it says thus says the Lord arise go up to Kedar and devastate the men of the east their tents and their flocks they shall take away they shall take for themselves their curtains all their vessels and their camels and they shall cry out to them fear is on every side flee get far away dwell in the depths again penetrate the deeper parts of the desert where they're less likely to be sought out O inhabitant of Hazor says the Lord for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has taken counsel against you and has conceived a plan against you arise go up to the wealthy nation that dwells securely says the Lord which has neither gates nor bars dwelling alone they were wealthy people but they didn't have gates or bars they didn't have city walls they didn't have cities they moved around their camels shall be for booty and the multitude of their cattle for plunder I will scatter to all winds those in the farthest corners and I will bring their calamity from all its sides says the Lord Hazor shall be a dwelling for jackals a desolation forever no one shall reside there nor son of man dwell in it then finally there's a short prophecy against Elam the Elamites were pretty much in the region of the northern region of Persia and the Persian people were related to the Elamites it says 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 thus says the Lord of hosts behold I will break the bow of Elam the foremost of their might against Elam I will bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven and scatter them toward all those winds there shall be no nations where the outcasts of Elam will not go for I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies and before those who seek their life I will bring disaster upon them my fierce anger says the Lord and I will send the sword after them until I have consumed them I will set my throne in Elam and I will destroy from there the king and the princess says the Lord but it shall come to pass in the latter days I will bring back the captives of Elam says the Lord now when this judgment came upon them is not or who the agent was is not stated it's almost certainly Nebuchadnezzar conquering the Elamites although they later joined with the Medes and overthrew the Babylonian empire but this is a generation or two later one thing it says I'll bring back the captives of Elam and bringing back the captives is a phrase that we sometimes find used to mean turn the fortunes of in fact in Job chapter 42 at the end of the story of Job

it says and the Lord turned the captivity of Job most modern translations render that the Lord restored the fortunes of Job to turn the captivity is sort of a Hebraism that means to change the fortunes for the better and to say that I'll bring back the captives could be the same concept that I'll improve the circumstances and it could even be referring to Elamites in the church because in Acts chapter 2 it mentions people from Elam were there in Jerusalem although they were probably Jews and but they could have been some Jewish could have been some Jewish proselytes from the Elamites hard to say in any case in Acts 2 9 there's mention of Elam being represented there at the day of Pentecost among those that heard the gospel and got saved presumably and so we come to the end of this section a section like this is always really difficult to know what to do with because teaching poetry is different than teaching Bible in general although much of the Bible is written in poetry it takes different skill to teach poetry and I'm not a poet but to just see the general tenor of these prophecies is about the best we can hope to do especially in the time that we have but these people were almost all judged at the hands of the Babylonians and we come next in chapter 50 to the Babylonians themselves coming under the judgment that's the final one but it's the longest by far the longest of these prophecies against the pagans and it will occupy our last session in Jeremiah music