

Exposition of Jeremiah - Lesson 49

“A Prophecy of Judgment Upon Ammon, Edom, Arabians, and Elam”

By:

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Applicational Text: Romans 1:21 *“...Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

Applicational Text: Proverbs 3:5-6 *⁵ Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. ⁶ In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Expositional Text: Jeremiah 25:15-17 *¹⁵ For thus saith the LORD God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. ¹⁶ And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. ¹⁷ Then took I the cup at the LORD's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the LORD had sent me:*

Introduction:

I have selected two Applicational Texts for this message Romans 1:21 showing God's justification in the judgments upon the gentile nations and Proverbs 3:5-6 showing God's instruction and promise.

The Exegetical Text is from Jeremiah 25:15-17 where Jeremiah received God's commission to issue these judgments. Although these judgments are written at the end of the Book, they were commissioned in chapter 25 and are recorded here as an addendum.

One of the things that the careful student of this study will notice about these prophecies is that they are messages of judgment, almost totally void of calls to repentance. We are once again reminded that there is a limit to God's grace and there will come a time when the door to the ark has been shut, and the day of grace has past.

There was an elderly retired school teacher in my pastorate at Sacramento, CA. Her name was Grace. She asked me to promise to do her funeral when she passed and said, “I want you to tell the people “The day of Grace has passed.” Well, she passed but the door is still open to the amazing grace of God, and we need to make certain everyone is shown the door before it closes for them. Therefore, it is important for us to understand God's justification for

judgments and for us to understand His instructions and promises while that door is still open, because we have an appointment with death and after death the judgment. Let us learn from the examples that are identified in this Book of Jeremih.

I. Judgment Against Ammon: (Descendants of Lot and his youngest daughter)

Jeremiah 49:1-6 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?* 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.* 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.* ⁴ *Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys, thy flowing valley, O backsliding daughter? that trusted in her treasures, saying, Who shall come unto me?* 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.* ⁶ *And afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.*

The Ammonites were the descendants of the incestual relationship between Lot and his youngest daughter, but their trouble with the Children of Israel began before the events that brought on the Judgment identified here. When God called Abraham to be the channel through which He would communicate His plan for the redemption of the human race, He told Abram to leave his country and his family and go to a place God would show him. As the biblical story unfolds, Abram did not immediately do that but went with his father to Haran. It was only after his father died that Abram struck out on his journey to follow God. But even then, he did not leave his family as instructed but took his nephew Lot with him. That resulted in a problem later as their herdsmen and shepherds argued over enough pasture, and it was then that Abram and Lot separated. However, there continued to be problems with the offspring of both trying to settle in the area. Abraham had to rescue Lot and his family when they had been taken hostage and then of course there is that whole situation with God's destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. God's motivation for the judgment mentioned here is the accumulation of hard feelings through the years that now brings on this judgment. When the tribes of Israel on the eastern side of the Jordan were carried away captive by the Assyrian, the Ammonites rejoiced and moved into the territory of the tribe of Gad. So, God raises the question, *Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why then doth their king inherit Gad, and his people dwell in his cities?* God had appointed the children of Israel to be the perpetual heirs of this land. Yes, occupation of it was conditional, but it still belonged to Israel, so the question is raised why does your king inherit Gad? Such a question could and should be asked of those who today seek to occupy the Land of Israel.

This question is followed by God's, judgment Jeremiah 49:2 *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in Rabbah* (the

Capital City) *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 judgment is described in the passage that follows: **Jeremiah 49:3-5** 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.* ⁴ *Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys, thy flowing valley, O backsliding daughter?* (They are called backsliding daughters because they had been believers but were now turned to idolatry) *that trusted in her treasures, saying, Who shall come unto me?* 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.*

But, the grace of God is available, **Jeremiah 49:6** *And afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.*

II. Judgment Against Edom: (Descendants of Esau) (Book of Obadiah)

Jeremiah 49:7-8 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?* 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.*

The Edomites are the descendants of Esau, the twin brother of Jacob. Although the boys were twins, Esau was the first born and entitled to the birthright (a double portion of the inheritance and the special blessing of their father Isaac. Most of us are familiar with the story of the twins. Esau was an outdoorsman and the favorite of their father while Jacob was a “Momma’s Boy.” When the boys were born, as we noted, Esau was born first, but when he came out of the womb, the second born had a tight grip on the foot of the first born, so the named him Jacob which meant “a tripper” or supplanter. It certainly was a name appropriate with his character—he was a “con man” extraordinaire, eventually ‘coning’ Esau into selling him his birthright and then cheating Esau out of the blessing that was rightfully his. So, there was bad blood between them and that bad blood carried over into the generations that followed. God changed Jacob’s name to Israel, and his descendants were known as the Children of Israel. It is with the twelve sons of Israel and their descendants that we have the twelve tribes known as the Children of Israel.

Esau is not part of the Abrahamic Covenant lineage that led to the birth of the Messiah, but he and his descendants, the Edomites, had exposure to and the opportunity to have a relationship with the Lord, but followed the pattern of most nations in adopting some form of idolatry. They were polytheistic, worshiping a variety of god’s but their primary god was Qos and was associated with war, weather, varying adaptations to other influences such as the worship of Baal which was common to the area.

The bad blood between the Children of Israel and the descendants of Esau expressed itself from time to time in war between them. God deals with the descendants of Jacob in the early part of the Book of Jeremiah, now he will also deal with the descendants of his brother Esau, the Edomites. The Old Testament prophetic Book of Obidiah also covers this judgment for those of you who seek a bit more information. But we are examining the prophecy through Jeremaih, so we pick up the Lord's warning and instruction to them...

The word from the Lord continues to express His determination...

Jeremiah 49:12-13 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.* 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.*

Then Jeremiah speaks about “...a rumor...” he has heard, probably from the prophet Obidiah whose prophecy is directed to Edom and appears to be a contemporary of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 49:14-19 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.* ¹⁵ *For, lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men.* 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.* ¹⁷ *Also Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.* 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.* 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?*

Then in verse twenty Jeremiah offers the Edomites counsel from the Lord... “**Therefore hear the counsel of the Lord...**” This instruction takes on additional meaning when we see that it is addressed to Teman. Teman was a famous city in Edom that was noted throughout the area for its wisdom and wise counsel. It is interesting to note that one of Job's three friends that came to give him comfort and counsel when he was under Satanic attack was Eliphaz the Temanite. Eliphaz was the name of the first-born son of Esau and Teman was one of his sons, a grandson of Esau. Eliphaz's diagnosis of Job's calamity was wrong and the counsel he provided was wrong, but the wisdom and counsel provided by the Temanites was sought by people far and wide. Here in our text in Jeremiah, the Lord offers the counselors some counsel,

Jeremiah 49:20-22 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. ²¹ *The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, at the cry the noise thereof was heard in the Red sea.* 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 Lord seems to like that statement of “a woman in her pangs” is illustrate the distress of mighty men when faced with sureness of defeat and the fear of death in battle. If you have ever delivered a baby or observed the birth process you will better understand the illustration, “*...the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.*” God knew what he was doing when he assigned the task of childbirth to the woman.

Then we move to God’s judgment upon Damascus...

III. Judgment against Damascus (Syria) (Descendants of a son of Shem)

Jeremiah 49:23-27 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.* 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.* ²⁵ *How is the city of praise not left, the city of my joy!* 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.* ²⁷ *And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall consume the palaces of Benhadad.*

Damascus, Hamath, and Arpad! This is a prophecy concerning the judgment of Syria, the descendants of one of the sons of Shem. It would seem that they are defeated before the battle begins. Fear is a deadly enemy, and we are instructed by our Lord to not fear.

Isaiah 41:10 *Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*

Oh! But these folks are on the wrong side, and it is God that has judged, and it is He who is sending the troops. Therefore they are justified in their fear. They have declined God’s offer of grace, and they are paralyzed with fear simply by having heard that the Babylonians are on their way. Makes one want to stand in the street and yell, REPENT!

Damascus is considered to be the oldest city of continued occupation in the world. At the time of this prophecy it was the Capital of Syria, a large metropolis whose residents consider themselves above reproach by any enemy. The inhabitants are the descendants of one of the sons of Shem who was one of the three sons of Noah.

It is a short message but ominous enough to make cowards out of everyone in the city and in the two other identified cities, Hamath and Arpad. These cities will not escape the judgment of God as is meted out through Nebuchadnezzar and his troops who sack the city

and set it on fire. *And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall consume the palaces of Benhadad.*

Whether Jeremiah or the Lord, the question is raised, “*...How is the city of praise not left, the city of my joy!*” Some understand this to be Jeremiah that is asking as well as indicting How Damascus, which was once a city of praise, and a city of joy is not spared. The answer of course is sin.

The judgment of God is both universal and inevitable! The only escape is God’s grace.

We move on to the Judgment of the Arabians.

IV. Judgment Against The Arabians: (Descendants of second son of Ishmael)

Jeremiah 49:28-33 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.* 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.* 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.* 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.* 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.* 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.*

Ray Stevens, a popular comedy country singer, had a novelty song titled, “Ahab the Arab Sheik of the Burning Sand,” back in 1962, that exaggerated the culture of the Arabians, I will spare you my rendition of that, but I could not help but recall it or get it out of my mind while I was preparing for our study here.

This judgment is directed to Kedar and Hazor. Kedar is both the name of a person and the name of a people, referring to the second son of Ishmael and, by extension, a nomadic Arab tribe, Bedouins, of the Arabian desert known for their black tents.

“...kingdoms of Hazor...” refers to a network Bedouin communities scattered throughout the area and is not to be confused with the city by that name located in Israel today. The judgment of God and Hazor became *“...be a dwelling for dragons, and a desolation forever: there shall no man abide there, nor any son of man dwell in it...”*

Yeah! I know! *“...dragons?”* The word "dragons" comes from the King James Version. In the Hebrew language, the word is *tanniyn*, and it has been translated into English in a

variety of ways, such as "whale," "serpent," "venemous snake," "monster," or "jackal." It simply refers to a creature that inhabits environments that are desolate.

The Bible identifies these people as being skilled in archery and herders of sheep, cattle and camels who developed a trade business with places like Tyre. Prophecies predicted their glory would fade, like those of other nomadic groups, and Nebuchadnezzar's army eventually destroyed their camps.

One thing that stands out is that there is no specific indictment against these people that we frequently have when judgment is given. We also take note that there is no mention of God sending Nebuchadnezzar to overthrow them. It appears that it was Nebuchadnezzar's idea and that God simply allows it and warns them it is coming. *"...Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived a purpose against you."*

Next, we move to the judgment of Elam.

V. Judgment Against Elam: (Descendants of Shem)

Jeremiah 49:34-39 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,* ³⁵ *Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will break the bow of Elam, the chief of their might.* 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.* 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:* ³⁸ *And I will set my throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the LORD.* ³⁹ *But it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.*

"Elam" refers both to a country (located in present-day Iran) and identifies a man, Elam, a son of Shem and a grandson of Noah, who is considered the ancestor of the Elamite people. The country of Elam was known for its military strength, with its capital at Susa, and appears in biblical texts related to Abraham's time, prophetic judgments, and the return of exiles from Babylon which Nebuchadnezzar had taken during his invasions of Elam. It was also known as Persia, and it was the Elamites, that is, the Medes and the Persians who eventually overthrew the Babylonians.

This prophecy was given by Jeremiah during the reign of Zedekiah, before Nebuchadnezzar initiated his initial conquest of them.

Elam became a powerful nation and is still around today. However, they are not known as Elamites today. The Elamites are now known as Iran. Iran has been part of God's plan for mankind for centuries, and we can assume His tolerance today provides for His purposes to be fulfilled. The Elamites are captives in their own country today by Muslim leaders and

are being taught to hate Israel and hate America, *“...But it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.*

Elam is in the list of nations who heard the Gospel in their own native language on the Day of Pentecost in thirty A.D., as is recorded in Acts chapter two at the beginning of the Church Age and took that message back to their people

Conclusion:

Concerning the Judgment of the Lord, God has ordered it...

Our Expository Text in Jeremiah 25:15-17 records Jeremiah's commission of the Lord to reveal these prophecies. ¹⁵ *For thus saith the LORD God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. ¹⁶ And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. ¹⁷ Then took I the cup at the LORD's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the LORD had sent me:*

Concerning the justification of Judgment, God has revealed it...

Our Applicational Text in Romans 1:21 justifies the judgments of God, *“...Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”*

Concerning the Avoidance of Judgment, God has provided for it...

Our Applicational Text in Proverbs 3:5-6 sets the standard for all nations *“...Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. ⁶ In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”*

But it begins at Salvation:

- *For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God...*
- *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life...*
- *With the heart man believes unto righteousness...*
- *But with the mouth confession is made unto salvation...*
- *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!*

*Let Us Learn From The Failure of Others and Avoid
The Pain, Loss, or Suffering of
Personal Discipline!*