

Jeremiah 49

We seem to ignore prophecy against the nations outside of Israel. This chapter is a continuation of God's judgement against Israel's neighboring nations. It is about Ammon (northern Jordan), Edom (south Jordan and north Saudi Arabia), Syria, Kedar (mid and east Saudi Arabia) and Hazor (northern Israel), and Elam (southern Iran). Babylon did much of the described damage. The history of the world is about a people who ignored God and became displaced by another. Then those invaders became displaced, once their purpose was fulfilled. That is one reason that God calls Babylon his servant. Babylon swept up all kinds of national messes.

And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him.

7 So all nations shall serve him and his son and his son's son, until the time of his land comes; and then many nations and great kings shall make him serve them.

(Jeremiah 27)

God is asking rhetorical questions:

- Why is the tribe of Gad not living in the former region of Ammon? Why are the former inhabitants displacing God's people?
- What happened to the well-documented wisdom of the people of Edom? It seems to not be keeping them from harm.
- Why did the music and amusements stop in Syria?
- What happened to the wealthy and distanced nation of Saudi Arabia?
- What happened to the military might of Elam?

Ammon

Read Jeremiah 49:1-6: We just finished describing the independence and pride causing the fall of Moab. Ammon was Moab's brother. Ammon is just north of Moab. They are both parts of modern Jordan. The Transjordan countries of Ammon, Moab, and Edom were adjacent to the 2 ½ tribes east of the Jordan.

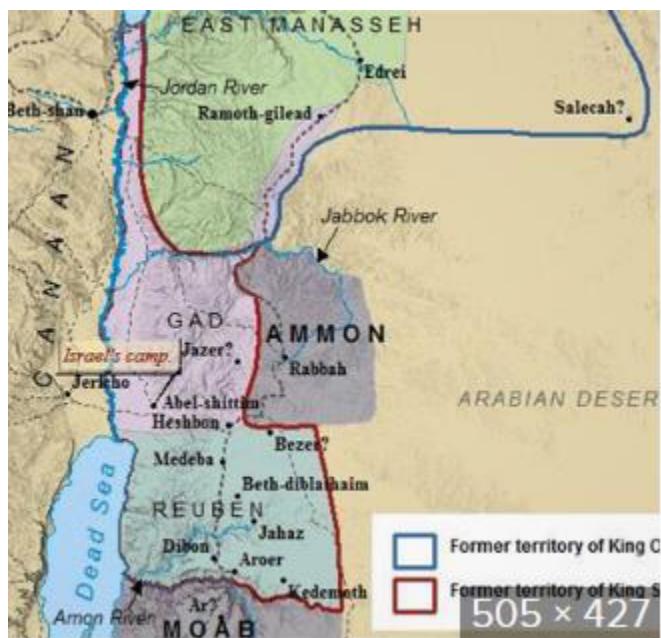
As goes the neighboring tribes, so goes the neighbors. It is dangerous to be separated from your brothers in Christ. They had shared borders with unwelcoming unbelievers. These scary neighbors should have caused God's people to draw near to him. Instead, they became just like them.

Ammon worshipped Milcom and Molech. Milcom was a version of Baal; who they regarded to be the king of gods. Molech was the fire god whom they sacrificed unwanted babies.

The Ammonites refused to help the returning Israelites re-enter their land. They were cruel and oppressive. They teamed up with the Amalakites and the Philistines and the Amorites against Israel. Originally, God told his people to not take away the land of Moab and Ammon; since they belonged to Lot's family.

Wanderings in the Wilderness

...18 “Today you are going to cross the border of Moab at Ar. 19 But when you get close to the Ammonites, do not harass them or provoke them, for I will not give you any of the land of the Ammonites. I have given it to the descendants of Lot as their possession.” 20 (That too was regarded as the land of the Rephaim, who used to live there, though the Ammonites called them Zamzummites. ... (Deuteronomy 2)



God gave the Amorite land to the tribes of Israel. Ammon and Moab were supposed to be left alone. Gad and Manasseh eventually lost its grip to their own lands to the neighboring Ammonites. God sent a rescuer to Gad against Ammon. Jephthah defeated them.

It came to pass after a time that the people of Ammon made war against Israel. 5 And so it was, when the people of Ammon made war against Israel, that the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob. 6 Then they said to Jephthah, “Come and be our commander, that we may fight against the people of Ammon.” ... And the king of the people of Ammon answered the messengers of Jephthah, “Because Israel took away my land when they came up out of Egypt, from the

Arnon as far as the Jabbok, and to the Jordan. Now therefore, restore those lands peaceably.” (Judges 11)

Eventually the Ammonites resurged, and King Saul came to subdue them. Later on, David made them pay tribute. Ultimately, the Ammonites regained their independence but were finally conquered by the Babylonians.

Then Nahash the Ammonite came up and encamped against Jabesh Gilead; and all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, “Make a covenant with us, and we will serve you.” ² And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, “On this condition I will make a covenant with you, that I may put out all your right eyes, and bring reproach on all Israel.” ³ Then the elders of Jabesh said to him, “Hold off for seven days, that we may send messengers to all the territory of Israel. And then, if there is no one to save us, we will come out to you.”.....¹¹ So it was, on the next day, that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch, and killed Ammonites until the heat of the day. And it happened that those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together. (1 Samuel 11)

The king of Ammon was Nahash, which means *snake*. God is asking in this chapter why the idol Milcom is occupying the places given to God's people. The snake manages to displace what God had arranged for us as well. It happens gradually. He did it to Eve and he did it to the tribe of Gad. The pride of life overpowered their precautions.

The whole east side of the Dead Sea is grazing land. Gad had large herds that needed good grazing land. The area near Ammon also had a lot of grass. Gad and Ammon had similar interests and began to compete. Ammon is from Lot. Like father, like son. Lot was a man who chased the tall grass for his grazing herds in his own day. It turned into blind ambition.



Gad and Ammon treasured their growing enterprises. That opportunity existed a little further away from the other tribes. I see that tendency in myself, as it was in my dad. I have chased business opportunities further and further from home at times. That leaves a spacial separation from your family. The 2 ½ tribes east of the Jordan were trying to convince themselves and everyone else that they could keep it all together. Chasing rainbows takes you a little further and a little further away.

They even constructed a replica altar to remind future generations that they were originally connected to the same God as the other tribes. That is a huge red flag. That sounds like they knew up front that they would be the first to potentially disconnect from their brothers. Cattlemen first; and children of Israel second. Cattlemen are very independent people, who prefer to go it alone. That is a recipe for disaster in the body of Christ. You could almost lump Ammon and Moab in with Gad and Manasseh and Reuben as having a common history of faith that now is diluted to non-existence.

Now the people of Reuben and the people of Gad had a very great number of livestock. And they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, and behold, the place was a place for livestock... Therefore they said, "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as a possession. Do not take us over the Jordan." (Numbers 32)

And when they came to the region of the Jordan which is in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh built an altar there by the Jordan—a great, impressive altar.... we said that it will be, when they say this to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say, 'Here is the replica of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made, though not for burnt offerings nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between you and us.' ²⁹ Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn from following the LORD this day, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for grain offerings, or for sacrifices, besides the altar of the LORD our God which is before His tabernacle." (Joshua 22)

There is a big difference in being a Christian who happens to be a businessman; and a businessman who happens to be a Christian. **The judgement describes Ammon trusting in their treasures.** It is easy to confuse *the cause and the effects* that accompany judgment. It does not seem comparable to Sodom and Gomorrah, but at its core it is. Like the Ammonites, there were terrible sexual sins and cruelty. That was *the effect*. In both Sodom and Ammon, the actual cause was *trusting in their treasures*. That should scare us.

⁴⁸ “As I live,” says the Lord GOD, “neither your sister Sodom nor her daughters have done as you and your daughters have done. ⁴⁹ Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. (Ezekiel 16)

Read Jeremiah 49:7-22: Originally Esau was used to develop Jacob. He played an intimidation role. Esau was capable and could get things done. His dad was so proud of him. On the other hand, Esau was a good waste of talent. He did not have a spiritual bone in his body. Esau/Edom was known for their fierceness and pride. You could think of him like a Navy Seal. His descendants, the Edomites chased out the Anakin giants and the Nabateans from the land. They said that no man can stand against them. That kind of thing sounds macho; but it won't get you into heaven. Jacob eventually became broken before God...not Esau.

The problem is that the Edomites disregarded spiritual life. God is angry with Edom. He states that Edom will become a desolation, a reproach, a waste and a curse.

The Edomites were especially hateful and capable. The Bible describes how Doeg the Edomite (the King's master shepherd) slaughtered many of the priests who were confederate with Daavid. The last known Edomite was Herod. When the LORD returns; he will execute his wrath in Bozrah/Edom.

“Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson? Who is this, robed in splendor, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? ‘It is I, proclaiming victory, mighty to save.’ Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the winepress? ‘I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing. It was for me the day of vengeance; the year for me to redeem had come. I looked, but there was no one to help, I was appalled that no one gave support; so my own arm achieved salvation for me, and my own wrath sustained me. I trampled the nations in my anger; in my wrath I made them drunk and poured their blood on the ground’” (Isaiah 63:1-6).

As it is written, “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.” (Romans 9)

Esau is just a worldly man, with a ton of skill. He is impressive to us; but god has no place for him.

Read Jeremiah 49: 23-27: What the Bible calls Assyria is Syria. Syria is called Aram in the Bible. The Assyrians were known to be the cruelest invaders. They

struck fear into their victims, so that they would give up without a fight. God used them to deport the 10 northern tribes. Now that their usefulness is complete, they will experience some of their own terror by others.

Babylon sacked Assyria in 612 BC. Prophecy may be underway again.

The ongoing turmoil in Syria has once again turned global attention toward [the ancient city of Damascus](#), raising a sobering question for Christians: Are we witnessing the fulfillment of biblical prophecy? As the Syrian Civil War intensifies, reports indicate that Turkish-backed rebel forces, having already captured Aleppo and Hama, are now poised to move toward Damascus—the stronghold of President Bashar al-Assad's regime. The Bible has long associated Damascus with prophetic warnings. Isaiah 17:1-3 declares: "See, Damascus will cease to be a city; it will become a ruinous heap." This prophecy foretells the city's destruction and desolation, a stark vision that resonates as rebel forces secure towns near Damascus, such as Izraa, and gain control of significant territory in the surrounding Daraa Governorate.

Assad loyalists kill 14 in clash with Syria's new ruling forces - authorities

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Opponents of Bashar al-Assad overthrew the regime in a lightning offensive

Syria's new rebel-led authorities say supporters of ousted President Bashar al-Assad have killed 14 interior ministry troops in an "ambush" in the west of the country.

They say 10 other troops were wounded in the fighting on Tuesday near the Mediterranean port of Tartous, a stronghold of Assad's minority Alawite Muslim sect.

The clashes with pro-Assad loyalists are the first direct challenge to the authority of Syria's de facto leader Ahmad al-Sharaa.

Assad's presidency fell to rebel forces led by al-Sharaa's Islamist Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) faction just over two weeks ago.

Jeremy Bowen: Assad's torture prison is worst I have seen

Read Jeremiah 49: 28-33: Kedar is the name of [Ishmael's](#) second son ([Genesis 25:13](#), [1 Chronicles 1:29](#)). The other instances of *Kedar* in the Bible refer to the Arabian descendants of Kedar and/or the territory where they settled.

The faithful Israelite would view the territory of Kedar as [a place of banishment](#) from the Lord: "Woe to me that I dwell in Meshek, that I live among the tents of Kedar!" ([Psalm 120:5](#)).

Ancient Hazor was destroyed. It is now an uninhabited archaeological site.



Tel Hazor from the air. Upper city is the excavated portion. Lower city is the large field to the right.

Hazor would be hammered repeatedly throughout the ensuing years. Asa, king of Judah, stripped the temple of its treasures to pay the Syrian King Ben-hadad to attack the belligerent northern kingdom of Israel. Ben-hadad obliged, and Hazor was one of the cities that faced destruction from his armies (1 Kings 15:20; “all the land of Naphtali” includes Hazor—see Joshua 19:32, 36). Hazor also weathered attacks by Assyrian King Shalmaneser III and then Syrian King Hazael (2 Kings 11:32-33).

And destruction from enemy kings was not all that Hazor faced. Amos 1:1 describes a major earthquake that occurred in Israel around 750 B.C.E. According to modern research, Hazor was one of the closer Israelite cities to the probable epicenter. One of Hazor’s excavators, Yigal Yadin, found tilted walls and collapsed floors attributed to this earthquake. Other related earthquake-evidence of the same period was found at five other archaeological sites—a witness to the powerful event described in biblical and extra-biblical sources.

Hazor eventually fell to the Assyrians during the campaigns of King Tiglath-Pileser III in 732 B.C.E.

After the Canaanite rule at Hazor was again subdued, Israelites settled the city. Once King Solomon came on the scene, Hazor experienced massive rebuilding. Then the Assyrians destroyed it all.

And so to this day, no one lives at Tel Hazor. It is possible that this has been the case for the past *2,200 years*

Read Jeremiah 49:34-39: Elam equates to the area of southern Iran. This is not to be confused with Persia, from northern Iran (Tajiks). The Elamites are Khuzestani Arabs. They fell to the Assyrians between 655-639 BC. They will cease to be a



military power.

The destruction was noted in this chapter as coming from all four directions. The Assyrians invaded from the north. The Persians and Babylonians subsequently invaded; and there were civil wars. Elam had its moment. They are no longer considered a people group. Even so, God will bring them back to himself.

On that day the Lord will extend His hand a second time to recover the remnant of His people from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. (Isaiah 11)