

EZEKIEL

Chapter 25

Judgment Upon the Nations

Introduction: This chapter marks the second section of Ezekiel, chapters 25-32. These chapters transpire **during the siege** of Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:1-3) and contain the judgments upon the surrounding nations, Israel's hostile neighbors. As we will see these judgments extend out from Israel in all directions.

- Eastern Boundary of Judah – *Ammon, Moab, Edom*
- Western Boundary of Judah – *Philistia*
- North of Judah – *Tyrus, Zidon cities of Phoenicia*
- Southwest of Judah – *Egypt was the major power*

This section (*chapters 25-32*) is a transition from the first section (*chapters 1-24*), the judgment on Judah and Jerusalem and the last section (*chapters 33-48*) the predictions of her future restoration.

- Section One (Chapters 1-24): Judgments on Judah and Jerusalem (*to the Jew first*)
- Section Two (Chapters 25- 32): Judgment on the surrounding nations (*then the Gentiles*)
- Section (Three Chapters 33-48): Promise of future restoration

The nations mentioned in these chapters are as follows:

- Chapter 25 – *Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia*
- Chapters 26-28 – *Tyrus and Zidon*
- Chapters 29-32 – *Egypt*

Judgment is given upon these nations from God. He is taking ownership for it; thus, you have the phrase “Thou shalt know that I am the LORD” (vss. 5, 7, 11, 17 etc.). It is the same phrase used in the preceding chapters (section one). This judgment upon the surrounding nations is given of God because of the nations' demeanor toward Israel (*Ezekiel 25:3, 8, 15; 26:2; 29:6*) and their ungodly pride and self-deification (*Ezekiel 28; 29:3*).

The judgments against these nations are both *historical* and *prophetical*. Though the bulk of the judgments laid against these nations transpired throughout history, we do see these nations being dealt with by God in the future (*Isaiah* 63) as they mount a union against Israel (*see Psalm* 83). So then while we will look primarily at what *has* transpired, we will also take note of what *will yet* transpire as these nations await future judgments.

The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them; And say unto the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou saidst, 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; Behold, therefore I will deliver thee to the men of the east for a possession, and they shall set their palaces in thee, and make their dwellings in thee: they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk. And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couchingplace for flocks: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. For thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped with the feet, and rejoiced in heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel; Behold, therefore I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the heathen; and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD. (Ezekiel 25:1-7)

Ammonites (1-7): The Ammonites sprang from Benammi, the son of Lot's younger daughter (Genesis 19:38 cf. 83:7, 8) just as the Moabites came from Moab the son of Lot's older daughter. These two peoples are mentioned in scripture continually together. When the Israelites came into the land they were commanded to leave the Ammonites alone (Deut. 2:19), which dwelt on the east side of Jordan east of the Dead Sea (*don't confuse with Amorites*). The Ammonites' hostility toward Judah can also be seen when they joined the Chaldeans to destroy Jerusalem in the first siege (2 Kings 24:25).

The Ammonites are being judged for two reasons: Ammon is being judged *first* for their haughtiness and self-deification, *secondly* for their joyful response concerning Nebuchadnezzar and his choice to lay siege to the land of Jerusalem instead of Ammon (Ezekiel 25:3 cf. 21:18-22). Ammon chose to not come to the aid of Jerusalem when Nebuchadnezzar's armies laid siege on Jerusalem, they even gloated over the destruction of the temple and deportation of God's people (vs. 6 cf. Zeph. 2:8). Thus, God is going to give them their just reward; the men of the east will invade their land and turn it into a

pasture (vss. 4, 5).

Though *historically* the Ammonite people were overtaken by the nomadic tribes of the east, *prophetically* the total fulfillment of this verse is yet to come. One day the LORD will come back and deal with this nation (see Isaiah 11:10-16; Psalm 83:7; Zeph. 2:9; Jeremiah 9:25, 26; Jeremiah 49:1-6).

Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because that Moab and Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the heathen; Therefore, behold, I will open the side of Moab from the cities, from his cities which are on his frontiers, the glory of the country, Bethjeshimoth, Baalmeon, and Kiriathaim, Unto the men of the east with the Ammonites, and will give them in possession, that the Ammonites may not be remembered among the nations. And I will execute judgments upon Moab; and they shall know that I am the LORD. (Ezekiel 25:8-11)

Moabites (8-11): The Moabites descended from Moab, the son of the eldest daughter of Lot (Genesis 19:38). The hostility between Moab and Israel began when Balak, king of Moab, tried to oppose Israel as Moses was coming into the Promised Land (Numbers 22:1-3 and all of 22-24). Throughout Israel's history, relations between Israel and Moab remained hostile; during the reign of Jehoshaphat, Jehoram sought help from Jehoshaphat in an attempt to reduce the influence of the Moabites. The Moabites suffered a great loss. Reduced to despair, the Moabite King ascended the wall of the city and there, in the sight of the allied armies, offered his first-born son a sacrifice to his god (2 Kings 3:26, 27). Moab joined Babylon in the first siege that was laid against Jerusalem (2 Kings 24:2).

The fate of Moab will be like that of Ammon (vs. 10) because of their pride against Jerusalem (Isaiah 16:6) and because they lightly esteemed Israel among the nations (vs. 8). Moab will be overtaken by the "men of the east," the nomadic tribes of the east, at the same time as Ammon (vs. 10). Moab would fall in battle, God exposing their northern flank to attack, taking the cities of Bethjeshimoth, Baalmeon and Kiriathaim (vss. 8-10). Once again however the destruction of Moab is also prophetic, awaiting a day that our LORD will ultimately deal with them (Psalms 108:9, 83:7, 8 Zeph. 2:9) **Seir is the mountains that encompassed the country of Edom. Over time Seir was synonymous with Edom. Seir is mentioned here briefly because it is synonymous with Edom, and they will suffer the same fate as Ammon and Moab.*

Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them; Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman; and they of Dedan shall fall by the sword. And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel: and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury; and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 25:12-14)

Edom (12-14): Edom is the nation that came from Esau, whose beginning is found in Genesis 25. They are the dwellers of Seir, the mountainous region (Deut. 2:22). The strife began when Edom refused to let Israel cross her territory during the time of the wilderness wanderings (Numbers 20:14-21). Thus, throughout history, the relationship between Israel and Edom has been strained at best. During the reign of Ahaz the Edomites fought against Judah with great success (2 Chronicles 28:16-17). Edom was also guilty of siding with Babylon during the assaults on Jerusalem.

The judgments against Edom are extensive. *Historically* their power as a people was removed in the inter-testament period by the Nabateans, but *prophetically* their judgment is yet on the horizon and is detailed extensively in scripture (See Jeremiah 49:7-22; Obadiah; Isaiah 63:1-4; Psalm 83 etc.)

Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred; Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims, and destroy the remnant of the sea coast. And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them. (Ezekiel 25:15-17)

Philistines (15-17): The Philistines were a small group that conquered a small portion of the land that gave them their name: the land of Phillistia (Psalm 87:4). There are more Old Testament references to the Philistines than any other nation other than Israel.

The Philistines had been Israel's enemy from the time of the conquest. Israel failed to take all the Promised Land because she disobeyed God (Judges 3:1-4). The Philistines were opposed by Shamgar (Judges 3:31), Samson (Judges 13-16), and Samuel (I Samuel 7:2-17). David finally subdued the Philistines after a series of battles (2 Samuel 5:17-25; 8:1). The battles however renewed during the divided kingdom, as each country tried to control the other (2 Chron. 17:10-11; 21:16-17; 26:6-7; 28:16-18). The feud between the

Philistines and Judah was halted by Babylon's intervention, Nebuchadnezzar establishing control over both countries.

The judgment against the Philistines is a result of their constant attacks upon God's chosen people as they tried to dispose Israel from the Promised Land (which continues to this day). Their final fate will be vengeance from God (vss. 16-17) which, prophetically speaking, is mentioned throughout scripture (see Zeph. 2:1-6; Amos 1:8; Ps. 83 etc.)

EZEKIEL

Chapter 26

Judgment Tyrus

Introduction: The next three chapters are devoted to Tyrus. The city is also mentioned in Isaiah 23 and Jeremiah 27, however it is Ezekiel that will talk the most about Tyre. Tyre was the ancient Phoenician city located at the site of present day Lebanon.

Hiram was king during the reigns of David and Solomon. He was a devoted friend, and he helped them both prepare for, and subsequently build, the temple (2 Samuel 5; I Kings 5; I Chronicles 14:2; 2 Chronicles 2). After the days of David and Solomon however, Tyre drifted away from Israel, and it finally got so bad that the people of Tyre sold Jews as slaves to the Greeks and the Edomites (Joel 3; Amos 1).

Tyre was the capital of the great Phoenician nation which was famous for its seagoing traders, and as such was a major trading center along routes from north to south. Thus, throughout these passages in Ezekiel and others, Tyre will be known as the land of ‘traffick’ and of “merchants” (see chapter 27).

In these chapters we will see Tyre and Zidon being judged for two things: their treatment of Israel and their pride and self-deification regarding their kingdoms.

The prophecy regarding the destruction of Tyre is pointed to as one of the most conclusive proof texts for the veracity of scripture.

And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD: and it shall become a spoil to the

nations. And her daughters which are in the field shall be slain by the sword; and they shall know that I am the LORD. For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people. He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field: and he shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mount against thee, and lift up the buckler against thee. And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers. By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee: thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach. With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets: he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground. And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water. And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard. And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: for I the LORD have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD. Thus saith the Lord GOD to Tyrus; Shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee? Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their brodered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment, and be astonished at thee. And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited of seafaring men, the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror to be on all that haunt it! Now shall the isles tremble in the day of thy fall; yea, the isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure. For thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee; When I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit, with the people of old time, and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth, in places desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited; and I shall set glory in the land of the living; I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 26:1-21)

The Prophecy of the Destruction of Jerusalem (1-21): The prophecy here was about Nebuchadnezzar's attack of Tyre which was about to happen. But it was more than

that; the Lord has more in view here than just the 13-year siege of Nebuchadnezzar and the “many nations” of which his empire consisted.

The prophetic details listed regarding the destruction of Tyrus give us the surety of the veracity of scripture. The specific verses detailing the destruction on Tyrus are as follows:

(vs. 3) Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up.

(vs. 4) And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock.

(vs. 7) For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people.

(vs. 12) And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water.

(vs. 14) And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: for I the LORD have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.

(vs. 21) I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord GOD.

The historical account that fulfills literally all these descriptions is as follows: Nebuchadnezzar came and laid siege on the city of Tyrus; for 13 years he cast a mount against it. Nobody could go in and nobody could go out by land. Nebuchadnezzar had Tyrus in a strangle hold as he battled against the city. However, unbeknownst to Nebuchadnezzar, the people of Tyrus had loaded their ships, taking their people and their belongings to an island a half-mile out to sea. On this island they established a new city while their old one was under siege. Finally, Nebuchadnezzar knocks down the walls and gets inside the city. He comes into Tyrus with all the nations of the world, for his army was made up of all the nations he had conquered. When Nebuchadnezzar entered the city he discovered that everyone was gone with the exception of a few people; they had reestablished themselves as the new city of Tyrus, a half-mile out to sea. There they existed for some 200 years until a conquering leader known as

Alexander the Great came. It was Alexander that would fulfill the rest of Ezekiel's prophecy. Alexander, like Nebuchadnezzar, ruled the known world at his time. Concerned about the fleet of ships that Tyrus possessed, Alexander sought to destroy them. He knew that there was only one way to destroy the island of Tyrus and that was to make a land bridge out to sea to conquer the city. Alexander proceeded to take all the stones, timbers and debris from the old city of Tyrus and cast it into the water to form his land bridge. He even used the dust from the old city to make mortar for his causeway, scraping the land clean like the top of a rock. Using this land bridge Alexander conquered the city of Tyrus. In Werner Keller's book "The Bible as History," he outlines Alexander's attack on the Phoenician city of Tyrus:

"This city well-fortified and protected by stout high walls was built on a small island which guarded the coastline. Alexander performed here a miracle of military ingenuity by building a 2,000 foot mole in the sea out to the island city. To safeguard the operations, mobile protective shields, so-called "tortoises" had to be employed. Despite this the construction of the causeway was greatly hindered by an incessant hail of missiles. Meantime his engineers were on shore building veritable monsters: "Helepoleis." These were mobile protective towers many stories high, which held the detachments of bowmen and light artillery. A drawbridge on the front of the towers enabled a surprise attack to be made on the enemy's walls. They were the highest siege towers ever used in the history of war. Each of them had twenty stories and the topmost platform towered at a height of over 160 feet far above the highest city walls.

When after seven months preparation these monsters, bristling with weapons, slowly and clumsily rolled towards Tyre, the fate of the maritime stronghold, which was considered impregnable, was sealed."

Tyrus would continue to be rebuilt until Muslims completely annihilated the city in 1290 AD, never to rise again. To this day the only thing that exists is a small fishing village where any time of the day one can see men drying their nets. As to the old city of Tyrus, nothing remains. Something was rebuilt at the same site, but it was no more the ancient city of Tyrus than it was the city of Seattle.

In recapping the fulfilled prophecies of the destruction of Tyrus:

- *(vs. 3) Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up.*

Not only was Nebuchadnezzar's army made up of these "many nations" but many nations had come up against Tyrus until it was completely destroyed in 1290AD.

- (vs. 4 & 12) *And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock.*

And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water. For thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee;

During his campaign through Asia, Alexander ordered the rubble of the old Tyrus, which had been destroyed more than 200 years before, to be cast into the sea. Nothing was left behind but barren rock. With this rubble he built a causeway to attack the "new city" of Tyrus (333 BC), which had been rebuilt on the island, thus enabling him to conquer it.

- (vs. 7) **For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people.**

Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city after a 13-year siege (585-573 BC). It was rebuilt on an island half-mile from the coast.

- (vs. 14) *And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: for I the LORD have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.*

Even today native fishermen use this site for the drying their nets. During the crusades Tyrus was finally brought to the ground by the Muslims. The old city of Tyrus was never rebuilt (1290 AD). Today the only thing remaining is a small fishing village where you can see fishermen drying their nets.

- (vs. 21) **I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord GOD.**

The destruction of Tyrus was so complete that almost no stone was found in its original place.