

Jeremiah

Chapter 49

Judgment on Ammon

Concerning the Ammonites. Thus says the LORD: “Has Israel no sons? Has he no heir? Why then has Milcom dispossessed Gad, and his people settled in its cities? 2 Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will cause the battle cry to be heard against Rabbah of the Ammonites; it shall become a desolate mound, and its villages shall be burned with fire; then Israel shall dispossess those who dispossessed him, says the LORD. 3 “Wail, O Heshbon, for Ai is laid waste! Cry out, O daughters of Rabbah! Put on sackcloth, lament, and run to and fro among the hedges! For Milcom shall go into exile, with his priests and his officials. 4 Why do you boast of your valleys, O faithless daughter, who trusted in her treasures, saying, ‘Who will come against me?’ 5 Behold, I will bring terror upon you, declares the Lord GOD of hosts, from all who are around you, and you shall be driven out, every man straight before him, with none to gather the fugitives. 6 “But afterward I will restore the fortunes of the Ammonites, declares the LORD.”

49:1 *Concerning the Ammonites.* See Eze 25:1–7; Am 1:13–15; Zep 2:8–11. Ammon was east of the Jordan and north of Moab. (CSB)

Descendants of Lot and therefore a people related to Israel (Gn 19:38; Dt 2:19). (TLSB)

no sons...no heirs – This is someone who may legitimately take possession of the land which was now left vacant, since Israel had been led away into exile. (Kretzmann)

When the Assyrians carried the East-Jordan Israelites captive, the Ammonites moved in and occupied the territory allotted to the tribe of Gad, claiming that they, not Israel, were its heir (cf 2Ki 15:29). Cf Jgs 3:13; 1Sm 11:1; 2Ch 20:1 for earlier hostile acts against Israel. After the fall of Jerusalem, the king of Ammon plotted the death of Gedaliah (Jer 40:13–14). (TLSB)

dispossessed Gad. Probably refers to the aftermath of Tiglath-Pileser III’s conquest of Transjordan in 734–732 B.C. The Ammonites later apparently recovered from their defeat and overran some of the territory owned by the Israelite tribe of Gad. (CSB)

"Judah was by right of kindred the heir, not Ammon; but Ammon joined with Nebuchadnezzar against Judah and Jerusalem, 2 Kings 24, 2, and exulted over its fall, Ps. 83, 4-7. 8; Zeph. 2, 8. 9. It had already in the days of Jeroboam, in Israel's affliction, tried to enlarge its border, 2 Kings 14, 26; Amos 1, 1." (Kretzmann)

his. Molech’s. (CSB)

49:2 *and its villages* – These would be her suburbs, the smaller cities and towns within her sphere of influence. (Kretzmann)

Israel shall dispossess – They will be in a position once more to occupy the land which the Ammonites had gotten by unfair means. On account of this misfortune, wailing and lamenting would be in order in the land of the Ammonites. (Kretzmann)

49:3 *Heshbon*. A city in Moab (48:34). Perhaps captured by the Ammonites, or there were two cities by this name. (TLSB)

At that time occupied by the Ammonite. (Kretzmann)

Ai. Not the Ai of Jos 8. Its location is unknown. (CSB)

Unidentified site in Ammon, though a place by that name in Israel is well attested (Gn 12:8; Jsh 7–8). (TLSB)

hedges. The Hebrew for this word refers not to city walls but to walls separating vineyards from each other (see Nu 21:24). (CSB)

Stone walls around fields, vineyards, and sheepfolds (Nu 32:16, 24, 36; Ps 89:40; Na 3:17; Zep 2:6), where fleeing people could hide. (TLSB)

shall go into exile ... and officials. The reason for the Lord's punishment upon Ammon is now set forth, as the prophet pictures the pride, the stubbornness, and the security of its inhabitants. (Kretzmann)

49:4 *faithless daughter*. Applied to the people of Judah in 31:22. (CSB)

you trust in her treasurers. Spoken to Moab in 48:7. (CSB)

Who will come against me? According to Josephus (*Antiquities*, 10.9.7) Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Ammon in the 23rd year of his reign (582 B.C.). (CSB)

The Ammonites boasted that no enemy could successfully launch a campaign against their land. (Kretzmann)

49:5 *bring terror upon you* – Their misfortune and overthrow would bring terror upon them. (Kretzmann)

none to gather the fugitives – No one would make any attempt to bring about so much as a semblance of order among the scattered fugitives. According to secular accounts the overthrow of Ammon took place in the fifth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, after King Baalis had executed the murder of Gedaliah, chap. 40, 14. (Kretzmann)

49:6† In their case also the Messianic promises were held out to all those who would return to the Lord in true repentance. (Kretzmann)

49:1–6 The Ammonites had opposed Israel and taken some of the territory God had given to the tribe of Gad. For Ammon's hostility toward God's people, Ammon will be destroyed (a prophecy fulfilled in 582 BC). Opposition to the Lord and His people inevitably brings destruction and condemnation. God provides many opportunities for repentance, even for those nations that oppose His people or His will. Through these opportunities, we see God's marvelous grace. • Gracious God, grant us wisdom to humble ourselves before You, to repent, and then to trust Your judgments; in Jesus Christ. Amen. (TLSB)

Judgment on Edom

7 Concerning Edom. Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Is wisdom no more in Teman? Has counsel perished from the prudent? Has their wisdom vanished? 8 Flee, turn back, dwell in the depths, O inhabitants of Dedan! For I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him, the time when I punish him.

9 If grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave gleanings? If thieves came by night, would they not destroy only enough for themselves? **10** But I have stripped Esau bare; I have uncovered his hiding places, and he is not able to conceal himself. His children are destroyed, and his brothers, and his neighbors; and he is no more. **11** Leave your fatherless children; I will keep them alive; and let your widows trust in me.” **12** For thus says the LORD: “If those who did not deserve to drink the cup must drink it, will you go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished, but you must drink. **13** For I have sworn by myself, declares the LORD, that Bozrah shall become a horror, a taunt, a waste, and a curse, and all her cities shall be perpetual wastes.” **14** I have heard a message from the LORD, and an envoy has been sent among the nations: “Gather yourselves together and come against her, and rise up for battle! **15** For behold, I will make you small among the nations, despised among mankind. **16** The horror you inspire has deceived you, and the pride of your heart, you who live in the clefts of the rock, who hold the height of the hill. Though you make your nest as high as the eagle's, I will bring you down from there, declares the LORD. **17** “Edom shall become a horror. Everyone who passes by it will be horrified and will hiss because of all its disasters. **18** As when Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring cities were overthrown, says the LORD, no man shall dwell there, no man shall sojourn in her. **19** Behold, like a lion coming up from the jungle of the Jordan against a perennial pasture, I will suddenly make him run away from her. And I will appoint over her whomever I choose. For who is like me? Who will summon me? What shepherd can stand before me? **20** Therefore hear the plan that the LORD has made against Edom and the purposes that he has formed against the inhabitants of Teman: Even the little ones of the flock shall be dragged away. Surely their fold shall be appalled at their fate. **21** At the sound of their fall the earth shall tremble; the sound of their cry shall be heard at the Red Sea. **22** Behold, one shall mount up and fly swiftly like an eagle and spread his wings against Bozrah, and the heart of the warriors of Edom shall be in that day like the heart of a woman in her birth pains.”

49:7–22 Shares many memorable phrases and concepts with the book of Obadiah. (CSB)

49:7 *Concerning Edom.* These were the descendants of Esau (Gen 36:1) and were the enemies of Israel. (TLSB)

wisdom. For which Edom was justly famed. (CSB)

Teman. An important Edomite town located south of the Dead Sea. In v. 20 it is used in parallelism with Edom itself. (CSB)

wisdom vanished – The rhetorical question has, of course, a strong negative significance: Wisdom and common sense seem to have disappeared entirely. (Kretzmann)

49:8 *Turn and flee.* See v. 24; 46:21. (CSB)

Dedan. See 25:23; see also notes on Isa 21:13; Eze 25:13. (CSB)

Esau. The patriarch Jacob’s brother, and another name for Edom (see Ge 25:29–30; 36:1), just as Israel was another name for Jacob (see Ge 32:28). The fact that Esau was Jacob’s brother made Edom’s enmity toward Israel all the more reprehensible (see Am 1:11; Ob 10). (CSB)

49:9 *not leave gleanings.* For the poor to glean. (CSB)

The Chaldeans, however, would be less considerate in their treatment of Idumea. (Kretzmann)

49:10 *strip ... bare.* Where his treasures were hidden. (Kretzmann)

is no more. See 31:15; Isa 19:7. (CSB)

His direct descendants ceased from being a nation. Edom ceased to be a factor politically at the time of the Romans. (Kretzmann)

49:11 *leave your fatherless* - The words imply an exhibition of mercy on the part of the Lord toward all those who, in true sorrow over their sins, turn to Him for help. (Kretzmann)

49:12 Echoed from 25:28–29. (CSB)

those who do not deserve ... must drink it. Though they are God's chosen ones, the people of Judah will be punished because of their sin (see Am 3:2). (CSB)

Troubles are not always punishments for certain past deeds, but they are God's works, intended for our benefit, and that God's power might be made more apparent in our weakness" (Ap XIIB 63). (TLSB)

Even the fact that Israel had been chosen as God's people did not give them exemption and deliverance from God's punishment if they took part in the idolatry of the heathen; how much more, then, would the heathen be subject to the judgment of Jehovah! (Kretzmann)

49:13 *have sworn by myself* – There is no greater name in which the Lord can take an oath (see Heb 6:13); Isa 45:23; see also 22:5; 51:14. (CSB)

Bozrah. Not the Bozrah ; the Edomite Bozrah was probably the capital of Edom in the days of Jeremiah. (CSB)

49:14–16 Almost identical with Ob 1–4. Cf ch 48, where Jeremiah quoted from Is. (TLSB)

49:15 *make you small* – This is in just retribution for Edom's pride. (Kretzmann)

49:16 *despised among mankind.* Edom's besetting sin (see v. 4; Ob 11–13; cf. 48:29–30). (CSB)

This is the insolence usually having this influence upon the heart of the proud, to deceive them, wherefore the Lord now calls out. (Kretzmann)

rock. Perhaps a reference to Petra, the most spectacular of the mountain strongholds for which Edom was noted. (CSB)

49:18 *Sodom and Gomorrah... were overthrown.* See Ge 19:24–25. Later calamities were often compared with the one that befell Sodom and Gomorrah. (CSB)

their neighboring cities. Primarily Admah and Zeboiim (see Ge 14:2, 8; Dt 29:23; Hos 11:8). (CSB)

49:19 *jungle of the Jordan.* Providing cover for lions (see 49:19; 50:44; Zec 11:3). If the Hebrew for this word means "flooding." (CSB)

The banks of the Jordan were a dense jungle, a hiding place for Asiatic lions. (TLSB)

Literally, "And in a land of peace thou wast secure, how wilt thou do along the wooded banks of Jordan?" The comparison is between an inhabited district, with its comparative security, and a country of primitive forests and undergrowth, where wild animals abounded, the application being the same as in the first part of the verse. (Kretzmann)

49:20 *flock*. The people of Edom. (CSB)

shall be dragged away – literally, "Most certainly they will be dragged away, the feeble of the flock," the Edomites being helpless before the attack of the invaders. (Kretzmann)

49:21 *cry shall be heard at the Red Sea*. Their cry would be so loud people at a great distance would hear it. (TLSB)

49:22 *eagle*. Represents Nebuchadnezzar in 48:40 (see note there), and probably here also. A more complete subjugation of the Edomites, however, was accomplished by Nabatean Arabs (perhaps the "desert jackals" of Mal 1:3) beginning c. 550 B.C. (CSB)

like the heart of a woman in her birth pains – No matter how impregnable the position of God's enemies may seem in the eyes of human beings, they will quickly fall before the attack of the Lord. (Kretzmann)

49:7–22 Famous for their wisdom, the Edomites have foolishly opposed God (like their ancestor Esau). They will be "stripped bare" by God's justice. Jeremiah uses a vineyard metaphor to state that none shall escape God's righteous judgment. Human pride inevitably leads to disaster, regardless of a person's wisdom or natural intellect. Wise or foolish by the world's standards, salvation belongs to everyone who trusts in Jesus Christ, for He alone is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6). • Father, teach us true wisdom through faith and insight through Your Word. Amen. (TLSB)

Judgment on Damascus

23 Concerning Damascus: **m** "Hamath and Arpad are confounded, for they have heard bad news; they melt in fear, they are troubled like the sea that cannot be quiet. **24** Damascus has become feeble, she turned to flee, and panic seized her; anguish and sorrows have taken hold of her, as of a woman in labor. **25** How is the famous city not forsaken, the city of my joy? **26** Therefore her young men shall fall in her squares, and all her soldiers shall be destroyed in that day, declares the LORD of hosts. **27** And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall devour the strongholds of Ben-hadad."

49:23 *Concerning Damascus*. Capital of Syria (Aram), c 60 mi NE of the Sea of Chinnereth. (TLSB)

Hamath. An important city in the kingdom of Aram. (CSB)

C 100 mi N of Damascus,. (TLSB) C 100 mi N of Hamath. Cf 2Ki 10:32–33; 13:3, 7, 22 for earlier invasions of Israel by Syrian kings. (TLSD)

This was a powerful city on the Orontes and formerly the capital of a country of the same name. (Kretzmann)

Arpad. C 100 mi N of Hamath. Cf 2Ki 10:32–33; 13:3, 7, 22 for earlier invasions of Israel by Syrian kings. (TLSB)

troubled like the restless sea. See Isa 57:20 (CSB)

49:25 *forsaken* – How was it that the place of delight, as Damascus was called of old, was not abandoned by its inhabitants, so that they might have saved their lives by a speedy flight? (Kretzmann)

city of My joy? Damascus, one of the oldest continuously occupied cities in the world, is a lively center of trade at the juncture of three continents, a favored location. (TLSB)

49:23–27 Damascus (capital of Aram) had long opposed God’s people and often plotted against them. Damascus came under Babylonian domination shortly after Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar. No matter how strong or powerful God’s enemies are, they all fall in the end. God’s victory over opposing forces accomplishes two things: (1) it shows God’s power over the gods of defeated nations, with the purpose of their salvation; (2) it means life and salvation for His people. • Lord, may we always see Your loving hand guiding all nations toward eternal salvation, regardless of how hopeless times may seem. Amen. (TLSB)

Judgment on Kedar and Hazor

28 Concerning Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon struck down. Thus says the LORD: “Rise up, advance against Kedar! Destroy the people of the east! 29 Their tents and their flocks shall be taken, their curtains and all their goods; their camels shall be led away from them, and men shall cry to them: ‘Terror on every side!’ 30 Flee, wander far away, dwell in the depths, O inhabitants of Hazor! declares the LORD. For Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has made a plan against you and formed a purpose against you. 31 “Rise up, advance against a nation at ease, that dwells securely, declares the LORD, that has no gates or bars, that dwells alone. 32 Their camels shall become plunder, their herds of livestock a spoil. I will scatter to every wind those who cut the corners of their hair, and I will bring their calamity from every side of them, declares the LORD. 33 Hazor shall become a haunt of jackals, an everlasting waste; no man shall dwell there; no man shall sojourn in her.”

9:28 *Kedar ... Hazor.* Settlements and villages in the desert southeast of Syria (not the city of Hazor north of the Sea of Chinnereth; Jsh 11:1–2). These settlements were occupied by Bedouin descendants of Ishmael, Abraham’s son by Hagar. A Babylonian army invaded the area in 599 BC. (TLSB)

kingdoms of Hazor. See vv. 30, 33; not the Hazor north of the Sea of Galilee (see Jos 11:1). These kingdoms may have included Dedan, Tema, Buz and other Arab regions, since the Hebrew root of the proper name Hazor often serves as a common noun meaning “settlement” (see especially Isa 42:11; see also Ge 25:16). (CSB)

Nebuchadnezzar ... struck down. In 599–598 B.C. (CSB)

people of the East. See Job 1:3; Eze 25:4. The Hebrew for this phrase is translated “eastern peoples” in Jdg 6:3. (CSB)

From the desert regions east of Israel, represented by Kedar and Hazor. (TLSB)

These were the people of Canaan designated all the wilderness dwellers of Arabia. (Kretzmann)

49:30 *dwell in the depths.* They were hiding themselves in remote places. (Kretzmann)

49:31 *at ease.* Completely secure (see Job 21:23). (CSB)

This was a tranquil tribe, having no presentiment of evil. (Kretzmann)

dwells securely. In safety, unsuspecting (see Jdg 18:7; Eze 38:11 (CSB))

has no gates or bars. Lives in unwalled villages (see Dt 3:5; cf. 1Sa 23:7). (CSB)

The people dwelt in tents, not walled cities. (TLSB)

alone. A condition that elsewhere characterizes Israel (see Nu 23:9; Dt 33:28). (CSB)

On with little or no intercourse with other nations or tribes, from which they might expect assistance in case of an attack. (Kretzmann)

49:33 *No man ... dwell there.* Repeated verbatim from v. 18. (CSB)

This prophecy was fulfilled when the Chaldeans, on their way to the West and South, sent detachments of troops to bring these nomadic tribes into subjection. (Kretzmann)

49:28–33 The people of Kedar and Hazor lived in unwalled villages and presented no obstacle to the armies of Nebuchadnezzar that overran them at the beginning of the sixth century BC. Even those sinners who feel safe from God’s judgment will feel the sting of God’s wrath. The Lord does not delight in the death of sinners but wants all people to be saved through faith in the Messiah, Jesus (cf Ezk 18:23). • Help us, O Lord, to find our security only in Your love and grace through Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit to guard our souls unto eternity. Amen. (TLSB)

Judgment on Elam

34 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning Elam, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah. **35** Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Behold, I will break the bow of Elam, the mainstay of their might. **36** And I will bring upon Elam the four winds from the four quarters of heaven. And I will scatter them to all those winds, and there shall be no nation to which those driven out of Elam shall not come. **37** I will terrify Elam before their enemies and before those who seek their life. I will bring disaster upon them, my fierce anger, declares the LORD. I will send the sword after them, until I have consumed them, **38** and I will set my throne in Elam and destroy their king and officials, declares the LORD. **39** “But in the latter days I will restore the fortunes of Elam, declares the LORD.”

49:34 *Elam.* 200 miles East of Baylon. Its city if Suza was to become one of capitals of the Medo-Persian Empire. Elam, which liest east of Babylon, allied with Babylon in her conquest of the Assyrians. (TLSB)

Zedekiah. Ruled 597–586 B.C. (CSB)

49:35 *bow.* The Elamites were skilled archers (see Isa 22:6). (CSB)

This would break their military power. (TLSB)

49:37 *I will bring disaster upon them...consumed them.* The Hebrew for this sentence is repeated verbatim from 9:16. (CSB)

They will be so shattered that their identity as a separate nation, would be lost. (Kretzmann)

49:38 *set my throne in.* For the fulfillment see 39:3. Since the gateway of a city was the place where its ruling council sat, the Babylonians replaced Judah's royal authority with their own (cf. 43:10; 49:38). (CSB)

49:39† Jews from Elam were a part of the multitude in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Ac 2:9). (TLSB)

From this country also there were some who accepted the Messiah as their Lord and Savior. It is interesting to note that among the strangers present on the great day of Pentecost to hear the sermon of Peter there were also people of Elam. Cf. Acts 2, 9. (Kretzmann)

49:34–39 Elam now stands before the Lord to receive His judgment. God finds Elam guilty of supporting Babylon in her war against the Judeans. He will scatter the Elamites throughout the world—their king and officials destroyed (v 38). In mercy, God does not completely destroy Elam. God judges all nations, yet He is Savior for all the earth and every people. • Enable us, heavenly Father, to reach out with the precious Gospel message to all nations, both near and far. Amen. (TLSB)