

# Book of Ezekiel

## Chapter 25

*Theme: Prophecies against the nations:  
the Ammonites, Moab, Edom, the Philistines*

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**Missler Introduction: The Nations React**

Now Ezekiel shifts gears, and from Chapters 25 through 32 the subject will be how the surrounding nations of Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, and Egypt regard the fall of Jerusalem.

It will not be a case of the Lord telling those 7 surrounding nations that they were going to get theirs; instead, the words against those nations were for the instruction of Israel. God's focus was still Israel.

God's faithful promise to Abraham was, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." Genesis 12:3. We also know that judgment must begin at the House of God. 1 Peter 4:17. "Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile." Romans 2:9.

For 24 chapters we have been reading about God's judgment on the Nation Israel - "the Jew first." In the next few chapters we are going to read about God's judgment on the nations regarding their reactions to the fall of Jerusalem, and a principle is involved. See Matthew 25:31-33, the Sheep and Goats Parable, it tells us who is going to be judged this way, the nations. It says so, and the principle involved is how they treated God's People.

Ammon, Moab, and Edom descended from Shem. Tyre may have descended from Japeth. Philistia, Zidon, and Egypt descended from Ham.

**Constable: Oracles Against Foreign Nations CHS. 25—32**

It is appropriate that this section appears at this point in Ezekiel, between the messages announcing judgment on Judah and Jerusalem for sin (chs. 4—24) and the messages announcing future blessings for Israel (chs. 33—48). It heightens dramatic tension as the reader wonders what will be the fate of Israel now in view of God's promises. Ezekiel had anticipated and announced the judgment of Judah. The destruction of Jerusalem caused Judah's hateful neighbors to rejoice at her downfall. However, God announced through Ezekiel that they should not gloat because He would judge them for their attitude toward and treatment of His chosen people. All nations will answer for their sins, not just Israel. This whole section is a testimony to the faithfulness of God to His promise to curse nations that cursed Israel (Gen. 12:3). Other reasons that God would judge these nations also receive attention in some of these oracles, such as pride and oppression of other people, but all of them contain references to these nations' hostile treatment of Israel.

Oracles against foreign nations are an aspect of God's covenantal restoration promises to Israel (centrally located in Lev. 26:40-45 and Deut. 30:1-10). The reason for them is fairly simple: Israel's foes must decrease if Israel is to increase. The promise of power over enemies is a reversal of the curses of subjugation by enemies, as Deut. 30:7 says: 'The Lord your God will put all these curses on your enemies.' Such oracles, then, gave great reassurance to righteous Israelites that no matter how severe their own circumstances might be at the moment, the time was coming when the nation—in whatever future generation it might occur—would experience deliverance from exile and oppression and exaltation to God's favor and blessing. From the point of view of orthodox Israelites, the oracles against foreign nations were oracles of hope.

MAJOR ORACLES AGAINST FOREIGN NATIONS						
	Isaiah	Jeremiah	Ezekiel	Amos	Obadiah	Zephaniah
Ammon		49:1-6	25:1-7	1:13-15		2:8-11
Moab	15—16	48	25:8-11	2:1-3		2:8-11
Edom	21:11-12; 34:5-17	49:7-22	25:12-14; 35	1:11-12	1-21	
Philistia	14:29-32	47	25:15-17	1:6-8		2:4-7
Tyre and Sidon	23		26:1—28:19 28:20-24	1:9-10		
Egypt	19	46:1-26	29—32			
Damascus	17	49:23-27		1:3-5		
Babylon	13:1— 14:23	50—51				
Ethiopia						2:12
Assyria						2:13-15

In addition to the major oracles against foreign nations in these prophetic books, Jonah and Nahum spoke to the situation in Assyria, and Daniel foretold the fate of Babylon and other nations. All the prophetic books in the Old Testament, except Hosea, contain some references to the future of the nations.

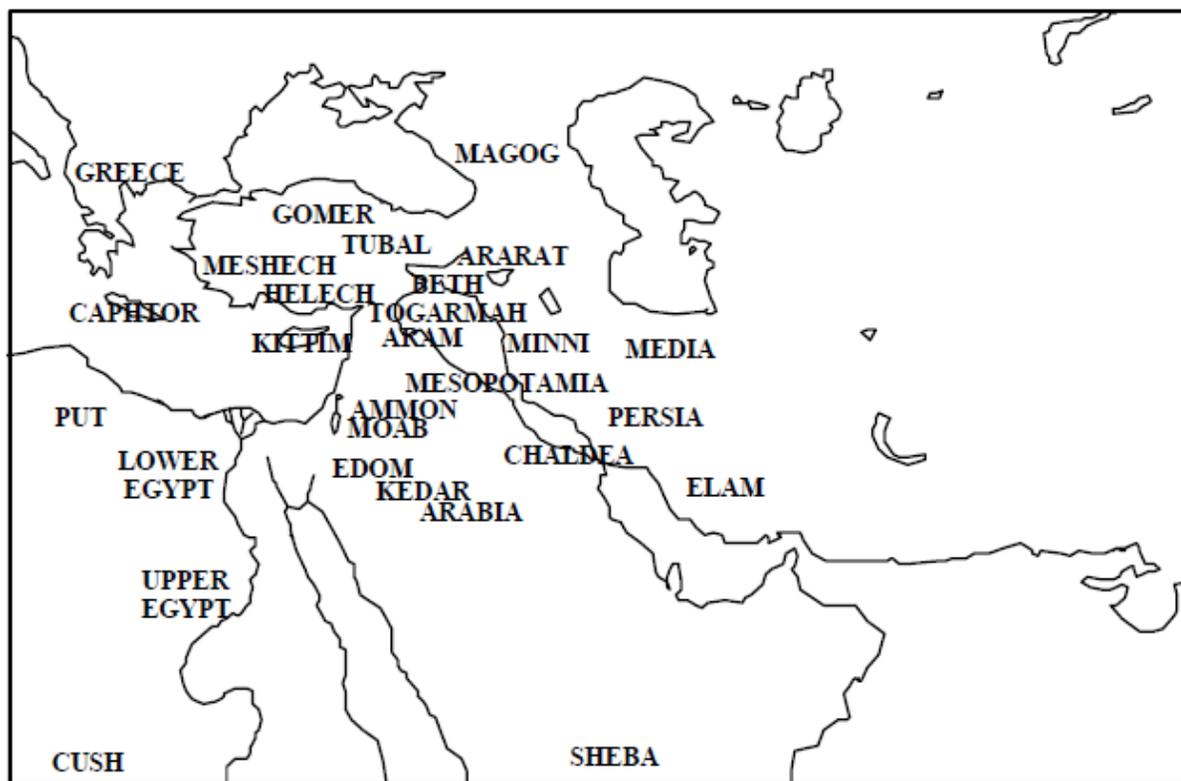
It is probably significant that Ezekiel mentioned seven nations, as did Jeremiah and Amos. Amos, who ministered in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, dealt with the Southern Kingdom of Judah as a foreign nation (Amos 2:4-5). The Jews regarded seven of anything as a divine work and or a complete number, dating back to God's creation of the cosmos in seven days. Thus these seven nations and city-states would have signified to the Jews that God would judge all such hostile pagan nations, not just these seven.<sup>369</sup>

Ezekiel did not record an oracle against Babylon. The commentators offer various explanations, but the one that appeals to me most is that God did not give him one, perhaps because for him to denounce Babylon in Babylon would have been very dangerous for the Jews. Daniel denounced Babylon in Babylon because God led him to do so and protected him and his people from danger.<sup>1</sup>

**[seven Gentile powers]** Seven Gentile powers to be judged:

1. Ammon (Ezekiel 25:1-7)
2. Moab (Ezekiel 25:8-11)
3. Edom (Ezekiel 25:12-14)
4. Philistia (Ezekiel 25:15-17)
5. Tyre (Ezekiel 26:1-28:19)
6. Zidon (Ezekiel 28:20-26)
7. Egypt (Ezekiel 29:1-32:32)

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Thomas Constable, Notes on Ezekiel, 2010



**Constable: Oracles Against Judah's Closest Neighbors Ch 25:**

This chapter ties in very closely with the preceding one. Evidently all the messages in these two chapters date from the beginning of the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem (24:1-2). Even though this chapter begins a series of messages that all deal with God's judgment on the nations, the messages in this chapter followed on the heels of the announcement of the siege. It is as though God was warning Israel's closest neighbors not to gloat over her fate or to hope to profit from it since they too would undergo divine wrath in the form of Babylonian invasion. They would not triumph over Israel. Ezekiel had referred to their judgment earlier (21:20, 28-32) as had Jeremiah (Jer. 9:25-26; 25:1-26; 27:1-11; 48:1—49:22). Their captivity would also last 70 years (Jer. 25:11), but their larger judgment would continue, as Israel's would, from the time of their defeat by Nebuchadnezzar until the second coming of Christ (i.e., the times of the Gentiles, Luke 21:24; cf. Isa. 11:14; Dan. 11:41; Joel 3:1-4). The description of the first four nations proceeds in an essentially clockwise direction from east to west whereas the remaining three judgments deal with Tyre, Sidon, and Egypt north to south.

The amount of space dedicated to each nation does not necessarily correspond to its importance in the ancient Near East of the sixth century B.C. Rather, by concentrating at length on two nations, mentioning at more-average length several others, and touching only briefly on yet others, this section of prophecies gives a realistic *over-all* impression of both thoroughness and variety.

The four messages in this chapter each have four parts: an introduction, an indictment, a punishment, and an outcome.

### **Messages Against foreign Nations (25:1-32:32)**

These messages were given concerning seven nations which surrounded Judah. The Ammonites were judged because of their joy over the desecration of the temple, the Moabites because they scorned Judah as special people, the Edomites because of their special hatred of the Jews, and the Philistines because of their vengeance. All these nations would soon realize that God is supreme. Nations today are also under limits imposed by God.<sup>2</sup>

**25:1ff** Ezekiel 25-32 are God's word concerning the seven nations surrounding Judah. The judgments in these chapters are not simply the vengeful statements of Jews against their enemies; they are God's judgments on nations that failed to acknowledge the one true God and fulfill the good purposes God intended for them. The Ammonites were judged because of their joy over the desecration of the temple (Ezekiel 25:1-7), the Moabites because they found pleasure in Judah's wickedness (Ezekiel 25:8-11), the Edomites because of their racial hatred for the Jews (Ezekiel 25:12-14), and the Philistines because they sought revenge against Judah for defeating them in battle (Ezekiel 25:15-17).<sup>3</sup>

### **Wycliffe: Oracles Against Foreign Nations. 25:1–32:32.**

The oracles announcing punishment on Israel's hostile neighbors (chs. 25–32) constitute a transition between the prophecies of judgment on Judah and Jerusalem (chs. 1–24), and the predictions of her restoration (chs. 33–39; 40–48). Oracles against foreign nations are grouped together in other prophets also: Isa 13–23; Jer 46–51; Amos 1; 2; Zeph 2:4-15.

Before the ideal state can be realized, enemies must be destroyed and Israel made secure in her land (28:24, 26; 34:28, 29). Seven nations, possibly a symbol of completeness, are destined for retribution. Five of them had formed an alliance against Chaldea (Jer 27:1-3). Babylon, the anti-God power of the OT, is not included in the denunciations, perhaps because that nation was the instrument of God's justice (29:17 ff.), although Ezekiel knew the character of the Chaldeans (7:21, 22, 24; 28:6; 30:11, 12; 31:12).

The Lord was to mete out chastisement upon Israel's surrounding foes because of their demeanor toward Israel (25:3, 8, 12, 15; 26:2; 29:6) and because of their ungodly pride and self-deification (28; 29:3). Here, as in the foreign oracles of the other prophets, is exhibited the international outlook of Hebrew prophecy, with its stress on the universal sovereignty of God and the moral responsibility of all mankind. "A nation's rank among the peoples depends upon the contribution which it makes to God's purpose for mankind and upon its homage to His universal rule" (Cook, ICC, p. 282).

The nations which fall under the prophet's scrutiny are Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia (25:1-7, 8-11, 12-14, 15-17), Tyre (three oracles: 26; 27; 28:1-19), Sidon (28:20-26), and Egypt (seven oracles: 29:1-16, 17-21; 30:1-19, 20-26; 31; 32:1-16, 17-32). The first four oracles are short and prosaic (ch. 25), while the pronouncements against Tyre (chs. 26–28) and Egypt (chs. 29–32) are long, magnificent poems, full of color and fire, well illustrating Ezekiel's varied style. The dates attached to some of the oracles locate

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<sup>2</sup> Life Application Notes from the Life Application Bible

<sup>3</sup> Life Application Notes from the Life Application Bible

this section between 587/586 B.C. (seven months before the fall of Jerusalem, 29:1) and 571/570 B.C. (16 years after its fall, 29:17).<sup>4</sup>

**McGee Introduction:** This brings us to a new section (chs. 25–32) which deals with the prophecies concerning the nations around Israel. All of these nations, as far as we are concerned today, have long since disappeared from the face of the earth, and the prophecies about them have been literally fulfilled.

Up to this point, Ezekiel has been giving out prophecies concerning Jerusalem and the land of Israel because the *final* deportation of the children of Israel has not yet arrived. To the very last, the people held on to the faint hope, at the urging and encouragement of the false prophets, that God would not destroy Jerusalem, and the land of Israel would remain. After all, wasn't it God's method of communication to the world? When the destruction of Jerusalem occurred, the people were startled; they were dumbfounded. I imagine the word came when the headline in the *Babylonian Bugle* read: JERUSALEM DESTROYED! And the opening line read something like this: "On this day Nebuchadnezzar with his armies entered the city of Jerusalem, having breached the wall."

Ezekiel was proved accurate in his prophecies, and from here on he will not be giving any prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, because he is not writing *history*; he is writing *prophecy*. So now he turns to the surrounding nations. What will be their fate?

There is a tremendous message for us in this chapter. There lies God's city in ruins. I see standing over that city a man by the name of Jeremiah. Tears are coursing down his cheeks; he is a man with a broken heart. He is the one who mirrors the One who will be coming to earth in five hundred or so years. He, too, will sit over Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives and will weep over the city knowing that destruction is coming again because its people will have turned their backs on the living and true God.

I see another prophet. He is not weeping, and I will tell you why. At this same time his lovely wife died, and the Scriptures make it clear that he loved her. This prophet is Ezekiel, and he is told not to mourn. On the surface he is hard-boiled.

God said that He would be that way. Jeremiah and Ezekiel reveal the two sides of God in this matter. This is something we need to see today. God is tenderhearted. Like Jeremiah the Lord Jesus Christ is merciful and kind. He was not willing that any should perish, so He died in the cross for us. But listen to Him speaking to the cities that rejected Him: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. And thou Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell" (Luke 10:13–15). That is strong language coming from the gentle Jesus! He also said, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them" (Luke 11:44). The Lord denounced them in such a way that it makes your hair curl! There are two sides to God, and He is the same today. We get a warped view of Him when all we hear is, "God is love, God is love." It is true that God is love, but don't lose sight of the fact that God is also holy. He is righteous and He will judge. You are not rushing into

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<sup>4</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 25:1). Chicago: Moody Press.

heaven on the little love boat today. You will go to heaven only if you put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, who shed His blood and gave His life on the cross. Then you will have eternal life and will be covered with the righteousness of Christ, standing complete and acceptable in Him. If you reject His salvation, there will be nothing left but judgment.

We have a warped view of God today. In this connection I always think of a judge who lived in west Texas many years ago. He had a reputation for making quick decisions. Other judges just didn't move as fast as he did. A friend asked him one day, "What is the secret of your making quick decisions?" "Well," he replied, "I'll tell you what I do. I just listen to the defense, and then I hand in a decision." The friend was startled. He asked the judge, "Don't you ever listen to the prosecution?" The judge said, "I used to, but that always confused me." And there are a lot of confused folks running around talking about the love of God, but we must never forget that He is also a God of judgment. Maybe that is the reason Ezekiel is a closed book, a sealed book to so many people. Liberal ministers encourage this by saying, "Nobody can understand the Book of Ezekiel." Well, you cannot understand it until you study it, that is for sure. We have had a remarkable principle laid down for us so far, and I hope we don't miss its message for us.

Now we come to the judging of the nations around Israel. I am not going to spend much time with them because they have long since passed off the stage, but they are important because they are to return. Only God can bring them back, and he says He will do that.<sup>5</sup>

God's judgment against the nations demonstrated His position as the only God. Gaining vengeance against the nations introduced Yahweh, the God of Israel, as Yahweh, the God of the universe (Eze 25:5, 7, 11, 14, 17; 26:6, 14; 28:22, 23, 24, 26; 29:6, 9, 16, 21; 30:8, 19, 25, 26; 32:15). See note on 1 Ki 20:13.

**OTS:** During the days when he was awaiting the arrival of the messenger with the news from Jerusalem Ezekiel directed his attention to neighboring nations. A section of foreign nation oracles like that which follows here appears also in Isaiah (chaps. 13–23) and Jeremiah (chaps. 46–51). Ezekiel devoted eight chapters to this material. Seven different nations were addressed, with Phoenicia and Egypt receiving the most attention. Commentators puzzle over the absence of any word concerning the fall of Babylon. Perhaps such an oracle would have stirred foolish resistance among the captives. Ezekiel began with the smaller nations which surrounded Judah.<sup>6</sup>

**ESV: Ezek. 25:1–32:32** Oracles against Foreign Nations. Poised at this moment in the dramatic downfall of Jerusalem, Ezekiel's tirade ends and the focus shifts. The fate of the city is left hanging as a collection of oracles against foreign nations is presented. While not all the oracles in this collection are dated, most seem to fall within the period 587–585 b.c. (for the exception, see 29:17). Almost every Prophetic Book includes prophecies addressed to nations other than Israel and Judah (e.g., Isaiah 13–23; Jeremiah 46–51; Amos 1–2; Zephaniah 2). Their primary theological role is to show that all peoples are under the dominion and discipline of the King of kings. Israel is uniquely God's own, yet

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<sup>5</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 24:27). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>6</sup> Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 25:1–17). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

all nations are subject to the one true God (cf. Amos 3:2; 9:7). The fate of every nation, whether for judgment or for blessing, is in God's hands. Implied hope for Israel is thus a secondary message of the condemnatory foreign-nation oracles. Further, the reasons for judgment found in the foreign and domestic oracles tend to cohere within a given book. In Ezekiel, just as Judah and Jerusalem are punished for impurity and oppression, so too are the foreign nations. However, Ezekiel often simply announces God's opposition to these nations without offering an explicit rationale. The oracles are arranged in three large sections: first, Judah's nearest neighbors are condemned (Ezekiel 25), followed by the extended collections of oracles against Tyre (chs. 26–28) and Egypt (chs. 29–32). Two smaller oracles—one against Sidon, the other looking to Israel's regathering—are embedded at the halfway point (28:20–26). In all, seven nations stand condemned.

**ESV: Ezek. 25:1–17** Against Judah's Neighbors. Apart from the old northern kingdom of Israel to the north, Judah had four immediate neighbors. Clockwise, they were Ammon on the northeast (vv. 1–7), Moab to the east across the Dead Sea (vv. 8–11), Edom to the south (vv. 12–14), and Philistia to the west (vv. 15–17). The oracles against these nations group into two pairs. Excluding Philistia, but including Tyre and Sidon (chs. 26–28), these nations had been part of a coalition with Judah against Babylon early in Zedekiah's reign (see Jer. 27:3). Each of these oracles has a similar structure, with formulaic address and conclusion, as well as similar content: condemnation for contemptuous cruelty of heart toward Judah.

**Chuck Smith:** Now beginning with chapter 25, God begins to pronounce His judgment upon the surrounding nations of Israel. And the first, of course, that of the Ammonites. We have today the city of Ammon, which comes from Ammonites, and the city of Ammon is the capitol of Jordan. And so the Ammonites and the Moabites who are going to be reviewed here for judgment are modern-day Moab. When we get to Edom, you are moving down to the southern part--or modern-day Jordan—when you move down into Edom, you are getting into southern Jordan and into Dedan, which is Saudi Arabia. And so these are the judgments proclaimed of God against these nations at that time.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Chuck Smith, Pastor / Founder Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, CA, Sermon Notes

## **Ezekiel 25:1**

**The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,**

### **The Ammonites (25:2-7)**

The first oracle against Ammon consists of two messages and consequently contains a double indictment and punishment. Ezekiel previously recorded an oracle against Ammon (21:28-32). Its placement there was evidently due to the presence of "sword of the Lord" terminology in that oracle, which the other prophecies in that chapter also contain, and the sequence of prophecies there.

#### **OTS: God's Word to Ammon (25:1-7).**

Ammon was located just to the east of the Jordan river. This nation was charged with mocking the plight of God's people when they experienced the judgment at the hands of their God. The Ammonites mocked when the Temple was profaned, when the land of Israel was made desolate, and when Judah was taken into captivity. Because of this, the Ammonites would be given to "the sons of the east" for a possession. These desert tribes would set their encampments and make their dwellings in the land of Ammon. They would take what they pleased of the fruit and milk of the land. Even Rabbah, capital of Ammon, would become a pasture for the camels and flocks of the invaders. Those who observed the fulfillment of this prediction would know that Yahweh alone is the only God (25:1-5).

God cannot stand the gloating of one people over the misfortune of another, especially if the misfortune had befallen *his* people. The Ammonites had clapped their hands, stamped their feet and rejoiced with all the scorn of their soul against the land of Israel. Therefore, Yahweh had stretched out his hand against Ammon. That nation would be given as spoil to other nations. The Ammonites would cease to exist as a distinct people. The fulfillment of these threats would cause those who knew of these predictions to recognize Yahweh as sole divinity (25:6f.).<sup>8</sup>

#### **Ron Daniel 1-7 Prophecy Against The Ammonites**

The first of the seven nations to be spoken against is Ammon. The Ammonites were Israel's neighbor to the northeast. They were distant relatives of Israel, dating back to the days of Lot, who was the son of Abraham's brother Haw-RAWN. This made him Abraham's nephew, the cousin of Isaac, and the second cousin of Israel.

You probably remember the story, though you probably would also like to forget it. After the destruction of Sodom and Gommorah, Lot and his two daughters took refuge in a cave. The women decided that he was the only one who was left to father children and said,

**(Gen. 19:32)** "Come, let us make our father drink wine, and let us lie with him, that we may preserve our family through our father."

The end result of that terrible thought was a deviant act:

**(Gen. 19:36-38)** Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. And the first-born bore a son, and called his name Moab; he is the

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<sup>8</sup> Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 25:1-7). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

father of the Moabites to this day. And as for the younger, she also bore a son, and called his name Ben-am-MEE; he is the father of the sons of Ammon to this day.

What is interesting to me is that the prophetic condemnation upon the Ammonites has nothing to do with their disturbing beginning. As a matter of fact, God was merciful to them. He told the Israelites when they were on their way towards the Promised Land...

**(Deut. 2:19)** ‘When you come opposite the sons of Ammon, do not harass them nor provoke them, for I will not give you any of the land of the sons of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot as a possession.’

However, they were forbidden from entering the assembly of the Lord (Deut. 23:3). This was...

**(Deut. 23:4)** because they did not meet you with food and water on the way when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you.

Indifference towards Israel, and active hostility. Either one of those practices will bring about a curse. Remember God's promise to Abraham and his descendants through Isaac and Jacob:

**(Gen. 12:3)** ...I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse...

But now in Ezekiel's day, they have really brought the condemnation of God down upon themselves as a nation. When they heard Jerusalem was attacked by Babylon, they danced in the streets.

Do you remember how offensive it was to us as Americans when we saw a similar sight? On September 11th, 2001, Palestinian television played the footage of the planes slamming into the World Trade Center. In response, Palestinians looked into the CNN news camera and cheered, jumping up and down, dancing in the streets, shouting for joy, and firing guns in the air. Similar scenes were repeated throughout the Arab world, in places like Beirut, Bagdad, and Indonesia.

As angry as that made me, I can only imagine how God felt when the same behavior was demonstrated on the day His chosen people were slaughtered and Jerusalem was laid low.

God vows prophetically that they will be given to the sons of the east. Rab-BAW, their capitol city, would become pasture land. Sure enough, it was just five years later that the Ammonites were attacked by the Babylonians.<sup>9</sup>

## **Ezekiel 25:2**

**Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them;**

The Lord directed His servant Ezekiel to set his face toward the nation of Ammon and to deliver a message of judgment from Him.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.rondaniel.com/library/26-Ezekiel/Ezekiel2501.pdf>

**Clarke: Set thy face against the Ammonites**—We have already seen, chap. 21:19, etc., that when Nebuchadnezzar left Babylon he was in doubt whether he should besiege Riblath, the capital of the Ammonites, or Jerusalem, the capital of the Jews, first: and having used his divination. he was determined, by the result, to attack Jerusalem the first. He did so and the Ammonites, seeing the success of his arms, made friends with him, and exulted in the ruin of the Jews. God resents this, and predicts their downfall with that of Edom, Moab, and the Philistines. The fulfillment of this prediction is not noted in Scripture: but Josephus tells us, that about five years after the taking of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar turned his arms against the Ammonites and Moabites, and afterwards against Egypt; and having subdued those nations, he returned to Babylon. Joseph. Antiq., 50 x., c. 2. Berosus states, as quoted by Josephus, contra App., that Nebuchadnezzar subdued Syria, Arabia, Phoenicia, and Egypt: and consequently, that he had brought under his dominion the Ammonites, Moabites, and Idumeans, who were included among the Philistines.<sup>10</sup>

**Wycliffe: Oracle Against Ammon. 25:1-7.**

For other denunciations, see 21:28-32; Amos 1:13-15; Zeph 2:8-11; Jer 49:1-6.

Ammon at one time possessed the land between the Arnon and the Jabbok rivers but had been pushed eastward by the Amorites (Judges 11:13; Num 21:21). An implacable foe of Israel through the years (Judges 10–11; I Sam 11; II Sam 10), Ammon is denounced in this oracle for its unholy glee and malice at the destruction of the Temple and the miseries of Israel and Judah (Ezk 25:3, 6). Post-Exilic references to Ammon are Neh 4:3; I Macc 5:6.<sup>11</sup>

**BKC 1-2:** Ezekiel had already pronounced judgment on Ammon (21:28-32). Now Ammon was singled out to head the list of nations that would feel the sting of divine judgment.

Ammon and Israel had been in conflict since the time of Jephthah during the period of the Judges (Jud. 10:6-11:33). Saul fought with the Ammonites to rescue Jabesh Gilead (1 Sam. 11:1-11), and David conquered Ammon (1 Chron. 19:1-20:3). Sometime after the death of Solomon the Ammonites regained their independence and renewed their hostilities with Judah. During Jehoshaphat's reign the Ammonites joined the Moabites and Edomites in an unsuccessful attack on Judah (2 Chron. 20:1-30). Ammon tried to expand her territory at Israel's expense (cf. Jer. 49:1), and she even sided initially with Nebuchadnezzar in an attempt to gain additional territory after Jehoiakim's revolt, about 600-597 B.C. (cf. 2 Kings 24:1-2).

In 593 B.C. Ammon joined a secret meeting of other potential conspirators to consider rebelling against Babylon (cf. Jer. 27:1-7). That plan did not materialize, but in 588 B.C. she did unite with Judah and Tyre against Babylon. So two ancient enemies, Judah and Ammon, were joined against a common foe.

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<sup>10</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Old Testament

<sup>11</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press.

When Nebuchadnezzar decided to attack Judah instead of Ammon (cf. Ezek. 21:18-27), Ammon was relieved that she had been spared. Instead of coming to Judah's aid, she rejoiced over Judah's misfortune, hoping to profit territorially from Judah's destruction.<sup>12</sup>

**McGee:** The Ammonites had a very bad beginning. They were a nomadic race descended from an incestuous relationship between Lot and his younger daughter (see Gen. 19:33–38). Their country lay along the Dead Sea. God said they would be made subject to Nebuchadnezzar, and they were.<sup>13</sup>

**ESV 1–7:** Against Ammon. Ammon and Moab fell to the Babylonians much later than Judah. Clearly, talk of “coalition” did nothing to help Judah's cause when the Babylonians overran it. Ammon receives two oracles, and the pattern is followed in the succeeding indictments: the basis of judgment is stated (**because**, Hb. *ya'an*), the outcome announced (**therefore**, Hb. *laken*), and the recognition formula follows by way of conclusion. The Ammon oracle, then, falls into two sections, with vv. 1–5 being more detailed than vv. 6–7.

### **Ezekiel 25:3**

**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;**

The Ammonites had rejoiced (cf. 26:2; 36:2) over the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem (cf. 24:21), the desolation of the land of Israel, and the exile of the Judahites (cf. 2 Kings 24:2; Jer. 49:1; Zeph. 2:8-10).

**BKC 3-7:** Against this background Ezekiel gave this prophecy. Twice he repeated his “because/therefore/you will know” formula to show the destruction of Ammon (vv. 3-5, 6-8). Ammon rejoiced over the destruction of the temple (mockingly saying Aha!) and the decimation and exile of the people of Judah. The Ammonites gloated over Judah's misfortune (v. 6).

God's judgment would fit Ammon's sin. They rejoiced over Judah's downfall so *they* would fall. God would send them to the people of the East, nomadic desert tribesmen, as a possession. These nomads would overrun the Ammonites, turning Rabbah, Ammon's capital city, into a pasture for camels and Ammon into a resting place for sheep. Because of Ammon's malice against Israel, Ammon would be plundered by other nations and destroyed (cut ... off).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 25:1–2). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>13</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 24:27). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>14</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 25:3–7). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

**Dake: Twelve Predictions—Fulfilled:**

1. Because you said, 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; therefore, I will deliver you to the men of the east for a possession (Ezekiel 25:3-4).
2. They will set their palaces in you (Ezekiel 25:4).
3. They will make their dwellings in you.
4. They will eat your fruit.
5. They will drink your milk.
6. I will make Rabbah a stable for camels (Ezekiel 25:5).
7. I will make the land of the Ammonites a couching place for flocks.
8. Because you have greatly rejoiced in your heart with despite against the land of Israel; therefore, I will stretch out My hand upon you and give you for a spoil to the heathen (Ezekiel 25:6-7).
9. I will cut you off from the people.
10. I will cause you to perish out of the countries (Ezekiel 25:7).
11. I will destroy you.
12. You will know that I am Jehovah (Ezekiel 25:5,7).<sup>15</sup>

**McGee:** The Ammonites applauded the enemy that destroyed Israel. They were allies. But the same enemy destroyed Ammon. In Jeremiah 49:6 we read concerning them, “And afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.” God judged them so that they might know that He is the Lord.<sup>16</sup>

The term “Aha” implies malicious joy and celebration over the profaning of the temple, the siege of Judah, and the taking of captives.

**ESV:** The leading reason for judgment against Ammon is the insult they gave to my sanctuary—God's own reputation is of primary concern. While **land** (Hb. *'adamah*; see note on 7:2) of Israel is a common phrase in Ezekiel, house of Judah is not; it is used outside this chapter only at 4:6 and 8:17. “House of Israel,” by contrast, is used 83 times in Ezekiel, well over half of its occurrences in the entire OT.

**Chuck Smith:** Because they rejoiced, danced in the streets when they heard that the sanctuary was profaned and the people were slaughtered. They had a big celebration. Much like they did when they got news that Sadat was assassinated. Same thing. You see, people haven't changed much. There's still that certain amount of barbarity in man. "When you said, 'Aha,' against My sanctuary when it was profaned."

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<sup>15</sup> Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

<sup>16</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 25:3). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

### **Ezekiel 25:4**

**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.**

**Constable 4-5:** Therefore the sovereign Lord would turn them over to the eastern invaders, the Babylonians, who would take over their country and settle in their land. The capital city, Rabbah (modern Amman), as well as the rest of the land, would become a desolation inhabited mainly by camels and flocks of sheep and goats. Nebuchadnezzar brought Ammon and Moab into subjection in the fifth year after Jerusalem fell (about 581 B.C.).

**Clarke: Will deliver thee to the men of the east**—Probably the Scenite Arabs, Ishmaelites, and people of Kedar, who seized upon the provinces of the vanquished Ammonites, etc. The following description suits this people only, living on fruits, the milk of their flocks, using camels, etc. Some think the people of the east mean the Chaldeans.

**The men of the East.** The Aramaean and Arabic tribes east of Ammon (cf. Judges 6:3, 33; Isa 11:14; Jer 49:28) were to despoil Ammon.

**ESV:** The agents of divine justice are the people of the East, that is, desert nomads. This both accounts for the description that follows, and implies the ironic insult that the people unconquered by mighty Babylon will fall to nomads.

### **Ezekiel 25:5**

**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.**

**Rabbah.** Its chief city (cf. 21:20), the site of Philadelphia, established by Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246), was to become pasture (cf. Isa 17:2; 32:14; Zeph 2:14). Rabbah was the capital city of the Ammonites.

**Ye shall know that I am the Lord.** The purpose of these judgments is to make men recognize that the Lord rules men and shapes history (cf. Dan 4:17). The expression in varying forms, starting at Ezk 6:7, occurs about sixty-five times in Ezekiel, and repeatedly in the foreign oracles.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 25:4). Chicago: Moody Press.

### **Ezekiel 25:6**

**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;**

**Constable 6-7:** Because the Ammonites had rejoiced over Israel's misfortune the Lord would punish them and give them as the spoils of war to other nations. He would end their existence as a separate nation and destroy them as a people. Ammon no longer existed as a nation after Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it and Bedouins from the east plundered it. This judgment would teach them that Yahweh is God.

Oracles against foreign nations are always implicitly oracles of encouragement for God's people.

Jeremiah predicted that Yahweh would restore the fortunes of the Ammonites (Jer. 49:6). This occurred briefly after the Exile. Tobiah was a Persian governor of Ammon during the postexilic period (cf. Neh. 2:10, 19; 4:7). But restoration of this region will also take place in the Millennium (cf. Jer. 46:26-28; 48:47).

When they heard of the destruction and desolation, they danced, they jumped, they clapped their hands and stamped their feet rejoicing in the destruction.

This second oracle is linked to the first (**for**, or “because,” Hb. *ki*) as a further indictment.

### **Ezekiel 25:7**

**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.**

Proverbs 24:17. “Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth.”

When Ammon rejoiced at the fall of Jerusalem, God said, “I will cut thee out of the countries, I will destroy thee.” Have you ever met an Ammonite? They are all gone!

Some might think of the Temple as a Jewish thing, as the seat of Judaism, right? And secular writers might say, “this is just a symptom of Jewish pride, finding these things in the Scriptures..” That is fine for a secular perspective; but it does not have the understanding of what was really being dealt with here. It is recognizing that the Temple is God’s Temple and still, even so, interesting that God held the nations accountable to treat that Temple with respect.

**I will cause thee to perish**—Except in history, the name of the Ammonites does not now exist.

### **Prophecy Against Moab (25:8-11)**

Now the next prophecy is against Moab. It is located south of Ammon. It has its origin in Genesis 19. We find extensive prophecies against Moab (Jeremiah 48; Isaiah 15 and 16; Amos 2:1-3). They are subject to some substantial comment. Seir is another name for Edom; and Edom we will see shortly.

Both Ammon and Moab have evaporated on us. They have been absorbed by the Arabs. They are no longer remembered as nations individually. You would not find anyone who would know what an Ammonite or a Moabite was unless they were a Bible student. They have been long, long ago absorbed.

#### **Ron Daniel: Prophecy Against The Moabites**

Looking a little further south, God focuses on the Moabites, who - on the map - were beneath the Ammonites, to the east of Israel.

The Moabites came from that same terrible union between Lot and his daughters. But they became the enemies of Israel when they partnered with the Midianites, trying to hire the prophet Balaam to curse them (Num. 22). When he was unable to pronounce a curse, they listened to his plan for causing Israel to stumble. They would tempt Israel's men into idolatry and immorality with their women.

In Judges 3, the Moabites (under the rule of King Eg-LAWN), oppressed the Israelites for 18 years.

Even into Saul's reign, Moab had been an enemy of Israel (1Sam. 14:47).

But now, the Moabites have incurred the wrath of God with intensity. He says of the Moabites (and Mount Seir, which is in Moab), that their judgment will ultimately be because they said of Judah, "they are like all the nations."

There are at least two ways that we could read that statement. Certainly, it could mean that they viewed Judah like all the other nations, in that they would fall at the hands of the Babylonians. The Moabites certainly partnered together with Babylon in attacking Judah (2Kings 24:2). But I think it is more of a general statement. I think the Moabites' attitude was, "Judah is just like any other nation. Their God isn't above anyone else's gods. They don't deserve special recognition or treatment, and they certainly shouldn't expect our respect."

But God has singled out the Jews as being His chosen people. Our blessing or cursing depends on how we view and treat the Israelites. Because Moab didn't view Judah as anything special, God says, "I am going to deprive the flank of Moab." This means that He is going to open their side, make them vulnerable to attack. The Moabite cities of Bayth Hahyesh-ee-MOTH, Bah-al Meh-ONE, and Keer-yaw-THAH-yim will fall to Babylon, just like the Ammonites.

## **Ezekiel 25:8**

**Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because that Moab and Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the heathen;**

**Constable:** The residents of Moab and Seir (Edom) had regarded Judah as just one of the other nations even though the Judahites were blood relatives of theirs (cf. Jer. 48:27; Zeph. 2:8-9). This attitude reflected disrespect for Yahweh. They viewed Israel's God as no better than other pagan deities since Judah had fallen to the Babylonians.

### **Dake: Four Predictions—Fulfilled:**

1. Because Moab and Seir say that the house of Judah is like the heathen; therefore, I will open the side of Moab from the cities on his frontiers, the glory of the country, unto the men of the east with the Ammonites (Ezekiel 25:8-10).
2. I will give them in possession that the Ammonites may not be remembered among the nations (Ezekiel 25:10).
3. I will execute My judgments upon Moab (Ezekiel 25:11).
4. They will know that I am Jehovah.

**Clarke: Moab and Seir do say**—Seir means the Idumeans. It appears that both these, with the Ammonites, had made a league with Zedekiah, Jeremiah 27:3, which they did not keep; and it is supposed that they even joined with the Chaldeans.

### **Oracle Against Moab. 25:8-11.**

Other maledictions are Isa 15–16; 25:10-12; Jer 48; Amos 2:1-3; Zeph 2:8-11.

Moab's territory lay between the river Arnon and the brook Zered, but Moab often laid claim to the land extending to the head of the Dead Sea. It possessed a higher degree of culture than Ammon. (On cities of Moab, cf. Nelson Glueck in AASOR, 18-19 (1937-'39), 72-75; *The Other Side of the Jordan* (New Haven: ASOR, 1940), pp. 134-139. Cf. Gen 19:30-38; Num 22–24; Ruth; Neh 13:1). 8. Moab saw nothing good or unique in Israel's existence: **The house of Judah is like ... all the nations** (ASV).<sup>18</sup>

### **BKC: Judgment on Moab (25:8-11)**

The hostility between Moab and Israel began when Balak, king of Moab, tried to oppose Israel as Moses was leading them to Palestine (cf. Num. 22-24). During the time of the Judges, Israel was oppressed by Eglon, king of Moab (Jud. 3:12-30). Relations between the countries improved slightly after that, and some Israelites went to Moab during a famine. Through this contact Ruth the Moabitess entered Israel's history and the royal line of David.

The relationship between Moab and Israel again deteriorated during Saul's reign (cf. 1 Sam. 14:47). David conquered Moab and made it a vassal of Israel (2 Sam. 8:2); it remained under Israel's control through Solomon's reign. Moab rebelled against Israel years after Israel and Judah split, during Jehoshaphat's regime (cf. 2 Kings 3:4-27). Moab united with Ammon and Edom in an ill-fated attempt to defeat Judah also during

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<sup>18</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 25:8). Chicago: Moody Press.

Jehoshaphat's reign (2 Chron. 20:1-23). Later Moab supported Babylon and attacked Judah after Jehoiakim's revolt, possibly hoping to gain additional territory (cf. 2 Kings 24:2). Moab then joined other nations and considered revolting from Babylon in 593 B.C. (cf. Jer. 27:1-7), but no evidence indicates that she ever did.<sup>19</sup>

**BKC 8-11:** Moab's sin, Ezekiel said, was her contempt for God's people. **Moab and Seir said, Look, the house of Judah** has become like all the other nations. Seir was the name of the mountain range south of the Dead Sea that encompassed the country of Edom. The word became synonymous with the land of Edom (cf. 2 Chron. 20:10 with Num. 20:14-21). Edom was included here with Moab (though her own judgment comes next) because she was guilty of the same sin of envy and contempt. In their scorn Moab and Edom were denying God's promises to Israel. By minimizing Judah's position of centrality among the nations, they were profaning the name of God who had promised Judah that position.

Because Moab treated Judah with contempt, God would remove Moab's glory by exposing its northern flank to attack. He would destroy three towns: Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon, and Kiriathaim. Beth Jeshimoth guarded the ascent to the Medeba Plateau from the Plains of Moab by the Jordan River. Baal Meon and Kiriathaim were important fortresses on the Medeba Plateau.

In addition to losing her defenses Moab would also lose her freedom. God said He would give Moab ... to the people of the East, the same fate as Ammon (cf. v. 4). The nomadic desert tribesmen who would overrun Ammon would also overrun Moab.<sup>20</sup>

**McGee:** The Moabites were more civilized than the Ammonites, but they too were descended from an incestuous relationship—between Lot and his older daughter (Gen. 19:33–38). Moab was situated on the east of Israel but along the northern part of the Dead Sea. This is the land that Ruth the Moabitess came from. She was an ancestor of King David, which makes her also an ancestor of the Lord Jesus Christ—her name appears in His genealogy (Matt. 1:5).

Notice the reason God will judge Moab:<sup>21</sup>

### **OTS: God's Word to Moab (25:8–11).**

The sin of Moab was the failure to recognize the distinctiveness of Israel. Therefore, God was about to bring judgment on that land. The cities of Moab would be invaded by desert tribes from the east. Moab and her cousin Ammon would disappear from the pages of history. Moab's demise would not be due simply to the passing of time. The judgments of Yahweh would bring that nation to an end. Moab would then be convinced that Yahweh was God.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 25:3–7). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>20</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 25:8–11). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>21</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 25:7). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>22</sup> Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 25:8–11). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

**ESV: and Seir.** This phrase, lacking in the Septuagint (see esv footnote), is surprising here and may be the result of a copyist's error. Seir is consistently identified with Edom in the OT, but nowhere else with Moab. It is not mentioned in the judgment of vv. 9–11.

**ESV 8–11:** Against Moab. For structure and general features, see note on vv. 1–7. Although the indictment is very brief, the insult to God behind the belittling of Judah (v. 8) can still be discerned.

### **Ezekiel 25:9**

**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,**

These towns were on the northern border of Moab.

**Constable 9-10:** Consequently the Lord promised to destroy the frontier cities in which the Moabites took much pride. Beth-jeshimoth lay in the Jordan Valley and guarded the eastern ascent to the Medeba Plateau. Baal-meon stood farther to the east and south in northern Moab, and Kiriathaim was another northern town on the Medeba Plateau. Its name means "the glory of the land," a play on words with the same phrase that appears earlier in verse 9. Yahweh would give the whole country over to the control of the eastern invaders along with Ammon, and Moab would cease to exist as a nation (cf. v. 7; Jer. 48:7-9).

**[I will open the side of Moab from the cities, from his cities which are on his frontiers]** I will lay the land of Moab open to attack from every quarter. Josephus tells us that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Ammon in the fifth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, and it was at this same time that Moab, Edom, and other countries fell.

**[the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim]** This refers to the wonderful pasture lands that belong to Reuben, lands north of the river Arnon, which the Moabites had conquered in the latter days of the existence of Judah.

**Clarke: I will open the side** (*ketheph*), the shoulder, the strongest frontier place. Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim were strong frontier towns of Moab.

**Beth-jeshimoth.** Tell el—'Azeimah, two and one-half miles northeast of the Dead Sea (Josh 12:3; 13:20). **Baal-meon. Ma`in**, nine miles east of the Dead Sea and four miles south of Medeba (Josh 13:17). **Kiriathaim.** Identified as el Qereiyat, ten miles below Baal-meon and seven miles northwest of Dibon (Josh 13:9; Jer 48:1, 23). The second and third of these cities are mentioned in the "Mesha Inscription," or "Moabite Stone" (ANET, pp. 320, 321).<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 25:8). Chicago: Moody Press.

**ESV:** These place names are known from sources outside the Bible. Although not leading cities themselves, they form a direct line pointing to Dibon and Aroer in the Moabite heartland.

### **Ezekiel 25:10**

**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.**

**That the Ammonites**—The Syriac has, “That Rabbah of the sons of Ammon be not remembered.”

### **Ezekiel 25:11**

**And I will execute judgments upon Moab; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.**

**Constable:** Yahweh would judge Moab, and the Moabites would come to realize that He is God. This nation also passed out of existence during the Exile. Yet Yahweh promised to restore the fortunes of Moab in the distant future (Jer. 48:47; cf. Jer. 46:26; 49:6, 39). This happened in a limited way after the Exile, but it will happen in the eschaton when modern residents of Moab's territory will stream to Jerusalem to worship Messiah in the Millennium.

## **The Prophecy Against Edom (25:12-14)**

The next 3 verses are against Edom, sometimes called Seir. It is perhaps more familiar to us because it is more closely related to Israel than Ammon or Moab was. It is south of Moab and goes from the Dead Sea all the way to the Gulf of Aqaba. It is mentioned in Genesis 25:23 and Deuteronomy 23:7. It was almost annihilated by David (2 Samuel 8). Edom was also subjugated by Amaziah in 2 Kings 14, and Uzziah. It won back its independence when there was the Syrian invasion in the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. about the time of Ahaz.

### **Ezekiel 25:12**

**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;**

The Edomites had taken vengeance on the Judahites rather than helping them (cf. 36:1-7; Gen. 25:30; 27:41-46; 32:4; Lam. 4:21-22; Amos 1:11-12).

### **Dake: Six Predictions—Fulfilled:**

1. Because Edom has dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and has greatly offended, and revenged himself on them; wherefore, I will stretch out My hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it (Ezekiel 25:12-13).
2. I will make it desolate from Teman (Ezekiel 25:13).
3. They of Dedan will fall by the sword.
4. I will take vengeance upon Edom by the hand of My people Israel (Ezekiel 25:14).
5. They will do in Edom according to My fury.
6. They will know My vengeance.

### **Wycliffe: Oracle Against Edom. 25:12-14.**

For other maledictions, see 35:1-15; 36:5; Isa 34; 63:1-6; Joel 3:19; Amos 1:11, 12; Ob; Mal 1:2-5.

Edom displaced the Hurrians in Seir to occupy the rugged country extending from the southern end of the Dead Sea on both sides of the Arabah to the Gulf of Akaba (Gen 14:6; 32:3; 36:20, 21, 30; Deut 2:1, 12; Judges 11:17, 18; 1 Kgs 9:26). Its capital was Sela, probably later the site of Petra. At the fall of Jerusalem, the Edomites pressed into southern Judah (1 Macc 4:29; 5:65). From the late fourth century B.C. through the first century A.D., the Nabataean Arabs established a high degree of culture in Edomite territory. The Edomites were subdued by John Hyrcanus in 125 B.C. and incorporated into Israel. Herod the Great was an Idumaeon, the Greek and Roman name for Edomite. (See *Jos Ant.* XII. 8. 6; XIV. 1. 3; 7. 3; *Wars* IV. 9. 7. 1 Macc 5:3. 5.) **Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance**, all her territory, **from Teman** (v. 13), probably Tawilan near Sela in the north, to **Dedan**, in the south (cf. Jer 49:7, 8; not the Dedan of Arabia, 27:20; 38:13), would be desolated.<sup>24</sup>

**Clarke: Because that Edom hath dealt**—The Edomites were the most inveterate enemies of the Jews from the very earliest times, and ever did all that they could to annoy them.

### **BKC: Judgment on Edom (25:12-14)**

Like Ammon and Moab, Edom was involved in a long series of conflicts with Israel. The strife actually began when Edom refused to let Israel cross her territory during the time of the wilderness wanderings (cf. Num. 20:14-21). Saul fought the Edomites (1 Sam. 14:47), and David finally captured Edom and made it a vassal state to Israel (2 Sam. 8:13-14). Solomon further exploited Edom and established Elath in Edom as Israel's seaport (cf. 1 Kings 9:26-28); but Edom opposed Solomon during the latter part of his reign (1 Kings 11:14-18). The nation continued as a vassal state after Israel and Judah split, and it was controlled by a governor from Judah till after the time of Jehoshaphat (1 Kings 22:47-48).

In the days of Jehoram (ca. 845 B.C.) Edom successfully rebelled against Judah (2 Kings 8:20-22a) and regained her freedom. Thereafter Judah and Edom struggled to see who would control the vital caravan and shipping routes at the southern end of the

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<sup>24</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 25:12). Chicago: Moody Press.

Transjordanian highway. Both Amaziah (2 Kings 14:7) and Uzziah (or Azariah, 2 Kings 14:21-22) regained territory that had been lost to Edom, but Edom counterattacked during Ahaz's reign and inflicted a major loss on Judah (2 Chron. 28:17).

Edom became a vassal of Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar's stunning defeat of Egypt in 605 B.C. Then in 593 B.C. Edom joined the other conspirators in planning to revolt against Babylon (cf. Jer. 27:1-7), but did not carry out the plan. When Judah revolted in 588 B.C., Edom sided with Babylon and aided Babylon in her assaults on Judah (cf. Ps. 137:7; Jer. 49:7-22).<sup>25</sup>

**BKC 12-14:** Ezekiel said Edom's sin was that she took revenge on the house of Judah. Edom saw in Judah's conflict with Babylon an opportunity to oppose her rival. If her foe were destroyed then Edom could achieve a place of power at the southern end of the Dead Sea.

Because Edom had aided in Judah's destruction, God said He would aid in her destruction. He would kill Edom's men and their animals ... from Teman to Dedan. Teman was a city in central Edom about three miles from Sela, later known as Petra. Dedan was southeast of Edom in northern Arabia. Perhaps Dedan was mentioned here because some Edomites were living there. Edom was conquered by the Nabateans during the intertestamental period. The remnant of the Edomites (also called Idumeans) moved west to the Negev. Later they were forced to become Jewish converts (Josephus *The Antiquities of the Jews* 13. 9. 1). Thus the Edomites lost both their country and their national identity.

God said Israel would bring His vengeance against the Edomites. As a result the Edomites would come to know (experience) His vengeance. This differs from what He had said about Ammon and Moab (vv. 7, 11).<sup>26</sup>

**McGee:** Edom is the nation that came from Esau, whose beginning is found in Genesis 25. The little Book of Obadiah details the judgment against Edom and the rock-hewn city of Petra. God gives His reason for judging Edom: Edom's treatment of His chosen people is the cause of God's judgment.<sup>27</sup>

#### **OTS: God's Word to Edom (25:12-14).**

Edom's sin is that of vengeful conduct toward Judah (cf. Amos 1:11). By "avenging" themselves on the children of Judah the Edomites had incurred enormous guilt. Therefore, God would stretch out his hand against Edom to cut off both man and beast from that land. The land would be laid waste by an invader. From Teman in the north to Dedan in the south Edomites would fall by the sword. The vengeance of Yahweh would be executed on Edom by the hand of the Israelites. The history of Edom subsequent to Ezekiel indicates the accuracy of this prediction. Edom fell to the Arabs in the fifth century B.C., to the Nabataeans in the third century B.C.. In the second century the great

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<sup>25</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 25:8-11). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>26</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 25:12-14). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>27</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 25:9). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Jewish general Judas Maccabaeus conquered the area and forced the inhabitants there to accept circumcision. This brought to an end the existence of Edom as a distinct people.<sup>28</sup>

**ESV 12–14** Against Edom. The intense hatred felt for Edom by later Judeans is amply attested in the OT, e.g., Ps. 137:7; Jer. 49:7–22; Lam. 4:21–22. In the OT, Edom often serves as the chief representative of hostility to God and his people. The accusation of taking vengeance (Ezek. 25:12) coheres with this wider picture. The locations of the cities Teman and Dedan are not certain, but the suggestion that they represent the extremities of Edom (from ... to) makes good sense. Assigning my people Israel (v. 14) to be the agent of God's wrath is not paralleled elsewhere in Ezekiel, but it does have the ring of poetic justice against this traditional foe.

### **Ron Daniel: 12-14 Prophecy Against The Edomites**

God's prophecy of judgment is moving in succession southward, having started with the Ammonites in the northeast, moving to the Moabites in the east, and now moving downward to the Edomites in the southeast.

The Edomites were about the closest relatives that the Jews had. Just as the people of Israel had come from Jacob, the Edomites came from Jacob's brother Esau. Esau was nicknamed Edom, and his descendants were the Edomites.

Esau's children came from his two wives, both of whom were Hittites (Gen 26:34-35), the people groups that descended from Ishmael. The Edomites proved to be a real thorn in Israel's side. For example, we read in Numbers 20...

**(Num. 20:14-21)** From Kadesh Moses then sent messengers to the king of Edom: "Thus your brother Israel has said, 'You know all the hardship that has befallen us; that our fathers went down to Egypt, and we stayed in Egypt a long time, and the Egyptians treated us and our fathers badly. But when we cried out to the LORD, He heard our voice and sent an angel and brought us out from Egypt; now behold, we are at Kadesh, a town on the edge of your territory. Please let us pass through your land. We will not pass through field or through vineyard; we will not even drink water from a well. We will go along the king's highway, not turning to the right or left, until we pass through your territory.'" Edom, however, said to him, "You shall not pass through us, or I will come out with the sword against you." Again, the sons of Israel said to him, "We will go up by the highway, and if I and my livestock do drink any of your water, then I will pay its price. Let me only pass through on my feet, nothing else." But he said, "You shall not pass through." And Edom came out against him with a heavy force and with a strong hand. Thus Edom refused to allow Israel to pass through his territory; so Israel turned away from him.

And so when Moses and all the Israelites arrived at the border of Edom, they expected that this nation who were blood relations would allow them to pass through. To clarify, Moses sent message saying, "We're not going to trample your fields, eat your food, or drink from your wells. We'll just take the direct road straight through."

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<sup>28</sup> Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 25:12–14). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

But the king of Edom said, "If you try and pass through, I'll fight against your people with my army." And, after a second appeal, he did bring out his army. But this was not the last of their offenses.

In the days of King David, the Edomites were conquered and made servants of Israel. They had a deputy appointed to rule over them, but no king (1Kings 22:47). But during the reign of King Jehoshaphat, they rebelled and raised up a king (2Kings 8:20).

To make matters worse, the Edomites were buying Israeli slaves from both Tyre and the Philistines (Amos 1). And when Babylon put Jerusalem to siege, the Edomites attacked Judah with a vengeance.

As a result, God promises to take vengeance upon the Edomites, from Tay-MAWN to Ded-AWN. But notice: God's vengeance on Edom will be by the hand of Israel. This prophecy was fulfilled during the days of the Maccabees, when Judas Maccabbeus...

**(1Mac. 5:65) (NRSV)** ...and his brothers went out and fought the descendants of Esau in the land to the south. He struck Hebron and its villages and tore down its strongholds and burned its towers on all sides.

### **Ezekiel 25:13**

**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.**

**Constable:** For this reason the Lord promised to send judgment on them. He would cause both man and beast to perish from their land, a picture of complete devastation (cf. 35:1—36:15). He would make the land a desolate waste from Teman to Dedan, throughout the country, as a result of an army invasion (cf. Joel 3:19; Obad.). Teman was a town in central Edom not far from Sela (Petra), and Dedan was a region southeast of Edom where Edomites evidently lived. Jeremiah revealed that this punishment would come through Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 9:26; 25:21; 27:1-11). Edomites occupied southern Judah after the Exile.

**LAN 13-14:** The Edomites were blood brothers of the Jews, both nations having descended from Isaac (Genesis 25:19-26). Edom shared its northern border with Israel, and the two nations were always in conflict. The Edomites hated Israel so much that they rejoiced when Jerusalem, Israel's capital, was destroyed. Teman was in the northern part of Edom; Dedan was in the southern part. Thus, Ezekiel was saying that the entire country would be destroyed.<sup>29</sup>

**Clarke: I will make it desolate from Teman**—Teman and Dedan were both cities of the Moabites, and apparently at each extremity of the land.

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<sup>29</sup> Life Application Notes from the Life Application Bible

## **Ezekiel 25:14**

**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.**

Genesis 27:41, “And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.”

We find this animosity between Edom and Israel in a number of places (Gen 27:29-41; Isa 34:5-7; Jer 49; Ezek35; Amos 1:9; and Mal1).

Getting to the prophetic part about this, it is interesting that the whole area from the Dead Sea through to the Gulf of Aqaba is desolate. It is desolate.

Another thing about the Edomites is that in 126 B.C. they were conquered and were forced to embrace the Jewish religion. Edom was subjected to enforce Judaism. This is recorded in 1 Maccabees 5. This gives us the background of Herod the Idumean. He was not Jewish, but had been brought up in the Jewish culture. The Romans gave him the title “King of the Jews” as an insulting accommodation; but try as Herod did, he never won the favor of the Jews, because they never accepted him as being Jewish: he was a hated Edomite.

**Constable:** The Israelites would play a part in Edom's judgment acting as the Lord's agents of His anger (cf. 35:1—36:15; Isa. 11:14; Dan. 11:41; Amos 9:12; Obad. 18). The Edomites too would come to acknowledge Yahweh as the true God.

Today the residents of the territory formerly occupied by Ammon, Moab, and Edom all go by the name "Arab."

**I will lay my vengeance upon Edom**—God will not allow men to insult those whom he has cast down. His judgment is sufficient; to add more is an insult to God.

**By the hand of my people Israel**—This was fulfilled by the Maccabees, who not only defeated them and brought them under complete subjection, but obliged them to receive circumcision, Joseph. Antiq. 50 xiii., c. 17; 1 Maccabees 5:65; 2 Maccabees 10:16.

## **The Philistines (25:15-17)**

Now we get to a group that we read a lot about, the Philistines. They descended from Ham, and came from Caphtor which we would call Crete (Deuteronomy 2:23; Amos 9:7; and Genesis 10:13-14).

### **Ron Danile: 15-17 Prophecy Against The Philistines**

The fourth of the seven nations to be spoken against is on the other side of Israel, to the west. Today, this area is called the "Gaza Strip." There, the Philistines dwelt. The Philistines were direct descendants of Noah's son Ham (Gen. 10:6, 10:13-14).

It is not difficult to recall many of the times the Philistines made themselves the enemies of Israel. Certainly, Joshua, Samson, Saul, and David all faced the Philistines in battle over the years.

Like the Edomites, the Philistines had also attacked the Jews with a vengeance when they were suffering at the hands of Babylon. For this, they will be destroyed.

All four of these nations had a common denominator- they were Israel's neighbors who cursed the Jews instead of blessing them. And as a result, they will suffer God's vengeance. How vitally important it is that we as a nation continue to stand with Israel in blessing.

### **Ezekiel 25:15**

**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;**

**Constable:** The Philistines to Judah's west had also scorned the Israelites and had sought to destroy them (cf. Judg. 13—16; 1 Sam. 4; 13; 31; 2 Sam. 5:17-25; 2 Kings 18:8; 2 Chron. 21:16-17; 28:18). Therefore the Lord would stretch out His strong hand in judgment against them and cut off the Cherethites, a group of Philistines who originated in Crete (ancient Caphtor; cf. 1 Sam. 30:14; Zeph. 2:5), and the rest of the Philistines who lived by the Mediterranean seacoast. This is a play on words in Hebrew. The Lord said He would cut off the cutters off (i.e., the Cherethites).

### **Dake: Five Predictions—Fulfilled:**

1. Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a spiteful heart, to destroy Judah for old hatred; therefore, I will stretch out My hand upon them (Ezekiel 25:15-16).
2. I will destroy the Cherethims (Ezekiel 25:16).
3. I will destroy the remnant of the sea coast.
4. I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes (Ezekiel 25:17).
5. They will know that I am Jehovah when I lay My vengeance upon them.

**Clarke: Because the Philistines**—They were as inimical to the Jews as the Ammonites, etc., were. Nebuchadnezzar punished them because they had assisted the Tyrians during the time he was besieging their city.

**I will cut off the Cherethims**—See the note on 2 Samuel 8:18.

**The remnant of the sea coasts**—The different seignories of the Philistines inhabited the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, from Judea to Egypt. For other matters relative to these prophecies, see Jeremiah 47:4.

**Wycliffe: Oracle Against Philistia. 25:15-17.**

For other maledictions, see Isa 14:29-31; Jer 47; Amos 1:6-8; Zeph 2:4-7; Zech 9:5-7.

The Philistines, from whom the name *Palestine* is derived (Herodotus *Histories* vii. 89), came from Caphtor, or Crete, in the Aegean basin (Jer 47:4; Amos 9:7), and as part of the “sea-peoples” established themselves on the southern coast of Canaan, displacing the Avvim (Deut 2:23). Ever a threat to the Hebrews (Ex 3:17, 18; Judges 14–16; I Sam 4–6), their monopoly on iron implements (I Sam 18:19-23) made them particularly formidable. Their pentapolis was under the control of five lords or *serens* (cf. Gr. *tyrannos*; Josh 13:3; I Sam 6:4). They adopted the worship of Dagan, the Semitic grain deity (I Sam 5), and various Canaanite gods. The great “uncircumcised” of antiquity were mighty carousers, as their ubiquitous wine craters and beer jugs suggest (Albright, *Arch, of Pal.*, p. 115). Saul fought against them (I Sam 13–14; 17–18; 31), and David defeated them (II Sam 8:1, 12; 5:17-25; 21:15-22). Relations continued hostile between Judah and the Philistines (II Chr 21:16; 28:18; II Kgs 18:8; II Chr 26:6, 7), until the Maccabees finally liquidated them (I Macc 5:68; 10:83-89; 11:60, 61).<sup>30</sup>

**BKC: Judgment on Philistia (25:15-17)**

The Philistines had been Israel’s enemy from the time of the Conquest. Israel had failed to take all the Promised Land because she disobeyed God and because of the Philistines’ military superiority on the coastal plain (cf. Jud. 3:1-4). Then the Philistines moved into the hill country in an attempt to control all the territory of Israel. They were opposed by the judges Shamgar (Jud. 3:31), Samson (Jud. 13-16), and Samuel (1 Sam. 7:2-17). Saul’s major battles in Israel were designed to check the Philistines’ advances on the central Benjamin plateau (1 Sam. 13:1-14:23) and in the Jezreel Valley (1 Sam. 28:1-4; 29:1-2, 11; 31:1-3, 7-10).

David finally subdued the Philistines. After a series of battles early in his reign blunted a Philistine challenge to his kingdom (2 Sam. 5:17-25), David was able to go on the offensive and defeat the Philistines (2 Sam. 8:1). Philistia remained a vassal country through the reign of Solomon and into the divided monarchy.

The battle between Philistia and Judah was renewed during the divided monarchy as each country tried to control the other. Jehoshaphat was able to dominate Philistia as a vassal state (2 Chron. 17:10-11), but she revolted against his son Jehoram and sacked Judah and Jerusalem (2 Chron. 21:16-17). Uzziah reestablished Judah’s control over Philistia (2 Chron. 26:6-7), but Philistia again gained the upper hand in Ahaz’s reign (2 Chron 28:16-18).

The feud between Philistia and Judah was halted by Babylon’s intervention. Nebuchadnezzar established control over both countries. Yet the rivalry remained. Philistia waited for an opportunity to try again to conquer Judah.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 25:15). Chicago: Moody Press.

<sup>31</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 25:12–14). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

**BKC 15-17:** Ezekiel placed his finger on Philistia's underlying sin. She acted in vengeance and took revenge (cf. v. 12) with malice (cf. v. 6), and with ancient hostility she sought to destroy Judah. Philistia's history included a string of attacks on God's Chosen People as they tried to dispossess Israel of the Promised Land.

Because Philistia had tried to destroy Judah, God would destroy her. He would stretch out His hand (cf. v. 13) against the Philistines, and would cut off the Kerethites and destroy those remaining along the seacoast. "Kerethites" (*kerēṭîm*) was a synonym for the Philistines (cf. 1 Sam. 30:1-14; Zeph. 2:5). The word might have come from "Crete" which was known as "Caphtor" in Old Testament times (cf. Amos 9:7). Ezekiel used "Kerethites" here instead of "Philistines" to produce an interesting wordplay: God would "cut off" (*hiḵrati*) the "Kerethites" (*kerēṭîm*).

During the intertestamental period the Philistines disappeared as a nation. This nation that had tried to usurp God's people discovered God's true character (they will know that I am the LORD; cf. Ezek. 25:7, 11) when He judged them for their sin.<sup>32</sup>

**McGee:** The Philistines have disappeared; they are no longer in that land. This judgment against them has been so literally fulfilled that the unbelieving critic wants to place Ezekiel's prophecy at a much later date so it can be considered history!

My friend, we will do well to take note of the fact that God judged the nations who had sinned against Him and His people.<sup>33</sup>

#### **OTS: God's Word to Philistia (25:15–17).**

The Philistines lived in the coastal plains to the west of Judah. Their sin was acting in revenge. In fact they had "taken vengeance with scorn of soul," i.e., mockery accompanied their vengeful acts. Their intent was to "destroy" the people of God because they had "everlasting enmity" toward them. Therefore, God's hand was against the Philistines. He intended to cut off the Kerethites who were close allies of Philistia. He would destroy "all the remnant of the seacoast," i.e., everyone else living in Philistia. They would experience the "great vengeance" of the Lord "with wrathful rebukes," i.e., repeated acts of furious chastisement. Through these experiences the Philistines would come to know the Lord. History records an attack against Gaza by Pharaoh Hophra in the sixth century B.C.. In the second century the Jewish armies overran the area and incorporated it into Judea.<sup>34</sup>

**Philistines.** Descendants of Mizraim, the son of Ham (Gen. 10:14; 1 Chron. 1:12), they were a constant thorn in the side of Israel (cf. Ex. 13:17; Judg. 3:2-3; 10:6-7; 13-16; 1 Sam. 4; 13:19-22; 17-18; 2 Chron. 17:11; 28:18; Zech. 9:1-8). They worshiped Dagon (the Semitic grain deity; cf. 1 Sam. 5) and other gods, and were finally liquidated under the Maccabees in the second century B.C.

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<sup>32</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 25:15–17). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>33</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 25:17). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>34</sup> Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 25:15–17). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

**ESV 15–17:** Against Philistia. Philistia had already been subdued by Nebuchadnezzar before the campaigns against Judah. It was thus not in a position to be part of the conspiracy planned in Zedekiah's day (see note on vv. 1–17). This oracle is very much an echo of the preceding one. The Cherethites (v. 16) were coastal dwellers, identified with the Philistines also in Zeph. 2:5. Use of their name also provides a pun on their punishment: in the phrase cut off the Cherethites, the verb and the proper noun both have the same three consonants (*k-r-t*) in their root (Hb. *wehikrati 'et-Keretim*).

### **Ezekiel 25:16**

**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.**

[**Cherethims**] Only found here, but Cherithites are mentioned several times as chief of the warriors of David (2 Samuel 8:18; 2 Samuel 15:18; 2 Samuel 20:7,23; 1 Kings 1:38,44; 1 Chron. 18:17). See also 1 Samuel 30:14; Zeph. 2:5.

The Kerethites originated in Crete, from which they take their name. They were either a clan of the Philistines, or possibly a separate people who migrated from the Aegean to Palestine about the same time. The Kerethites and Philistines were closely intermixed once they were in Palestine and are often mentioned together.

**The Cherethites** (Cretans) were foreign mercenaries, David's bodyguard (II Sam 8:18; 15:18; 20:7). They are here synonymous with the Philistines, and not to be equated with Keret of the Ugaritic tablets (cf. Albright, *BASOR*, 71 (Oct., 1938), 35-40).<sup>35</sup>

**The Philistines** were to experience God's wrathful chastisements (RSV; *furios rebukes*, AV; v. 17), because they took vengeance with malice of heart, to destroy it for the old hatred (v. 15).

### **Ezekiel 25:17**

**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.**

The Philistines were a small group that conquered a small portion of the land that gave it its name; but there were more Old Testament references to them than any other nation other than Israel itself.

They were subjugated by David; when they were attacked vigorously in the days of Saul, it was roughly in 1 Samuel 13 and 14. They were conquered by Jehosaphat in 2 Chronicles 17. They were subjugated by Uzziah in 2 Chronicles 21. They became very

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<sup>35</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 25:16). Chicago: Moody Press.

powerful under Ahaz in 2 Chronicles 28. They were subdued again by Hezekiah in 2 Kings 18. They were also mentioned in Isaiah 14. They confederated against Jerusalem, Psalm 83. Then they were invaded by Nebuchadnezzar, Jeremiah 47. They had many prophecies against them (Joel 3:4; Amos 1:6-8; Obadiah 19; Zephaniah 2; and Zechariah 9).

As you can probably gather from the context, the Cherethites seemed to be a sub-tribe under the Philistines. The word Cherethim means “the cutters,” so in the Hebrew there is a play on words in verse 16, “I will cut off the cutters.” (1 Samuel 30 and Zephaniah 2) At one time they were a part of David’s body guard.

**Constable:** He would take vengeance on them for their treatment of His chosen people. He would do so by these rebukes executed in His wrath (cf. Isa. 11:14; Jer. 25:20; 47:1-7; Joel 3:1-4; Obad. 19; Zeph. 2:4-7). There is no record of the Philistines' existence after the second century B.C., though the name of their cities remained. They would know that Yahweh was God when they experienced His judgment.

These judgments should be a warning to any nation that spitefully treats the Chosen People of God (i.e., Israel, the physical descendants of Jacob) and that sins against the sovereign God in other ways. He will punish sin and those who abuse His people.

### **The Phoenicians**

The Phoenicians were incredibly industrious people, skilled in arts and crafts, very resourceful, very adventurous mariners. That caused them to become a major center of power and commerce right on through the Roman period. In fact, they were a dominant factor in world history from 1300 B.C. to almost 1300 A.D., some 2600 years.

Today we know Phoenicia as the country of Lebanon. Both Tyre and Sidon were located there with Sidon being the more dominant power in its early history, and Tyre becoming its capital later on. We are not certain where the ancient city of Tyre was located but we are certain about Sidon, which today is called Saida.

A few years ago, when the Israeli Army attacked Lebanon, they came across this village of Saida and stumbled into an underground command post financed by the Soviets. It had been designed so as to be accessible from sea as well as land. They had built giant steel doors that could be opened to admit submarines. The Israelis figured out the codes and managed to open the doors. They found it stocked with an enormous supply of armaments, plus files on all of the terrorist organizations in both Europe and America. It was an arrangement set up between Arafat and the Kremlin back in 1979.

It is interesting to notice how today’s world tensions hang up on the Middle East and tend to pivot around quaint old cities and prophecies we find penned by a prophet of God 2500 years ago.