

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing Part LXXIX: God's Judgment On Moab For False Self-Reliance (Jeremiah 48:1-10)

I. Introduction

- A. The Moabites, descendants of Abraham's nephew Lot (Gen. 19), were to be excluded from the congregation of the Lord to the tenth generation for not supplying relative nation Israel with food and water in the Exodus and for hiring Balaam to curse Israel, Deuteronomy 23:3-4. They were also idolatrous and attacked Israel possibly under the encouragement of the king of Babylon, 2 Kings 24:2; Ryrie Study Bib., KJV, 1978, fn. to Jer. 48:1.
- B. However, in Jeremiah 48:1-10, God's prophecy highlights self-reliance as the central cause for His judgment upon Moab, so we view the passage for our instruction and application on this issue (as follows):

II. God's Judgment On Moab For False Self-Reliance, Jeremiah 48:1-10.

- A. In predicting His judgment against Moab, God called for a "woe" against the cities of Nebo and Kiriathaim, cities that initially had belonged to the tribe of Reuben but had been conquered by Moab, Jer. 48:1; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1194. Also, Misgab, possibly another city or a fortress, would be shattered by foreign invaders, and in a poetic play on words, God declared that "in Heshbon" (*beheshbon*) "men would plot" (*hashbu*) Moab's downfall, Ibid.; Jeremiah 48:2a.
- B. God would use the foreign invaders to overthrow the town of Madmen, the cries of Horonaim would ring through Moab's hills as the fugitives who fled up the way to Luhith wept bitterly and those going down to Horonaim shouted anguished cries over the destruction that awaited them, Jeremiah 48:2b-5; Ibid.
- C. The Moabites would flee for their lives, becoming like a bush in the desert, "deserted and forlorn," Ibid.; Jer. 48:6. The phrase "like a bush" can also be translated "like Aroer", a city on the edge of the Arnon River gorge on the northern border of Moab. (Ibid.; Ibid., Map 6; "The Divided Kingdom: Israel & Judah")
- D. Though there were likely a number of sins for which God could have punished Moab, His main reason for overthrowing her is stated in Jeremiah 48:7a: Moab had trusted in her own works and treasures, so also she would be taken. The pronoun "you" is written separate from the verb and preceded by the adjective "also" that is connected to it by an elevated dash called a Maqqeph, implying that just as Moab had seized Nebo and Kiriathaim from Israel's tribe of Reuben, so also **Moab** -- "even *you*" -- would likewise be conquered by a foreign invader! (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 792)
- E. In like manner, Moab's false god Chemosh with its priests and princes would together go into captivity, Jeremiah 48:7b. Idolatry is a form of independence from God, so this sin of idolatry can be lumped together with Moab's errant trust in its own works and treasures versus reliance by faith on the true Creator God.
- F. Moab's destruction would be complete: every city in the Jordan Valley and in the plateau east of the Dead Sea, would be overrun and laid waste, with salt being put on the land to render it unusable for agricultural pursuits, the main source of livelihood income for the nation, Jeremiah 48:8-9 NIV.
- G. In fact, so intent was the Lord to assure Moab's destruction that He called for a curse on any party He had appointed to destroy Moab who was slack to do His work, for anyone who kept back the sword from administering the bloodshed God had determined was to occur to Moab, Jeremiah 48:10.
- H. The fulfillment of this prophecy occurred at the hands of "nomadic desert tribesmen from the East (cf. Ezek. 25:10)." (Ibid., Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1195)

Lesson: *For relying on its own works and treasures, Moab would be laid waste, seeing its people and cities be taken by foreign invaders like they had seized towns from God's people of the tribe of Reuben. So intent was the Lord to destroy Moab that He called for a curse on those He had assigned to administer this judgment were they to fail fully to use the sword to administer the bloodshed God had decreed against Moab.*

Application: *(1) May we repent of any and all self-sufficiency and return humbly to trust in the Lord lest He administer severe discipline against us! (2) Moab's self-sufficiency was seen in a reliance on her own works and treasures, so we must avoid relying on our human efforts and financial resources versus the Lord or face His discipline. (2) May we also respect the property of others unlike what Moab did with the cities of the Reubenites, for God is very willing to let our property be seized or harmed as we have wrongfully seized or harmed the property of others. (3) If God directs us to administer discipline on another party under our oversight, may we fully and faithfully administer it lest He severely discipline us for failing to carry out His will!*