

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing

Part LXXXVI: God's Judgment On Nomadic Desert Tribes For Their Smug Self-Sufficiency (Jeremiah 49:28-33)

I. Introduction

- A. The Noahic Covenant called for men to value human life so as to avoid excessive violence and not to commit murder, the reason why capital punishment in Genesis 9:5 is part of that Genesis 8:20-9:17 covenant.
- B. However, the descendants of Ishmael lived in fierce, warlike opposition to other peoples (Genesis 16:11-12; Psalm 120:5-6; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1198) in violation of that Noahic Covenant, a people of smug self-sufficiency who dwelt in the desert separate from other people.
- C. God's judgment thus fell on them in the form of a Babylonian invasion, providing a lesson for us (as follows):

II. God's Judgment On Nomadic Desert Tribes For Their Smug Self-Sufficiency, Jeremiah 49:28-33.

- A. God called for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to strike down Kedar in judgment for its sins, Jer. 49:28.
 1. Kedar was one of the nomadic tribes of the line of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13; *Ibid.*) that lived in the Arabian desert, a tribe known for its archery skills (Isa. 21:16-17; *Ibid.*) much like their ancestor, Gen. 21:20.
 2. When Hagar fled from her mistress Sarai in Genesis 16:1-9, the Angel of the Lord told Hagar she would have a son named Ishmael who, with his descendants, would be opposed to every man and everyone would be opposed to him, and that he would live in hostility to his kinsmen, Genesis 16:12 NIV.
 3. This hostility showed itself in fierce raids the Ishmaelites later made on other people groups in the Middle East. They defied the Noahic Covenant by which God had directed people after the Flood to respect human life and not be given to violence like the men of the pre-Flood world, cf. Genesis 6:12-13.
 4. Thus, the tents, flocks, curtains, goods and camels of Kedar, some of which were once taken as booty by Kedar's raids against others, would in turn be seized as spoils of war by the Babylonians while men of Kedar would cry to each other, "Terror on every side!" (Jer. 49:29) A nomadic tribe known for its ferocity against others would itself feel the terror and face the destruction wrought by foreign invaders!
- B. God also called for Hazor in the Arabian desert to fall to the Babylonians for its sins, Jeremiah 49:30-33:
 1. Hazor was a place in the Arabian desert that is unknown to us today, and God called its people to flee, to wander far away and hide in deep caves in humiliating contrast to their once proud lifestyle of the open desert where other nations had previously not attacked them, Jer. 49:30a; *Ibid.*, p. 1199. Babylon's king had formed a plan and had a purpose against these people of the desert, Jeremiah 49:30b.
 2. The Lord specifically called Babylon to rise up and advance against a nation that was at ease, that dwelt securely to where it did not see a need to protect itself with bars and gates because it dwelt alone in the desert far from where other people groups would even want to go, Jeremiah 49:31. Their smug self-sufficiency would be crushed as they became the object of an intentional invasion by Babylon.
 3. Accordingly, the camels of Hazor, valuable animals that provided excellent transportation in an otherwise difficult desert terrain, would become plunder, their herds of livestock becoming spoil as God used the Babylonians to scatter the men of Hazor to the winds by bringing calamity upon them from every direction, with Hazor becoming a permanent haunt of jackals, a place of desolation, Jeremiah 49:32-33. Since Hazor is an unknown place in today's Arabian desert, the prediction that it would be a desolate place without human inhabitant has certainly shown Jeremiah's prophecy to be true! (*Ibid.*, p. 1198-1199)

Lesson: For failing to respect God's Noahic Covenant to respect human life so as to refrain from violence and murder, the nomadic tribes of Ishmael of the Arabian Desert known also for their smug self-sufficiency in living alone in the desert free of bars and gates would face the terror of invasion by Babylon, their goods being taken from them as spoils of war, and they would scatter to the winds and hide in caves in terror and humiliation.

Application: (1) May we respect God's Noahic Covenant and thus respect human life so as not to be violent not only physically, but emotionally against other people. (2) May we humbly rely on the Lord instead of functioning in smug self-sufficiency and seek to get along with others versus living with selfish ferocity as antagonistic in our relationships with others. (3) May we respect the property of others and not seek to seize what belongs to others as did the Ishmaelite tribes, for God is our Adequate Supplier of all that we need, Matthew 6:25-34. (4) If God lets us experience injustice and material loss at the hands of others, may we examine ourselves to see if He is disciplining us for our smug self-sufficiency and violence against others, and if so, may we repent for restoration and blessing.