

I Am everyone's God **Chapters 25-33**

Introduction

YHWH Elohim will not leave the guilty unpunished (Exodus 34:7; Nahum 1:3).

There were earlier prophetic warnings against the nations¹ who harassed Israel. Many of these prophecies were distant from God's judgment, but not these ones.

The statement, "I have spoken and I will do it" peppers the book (9:17, 24; 22:14; 24:14; 36:36; 37:14).

The primary reason given for these judgments are rooted in the Abrahamic Covenant. God will curse those who curse Israel (Gen 12:1-3; 15:1-21; Zech. 2:7-8)

What can we learn from these prophecies of doom to the enemies of Israel?

God is sovereign

God doesn't ask permission and He doesn't apologize (Isaiah 45:6b-7, 9, 21-24).

He may wait, out of mercy, but He will act, out of justice.

In calamity God's people are to be humble and merciful.

- **Humility**

Identifying with vs. blaming them

Repentance rather than speculation should follow tragedy (Luke 13:1-9, Romans 2:3; 11:17-24).

Seeing life with the end in view vs. denial (Ecc.7:2,4)

Being respectfully honest with questions, doubts and desires²

Casting your lot with God.

Those who believe God is sovereign – submit

We must trust God despite circumstances.

¹ Joel (c.875-750) against Edom and Egypt; Obadiah (c.854 or later) against Edom; Amos (c.767-753) against Syria, Philistia, Phoenicia, Edom, Ammon, Moab; Habbakuk (c.608-597) against Babylon; Isaiah (c.740-680) and Jeremiah (c.626-585) against Egypt & Babylon and Daniel (c.600-530) against Babylon.

² Consider Abraham, Job, Moses, David & Jesus

- **Mercy**
Sadness for vs. Rejoicing about their hardship³

Pray for God's mercy

Provide mercy

25 – Oracles against Ammon, Moab, Edom & Philistia

Ammon (vv.1-7)

The Ammonite culture persisted to the Persian Empire. By the late 500's - early 400's they were supplanted by Arabic nations.⁴

Within 70 years of this prophecy, Ammon no longer existed.

Moab (vv.8-11)

The Moabite culture persisted to the Persian Empire. By the late 500's - early 400's they were supplanted by Arabic nations.⁵

Within 70 years of this prophecy, Moab no longer existed.

Edom (vv.12-14)⁶

History & archeology tells us that Edom fell shortly after Jerusalem. By 500 BC the settlements of Edom were demolished. By the late 500's - early 400's they were supplanted by Arabic nations.⁷ The Edomites were forcibly converted to Judaism by John Hyrcanus.⁸

³ Jonah; Ez.25:3,6f; 32:18; Prov.24:17; Mt.5:22

⁴ The records of a war between Antigonus Cyclops against Petra indicate that by 312 BC the Nabataean Arabs, from east of Ammon, were long established in this region at this time.

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⁶ See also the prophecies of Edom's destruction in 35:1-8; Obadiah, Isaiah 34:10-15 and Jeremiah 49:15-18

⁷ The Babylonian king Nabonidus (556-539 BC) is believed by many to have destroyed Edomite cities in 552 BC; the records of a war between Antigonus Cyclops against Petra indicate that by 312 BC the Nabataean Arabs were long established in Edomite territories.

⁸ A Macabean leader of the revolt against Seleucid control of Palestine by Antiochus. He was in power from 134 BCE until his death 104 BCE, having built a Palestinian kingdom that rivaled Solomon's in geographic size.

While the nation fell, many Edomites continued into the NT times (i.e. Edumeans or Idumeans) in southern Judah.

Philistia (vv.15-17)

Philistia occupied the southern part of the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. There was constant friction between Philistia & Israel throughout most of their history. Major cities included Joppa, Gaza, Ashkelon & Jabneh.

From 609 to 586 BCE, in a series of three Babylonian military campaigns, all the cities of Philistia were decimated and with this came the end of their national existence.

26 – The sin and judgment of Tyre

Tyre and Sidon were Phoenician⁹ cities along the northern part of the eastern coast of the Mediterranean.

Chapters 26 - 28:10 Predict the destruction of Tyre

Many scholars claim this is an example of a failed prophecy because Nebuchadnezzar¹⁰ did not destroy the island city of Tyre (26:7) and, in fact, after 13 years had to withdraw from the siege he had begun in 585/586 (i.e. 586 – 573 BC).

They point out that actually Alexander the Great destroyed the island city of Tyre after 7 months (332 BC).

Also, some say that there were many settlements on that site afterward and to this day, which belies the prediction of (26:19-21).

The prophecy is actually more detailed and intricate than critics have considered.

- 26:3 - 6 This overview predicts that a series of nations will destroy Tyre.
 - Babylon destroyed the mainland city (585/586)
 - Persia made Tyre a vassal state (539 BC)
 - Greece laid siege to the island part of Tyre destroying it in 7 months (332)
 - Romans took the temple treasuries (48 BC)
 - Muslims took over the city (636 AD)
 - Christian Crusaders took over the city (1124 AD)
 - Mamluks¹¹ destroyed the city (1291 AD)
- 26:7-11 predicts that Nebuchadnezzar would destroy the mainland portions of the city (v.8), which he did in 585/586 and lay siege to it (v.8), which he did from 586-573.
- 26:12-18 predicts that “they” (a significant shift from “he” in vv.7-11) referring to the nations, would plunder their wealth, demolish their walls & homes, throw their stones and timber into the sea (Alexander did this in 332 BC).¹²

⁹ a.k.a. Sidonians (Josh.13:6, Jgs.3:3)

¹⁰ Nebuchadnezzar is an alternate way his name appears.

¹¹ Mamluks were former soldier slaves of Muslim Arabs

¹² The city of Old Tyre is uninhabited, underwater or bare rock east of the modern city of Sur

- ▶ Alexander made the rock bare (vv.4,14) both on the mainland (to make a 1 mile long causeway to the island) and the island (intending to show the might of Greece to other nations).
- ▶ The coastal cities almost immediately capitulated to Greece (26:15-16)
- 26:19 predicts that God would submerge the city in the ocean.
 - ▶ Half the city was destroyed by earthquakes (502 AD)
 - ▶ The city was badly damaged by earthquakes (551 AD)
 - ▶ The Mediterranean Sea has risen considerably since ancient times such that the island of Tyre is now under the ocean. The former southern harbor is underneath 50 feet of water. Also, the island itself is thought to have sunk through a process of subsidence. Today black reefs off shore of what remains of Alexander's causeway are thought to be the remnant of that island.

27 – Lament over the ruin of Tyre

28 – God is against Tyre and Sidon

Satan

29 – Judgment upon Egypt

Chapters 29 – 32 Predict the destruction of Egypt

Many scholars claim this is an example of a failed prophecy because there is no record of such destruction and restoration (after 40 years according to 29:8-16 & 17-20) in Greek literature.

For one thing, this would be an argument from silence. The absence of evidence in extant Greek histories doesn't mean the events predicted didn't happen (i.e. the absence of evidence doesn't count as evidence for those who deny the events).

Without positive evidence we could only say we don't know if the prophecy was fulfilled or not. However, there is extra-biblical evidence that Babylon invaded Egypt (around 578 BC).¹³

- Josephus claims that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Egypt.¹⁴
- A cuneiform tablet dates one of Nebuchadnezzar's invasions to his 37th year.¹⁵
- The *Nes-Hor* funerary stela mentions an invasion of the Nile valley by an army of northerners whose invasion reached the Ethiopian border.¹⁶
- 40 years later the Persians conquered Babylon allowing an Egyptian restoration
- Egypt has never been a significant nation since (29:15).
 - ▶ Under the control of Persians¹⁷

¹³ Since the prophecy came to Ezekiel in the 27th year (probably of Nebuchadnezzar) who's enthronement was in 605 BC then the event should have occurred around 578 BC.

¹⁴ He dates it around 582 BC; *Antiquities* 10.9.5-7

¹⁵ ANET, p.308; 569/568 BC; this is a Babylonian record; it's believed that Nebuchadnezzar invaded more than once.

¹⁶ This Egyptian stela is in the Louvre; the commander Nes-Hor served under the reign of Uah-ib-Ra; Nes-hor was the governor of southern Egypt under Pharaoh Hophra (591-572 BC; called Apries by the Greek historian Herodotus).

¹⁷ Cambyses, son of Cyrus, invaded and annexed Egypt in 525 BC, holding it until 332.

- ▶ Under the control of Greece (i.e. including the Ptolemy's)¹⁸
- ▶ Under the control of Rome¹⁹
- ▶ Under the control of Islamic Arabs²⁰

30 – Egypt's doom is near

31 – Pharaoh's fall

32 – Final lamentation over Pharaoh

Homework Assignment

Read Chapters 17:22-24; 20:27-44; 28:25; 36-37

Prepare a response to the following question to turn in next week

Compare and contrast the message of righteousness in chapters 14 & 18, with the righteousness described in the chapters you were asked to read. How might you resolve the apparent contradictions?

¹⁸ The Greeks controlled Egypt from 332 until 31 BC.

¹⁹ From 31 BC until 630's AD when the Muslim Arabs invaded

²⁰ From the 630's until today.