Jeremiah

Chapter 47

*A Message About the Philistines*

**This is the word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the Philistines before Pharaoh attacked Gaza: 2 This is what the LORD says: “See how the waters are rising in the north; they will become an overflowing torrent. They will overflow the land and everything in it, the towns and those who live in them. The people will cry out; all who dwell in the land will wail 3 at the sound of the hoofs of galloping steeds, at the noise of enemy chariots and the rumble of their wheels. Fathers will not turn to help their children; their hands will hang limp. 4 For the day has come to destroy all the Philistines and to cut off all survivors who could help Tyre and Sidon. The LORD is about to destroy the Philistines, the remnant from the coasts of Caphtor. 5 Gaza will shave her head in mourning; Ashkelon will be silenced. O remnant on the plain, how long will you cut yourselves? 6 “‘Ah, sword of the LORD,’ you cry, ‘how long till you rest? Return to your scabbard; cease and be still.’ 7 But how can it rest when the LORD has commanded it, when he has ordered it to attack Ashkelon and the coast?**”

**47:1** *concerning the Philistines.* See Isa 14:28–32; Eze 25:15–17; Am 1:6–8; Zep 2:4–7. (CSB)

They were ancient enemies of the people of Israel on the west, along the shores of the Mediterranean. (Kretzmann)

 *Pharaoh.* It is uncertain whether Neco II (see 46:2; see also note on 2Ki 23:29) or Hophra (see notes on 37:5; 44:30) is intended. (CSB)

 *Gaza.* See v. 5; 25:20; see also note on Jdg 1:18. (CSB)

The exact occasion of this conquest is a matter of conjecture. It may be that Pharaoh-necho took the city after the battle of Megiddo, or that Pharaoh-hophra smote the city after his vain attempt to drive the Chaldeans out of the country. At any rate, Gaza was strong enough after its conquest by Pharaoh to be an object of anxious concern and to demand stern measures on account of its opposition to Jehovah. The exact occasion of this conquest is a matter of conjecture. It may be that Pharaoh-necho took the city after the battle of Megiddo, or that Pharaoh-hophra smote the city after his vain attempt to drive the Chaldeans out of the country. At any rate, Gaza was strong enough after its conquest by Pharaoh to be an object of anxious concern and to demand stern measures on account of its opposition to Jehovah. (Kretzmann)

**47:2** *waters are rising.* See notes on 46:7–8. (CSB)

Waters is a common prophetic image for a multitude of people. (ACC)

 *the north.* Babylonia, as in 1:13–14; 46:20. (CSB)

 OVERFLOWING THE LAND – Like a winter torrent, carrying everything before it. (Kretzmann)

 *the land … live in them.* The Hebrew for this phrase is repeated verbatim from 8:16. (CSB)

 *land.* Phoenicia and Philistia. *towns.* See note on 46:8; includes Tyre and Sidon (see v. 4) as well as Gaza, Ashkelon (see v. 5) and other Philistine cities. (CSB)

**47:3** *steeds.* Lit. “strong ones” (see note on 46:15). (CSB)

 FATHERS WILL NOT TURN TO HELP – Though their children are left behind, they have neither strength nor courage to go back to bring them off. (ACC)

 *hands will hang limp.* Paralyzed by terror (see 6:24; Isa 13:7). (CSB)

A general powerlessness having taken hold of them, making it impossible for them even to think of defending themselves. (Kretzmann)

**47:4** *Tyre and Sidon.* See notes on v. 2; 25:22; 27:3. (CSB)

Places sufficiently remarkable both in the Old and New Testament, and in profane history. They belonged to the Phoenicians; and at this time were depending on the succor of their allies, the Philistines. But their expectation was cut off. (ACC)

 *remnant.* See v. 5. (CSB)

 *Caphtor.* Crete (see NIV text note; the Kerethites of Zep 2:5 and elsewhere were probably Cretans), one of many islands in the Mediterranean believed to be the original homeland of the Philistines (see Ge 10:14 and note; see also Dt 2:23). (CSB)

Crete, or Cyprus. Some think it was a district along the coast of the Mediterranean, belonging to the Philistines; others, that the Cappadocians are meant. (ACC)

**47:5** *Gaza.* See v. 1; 25:20; see also note on Jdg 1:18. (CSB)

 *shave her head in mourning.* See note on 16:6; see also 48:37. (CSB)

One of the city-states of Philistia, due to tearing out the hair because of great grief. (Kretzmann)

 *Ashkelon.* See v. 7; 25:20; see also note on Jdg 1:18. (CSB)

Or put to silence; another mark of the deepest sorrow. Ashkelon was one of the five seignories of the Philistines, Gaza was another. (ACC)

 *be silenced.* A sign of mourning (see La 2:10). (CSB)

 *remnant.* See note on v. 4. (CSB)

 *plain.* Roughly equivalent to the modern Gaza Strip, it lay west of the foothills that separated Philistia from Judah. (CSB)

 *cut yourselves.* See note on 16:6; see also 48:37. (CSB)

Or plain; for the whole land of the Philistines was a vast plain, which extended along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea from Phoenicia to the frontiers of Egypt. The whole of this plain, the territory of the Philistines, shall be desolated. (ACC)

**47:6** SWORD – This is a most grand prosopopoeia—a dialogue between the sword of the Lord and the prophet. Nothing can be imagined more sublime. (ACC)

 *you.* The Philistines. (CSB)

 RETURN TO YOUR SCABBARD – Shed no more blood, destroy no more lives, erase no more cities, desolate no more countries. *Rest*:—hast thou not been long enough at this work of judgment? *O be still*:—let wars and desolations cease for ever. (ACC)

**47:7** HOW CAN IT REST – This is the answer of the Sword. I am the officer of God’s judgments, and he has given me a commission against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore; all the coast where the Philistines have their territories. The measure of their iniquities is full; and these God hath appointed this sword to ravage. The Philistines were ever the implacable enemies of the Jews, and the basest and worst of all idolaters. On these accounts the sword of the Lord had its commission against them; and it did its office most fearfully and effectually by the hand of the Chaldeans. (ACC)

 *attack Ashkelon.* The immediate fulfillment took place under Nebuchadnezzar in 604 b.c. (CSB)

 *coast.* See Eze 25:16; the Philistine plain (see note on v. 5). (CSB)