

EZEKIEL

Chapter 25

Prophecy Against Ammon

The word of the LORD came to me: 2 “Son of man, set your face toward the Ammonites and prophesy against them. 3 Say to the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord GOD: Thus says the Lord GOD, Because you said, ‘Aha!’ over my sanctuary when it was profaned, and over the land of Israel when it was made desolate, and over the house of Judah when they went into exile, 4 therefore behold, I am handing you over to the people of the East for a possession, and they shall set their encampments among you and make their dwellings in your midst. They shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk. 5 I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and Ammon a fold for flocks. Then you will know that I am the LORD. 6 For thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have clapped your hands and stamped your feet and rejoiced with all the malice within your soul against the land of Israel, 7 therefore, behold, I have stretched out my hand against you, and will hand you over as plunder to the nations. And I will cut you off from the peoples and will make you perish out of the countries; I will destroy you. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

25:1–32:32† Oracles against the nations. Frequently in the prophets, God’s word of judgment on Israel is accompanied by oracles of judgment on the nations. These make clear that, while judgment begins “with the family of God” (1Pe 4:17), the pagan nations would not escape God’s wrath. No nation will be able to thwart God’s plan to use the descendants of Abraham in bringing salvation to the ends of the earth (Ge 12:3). In the case of Ezekiel there are seven oracles (the seventh of which has seven parts, each introduced by the phrase “The word of the LORD came to me”) (CSB)

Oracles against seven nations surrounding Israel, which serve as an interlude, leave the reader in suspense about the future of Jerusalem (see note, 24:26). The doom pronounced on the foreign nations constitutes a prelude to the third and final section of Ezk. For similar collections of oracles against Israel’s enemies, cf Is 13–23; Jer 46–51; Am 1:2–2:3. The nations are Ammon east of the Jordan, Moab east of the Salt Sea, Edom to the south, Philistia to the west (ch 25), and Tyre and Sidon to the northwest (chs 26–28). The seventh is Egypt, contender for the control of all Israel (chs 29–32). The indicted nations add up to a total of seven, and the seventh (Egypt) is condemned by seven words of the Lord that came to Ezekiel on seven occasions (29:1, 17; 30:1, 20; 31:1; 32:1, 17). Every earthly power that seeks to hinder the coming of God’s kingdom must go down in defeat. Note that Babylon is not included; in Ezekiel’s day, the Babylonian king was not obstructing God’s purposes. Though acting out of selfish motives, the Babylonian king was carrying out a divinely assigned task when he destroyed Jerusalem. Although Israel had dealings with other peoples, the seven nations indicted and condemned represent the totality of worldly powers answerable to God’s direction (cf Dt 7:1). Ezekiel underscores the miracle of Israel’s survival among hostile nations and empires by noting the exact date when he received seven of the oracles directed against them, thus accounting for half of the dated passages in the entire Book (26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17). (TLSB)

25:2 *Ammonites.* Ammon (part of modern Jordan) was immediately east of Israel (see 21:20; see also Jer 9:26; 49:1–6; Am 1:13–15; Zep 2:8–11). For hostile Ammonite action during this time and later see 2Ki 24:2; Ne 4:7. (CSB)

25:3 *Aha!* A cry of malicious joy (cf. 26:2; 36:2; Ps 35:21–25). (CSB)

sanctuary when it was profaned. Fall of Jerusalem, 587 BC. (TLSB)

25:4 *people of the East.* Probably nomadic tribes of the desert east of Ammon, though this could be a reference to Nebuchadnezzar and his army (see 21:31). (CSB)

25:5 *pasture for camels...flocks.* A common OT description for destroyed cities (see Isa 34:13–15; Zep 2:13–15). The sites were returned to the conditions they were in before the cities were built, representing the undoing of human efforts. (CSB)

25:1–7 Ezekiel pronounces the first of seven prophecies against nations surrounding Israel. God directs world events by faithfully protecting those whom He loves and punishing those who disobey Him. God continues to do the same today. He will not allow nations or individuals to mock Him. He will call straying people to repentance, that He might forgive them and restore blessings to them so that others may come to know the Lord (vv 5, 7). • Almighty God, grant that we never rejoice at the misfortune of others; we pray that all may come to know You by faith. Amen. (TLSB)

Prophecy Against Moab and Seir

8 “Thus says the Lord GOD: Because Moab and Seir said, ‘Behold, the house of Judah is like all the other nations,’ **9** therefore I will lay open the flank of Moab from the cities, from its cities on its frontier, the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim. **10** I will give it along with the Ammonites to the people of the East as a possession, that the Ammonites may be remembered no more among the nations, **11** and I will execute judgments upon Moab. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

25:8 *Moab.* Immediately to the south of Ammon, east of the Dead Sea (see Isa 15–16; Jer 48; Am 2:1–3; Zep 2:8–11). (CSB)

Seir. Edom, a country south of Moab and south of the Dead Sea (see ch. 35, especially v. 15; 36:5; Isa 34:5–17; 63:1–6; Jer 49:7–11; Am 1:11–12). (CSB)

like all the other nations. Israel wanted to be like the nations, but when the nations saw Judah in her apparent vulnerability and lost their awe of her, they failed to take her God seriously (cf. La 4:12). (CSB)

They certainly share the same sins but have greater responsibility because of their rebellion (cf 2:3–7). (TLSB)

25:9 *flank of Moab.* Lower hills rising from the Dead Sea, visible from Jerusalem. (CSB)

Beth Jeshimoth. A town in the plains of Moab. (CSB)

Baal Meon. A major Moabite town mentioned in an inscribed monument of Mesha, king of Moab. (CSB)

Kiriathaim. A city also mentioned in the Mesha inscription (cf. 2Ki 3:4–5). (CSB)

Yahweh does not tolerate such blasphemous denials of his intrinsic uniqueness and incomparability and turns the tables. Like all the other kingdoms of this world, Moab must ultimately sink into oblivion. (CC)

25:8–11 Moab falls under the Lord’s judgment. God accuses Moab of believing that Judah is like the other nations (v 8), when in truth they are called and blessed by God. Today, bear His name with repentant joy and sincere faith so that others may know the Lord. God expects His people to be different.

Indeed, He makes a difference in the lives of those baptized in His name by forgiving their sins. • Merciful God, show us how to live in Your righteousness by Your Spirit's power, through Christ, our Lord. Amen. (TLSB)

Prophecy Against Edom

12 “Thus says the Lord GOD: Because Edom acted revengefully against the house of Judah and has grievously offended in taking vengeance on them, 13 therefore thus says the Lord GOD, I will stretch out my hand against Edom and cut off from it man and beast. And I will make it desolate; from Teman even to Dedan they shall fall by the sword. 14 And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel, and they shall do in Edom according to my anger and according to my wrath, and they shall know my vengeance, declares the Lord GOD.

25:12–14 Living in the territory south of the Salt Sea, the Edomites refused to allow Israel to pass through their nation on their march to the Promised Land (Nu 20:18–21). (TLSB)

25:12 *Edom.* Edom runs a close second to Babylon, especially in the OT, as *the* symbol and type of the kingdoms of this world—of Satan's realm, which will be in unending conflict with the kingdom of God until the end of time. (CC)

The mutual enmity seems especially bitter because of the familial relationship between Edom and Israel. As is often the case, few feuds and grudges are as sharp and implacable as those between siblings. Jacob and Esau (the father of the Edomites) were twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah, and their rivalry, which will become one of the better-known narratives of the Bible, is foretold already at their birth (Gen 25:23). Genesis 32–33 indicates that Esau had settled in Edom already at the time of Jacob's return from Haran. Gen 36:31–39 reports that eight kings had already ruled in Edom before Saul became Israel's first. En route from Egypt to Canaan, Moses appeals in vain to the Edomites' relation as brothers for permission to traverse their territory (Num 20:14–21). Because of the relationship, Deut 23:7–8 even permits Israelites to intermarry with Edomites in the third generation. Closer to Ezekiel's time, both Amos and Obadiah highlight Edom's malicious behavior toward its brother. And the reader will not overlook that after the short oracle against Edom here, an entire chapter (Ezekiel 35) will be devoted to the coming judgment on Edom. (CC)

acted revengefully. By not harboring Judah's refugees after 586 B.C. (see Ob 11–14). (CSB)

25:13 *Teman.* A district near Petra in central Edom (see Jer 49:7, 20; Am 1:12; Ob 9; Hab 3:3). (CSB)

Dedan. A tribe and territory in southern Edom (see 27:20; 38:13; Isa 21:13; Jer 49:8). (CSB)

25:14 *vengeance ... by the hand of My people Israel.* The Edomites were later dominated by the Nabateans, Maccabees, and Romans until they disappeared from history. (TLSB)

25:12–14 In Ezekiel's day, the Edomites joined forces with the Babylonians besieging Jerusalem, and they participated in the slaughter of God's people (Ob 8–14). They did not simply ignore Judah's trouble, but actively exploited them. Today, when you see someone struggling, pray for him and actively seek his good. Leave vengeance to God and those whom God charges with matters of justice. Your hope and pride as God's child is not in your power over others but in the mercy He shed upon you by your Savior, Jesus. • Almighty God, we pray that You would forgive us, for at times we fail to help others in need. Lead us to strongly defend Your Holy Word. Amen. (TLSB)

Prophecy Against Philistia

15 “Thus says the Lord GOD: Because the Philistines acted revengefully and took vengeance with malice of soul to destroy in never-ending enmity, 16 therefore thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I will stretch out my hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethites and destroy the rest of the seacoast. 17 I will execute great vengeance on them with wrathful rebukes. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I lay my vengeance upon them.”

25:15 *Philistines*. Inhabitants of the coastal plain along the Mediterranean west of Judah (1Sa 6:17), who strove for control of Canaan until subdued by David. Their hostility to Israel continued, however (see Isa 14:29–31; Jer 47; Am 1:6–8; Zep 2:4–7), until Nebuchadnezzar deported them. (CSB)

never-ending enmity. Books of Jgs and 1Sm–2Ch include God’s many grievances against the Philistines. The trouble began in Jgs 3. (TLSB)

25:16 *Kerethites*. Related to, if not identical with, the Philistines. (CSB)

sea coast. Of the Mediterranean. (CSB)

25:17 *they will know*. Statement of God’s ultimate purpose occurs frequently in sermons addressed to Israel. When it appears repeatedly also in these oracles, it holds out hope that people of heathen origin will also be led to knowledge of the saving truth, vouchsafed in God’s everlasting covenant of grace (25:7, 11; 1Tm 2:4). (TLSB)

25:15–17 Looking westward, God directs His fourth prophecy against the Philistines. Far from an act of revenge, God reaches out to the Philistines, that they may know He is God. To this day, God continues to reach out to people who do not know Him. He desires the salvation of all (1Tm 2:3–4), as He emphasized to Ezekiel (Ezk 18:23, 32). Pray for those who fight against God’s people. The Lord can change their lives and grant them repentance, just as He has granted repentance and life to you in Christ Jesus. • Lord, You are merciful. By Your grace through Christ, deliver the nations from evil. Amen. (TLSB)