

Message #52**Jeremiah 48:1-47**

When we come to this part of Jeremiah, he gives a prophecy concerning one of the nations, Moab. Other than Babylon itself, this is the longest prophecy against any “foreign nation.”

The Moabites were descendants of Lot (Gen. 19:20-38). They were the result of an incestuous relationship with a daughter of Lot that produced Moab (Gen. 19:31-37).

They had a long history with Israel. They certainly knew about Abraham and God, because Lot was Abraham’s nephew.

In fact, the tribe of Reuben was assigned a portion of land in Moab (Num. 32: Josh. 13:15-23). The Moabites had, at times, been in a peaceful relationship with Israel, but she was never Israel’s friend. We may recall that Ruth was a Moabitess, and Naomi’s sons, who were from Bethlehem in Judah, married Moabite women (Ruth 1:1-5).

However, most of the time (not all) of the time, they were Israel’s enemies. Both David and Solomon conquered them (II Sam. 8:2, 12) some 400-450 years prior to Jeremiah.

But as time went on, the Moabites were not the allies of Israel. In fact, when Jehoiakim plotted against Babylon (600-598 BC), Moab sided with Babylon. When Zedekiah led his final revolt against Babylon, Moab did not side with Israel (II Kings 24:2; Jer. 12:7-13; 27:1-11).

In 581 BC, Moab was completely conquered by the Babylonians, and then a few years later Arabs invaded her and she was destroyed by them.

Now the specific area where the Moabites lived is modern day Jordan. Modern day Jordan is 93 % Muslim religion and 98% of the people are Arabs. Now we know from **verse 47** that there are “latter days” ramifications to this prophecy.

For many years, including to this very day, Moab (Jordan) has been an enemy of Israel and an idolatrous, God-mocking nation (Numbers 25:1-3). She has never been Israel’s trusted friend. During the days when Israel was in the wilderness, it was Moabite women who seduced Israel’s men (Numbers 31:15-17). During the days of the Judges, the Moabites oppressed Israel for 18 years (Judges 3:12-14). During the days of Israel’s kings, King Saul fought against the Moabites (I Samuel 14:47) and King David defeated the Moabites (II Samuel 8:2, 12). But Solomon built an altar to Moab’s “god” Chemosh because he was influenced by his Moabite wives (I Kings 11:7-8).

In our day, Jordan is at the center of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Ever since an agreement was made between Jordan and Israel, in 1994 called the “Washington Declaration,” a supposed formal cooperation exists between the Jews and the Arabs as long as Israel promises to respect and give priority to their idolatrous Muslim holy shrines in Jerusalem (Dore Gold, *The Fight For Jerusalem*, p. 268).

So we cannot just limit this to the days of Jeremiah. Prophetically speaking, Moab is a key eschatological target for judgment (Ez. 25:8-11; Amos 2:1-3; Zephaniah 2:9; Is. 15-16). There are far reaching ramifications here for those living in this part of the world.

What we see here is this:

THOSE WHO HAVE EXPOSURE TO GOD’S WORD BUT DO NOT TAKE IT SERIOUSLY AND TRUST IN THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND TREASURES, WILL EVENTUALLY FACE A SEVERE JUDGMENT OF GOD.

The Moabites are illustrative of people who have great exposure to the people of God and to the Word of God, while living a prosperous life. But they really don’t take it too seriously. They go about their business and never get real serious about God.

The chapter breaks down into six parts:

PART #1 – Jeremiah warns the Moabites that judgment is coming and they need to take God’s word seriously. **48:1-10**

In **verse 1-2**, names four cities: Nebo, Kiriathaim, Heshbon and Madmen. **Three of the cities are specific cities that were actually built by the Reubenites (Num. 32:33-38).** Nebo and Kiriathaim and Heshbon are named. Heshbon was a well-known city mentioned 38 times in the Bible. It was a Levitical city. So these were cities that had actually been built by the Israelites, but the Moabites were living there. These cities were located around the Dead Sea.

In **verse 1**, God pronounces a “woe” judgment on them. God says these cities are going down. It will include destruction to Horonaim (**v. 3**) and Luhith (**v. 5**). They would be destroyed and brought to shame. The sword would destroy all there.

According to **verse 4**, even the little ones would suffer and there would be no easing up.

According to **verses 6-9**, God warns the people to flee for their lives and escape coming judgment. They would need to flee to the wilderness.

Verse 7 gives the reason for it; they trust in their own achievements and treasures. They trust in a false deity Chemosh and they have their false priests and princes.

Verse 8 describes the fact that “no city” will escape. **Verse 9** says that her cities will become complete desolation “without inhabitants.”

Verse 10 says that God has ordered this destruction and cursed is the one who does the Lord’s work negligently.

Six observations:

- 1) Many of these places were destroyed by the Babylonians but not all.
- 2) There will come a final judgment to this Jordan area that will fulfill this completely.
- 3) God never wants people trusting in their own achievements and treasures.
- 4) God wants His people trusting in Him.
- 5) God will not honor anyone who does the Lord's work negligently.
- 6) When one is not right with God, one is not safe anywhere.

What is given in these verses is a series of warnings against specific places that were part of the Moabite territory.

PART #2 – Jeremiah rebukes the Moabites for pursuing an easy life that has so caused the nation to decay that it will be destroyed. **48:11-17**

According to **verse 11**, The Moabites had pretty much lived a life of ease. They seemed to have an abundance of everything. They were never at war. They had plenty and had never gone without. They had never been exiled. They always enjoyed a full, rich life.

But the problem was they did not worship the true God. They worshipped a false deity named Chemosh (**v. 13**), so God says I will make them ashamed. I will shatter them. I will destroy their military and send swift judgment on them. God says in **verse 17**, all around them can mourn because I will break them to pieces.

As I mentioned, the predominant religion of Jordan today is Islam. It worships a false deity they name Allah. The warning is very clear here, there will come a day when God is going to completely destroy this part of the world for their arrogance and their false religion.

People at ease can think it will always be that way. Leave the true God out of the life or the nation and sooner or later, God will step in and shatter it.

PART #3 – Jeremiah predicts that even the most glorious places of Moab will experience the judgment of God. **48:18-25**

In these verses, Jeremiah names the cities of Aroer, Holon, Jahzah, Mephaath, Dibon, Nebo, Beth-diblathaim, Kiriathaim, Beth-gamul, Beth-meon, Kerioth, Bozrah.

The purpose of naming these cities is to reinforce that when this judgment comes, no one will escape. Even if one lives in a remote city like Aroer. All of the cities in the Jordan valley on the east side both far and near will be destroyed.

In **verse 25**, Jeremiah says Moab's horn would be cut off and his arm would be broken.

Now we know from Daniel that the horn represents political and military power and the arm represents strength. What God is predicting is that He will make Jordan a zero land. He will take away any strength and he will take away their ability to influence anything.

People who live in the Middle East think it is just fine to invent their false religion. God says it will all come crumbling down.

PART #4 – Jeremiah predicts that the proud arrogant Moabites will experience the full brunt of God’s wrath. **48:26-30**

God says I am going to make the proud Moabites drunk so that they stumble and wallow in their own vomit. I will cause people to laugh at them. Just as they laughed at Israel and God’s people, so God will cause people to laugh at them.

God says this is a proud people, but their pride will be shattered. She has nothing to be proud about and her arrogance will accomplish nothing.

PART #5 – Jeremiah informs the Moabites that God is saddened by what He must do. **48:31-39**

God says I find no joy in destroying people. I weep over the fact that I take away their blessings and give them over to total destruction.

God says in **verse 35**, “I will make an end of Moab.” I am saddened by what I have to do, but God says I will bring her to shattered ruins.

PART #6 – Jeremiah predicts that God’s destructive judgment is coming, but one day God’s restoration will also come. **48:40-47**

God says I will fly swiftly over the Moabites and bring terror and judgment on them.

But now notice the end of **verse 47**, God says I will restore the fortunes of Moab “in the latter days.”

Now Moab lost its national identity when they were overtaken by the Arabians. The Arabs control that part of the world.

The prediction that God makes here is that “in latter days” God is going to restore things to Moab. We know from Daniel 11:41 that some Moabite/Jordanians will survive the onslaught of the Antichrist.

So we conclude from this that God is going to target the Arab world and destroy them and when Jesus Christ is back here in the millennium reigning as King, these things will be fulfilled (**Deut. 4:30; Jer. 49:39; Dan. 10:14**).

From Matthew 1:5 we learn that Ruth, a Moabitess, is in the lineage genealogy of Jesus the Messiah. There will come a day when all of the Arab world and all from Israel and all nations will acknowledge that.

There are six named sins of Moab that will lead to destruction:

- 1) Trust in self-achievement (**v. 7**)—trust in yourself and your righteousness.
- 2) Trust in treasure/money (**v. 7**)—trust your money (greed).
- 3) Proud, arrogant, self-exalting haughtiness (**v. 29**).
- 4) Idolatry (**v. 35**)—worship something other than the true God of the Bible.
- 5) Arrogance against God (**v. 42**).
- 6) Riotous revelry (**v. 45**).

There is nothing in the chapter that would merit God doing what He says He will do in **verse 47** other than pure grace.