

**Message #51****Jeremiah 47:1-7**

In Psalm 22:28 we read, “For the kingdom is the LORD’S and He rules over the nations.”

In Psalm 110:5-6 we read, “The Lord is at Your right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath. He will judge among the nations, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country.”

It is very clear from these statements that God one day intends to judge the nations of the world with a ferocious judgment.

God is sovereign over all nations of the world. He is sovereign over the United States. He is sovereign over Russia. He is sovereign over China. He is sovereign over Africa and South America and Australia and Antarctica.

As we have been traveling through this book of Jeremiah, we have seen a chronology and that is that God first brings judgment against His own people and then He brings His judgment to the nations.

God’s judgment first starts with His own household and after He has completed that, He takes His judgment out to the world.

It is very clear that all nations of the world are accountable to God. All nations will be judged by God. **God judges the big nations like Egypt, and as we shall see He will also judge the small nations like the Philistines.**

No one escapes God’s judgment. These are real judgments against real nations in real history. Now as Jeremiah was predicting these things, there was a very near application and a very far application.

We saw last time that God predicted that Nebuchadnezzar would sweep in and destroy Egypt, which he did. Yet there were things stated in the prediction that did not happen. For example, in Jeremiah 46:28 he states, “For I will make a full end of all the nations.” Well obviously that has not happened yet. So we conclude the warning against Egypt was partially fulfilled but not completely fulfilled and is yet to be fulfilled.

God is the God of all nations of the world and it is predicted that He will pour out His wrath on all nations of the world and that event will be a critical prelude to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

This is why the word of God needs to be proclaimed to the whole world. What is the point of taking the word of God to all nations of the world? The point of it is that God is Sovereign over all nations of the world. All nations of the world have the opportunity to believe in Jesus Christ and to get serious about the Scriptures.

Now to bring about a Kingdom on this earth in which righteousness reigns, something will have to be done about evil in the world and the evil nations in the world. Since the world is not willing to submit to the word and will of God, God will have to cause it to happen by force.

**THE GOD OF THE BIBLE IS THE SOVEREIGN GOD AND JUDGE OVER ALL NATIONS OF THE WORLD AND AS HE HAS POURED OUT JUDGMENT AGAINST HIS OWN PEOPLE, HE WILL ALSO POUR OUT JUDGMENT AGAINST ALL NATIONS AND CITIES.**

There are actual cities named here, which means they are specifically targeted. The nations and cities that are named in these prophecies are nations that were in close proximity to Israel. In fact, they still are.

These same nations and cities are also mentioned in Zechariah's prophecies that occurred some 50-60 years after Jeremiah (Zechariah 9:2-5). The vast majority of the nation's today in these very areas are Arabs and they are involved in the Muslim religion.

These nations were targeted in the days of Jeremiah, but they were also targeted in the days of Zechariah, and they will also be the target of God's wrath in the Tribulation. These nations have no legal right to Israel's land and God will destroy them.

The Philistines were at their pinnacle of power back during the time of David, which means they were at the peak of power some 450 years before Jeremiah. The name Palestine is actually derived from the noun Philistines. For the most part, these people had migrated from Crete and lived along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

They worshipped false gods. Primarily they worshipped Dagon.

In fact, this area today along the Mediterranean coast is 99 % Muslim. The true God of the Bible is still not worshipped. What is worshipped is the invented Allah of the Koran.

From **verse 1**, we learn that this message God gives Jeremiah for the Philistines occurred before Pharaoh conquered Gaza. Gaza was a main Philistine city.

There is no certainty as to the exact date, but it is clear that God wanted Jeremiah to take this message to the Philistines. We know that Zechariah wrote in the 8<sup>th</sup> month of the second year of Darius (Zechariah 1:1). That would be the year of 520 BC. Since Zechariah names those same cities, we know that Nebuchadnezzar did not fulfill the totality of what is predicted here.

By the time Jeremiah writes, the Philistines were a relatively small group who were really no threat to much of anyone. The giants were gone and they were just there in their little false religion. Years before they had been an enemy of Israel, but at the time of Jeremiah, they weren't much of a threat.

It is kind of like today. The group that primarily controls this Gaza area are Lebanese and Syrians and most of them are not much of a threat to Israel.

So one might think, well God probably forgot about the fact that they used to do bad things to His people. God doesn't forget and God does settle scores. **Do not make the mistake of assuming that just because God does not fulfill all prophecy immediately, that He won't fulfill it eventually.**

**Message #1** - A flood of judgment will overflow the land. **47:2a**

The judgment that God would ultimately bring against this area would be so scary that just the sound would cause the strongest of military men to fear.

The judgment would come from the north, which would mean the initial judgment would come from the Babylonians. So the Babylonians would not only be used by God to destroy Israel, they would also be used by God to punish these other nations.

This particular part of the land is Promised to Israel and belongs to Israel, although it is not controlled by Israel right now. So what that means is that some of this is futuristic prophecy.

God would use the Babylonians, then He would use the Medes/Persians (Zechariah 9) and then one day He will use the Antichrist to complete the job. Jesus said there will come "a great tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will" (Matt. 24:21).

**Message #2** - When this flood of judgment hits, every person will wail. **47:2b**

God's judgment is no respecter of persons. **God's judgment against a nation is also a judgment against individuals in that nation.**

When God pours out His judgment, all people, regardless of status, will experience it.

The judgment of God will overwhelm the inhabitants of the Gaza strip like a flood. There will be no escape. For God, it will be a complete and total victory.

Now carefully notice at the end of **verse 2** that "every inhabitant of the land will wail." This has never happened. The fact is, there are still people living in those areas who are the enemies of God and Israel.

**Message #3** - When this judgment hits, fathers will turn their backs on their own children. **47:3**

God's judgment is fearful. There is terror in the judgments of God. This will be so fearful that parents will not even go back to try to save their children. It will be every man for himself.

The weapons of judgment warfare may change, but the terror of judgment will not change.

**Message #4** - When this judgment occurs, God will destroy all Philistines and all allies. **47:4**

Now the principle to see here is this: any ally of the Philistines will be targeted with the judgment of God.

There is, in fact, a Babylonian document that is now located in Istanbul, Turkey, that mentions the fact that the kings of Tyre and Sidon (v. 4) and Gaza and Ashkelon (v. 5) were brought before the court of Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuchadnezzar was never able to completely conquer this part of the world and these cities. For example, the Assyrians attacked Tyre, a fortress city comprised of a mainland city and an island city, for five years and Nebuchadnezzar attacked the area for 13 years (585 BC-573 BC) and was never able to take the island. So what that tells us is the totality of this prophecy has not yet been fulfilled.

It is true that the very cities named in these verses literally were controlled by Nebuchadnezzar. God used Nebuchadnezzar as an instrument to carry out His judgment.

But we know that Tyre was not completely destroyed or cut off because it was still in existence during the days of Alexander the Great, and frankly the area is still inhabited today. Caphtor is the O.T. name for the island of Crete.

Crete was the place where Titus was during the days of Paul. It is still a party type island today. There has not been a complete destruction yet, but it will come.

So we conclude there are some still unfinished judgments that will target this part of the world during the Tribulation and bring to fulfillment all that is predicted.

**Message #5** - When this judgment occurs, bad things will happen to the Philistine cities. **47:5**

There were five Philistine city/states that were known in Biblical times: Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, Ecron, and Ashdod. Two of them are specifically named and singled out: Gaza and Ashkelon.

Gaza was located a couple miles inland from the Mediterranean Sea and Ashkelon was located about ten miles north of Gaza. Ashkelon was and still is a prosperous port city today with the name Ashqelon. What Zechariah predicts is that one day Ashkelon would end up being completely deserted because of the judgment of God (Zech. 9:5). It is a thriving city today.

What we may specifically observe here is that God does target cities for judgment. He does watch what is happening in cities and He does keep records of those cities that fear Him and those that mock Him.

What is said about Gaza is that baldness has come. That may mean the place will be so destroyed that it will be down to the bare rock. It also could mean that any survivors will be in such mourning that they will literally shave their heads bare.

Ashkelon would be brought to total ruin and the people were in such depression that they cut themselves, which was another mourning type of action (Jer. 41:5).

After the battle of Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar turned his attention to the Philistines in 604 BC. He apparently marched into Ashkelon and captured it and captured the king and plundered it, and he did turn parts of the city into a mound of heaps and ruins.

So the prophecy was literally partially fulfilled in exactly what God predicted. God always fulfills prophecy literally.

Revelation 16:19 makes a remarkable prediction, “and the cities of the nation’s fell.” There is yet to be a major outpouring of God’s wrath that will hit all cities of all nations. The completion of this prophecy will be during the Great Tribulation.

**Message #6** - The sword of the LORD will not be quiet or withdrawn until all judgment is complete. **47:6**

Judgment is a sword of the LORD. God will not stop His judgment until it is complete. The completion will occur during the Tribulation. This is what most people do not understand or fear about the judgment of God. When God reaches an angry judgment level, His perfect attributes cannot and will not let Him stop it until it is all complete.

**Message #7** - The sword of the LORD will not be quiet because God has given an order of destruction. **47:7**

God assigns and targets places for destruction and judgment. Once one reaches this level, the order will be carried out. No one will stop the Great Tribulation from coming.

God’s people cannot look to the nations for salvation or deliverance. God’s people must look to God.

He is a God who predicts that He will target the world for judgment and pour out His wrath. His judgments are ferocious.

Wise people will make a decision to be right with the God of the Bible through Jesus Christ.

According to James, “mercy triumphs over judgment” (James 2:13).

Any who experience the mercy of God through Jesus Christ never need worry about the ferocious judgment of God.

But this chapter is very clear that sin is not overlooked or forgotten by God, and it will receive its due reward in due time.