

Handout: Ezekiel Lesson 9

What Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations... Look, for a start I am bringing disaster on the city that bears my name, so are you likely to go unpunished? You certainly will not go unpunished, for next I shall summon a sword against all the inhabitants of the land, Yahweh declares.

Jeremiah 25:13b, 29

Ezekiel directs his prophecies against seven nations in Chapters 22-32 who were Israel's immediate neighbors. The series of oracles pronounce divine judgment moving from north to south in the Transjordan and then east to the Mediterranean coast.

Chapter 25 has four short oracles:

1. Prophecy against Ammon (verses 1-7)
2. Prophecy against Moab (verses 8-11)
3. Prophecy against Edom (verses 12-14)
4. Prophecy against Philistia (verses 15-17)

In 25:3, Yahweh condemns the Ammonites because:

1. They gloated over the Babylonians profaning the Temple in its destruction.
2. They gloated over the land of Israel when it was ravaged.
3. They gloated over the House of Judah when it went into exile.

The section devoted to the judgment against the Phoenician city-state of Tyre divides into four parts:

1. The indictment and judicial sentence against Tyre (26:1-14).
2. The first lament over Tyre (26:15-21).
3. The second lament over Tyre (27:1-36).
4. Judgment against the king of Tyre (28:1-19)

Tyre's influence was international; men and nations from the islands and city-states across the Mediterranean and the city-states and nations of Africa, Asia Minor, Europe, and Mesopotamia made alliances or trade agreements with her. Locate these different cities and peoples on a map of the ancient world named in Chapter 27:

- Seir or Hermon was the mountain that terminates the Anti-Lebanon Range in the south.
- Lebanon means "white" and probably refers to the snows that cover the upper slopes of the Lebanon Mountains most of the year. The chain of mountains extends north and south along the Syrian coast through the modern country of Lebanon.
- Bashan means "fertile plain," and refers to a region of the Upper Transjordan, east of the Sea of Galilee that extended from the foot of Mt. Hermon (Mt. Seir) on the north to the Yarmuk River on the south.
- The Kittim isles: According to the Table of Nations in Genesis Chapter 10, the Kittim were the descendants of Javan who settled on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus and mainland Greece (Gen 10:4; 1 Chr 1:7).
- Egypt is the great nation and ancient civilization along the Nile River in northeast Africa.

- Men from Persia (Southeastern Asia/Persian Gulf, modern Iran), Lud and Put (northwest Africa) sent mercenaries to serve in the army.
- The sons of Arvad manned her walls with their warriors, while the Gammadians manned her towers. Arvad was a Phoenician port north of Tyre. The Gammadians, according to the Jewish Targum of Jonathan, were from Cappadocia, a region in Central Anatolia (Asia Minor/modern Turkey).
- Tarshish (Iberian Peninsula or Carthage in North Africa according to the Jewish Targum of Jonathan) traded with Tyre because of her abundant resources and exchanged merchandise for silver, iron, tin, and lead.
- Javan, Tubal, and Meshech traded merchandise, slaves, and bronze artefacts. Javan refers to Greek contacts, possibly Ionia, an ancient region of central coastal Anatolia in present-day Turkey. It consisted of the northernmost territories of the Ionian League of Greek settlements. Jewish 1st-century AD historian Flavius Josephus identified Tubal and Meshech with the Cappadocians. Other traditions identify them with other Caucasus people as well as Armenians.
- Beth-Togarmah traded horses, chargers, mules. They are probably the Cimmerians, an ancient Indo-European people living north of the Caucasus and the Sea of Azov as early as 1300 BC until they were driven southward into Anatolia during the 8th century BC.
- The people of Dedan from the Arabian Desert paid for goods in ivory tusks and ebony.
- Edom, south of the Dead Sea, traded for manufactured goods, exchanging garnets, purple, embroideries, fine linen, coral, and rubies.
- Judah and Israel traded with them, bringing grain from Minnith, pannag, honey, oil, and balm. Minnith was a region in the Transjordan. *Pannag* is an unknown word.
- The city of Damascus, Syria traded for quantities of manufactured goods and other goods of all kinds, in exchange for wine from Helbon (perhaps the city of Aleppo, Syria) and wool from Zahar (as a place-name it is unknown. Zahar may instead mean a kind of wool, like unbleached wool).
- Dan, Javan, and Uzal supplied wrought iron, cassia (a tree or shrub), and reeds in exchange for goods. Dan probably refers to northern Israel. Javan refers to the Ionian cities along the coast of Asia Minor or Greece proper, and Uzal the people in Western Asia at the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula.
- Dedan, a tribal people of the Arabian Desert, traded in saddle-cloths.
- Arabia and all the sheikhs of Kedar were customers. The Kedarenians were a tribe of the Arabian Desert.
- The merchants of Sheba and Raamah traded with the finest spices, precious stones and gold for merchandise. Sheba was a south Arabian kingdom, probably Yemen. Raamah, a small nation of traders near Sheba.
- Haran, Canneh and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur and Chilmad traded textiles including embroidered and purple cloaks, multi-colored materials and strong plaited cords. Haran is a city on the upper Euphrates River, Canneh, and Eden are probably towns on the middle Euphrates, Sheba is probably modern-day Yemen, Asshur was the first capital city of the old Assyrian Empire located on the Tigris River, and Chimad is an unknown town.