

August 9

2 Kings 24, 2 Chronicles 36, Jeremiah 24, 48-49

Hey everyone, I'm Robert Murphy the Online Campus Pastor and I have the privilege of doing the Daily Accelerator for August 9.

Today we read from 2 Kings 24, 2 Chronicles 36 and Jeremiah 24 and 48-49. And, we'll focus in on Jeremiah 48-49

Now, we already have encountered the prophecies given by Jeremiah regarding the neighbors (and enemies) of Judah.

It is good to remember that the Lord is the Lord of Israel but He is also the Lord of all the earth, and all the nations are under His sovereign control. Even though punishment begins with the household of faith, the Lord will judge all the nations.

Jeremiah talks about Moab: "Lot and his son Moab are the ancestors of the Moabites whose traditional territory is east of the Dead Sea between the Arnon River and the Brook Zered" The Moabites were enemies of Israel from the time of Balaam and Balak onward. Jeremiah's message that God is going to put an end to those who make offerings on the high places and burn incense to their gods." It seems particularly vivid in light of that fearsome act of Mesha the king, who offered up his own son as a burnt sacrifice.

Now we have seen several other such indictments in our trip through the Word of God thus far but it is important once again to pay attention if only because our western society has become so idolatrous in its worship of material things. We may not be very different from the Moabites and we may incur the same kind of judgment. A thought which should give us pause.

I do not know whether or not you noticed it, but there was a remarkable and disturbing verse in this passage. Jeremiah says presumably to the soldiers who will be involved in the campaign to destroy Moab: "A curse on him who is lax in doing the Lord's work! A curse on him who keeps his sword from bloodshed." The destruction of Moab is according to the prophet, the work of the Lord.

I know this kind of act from God can be hard to comprehend and is troubling for people. If you'd like more resources about this topic, I'd encourage you to check out the Tough Questions videos that Pastor Tim Perry has been doing. He's addressed this topic of God wiping out people groups. Lead Pastor Mark has also addressed this as well with his Biggies videos. These videos are available on the Christ Community Church website.

It is probably also worth noting that this passage, in Jeremiah 48, is closely related to what we read in Isaiah chapters 15 and 16. Jeremiah is speaking God's Word, but he draws on the prophecies already made by his predecessor the prophet Isaiah.

Ammon comes next in Jeremiah's list of nations with whom God is dealing. I have to admit that for today's readers, it almost seems monotonous: This nation sinned this way and will be destroyed in a battle, that nation sinned in a different way and will be decimated in another horrible war. What is constant in the midst of all of this is the understanding that in the midst of the wars of retribution and vengeance, behind all of man's inhumanity to man there is a sovereign God who is using the wrath of man to accomplish the purposes of God. That hasn't changed in all the thousands of years between Jeremiah's day and our own. There are still wars all over the earth on something very close to a continuous basis. Man is still pouring out his wrath on his fellowman and perpetrating the most incredible atrocities that can be imagined -- in declared wars in Europe and Africa and in undeclared wars in northern Ireland and South America. Still God is overruling and using these vicious events to build up and bring down rulers and nations in accordance with His own sovereign purposes. That is something you and I need to remember in our day of geo-political uncertainty.

Much more to the point, as far as Jeremiah is concerned, Edom helped Nebuchadnezzar during the siege of Jerusalem. You may remember the judgment pronounced against Edom in the Book of Obadiah. In the New Testament Edom has a different name, a Greek name. There it is called Idumea. Its most famous New Testament citizen was named Judas Iscariot. Edom is where the famous city of Petra is located and it is Petra that is referred to in verse 16 where Jeremiah says that God will bring down those who live in the clefts of the rocks.

Damascus gets a mention in Jeremiah's prophecy. By the way, Amman, Jordan and Damascus, Syria are as far as I know the two oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world today. It is located just to the north of Israel in present day Syria. God promises to send judgment upon Damascus, but he does not say it will be deserted.

Kedar and Hazor are the last two kingdoms mentioned in our reading today. Kedar which I think means "mighty" was a nomadic Bedouin tribe descended from Ishmael. "They lived in black tents and possessed some villages in the desert country east of Edom" Hazor was the name of the area containing a group of cities in the same general area. These then are the desert peoples. These areas were attacked by Nebuchadnezzar and the cities of Hazor did disappear from the map.

Remember, the bottom line message is that behind all the political posturing and behind all the wars of men, an Almighty God is working His will and establishing His plan. The Lord

is the Lord of Israel. He is the Lord of all the earth, and all the nations are under His sovereign control.