

The Book of Ezekiel

Lesson 11: Oracles Against the Surrounding Nations -- Ezekiel 25:1–26:21

With chapter 25 Ezekiel turns from prophesying against Jerusalem to prophesying against the nations that surrounded her. The destruction of the city is now certain, and the LORD shows that His justice does not stop at Israel's borders. He is the God of all the earth, and every nation answers to Him.

These oracles fall on Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia, the near neighbors who watched Judah fall and rejoiced. Each is charged not with mere idolatry in the abstract but with a particular malice toward God's people, a gloating, vengeful spirit that took pleasure in the suffering of others.

The opening oracle against Tyre, which fills chapter 26, begins a longer section that runs through chapter 28. Tyre was a wealthy merchant city that saw Jerusalem's ruin chiefly as a business opportunity. The LORD declares that this proud trading center will itself be scraped bare like the top of a rock.

Running through these chapters is the refrain, you shall know that I am the LORD. God's purpose in judgment is not merely to punish but to make Himself known. He will be acknowledged, by Israel and by the nations alike, and the believer is called to consider how he gloats, how he trusts, and whether he truly knows the LORD.

Group Discussion: As a class, list the four nearby nations named in chapter 25 and the specific attitude each showed toward Judah's fall. Then discuss why God treats gloating over another's downfall as a sin worthy of judgment, and where we are tempted to the same spirit today.

Personal Reflection: Search your own heart for any quiet satisfaction you have felt at the stumbling of someone you resented. Ask whether you trust in your own security, wealth, or position the way Tyre trusted in hers, and resolve to acknowledge the LORD as God over every part of your life.

Read Ezekiel 25:1–26:21

Study Questions

1. What charge does the LORD bring against Ammon in 25:1–7, and how does it reveal that God judges the heart attitude behind an action, not only the action itself?

2. When have you said Aha over someone else's trouble, and what did that response expose about your own heart?
3. Moab said that the house of Judah is like all the other nations (25:8). Why is it a serious matter to treat God's covenant people as nothing special, and how does the LORD answer that charge?
4. In what ways are you tempted to measure God's people and His church by the same standard you apply to the world around you?
5. Edom is condemned for taking vengeance and being greatly guilty (25:12). What does Scripture teach about vengeance belonging to God rather than to us?
6. Is there a grudge you have nursed or a vengeance you have privately wished for, and what would it look like to surrender that to the LORD?
7. Philistia acted with malice of soul to destroy in unending hostility (25:15). How does long-held bitterness corrupt a person or a people over time?

8. Where have you allowed an old wound to harden into settled hostility, and how can you let the LORD heal it instead?

9. Tyre rejoiced over Jerusalem's fall, saying, I shall be replenished, now that she is laid waste (26:2). Trace how the LORD answers this greed and gloating through chapter 26, and explain what it teaches about the danger of trusting in wealth and rejoicing in another's ruin. How does the refrain you shall know that I am the LORD show that God's deeper aim in all these judgments is to be truly acknowledged as God?

10. After studying these oracles, what does it mean for you personally to truly know that He is the LORD, and how should that knowledge change the way you regard your neighbors, your enemies, and your own security?

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Romans 12:19, vengeance belongs to the LORD, not to us; Obadiah 10–15, the fuller oracle against Edom for gloating over his brother's calamity; Proverbs 24:17–18, do not rejoice when your enemy falls; Psalm 137:7, Edom's cry to raze Jerusalem to its foundation; Amos 1:9–10, judgment on Tyre for not remembering the covenant of brotherhood

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