

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing

Part LXXX: God's Judgment On Moab's Complacent Trust In A False God
(Jeremiah 48:11-17)

I. Introduction

- A. Self-sufficiency, or relying on some other crutch or false "idol" besides the Lord is the heinous sin of idolatry in His eyes that demands God's severe discipline.
- B. Whether it was Israel or the Gentile nation of Moab, a complacent trust in a false god was totally repugnant to the Lord, what Jeremiah 48:11-17 explains in the case of Moab with a lesson and application for us:

II. God's Judgment On Moab's Complacent Trust In A False God, Jeremiah 48:11-17.

- A. The critique God makes of the nation Moab in Jeremiah 48:11 is figuratively given in terms of the practice of wine making as follows: "In making wine, first the grapes were stomped, then the juice was placed into bottles or skins and allowed to ferment. During this time the sediment, or dregs, would settle to the bottom. After 40 days the fermented wine was carefully poured into another container to separate it from the dregs. If the dregs were allowed to remain, the wine became too sweet and thick and was spoiled." The wine's aroma would also not have changed due to the effect of the presence of its 40-day-old dregs, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1195.
- B. Accordingly, when God asserted that Moab had been at ease since his youth, that it had settled on its dregs (Jeremiah 48:11a), He meant that the nation was complacently at ease, never having gone into exile, v. 11c.
- C. Moab had not been emptied from one vessel to another to separate the wine from the dregs so that its taste had remained in it and its aroma had not changed, that Moab's people were spiritually corrupted by their complacent trust in a false god like wine that had not been separated from its dregs by pouring, Jer. 48:11b,d.
- D. Thus, God predicted through His prophet Jeremiah that He would send Moab pourers who would pour him, emptying his vessels and breaking his jar in pieces, a statement that indicated destructive divine judgment by means of an invading nation, Jeremiah 48:12.
- E. At that time, the Moabites would be ashamed of their false god Chemosh in whom they had complacently relied just like the Hebrews of the Northern Kingdom of Israel had been ashamed of their false calf god at Bethel when their trust in it had failed to deliver them from the Assyrian invaders, Jeremiah 48:13:
 1. When the Northern Kingdom of Israel split from the Southern Kingdom of Judah, Israel's king Jeroboam had formed a syncretism, mixing the worship of Israel's true God with pagan elements, forming a gold calf and setting it up at Dan and at Bethel that Israel's people might worship there instead of returning to Judah's temple to worship the Lord in Jerusalem, 1 Kings 12:25-30.
 2. Israel practiced this gold calf worship until Assyria invaded their land and took them captive, 2 Kings 17:21-23. Their stubborn and complacent trust in Jeroboam's false gold calf led to their being ashamed that they had trusted in it to preserve them from Assyria, and this fate would also occur to the Moabites for trusting complacently in their false god Chemosh when Chemosh also proved futile to deliver them.
- F. Moab was also confident in its warriors, men considered to be valiant in battle, Jeremiah 48:14. For this reason, the invading destroyer would come upon Moab and the choicest of Moab's young men would go down in death by slaughter, a declaration by the King, Israel's Lord of Hosts, Jeremiah 48:15.
- G. Because Moab's calamity was imminent and its affliction was hastening on swiftly, God called for onlookers all around to grieve for Moab, all who knew of the nation, to say, "How the mighty scepter is broken, the glorious staff," Jeremiah 48:16-17 ESV. The royalty of Moab would be broken by the Supreme King, God.

Lesson: For the sin of complacently trusting in their false god Chemosh and in their valiant young warriors, the nation Moab that had never known exile would become unsettled, devastated and go into exile like faithless and complacent Israel before her when Israel had fallen to Assyria.

Application: (1) May we understand that complacently trusting in ANY entity other than the Lord is the sin of idolatry in God's eyes, what He will severely discipline. (2) May we also realize that nothing in all creation can replace the unseen Creator God of the universe as our source of stability, for apart from the Lord there is no reliable, true God. This realization should lead us to abandon all materialism, to abandon all "things" we possess as our source of fulfillment when we should be looking for that fulfillment from God alone! (3) If we face very unsettling trials, may we examine our hearts to see if God may be seeking to rid us of our reliance on some false idol of this world, that we repent of our sin of idolatry and rely on God alone. (1 John 5:21)