

The second oracle or burden that we come to is hidden at the end of Isaiah 14 and is against Philistia (NASB) or Palestine (KJV). The name Palestina “refers to those who gave that name to the land, the Philistines.”ⁱ References in Ezekiel 25:15-17 and Zephaniah 2:5-7 imply that eventually, the Philistines, were completely wiped out as a people. Other secular records concur with these Biblical accounts and say the Assyrians completely eliminated the Philistine peoples. However, Zechariah 9:6 says that a mongrel race will dwell in Ashdod (a Philistine city). The Scripture does not tell us here what mix of two or more people groups make up this mongrel race. The passage in Zechariah 9:7 continues on to say, “then they also will be a Remnant for our God, and be like a clan in Judah.” Could the present-day Palestinians be the mongrel race that inhabits the Gaza Strip and the East Bank today? Whether or not the Philistines are part of the mongrel race, it looks like those of the mongrel race in the land today may be included in the Remnant. Of course, there are Biblical scholars who take the viewpoint that the “Remnant” in this Zechariah passage refers only to the Jewish inhabitants of Ashdod. However, this seems contradictory to me in that the passage in Zechariah 9:6 says it is a mongrel race and not purely the Jewish race. In light of all this, one of the arguments for the Palestinians having a rightful claim to the land of Israel, today, is that they have heritage or history there, just like the Jews. I think there is some Biblical evidence that could lead us to think that the present-day Palestinians could possibly be the mongrel descendants of the original Philistines.

The second burden will be against Moab and we will look at this oracle in chapters 15 and 16.

Days 1 and 2 – The Burden of Palestine

I would like to introduce you to the Philistines. We will take a look at the first few mentions of the Philistines in Scripture and then will look at their interactions with the Israelites once the nation of Israel is in the Promised Land.

In Genesis 10, we see the Philistines coming from the lineage of Ham. Ham was one of the three sons of Noah who came through the flood on the ark. Ham was the father of Cush who was the father of Nimrod, whom we’ve already seen as the great builder of rebellious cities. Ham was also the father of Mizraim who was the father of Casluhim. The Philistines were descendants from Casluhim.

The next time that we encounter the Philistines is when Abraham complains about water rights in the Promised Land to Abimelech, King of the Philistines. This is found in Genesis 21:22. These two powerful and wealthy landlords make a covenant with each other to be honest with and show kindness to each other and their offspring. Abraham had dug a well and Abimelech’s men were not to seize it for their use. At this point, it is difficult to tell from the Scripture whether the Philistines had a separate land that they lived in other than the land God had promised to Abraham and his descendants.

There was a famine in the land during the days of Abraham's son, Isaac. At this time, Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, to avoid the famine. While he was there, the LORD appeared to Isaac and told him that he was to stay in this land of Gerar. There, God restated the covenant to Isaac that he had given to his father Abraham before Isaac was born. This covenant included the promise of the seed, "all these lands," and the nation of Israel. It is evident from the Scripture here that the land that was given to Abraham and to his descendants was some of the same land that the Philistines inhabited. God blessed Abraham so greatly that the Philistines asked him to go someplace else to live. The Philistines filled Isaac's wells with dirt, showing their jealousy for the sons of Abraham very early on in their history with each other.

Please read Exodus 23:18-33. One of the tasks that the Israelites were given once they were in the land was to rid the land of all the inhabitants for they all worshiped other gods.

Who were the Israelites to drive out of the land according to Exodus 23:23ff?

Compare this list to the list God gave Abram in the covenant of Genesis 15.

Do you see the Philistines on either of these two lists?

However, once the Israelites entered the Promised Land at the leadership of Joshua, they were to possess all the land, and the Philistines, who worshiped other gods, lived on part of that land. When Joshua is advanced in years and old, the LORD told him that there was much land that still needed to be possessed, including all the regions of the Philistines: the Gazite, the Ashdodite, the Ashkelonite, the Gittite, the Ekronite, and the Avvite. (Joshua 13:2). They were not to make a covenant with the Philistines and they were to destroy them all. They never did this.

What nations are included of those who are left in the land that God will use for testing the Israelites to see if the Israelites will obey the commandments of the LORD according to Judges 3:1-4?

The bottom line is this: the Israelites were supposed to get rid of the Philistines that were living in their land at the time they entered the Promised Land under Joshua. They did not do as they were told. The Philistines were trouble for the Israelites all the way through out their history while in the land prior to the deportation. Interestingly, once the Israelites returned to the land (the first time) to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem, the Bible records that the Ashdodites were present amongst those who mocked the Jewish workers. (See Nehemiah 4:1-8)

Please read Isaiah 14:28-32 and work on your double-spaced worksheets as before. Locate the land of the Philistines from one of the maps referred to in lesson 1. If you use the International Inductive Study Bible map found on page 1112, look for “Ashdod.” Ashdod was one of the cities of the Philistines. This city was inside the boundaries of the land that God gave to Abraham.

Where do the Palestinians hang out today?

What year did this oracle or this burden come to Isaiah according to Isaiah 14:28?

What do you remember from studying about King Ahaz in Part 1 of Isaiah?

And what did the Philistines do to Israel that will cause the judgment of God to come upon them?

What will the judgment of God on Philistia look like? (Isaiah 14:29-31)

Why were the Philistines rejoicing?

Is this prophecy for Philistia’s benefit or for Judah’s benefit?

What would happen to the Philistines at the hand of the king of Assyria, even though the Assyrian King, Shalmaneser V, had died? (Isaiah 14:29)

This is what did happen to Philistia. Only four years after this oracle was given to Isaiah, Assyria under the leadership of Sargon II, defeated Ashdod and made Philistia a province.

Before we close out this oracle or judgment on Philistia, I would like you to look at two prophecies concerning Philistia recorded in Zephaniah 2:5-7 and Zechariah 9:5-7. Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of King Josiah, the boy king who brought the people of Judah back into obedience to God for a short time just before the Babylonian captivity. We looked briefly into these two chapters in this week's opening paragraph.

Please read Zephaniah 2:5-7.

What does Zephaniah prophesy against the land of the Philistines?

Zechariah prophesied to the Southern Kingdom of Judah after the captivity in Babylon, during the time when the Medes and the Persians were the dominant world power.

Please read Zechariah 9:5-7.

What does Zechariah prophesy against the Philistines?

Will the Philistines inhabit Philistia at another time? (9:5)

Has this prophecy already come true? Is there any future fulfillment for this prophecy?

What will God remove from the group of people living in the land of the Philistines?
(9:7)

What will happen to this group of people after God has removed their idolatrous nature?
(9:7)

Does this mean that the Palestinians will be saved in the end?

Why do the Palestinians still exist today and in the areas the Philistines formally inhabited? Something to think about: covenants made between two parties are supposed to be honored even by their descendants.

Please add this burden to your theme for Isaiah 14 on your Isaiah-theme-summary chart found in the Appendix.

Days 3-5 – The Burden of Moab

For the next several days, we will look at the burden that Isaiah spoke against Moab. Please read Isaiah 15 and 16 and work on your double-spaced worksheets for these two chapters before you answer the questions.

To know the origin of the Moabites, we must go back to Genesis 19 and the story of Lot, who was Abraham's nephew. Remember that Lot and his family had been with Abraham when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. The angels had told them to leave the city and to not look back at it. Lot's wife was curious enough to look back and she was turned into a pillar of salt. Lot's two daughters left with him. This story in Genesis 19 is about Lot's two daughters, who wanted to preserve their family in offspring, through themselves and their father.

Read Genesis 19:30-38.

What did the two daughters do to their father in order to get him to lay with them (have sexual intercourse with them)?

Did Lot know that any of this happened?

Did both daughters get pregnant?

So, where did the Moabites come from?

Was it a wrong thing, at this time in history, for these two girls to have done what they did in order to preserve their Father's name upon the earth?

What did the Moabites do to the sons of Israel in Numbers 22-24?

What did the Israelites do with the Moabite women in Numbers 25?

What country did King David's great-grandmother, Ruth, come from? (Ruth 1-4)
What or who did the Moabites worship in Isaiah 15:2?

Please mark all the references to the nation of Moab, all its synonyms and pronouns, and any references to Moabite cities with the same distinctive mark on your double-spaced worksheets for Isaiah 15 and 16 in the appendix. I marked all of mine with a bluish-green capital M. From these markings what do you notice about the devastation and ruin that are about to come upon the Moabites?

Who is going to completely devastate Moab? (15:2)

The Assyrians were going to devastate Moab. Their practice was to shave the head and pull out the beard of their captives – either to keep lice down or to expose their skin to the sun's damaging rays or to say to the world that these were captives. It was disgraceful and painful to have the beard plucked from the face.

Why does Isaiah's heart cry out for Moab in 15:5 and why does he weep bitterly for them in 16:9?

Did the Moabites know of Israel's God, Jehovah? (16:1-5)

What kept the Moabites from surrendering themselves to Jehovah God? (15:6)

Who ultimately causes the jubilant shouting, the cries of joy, to cease? (16:10)

How soon will all of this transpire? (16:14)

Was this burden spoken for the benefit of the Moabites or for the Israelites?

Today, the nation of Moab has disappeared, but who are the modern Moabites?

Please write the themes for Isaiah 15 and 16 on your Isaiah-theme-summary chart in the appendix.

¹ J. Vernon McGee, *Isaiah, Volume 1*, LaVerne, CA, El Camino Press, 1978, p. 130.

PHILISTIA

Genesis 12:3 “And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse.”

Oracle or Judgment Against Philistia (Palestine) Isaiah 14:28-32

When was oracle given? in the year K. Ahaz died -716 BC
Who are the Philistines?
 Past?
 Genesis 10 descendants of Ham->Mizraim->Casluhim
Where did they live? in part of land God gave to Abraham & his descendants (cities of Ekron, Gaza, the Gittites, Ashkelon, Ashdod, the Avittes)
When/ where do the Israelites encounter the Philistines
Genesis 21 Abraham/Abimelech, K. of Philistia; they make covenant to be good to each other & their descendants; Abimelech’s men were not to seize well Abraham dug
Genesis 26 Isaac/Abimelech-something had happened to break the covenant of Father Abraham & Abimelech. Abim’s men jealous of God’s blessing on Isaac’s family, put dirt in Isaac’s well; asked Isaac to go elsewhere. Palestine is still asking Isaac’s descendant to go elsewhere.
Exodus 23:18-33 God was to drive out Israel’s enemies, but the Israelites were to be obedient to follow thru and utterly destroy those other nations in their land. Why? so as not to worship their gods.
Joshua 13:1-3 the 5 lords of Philistine cities remain & need to be possessed. God left them around so that He could see if Israelites would be obedient to Him-**Judges 3:1-4**
What were the Israelites to do with the Philistines when they entered the land? to get rid of them
What did the Israelites do with the Philistines when they entered the land? **Judges 3:5-8** they probably intermarried w/ them & then they worshipped their gods, Baal, Asheroth. K. Ahaz, who had just died worshiped & sacrificed to their gods

(Lesson for today)
How have we been disobedient to God? becoming part of the world
Who is the object of our idol worship today? abortion-convenience; probably ourselves & our own comfort, abundance resulting in entire generation wiped out, unending dissatisfaction

What plan did the Philistines intentionally carry out? probably intermarriage with Israelites

What will be God’s judgment on Philistia for this plan? Assyria from the North

Why were the Philistines rejoicing? not b/c Ahab died, but probably death of Shalmaneser. But this joy was short lived - Sargon II, Shalmaneser’s successor made them a province of Assyria within 3 years of this writing

(Lesson for today)
 Since 4 years after Isaiah’s prophecy re Philistia, this came to pass, what can we know about the rest of Isaiah’s prophecies? **Numbers 23:19** God is not a man that He should lie; nor a son of man, that He should repent, has He said & will He not do it? or has He spoken & will He not make it good? if God fulfilled this prophecy so exactly, then He will fulfill the rest of Isaiah’s prophecies, too.

Who are the Philistines?
 Future?

Zephaniah 2:5-7 God will destroy them so that there will be no inhabitants of Philistia living there - this was completed by Pharaoh Neco II of Egypt in 609-594 BC. This land, including the Philistines’ houses will be dwellings for the Remnant. BKC p. 1530, says Judah’s future occupancy of this territory is guaranteed by Abrahamic Covenant - **Genesis 15:18-20**

Zechariah 9:5-7 looks like Philistia will be absorbed into population of God’s people in the Millennial Kingdom

MOAB

Genesis 12:3 “And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse.”

Oracle or Judgment Against Moab (Isaiah 15:1-16:14)

Who are the Moabites?

Past?

Genesis 19 Lot-Abraham’s nephew, came w/ Abram when he was called out of Ur of Chaldees to a land God would show him; Sodom & Gomorrah -> Lot, wife, daughters; Lot’s wife turned into pillar of salt for disobedience; Lots’ daughters wanted to preserve their father’s line -> both pregnant by Lot; older -> Moabites; younger -> Ammonites

Who are the Moabites?

Future?

Numbers 22-24 both of these nations became problem for Israel later on (Moabite king, Balak, hired Balaam to curse Israel. Eventually Balaam tells Balak how to trap Israel -> intermarry-> worship their idols **Numbers 25**

Ruth 1-4 great grandmother of David

Who did the Moabites worship? Chemosh (Baal?) They sought him for comfort. Went up to temple at Dibon.

How complete was the devastation of Isaiah’s oracle on Moab? completely throughout as evidenced by all the names of the cities of Moab in Isaiah 15-16

Who will devastate Moab? Assyrians

Why does Isaiah’s heart cry out for Moab & why does he weep bitterly for Moab? reveals the heart of God; God will extend His mercy if they would but turn back to Him. Last call to Moab from God.

(Lesson for today) -**Revelation 14:6** God is merciful right to end & gives a last call right before judgment.

What did God require of the Moabites? to show that they had returned to Him-by sending the tribute lamb & give up the worship of their god for the worship of Jehovah God.

Did the Moabites know that God was going to spare Jerusalem? yes; that’s why they were seeking refuge under Jerusalem’s wings

What kept the Moabites from surrendering to Jehovah God? their pride (15:6)

When did this oracle occur? within 3 years (16:14)

(Lesson for today)

Since 3 years after Isaiah’s prophecy re Moab, this came to pass, what can we know about the rest of Isaiah’s prophecies?

Numbers 23:19 God fulfilled Isaiah’s prophesy in Isaiah’s time just as He said. Therefore the future prophecies will come about, too.

Who are the modern Moabites?

(Lesson for today)

II Timothy 3:5

those who make a profession of being children of God, but actually have no living relationship with Him.