I. A Message to Baruch, 45:1-5

A. Jeremiah’s short message to Baruch has been removed from any chronologically-based location and placed here to form a contrast to what precedes it in the text.

B. Just as the fate of Ebed-melech and Jeremiah (39:11-40:6) stands in contrast to the fate of Zedekiah (39:1-10), now the fate of Baruch (45:1-15) stands in contrast to the fate of Johanan and his followers (43:1-44:30).

C. 45:1-5 is set in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (605 B.C.)

1. It offers a small glimmer of hope and stands in stark contrast to the extremely dark and hopeless tone of the preceding sections.

2. Baruch’s own words (v. 3) resound with the kind of hopelessness which the people in Egypt must have felt.

3. He speaks of adding sorrow to pain, of groaning and finding no rest (cp. Job 3:24-26).

4. The Lord’s response (v. 4) uses the language of Jeremiah’s call to describe the devastation of the land: I will overthrow what I have built and uproot what! have planted (cp. 1:10; 24:6).

5. There is even a foreshadowing of the recent prophecy of doom in the Lord’s pledge to bring disaster on all people (v. 5a).

6. The only hope is held out for Baruch himself The Lord promises, I will let you escape with your life (v. 5b).

7. There are at least four significant aspects to this small message of hope. One is the parallel to the prophecy to Ebed-melech. Virtually identical phrases are used to comfort Ebed-melech at the time Jerusalem falls (39:18) and Baruch here. The literary structure for all of Jeremiah 37-45 which this suggests has already been men 345

II. A Message about Egypt, 46:1-28
A. **46:1** is a literary introduction to all of chapters 46-51, a series of prophecies concerning other nations.

1. They illustrate Jeremiah’s ordained role as “a prophet to the nations” (1:5,10).

2. They show that the LORD is sovereign over all the nations of the region, not just Judah and Israel.

3. He communicates as his word to all those nations through the same prophet, Jeremiah.

4. His message is primarily one of judgment, but there are occasional promises of blessing in the future (46:26; 48:47; 49:6,39).

5. That he chooses to speak to them at all shows not only his sovereignty, but his concern for each of them. “The LORD disciplines those whom he loves” (Prov 3:12; Heb 12:6).

6. Yet Israel is his favorite.

7. Many of the condemnations pronounced against these other nations are for various atrocities, some committed against Israel.

8. Some are announced without specific accusations of wrongdoings being given.


B. **Background:** In May/June 605 crown prince Nebuchadnezzar defeated Neco II of Egypt at Carchemish, on the northern Euphrates, 60 miles west of Haran (Gen 11:31), the last capital of Assyria, and pursued him to the borders of Egypt. Nebuchadnezzar was in full control of the entire region

1. Like the Nile, Egypt was preparing to inundate the lands to the north.

2. Instead the country was driven back and humiliated before the nations.
3. The oracle beginning in verse 13 may date from 588, when Egypt attempted to relieve the siege of Jerusalem (37:7).

4. The poetic section refers to Lower Egypt (Memphis, vv. 14-24) while the prose section refers to Upper Egypt (Thebes, vv. 25-26).

5. **Verses 27-28:** A doublet of 30:10-11, here contrasts the destruction of Egypt (except 26b) and the reconstruction of all Israel.

### C. 46:2-12

1. **2:** The historical background for the prophecy.

2. **3-4:** evoke the sense of apprehension that is the prelude to combat

3. **5-6:** The prophet is the watchman standing on the walls of the city to see the outcome of the battle and report it to those waiting anxiously inside.
   a. He describes an army retreating in disarray.
   b. **There is terror on every side.**
   c. The Israelites must have rejoiced at this news, because the same Egyptians had recently humiliated them and killed their king (2 Kgs 23:29-30).
   d. Any joy will be short lived, however, because Jeremiah will soon use the same words to describe their own defeat at the hands of the Babylonian army (6:25; 20:4; see 49:29).
   e. This is an army that overtakes the swift and overpowers the strong.
   f. None can withstand its onslaught

4. **7-9:** are a sequential digression which serves to emphasize the significance of this defeat from an Israelite perspective.
   a. Jeremiah compares the Egyptian forces with the Nile itself, suggesting enormous and unrelenting power.
b. Men from throughout Egypt (Cush, Put, Lydia) had marched proudly out to face the Babylonians, expecting a resounding victory.

c. What had gone wrong?

5. 10: provides the answer

a. The Lord has decreed their defeat.

b. This is “the day of the Lord,” the time when he takes vengeance on his enemies.

c. This proud army has marched out wonderfully adorned, supposing itself to be an honored guest at a feast.

d. But the Lord intends for it to be the sacrifice (cp. Zeph 1:7-9).

6. 11-12: these closing lines suggest a measure of bitterness toward Egypt

a. The call to get balm from Gilead is a taunt.

b. Gilead was known for its medicinal products (8:22; see Gen 37:25).

c. It would be natural for wounded troops to seek soothing ointments there.

d. Jeremiah advises them they will find no relief in Gilead this time.

e. This might reflect a move by the retreating Egyptians to salve their wounded egos by pillaging weak Israelite settlements on their way back to Egypt.

f. This will not hide the shame of their defeat, though.

D. 46:13-24 The scene shifts from the Battle at Carchemish to a subsequent confrontation between Babylon and Egypt
1. **14:** The mighty sword of the Babylonians, which also terrorizes Judah, is “devouring” Egyptian soldiers (see v 10; 2:30).

2. **15-16:** They tried to stand, but they stumbled and fell (v. 16; see vv. 6,12) because the Lord thrushed them down (v. 15).
   a. Everyone sees the Egyptians routed, and they is assume the Babylonians are the cause.
   b. Jeremiah asserts, however, that the real “victor” is Israel’s God.
   c. This is all part of his plan.

3. **17-24:** Once the Egyptians realize the futility of resistance, they will run to the safety of home, where they will blame their Pharaoh for their defeat.
   a. The Lord issues a royal decree about the outcome of the upcoming campaign.
   b. Nebuchadnezzar is like Tabor among the mountains, and like Carmel by the sea. (v. 18)
   c. The Egyptians will be like stampeding calves, by the sting of a gadfly (vv. 20-2 1).
   d. Egypt will be like a snake, hissing as it flees from an attacker (v. 22).
   e. Egypt will be felled forest (vv. 22-23; cp. Isa 10:33-34), overrun by locusts (v. 23; cp. Ps 105:34; Nahum 3:15).
   f. This heaping up of destructive images helps to convey the certainty of the Egyptian defeat and the relentless nature of the Babylonian attack.

E. **46:25-28** notes that in the future Egypt and Israel will both experience similar resurgences — the passages indicate

1. The veracity of Jeremiah’s words, they should have even more reason to believe his words of hope.
2. As Egypt resurges, they should recognize it as proof that the Lord is going to bring them back to glory in as well.

3. The future glory promised for Israel exceeds that of any other; Israel is still the Lord’s favorite.

III. A Message about the Philistines, 47:1-7

A. Background:

1. Dissimilar from the other oracles against the Philistines (cf. Isa 14:29-31; Ezek 25:15-17), this oracle may be associated with Nebuchadnezzar’s sack of Ashkelon in 604 (vv. 5, 7; 36:9).

2. The Phoenician cities, Tyre and Sidon, were perhaps allied also with the Philistines (27:3).

3. The Philistines were related to the Indo-European inhabitants of Crete, and part of a larger group called the “Sea Peoples.”

B. 2: metaphorically describes the invading army as a river — the sheer volume of the attacking force seems like an overpowering river to the smaller nations of the region.

C. 3-5 describes the chariot charge as practiced in ANE warfare

1. Two armies face each other.

2. At the appropriate moment the commander initiates the charge with a war shout.

3. The horses lunge forward pulling the chariot which is filled with driver, archer, and shield bearer.

4. As the chariot approaches the enemy the archer shoots his arrows causing those shot at to take defensive action.

5. As the chariot picks up speed, bearing down on the enemy the distance becomes too short for arrows, so the sword and spears are brought out.
6. The riders hack and stab at any and every enemy soldier within reach.

7. Those that cannot take appropriate defensive measures are either hacked in pieces by the sword, or trampled by the horse and chariot.

8. When these elements of the battle are multiplied by fifty (fifty chariots making a squadron), and to this number is added the sounds of dying men, the whine of the horses and the thundering of their hoofs, the rumbling of the chariot wheels, and the stirred-up dust, it is easy to see how the enemy, terrorized beyond imagination, is put to flight—parents abandoning children, officers forsaking posts.

9. It truly was like an earthquake, or storm, which could shake buildings

D. 6-7: in all of this, it is the Lord's sword which strikes down its victims

1. This is his doing, a deed performed by the invaders at his command.

2. He is using one nation, which he perhaps has just punished, to mete out judgment on another nation

3. There is no mention of Israel in this; he is dealing with these nations for their own sake.

4. There is not even an indictment for wrongdoing mentioned here.

5. It is enough to know that the Lord works through nations to discipline nations, even when those nations do not realize it.

6. Believers are to recognize it, and stand in awe of the power and wisdom of the Lord

IV. A Message about Moab, 48:1-47

A. Overview:

1. This chapter appears to be a sequence of three oracles, vv. 1-13, 14-38, and 39-47.
2. **Verses 1-39** emphasize Moab's destruction

3. **Verses 29-47** have material similar to Isa 15-16. Possible dates for the oracles are: 1-13—the threat of Nebuchadnezzar in 605; 14-38–601 (cf. 12:7-13); 39-47–594 (cf. 27:1-3).

4. Moab was a “cousin” people to the Israelites, being descended from Lot (Gen 19:30-38).
   a. The royal house traced some of its ancestry to this nation (Ruth 1:1-22; 4:18-22; 1 Sam 22:3-4).
   b. In spite of David’s family ties, the two nations had been at odds since the time of Israel’s reentry into the region under Moses and Joshua (Numbers 21—24; Deut 2:8-19; Judg 11:14-18). The subsequent centuries found them often at war (Judg 3:12-30; 2 Sam 8:2; 2 Kgs 3:4-27; 2 Chr 20:1-30), as the two nations squabbled over territory.
   c. The primary concern of the biblical writers was the corrupting influence of Moab on Israel’s religious faithfulness (Num 25:1; 31:13-18; Deut 23:3-6; 1 Kgs 11:1,7,33; 2 Kgs 23:13; Micah 6:5).
   d. Another more immediate catalyst for antagonism is Moab’s ridiculing posture toward Jerusalem as the Babylonians destroy the city (v. 27).
   e. Moab falls to Babylon a few years later, probably following the assassination of Gedaliah.’

B. **48:1-10** The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel (v. 1; cp. v. 15) pictures God as a divine warrior

   1. He cannot be repulsed.
   2. The defeat of Moab is certain.
   3. The imagery reflects a military collapse. Then, describe some aspect of this military collapse.
a. Strongholds are taken (v. 1)

b. The sword pursues its victims (v. 2)

c. Cries of destruction occur (v. 3) and people in flight (vv. 4-6)

d. Chemosh, their protector deity, will go into exile is (v. 7)

e. There is no escape for any settlement (v. 8).

f. Salt will be poured on the whole nation (v. 9).

g. Accursed is anyone who does not carry out this destruction (v. 10)

C. 48:11-17 This portion moves from the analogy between Moab and a jar of wine (vv. 11-13) to the divine announcement of the nation’s demise (vv. 14-17).

1. 11-13: Moab has an inflated ego, having never suffered as Israel has by being forced to leave her land — settled like wine on its dregs, but the time is coming when he will be decanted and his and his jars broken

2. 14-17: Moabite soldiers ignore their predicament; their own weakness in contrast to the overwhelming military might of Babylon; Moab's neighbors are commanded to mourn, but not gloat over his fall.

D. 48:18-25 communicates the totality of Moab's destruction

1. Dibon, one of the best fortified cities of the land, and thus thinking they are “above” all that is about to happen, is commanded to come down, because the destroyer has come up against him

2. Aoer, another “secure” city, has people fleeing from it.

3. This bad news mushrooms out from Arnon to a dozen of the principal cities of the country.

4. The references to Moab’s horn and arm indicate that the nation’s “strength” is broken.
E. 48:26-28 probably brought some comfort to suffering people of Israel; Moab, who laughed at Israel, will humiliate itself like a man in a drunken stupor; they must abandon in the cities in which they have taken pride, slinking away in shame to live like weak animals in the rocks and caves.

F. 48:29-39 These verses, based on Isaiah 16:6-11, with the difference that in Isaiah Moab grieves for herself (Isa 16:6-7), while in Jeremiah God grieves

G. 48:40-47 describes the nation's capture and exile.

1. Babylon is portrayed as an eagle (v. 40), probably is a vulture, a bird that feeds on the bodies of those slain in battle.

2. Jeremiah moves from this allusion to a battlefield strewn with the bodies of the dead to towns . . . taken and the strongholds seized, to soldiers who have lost their courage (hearts) (v. 41)

3. Moab had gone too far when he magnified himself against the LORD (v.42).

4. Therefore, terror, pit, and trap are inevitable (vv. 43-44)

5. Moab is destroyed (vv. 45-46)

6. The oracle ends on a hopeful note — Yet I will restore the fortunes of Moab in the latter day (v. 47)

V. A Message about Ammon, 49:1-6

A. **Occasion:** May be the Ammonite sponsorship of Ishmael by King Baalis (40:13-14), perhaps in the autumn of 587

1. Ammon, the northern “brother” of Moab (Gen 19:30-38), had previously occupied Transjordanian territory claimed by Israel (Judg 10:6-12; 2 Kgs 15:29) and was Israelite territory under David (2 Sam 12:26-31; Amos 1:13-14).

2. Ammon must also suffer for its idolatry and violence.
3. **Milcom**, was the Ammonite national god (1 Kgs 11:5, 33), while **Rabbah** was Ammon’s capital.

B. The oracle falls into 3 parts:

1. **Verses 1-2**, address an unspecified audience, announce the future fall of Rabbah, capital of Ammon (site of present-day Amman, Jordan).
   
   a. Comprised of 3 rhetorical questions, of which the 3rd points to a situation that should not exist, based on the information gathered by the first 2.

   b. The 1st 2 established that Israel has **sons, heirs**, so why, then is Milcom, the national deity of the Ammonites (Lev 18:21; 20:2-5; 1 Kgs 11:7; 2 Kgs 23:10; Jer 32:35) taken possession of **Gad**, portions of Israel’s territory.

   c. **2**: is the divine response in which God says He will come and cause **Israel** to dispossess those who dispossessed him.

2. **Verses 3-5** focus directly on the people of Ammon calling on them to mourn their fall.

   a. **3**: calls on the people of Ammon to **wail** and **cry out** because their city is **laid waste**.

   b. **4**: They are in a panic, because **Milcom** is to go into **exile**.

   c. **5**: Thought they have been boasting about their advantages (v. 4), the Lord is bringing **terror** on them.

   d. their deity and his religious attendants are to be exiled (48:7). Like the proud Moabites (48:29-30), the Ammonites have been boasting about things that have no real glory, trusting in their riches (v. 4; see 48:7) to protect them. They arrogantly ask, **Who will attack (“come against”) me?** The Lord himself responded, **I will bring terror (“cause terror to come”’; vv. 4-5**).

3. **Verse 6** comforts Israel in that they could recognize a bit of themselves in these words
a. Addressed to the Ammonites it offers hope to Israel that God would restore Israel as he would Ammon

b. God seeks to save both those who are his people as well as those who are not his people

VI. A Message about Edom, 49:7-22

A. **Occasion:** After 587 the relationship between Israel and “brother” Edom (Deut 23:7-8) deteriorated. There existed a Jewish anger because of Edom’s occupation of southern Judah (Lam 4:21-22; Ezek 25:12-14) and the way Edom thrilled over the Babylonian atrocities (Ps 137).

B. 49:7-11: The Edomites are occasionally associated with wisdom (Obad 8).
   1. Eliphaz, one of Job’s “comforters,” is a Temanite, and Teman is a leading city or region of Edom (Gen 36:15,34,42; Amos 1:12).
   2. 7: The Edomites would have taken as a personal insult the statement that wisdom had failed in Edom
   3. 8: However, here is something that even their great wisdom cannot prevent — the Lord is bringing the calamity of Esau upon him, the time when I punish him.
   4. 9-10: While thieves would take only what they wanted, God's destruction would be total
      a. These verses draw from Obadiah 5-6 to convey the completeness of this destruction.
      b. Pickers always leave a little bit of the unwanted fruit behind (6:9; Deut 24:19-22), and thieves leave behind items that are not worth taking.
      c. God 's devastation on Edom will be more thorough than that — he is not able to conceal himself.

12
C. 49:12-13 summarizes the primary thought of 25:15-29, in which some of the cities of Edom are mentioned (25:23).

1. **12: If those who do not deserve to drink the cup still have to drink it, shall you be the one to go unpunished? — the innocent often suffer with the guilty — all must all drink the cup of the Lord’s wrath**

2. **13: furthers this, adopting some of the strongest language concerning Judah’s devastation to describe Edom’s (see 24:9; 25:9; 29:18; 42:18; 44:8,12,22; cp. 25:18).**

D. 49:14-22 Jeremiah develops two motifs in this main oracle The first (in vv. 14-18) draws heavily from Obadiah 1-4.

1. The theme of bring down the one who is high up.

2. **14: The Lord summons nations to attack Edom with the words, Rise up for battle!**

3. **19: Like an eagle, in the heights of the hill, among the rocky crags (a topographical description of certain parts of Edom), Edom will be “brought down”**

   a. Its defenders will be brought down from their posts among the steep mountains and their national pride will be brought down by this humiliating defeat (see 18:16; 19:8).

   b. Edomites, will be like young sheep (v. 20) who are attacked by a ravenous lion (v. 19) and no shepherd (king) will be able to protect them from this attack.

4. **21-22: These events are so momentous they feel like and earthquake, or an eagle who swoops down on om to carry away any of the devastated flock that might survive.**

VII. A Message about Damascus, 49:23-27

A. **Occasion:** May have been the raids by the Syrians after 601 (2 Kgs 24:2). Damascus lost its independence with the capture of Arqad by Tiglath-Pileser III in 740. Hamath in 738, and Damascus in 732 (Isa 10:9; 37:13).
B. Damascus, capital of Aram (Syria), lay between Israel and her Mesopotamian invaders.

1. It prospered at times from trade because of its proximity with Assyria and Babylon.

2. It also faced repeated threats of invasion for the same reason.


4. It had been conquered by the Assyrians in the mid-eighth century B.C. (Isa 7:16-17), but the collapse of Assyria a century later had apparently allowed the nation to reassert its independence.

C. The oracle portrays the discouragement that grows as Babylon approaches.

1. The discouragement of Hamath and Arpad spawns a similar reaction among the citizens of Damascus.

2. Like the Edomites (v. 22), their anguish is analogous to labor pains.

3. Onlookers are amazed that anyone still remains there because no one would want to see their beautiful hometown humiliated as this one inevitably will be.

4. As with the other nations, the Lord of hosts has decreed it.

VIII. A Message about Kedar and Hazor, 49:28-33

A. **Occasion:** In mid-winter 599/598 Nebuchadnezzar led a successful expedition against the Arab tribes in the desert east of Syria-Palestine, which may have been the occasion of this oracle (9.26; 25:23-24).

1. **Kedar** is a collective term for nomadic or semi-nomadic Arabs (2:10).

2. **Hazor** is not the city in Galilee (Josh 1:1), but a collective term for sedentary Arabs, who lived at oases.
3. Neither group had fortresses and neither would escape attack from the wide-ranging Nebuchadnezzar.

4. The oracle itself falls into 4 parts.
   a. **28b-29, 31-32a:** twice God addresses the Babylonian attackers, encouraging them in their efforts
   b. **30:** In between, he advises those being attacked to seek shelter in caves
   c. **32b-33:** The oracle closes with a divine announcement of coming desolation
      1. There is no promise of restoration.
      2. The point is made that, while the devastation is executed by the Babylonians, ultimately the Lord is the one who orders and causes it.

IX. A Message about Elam, 49:34-39

A. **Occasion:** There is some evidence that Nebuchadnezzar attacked Elam, east of Babylonia, in the winter of 596.
   1. If so, that attack might have been the occasion for this oracle.
   2. **Zedekiah** became king in March 597, when Jehoiachin was deposed.
   3. **Bow to Elam** reflects the prowess of Elamite archers (Isa 22:6).

B. This prophecy too is a royal edict pronounced by the divine king, **Lord of hosts** (v. 35)
   1. Every statement is made in the first person, God declaring his direct involvement in the defeat of Elam.
      a. **35:** *I am going to break the bow of Elam*
      b. **36a:** *I will bring upon Elam the four winds from the four quarters of heaven*
c. **36b**: I will scatter them to all these winds

d. **37a**: I will terrify Elam before their enemies

e. **37b**: I will bring disaster upon them, my fierce anger

f. **37b**: I will bring disaster upon them

g. **37d**: I will send the sword after them

h. **37e**: until I have consumed them

2. Yet, as with Moab and Ammon (48:47; 49:6), there is a final note of hope