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A Message Concerning Damascus

49: 23-27

A message concerning Damascus DIG: Where is Damascus? In what state does Jeremiah see the cities of Syria? Who is behind the disaster? What have the Syrians done (Second Kings 8:7-12)? Is there any sign of mercy here? Why? Why not? What is the far eschatological future prophecy given by Isaiah about the destiny of Assyria?

REFLECT: Both Egypt and (Syria) Assyria were long time enemies of Judah and Isra'el. Both, however, will end up enjoying the joys of the thousand year Messianic Kingdom. Does that bother you or please you? How hard is it for you to forgive someone who has hurt you deeply? How hard is it to pray for those who oppress you?

**Sometime between 604 and 601 BC
during the eleven-year reign of Jehoiakim**

Concerning Damascus, which represents all of **Syria**, is now named among **the Gentile nations** under judgment from **YHVH**. **Syria** was often at war with **Isra'el (Isaiah 7:1 to 8:4)**, but this conflicted relationship essentially stopped after the northern kingdom of **Isra'el** was conquered by Tiglath-Pileser of **Assyria** in 722 BC. At that point **Syria**, essentially became **Assyria**. Although **Damascus/Syria** is not listed among the doomed nations in **25:18-26**, this oracle does have parallels in eighth-century prophetic writings (**Isaiah 17:1-6**). **She** was a constant enemy of **Isra'el** in that day. **Her** crime was brutality against the conquered people of Gilead, **Isra'el's** territory east of Galilee (**Amos 1:3-6**). In addition, **the Aramean** armies joined Babylon in the assault on **Jerusalem** and **Judah (Second Kings 24:2)**, resulting in **the second deportation** in 598 BC (**to see link click Gt - In the Thirty-Seventh Year of the Exile Jehoiachin was Released from Prison**).²²³

Three cities are named that refer to all of the kingdom: **Damascus** (the capital of **the Aramean** state directly north of **Isra'el**), **Hamath** and **Arpad** are all **dismayed**, for they all **have heard bad news** of Babylon's advance. They are all **disheartened**, troubled like **the restless sea**. The great city and fortress of **Damascus** has become feeble, she has

turned to flee and panic has gripped her; anguish and pain have seized her, pain like that of a woman in labor (49:23-24).

Why has the city of renown not been abandoned, the town in which I delight? Surely, her young men will fall in the streets; all her soldiers will be killed in that day, declares ADONAI-Tzva'ot (49:25-26). Her strength is gone; her glory has departed. The mood is not even one of threat, but only of grief, for the great city had been devastated. No one can withstand the resolve of Ha'Shem.



God's fire of judgment: I will set fire to the walls of Damascus (see [Ae - The Problem of Holy War in the TaNaKh](#)); it will consume the fortresses of Ben-Hadad (49:27). Ben-Hadad, literally *son the* [the storm god] *Hadad*, was name of the dynasty that ruled in Damascus in the ninth and eighth centuries BC (First Kings 15:18 and 20, 20:1-34; Second Kings 6:24, 13:3 and 24**), by which the Syrian royal house was more generally known.**

While not mentioned here, we know from other Scriptures that **Assyria** will have a place in the Millennial Kingdom (see the commentary on [Revelation Fk - Gentiles in the Messianic Kingdom](#)). Ancient **Assyria** today encompasses northern Iraq, another ruthless enemy of **Isra'el**. But peace will come between Iraq and **Isra'el** by means of conversion (see the commentary on [Isaiah Eg - Blessed Be Egypt, Assyria and Isra'el](#)). There will be economic, religious and political unity because they will all worship the same **God**.