

Introduction

- Pattern of surrounding nations, concluding with Judah itself:
 - point of all-encompassing, no part of the surrounding world exempt
- **When** this judgement will happen is never here mentioned...
 - but **1:14** points to it being **soon...**
 - there is an urgency to this diagnosis of the state of the nations, including the state of God's people

Who: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod and Ekron (2:4-7)

- Why: No reason given
- What: ruined and emptied - empty land, taken over by animals - and actually given over to the remnant of God's people
 - remnant speaks both of **judgement** (only a few survive) and **hope** (a few do survive)
 - glimmer of hope for God's people in their inheriting of the land the Philistines would be driven from...

Who: Moab and Ammon (2:8-11)

- Why: insults and taunts (**v.8**)
 - ultimately a mockery of the God whose people they mocked and threatened
- What: destroyed and deserted like Sodom and Gomorrah, land made fruitless
 - two separate nations, often in opposition to God's people
 - only here referred to together
 - again there is the remnant of God's people, **the survivors**, mentioned in **v.9** - with the same mix of judgement and hope...

Who: Cush (2:12)

- Why: No reason given
- What: slain by the sword - imagery of battle, their army on the warpath far from home

Who: Assyria/Nineveh (2:13-15)

- Why: pride (**v.15**)
- What: deserted, a place for wild creatures, and subject of scorn by others

Who: Jerusalem (3:1-8)

- Why: oppression, rebellion and disloyalty; corrupt leadership; injustice (**3:1-4,7**)
 - not so much about what they believe (or say they believe), but about how they live out what they believe
- What: not spelled out! But compared with what God has decreed on the surrounding nations.
 - contrast between people's unrighteousness and the **"Lord within her"**'s righteousness is drawn very starkly
 - especially in light of focus on the leaders - they are unrighteous, God is righteous...

Judgement Ahead

- **Image: Warning sign**
- All this is an incentive for repentance and obedience
 - note how judgement on Judah brackets the judgement on the nations;
 - **(commentary compares to an artillery battery bracketing their target to get the range right before the full weight of the barrage falls...)**
 - the judgement on the nations is the amplification of the seriousness of Judah's situation
 - **God hates sin**

- What sin hides within our hearts and lifestyles:
 - greed?
 - injustice?
 - destruction of God's creation?
- *Will we turn from that sin, and rather wait for the Lord (v.8)*