

Lesson 21: Judith 6-7

As general to Nebuchadnezzar, Holofernes had begun his campaign to conquer all those peoples who did not respond to the call to war against King Arphaxis and the Medes. Nebuchadnezzar's ultimate goal was to establish his reign as "lord of all the land." In this lesson, Holofernes and his armies reach the small town of Bethulia which is in a difficult to reach mountainous region of Judah.

In Chapter 8 we will finally meet Judith.

1. Read Judith 6:11-20 and footnotes. Share any footnotes you have with your group.

Who is Uzziah and what does his name mean?

Reflection: Why do the people of Bethulia hurl stones in verse 12?

Read again Judith 5:1 and 6:2, 6:5 and 6:11-13. Who is Achior? What do we know about him?

How do the people respond to the testimony of Achior? (See 6:18.)

How did Uzziah treat Achior *after* his testimony?

2. Read Judith 7:1- 18 and footnotes. Share any helpful footnotes.

How does Holofernes plan to conquer Bethulia?

How do the Moabites, Ammonites and Edomites assist Holofernes?

Who are the Moabites and the Ammonites? (See Genesis 19:36-38 below)

Gen. 19:36-38 ³⁶Thus the two daughters of Lot became pregnant by their father. ³⁷The firstborn gave birth to a son whom she named Moab, saying, "From my father." He is the ancestor of the Moabites of today. ³⁸The younger one, too, gave birth to a son, and she named him Ammon, saying, "The son of my kin." He is the ancestor of the Ammonites of today.

Who are the Edomites?

(See Genesis 36:1-5, Numbers 20:19-21 and 2 Samuel 8:13-14 below)

Genesis 36:1-5 ¹These are the descendants of Esau (that is, Edom). ²Esau took his wives from among the Canaanite women: Adah, daughter of Elon the Hittite; Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah the son of Zibeon the Hivite; ³and Basemath, daughter of Ishmael and sister of Nebaioth. ⁴Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau; Basemath bore Reuel; ⁵and Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam and Korah. These are the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

Num 20: 19-21 The Israelites said to him, "We will go up along the highway. If we or our livestock drink any of your water, we will pay for it. It is nothing—just let us pass through on foot." ²⁰But Edom replied, "You shall not pass through," and advanced against them with a large and heavily armed force. ²¹Therefore, since Edom refused to let Israel pass through their territory, Israel turned away from them.

2 Sam 8:13-14 ¹³On his return, David made a name for himself by defeating eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt. ¹⁴He set up garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became David's subjects. Thus the LORD brought David victory in all his undertakings.

3. Read Judith 7:19-32 and footnotes.

In verses 19-22, does Holoferne's plan seem to be working?

Who do the townspeople blame for their situation?

What, do they believe, was *God's* role in their situation at this point in time?
(See 7:25 and 7:28)

What do the people believe the consequences of surrender would be for them?

What do the people of Bethulia want Uzziah and the elders to do at this point?

What was Uzziah's counter-proposal to their request?