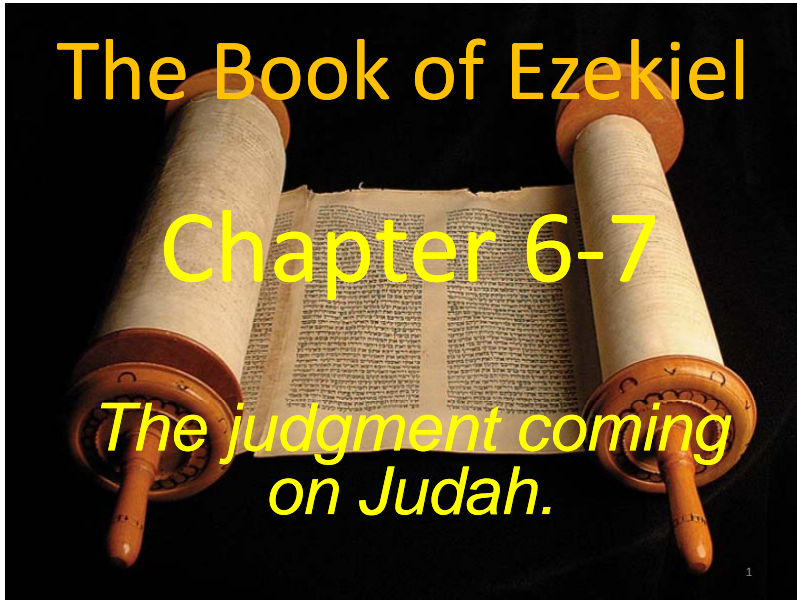


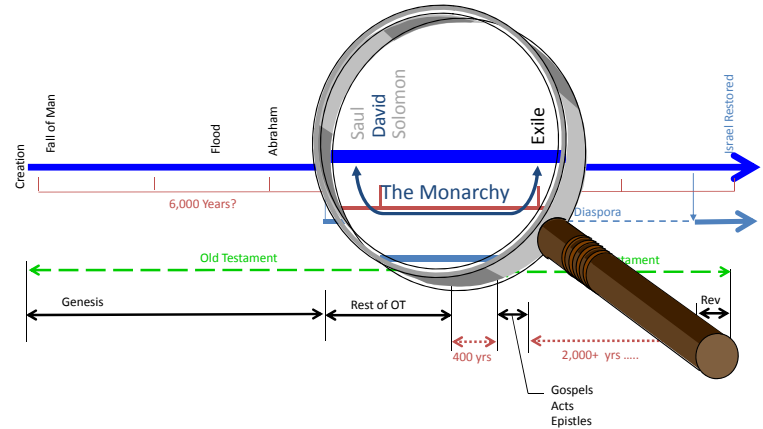
The Book of Ezekiel

Chapter 6-7

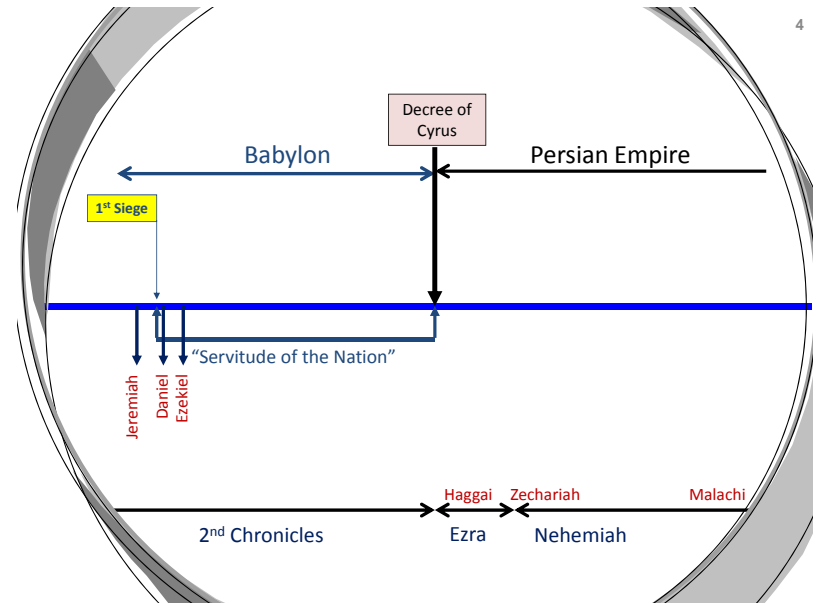
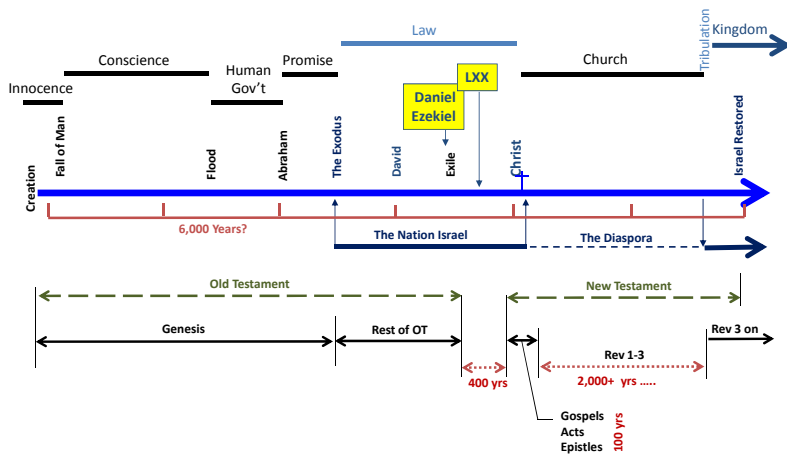
The judgment coming on Judah.

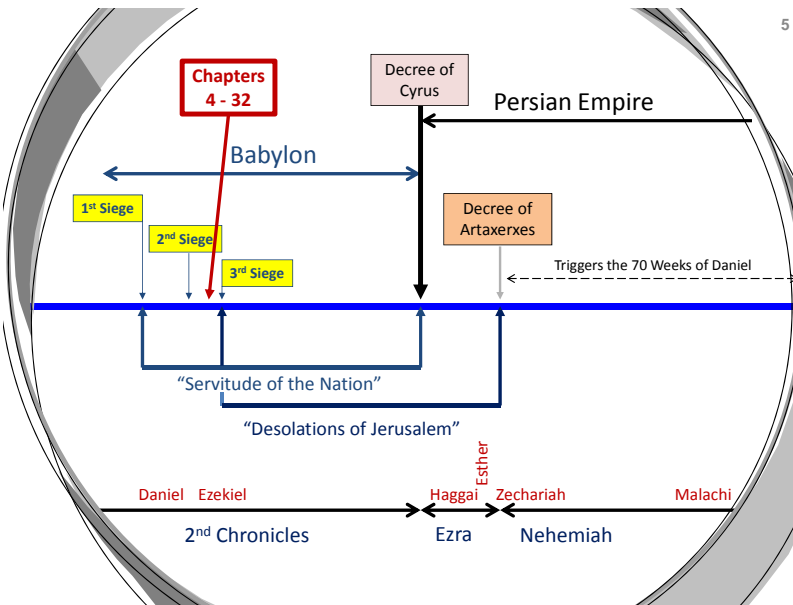


The Monarchy



The Panorama of History





Three Major Sections

It was in 593 BC, 5 years after his captivity (*Ezek 1:2*), that Ezekiel received his call to be a prophet (*Chapters 1-3*).

Ezekiel had a unique two-part ministry:

- 592 - 586 BC his messages contained warnings about Jerusalem's destruction (*Chapters 4-32*).
His last message of this era was delivered in April 585 BC, just after the city and its temple were destroyed.
- For the next 13 years Ezekiel was silent.
- Then, in April 571 BC, the prophet took up a new ministry.
Now his message was one of hope, promise, and comfort for the exiles (*Chapters 33-48*).

7

The judgment coming on Judah Ezekiel 6-7

The Lord commanded Ezekiel to announce prophetic messages to the Jews in captivity after his time of imposed silence ended (*3:26-27*).

In Chapter 5 the prophet elaborated some of the symbols he introduced.

The first message in chapter 6 Ezekiel deals with the cause of the judgment; Israel's idolatry.

In chapter 7, his second message deals with the nature of the coming judgment.

6

Outline of Ezekiel

Chapter

- 1-3 The Call of the Prophet Ezekiel
- 4-24 God's Judgment on Jerusalem
(Given before the siege of Jerusalem)
- 25-32 God's Judgment on the Muslim Nations
(Given during the siege)
- 33-48 The Restoration of the Jews
(Given after the siege)
- 33-36 They return to their land
- 37 They experience new life and unity
- 38-39 They are protected from Gog and Magog
- 40-48 The Millennial Kingdom

8

8

Ezekiel 6:1-2

13

1] *And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*
2] *Son of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them,*

This verse opens the first of the two messages;
The second message in Chapter 7 begins the same way.

Both of these messages conclude with
"...and they shall know that I am the Lord."

In all 14 of its occurrences in Ezekiel, the expression "**set your face toward**" always means to turn toward something with hostile intentions.

The Mountains of Israel

15

They formed the chief topographical feature of the land of Israel.

The phrase is peculiar to Ezekiel

Ezek 6:2, 3; 19:9; 33:28; 34:13, 14; 35:12; 36:1, 4, 8; 37:22; 38:8; 39:2, 4, 17

Notice that he has given up on the people.

Rhetorically, he is prophesying against the mountains because of idolatry (*1 Kings 13*) where the prophet speaks to the altar rather than to King Jeroboam.

Ezekiel was to announce to the exiles that God would bring warriors against Israel's mountains, hills, ravines, and valleys, the very places where the people built and worshipped at pagan idol shrines (*2 Kings 23:10*).

Under the new kingdom, the prophet will portray the happiness and peace of the mountains (*Ezek 36:1-15*).

Ezekiel 6:1-2

14

1] *And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*
2] *Son of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them,*

"**the mountains of Israel**" 17 times in Ezekiel and
nowhere else in the Old Testament.

The mountains of Israel run the entire length of the country from north to south.

They represent the whole land of Israel, especially Jerusalem, which sits on the central watershed ridge.

By contrast, Babylonia was very flat.

Specifically, the mountains of Israel also stand for the centers of pagan worship where the Israelites practiced idolatry.

Seriousness of Idolatry

16

God took idolatry seriously enough to make it a capital crime.

- He brought the nation heavy judgments, including what we saw in *Chapter 5*: cannibalism!
- The sieges and abuses on them by their conquerors were brought about as God's judgment of idolatry (*Lev 26:30-33; Hos 4:13; Isa 65:7; Jer 3:6*).

The role of Jerusalem and of Israel was to be a witness to the rest of the world of what God was really all about.

Ezekiel 6:3

17

*3] And say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys; Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your **high places**.*

The judgment is to come upon the entire land.

“...**high places**”: This is a reference to the idols that were up on high ground.

In the Old Testament, they are referred to as “groves.”

It was a characteristic heathen practice to establish altars in “high places”; the mountaintops.

The “groves” were actually phallic symbols of Canaanite worship..

The High Places

18

The object of His judgment would be the high places of worship that stood throughout the land.

- God would destroy the altars, and the people who worshipped before them would fall slain around them.
- The idols would not be able to defend their worshippers.
- The Lord would defile these altars with the bones of the Israelites who died before them (*Lev. 26:30; 2 Kings 23:20; Ps. 53:5; 141:7; Jer. 8:1-2*).

Scattered animal bones often marked these places of sacrifice, but human bones would pollute them in the future.

Pagan altars of all types that the people had built would be broken down throughout the country along with the cities.

Many people would die, and God's people would know that He had judged them.

The High Places

19

- High places were in Canaan before Israel arrived, and God commanded Israel to destroy them (*Num 33:52*).
- Israel was to worship only at the tabernacle, placed at Shiloh (*Deut 12:2-14; 1Sa 1:3*)
- After the destruction of Shiloh (probably by the Philistines) and before the construction of the temple in Jerusalem, Israel had no central place of worship.
 - The altar and tabernacle were relocated at Gibeon (*2 Ch 1:1-3*)
 - The ark was taken to Kiriath Jearim (*1 Sam 6:21-7:1*).
- After the temple in Jerusalem was completed, worshiping at high places was again condemned.
 - Most high places remaining in the land were dedicated to false gods (*1Kgs 11:7-10*).
- The conflict between true worship and false worship was often centered on these high places.
 - Those kings who followed God tried to destroy the high places: Hezekiah (*2 Kgs 18:3-4*) and Josiah (*2 Kgs 23:8-9*)
 - Kings who did not follow God rebuilt them: Manasseh (*2 Kgs 21:1-6*).

Mountains, Hills, Rivers, Valleys

20

The physical mountain and hill features of Israel were different from the flat Babylonian plains.

They were also seats of idolatry of many kinds.

Amos 7:9; Hos 4:13; Jer 2:20, 23; 7:31, 32; Isa 57:3-12; Zech 12:11; Mal 2:10, 11

The course of idolatry had been checked in Israel by such leaders as Samuel, David, Asa, and Hezekiah.

- Manasseh re-introduced many types of pagan worship.
- Josiah had engaged in a far-reaching reform in 622 BC, but his successors did not continue his work (*2 Kings 23:13-20*).

Ezekiel 6:4-5

21

4] *And your altars shall be desolate, and your images shall be broken: and I will cast down your slain men before your idols.*

5] *And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols; and I will **scatter your bones** round about your altars.*

“...**scatter your bones**...”:

This was one method of defiling altars (*2 Kings 23:16*)

Ezekiel 6:6

22

6] *In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate; that your **altars** may be laid waste and made desolate, and your **idols** may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, and your **works** may be abolished.*

“...**altars**...” Small limestone altars, with a horn at each corner, and pottery stands for the burning of incense, have been found at Megiddo.

“...**idols**...” The Hebrew word *gillulim*, literally means “dung-gods.”

The temple incense was being replaced by foul smell of decomposing dead bodies..

“...**works**...”: the mere work of men’s hands (*Isa 40:18–20*).

Ezekiel 6:7

23

7] *And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and **ye shall know that I am the LORD**.*

“...**ye shall know that I am the LORD**”: The main theme throughout this book.

Leviticallly, contact with a dead body was considered defiling (*Num 9:6-10; 2 Kgs 23, et al.*).

Grave sites were whitewashed at the time of Passover, so that strangers coming to celebrate would not inadvertently stumble on the graves and become ceremonially defiled so that they could not celebrate the feast.

Since the ground God wanted to have sanctified had been defiled by the idols, He was in turn defiling that ground with their bones.

Ezekiel 6:7

24

7] *And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and **ye shall know that I am the LORD**.*

“...**ye shall know that I am the LORD**”:

The Lord would leave a remnant alive, however, when He brought this judgment and scattered His people in captivity.

They would despise themselves when they remembered how their adulterous hearts and lustful eyes had hurt their Lord.

They would remember that the Lord's promised judgments for their sins were not vain (*v. 7*).

Idolatry → Materialism in disguise...

25

Most people who practice idolatry are not merely practicing another faith, but are showing their actual lack of faith.

Modern idolatry, like the ancient Israelite-Near Eastern kind, is essentially materialistic (*1 John 2:15-17; 5:21*).

While we may not deny God's existence, we don't trust Him to take care of us materially instead of placing our full reliance on Him

Therefore, we do everything we can to gain or hold onto worldly possessions, to secure our future, to have a 'comfortable' retirement, to succeed in a competitive world.

With this comes the danger of 'losing our own souls' because we cannot serve God and money (*Matt. 6:24*).

When we fail to trust God for our needs, we go far beyond the bounds of providing for our basic requirements and can thus trap ourselves in modern idolatry, which is nothing other than materialism.

We put things in the place God rightfully deserves. *1Tim. 6:6-10*

Ezekiel 6:8

27

*9] And they that escape of you shall remember me **among the nations whither** they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.*

“...among the nations whither...”: God did not bring captivity on Israel in vain.

Ezekiel 6:8

26

*8] Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the **countries**.*

Here is a place where Ezekiel goes beyond his immediate audience of the Babylonian captivity.

“...countries...”: ← Note this is plural which takes this statement much further than the Babylonian captivity and into the longer diaspora which has lasted ~2,000 years and which is ending in our day.

The Remnant

28

A “remnant” is again mentioned. *Isa 1:9*

Also note that Sodom and Gomorrah were completely wiped out
Here, Israel was not totally wiped out (*Isa 20:20-22; Jer 43:5; Zeph 2:7; Zech 10:9, 12:2-3, 12:9-10; Rom 9:6-13, 11:5-25*).

There were some among these people who remained faithful to God.

The nation as a whole went away from God, but there was a believing remnant.

Today, liberalism has taken over the bulk of the organized church, but there are many of God's people left.

God takes note of His faithful ones.

Some have played the harlot: they have committed spiritual adultery.

The ‘organized’ church which will remain after Christ takes His true church out of the world is also called a harlot in *Revelation 17*.

Ezekiel 6:10

29

10] And they shall know that I am the LORD, and that I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them.

- 3x in this chapter
- God did not bring captivity on Israel in vain

Spiritual Fornication

30

All through Scripture, especially in the Book of Revelation and the Old Testament prophecies, God pictures unfaithfulness theologically as idiomatically identical with unfaithfulness in a sexual sense.

Just as a wife can be unfaithful to her husband, Israel was viewed as being unfaithful to YHVH.

Poetically speaking the concept of the faithless woman was an idiom that God used to speak of and to Israel.

Plan and Purpose

31

The people and Ezekiel were to express derision that the sword, famine, and plague (5:1-3, 12; Rev. 6:4-8) would come and judge these evil abominations (21:14-17; 22:13; 25:6; Lam. 2:15; Nah. 3:19).

The three instruments of judgment, summarizing the full range of divine punishment (2 Sam. 24:13; Jer. 27:13; 29:17), would affect various parts of the people and touch them all.

The people would recognize Yahweh was at work in judgments when they observed so many Judahites slain beside their pagan places of worship.

In every generation God's judgment and discipline is misunderstood by most people.

God's chief desire is to bring people to himself - or back to himself - to restore the people to their proper relationship with Him (vv. 7, 10, 13, 14)

When mankind willfully refuses to turn to him, God mercifully uses discipline and judgment to cause the people to recognize that he is the only true God, and that He is always faithful to what He has said in His word!

Ezekiel 6:11

32

11] Thus saith the Lord GOD; Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.

Pound the table, hit the walls, stomp your feet, kick the door...

God is basically instructing Ezekiel to amplify his words.

Ezekiel 6:12

33

12] He that is **far off** shall die of the pestilence; and he that is **near** shall fall by the sword; and he that **remaineth and is besieged** shall die by the famine: thus will I accomplish my fury upon them.

Judgment will come not only on Israel but on idolatrous Jews **wherever they are located...**

Ezekiel 6:14

35

14] So will I stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yea, more desolate than the **wilderness toward Diblath**, in all their habitations: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

“**Diblathaim**”: the Moabitish towns mentioned in *Num 33:45*; *Jer 48:22* would not be logical sites in this context.

Ezekiel was more likely referring to all the land, from the desert in the south to Riblah in the north: from the southernmost boundary to the ideal northern boundary (*Num 34:11-12*). From the unenclosed pastures S and SE of Israel to some town in the extreme N, probably Riblah.

Ezekiel 6:13

34

13] Then shall ye know that I am the LORD, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols.

This verse refers to the cult of the fertility goddess (*Hos 4:13*).

The “oak” was the terebinth tree.

It is a deciduous tree common to Palestine and grows to a height of 35-40 feet.

The Elah Valley, where David slew Goliath, probably received its name because of the abundance of these trees (*1Sa 17:2, 19*)

דִּבְלָה Diblah or רִיבְלָה Riblah?

36

The Hebrew letter resh and the Hebrew letter dalet, bear close resemblance, becoming easily interchanged by copyists (such variants are found in Ginsberg’s Masoretic Bible and in Codex Petropolitanus of a.d. 916).

It was in Diblah that Nebuchadnezzar had sat in judgment on the last Jewish king, Zedekiah, and killed his sons before his eyes, and then blinded him and slain the chief men of Jerusalem (*2 Kgs 25:6, 7*).

Ezekiel 7:3

41

3] Now is the end come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thine abominations.

This judgment would come because the Lord was angry with His people for their abominable sins.

He would not restrain His punishment but would bring the consequences of their sins on them.

“...will judge thee according to your ways...”:

The judgment or the punishment will fit the crime.

How serious is it to be a phony Christian?

Ezekiel 7:4

42

4] And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

“...mine eye shall not spare thee...”: *5:11; 7:9; 8:18; 9:10.*

While the language of verses 5-9 applies to Judah's fall, it has resemblances to eschatological passages

e.g. *Ezek 30:3; Joel 1:15; Mal 4:1; Dan 12:1*

Ezekiel 7:5-9

43

The Lord again reveals that a unique disaster was coming. The Lord was about to judge His people for all their abominations.

He would show no pity. The Israelites doom would soon arrive as a tumult on the mountains, not as a joyful sound.

They would then know that He was the Lord.

This oracle stresses the horror and surprise of the coming judgment as well as the person judging.

The last phrase is a new name for God: *Yahweh makkeh*, "the Lord who strikes."

"To hearers and readers who were used to names of God like 'Jehovah-jireh' and 'Jehovah-nissi' (*Gn. 22:14; Ex. 17:15*), it must have come home with tremendous force to have Him described as 'Jehovah-makkeh'.

The Lord who had provided and protected was about to strike."

Ezekiel 7:5-6

44

5] Thus saith the Lord GOD; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come.

6] An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come.

This is a lamentation.

In English it sounds almost like a song or poem being repetitive,.

In the Hebrew, there are puns of sound (homonyms) as well as ironies of thought. The English translation loses much.

“An end is come, the end is come”:

In Hebrew the two words translated in the first clause are reversed in the second clause.

In wordplay Ezekiel announced that the end had roused itself against you; The words “end” *qets and haqets* and “roused” *haqus sound so much alike that they drew attention to themselves.*

Disaster had been predicted for Jerusalem by Micah, but that prophecy had remained unfulfilled for over 100 years (*Micah 3:12*).

Now Jerusalem's end was about to come.

Ezekiel 7:7

45

7] **The morning** is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains.

“The morning...” הַצֶּפֶרֶה **tsephiyrah** → literally: “Your doom”:

This rendering of **tsephiyrah** is based on a root like the cognate Akkadian **sapâru** meaning “to destroy”

Akkadian: The earliest attested Semitic language, now extinct that was spoken in ancient Mesopotamia.

KJV is based on Aramaic **saphrâ**, “dawn” –or– “morning”

Word is also used in Verse 10.

Ezekiel 7:7

46

7] The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, **the day of trouble is near**, and not the sounding again of the mountains.

“The Day ‘of Trouble’ Is Near...”

In popular thinking, “the day” meant the victory of Israel over her foes (*Isa 9:3; Hos 2:2; Ezek 30:9*),

The prophets stressed the aspect of judgment on Israel (*Amos 5:18; Isa 2:12ff; 13:9; Jer 30:7; Ezek 7:19; 13:5; 36:33; Mal 4:1*).

Later the overthrow of heathenism was attached to “the day of YHWH” (*Jer 46:10; Eze 30:2; 38:10, 14; 39:8, 11, 13; Zech 14:3*)

and the ushering in of the new order, the rule of God (*Ezek 39:22; Mal 4:2*)

Ezekiel 7:8-9

47

8] Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee, and accomplish mine anger upon thee: and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense thee for all thine abominations.

9] And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense thee according to thy ways and thine abominations that are in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I am the LORD that smiteth.

Verses 8 and 9 are virtually a repetition of verses 3 and 4. .

Eze 7:3 'Now the end is upon you, and I will send My anger against you; I will judge you according to your ways and bring all your abominations upon you.

Eze 7:4 'For My eye will have no pity on you, nor will I spare you, but I will bring your ways upon you, and your abominations will be among you; then you will know that I am the LORD!'

Ezekiel 7:9

48

9] And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense thee according to thy ways and thine abominations that are in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that **I am the LORD that smiteth**.

Those who professed to know Him by other names (*Gen 22:14; 33:20; Ex 17:15*)

would now know Him by the name:

יְהוָה מַכֵּה → *Yahweh-makke*
“**the Lord who strikes the blow.**”

A variation of the other statements:

“...ye shall know that I am the Lord”
(*Ezek 6:7, 10, 14; 7:4, 27*)

“*Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men*”
2Cor5:11

Ezekiel 7:10

49

10] *Behold the day, behold, it is come: the morning is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded.*

"...morning...": תִּשְׁפִּיחַ tsephiyrah → doom (see notes on Vs 7)

The Lord announced that the day of Israel's doom was come.

Judgment was about to break forth as buds on a branch. Ezekiel's imagery could be drawn from:

- Aaron's rod that budded (*Num 17*)
If the allusion was to Aaron's rod, the point was that just as its budding indicated God had selected him for service, so the budding of Israel's rod of arrogance indicated God had selected Jerusalem for doom.
- Or, he could have been familiar with Jeremiah's picture of an almond tree in blossom (*Jer 1:11-12*).
If he was alluding Jeremiah's almond tree in blossom, the point was that just as the budding of the almond tree indicated God's judgment was sure to follow so the budding of violence in Israel indicated God's judgment would follow.

Ezekiel 7:11

50

11] *Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness: none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs: neither shall there be wailing for them.*

The people's violence had grown from a small shoot into a stout branch of wickedness.

Nebuchadnezzar would prove to be the rod of God's judgment.
No eminent individuals and nothing of much value would remain.

Ezekiel 7:11-13

51

11] *Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness: none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs: neither shall there be wailing for them.*

12] *The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.*

13] *For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, although they were yet alive: for the vision is touching the whole multitude thereof, which shall not return; neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life.*

Property is of little value to either buyer or seller when exile threatens (*Isa 24:2*).

The time of judgment was so near that both buyers and sellers should refrain from their usual pursuits. (*1 Co 7:29-31*)

Property and Land Worthless

52

Possessions would be confiscated and property owners torn from their land and carried to Babylon.

- The buyer who normally rejoiced over a good business deal should not be happy because he would not be able to possess the land he had purchased.
- One forced to sell his land should not grieve because he would have lost it anyway. .

When land was sold in Israel, the transaction was always temporary.

Every 50 years, during the Year of Jubilee, the property reverted to its original owners (*Lev 25:10, 13-17*).

God's coming judgment would prevent original owners from ever reclaiming their properties; they would be in exile along with the buyers.

Four Oracles of Doom 7:1-13

53

- Four short oracles of doom opened the chapter with the recurring theme:

—“The end has come” vv. 2-4

—“Evil has come” vv. 5-9

—“The day has come” vv. 10, 11

—“The time has come” vv. 12, 13

*“Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...”
2Cor5:11*

Ezekiel 7:14-15

55

14] They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready; but none goeth to the battle: for my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.

15] The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within: he that is in the field shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.

- The Israelites had prepared to fight the Babylonians, but they would not be successful because the Lord Himself would fight against His people.
- Those who sought escape outside Jerusalem’s walls were hunted down and murdered by Babylon’s armies.
- Those who sought protection within the city walls faced the dual enemies of famine and disease.
- The majority of the people would die, and even those who survived would pay a price.

Repeated during the Roman invasions of 70 AD and 115 AD.

Final Scenes of Desolation (Ezekiel 7:14-27)

54

- The uselessness of defense (v14-18)
- The wealth of the city becoming a prey to the invader (v19-22)
- The stupefaction seizing all classes of people (v 23-27)

– The city v14-15

– The king v27

– The Temple v20-22

– The enemy v24

are all referred to in mysterious, puzzling fashion.

Ezekiel 7:16

56

16] But they that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.

The pitiful wail of those hiding in the mountains, who were weeping over their sins and material losses, would sound like mourning doves.

Ezekiel 7:17-18

57

17] All **hands shall be feeble**, and all **knees shall be weak as water**.

18] They shall also **gird themselves with sackcloth**, and horror shall cover them; and shame shall be upon all faces, and baldness upon all their heads.

"All hands shall be feeble"... weak and trembling in shock and fear

"All knees will run with water"... the loss of bladder control that occurs in a moment of extreme crisis; they wet themselves...

Everyone would lose heart, and traditional signs of mourning would be everywhere.

"put on sackcloth" a sign of grief or mourning and repentance

(*Gen 37:34; 1 Sam 3:31; Job 16:15; Jer 6:26; Isa 58:5; Dan 9:3-4; Jon 3:5-9; Mt 11:21*).

Sackcloth" was coarse cloth, woven from the long hair of goats or camels worn to make themselves miserable and so keep thoughts of selfish enjoyment aside.

Ezekiel 7:18

58

18] They shall also **gird themselves with sackcloth**, and horror shall cover them; and shame shall be upon all faces, and baldness upon all their heads.

Shaved Heads

'make tonsures' → ancient practice of shaving the head for a symbolic purpose as in a religious vow

- done to lament disaster (*Ez 27:31; Isa 15:2, 3; Jer 48:37*)
- and to mourn the dead (*Gen 37:34; Jer 16:6; Mic 1:16*).

Hebrews were forbidden to shave even part of their heads for the dead (*Lev 21:5; Deut 14:1; Ezek 44:20*).

Ezekiel 7:19

59

19] They shall cast their silver in the streets, and **their gold shall be removed**: their silver and their gold **shall not be able to deliver them** in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they **shall not satisfy their souls**, neither fill their bowels: because it is the **stumblingblock** of their iniquity.

"...their gold shall be removed...": Literally, shall be impurity, i.e., ceremonial impurity

of menstruation (*Lev 15:19; Eze 18:6*)
of touching a corpse (*Num 19:13, 20, 21*) or
of idolatry (*v 20 and Ezek 36:17*).

"...their gold shall not be able to deliver them": The revulsion Israel would feel toward her wealth; items once deemed precious would be discarded.

"...shall not satisfy their souls": Their silver and gold ... cannot satisfy their souls
(*Lam 1:11; 2:11-12, 19-20; 4:4, 8-10; 2 Kgs 6:25*).

Ezekiel 7:19

60

19] They shall cast their silver in the streets, and **their gold shall be removed**: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the **stumblingblock** of their iniquity.

"...stumbling block": the cause of their ruin

(*Ezek 14:3; 18:30; 44:12*).

Valuables and food would mean very little then because all that would concern the people would be remaining alive.

Money cannot buy food at any price when food is not available.

Ezekiel 7:20

61

20] *As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty: but they made the images of their abominations and of their detestable things **therein**: therefore have I set it far from them.*

Up till now God had been talking about the land and the sin of the people broadly. God is now shifting His focus specifically on the Temple.

The people had become proud over the glorious splendor of Jerusalem and the temple and, as the height of arrogance, had used some of the temple treasures to make idols.

Since Israel had already profaned the temple of God, He saw no further purpose in keeping it from the desecration of the enemy.

Therefore the Lord would make the temple an abhorrent thing to them and would turn it over to their enemies who would profane it (*Dan. 5:3-4*).

The Lord would turn away from His people then.

Ezekiel 7:21-22

62

21] *And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey, and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil; and they shall pollute it.*

22] *My face will I turn also from them, and they shall pollute **my secret place**: for the robbers shall enter into it, and defile it.*

Israel's wealth would be plundered by foreigners including the Temple.

"My Secret place" refers to the Holy of Holies.

The pride of the powerful Judahites would end.

Their enemies would profane their holy places.

Ezekiel 7:23-24

63

23] ***Make a chain**: for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence.*

24] *Wherefore I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses: I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease; and their holy places shall be defiled..*

"**Make a chain**": making a chain was symbolic - speaks of captivity.

The chain would bind the Israelites and carry them off to captivity because Judah and Jerusalem had become places of violent crime.

The Lord would bring the worst of nations against His people, and they would take over the Judahites' homes (*Lev. 26:31-32; Deut. 28:49-57*).

This verse characterizes the land until General Allenby entered Jerusalem in 1917 to deliver it from the Turks and Islamic rule.

The scope of what Ezekiel talks about often broadens from a specific focusing on the Babylonians coming to execute God's fury.

Sometimes you will see glimpses in the text where he goes far beyond his own day, moving to the End Times (*Ex 28!*).

Ezekiel 7:25-26

64

25] ***Destruction cometh**; and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none.*

26] *Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumor shall be upon rumor; then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients.*

..."**Destruction cometh**".... Literally, shuddering comes.

Everyone from king to common citizen would shake with terror.

They would not be able to escape anguish, and things would go from bad to worse for them.

No one would be able to obtain guidance from the Lord – not the prophets by receiving revelations, nor the priests by studying the law, nor the elders by appealing to history.

The Lord would punish His people in keeping with how they had sinned, and they would know that He was the Lord.

Ezekiel 7:26

65

*26] Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumor shall be upon rumor; then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but **the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients.***

Famine of the Word

They would not listen when they were in charge;
now there would be a famine of the Word.

Amos also talks of a famine of the Word (*Amos 8:11*).

We have no ability to conceive what a famine of the Word would be like. Many countries exist today where people must expose themselves to incredible dangers just for a few pages of God's Word.

Compare this to the "Emergent church" today which is retreating to icons rather than the truth of God's Word,

Or of the Dark Ages, when the Word of God was not accessible to the common people...

Ezekiel 7:27

66

*27] **The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and **they shall know that I am the LORD.*****

Ezekiel refers

- to Jehoiachin (*Ezek 17:12*),
- to past kings (*Ezek 43:7, 9*), and
- to the future ruler as king (*Ezek 37:22, 24*),
but he does not use the title in regard to the reigning Zedekiah (*Ezek 12:12; 21:25*).

"...**they shall know that I am the LORD...**": 70X in this book..

Divine Justice...

67

Divine justice is one of the evidences of the living God.

Just as the Lord announced through Ezekiel that

- retribution upon the wicked leaders of Israel will convince them that He is the Lord ("they shall know that I am the Lord"),
- so in the final judgment of the wicked the ultimate justice of God will leave no doubt of His reality!

Idol Worship today

68

As we study Ezekiel, we need to determine what God would have us do today.

- We need to get God's perspective of His judgments on those ancient peoples,
- We need to recognize that there are elements of their problems **in our own lives** that offend God no less than Israel offended God 2500 years ago.

Idol worship in a classical sense still going on today.

If astrology and the occult were simply superstitions and harmful only because they represented ignorance, then God would have dealt with them accordingly; but the Bible deals with those things as capital crimes punishable by death worthy of execution.

Idol Worship today

69

Those who are in any way drawn or attracted to Quija boards, or similar things, should recognize that you are toying with something that in God's eyes is a very serious sin.

This directly looses supernatural of forces into your life that whose intention is to undo you and gain entrance and control over your life. They are organized for your destruction.

Turn your back on them. Turn your back on Satan who takes life.

Turn toward Almighty God who gives it.

Listen as to what God is teaching us through these words.

We may not be lighting candles to some carved image, but we can inadvertently make idols of other things in our lives,

...a person, a company, a hobby, or some other material object.

Any kind of excessive preoccupation with something other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, can become a form of idol worship.

2 Cor 5:11

71

***“Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord,
we persuade men .***

Test the Situation

70

As we wonder about the meaning of some incident or experience that we are going through, let the Holy Spirit help explain it.

— If it is of the Holy Spirit, the incident or experience will draw you closer to the Lord.

The leading and motivation will come from within...

The Holy Spirit will convict, guide, and empower...

— If the incident is of Satan, it will give you excuses to fall away from the Lord.

The temptation and pressure will come from without...

Satan will condemn, destroy, and tear down...