

EZEKIEL 22:1-31 – “SINS OF JERUSALEM; ISRAEL IN THE FURNACE; ISRAEL’S WICKED LEADERS”

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:30pm, H 106 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by doughnut/vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell # 714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column.

THE CONSUMING OF GOD’S WRATH – VS. 1-31

The next two studies we will be the corruption of God’s people (Chapter 23) and the conquest of Jerusalem by Babylon (Chapter 24)

Eze 22:1 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Eze 22:2 "Now, son of man, will you judge, will you judge the bloody city? Yes, show her all her abominations!

Eze 22:3 Then say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "The city sheds blood in her own midst, that her time may come; and she makes idols within herself to defile herself.

Eze 22:4 You have become guilty by the blood which you have shed, and have defiled yourself with the idols which you have made. You have caused your days to draw near, and have come to the end of your years; therefore I have made you a reproach to the nations, and a mockery to all countries.

Eze 22:5 Those near and those far from you will mock you as infamous and full of tumult.

Eze 22:6 "Look, the princes of Israel: each one has used his power to shed blood in you.

Eze 22:7 In you they have made light of father and mother; in your midst they have oppressed the stranger; in you they have mistreated the fatherless and the widow.

Eze 22:8 You have despised My holy things and profaned My Sabbaths.

Eze 22:9 In you are men who slander to cause bloodshed; in you are those who eat on the mountains; in your midst they commit lewdness.

Eze 22:10 In you men uncover their fathers' nakedness; in you they violate women who are set apart during their impurity.

Eze 22:11 One commits abomination with his neighbor's wife; another lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law; and another in you violates his sister, his father's daughter.

INTERPRETATION

WHY GOD WILL BRING HIS WRATH UPON THEM:

1 The fourth word of judgment Ezek. 22:1-16. The sins which have brought ruin upon Jerusalem are the sins which disgraced the pagan inhabitants of Canaan, whom the Israelites were to cast out (compare Lev. 18). The commission of like sins would insure like judgment.

2 Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city? Are you ready to execute your charge, which I commit to you against Jerusalem that murders the prophets and them that are godly? Yes, show her all her abominations. Literal – 2 Kings 21:16; Physical – 2 Kings 23:26-27 – Blood/bloody - 7X

3 Then say, Thus says the Lord GOD, The city sheds blood in the midst of it, that her time, that is the time of her destruction, may come, and makes idols against herself, to her own undoing, to defile herself.

4 your days, - i. e., of judgment; “your years,” i. e., of visitation (compare Eze 20:25, Eze 20:39). A reproach ... a mockery - Judah shall be like the Ammonites Eze 21:28.

5 Those that are near, and those that are far from thee, shall mock thee, who art infamous and much troubled, whose very name all men hate.

6 Look, the princes of Israel,.... Those that belonged to the royal family, or the nobles of the land, or the members of the grand Sanhedrim of the nation: **everyone were using their power to shed blood**; everyone exerted himself to the uttermost, according to his ability, to shed blood, or cause it to be shed; everyone striving, as it were, who should shed most, to exceed each other in this abominable sin.

7 In you have they made light by father and mother: in your midst, they have they dealt by oppression with the stranger: in you have they oppressed the fatherless and the widow. He means by this that there was no kind of wickedness which was not committed in Jerusalem and therefore the plagues of God would speedily come on her.

8 You have despised My holy things,.... The holy place, the temple, and the worship of it; holy persons, the priests that officiated there; holy sacrifices offered up by them; the holy word of God read and explained; and all holy ordinances there administered. These words are directed to Jerusalem, the holy city, and to the inhabitants of it, who ought to have been holy men; and **profaned my sabbaths**; by doing their own work, and neglecting the service of God; and which was an inlet, as it usually is, to all manner of sin.

9 In you are men that carry tales - Witnesses that will swear anything, even where life is concerned. Who **eat upon the mountains** - Sacrifice to idols, and celebrate their festivals.

10 In you have they uncovered (had sex with their mother!) - They are guilty of the most abominable incest and unnatural lust. **In you they violate women during their impurity** - In their unholy and unnatural connections, they have not abstained from those set apart because of their infirmities. The catalogue of crimes that follow is too plain to require comment.

11 The sin of adultery, which is an abominable sin; it is so to God, and it should be so to man; some man of note, a great man; for this sin prevailed among the princes and nobles: or “everyone”; it being a general vice, which obtained among all ranks, high and low, rich and poor: and another **lewdly defiled his daughter in law**; his wife's daughter, or his son's wife, contrary to Lev 18:15, and another in you have humbled his sister, his father's daughter: his own sister, begotten of the same father, though it may be not born of the same mother; yet the relation is too near for marriage; and besides, it is a rape that is here intended; and the uncovering of the nakedness of a sister, whether by father or mother's side, whether born at home or abroad, is prohibited, Lev 18:9, and some have thought that all these acts of uncleanness were committed in honor of their idols, and when they worshipped them on the mountains, Eze 22:9.

APPLICATION

We must listen to the LORD as He speaks to us! We have seen God condemning Israel (Jerusalem) for about 20 chapters! Why is He spending all this time demonstrating His judgment? He wants us to understand how to live in this world!

In chapter 22, the focus is clearly on the city of Jerusalem! (815X; ten Psalms in Bible-Babylon 249X)) Note its history: (2 Sam. 5:7; Ps 132:13; Ps. 48; Ps. 87). The Jews were proud of Mt. Zion and claimed that the Lord loved Zion more than any other place! But now the city of Jerusalem and the temple would be invaded by “unclean Gentiles” who were brought there by the Lord! Why would the Lord destroy His beloved city and the temple? Because His people had sinned and broken the covenant, and they were beyond remedy.

v. 8 Our whole culture is doing this!
v. 9 60+ million are subscribers to pornography; 40+ million to hard core
v. 10-11 It's been said the U.S. is going to die before we learn what not to do!

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OBSERVATION

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Eze 22:12 In you they take bribes to shed blood; you take usury and increase; you have made profit from your neighbors by extortion, and have forgotten Me,” says the Lord GOD.

Eze 22:13 “Behold, therefore, I beat My fists at the dishonest profit which you have made, and at the bloodshed which has been in your midst.

Eze 22:14 Can your heart endure, or can your hands remain strong, in the days when I shall deal with you? I, the LORD, have spoken, and will do it.

Eze 22:15 I will scatter you among the nations, disperse you throughout the countries, and remove your filthiness completely from you.

Eze 22:16 You shall defile yourself in the sight of the nations; then you shall know that I am the LORD.” ‘ ‘

Eze 22:17 The word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Eze 22:18 “Son of man, the house of Israel has become dross to Me; they are all bronze, tin, iron, and lead, in the midst of a furnace; they have become dross from silver.

Eze 22:19 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Because you have all become dross, therefore behold, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.

Eze 22:20 As men gather silver, bronze, iron, lead, and tin into the midst of a furnace, to blow fire on it, to melt it; so I will gather you in My anger and in My fury, and I will leave you there and melt you.

Eze 22:21 Yes, I will gather you and blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and you shall be melted in its midst.

INTERPRETATION

12 They were hiring with money to swear a man out of his life, or, if they were upon a jury, would be bribed to find an innocent man guilty. When so much barbarous bloody work of this kind was done in Jerusalem we may well conclude, That men's consciences had become wretchedly profligate and seared and their hearts hardened; for those would stick at no wickedness who would not stick at this. That abundance of quiet, harmless, good people were made away with, whereby, as the guilt of the city was increased, so the number of those that should have stood in the gap to turn away the wrath of God was diminished.

THE DISASTER THAT IS COMING FROM GOD AGAINST ISRAEL

13 Behold, therefore I have smitten my hand at thy dishonest gain, in token of my wrath and vengeance, which you have made, and at your blood which has been in the midst of you

14 Can your heart endure, or can your hands be strong, able to defend yourself in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the LORD have spoken it, and will do it.

15 And I will scatter you among the nations, and disperse you in the countries, and will consume your¹ filthiness out of you. I will thus take away the occasion of your wickedness.

16 And thou shalt take your inheritance in yourself in the sight of the nations, and you shall know that I am the LORD. You will be no more the inheritance of the Lord, but forsaken.

17 **And the word of the Lord came unto me,**.... The word of prophecy from the Lord, **saying;** as follows:

18 **The house of Israel has become dross** - They are all like base metal - brass, tin, iron, and lead alloyed together with silver. Ye must be put in the furnace, and subjected to the most intense fire, till your impurities are consumed away. No ordinary means will avail anything; the most violent must be resorted to.

19 **I will gather you** - Jerusalem is represented here as the refining pot; all the people are to be gathered together in it, and the Chaldean fire is to knelt the whole. And God will increase thy sufferings: as the refiner blows the fire with his bellows, so God will blow upon you with the fire of his wrath, *Eze 22:21*.

20 As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in My anger and in My fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you, meaning by this that the godly would be tried and the wicked destroyed.

21 Not only gather them in wrath, as before; but blow upon them in wrath, which is often compared to fire in Scripture; and besides, the city and temple of Jerusalem were to be burnt, and were burnt with material fire, in consequence of God's displeasure against His people: **and you shall be melted in the midst of a furnace;** of the city of Jerusalem; be destroyed by one judgment or another in it; or perish in the conflagration of it.

APPLICATION

Here is the 5th and 6th reasons for judgment – Avarice or greed and finally they had forgotten Me! Will God judge America?

How will a wicked nation know that there is God?

v. 18 Your house has become dross to Me – of no value!

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OBSERVATION

Eze 22:22 As silver is melted in the midst of a furnace, so shall you be melted in its midst; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have poured out My fury on you.”

Eze 22:23 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Eze 22:24 "Son of man, say to her: 'You are a land that is not cleansed or rained on in the day of indignation.'

Eze 22:25 The conspiracy of her prophets in her midst is like a roaring lion tearing the prey; they have devoured people; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in her midst.

Eze 22:26 Her priests have violated My law and profaned My holy things; they have not distinguished between the holy and unholy, nor have they made known the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they have hidden their eyes from My Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them.

Eze 22:27 Her princes in her midst are like wolves tearing the prey, to shed blood, to destroy people, and to get dishonest gain.

Eze 22:28 Her prophets plastered them with untempered mortar, seeing false visions, and divining lies for them, saying, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' when the LORD had not spoken.

Eze 22:29 The people of the land have used oppressions, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully oppress the stranger.

Eze 22:30 So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.

Eze 22:31 Therefore I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; and I have recompensed their deeds on their own heads," says the Lord GOD.

INTERPRETATION

22 This is repeated for the greater confirmation of it; and the people might assure themselves that it would verily be, as was threatened: **and you shall know that I the Lord have poured out My fury upon you**; feel it upon them; be sensible of it, and acknowledge it; and that it is the Lord's doings, and righteously done; these are they who are meant by the silver, who, though cast into the furnace, were not destroyed, only purified, and made the better and brighter for their afflictions.

THE DECEPTION OF ISRAEL’S LEADERS (VS. 23-31)

23 The sixth word of judgment. The special sins of princes, priests, and people.

24 **land ... not cleansed** — not cleared or cultivated; all a scene of desolation; a fit emblem of the moral wilderness state of the people. **nor rained on** — a mark of divine “indignation”; as the early and latter rain, on which the productiveness of the land depended, was one of the great covenant blessings. Joel (Joe. 2:23) promises the return of the former and latter rain, with the restoration of God’s favor.

25 There is a **conspiracy of her prophets** in the midst of her, like a roaring lion ravaging the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst of her. The false prophets have conspired together to make their doctrine more probable. The conspiracy was spreading!

26 **Her priests have violated My law, and have profaned My holy things**: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shown difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. They have neglected my service.

27 **Her princes were "like wolves ravaging the prey."** Paul has warned the church about wolves in sheep’s clothing (see Act. 20:29), and we do have them in the church today. Why was Jerusalem called a bloody city? Because of the prophets, the priests, and the princes.

28 And her prophets have plastered them with untempered mortar, seeing false visions, and **divining lies to them**, saying, **Thus says the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken.** They who would have reproved them, flattered them in their vices and covered their doings with lies.

29 **The people** — put last, after the mention of those in office. Corruption had spread downwards through the whole community. **wrongfully** — that is, “without cause,” gratuitously, without the stranger proselyte giving any just provocation; nay, he of all others being one who ought to have been won to the worship of Jehovah by kindness, instead of being alienated by oppression; especially as the Israelites were commanded to remember that they themselves had been “strangers in Egypt”

30 And I sought for a man among them, who would show himself zealous in my cause by resisting vice, (*Isa. 59:16*), and also pray to me to withhold my plagues, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. (*Psa. 106:23*).

31 There was not a man to be found in the land who could stand in the gap. I thank God He did find a Man to stand between my sin and a holy God. That Man is the Lord Jesus Christ, and God sees those who belong to Him in Christ. I am thankful for the Man who stands in the gap today! **Therefore have I poured out My indignation on them**,.... Like a mighty torrent, carrying all before it: **I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath**; by the sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity: **their own way have I recompensed on their heads**, says the Lord; brought just punishment upon

APPLICATION

The greatest day of God’s judgment is still future-we believe it is coming close!

There was corruption all the way through – the kings, the priests and the people

Is this going on now in our culture?

The princes (leaders) were destroying the people to get dishonest gains!

Are we as a nation in real trouble?
Are we as a church throughout America in real trouble?
v. 29 – The care for the poor and needy was gone! God cares about the poor and needy!

v. 30 God’s call for someone to stand in the gap went unheeded! Can you see God’s heart here?

Our present Christian culture shows how we deserve God’s judgments, does it not?

Can you see how this is written for us? “For I am God and there is none else!”

Gal. 5:16-25!! Eze. 22:30!!

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OBSERVATION

Psa 48:1-2 A Song *and* Psalm for the sons of Korah.

Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised

in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.

Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth,

is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King,

is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

INTERPRETATION

Questions:

The Bible has been described by some as a tale of two cities. What are their names?

How will a wicked nation know that there is God?

Are we as a nation in real trouble?

Are we as a church throughout America in real trouble?

It's so obvious God hates the sins outlined in this chapter. Are we individually guilty in any of these areas?

Can you see God's heart in v. 30? So *I sought for a man among them* who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.

Do you think God would look on you as one who is standing gap for this nation? Our church (at large)?

APPLICATION

Standing in the Gap! Ez. 22:30:

So I sought for a man among them -- among the princes, priests, prophets, and people of the land, who acted the part as above described; for otherwise, no doubt, there were good people in the land, as Jeremiah, Baruch, and others, but not among these:

who would make a wall, -- or a hedge - *that was broken down by the transgressions* of the people, who exceeded all bounds of law and justice; *one that would restrain them from sinning*, and *reform them*, and *set them a good example*; -- *a good man, that would endeavor by his influence to stop the breaking in of sin, and the consequences of it*:

and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it;-- in the gap that sin had made, at which the Lord was entering as a man of war to destroy the transgressors; one that should present himself to the Lord on the behalf of the people; seek mercy for them, to interpose between God and them, and act the part of an intercessor; pray for them, as Moses did for the people of Israel, that he would not destroy them; see Psa 106:23,

but I found no one, -- no reformer of them, no repairer of the breach, nor restorer of paths, to dwell in; no intercessor for them, as Abraham for Sodom, Moses for Israel; or any, like Aaron, that stood between the living and the dead to stay the plague.

Isa 59:16; Isa 63:5; Jer 5:1

Today would God say that you and that I am “standing in the gap?”