

# WEEK 46. Ezekiel 20-35 (Israel's Rebellion, Prophecy, and Lament)

## Sunday ([Ezekiel 20](#))

### Israel's Rebellion

20:1 In the seventh year, in the fifth month, on the tenth of the month, some of the elders of Israel came to seek the Lord, and they sat down in front of me. 20:2 The word of the Lord came to me: 20:3 "Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel, and tell them: 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: Are you coming to seek me? As surely as I live, I will not allow you to seek me, declares the sovereign Lord.' 20:4 "Are you willing to pronounce judgment? Are you willing to pronounce judgment, son of man? Then confront them with the abominable practices of their fathers, 20:5 and say to them:

"This is what the sovereign Lord says: On the day I chose Israel I swore to the descendants of the house of Jacob and made myself known to them in the land of Egypt. I swore to them, "I am the Lord your God." 20:6 On that day I swore to bring them out of the land of Egypt to a land which I had picked out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands. 20:7 I said to them, "Each of you must get rid of the detestable idols you keep before you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the Lord your God." 20:8 But they rebelled against me, and refused to listen to me; no one got rid of their detestable idols, nor did they abandon the idols of Egypt. Then I decided to pour out my rage on them and fully vent my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. 20:9 I acted for the sake of my reputation, so that I would not be profaned before the nations among whom they lived, before whom I revealed myself by bringing them out of the land of Egypt.

20:10 "So I brought them out of the land of Egypt and led them to the wilderness. 20:11 I gave them my statutes and revealed my regulations to them. The one who carries them out will live by them! 20:12 I also gave them my Sabbaths as a reminder of our relationship, so that they would know that I, the Lord, sanctify them. 20:13 But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness; they did not follow my statutes and they rejected my regulations (the one who obeys them will live by them), and they utterly desecrated my Sabbaths. So I decided to pour out my rage on them in the wilderness and destroy them. 20:14 I acted for the sake of my reputation, so that I would not be profaned before the nations in whose sight I had brought them out. 20:15 I also swore to them in the wilderness that I would not bring them to the land I had given them – a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands. 20:16 I did this because they rejected my regulations, did not follow my statutes, and desecrated my Sabbaths; for their hearts followed their idols. 20:17 Yet I had pity on them and did not destroy them, so I did not make an end of them in the wilderness.

20:18 “But I said to their children in the wilderness, “Do not follow the practices of your fathers; do not observe their regulations, nor defile yourselves with their idols. 20:19 I am the Lord your God; follow my statutes, observe my regulations, and carry them out. 20:20 Treat my Sabbaths as holy and they will be a reminder of our relationship, and then you will know that I am the Lord your God.” 20:21 “But the children rebelled against me, did not follow my statutes, did not observe my regulations by carrying them out (the one who obeys them will live by them), and desecrated my Sabbaths. I decided to pour out my rage on them and fully vent my anger against them in the wilderness. 20:22 But I refrained from doing so, and acted instead for the sake of my reputation, so that I would not be profaned before the nations in whose sight I had brought them out. 20:23 I also swore to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them throughout the lands. 20:24 I did this because they did not observe my regulations, they rejected my statutes, they desecrated my Sabbaths, and their eyes were fixed on their fathers’ idols. 20:25 I also gave them decrees which were not good and regulations by which they could not live. 20:26 I declared them to be defiled because of their sacrifices – they caused all their first born to pass through the fire – so that I would devastate them, so that they will know that I am the Lord.’

20:27 “Therefore, speak to the house of Israel, son of man, and tell them, “This is what the sovereign Lord says: In this way too your fathers blasphemed me when they were unfaithful to me. 20:28 I brought them to the land which I swore to give them, but whenever they saw any high hill or leafy tree, they offered their sacrifices there and presented the offerings that provoke me to anger. They offered their soothing aroma there and poured out their drink offerings. 20:29 So I said to them, What is this high place you go to?” (So it is called “High Place” to this day.)

20:30 “Therefore say to the house of Israel, “This is what the sovereign Lord says: Will you defile yourselves like your fathers and engage in prostitution with detestable idols? 20:31 When you present your sacrifices – when you make your sons pass through the fire – you defile yourselves with all your idols to this very day. Will I allow you to seek me, O house of Israel? As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, I will not allow you to seek me!

20:32 “What you plan will never happen. You say, “We will be like the nations, like the clans of the lands, who serve gods of wood and stone.” 20:33 As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, with a powerful hand and an outstretched arm, and with an outpouring of rage, I will be king over you. 20:34 I will bring you out from the nations, and will gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a powerful hand and an outstretched arm and with an outpouring of rage! 20:35 I will bring you into the wilderness of the nations, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. 20:36 Just as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, declares the sovereign Lord. 20:37 I will make you pass under the shepherd’s staff, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. 20:38 I will eliminate from among you the rebels

and those who revolt against me. I will bring them out from the land where they have been residing, but they will not come to the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

20:39 “As for you, O house of Israel, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Each of you go and serve your idols, if you will not listen to me. But my holy name will not be profaned again by your sacrifices and your idols. 20:40 For there on my holy mountain, the high mountain of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord, all the house of Israel will serve me, all of them in the land. I will accept them there, and there I will seek your contributions and your choice gifts, with all your holy things. 20:41 When I bring you out from the nations and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, I will accept you along with your soothing aroma. I will display my holiness among you in the sight of the nations. 20:42 Then you will know that I am the Lord when I bring you to the land of Israel, to the land I swore to give to your fathers. 20:43 And there you will remember your conduct and all your deeds by which you defiled yourselves. You will despise yourselves because of all the evil deeds you have done. 20:44 Then you will know that I am the Lord, when I deal with you for the sake of my reputation and not according to your wicked conduct and corrupt deeds, O house of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord.”

### **Prophecy Against the South**

20:45 The word of the Lord came to me: 20:46 “Son of man, turn toward the south, and speak out against the south. Prophecy against the open scrub land of the Negev, 20:47 and say to the scrub land of the Negev, ‘Hear the word of the Lord: This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look here, I am about to start a fire in you, and it will devour every green tree and every dry tree in you. The flaming fire will not be extinguished, and the whole surface of the ground from the Negev to the north will be scorched by it. 20:48 And everyone will see that I, the Lord, have burned it; it will not be extinguished.”

20:49 Then I said, “O sovereign Lord! They are saying of me, ‘Does he not simply speak in eloquent figures of speech?’”

### **PRAYER**

Lord, from the Garden of Eden through this day and until Jesus returns humankind has rebelled, choosing the pleasures of the flesh over the joys of eternal relationship. May I pause to consider the meaning and consequences of every choice through Your eyes rather than the dysfunctional eyes of the flesh-centered world.

### **SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE**

When the Elders of Israel came to Ezekiel for help from the Lord he was challenged to pronounce the holy judgment of God.

The Lord commissioned him to remind the leaders of their history of rebellion and of His impending punishment upon them.

Ezekiel asked the Lord what he should do because they were accusing him of mere "... eloquent figures of speech".

## INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

### CONSIDER

The enemies of the truth of God even today declare that the Bible is mere symbolism and without authority, therefore absent absolute truth, and unnecessary to trust or obey.

### DISCUSS

Why would the leaders, who were in chronic rebellion, imagine that they'd receive help from the very One against Whom they'd chosen to unrepentantly sin?

### REFLECT

God was separating from Israel because a continued association meant that He would be seen as endorsing their sinful behavior and/or that He was powerless.

### SHARE

When have you made a choice you knew to be in rebellion against God and discovered a sense that He was not there with you? (The Holy Spirit never leaves a genuinely saved person but He is offended by sin and is not a friendly presence there.)

## FAITH IN ACTION

### PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place where you are building walls to intimacy with Him.

### ACT

Today I will confess and repent, seek and receive His forgiveness, then return to Him with a clean heart.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

## Monday ([Ezekiel 21-22](#))

The Sword of Judgment

21:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 21:2 “Son of man, turn toward Jerusalem and speak out against the sanctuaries. Prophecy against the land of Israel 21:3 and say to them, “This is what the Lord says: Look, I am against you. I will draw my sword from its sheath and cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked. 21:4 Because I will cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked, my sword will go out from its sheath against everyone from the south to the north. 21:5 Then everyone will know that I am the Lord, who drew my sword from its sheath – it will not be sheathed again!”

21:6 “And you, son of man, groan with an aching heart and bitterness; groan before their eyes. 21:7 When they ask you, ‘Why are you groaning?’ you will reply, ‘Because of the report that has come. Every heart will melt with fear and every hand will be limp; everyone will faint and every knee will be wet with urine.’ Pay attention – it is coming and it will happen, declares the sovereign Lord.”

21:8 The word of the Lord came to me: 21:9 “Son of man, prophesy and say: ‘This is what the Lord says:

“A sword, a sword is sharpened,  
and also polished.

21:10 It is sharpened for slaughter,  
it is polished to flash like lightning!

“Should we rejoice in the scepter of my son? No! The sword despises every tree!

21:11 “He gave it to be polished,  
to be grasped in the hand –  
the sword is sharpened, it is polished –  
giving it into the hand of the executioner.

21:12 Cry out and moan, son of man,  
for it is wielded against my people;  
against all the princes of Israel.

They are delivered up to the sword, along with my people.

Therefore, strike your thigh.

21:13 “For testing will come, and what will happen when the scepter, which the sword despises, is no more? declares the sovereign Lord.’

21:14 “And you, son of man, prophesy,

and clap your hands together.

Let the sword strike twice, even three times!

It is a sword for slaughter,

a sword for the great slaughter surrounding them.

21:15 So hearts melt with fear and many stumble.

At all their gates I have stationed the sword for slaughter.

Ah! It is made to flash, it is drawn for slaughter!

21:16 Cut sharply on the right!

Swing to the left,

wherever your edge is appointed to strike.

21:17 I too will clap my hands together,

I will exhaust my rage;

I the Lord have spoken.”

21:18 The word of the Lord came to me: 21:19 “You, son of man, mark out two routes for the king of Babylon’s sword to take; both of them will originate in a single land. Make a signpost and put it at the beginning of the road leading to the city. 21:20 Mark out the routes for the sword to take: “Rabbah of the Ammonites” and “Judah with Jerusalem in it.” 21:21 For the king of Babylon stands at the fork in the road at the head of the two routes. He looks for omens: He shakes arrows, he consults idols, he examines animal livers. 21:22 Into his right hand comes the portent for Jerusalem – to set up battering rams, to give the signal for slaughter, to shout out the battle cry, to set up battering rams against the gates, to erect a siege ramp, to build a siege wall. 21:23 But those in Jerusalem will view it as a false

omen. They have sworn solemn oaths, but the king of Babylon will accuse them of violations in order to seize them.

21:24 “Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: ‘Because you have brought up your own guilt by uncovering your transgressions and revealing your sins through all your actions, for this reason you will be taken by force.

21:25 “As for you, profane and wicked prince of Israel,

whose day has come, the time of final punishment,

21:26 this is what the sovereign Lord says:

Tear off the turban,

take off the crown!

Things must change!

Exalt the lowly,

bring down the proud!

21:27 A total ruin I will make it!

It will come to an end

when the one arrives to whom I have assigned judgment.’

21:28 “As for you, son of man, prophesy and say, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says concerning the Ammonites and their coming humiliation; say:

“A sword, a sword drawn for slaughter,

polished to consume, to flash like lightning –

21:29 while seeing false visions for you

and reading lying omens for you –

to place that sword on the necks of the profane wicked,

whose day has come,

the time of final punishment.

21:30 Return it to its sheath!

In the place where you were created,

in your native land, I will judge you.

21:31 I will pour out my anger on you;

the fire of my fury I will blow on you.

I will hand you over to brutal men,

who are skilled in destruction.

21:32 You will become fuel for the fire –

your blood will stain the middle of the land;

you will no longer be remembered,

for I, the Lord, have spoken.”

### **The Sins of Jerusalem**

22:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 22:2 “As for you, son of man, are you willing to pronounce judgment, are you willing to pronounce judgment on the bloody city? Then confront her with all her abominable deeds! 22:3 Then say, “This is what the sovereign Lord says: O city, who spills blood within herself (which brings on her doom), and who makes herself idols (which results in impurity), 22:4 you are guilty because of the blood you shed and defiled by the idols you made. You have hastened the day of your doom; the end of your years has come. Therefore I will make you an object of scorn to the nations, an object to be mocked by all lands. 22:5 Those both near and far from you will mock you, you with your bad reputation, full of turmoil.

22:6 ““See how each of the princes of Israel living within you has used his authority to shed blood. 22:7 They have treated father and mother with contempt within you; they have oppressed the foreigner among you; they have wronged the orphan and the widow within you. 22:8 You have despised my holy things and desecrated my Sabbaths! 22:9 Slandorous men shed blood within you. Those who live

within you eat pagan sacrifices on the mountains; they commit obscene acts among you. 22:10 They have sex with their father's wife within you; they violate women during their menstrual period within you. 22:11 One commits an abominable act with his neighbor's wife; another obscenely defiles his daughter-in-law; another violates his sister – his father's daughter – within you. 22:12 They take bribes within you to shed blood. You engage in usury and charge interest; you extort money from your neighbors. You have forgotten me, declares the sovereign Lord.

22:13 “See, I strike my hands together at the dishonest profit you have made, and at the bloodshed they have done among you. 22:14 Can your heart endure, or can your hands be strong when I deal with you? I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do it! 22:15 I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you among various countries; I will remove your impurity from you. 22:16 You will be profaned within yourself in the sight of the nations; then you will know that I am the Lord.”

22:17 The word of the Lord came to me: 22:18 “Son of man, the house of Israel has become slag to me. All of them are like bronze, tin, iron, and lead in the furnace; they are the worthless slag of silver. 22:19 Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: ‘Because all of you have become slag, look out! – I am about to gather you in the middle of Jerusalem. 22:20 As silver, bronze, iron, lead, and tin are gathered in a furnace so that the fire can melt them, so I will gather you in my anger and in my rage. I will deposit you there and melt you. 22:21 I will gather you and blow on you with the fire of my fury, and you will be melted in it. 22:22 As silver is melted in a furnace, so you will be melted in it, and you will know that I, the Lord, have poured out my anger on you.’”

22:23 The word of the Lord came to me: 22:24 “Son of man, say to her: ‘You are a land that receives no rain or showers in the day of my anger.’ 22:25 Her princes within her are like a roaring lion tearing its prey; they have devoured lives. They take away riches and valuable things; they have made many women widows within it. 22:26 Her priests abuse my law and have desecrated my holy things. They do not distinguish between the holy and the profane, or recognize any distinction between the unclean and the clean. They ignore my Sabbaths and I am profaned in their midst. 22:27 Her officials are like wolves in her midst rending their prey – shedding blood and destroying lives – so they can get dishonest profit. 22:28 Her prophets coat their messages with whitewash. They see false visions and announce lying omens for them, saying, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says,’ when the Lord has not spoken. 22:29 The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery. They have wronged the poor and needy; they have oppressed the foreigner who lives among them and denied them justice.

22:30 “I looked for a man from among them who would repair the wall and stand in the gap before me on behalf of the land, so that I would not destroy it, but I found no one. 22:31 So I have poured my anger on them, and destroyed them with the fire of my fury. I hereby repay them for what they have done, declares the sovereign Lord.”

## PRAYER

Lord, we have forgotten that as Your children we have been set-apart, we commit the terrible blasphemy of syncretism when we mix Your perfect truth with the partial truths and falsehoods of the world, then treat them as if they have equivalent value. May I be watchful against any drift into the rationalization of moral equivalence.

## SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Ezekiel was instructed to prophesy against Jerusalem and in so-doing he invited the Lord God to initiate a no-turning-back judgment.

He was also instructed to "... groan with an aching heart and bitterness" so that the people would ask why, and he was to reply "Because of the report that has come ..."

Ezekiel was challenged to prophesy against Jerusalem "O city, who spills blood within herself (which brings on her doom), and who makes herself idols (which results in impurity), 22:4 you are guilty because of the blood you shed and defiled by the idols you made. You have hastened the day of your doom ..."

He then announced the initiation of the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, followed by the prophecies against the nations, and finally the lamentations of the nations.

## INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

### CONSIDER

Because the people has sold-out any shred of integrity before the Lord God the king of Babylon felt free to make excuses to breach his agreements with them as they had breached their covenant with God.

### DISCUSS

Why would the people have responded so emotionally to Ezekiel's public groaning?

### REFLECT

There is a critical and profound difference between the secular and the sacred [Ezekiel 2:26b](#) "They do not distinguish between the holy and the profane, or recognize any distinction between the unclean and the clean."

### SHARE

When have you observed someone else's emotional response and been brought to a greater awareness of the depth of significance of an event?

## FAITH IN ACTION

### PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place in your life where you've made excuses for breaking your word and/or have given equal authority to worldly philosophies and priorities to those of the Lord God.

### ACT

Today I will confess and repent, seek and receive His forgiveness, then surrender to the Holy Spirit as He leads me to a more-righteous walk before the Lord.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

## Tuesday ([Ezekiel 23-24](#))

### Two Sisters

23:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 23:2 "Son of man, there were two women who were daughters of the same mother. 23:3 They engaged in prostitution in Egypt; in their youth they engaged in prostitution. Their breasts were squeezed there; lovers fondled their virgin nipples there. 23:4 Oholah was the name of the older and Oholibah the name of her younger sister. They became mine, and gave birth to sons and daughters. Oholah is Samaria and Oholibah is Jerusalem.

23:5 "Oholah engaged in prostitution while she was mine. She lusted after her lovers, the Assyrians – warriors 23:6 clothed in blue, governors and officials, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding on horses. 23:7 She bestowed her sexual favors on them; all of them were the choicest young men of Assyria. She defiled herself with all whom she desired – with all their idols. 23:8 She did not abandon the prostitution she had practiced in Egypt; for in her youth men had sex with her, fondled her virgin breasts, and ravished her. 23:9 Therefore I handed her over to her lovers, the Assyrians for whom she lusted. 23:10 They exposed her nakedness, seized her sons and daughters, and killed her with the sword. She became notorious among women, and they executed judgments against her.

23:11 "Her sister Oholibah watched this, but she became more corrupt in her lust than her sister had been, and her acts of prostitution were more numerous than those of her sister. 23:12 She lusted after the Assyrians – governors and officials, warriors in full armor, horsemen riding on horses, all of them desirable young men. 23:13 I saw that she was defiled; both of them followed the same path. 23:14 But she increased her prostitution. She saw men carved on the wall, images of the Chaldeans carved in

bright red, 23:15 wearing belts on their waists and flowing turbans on their heads, all of them looking like officers, the image of Babylonians whose native land is Chaldea. 23:16 When she saw them, she lusted after them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea. 23:17 The Babylonians crawled into bed with her. They defiled her with their lust; after she was defiled by them, she became disgusted with them. 23:18 When she lustfully exposed her nakedness, I was disgusted with her, just as I had been disgusted with her sister. 23:19 Yet she increased her prostitution, remembering the days of her youth when she engaged in prostitution in the land of Egypt. 23:20 She lusted after their genitals – as large as those of donkeys, and their seminal emission was as strong as that of stallions. 23:21 This is how you assessed the obscene conduct of your youth, when the Egyptians fondled your nipples and squeezed your young breasts.

23:22 “Therefore, Oholibah, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look here, I am about to stir up against you the lovers with whom you were disgusted; I will bring them against you from every side: 23:23 the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod, Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them, desirable young men, all of them governors and officials, officers and nobles, all of them riding on horses. 23:24 They will attack you with weapons, chariots, wagons, and with a huge army; they will array themselves against you on every side with large shields, small shields, and helmets. I will assign them the task of judgment; they will punish you according to their laws. 23:25 I will direct my jealous anger against you, and they will deal with you in rage. They will cut off your nose and your ears, and your survivors will die by the sword. They will seize your sons and daughters, and your survivors will be consumed by fire. 23:26 They will strip your clothes off you and take away your beautiful jewelry. 23:27 So I will put an end to your obscene conduct and your prostitution which you have practiced in the land of Egypt. You will not seek their help or remember Egypt anymore.

23:28 “For this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look here, I am about to deliver you over to those whom you hate, to those with whom you were disgusted. 23:29 They will treat you with hatred, take away all you have labored for, and leave you naked and bare. Your nakedness will be exposed, just as when you engaged in prostitution and obscene conduct. 23:30 I will do these things to you because you engaged in prostitution with the nations, polluting yourself with their idols. 23:31 You have followed the ways of your sister, so I will place her cup of judgment in your hand. 23:32 “This is what the sovereign Lord says: “You will drink your sister’s deep and wide cup; you will be scorned and derided, for it holds a great deal. 23:33 You will be overcome by drunkenness and sorrow. The cup of your sister Samaria is a cup of horror and desolation. 23:34 You will drain it dry, gnaw its pieces, and tear out your breasts, for I have spoken, declares the sovereign Lord.

23:35 “Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Because you have forgotten me and completely disregarded me, you must bear now the punishment for your obscene conduct and prostitution.”

23:36 The Lord said to me: "Son of man, are you willing to pronounce judgment on Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominable deeds! 23:37 For they have committed adultery and blood is on their hands. They have committed adultery with their idols, and their sons, whom they bore to me, they have passed through the fire as food to their idols. 23:38 Moreover, they have done this to me: In the very same day they desecrated my sanctuary and profaned my Sabbaths. 23:39 On the same day they slaughtered their sons for their idols, they came to my sanctuary to desecrate it. This is what they have done in the middle of my house.

23:40 "They even sent for men from far away; when the messenger arrived, those men set out. For them you bathed, painted your eyes, and decorated yourself with jewelry. 23:41 You sat on a magnificent couch, with a table arranged in front of it where you placed my incense and my olive oil. 23:42 The sound of a carefree crowd accompanied her, including all kinds of men; even Sabeans were brought from the desert. The sisters put bracelets on their wrists and beautiful crowns on their heads. 23:43 Then I said about the one worn out by adultery, 'Now they will commit immoral acts with her.' 23:44 They had sex with her as one does with a prostitute. In this way they had sex with Oholah and Oholibah, promiscuous women. 23:45 But upright men will punish them appropriately for their adultery and bloodshed, because they are adulteresses and blood is on their hands.

23:46 "For this is what the sovereign Lord says: Bring up an army against them and subject them to terror and plunder. 23:47 That army will pelt them with stones and slash them with their swords; they will kill their sons and daughters and burn their houses. 23:48 I will put an end to the obscene conduct in the land; all the women will learn a lesson from this and not engage in obscene conduct. 23:49 They will repay you for your obscene conduct, and you will be punished for idol worship. Then you will know that I am the sovereign Lord."

### **The Boiling Pot**

24:1 The word of the Lord came to me in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month: 24:2 "Son of man, write down the name of this day, this very day. The king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day. 24:3 Recite a proverb to this rebellious house and say to them, "This is what the sovereign Lord says:

"Set on the pot, set it on,

pour water in it too;

24:4 add the pieces of meat to it,

every good piece,

the thigh and the shoulder;

fill it with choice bones.

24:5 Take the choice bone of the flock,

heap up bones under it;

boil rapidly,

and boil its bones in it.

24:6 “Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says:

Woe to the city of bloodshed,

the pot whose rot is in it,

whose rot has not been removed from it!

Empty it piece by piece.

No lot has fallen on it.

24:7 For her blood was in it;

she poured it on an exposed rock;

she did not pour it on the ground to cover it up with dust.

24:8 To arouse anger, to take vengeance,

I have placed her blood on an exposed rock so that it cannot be covered up.

24:9 “Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says:

Woe to the city of bloodshed!

I will also make the pile high.

24:10 Pile up the bones, kindle the fire;

cook the meat well, mix in the spices,

let the bones be charred.

24:11 Set the empty pot on the coals,

until it becomes hot and its copper glows,

until its uncleanness melts within it and its rot is consumed.

24:12 It has tried my patience;

yet its thick rot is not removed from it.

Subject its rot to the fire!

24:13 You mix uncleanness with obscene conduct.

I tried to cleanse you, but you are not clean.

You will not be cleansed from your uncleanness

until I have exhausted my anger on you.

24:14 “I the Lord have spoken; judgment is coming and I will act! I will not relent, or show pity, or be sorry! I will judge you according to your conduct and your deeds, declares the sovereign Lord.”

### **Ezekiel’s Wife Dies**

24:15 The word of Lord came to me: 24:16 “Son of man, realize that I am about to take the delight of your eyes away from you with a jolt, but you must not mourn or weep or shed tears. 24:17 Groan in silence for the dead, but do not perform mourning rites. Bind on your turban and put your sandals on your feet. Do not cover your lip and do not eat food brought by others.”

24:18 So I spoke to the people in the morning, and my wife died in the evening. In the morning I acted just as I was commanded. 24:19 Then the people said to me, “Will you not tell us what these things you are doing mean for us?”

24:20 So I said to them: “The word of the Lord came to me: 24:21 Say to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Realize I am about to desecrate my sanctuary – the source of your confident pride, the object in which your eyes delight, and your life’s passion. Your very own sons and

daughters whom you have left behind will die by the sword. 24:22 Then you will do as I have done: You will not cover your lip or eat food brought by others. 24:23 Your turbans will be on your heads and your sandals on your feet; you will not mourn or weep, but you will rot for your iniquities and groan among yourselves. 24:24 Ezekiel will be an object lesson for you; you will do all that he has done. When it happens, then you will know that I am the sovereign Lord.'

24:25 "And you, son of man, this is what will happen on the day I take from them their stronghold – their beautiful source of joy, the object in which their eyes delight, and the main concern of their lives, as well as their sons and daughters: 24:26 On that day a fugitive will come to you to report the news. 24:27 On that day you will be able to speak again; you will talk with the fugitive and be silent no longer. You will be an object lesson for them, and they will know that I am the Lord."

## PRAYER

Lord, You chose the most powerful and stark terms to define the abhorrence You felt for the sins of Israel, everyone who heard them would have been shocked to be identified as morally-parallel with them. May I be aware that every sin offends You.

## SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Two women, two revolting stories of promiscuity, and two reports of negative consequences. In Ezekiel a reference was made to Sodom, and their punishment, here the same behavior and punishment is in view.

Samaria and Jerusalem were the nations whose rebellion was paralleled with their stories, their judgment was treatment alike that of unclean rotted meat, rejected and cast-aside as worse than worthless, indeed repulsive.

The shocking graphic imagery in Ezekiel is because that was the only way they'd hear Him as they had become so barbaric and rebellious they had to be shocked into awareness.

In His holiness He was that disgusted by them and that was the threshold where He had to terminate the old covenant. Terminating that covenant was no small thing.

We need to understand, in human terms, how revolting our rebellion is to a Holy God.

The Lord took Ezekiel's wife as an object lesson so that he could then model God's reaction to the death of rebellious Israel. (The life of a prophet, and those nearest to him, was a traumatic one – the rewards were clearly reserved for Heaven.)

## INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

## CONSIDER

Neither woman in the story had a moment of remorse or repentance for their sin, just as had become apparent of Israel toward the Lord.

## DISCUSS

Would Ezekiel's knowledge that Israel was about to be obliterated make the Lord's taking of his wife as a teachable moment for Israel less painful?

## REFLECT

Despite all of their troubles, clearly due to their rebellion, even the remnant of Israel continued to rebel.

## SHARE

When has something bad happened which became a powerful teaching lesson that in some ways outweighed the tragedy?

## FAITH IN ACTION

## PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a way in which you are making a choice, or choices, which offend Him.

## ACT

Today I will confess and repent, request and receive forgiveness, then establish a network of accountability so that I do not drift back into that rebellious behavior.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

## Wednesday ([Ezekiel 25-30](#))

### A Prophecy Against Ammon

25:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 25:2 "Son of man, turn toward the Ammonites and prophesy against them. 25:3 Say to the Ammonites, 'Hear the word of the sovereign Lord: This is what the sovereign Lord says: You said "Aha!" about my sanctuary when it was desecrated, about the land of Israel when it was made desolate, and about the house of Judah when they went into exile. 25:4 So take note, I am about to make you slaves of the tribes of the east. They will make camps among you and pitch their tents among you. They will eat your fruit and drink your milk. 25:5 I will make Rabbah

a pasture for camels and Ammon a resting place for sheep. Then you will know that I am the Lord. 25:6 For this is what the sovereign Lord says: Because you clapped your hands, stamped your feet, and rejoiced with intense scorn over the land of Israel, 25:7 take note, I have stretched out my hand against you, and I will hand you over as plunder to the nations. I will cut you off from the peoples and make you perish from the lands. I will destroy you; then you will know that I am the Lord.”

### **A Prophecy Against Moab**

25:8 “This is what the sovereign Lord says: ‘Moab and Seir say, “Look, the house of Judah is like all the other nations.” 25:9 So look, I am about to open up Moab’s flank, eliminating the cities, including its frontier cities, the beauty of the land – Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon, and Kiriathaim. 25:10 I will hand it over, along with the Ammonites, to the tribes of the east, so that the Ammonites will no longer be remembered among the nations. 25:11 I will execute judgments against Moab. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

### **A Prophecy Against Edom**

25:12 “This is what the sovereign Lord says: ‘Edom has taken vengeance against the house of Judah; they have made themselves fully culpable by taking vengeance on them. 25:13 So this is what the sovereign Lord says: I will stretch out my hand against Edom, and I will kill the people and animals within her, and I will make her desolate; from Teman to Dedan they will die by the sword. 25:14 I will exact my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel. They will carry out in Edom my anger and rage; they will experience my vengeance, declares the sovereign Lord.”

### **A Prophecy Against Philistia**

25:15 “This is what the sovereign Lord says: ‘The Philistines have exacted merciless revenge, showing intense scorn in their effort to destroy Judah with unrelenting hostility. 25:16 So this is what the sovereign Lord says: Take note, I am about to stretch out my hand against the Philistines. I will kill the Cherethites and destroy those who remain on the seacoast. 25:17 I will exact great vengeance upon them with angry rebukes. Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I exact my vengeance upon them.”

### **A Prophecy Against Tyre**

26:1 In the eleventh year, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: 26:2 “Son of man, because Tyre has said about Jerusalem, ‘Aha, the gateway of the peoples is broken; it has swung open to me. I will become rich, now that she has been destroyed,’ 26:3 therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am against you, O Tyre! I will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. 26:4 They will destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers. I will

scrape her soil from her and make her a bare rock. 26:5 She will be a place where fishing nets are spread, surrounded by the sea. For I have spoken, declares the sovereign Lord. She will become plunder for the nations, 26:6 and her daughters who are in the field will be slaughtered by the sword. Then they will know that I am the Lord.

26:7 “For this is what the sovereign Lord says: Take note that I am about to bring King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, king of kings, against Tyre from the north, with horses, chariots, and horsemen, an army and hordes of people. 26:8 He will kill your daughters in the field with the sword. He will build a siege wall against you, erect a siege ramp against you, and raise a great shield against you. 26:9 He will direct the blows of his battering rams against your walls and tear down your towers with his weapons. 26:10 He will cover you with the dust kicked up by his many horses. Your walls will shake from the noise of the horsemen, wheels, and chariots when he enters your gates like those who invade through a city’s broken walls. 26:11 With his horses’ hoofs he will trample all your streets. He will kill your people with the sword, and your strong pillars will tumble down to the ground. 26:12 They will steal your wealth and loot your merchandise. They will tear down your walls and destroy your luxurious homes. Your stones, your trees, and your soil he will throw into the water. 26:13 I will silence the noise of your songs; the sound of your harps will be heard no more. 26:14 I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place where fishing nets are spread. You will never be built again, for I, the Lord, have spoken, declares the sovereign Lord.

26:15 “This is what the sovereign Lord says to Tyre: Oh, how the coastlands will shake at the sound of your fall, when the wounded groan, at the massive slaughter in your midst! 26:16 All the princes of the sea will vacate their thrones. They will remove their robes and strip off their embroidered clothes; they will clothe themselves with trembling. They will sit on the ground; they will tremble continually and be shocked at what has happened to you. 26:17 They will sing this lament over you:

“How you have perished – you have vanished from the seas,

O renowned city, once mighty in the sea,

she and her inhabitants, who spread their terror!

26:18 Now the coastlands will tremble on the day of your fall;

the coastlands by the sea will be terrified by your passing.’

26:19 “For this is what the sovereign Lord says: When I make you desolate like the uninhabited cities, when I bring up the deep over you and the surging waters overwhelm you, 26:20 then I will bring you down to bygone people, to be with those who descend to the pit. I will make you live in the lower parts of the earth, among the primeval ruins, with those who descend to the pit, so that you will not be

inhabited or stand in the land of the living. 26:21 I will bring terrors on you, and you will be no more! Though you are sought after, you will never be found again, declares the sovereign Lord.”

### A Lament for Tyre

27:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 27:2 “You, son of man, sing a lament for Tyre. 27:3 Say to Tyre, who sits at the entrance of the sea, merchant to the peoples on many coasts, “This is what the sovereign Lord says:

“O Tyre, you have said, “I am perfectly beautiful.”

27:4

Your borders are in the heart of the seas;

your builders have perfected your beauty.

27:5 They crafted all your planks out of fir trees from Senir;

they took a cedar from Lebanon to make your mast.

27:6 They made your oars from oaks of Bashan;

they made your deck with cypresses from the Kittean isles.

27:7 Fine linen from Egypt, woven with patterns, was used for your sail

to serve as your banner;

blue and purple from the coastlands of Elishah was used for your deck’s awning.

27:8 The leaders of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers;

your skilled men, O Tyre, were your captains.

27:9 The elders of Gebal and her skilled men were within you, mending cracks;

all the ships of the sea and their mariners were within you to trade for your merchandise.

27:10 Men of Persia, Lud, and Put were in your army, men of war.

They hung shield and helmet on you; they gave you your splendor.

27:11 The Arvadites joined your army on your walls all around,  
and the Gammadites were in your towers.

They hung their quivers on your walls all around;  
they perfected your beauty.

27:12 “Tarshish was your trade partner because of your abundant wealth; they exchanged silver, iron, tin, and lead for your products. 27:13 Javan, Tubal, and Meshech were your clients; they exchanged slaves and bronze items for your merchandise. 27:14 Beth Togarmah exchanged horses, chargers, and mules for your products. 27:15 The Dedanites were your clients. Many coastlands were your customers; they paid you with ivory tusks and ebony. 27:16 Edom was your trade partner because of the abundance of your goods; they exchanged turquoise, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral, and rubies for your products. 27:17 Judah and the land of Israel were your clients; they traded wheat from Minnith, millet, honey, olive oil, and balm for your merchandise. 27:18 Damascus was your trade partner because of the abundance of your goods and of all your wealth: wine from Helbon, white wool from Zahar, 27:19 and casks of wine from Izal they exchanged for your products. Wrought iron, cassia, and sweet cane were among your merchandise. 27:20 Dedan was your client in saddlecloths for riding. 27:21 Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your trade partners; for lambs, rams, and goats they traded with you. 27:22 The merchants of Sheba and Raamah engaged in trade with you; they traded the best kinds of spices along with precious stones and gold for your products. 27:23 Haran, Kanneh, Eden, merchants from Sheba, Asshur, and Kilmad were your clients. 27:24 They traded with you choice garments, purple clothes and embroidered work, and multicolored carpets, bound and reinforced with cords; these were among your merchandise. 27:25 The ships of Tarshish were the transports for your merchandise.

“So you were filled and weighed down in the heart of the seas.

27:26 Your rowers have brought you into surging waters.

The east wind has wrecked you in the heart of the seas.

27:27 Your wealth, products, and merchandise, your sailors and captains,

your ship’s carpenters, your merchants,

and all your fighting men within you,

along with all your crew who are in you,

will fall into the heart of the seas on the day of your downfall.

27:28 At the sound of your captains' cry the waves will surge;

27:29 They will descend from their ships – all who handle the oar,  
the sailors and all the sea captains – they will stand on the land.

27:30 They will lament loudly over you and cry bitterly.

They will throw dust on their heads and roll in the ashes;

27:31 they will tear out their hair because of you and put on sackcloth,  
and they will weep bitterly over you with intense mourning.

27:32 As they wail they will lament over you, chanting:

“Who was like Tyre, like a tower in the midst of the sea?”

27:33 When your products went out from the seas,

you satisfied many peoples;

with the abundance of your wealth and merchandise

you enriched the kings of the earth.

27:34 Now you are wrecked by the seas, in the depths of the waters;

your merchandise and all your company have sunk along with you.

27:35 All the inhabitants of the coastlands are shocked at you,

and their kings are horribly afraid – their faces are troubled.

27:36 The traders among the peoples hiss at you;

you have become a horror, and will be no more.”

**A Prophecy Against the King of Tyre**

28:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 28:2 “Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, “This is what the sovereign Lord says:

“Your heart is proud and you said, “I am a god;

I sit in the seat of gods, in the heart of the seas” –

yet you are a man and not a god,

though you think you are godlike.

28:3 Look, you are wiser than Daniel;

no secret is hidden from you.

28:4 By your wisdom and understanding you have gained wealth for yourself;

you have amassed gold and silver in your treasuries.

28:5 By your great skill in trade you have increased your wealth,

and your heart is proud because of your wealth.

28:6 “Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says:

Because you think you are godlike,

28:7 I am about to bring foreigners against you, the most terrifying of nations.

They will draw their swords against the grandeur made by your wisdom,

and they will defile your splendor.

28:8 They will bring you down to the pit, and you will die violently in the heart of the seas.

28:9 Will you still say, “I am a god,” before the one who kills you –

though you are a man and not a god –

when you are in the power of those who wound you?

28:10 You will die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of foreigners;

for I have spoken, declares the sovereign Lord.”

28:11 The word of the Lord came to me: 28:12 “Son of man, sing a lament for the king of Tyre, and say to him, “This is what the sovereign Lord says:

“You were the sealer of perfection,  
full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

28:13 You were in Eden, the garden of God.

Every precious stone was your covering,  
the ruby, topaz, and emerald,  
the chrysolite, onyx, and jasper,  
the sapphire, turquoise, and beryl;  
your settings and mounts were made of gold.

On the day you were created they were prepared.

28:14 I placed you there with an anointed guardian cherub;  
you were on the holy mountain of God;  
you walked about amidst fiery stones.

28:15 You were blameless in your behavior from the day you were created,  
until sin was discovered in you.

28:16 In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned;  
so I defiled you and banished you from the mountain of God –  
the guardian cherub expelled you from the midst of the stones of fire.

28:17 Your heart was proud because of your beauty;  
you corrupted your wisdom on account of your splendor.

I threw you down to the ground;

I placed you before kings, that they might see you.

28:18 By the multitude of your iniquities, through the sinfulness of your trade,  
you desecrated your sanctuaries.

So I drew fire out from within you;

it consumed you,

and I turned you to ashes on the earth

before the eyes of all who saw you.

28:19 All who know you among the peoples are shocked at you;

you have become terrified and will be no more.”

### **A Prophecy Against Sidon**

28:20 The word of the Lord came to me: 28:21 “Son of man, turn toward Sidon and prophesy against it.

28:22 Say, “This is what the sovereign Lord says:

“Look, I am against you, Sidon,

and I will magnify myself in your midst.

Then they will know that I am the Lord

when I execute judgments on her

and reveal my sovereign power in her.

28:23 I will send a plague into the city and bloodshed into its streets;

the slain will fall within it, by the sword that attacks it from every side.

Then they will know that I am the Lord.

28:24 “No longer will Israel suffer from the sharp briars or painful thorns of all who surround and scorn them. Then they will know that I am the sovereign Lord.

28:25 “This is what the sovereign Lord says: When I regather the house of Israel from the peoples where they are dispersed, I will reveal my sovereign power over them in the sight of the nations, and they will live in their land that I gave to my servant Jacob. 28:26 They will live securely in it; they will build houses and plant vineyards. They will live securely when I execute my judgments on all those who scorn them and surround them. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God.”

### A Prophecy Against Egypt

29:1 In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: 29:2 “Son of man, turn toward Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt. 29:3 Tell them, “This is what the sovereign Lord says:

“Look, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt,

the great monster lying in the midst of its waterways,

who has said, “My Nile is my own, I made it for myself.”

29:4 I will put hooks in your jaws

and stick the fish of your waterways to your scales.

I will haul you up from the midst of your waterways,

and all the fish of your waterways will stick to your scales.

29:5 I will leave you in the wilderness,

you and all the fish of your waterways;

you will fall in the open field and will not be gathered up or collected.

I have given you as food to the beasts of the earth and the birds of the skies.

29:6 Then all those living in Egypt will know that I am the Lord

because they were a reed staff for the house of Israel;

29:7 when they grasped you with their hand, you broke and tore their shoulders,

and when they leaned on you, you splintered and caused their legs to be unsteady.

29:8 “Therefore, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to bring a sword against you, and I will kill every person and every animal. 29:9 The land of Egypt will become a desolate ruin. Then they will know that I am the Lord.

Because he said, “The Nile is mine and I made it,” 29:10 I am against you and your waterways. I will turn the land of Egypt into an utter desolate ruin from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border with Ethiopia. 29:11 No human foot will pass through it, and no animal’s foot will pass through it; it will be uninhabited for forty years. 29:12 I will turn the land of Egypt into a desolation in the midst of desolate lands; for forty years her cities will lie desolate in the midst of ruined cities. I will scatter Egypt among the nations and disperse them among foreign countries.

29:13 “For this is what the sovereign Lord says: At the end of forty years I will gather Egypt from the peoples where they were scattered. 29:14 I will restore the fortunes of Egypt, and will bring them back to the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin; there they will be an insignificant kingdom. 29:15 It will be the most insignificant of the kingdoms; it will never again exalt itself over the nations. I will make them so small that they will not rule over the nations. 29:16 It will never again be Israel’s source of confidence, but a reminder of how they sinned by turning to Egypt for help. Then they will know that I am the sovereign Lord.”

29:17 In the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: 29:18 “Son of man, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre. Every head was rubbed bald and every shoulder rubbed bare; yet he and his army received no wages from Tyre for the work he carried out against it. 29:19 Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to give the land of Egypt to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon. He will carry off her wealth, capture her loot, and seize her plunder; it will be his army’s wages. 29:20 I have given him the land of Egypt as his compensation for attacking Tyre, because they did it for me, declares the sovereign Lord. 29:21 On that day I will make Israel powerful, and I will give you the right to be heard among them. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

### A Lament Over Egypt

30:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 30:2 “Son of man, prophesy and say, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says:

“Wail, ‘Alas, the day is here!’”

30:3 For the day is near,

the day of the Lord is near;

it will be a day of storm clouds,

it will be a time of judgment for the nations.

30:4 A sword will come against Egypt

and panic will overtake Ethiopia

when the slain fall in Egypt

and they carry away her wealth

and dismantle her foundations.

30:5 Ethiopia, Put, Lud, all the foreigners, Libya, and the people of the covenant land will die by the sword along with them.

30:6 “This is what the Lord says:

Egypt’s supporters will fall;

her confident pride will crumble.

From Migdol to Syene they will die by the sword within her,

declares the sovereign Lord.

30:7 They will be desolate among desolate lands,

and their cities will be among ruined cities.

30:8 They will know that I am the Lord

when I ignite a fire in Egypt

and all her allies are defeated.

30:9 On that day messengers will go out from me in ships to frighten overly confident Ethiopia; panic will overtake them on the day of Egypt’s doom; for beware – it is coming!

30:10 ““This is what the sovereign Lord says:

I will put an end to the hordes of Egypt,  
by the hand of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon.

30:11 He and his people with him,  
the most terrifying of the nations,  
will be brought there to destroy the land.

They will draw their swords against Egypt,  
and fill the land with corpses.

30:12 I will dry up the waterways  
and hand the land over to evil men.

I will make the land and everything in it desolate by the hand of foreigners.

I, the Lord, have spoken!

30:13 ““This is what the sovereign Lord says:

I will destroy the idols,  
and put an end to the gods of Memphis.

There will no longer be a prince from the land of Egypt;  
so I will make the land of Egypt fearful.

30:14 I will desolate Pathros,

I will ignite a fire in Zoan,  
and I will execute judgments on Thebes.

30:15 I will pour out my anger upon Pelusium,

the stronghold of Egypt;

I will cut off the hordes of Thebes.

30:16 I will ignite a fire in Egypt;

Syene will writhe in agony,

Thebes will be broken down,

and Memphis will face enemies every day.

30:17 The young men of On and of Pi-beseth will die by the sword;

and the cities will go into captivity.

30:18 In Tahpanhes the day will be dark

when I break the yoke of Egypt there.

Her confident pride will cease within her;

a cloud will cover her, and her daughters will go into captivity.

30:19 I will execute judgments on Egypt.

Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

30:20 In the eleventh year, in the first month, on the seventh day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: 30:21 “Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Look, it has not been bandaged for healing or set with a dressing so that it might become strong enough to grasp a sword.

30:22 Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and I will break his arms, the strong arm and the broken one, and I will make the sword drop from his hand.

30:23 I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among foreign countries.

30:24 I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and I will place my sword in his hand, but I will break the arms of Pharaoh, and he will groan like the fatally wounded before the king of Babylon.

30:25 I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh will fall limp. Then they will know that I am the Lord when I place my sword in the hand of the king of Babylon and he extends it against the land of Egypt.

30:26 I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among foreign countries. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

## **PRAYER**

Lord, You rightly describe the sin of the nations around Israel, and meted-out perfect justice against them while looking ahead to the day of redemption for a repentant Israel. May I be assured that Your justice is true, Your power omnipotent, and Your timing perfect.

## **SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE**

Ezekiel was commissioned to pronounce the terrible judgment of the Lord upon the nations around Israel.

Each nation had offended Israel and the Lord God.

In each case a vision was cast for a future where a repentant Israel would be restored.

## **INTERACT WITH THE TEXT**

### **CONSIDER**

The punishment came largely due to the insensitive gloating and selfish lust of the nations at the expense of Israel.

### **DISCUSS**

Why the laments for Tyre and Egypt?

### **REFLECT**

It's one thing to compete with another nation but another thing to gloat over their fall then to make plans to pick through the remnants to become more wealthy.

### **SHARE**

When have you observed a one-wealthy person or organization fall because they became too crass and greedy?

## **FAITH IN ACTION**

### **PRAY**

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place where you gloat over the ill-fate of another and/or lust after their abandoned valuables.

### **ACT**

I agree to repent and confess, seek and receive the Lord's forgiveness, then engage in prayer and Bible study to purge my heart of wrong attitudes.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

### **Thursday ([Ezekiel 31-32](#))**

#### **A Cedar in Lebanon**

31:1 In the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: 31:2 "Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and his hordes:

"Who are you like in your greatness?"

31:3 Consider Assyria, a cedar in Lebanon,

with beautiful branches, like a forest giving shade,

and extremely tall;

its top reached into the clouds.

31:4 The water made it grow;

underground springs made it grow tall.

Rivers flowed all around the place it was planted,

while smaller channels watered all the trees of the field.

31:5 Therefore it grew taller than all the trees of the field;

its boughs grew large and its branches grew long,

because of the plentiful water in its shoots.

31:6 All the birds of the sky nested in its boughs;

under its branches all the beasts of the field gave birth,

in its shade all the great nations lived.

31:7 It was beautiful in its loftiness, in the length of its branches;

for its roots went down deep to plentiful waters.

31:8 The cedars in the garden of God could not eclipse it,

nor could the fir trees match its boughs;

the plane trees were as nothing compared to its branches;

no tree in the garden of God could rival its beauty.

31:9 I made it beautiful with its many branches;

all the trees of Eden, in the garden of God, envied it.

31:10 “Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Because it was tall in stature, and its top reached into the clouds, and it was proud of its height, 31:11 I gave it over to the leader of the nations. He has judged it thoroughly, as its sinfulness deserves. I have thrown it out. 31:12 Foreigners from the most terrifying nations have cut it down and left it to lie there on the mountains. In all the valleys its branches have fallen, and its boughs lie broken in the ravines of the land. All the peoples of the land have departed from its shade and left it. 31:13 On its ruins all the birds of the sky will live, and all the wild animals will walk on its branches. 31:14 For this reason no watered trees will grow so tall; their tops will not reach into the clouds, nor will the well-watered ones grow that high. For all of them have been appointed to die in the lower parts of the earth; they will be among mere mortals, with those who descend to the pit.

31:15 “This is what the sovereign Lord says: On the day it went down to Sheol I caused observers to lament. I covered it with the deep and held back its rivers; its plentiful water was restrained. I clothed Lebanon in black for it, and all the trees of the field wilted because of it. 31:16 I made the nations shake at the sound of its fall, when I threw it down to Sheol, along with those who descend to the pit. Then all the trees of Eden, the choicest and the best of Lebanon, all that were well-watered, were comforted in the earth below. 31:17 Those who lived in its shade, its allies among the nations, also went down with it to Sheol, to those killed by the sword. 31:18 Which of the trees of Eden was like you in majesty and loftiness? You will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the lower parts of the earth; you will lie among the uncircumcised, with those killed by the sword! This is what will happen to Pharaoh and all his hordes, declares the sovereign Lord.”

### **Lamentation over Pharaoh and Egypt**

32:1 In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: 32:2 “Son of man, sing a lament for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say to him:

“You were like a lion among the nations,  
but you are a monster in the seas;  
you thrash about in your streams,  
stir up the water with your feet,  
and muddy your streams.

32:3 “This is what the sovereign Lord says:

“I will throw my net over you in the assembly of many peoples;  
and they will haul you up in my dragnet.

32:4 I will leave you on the ground,

I will fling you on the open field,

I will allow all the birds of the sky to settle on you,

and I will permit all the wild animals to gorge themselves on you.

32:5 I will put your flesh on the mountains,

and fill the valleys with your maggot-infested carcass.

32:6 I will drench the land with the flow

of your blood up to the mountains,

and the ravines will be full of your blood.

32:7 When I extinguish you, I will cover the sky;

I will darken its stars.

I will cover the sun with a cloud,

and the moon will not shine.

32:8 I will darken all the lights in the sky over you,  
and I will darken your land,  
declares the sovereign Lord.

32:9 I will disturb many peoples,  
when I bring about your destruction among the nations,  
among countries you do not know.

32:10 I will shock many peoples with you,  
and their kings will shiver with horror because of you.

When I brandish my sword before them,  
every moment each one will tremble for his life, on the day of your fall.

32:11 “For this is what the sovereign Lord says:  
“The sword of the king of Babylon will attack you.

32:12 By the swords of the mighty warriors I will cause your hordes to fall –  
all of them are the most terrifying among the nations.

They will devastate the pride of Egypt,  
and all its hordes will be destroyed.

32:13 I will destroy all its cattle beside the plentiful waters;  
and no human foot will disturb the waters again,  
nor will the hooves of cattle disturb them.

32:14 Then I will make their waters calm,  
and will make their streams flow like olive oil, declares the sovereign Lord.

32:15 When I turn the land of Egypt into desolation

and the land is destitute of everything that fills it,

when I strike all those who live in it,

then they will know that I am the Lord.'

32:16 This is a lament; they will chant it.

The daughters of the nations will chant it.

They will chant it over Egypt and over all her hordes,

declares the sovereign Lord."

32:17 In the twelfth year, on the fifteenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: 32:18 "Son of man, wail over the horde of Egypt. Bring it down; bring her and the daughters of powerful nations down to the lower parts of the earth, along with those who descend to the pit. 32:19 Say to them, 'Whom do you surpass in beauty? Go down and be laid to rest with the uncircumcised!' 32:20 They will fall among those killed by the sword. The sword is drawn; they carry her and all her hordes away. 32:21 The bravest of the warriors will speak to him from the midst of Sheol along with his allies, saying: 'The uncircumcised have come down; they lie still, killed by the sword.'

32:22 "Assyria is there with all her assembly around her grave, all of them struck down by the sword. 32:23 Their graves are located in the remote slopes of the pit. Her assembly is around her grave, all of them struck down by the sword, those who spread terror in the land of the living.

32:24 "Elam is there with all her hordes around her grave; all of them struck down by the sword. They went down uncircumcised to the lower parts of the earth, those who spread terror in the land of the living. Now they will bear their shame with those who descend to the pit. 32:25 Among the dead they have made a bed for her, along with all her hordes around her grave. All of them are uncircumcised, killed by the sword, for their terror had spread in the land of the living. They bear their shame along with those who descend to the pit; they are placed among the dead.

32:26 "Meshech-Tubal is there, along with all her hordes around her grave. All of them are uncircumcised, killed by the sword, for they spread their terror in the land of the living. 32:27 They do not lie with the fallen warriors of ancient times, who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war, having their swords placed under their heads and their shields on their bones, when the terror of these warriors was in the land of the living.

32:28 “But as for you, in the midst of the uncircumcised you will be broken, and you will lie with those killed by the sword.

32:29 “Edom is there with her kings and all her princes. Despite their might they are laid with those killed by the sword; they lie with the uncircumcised and those who descend to the pit.

32:30 “All the leaders of the north are there, along with all the Sidonians; despite their might they have gone down in shameful terror with the dead. They lie uncircumcised with those killed by the sword, and bear their shame with those who descend to the pit.

32:31 “Pharaoh will see them and be consoled over all his hordes who were killed by the sword, Pharaoh and all his army, declares the sovereign Lord. 32:32 Indeed, I terrified him in the land of the living, yet he will lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with those killed by the sword, Pharaoh and all his hordes, declares the sovereign Lord.”

## PRAYER

Lord, those who became proud, imagining themselves Your peers, have always been humbled. May I neither imagine myself Your peer nor associate myself with anyone or any organization that does.

## SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

The Lord gave to Ezekiel an illustration of the pride of great pagan nations around Israel using trees.

For His purpose He poetically-postulated that the trees held human-like qualities of envy and pride and then that the Assyrians were like a cedar tree so great that it might elicit envy from the perfect trees in Eden.

Then He told of the consequences of the pride and violence of several nations and how they had all been sent to “Sheol”.

“Sheol” referred to death and destruction without hope for eternal redemption.

And it all of this Egypt was to understand that their fate was the same.

## INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

### CONSIDER

The Bible elsewhere teaches that “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

[\[Proverbs 16:18\]](#)

### DISCUSS

Why would the Lord take the time to pronounce the reasons and results of His judgment of these nations?

#### **REFLECT**

The nation of Israel was being judged in much the same way, and for much the same reason, as these other nations.

#### **SHARE**

When have you observed a careful effort being made to explain the consistency of a harsh judgment upon all who committed similar acts?

#### **FAITH IN ACTION**

#### **PRAY**

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place where you may harbor a “haughty spirit”.

#### **ACT**

I will confess and repent, seek and accept the Lord’s forgiveness, and then partner with a fellow believer for accountability as I purge the “haughty spirit” within. It may be in comparing my appearance, position, or possessions to another, an intellectual or social arrogance, or perhaps a works-righteousness arrogance.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

### **Friday ([Ezekiel 33-34](#))**

#### **Ezekiel Israel’s Watchman**

33:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 33:2 “Son of man, speak to your people, and say to them, ‘Suppose I bring a sword against the land, and the people of the land take one man from their borders and make him their watchman. 33:3 He sees the sword coming against the land, blows the trumpet, and warns the people, 33:4 but there is one who hears the sound of the trumpet yet does not heed the warning. Then the sword comes and sweeps him away. He will be responsible for his own death. 33:5 He heard the sound of the trumpet but did not heed the warning, so he is responsible for himself. If he had heeded the warning, he would have saved his life. 33:6 But suppose the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people. Then the sword comes and takes one of their lives. He is swept away for his iniquity, but I will hold the watchman accountable for that person’s death.’

33:7 “As for you, son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you must warn them on my behalf. 33:8 When I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked man, you must certainly die,’ and you do not warn the wicked about his behavior, the wicked man will die for his iniquity, but I will hold you accountable for his death. 33:9 But if you warn the wicked man to change his behavior, and he refuses to change, he will die for his iniquity, but you have saved your own life.

33:10 “And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, ‘This is what you have said: “Our rebellious acts and our sins have caught up with us, and we are wasting away because of them. How then can we live?”’ 33:11 Say to them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but prefer that the wicked change his behavior and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil deeds! Why should you die, O house of Israel?’

33:12 “And you, son of man, say to your people, ‘The righteousness of the righteous will not deliver him if he rebels. As for the wicked, his wickedness will not make him stumble if he turns from it. The righteous will not be able to live by his righteousness if he sins.’ 33:13 Suppose I tell the righteous that he will certainly live, but he becomes confident in his righteousness and commits iniquity. None of his righteous deeds will be remembered; because of the iniquity he has committed he will die. 33:14 Suppose I say to the wicked, ‘You must certainly die,’ but he turns from his sin and does what is just and right. 33:15 He returns what was taken in pledge, pays back what he has stolen, and follows the statutes that give life, committing no iniquity. He will certainly live – he will not die. 33:16 None of the sins he has committed will be counted against him. He has done what is just and right; he will certainly live.

33:17 “Yet your people say, ‘The behavior of the Lord is not right,’ when it is their behavior that is not right. 33:18 When a righteous man turns from his godliness and commits iniquity, he will die for it. 33:19 When the wicked turns from his sin and does what is just and right, he will live because of it. 33:20 Yet you say, ‘The behavior of the Lord is not right.’ House of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his behavior.”

## The Fall of Jerusalem

33:21 In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth of the month, a refugee came to me from Jerusalem saying, “The city has been defeated!” 33:22 Now the hand of the Lord had been on me the evening before the refugee reached me, but the Lord opened my mouth by the time the refugee arrived in the morning; he opened my mouth and I was no longer unable to speak. 33:23 The word of the Lord came to me: 33:24 “Son of man, the ones living in these ruins in the land of Israel are saying, ‘Abraham was only one man, yet he possessed the land, but we are many; surely the land has been given to us for a possession.’ 33:25 Therefore say to them, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: You eat the meat with the blood still in it, pray to your idols, and shed blood. Do you really think you will

possess the land? 33:26 You rely on your swords and commit abominable deeds; each of you defiles his neighbor's wife. Will you possess the land?'

33:27 "This is what you must say to them, "This is what the sovereign Lord says: As surely as I live, those living in the ruins will die by the sword, those in the open field I will give to the wild beasts for food, and those who are in the strongholds and caves will die of disease. 33:28 I will turn the land into a desolate ruin; her confident pride will come to an end. The mountains of Israel will be so desolate no one will pass through them. 33:29 Then they will know that I am the Lord when I turn the land into a desolate ruin because of all the abominable deeds they have committed.'

33:30 "But as for you, son of man, your people (who are talking about you by the walls and at the doors of the houses) say to one another, 'Come hear the word that comes from the Lord.' 33:31 They come to you in crowds, and they sit in front of you as my people. They hear your words, but do not obey them. For they talk lustfully, and their heart is set on their own advantage. 33:32 Realize that to them you are like a sensual song, a beautiful voice and skilled musician. They hear your words, but they do not obey them. 33:33 When all this comes true – and it certainly will – then they will know that a prophet was among them."

### **A Prophecy Against False Shepherds**

34:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 34:2 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them – to the shepherds: "This is what the sovereign Lord says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not shepherds feed the flock? 34:3 You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the choice animals, but you do not feed the sheep! 34:4 You have not strengthened the weak, healed the sick, bandaged the injured, brought back the strays, or sought the lost, but with force and harshness you have ruled over them. 34:5 They were scattered because they had no shepherd, and they became food for every wild beast. 34:6 My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over the entire face of the earth with no one looking or searching for them.

34:7 "Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: 34:8 As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, my sheep have become prey and have become food for all the wild beasts. There was no shepherd, and my shepherds did not search for my flock, but fed themselves and did not feed my sheep, 34:9 Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: 34:10 This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand my sheep from their hand. I will no longer let them be shepherds; the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore. I will rescue my sheep from their mouth, so that they will no longer be food for them.

34:11 "For this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I myself will search for my sheep and seek them out. 34:12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will seek out

my flock. I will rescue them from all the places where they have been scattered on a cloudy, dark day. 34:13 I will bring them out from among the peoples and gather them from foreign countries; I will bring them to their own land. I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams and all the inhabited places of the land. 34:14 In a good pasture I will feed them; the mountain heights of Israel will be their pasture. There they will lie down in a lush pasture, and they will feed on rich grass on the mountains of Israel. 34:15 I myself will feed my sheep and I myself will make them lie down, declares the sovereign Lord. 34:16 I will seek the lost and bring back the strays; I will bandage the injured and strengthen the sick, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them – with judgment!

34:17 “As for you, my sheep, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to judge between one sheep and another, between rams and goats. 34:18 Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must trample the rest of your pastures with your feet? When you drink clean water, must you muddy the rest of the water by trampling it with your feet? 34:19 As for my sheep, they must eat what you trampled with your feet, and drink what you have muddied with your feet!

34:20 “Therefore, this is what the sovereign Lord says to them: Look, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. 34:21 Because you push with your side and your shoulder, and thrust your horns at all the weak sheep until you scatter them abroad, 34:22 I will save my sheep; they will no longer be prey. I will judge between one sheep and another.

34:23 I will set one shepherd over them, and he will feed them – namely, my servant David. He will feed them and will be their shepherd. 34:24 I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken!

34:25 “I will make a covenant of peace with them and will rid the land of wild beasts, so that they can live securely in the wilderness and even sleep in the woods. 34:26 I will turn them and the regions around my hill into a blessing. I will make showers come down in their season; they will be showers that bring blessing. 34:27 The trees of the field will yield their fruit and the earth will yield its crops. They will live securely on their land; they will know that I am the Lord, when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from the hand of those who enslaved them. 34:28 They will no longer be prey for the nations and the wild beasts will not devour them. They will live securely and no one will make them afraid. 34:29 I will prepare for them a healthy planting. They will no longer be victims of famine in the land and will no longer bear the insults of the nations. 34:30 Then they will know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and that they are my people, the house of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord. 34:31 And you, my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are my people, and I am your God, declares the sovereign Lord.”

**PRAYER**

Lord, You challenged Ezekiel to be bold, you punished the spiritual shepherds for their failure to deal honestly and to teach the people, and each person to receive consequences for their own choices. May I be honorable as a leader, careful whom I follow, and faithful before You.

### SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Ezekiel was warned to deliver the Lord's message accurately and quickly or else the one who failed due to lack of warning would cause him consequences as well.

The spiritual shepherds of the people were judged as failures and thieves for abandoning the people to the world without teaching them and for selfishly taking resources while watching the people fall.

Each individual was placed on notice that God would judge them on their own merits as t their choices and deeds.

And finally, Ezekiel was given the promise that the Lord would be the good shepherd Who gathered the faithful to a safe place, then give them a shepherd like the symbolic David (his faithful persona).

### INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

#### CONSIDER

It must have been so difficult for Ezekiel to keep delivering the awful news to his people that the Lord had to warn him sternly to not shirk from his mission.

#### DISCUSS

What might have been he initial reaction of the people when hearing that they'd deal directly with God versus the priests/shepherds?

#### REFLECT

Ezekiel must have been comforted to hear the promise of God that He would gather the righteous and restore the peace.

#### SHARE

When have you observed a neglectful spiritual leader, or a faithful leader whom people enjoyed hearing and which time they treated as a good-luck ritual, but whose teaching they ignored?

### FAITH IN ACTION

#### PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a leader or a congregation for whom to pray.

## ACT

I agree to pray in earnest for a careless shepherd who is merely entertaining or 'warehousing' those who are trusting him for spiritual leadership, or for a congregation with a faithful teacher whose presence they seek as a celebrity but whose words they ignore.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

## Saturday ([Ezekiel 35](#))

### Prophecy Against Mount Seir

35:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 35:2 "Son of man, turn toward Mount Seir, and prophesy against it. 35:3 Say to it, "This is what the sovereign Lord says:

"Look, I am against you, Mount Seir; I will stretch out my hand against you and turn you into a desolate ruin.

35:4 I will lay waste your cities; and you will become desolate. Then you will know that I am the Lord!

35:5 "You have shown unrelenting hostility and poured the people of Israel onto the blades of a sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of their final punishment. 35:6 Therefore, as surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, I will subject you to bloodshed, and bloodshed will pursue you. Since you did not hate bloodshed, bloodshed will pursue you.

35:7 I will turn Mount Seir into a desolate ruin; I will cut off from it the one who passes through or returns. 35:8 I will fill its mountains with its dead; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines, those killed by the sword will fall. 35:9 I will turn you into a perpetual desolation, and your cities will not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

35:10 "You said, "These two nations, these two lands will be mine, and we will possess them," – although the Lord was there – 35:11 therefore, as surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, I will deal with you according to your anger, and according to your envy, by which you acted spitefully against them. I will reveal myself to them when I judge you. 35:12 Then you will know that I, the Lord, have heard all the insults you spoke against the mountains of Israel, saying, "They are desolate, they have been given to us for food." 35:13 You exalted yourselves against me with your speech and hurled many insults against me – I have heard them all! 35:14 This is what the sovereign Lord says: While the whole earth rejoices, I will turn you into a desolation. 35:15 As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, so will I deal with you – you will be desolate, Mount Seir, and all of Edom – all of it! Then they will know that I am the Lord."

## **PRAYER**

Lord, those who speak and act hatefully toward You and Your children will pay a terrible price when the time of judgment comes. May I have the mercy to pray that those who spew anti-God venom and who abuse power to harm those who love God will turn from their sin before it's eternally too late.

## **SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE**

Ezekiel delivered a prophesy against Edom for their constant victimization of His people, especially when they were already troubled.

## **INTERACT WITH THE TEXT**

### **CONSIDER**

Edom lusted for the lands and possessions of Israel and was anxious to seize them once they lost the blessing and protection of God.

### **DISCUSS**

Why would Edom think that the same God whom they had insulted would allow them to profit from the punishment of Israel?

### **REFLECT**

Edom would receive as they had given, losing what they had because they lusted after that which God had blessed Israel, suffering terribly as they had caused Israel to suffer, hopeless because they had insulted the only One Who could give them hope.

### **SHARE**

When have you observed a constant-critic or greed-obsessed person or organization suffer just as they had desired that others might suffer so they might benefit?

## **FAITH IN ACTION**

### **PRAY**

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place or person which requires the Lord's Word of warning.

### **ACT**

Today I will prayerfully discern and accept the mission of the Lord to bring His Word of warning to a 'back-slidden' Christian. I will ask a fellow believer to pray in-agreement and to be my accountability throughout the process.

Be Specific \_\_\_\_\_

All Bible text is from the NET unless otherwise indicated - <http://bible.org>

Note 1: These Studies often rely upon the guidance of the NET Translators from their associated notes. Careful attention has been given to cite that source where it has been quoted directly or closely paraphrased. Feedback is encouraged where credit has not been sufficiently assigned.

Note 2: When NET text is quoted in commentary and discussion all pronouns referring to God are capitalized, though they are lower-case in the original NET text.

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