

Ezekiel 5-7

Good evening, Church.

We are going to continue our study of the Old Testament. We are currently in the book of Ezekiel in the Major Prophets.

Tonight, we will be in Ezekiel Chapters 5-7.

Before we get into it, I do have some announcements. This Saturday is Seasoned Saints for those of you who are over 50.

They will meet at 4 pm in the Grace Café.

It is a potluck, so please bring a dish to share.

Another event that is coming up that gets full pretty quickly is the marriage dinner.

So, this is one you don't want to procrastinate on this year.

It will be on Valentine's Day, February 14th... and Pastor Don McClure is coming out to share.

I have another announcement that I am pretty happy about.

The company we use to do our Israel Tours reached out to us.

Shanee, the owner of whom some of you know, flew out to meet with Pastor Joe and me.

She said it was time to come back... In recent wars, the enemy has been defeated in ways that have made Israel safer than it has been in a long time.

Also, she said there is new optimism about the Trump presidency.

So, we worked with her to get another tour on the Calendar...

It will be next year, January 19-29...

We were able to change the trip up and will be doing some sites we have not done previously.

So, if you have not been, please pray about joining.

Please save those dates if you have been and are like me and cannot get enough of the Holy Land.

January 19-29, 2026...

So, with that said, let's pray, and we will get into our study...

Now, remember the timeline here...

The Babylonians took Ezekiel captive during the second invasion before the final destruction of the Holy City and its Temple.

Those captives were in Babylon listening to the false prophets, who told them they would soon return to Jerusalem.

They were telling them not to get too comfortable in this foreign land.

They relied on Egypt to come and save them and defeat Babylon.

The false prophets assured the people that all was well, that it was only a matter of time, and that they would be heading home.

Don't settle down; get a hotel room or an Airbnb because it won't be long.

Remember, in our study of Jeremiah, he revealed to them that they would be in captivity for 70 years.

At this point, the letters from Jeremiah have reached Babylon, telling them to settle in, build homes, and plant vineyards because it will be a while.

Ezekiel is there prophesying in captivity and is the only one telling them it will only worsen.

The judgment of God was not yet complete, and the City of Jerusalem they hoped to return to would be destroyed.

Remember, Ezekiel was used to give incredible demonstrative illustrations to picture all of this.

He was more illustrative than the other prophets.

Last week, we saw him lying on his side for long periods and cooking his food over feces.

Ezekiel may have heard God say, “Well, Dung, good and faithful servant.”

Well, let's get into chapter 5 now... Ezekiel will again use an interesting method to get his message across here.

Starting in verse 1...

A Sword Against Jerusalem

5:1 "And you, son of man, take a sharp sword, take it as a barber's razor, and pass it over your head and your beard; then take scales to weigh and divide the hair. 2 You shall burn with fire one-third in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are finished; then you shall take one-third and strike around it with the sword, and one-third you shall scatter in the wind: I will draw out a sword after them.

So, Ezekiel is called to shave his head and beard here with a sharp sword as a barber's razor.

Then, he is to take certain balances of the weight of that fallen hair and separate it out.

And it is all depicting the coming judgment of God.

A third part of the people will die from pestilence and hunger during the terrible final siege of the Babylonians.

Then, when that mighty army finally breaches the city walls, a third of the people will be slain with the sword. The remaining third will be scattered all over the world as slaves and captives to the Babylonians.

Ezekiel's hair, part of which was chopped up with a sword, part of which was burned with fire, and part of which was thrown up in the wind, illustrated what was to come to the nation.

Verse 3...

3 You shall also take a small number of them and bind them in the edge of your garment. 4 Then take some of them again and throw them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire. From there a fire will go out into all the house of Israel.

5 "Thus says the Lord God: 'This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries around her.

Jerusalem was seen as the center of the world at the time.

It lay between all the great empires of the time: the Egyptians, Ethiopians, Assyrians, Persians, and Babylonians.

Its placement between two continents, Asia and Africa, also makes it an important trade route.

Some of you remember this when we were in the Holy Land, the trade routes that went through Israel.

It has always been an essential piece of real estate.

When touring Israel, it is fascinating to see how much history goes through that small country and how many empires have been dug up in her land.

Even today, our News Cycles are dominated by what is happening in this country, roughly the size of New Jersey.

It still can be argued that it is the center of our world.

Here, through Ezekiel, God claims that He has set Jerusalem in the midst of the nations and countries around her.

If you ever wonder why we are so fascinated with Israel, it is by God's design.

Verse 6...

6 She has rebelled against My judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against My statutes more than the countries that are all around her; for they have refused My judgments, and they have not walked in My statutes.'

God had established a judicial system in Israel like nothing this world had ever seen.

It was modeled after the laws and judgments of God, given to Moses on Mt. Sinai.

Ps 19:7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;

They had a perfect judicial system...

God's Laws dealt with issues of man living with one another in society and the preservation of the culture that resulted from His Laws.

God clearly laid out the consequences or judgments that would come for the various transgressions.

Following His Law would establish them as a Great and Powerful nation, and their Land would be blessed.

You could live there safely without fear of being robbed at night or mugged.

You could walk down 7th Street and not worry about encountering trouble.

Because of the Laws, Statutes, and Judgments that God had put in place.

If they were followed, they would reduce crime and create the most wholesome environment.

But, here, God tells them they did not keep His judgments.

The terrible thing about it is that they have become worse than the other nations around them.

Their judicial system became corrupt as bribery and extortion took root.

Judges were bought off or had politically motivated agendas.

Lady Justice took her blindfold off and tipped her scales...

This ruined all that God intended them to be...

The land was, in turn, filled with unrighteousness, perverseness, and crime.

Verse 7 now...

7 Therefore thus says the Lord God: 'Because you have multiplied disobedience more than the nations that are all around you, have not walked in My statutes nor kept My judgments, nor even done according to the judgments of the nations that are all around you' — 8 therefore thus says the Lord God: 'Indeed I, even I, am against you and will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations.'

Again, God is comparing the conduct of the Jewish people with that of the pagan nations around them.

And God said that they had multiplied their disobedience more than them.

The Jewish people had been given a great privilege.

God had chosen them out of all nations and people to give His Law, and sadly, they were living worse than the ignorant Gentiles.

You see, with privilege comes a great responsibility.

God holds those accountable more so who know His Truth...

This should cause us to check our hearts, as this is a warning to us, who are rich in God's Word and Truth.

Today, the Christian Church is the steward of Truth...

Paul said,... **1 Cor. 4:1-2 Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.**

We need to be faithful...

Look now at verse 9...

9 And I will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations. 10 Therefore fathers shall eat their sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments among you, and all of you who remain I will scatter to all the winds.

The sins of God's people were such high heavenly crimes that God acted in a way that He claims He may never act again.

He foretells the terrible realities of siege warfare and that food will be so scarce that appalling acts of cannibalism will take place.

These were terrible judgments that God reserved for extreme disobedience.

And after all that He had done for the Jewish people, for them to go so heartily into idolatry, it called for the highest punishment from God.

In the Last Days, I imagine, this will be God's attitude to those who have rejected His Grace and offer of Salvation to humanity.

He is now waiting for the world to become ripe for the ultimate judgment of humanity.

The Bible calls that time “The Great Tribulation.”

Jesus gave these details of that time...

Matt 24:21-22 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

Serious sins call for the highest punishment.

Look at today's unashamed outlook on sin and unbridled abominations; we know we cannot get away with it for much longer.

Look now at verse 11...

11 'Therefore, as I live,' says the Lord God, 'surely, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will also diminish you; My eye will not spare, nor will I have any pity.'

Here, God is referring to what the Jews were doing in the Temple courts.

When King Manasseh and Jehoiakim ruled, they allowed idols to be placed in the Holy of Holies, which was supposed to be the sacred resting place of Yahweh's Glory.

This was a terrible tragedy that in the heart of the Temple, where God's presence dwelt, they were defiling it with false gods.

Today, you and I, Christians, are the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

Our bodies are reserved for God... and we can defile ourselves by making an idol out of something in our lives.

Paul warned in **1 Cor. 6:19-20** Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Look now at verse 12...

12 One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.

13 'Thus shall My anger be spent, and I will cause My fury to rest upon them, and I will be avenged; and they shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it in My zeal, when I have spent My fury upon them. 14 Moreover I will make you a waste and a reproach among the nations that are all around you, in the sight of all who pass by.

God is going to use the Jewish nation as an object lesson, a sermon for the surrounding nations of what happens when you refuse to live up to the high calling and privilege that you have been given.

Verse 15...

15 'So it shall be a reproach, a taunt, a lesson, and an astonishment to the nations that are all around you,

when I execute judgments among you in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes. I, the Lord, have spoken. 16 When I send against them the terrible arrows of famine which shall be for destruction, which I will send to destroy you, I will increase the famine upon you and cut off your supply of bread. 17 So I will send against you famine and wild beasts, and they will bereave you. Pestilence and blood shall pass through you, and I will bring the sword against you. I, the Lord, have spoken."

God says, "I have spoken it" over sixty times in the Book of Ezekiel.

He says, "When you see these things happen, you will know without any doubt that I spoke these things."

Not only the Jews will know, but the nations will know...

We benefit from history and know that what God spoke here happened.

And we know that when God says something will happen, it will.

And here He is warning them that arrows of famine will come...

When people begin to starve, their bodies are so malnourished that they are not able to fight off disease and sickness.

And when pestilence breaks out, it is simply terrible... God tells them beforehand all the terrible things that will come upon them.

Now, as we come to chapters 6 and 7, it is essential to note that these chapters explain the dramatizations of chapters 4 and 5.

Verse 1 now...

Judgment on Idolatrous Israel

6:1 Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying: 2 "Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them, 3 and say, 'O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God to the mountains, to the hills, to the ravines, and to the valleys: "Indeed I, even I, will

bring a sword against you, and I will destroy your high places.

The people were not listening to God, so He told Ezekiel to speak to the mountains, hills, valleys, ravines, or, more clearly, the land of Israel.

He wants to know if anyone is home at this point...

Verse 4...

4 Then your altars shall be desolate, your incense altars shall be broken, and I will cast down your slain men before your idols. 5 And I will lay the corpses of the children of Israel before their idols, and I will scatter your bones all around your altars.

In antiquity, bones scattered around an altar desecrated the altar of the god it was made to.

Coming in contact with dead objects defiled a person or thing.

Here, we see their dead bodies will defile their altars.

Verse 6...

6 In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate, so that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, your idols may be broken and made to cease, your incense altars may be cut down, and your works may be abolished. 7 The slain shall fall in your midst, and you shall know I am the Lord.

Once again, God is saying that when He does these things, they will have no doubts that it was Him.

They burned incense, offered prayers, and built altars to the pagan gods..., including the goddess Ashtoreth.

The prophets of God were warning the Jews that the Ashtoreth worship was detestable...

Ashtoreth was a fertility goddess represented by pornographic idols that were designed to arouse and stimulate a person sexually.

The goddess was worshipped through sexual rites.

It was the worship of sex and allowing lust to become the prominent issue in a person's life.

Now, of course, we have become a little more sophisticated.

We don't so much make little graven idols.

But there are pictures and videos just a click away.

This is still the worship of Ashtoreth.

The worship of sex.

There was also the worship of Molech, which was the worship of pleasure.

Those who sought out pleasure, whatever form.

They also worshipped power and position.

They wanted to rule, influence, and control people... which was the worship of Molech.

I think these types of worship still abound in our society today.

Let's not deceive ourselves into thinking that idolatry was merely a problem in ancient times - a temptation for primitive cultures - that it's no concern to us in modern times...

Social critic Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, "Men are idolaters, and want something to look at, and kiss, and hug, and throw themselves down before; they always did, they always will; and if you don't make it out of wood, you must make it out of words."

Idols are not just images made of wood or metal; they can be items, identities, ideas, or even ideals.

An idol might sit in your driveway, or it could be a philosophy that captures the hearts of thousands.¹

Idols are everywhere...

We are commanded in **1 Cor. 10:14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.**

John ended his epistle by saying...

1 John 5:21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

God tells the Jews that because they had these false idols and altars, He was going to put the false worship to an end.

He will not share His Glory with another.

¹ <https://www.sandyadams.org/sermon/ezekiel-4-7/>

They will indeed be brought down.

He promises that the flame will fall in the midst of them, and they will know He is the Lord.

Verse 8...

8 "Yet I will leave a remnant, so that you may have some who escape the sword among the nations when you are scattered through the countries.

God will always keep a remnant.

He will not judge all the Jews.

He will leave a faithful remnant in every country loyal to Him.

We know that in Babylon, men like Ezekiel, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego existed.

God has even kept a remnant today, those who genuinely look upon Him and believe and Trust in His Son.

The Bible tells us that even during the Great Tribulation, there will be a remnant of 144,000 Jews who will have a seal and be protected.

They will be evangelists during that time.

God will always have a remnant.

Verse 9 now...

9 Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations where they are carried captive because I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me, and by their eyes which play the harlot after their idols; they will loathe themselves for the evils which they committed in all their abominations. 10 And they shall know that I am the Lord; I have not said in vain that I would bring this calamity upon them."

You can see in these verses that God did not get joy from this!

He says, "I was crushed by their adulterous heart."

This was painful for Him as His heart was broken.

Understand, as God is issuing these judgments on the Jews, He is not some cold, distant, uncaring Judge.

God is acting out of love here... and we see He is hurt like a loyal and adoring husband who His selfish wife has betrayed.

He pleaded with her to return and be loyal to Him, but she remained with her lovers, continuing this love affair publicly, not caring about the shame she had brought upon her Husband.

A person can feel no deeper wound than a true love's betrayal.

God's Love was publically prostituting herself... as the Jews constantly turned to other gods.

Reread it: God says, "I was crushed by their adulterous heart."

That is a hard one to understand that our God was crushed.

It seems God's Love for His people is a serious thing.

As Christians today, we should realize that when we flirt with the world or look to idols, we can crush God.

As a Child of God, you can delight Him or cause Him heartache.

Ezekiel says here that God's heart was crushed by the Jews committing adultery and prostituting themselves to other gods.

Back in verse 4 and verse 6, God talked about breaking their idols.

That is the Hebrew word translated as "crushed" here.

God is going to do to their lovers what His idol-worshipping people have done to His own heart.

Verse 11 now...

11 'Thus says the Lord God: "Pound your fists and stamp your feet, and say, 'Alas, for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! For they shall fall by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. 12 He who is far off shall die by the pestilence, he who is near shall fall by the sword, and he who remains and is besieged shall die by the famine. Thus will I spend My fury upon them? 13 Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when their slain are among their idols all around

their altars, on every high hill, on all the mountaintops, under every green tree, and under every thick oak, wherever they offered sweet incense to all their idols. 14 So I will stretch out My hand against them and make the land desolate, yes, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblah, in all their dwelling places. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.'""

Here is another demonstrative stunt for Ezekiel to perform.

He is to throw a tantrum like my 3-year-old does.

Pound his fist, stomp his feet...

They have this saying, "Terrible Twos," but it is misleading because it should be "Terrible Threes."

Almost all my kids, no, all my kids, went from our little angels to terrors on their third birthday.

Pastor Joe and his wife Shannon were on vacation with us over Christmas break, and Uriah's tantrums made our holiday memorable.

Jess was overwhelmed...

But the kid is so cute... Joe and Shannon did not believe that he was being so bad.

So they had to run to the store to get a few things, and Jess took the car seat out of her car and put it in theirs, and she had them take him with them.

Shannon said they got about 15 minutes into the drive and started listening to Danny Go, this annoying kids' music...

But they did not get the right song... and the tantrum began...

When they returned, they could not get that car seat out of their car fast enough.

But it is interesting because as dramatic as their third birthday is, they start to level out on their fourth birthday. They can use their words and communicate better...

But at three, language is limited, so they must resort to pounding their fists and stomping their feet!

Ezekiel here is called to act like a toddler in his condemnation of Israel's idolatry and as he predicts their disaster.

When the Jews see all these things, the carcasses of the Jews on the high places, the altars of the idols, then they will know God is God.

They shall know that He is the Lord.

As we move into Chapter 7, we will go quickly through it, as it is simply a poem of punishment.

Verse 1 now...

Judgment on Israel Is Near

7:1 Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying,
2 "And you, son of man, thus says the Lord God to the land of Israel: 'An end! The end has come upon the four corners of the land.

This contrasts with what the false prophets were saying at the time.

They were predicting deliverance for the Jews.

Ezekiel is sent to tell them, "Nope, the end has come."

It is the end of the road for the Land and for the Jews.

Verse 3...

3 Now the end has come upon you, And I will send My anger against you; I will judge you according to your ways, And I will repay you for all your abominations. 4 My eye will not spare you, Nor will I have pity; But I will repay your ways, And your abominations will be in your midst; Then you shall know that I am the Lord!

5 "Thus says the Lord God:

'A disaster, a singular disaster; Behold, it has come! 6 An end has come, The end has come; It has dawned for you; Behold, it has come! 7 Doom has come to you, you who dwell in the land; The time has come, A day of trouble is near, And not of rejoicing in the mountains.

8 Now upon you I will soon pour out My fury, And spend My anger upon you; I will judge you according to your ways, And I will repay you for all your abominations.

9 'My eye will not spare, Nor will I have pity; I will repay you according to your ways, And your

abominations will be in your midst. Then you shall know that I am the Lord who strikes.

The Lord who strikes, Jehovah-Naka, is such a striking name.

In God's Word, we are told **Prov. 13:24**

**He who spares his rod hates his son,
But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.**

Our God is a God of the rod, who disciplines when needed.

A person cannot blaspheme God over and over, disregard His holiness, take His grace for granted, and expect God to get over it.

There is a point when God will strike back.

He is just, and to maintain His justice, God strikes back when a sinner strikes God.

And really, this is what makes God's Grace so Great.

When He decided to address sin once and for all, to atone for the sinner, instead of Him striking the sinner directly, God struck His only Son.

Isa 53:4-6 Surely He has borne our griefs

And carried our sorrows;

Yet we esteemed Him stricken,

Smitten by God, and afflicted.

5 But He was wounded for our transgressions,

He was bruised for our iniquities;

The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,

And by His stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray;

We have turned, every one, to his own way;

And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

The God who strikes became the God who was struck.

As Jesus went to the Cross, the Jews struck Him; when

He was on the Cross, the Romans struck Him...

Isaiah says we struck Him.

And the stripes we inflicted upon Him were the very means to our healing.

This is what makes God's Grace so amazing.

The sacrifice He demanded, He provided Himself.

But you must receive His Gift of Grace... or accept the penalty for your sins... you will stand on your behalf.

And I don't know about you; that thought terrifies me.

I am thankful for my Savior, Jesus Christ... who was struck for me...

The poetry continues now in verse 10...

10 'Behold, the day! Behold, it has come! Doom has gone out; The rod has blossomed, Pride has budded.

11 Violence has risen up into a rod of wickedness; None of them shall remain, None of their multitude, None of them; Nor shall there be wailing for them. 12 The time has come, The day draws near.

'Let not the buyer rejoice, Nor the seller mourn, For wrath is on their whole multitude. 13 For the seller shall not return to what has been sold, Though he may still be alive; For the vision concerns the whole multitude, And it shall not turn back; No one will strengthen himself Who lives in iniquity.

In so many words, the trade would stop in Jerusalem, and Babylon would control the city's commerce.

Verse 14...

14 'They have blown the trumpet and made everyone ready, But no one goes to battle; For My wrath is on all their multitude.

The Jewish military will utterly fail.

No one will go out to fight when they blow the battle horn.

The Jewish army will be deserters and cowards.

Verse 15...

15 The sword is outside, And the pestilence and famine within. Whoever is in the field Will die by the sword; And whoever is in the city, Famine and pestilence will devour him.

16 'Those who survive will escape and be on the mountains Like doves of the valleys, All of them mourning, Each for his iniquity. 17 Every hand will be feeble, And every knee will be as weak as water. 18

They will also be girded with sackcloth; Horror will cover them; Shame will be on every face, Baldness on all their heads.

19 'They will throw their silver into the streets, And their gold will be like refuse; Their silver and their gold will not be able to deliver them In the day of the wrath of the Lord; They will not satisfy their souls, Nor fill their stomachs, Because it became their stumbling block of iniquity.

In the end, their wealth will be useless.

Their silver and gold will have no purchasing power.

They won't be able to buy food or peace.

Verse 20...

20 'As for the beauty of his ornaments, He set it in majesty; But they made from it The images of their abominations — Their detestable things; Therefore I have made it Like refuse to them. 21 I will give it as plunder Into the hands of strangers, And to the wicked of the earth as spoil; And they shall defile it. 22 I will

turn My face from them, And they will defile My secret place; For robbers shall enter it and defile it.

Ezekiel is talking of the Temple.

The beautiful jewel in the crown of Jerusalem will be stripped of all her glory and riches.

She will be robbed and looted, and the holy places defiled.

Eventually, the Babylonians would burn it all to the ground.

Ezekiel is here called again to illustrate the message by making a chain to depict the bondage coming in their near future.

Verse 23...

23 'Make a chain, For the land is filled with crimes of blood, And the city is full of violence. 24 Therefore I will bring the worst of the Gentiles, And they will possess their houses; I will cause the pomp of the strong to cease, And their holy places shall be defiled. 25 Destruction comes; They will seek peace, but there shall be none. 26 Disaster will come upon disaster, And

rumor will be upon rumor. Then they will seek a vision from a prophet; But the law will perish from the priest, And counsel from the elders.

They would be looking to the false prophets who filled their hearts with hope.

They will want more assurances, but at this point, those false messengers will all be gone.

Verse 27...

27 'The king will mourn, The prince will be clothed with desolation, And the hands of the common people will tremble. I will do to them according to their way, And according to what they deserve I will judge them; Then they shall know that I am the Lord!'"

Those are pretty gnarly words, “according to what they deserve, I will judge them.”

I am so thankful that God does not give me what I deserve.

That He has offered me mercy...

We deserve death; we deserve the punishment of hell...

But He extends Mercy, not justice.

For all eternity, we will praise our Savior for showing us Mercy...

Not only that, but He gave us a Gift that we did not deserve, Grace.

If you have not opened that Free Gift of Salvation, do so tonight.

Jesus paid the way...

As we studied on Sunday, Jesus Himself claimed...

John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Come to Jesus tonight...

If you are saved and have placed your faith in Jesus, who was struck for your sins, then worship Him with a heart of gratitude with this last song.

Let's pray...