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## Ezekiel 7.

(2014)

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But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

***Teach it, don't demand it.***

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## Ezekiel 7.

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### Topics.

- I will Judge and punish you according to your ways.
- Behold, the day comes!
- The sword is without, pestilence and famine is within.
- God and silver was the cause of Judah's iniquity.
- The LORD will make the temple an unclean thing.
- Israel is full of violence and bloody crimes.

**Introduction to the Book of Ezekiel:** Ezekiel, a prophet and priest, was exiled to Babylon in 597 B.C. His ministry extended over at least twenty-three years. The book opens with his first dramatic vision of the "likeness" of the LORD". Ezekiel was keenly aware of God's presence and power in human affairs. He addressed both the exiles and the people left in Judah with messages of warning and judgment, predicting the fall of Jerusalem.

After its fall (586), Ezekiel prophesied of hope and reassurance for the people of Judah, who had then lost the focus of God's covenant and the temple in Jerusalem. His vision of the valley of dry bones (ch. 37) is a classic picture of God's ability to breathe new life into those who are spiritually dead. Ezekiel is prophesying about the Jews that did not go into captivity to Babylon, but remained against the word of the LORD in Jerusalem.

**NOTE:** Ezekiel's message is primarily directed to the people in the land of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (the two tribes), but often it is difficult to separate the message from Judah and Israel (the ten tribes) because much of what the LORD says can be applied to both Judah and Israel because the two are so intertwined and both nations were guilty of the same gross sins.

**FOR INFORMATION:** concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

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### I will Judge and punish you according to your Ways.

Ezekiel 7:1-4 ----- <sup>1</sup>The word of the LORD came to me (Ezekiel): <sup>2</sup>"And you, O 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. <sup>3</sup>Now the end is upon you, and I will send my anger upon you; *I will judge you according to your ways*, and I will punish you for all your abominations. <sup>4</sup>And my eye will not spare you, nor will I have pity, but *I will punish you for your ways*, while your abominations are in your midst. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

**Four times in this chapter the LORD says,** "I will judge and punish you according to your ways." The people of Israel themselves by their lifestyle determine how God is going to judge and punish them, if they do what is right they will be rewarded, but if they do what is wrong they will be judged accordingly, it is their choice, their actions, and their lifestyle that determines whether they are judged or blessed.

The LORD does not want to inflict suffering on His people, but He is not only a God of love, but a God of justice, He cannot excuse His people from gross wickedness simply because they are His people. The LORD sent faithful and dedicated prophets to warn Israel of impending doom, but they would not listen and continued in their gross and extreme wickedness.

Following is a list of gross wickedness and sins that permeated the land of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: -

- Gross idolatry and Baal altars.
- Asherim worship (a goddess of love and fertility) her worship was indecent and sexual in an offensive way.
- Acknowledgement of the deity of Moloch and Israel's children were being sacrificed to him in the Hinnom Valley.
- Altars for worshipping the sun, moon, stars and the host of heaven were set up in the temple court for planetary worship.
- Worship of Idols at altars that had been built under shady trees on their hills.
- Innocent people were killed and cheated out of justice.
- People were oppressed for the selfish gain of others.
- The less fortunate and poor were deserted and offered no help.

Eventually mankind's wickedness reaches a depth of cruelty, pride and evil that God is forced to intervene and judge, nevertheless the following verses show that He takes no pleasure or delight in bringing suffering and sorrow to the human race.

- *Have I (the LORD) any pleasure in the death of the wicked*, declares the Lord GOD, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live? (Ezek. 18:23).
- I (the LORD) have *no pleasure in the death of anyone*, declares the Lord GOD; so turn, and live (Ezek. 18:32).
- Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, *I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked*, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel? (Ezek. 33:11).

#### **I will Judge and punish you according to your Ways continued:-**

Ezekiel 7:5-9 ----- <sup>5</sup>"Thus says the Lord GOD: Disaster after disaster! Behold, it comes. <sup>6</sup>An end has come; the end has come; it has awakened against you. Behold, it comes. <sup>7</sup>Your doom has come to you, O inhabitant of the land. The time has come; the day is near, a day of tumult, and not of joyful shouting on the mountains. <sup>8</sup>Now I will soon pour out my wrath upon you, and spend my anger against you, and *judge you according to your ways*, and I will punish you for all your abominations. <sup>9</sup>And my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity. *I will punish you according to your ways*, while your abominations are in your midst. Then you will know that I am the LORD, who strikes.

The LORD once again repeats, "I will punish you according to your ways" and tells those who remained in the city of Jerusalem against the word of the LORD that a day is coming upon them, a day of: -

- The LORD showing no pity.
- Disaster after disaster!
- The LORD'S judgment, anger, wrath and punishment.
- Doom and, tumult and emotional upheaval.
- Mourning and sorrow.

This day is not a twenty-four hour period, throughout the Bible a word day can mean, one day, a period of time, or a collective series of events. In this context the day encompasses Babylon's armies surrounding the walls of Jerusalem for nearly two years, the starvation and slaughtering of its inhabitants, the cities destruction,

the pillaging of God's temple and the remaining people being taken captive to Babylon for seventy years. The LORD says after these horrific events take place the people of Judah will know that it was the LORD their God that brought all their suffering upon them. This is because God sent both Ezekiel and Jeremiah to warn Judah if they did not turn from their gross wickedness and rebellion all these events would come upon them. Instead of listening to Ezekiel (and Jeremiah who also warned them) they set their hearts diamond hard against the word of the LORD and His very clear warning and continued in their corruption and rebellion and in this way brought God's judgment upon themselves.

### **Behold, the Day Comes!**

Ezekiel 7:10-13 ----- <sup>10</sup>"Behold, the day! Behold, it comes! Your doom has come; the rod has blossomed; pride has budded. <sup>11</sup>Violence has grown up into a rod of wickedness. None of them shall remain, nor their abundance, nor their wealth; neither shall there be preeminence among them. <sup>12</sup>The time has come; the day has arrived. Let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn, for wrath is upon all their multitude. <sup>13</sup>For the seller shall not return to what he has sold, while they live. For *the vision concerns all their multitude*; it shall not turn back; and because of his iniquity, none can maintain his life.

The city of Jerusalem is full of pride, wickedness and violence. Its leaders and those in authority are exalting each other and giving themselves first place in everything.

**NOTICE:** this is a vision everything that Ezekiel sees in this vision applies to all Israel (v13).

### **The Sword is without, Pestilence and Famine is Within.**

Ezekiel 7:14-18 ----- <sup>14</sup>"They have blown the trumpet and made everything ready, but none goes to battle, for my wrath is upon all their multitude. <sup>15</sup>The sword is without; pestilence and famine are within. He who is in the field dies by the sword, and him who is in the city famine and pestilence devour. <sup>16</sup>And if any survivors escape, they will be on the mountains, like doves of the valleys, all of them moaning, each one over his iniquity. <sup>17</sup>All hands are feeble, and all knees turn to water. <sup>18</sup>They put on sackcloth, and horror covers them. Shame is on all faces, and baldness on all their heads.

**The sword is without:** (v15) refers to Babylon's mighty and fierce armies outside the walls of the city of Jerusalem.

**Pestilence and famine are within:** (v15) refers to the pestilence and famine within the walls of Jerusalem. Those who escape the pestilence, the famine and the armies of Babylon will be and horror-struck and mourn over their own iniquity in shame. This is because they will clearly see that Ezekiel was truly sent of God and truly spoke the word of God, but they did not listen and will know that this is why all this disaster, sorrow and suffering came upon them.

### **God and Silver was the cause of Judah's Iniquity.**

Ezekiel 7:19-22 ----- <sup>19</sup>They cast their silver into the streets, and their gold is like an unclean thing. Their silver and gold are not able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD. They cannot satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs with it. For it was the stumbling block of their iniquity. <sup>20</sup>His beautiful ornament they used for pride, and they made their abominable images and their detestable things of it. Therefore I make it an unclean thing to them. <sup>21</sup>And I will give it into the hands of foreigners for prey, and to the wicked of the earth for spoil, and they shall profane it. <sup>22</sup>I will turn my face from them, and they shall profane my treasured place. Robbers shall enter and profane it.

**His beautiful ornament:** (v20) refers to the Ark of the Covenant and the temple.

Silver and gold was the cause of Israel's iniquity (v19) because the Ark of the Covenant was covered in Gold and the temple of God was full of silver and gold making both the ark and the temple majestic structures of beauty, but they became

a thing of pride to Israel, adding to their sin of pride they used gold and silver to make their idols and images with and in this way silver and gold was the cause of Israel's iniquity. The inside of the temple and all its sacred furniture was built as a most glorious temple because it was to reflect the heavenly beauty and glory of God on earth, but it was never to become a thing of pride or a thing which gave those who served in it a feeling of being superior to others outside of its walls, but this is what has happened.

The priests who had the honoured position of serving God in the temple considered themselves superior before God to those they ministered to. This is an abomination before God since all those who are called to ministry are called to serve and encourage others into God's Kingdom and not to puff themselves up in pride, because of their esteemed position.

### **The LORD will make the Temple an Unclean Thing.**

The LORD says He will make His treasured place, the temple of God and unclean thing to Israel by giving it into the hands of foreigners. During these ancient years the Jews viewed themselves as the holy race with God and all other nations as unclean races without God.

Only the priests were to go into the Holy Place of the temple and only the high priest was to go into the Most Holy Place of the temple, but when the armies of Babylon entered the city of Jerusalem they not only entered the Holy Place and Most Holy place of the temple they also pillaged the sacred and holy items and took them back to Babylon and in this way the LORD'S word was fulfilled the temple was robbed and polluted.

### **Israel is full of Violence and Bloody Crimes.**

Ezekiel 7:23-27 ----- <sup>23</sup>"Forge a chain! For the land is full of bloody crimes and the city is full of violence. <sup>24</sup>I will bring the worst of the nations to take possession of their houses. I will put an end to the pride of the strong, and their holy places shall be profaned. <sup>25</sup>When anguish comes, they will seek peace, but there shall be none. <sup>26</sup>Disaster comes upon disaster; rumor follows rumor. They seek a vision from the prophet, while the law perishes from the priest and counsel from the elders. <sup>27</sup>The king mourns, the prince is wrapped in despair, and the hands of the people of the land are paralyzed by terror. *According to their way I will do to them, and according to their judgments I will judge them, and they shall know that I am the LORD.*"

The priests are grossly corrupt and the elders give foolish counsel that leads the people of Israel into idolatry and the worship of pagan gods. They are so spiritually blinded that even though they are living of lifestyle before God that is full of corruption and wickedness they are still seeking a positive vision of blessing from God's prophet Ezekiel, but until they turn from their wickedness and rebellion Ezekiel can only give a message of warning and doom which they do not want to hear.

**All this disaster came through Babylon:** God called Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon His servant (Jer. 25:8-9) and used him and his armies to bring about all that Ezekiel prophesied would come upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem if they did not repent and turn from their rebellion and wickedness.

**NOTICE:** the LORD repeats what He said four times in the previous chapter, "according to their ways I will do to them," meaning according to their actions, behaviour and lifestyle God will judge them. It is in the people's own power to determine whether they will be face doom or be blessed.

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End.