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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Ezekiel 16.

(2014)

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But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

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Ezekiel 16.

Topics.

- The first time the LORD passed over Jerusalem (the birth of Jerusalem).
- The second time the LORD passed over Jerusalem.
- Jerusalem trusted in riches and wealth.
- Judah slaughtered God's children and offered them by fire.
- Woe, woe to Jerusalem declares the Lord God.
- Judah was worse than prostitutes because they paid their lovers.
- Judah committed lewdness in addition to abominations.
- Jerusalem was more corrupt than the Hittite, Amorite, Samaria and Sodom.
- God will restore Sodom, Samaria and Jerusalem.
- The commonwealth of Israel.
- The glory of the spiritual temple God is building in Christ.

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.

Jerusalem is the focus of this chapter, but buildings cannot sin, repent or obey, therefore the title Jerusalem embraces the inhabitants of the city so the name Jerusalem becomes a title for the people dwelling in Jerusalem and by extension the entire nation of Israel (see the title: Like Mother, like Daughter (Verses 44-46).

Son of Man, make Known to Jerusalem Her Abominations.

Ezekiel 16:1-3 ----- ¹Again the word of the LORD came to me: ²"Son of man, *make known to Jerusalem* her abominations, ³and say, Thus says the Lord GOD *to Jerusalem*: Your origin and your birth are of the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.

In these verses the city of Jerusalem is personified as being born and having a mother and father.

Jerusalem was born: in the land of the Canaan (Ezek. 16:3).

Jerusalem father: was an Amorite.

Jerusalem mother: was a Hittite.

Canaan: was one of the old names for Palestine which was the land of the Canaanites that was dispossessed by the Israelites.

Amorites: were the tribe of people who descended from Canaan the son of Ham (they were probably east Semites).

Hittites: sprang from Ham through Canaan's second son Heth; they became widely diffused throughout the land of Canaan (Palestine) and worshipped the goddess of fertility and were morally corrupt (Ezek. 16:44-45).

Jerusalem's Father was an Amorite and your Mother a Hittite.

Prior to Jerusalem becoming known as the "City of God," it was an unnoticed town (occupied by the Jebusites) that sat on a hill in the land of Canaan, the land of the Amorites and the Hittites who were both descendants of Ham (the youngest son of Noah). It is in this sense that the Amorites and Hittites were Jerusalem's original parents.

- He (the LORD) found him (Jerusalem) in a desert land (Canaan), and in the howling waste of the wilderness; he (the LORD) encircled him, he cared for him, he kept him as the apple of his eye (Deut. 32:10).

Ezekiel's statement that Jerusalem's father was an Amorite and her mother a Hittite was a rebuke to the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem because they had been so influenced by the Amorites and Hittites (descendants of Ham) that they had forsaken God and His ways and embraced the religious practises and gods of Ham's descendants the Amorites and Hittites (Ezek. 16:3, 45).

The First Time the LORD Passed over Jerusalem (the Birth of Jerusalem).

Ezekiel 16:4-6 ----- ⁴And as for your birth (Jerusalem) (v2), on the day you were born your cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you, nor rubbed with salt, nor wrapped in swaddling cloths. ⁵No eye pitied you, to do any of these things to you out of compassion for you, but you were cast out on the open field, for you were abhorred, on the day that you were born. ⁶"And when I (the LORD) passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood, I said to you in your blood, 'Live!' I said to you in your blood, 'Live!'"

Jerusalem is pictured as a city no-one cared much about, but over which the LORD took pity and purposes to make it a glorious city.

- He (the LORD) found him (Jerusalem) in a desert land (Canaan), and in the howling waste of the wilderness; he (the LORD) encircled him, he cared for him, he kept him as the apple of his eye (Deut. 32:10).

Jerusalem is Personified as a Woman.

Ezekiel 16:7 ----- ⁷I made you (Jerusalem) flourish like a plant of the field. And *you grew up* and became tall and arrived at full adornment. Your breasts were formed, and your hair had grown; yet you were naked and bare.

Naked and bare: in this context means there was no temple.

Jerusalem's grew up: this was through the time of King David. David captured the city of Jerusalem, brought the Ark of the Covenant into it and by David's actions it became called the city of David.

The Second Time the LORD Passed Over Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 16:8-14 ----- ⁸When I passed by you (Jerusalem) again and saw you, behold, you were at the age for love, and I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness; I made my vow to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord GOD, and you became mine. ⁹Then I bathed you (Jerusalem) with water and washed off your blood from you and anointed you with oil. ¹⁰I clothed you also with embroidered cloth and shod you with fine leather. I wrapped you in fine linen and covered you with silk. ¹¹And I adorned you with ornaments and put bracelets on your wrists and a chain on your neck. ¹²And I put a ring on your nose and earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. ¹³Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing was of fine linen and silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour and honey and oil. You (Jerusalem) grew exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty. ¹⁴And your renown went forth among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through the splendor that I had bestowed on you, declares the Lord GOD.

Jerusalem arrived at an age for love: means an age of intimacy with God and would apply to the completion of the Temple of God. The following verses show that the glory of God came to Jerusalem when the Temple of God was completed.

The Ark of the Covenant is brought into the Temple of God.

- Then (when the House of the LORD was finished) Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the people of Israel, in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion (2 Chron. 5:2).

The LORD'S Glory fills the Temple of God.

- It was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the LORD), and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the LORD, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever," the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, ¹⁴so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God (2 Chron. 5:13-14).
- As soon as Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. ²And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD'S house (2 Chron. 7:1-2).

God has put His Name on the Temple of the LORD.

- Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. ¹⁶For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that my name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time (2 Chron. 7:15-16).

The words, "The LORD entered into a covenant with Jerusalem and she became His city," also apply to the completion of the temple.

Contained in the LORD'S Covenant with Israel was the allowance for repentance. It stated, "If the LORD'S people humble themselves, seek him in prayer and turn from their wicked ways God will hear their prayer forgive their sin and prosper their land and the throne of Jerusalem will always have a king of Israel on it, but if the LORD'S people turn from the LORD and forsake His statutes and serve other gods to worship them, then God will cast the people out of His sight and bring Jerusalem and everything the people do to ruin" (2 Chron. 7:13-22).

Jerusalem Trusted in Riches and Wealth.

Ezekiel 16:15-19 ----- ¹⁵But you (Jerusalem) trusted in your beauty and played the whore because of your renown and lavished your whorings on any passerby; your beauty became his. ¹⁶You took some of your garments and made for yourself colorful shrines, and on them played the whore. The

like has never been, nor ever shall be. ¹⁷You also took your beautiful jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself images of men, and with them played the whore. ¹⁸And you took your embroidered garments to cover them, and set my oil and my incense before them. ¹⁹Also my bread that I gave you— I fed you with fine flour and oil and honey—you set before them for a pleasing aroma; and so it was, declares the Lord GOD.

With God's blessing and favour on Jerusalem it became a beautiful and famous city, but its inhabitants corrupted it.

Whoring: is an offensive term ascribe to the characteristic and behaviour of prostitutes and prostitution.

The words, "You lavished your whorings on any visitors," has the following two applications: -

1. They literally and lustfully indulged in sexual affairs with the visitors.
2. They bought idols, pagan gods, and their images into the city of Jerusalem and the Temple of God.

It is the latter one of these that is in focus, because it is the LORD'S people who are prostituting themselves against God. They were not only using the very same scared items that God had ordained for His temple to worship other gods with, but had also placed pagan idols in the temple of God. This is why the LORD uses such strong language against them.

Judah Slaughtered God's Children and Offered them Up by Fire.

Ezekiel 16:20-22 ----- ²⁰And (the inhabitants of Jerusalem) you took your sons and your daughters, whom you had borne to me, and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. Were your (Jerusalem) whorings so small a matter ²¹that you slaughtered my children and delivered them up as an offering by fire to them? ²²And in all your abominations and your whorings you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, wallowing in your blood.

These verses shine a spotlight on how extremely wicked Israel had become and clearly show why God's heart would have been crushed and why He had to bring judgment and punishment upon His own people. You slaughtered my children refers to Molech. The statue of Molech stood in the valley of (the son of) Hinnom (the Hebrew word for Gehenna) which was a valley of Jerusalem. Molech was so tall that he appeared as if he were staring down from a throne of brass. Fire in the pit beneath the hollow statute would blaze with a loud roar, tongues of flame would reach up and lick around the edges of Molech's open mouth and a column of smoke would billow high into the air and be seen from some distance.

The arms of Molech reached upward and out as if waiting to be filled they formed a steep incline that ended in Molech's open mouth. Priests would bring a child to be sacrificed to Molech and chant, Molech, Molech, Molech and the frenzied crowd would also chant Molech, Molech, Molech to the throbbing beat of drums. While the priests and the crowd chanted to the pounding rhythm of drums, the chief priest faced Molech with his arms raised, pleading with the god in a frenzied cry, when the chief priest finished his prayer, he would lower his arms and lift the child sacrifice in the air.

The chief priest would then toss the child into the monsters waiting arms the child would roll down the hot and smoothly polished arms and into Molech's open mouth and the roaring fire and flames would devour the sacrificial child. In the New Testament Gehenna the Valley of Hinnon where the statute of Molech stood became a very appropriate symbol for the horror and total destruction of the human body, soul and spirit. How God must have wept as His heart was torn in grief as He looked down on His people doing such cruel and horrific things to the LORD'S children, is it any wonder that He was angry and forced to judge and punish the nation?

When you were naked, wallowing in your blood (v22) refers to Israel's: -

- Bondage in Egypt.
- Their wilderness wanderings.
- Their times of hardship and troubles.
- Being without a permanent place to build their homes.
- Not having such a glorious city they could call their own.

The people of Israel forgot God's blessings and went after other gods and the things the flesh craves such as fame, wealth, material possessions, power and control.

The lesson for us today: it is very easy to forget that before knowing God we were without His love, without hope, without any joy for the future, and certainly without eternal life so instead of seeking more of God, our natural human nature (or the devil within) entices to seek after other religions that seem to offer something new.

NOTE.

Since there are corrupt churches in the world it maybe that it is the LORD drawing us to seek something new, the key to knowing whether it is self or ego (the devil within) or the leading of God's Spirit is to examine within our own hearts if the new experience is taking us closer to the love of Jesus and the grace of God or further into the things of this world, sadly in Israel's case the new things they were seeking was leading them a million miles away from the LORD their God.

Woe, Woe to Jerusalem Declares the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel 16:23-26 ----- ²³And after all your wickedness (woe, woe to you! declares the Lord GOD), ²⁴you built yourself a vaulted chamber and made yourself a lofty place in every square. ²⁵At the head of every street you (Jerusalem) built your lofty place and made your beauty an abomination, offering yourself to any passerby and multiplying your whoring. ²⁶You also played the whore with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, multiplying your whoring, to provoke me to anger.

Poor Jerusalem, through the language of personification she is spoken of as being the head of her inhabitants and being rebuked for the wicked behaviour of the people of God that live within her walls. Added to all the above wickedness the inhabitants of Jerusalem have built idols and images to other gods in every public area and at the head of every street.

The lesson for today: never be surprise at how far God's people or God's church can fall away from the LORD'S ways. If the LORD'S chosen people can fall so far from their God that they sacrifice their own children to other gods it is not surprising that some teachers and some churches can be enticed into a gospel that appeals to pride, self, ego (the devil within) and the desire to be famous or considered important.

We must always examine our hearts motive, and ask ourselves the following three questions: -

1. Are we following the LORD for what we can get from Him or because we love Him?
2. Is it our heartfelt desire to be a benefit God's global Kingdom and to testify of our faith when opportunities arise?
3. Do we have an inward passion to honour God and be a good testimony to Christ or do we live our lives indifferent to how it reflects on God and upon the good name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The LORD is against Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 16:27-30 ----- ²⁷Behold, therefore, I stretched out my hand against you (Jerusalem) and diminished your allotted portion and delivered you to the greed of your enemies, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed of your lewd behavior. ²⁸You played the whore also with the Assyrians, because you were not satisfied; yes, you played the whore with them, and still you were not satisfied. ²⁹You multiplied your whoring also with the trading land of Chaldea, and even with this you were not satisfied. ³⁰"How lovesick is your (Jerusalem) heart, declares the Lord GOD, because you did all these things, the deeds of a brazen prostitute,

How amazing is this even the Philistines were ashamed of Israel's lewd behaviour.

NOTICE: Israel went after the gods of Assyria and the Babylonians because they were not satisfied (v28). If the human heart is not completely sold out to God it will always want more, but if we are surrendered to the LORD our hearts will find its greatest need in this mortal world (i.e., love, peace, joy and contentment) regardless of the abundance of wealth and material possession or the lack of them. King David was an amazingly rich man, but he understood love, peace, joy and contentment came by knowing the LORD and not by the wealth and power he had.

Judah was worse than Prostitutes because they Paid their Lovers.

Ezekiel 16:31-36 ----- ³¹building your (Jerusalem's) vaulted chamber at the head of every street, and making your lofty place in every square. Yet you were not like a prostitute, because you scorned payment. ³²Adulterous wife, who receives strangers instead of her husband! ³³Men give gifts to all prostitutes, but you (Jerusalem) gave your gifts to all your lovers, bribing them to come to you from every side with your whorings. ³⁴So you were different from other women in your whorings. No one solicited you to play the whore, and you gave payment, while no payment was given to you; therefore you were different. ³⁵"Therefore, O prostitute, hear the word of the LORD: ³⁶Thus says the Lord GOD, Because your lust was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in your whorings with your lovers, and with all your abominable idols, and because of the blood of your children that you gave to them,

The words, "Jerusalem paid her lovers" refers to the gifts the inhabitants of Jerusalem were giving other gods. The streets of Jerusalem had idols of other gods in their public places and in every street. As horrific as this is it gets even worse because the inhabitants of Jerusalem were actually giving gifts to these other gods, whereas a prostitute is selling herself so she could buy food and support her children (there would be exceptions), but no prostitute pays her bed partners for their favours.

This is why the LORD says the people of Israel are even worse than prostitutes they were actually paying the pagan gods (by giving them offerings and gifts etc.) that they were worshipping. (Worshipping other gods is spiritual prostitution). The inhabitants of Jerusalem falsely believed the more they could give to these false gods the more indebted the god would be to them to favour them they were in a sense bribing the god.

Their nakedness has been exposed: means all their abominations and sins have been seen, by the surrounding nations and by God.

NOTICE: the LORD calls the inhabitants of Jerusalem an adulterous wife; this is because spiritually God was the husband of Israel (v32). An adulterous wife is a far more offensive title than prostitute simply because a prostitute is not betraying or cheating on anyone except herself (the men are accountable for their own actions) whereas an adulterous wife is betraying her husband and her children.

Even though the book of proverbs paints a picture of the seductive woman being the hunter and the man who goes into her being the foolish and unwise victim, neither the adulteress or the man who goes into her has an excuse because we will all be judged for our own actions and cannot excuse what we do because of the behaviour of someone else.

The LORD will gather Nations Against Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 16:37 ----- ³⁷therefore, behold, I will gather all your lovers with whom you (Jerusalem) took pleasure, all those you loved and all those you hated. I will gather them against you from every side and will uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness.

All your lovers: refers to Judah's idols and other gods.

The Judgment of God is perfect, the inhabitants of Jerusalem had set up idols and images of the gods of the surrounding nations in the streets of Jerusalem and the Temple of the LORD and now God is going to use the nations of these idols and gods to destroy the city of Jerusalem and pillage the temple.

Jerusalem will be Destroyed.

Ezekiel 16:38-42 ----- ³⁸And I will judge you as women who commit adultery and shed blood are judged, and bring upon you the blood of wrath and jealousy. ³⁹And I will give you into *their hands*, and they shall throw down your vaulted chamber and break down your lofty places. *They* shall strip you of your clothes and take your beautiful jewels and leave you naked and bare. ⁴⁰*They* shall bring up a crowd against you, and *they* shall stone you and cut you to pieces with their swords. ⁴¹And *they* shall burn your houses and execute judgments upon you in the sight of many women. I will make you stop playing the whore, and you shall also give payment no more. ⁴²So will I satisfy my wrath on you, and my jealousy shall depart from you. I will be calm and will no more be angry.

The LORD is going to judge Jerusalem as women who commit adultery and murderers, the sentence of both of these was death.

The LORD says He will: -

- Destroy Jerusalem's treasures and all the idols of the gods they boast of.
- Strip Jerusalem of her priestly clothing and take her jewels, silver and gold.
- Slaughter the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
- Burn their houses and execute judgments upon the men in the sight of many women.

The LORD used Babylon to bring about all these Judgments Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his fierce and mighty armies entered the city of Jerusalem and burned the people's homes and the city they slaughtered the people and pillaged the Temple of God of its sacred items, its beautifully woven veils and anything else made of precious stones, silver and gold.

I will make you stop playing the whore: (v41) Babylon invaded Jerusalem and took its inhabitants (the two tribes of Judah) into captivity later Babylon conquered Assyria who had previously taken Israel (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria) captive.

Israel and Judah were under Babylonian rule for seventy years. They went into captivity to Babylon as two rebellious nations who had turned from God to idols and who were even sacrificing their own children to pagan gods.

While in captivity God moulded them like a master potter moulds a beautiful clay jar. They went into Babylon as two unfaithful nations that had turned away from the LORD to idols and other gods. Seventy years later, Cyrus (King of Persia) who the LORD called His Shepherd (Isaiah 44:28) gave permission to Israel to return to Jerusalem.

Under Ezra and Nehemiah God brought Israel back to their beloved city Jerusalem as one nation faithful to only one God, the LORD their God, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob (Israel never turned to pagan gods again). Through Babylon the LORD fulfilled the prophetic words, "Israel would stop playing the whore with idols and other gods" that he spoke through His prophet Ezekiel.

Judah Committed Lewdness in Addition to Abominations.

Ezekiel 16:43 ----- ⁴³Because you have not remembered the days of your youth, but have enraged me with all these things, therefore, behold, I have returned your deeds upon your head, declares the Lord GOD. "Have you not committed lewdness in addition to all your abominations?"

There are times of spiritual dryness in every Christian's life, but it does not mean God has withdrawn His love or His favour they are times of testing our faith and what is in our hearts in that they reveal whether we will we stay faithful to the LORD or be like the inhabitants of Jerusalem and turn from the LORD to seek after other gods or New Age spiritual teachings. In the New Testament the apostle Peter wrote: -

- The faithful are being guarded by God's power through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:5-7).

NOTICE: it is not riches and wealth or material possessions or the things of this world the faithful are to rejoice in, but their eternal inheritance. This is because the things of this world come and go they are temporary whereas the eternal inheritance of the faithful is everlasting glory.

Like Mother, like Daughter.

Ezekiel 16:44-46 ----- ⁴⁴Behold, everyone who uses proverbs will use this proverb about you (Jerusalem/Judah): 'Like mother, like daughter.' ⁴⁵You (Jerusalem) are the daughter of your mother who loathed her husband and her children; and you are the sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite. ⁴⁶And your (Jerusalem) elder sister is Samaria, who lived with her daughters to the north of you; and your younger sister, who lived to the south of you, is Sodom with her daughters.

Jerusalem is personified as being born and having a mother, father and sisters.

Jerusalem's mother: was a Hittite (Ezek. 16:45) the Hittites sprang from Ham through Canaan's second son Heth; they became widely diffused throughout the land of Canaan (Palestine), they worshipped the goddess of fertility and were morally corrupt (Ezek. 16:44-45).

Jerusalem's father: was an Amorite (Ezek. 16:45) Amorites were the tribe of people who descended from Canaan the son of Ham (they were probably east Semites). The tribal god of the Amorites was Marduk, he was acknowledged as the creator of the universe, the god who arranged and regulated the planets and stars, and created the human race. Marduk was worshipped as the god of light and life, and the ruler of destinies. It was believed he had kingship over the universe and was head of all deities and divine kings, he rose to such eminence that he claimed fifty titles. Eventually, he was called simply Bel, meaning Lord.

Jerusalem's elder sister: was Samaria (Ezek. 16:46) Samaria was a region in Palestine and the capital city of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (the ten tribes). It was established in idolatry and a tradition of luxury, vice and paganism by Ahab and Jezebel his Phoenician bride.

Jerusalem's younger sister: was Sodom (Ezek. 16:46) Sodom became symbols of wickedness and of God's judgment. They did not aid the poor or the less fortunate and were not ashamed of their sins, but proclaimed them in the open. They were liars and full of pride. The men committed adultery and violently indulged in sexual immorality. They supported evildoers, where prosperous, at ease and had an excess of food.

Jerusalem's mother: was a Hittite and Her father an Amorite.

Jerusalem's elder sister: was Samaria and Her younger sister Sodom.

Prior to Jerusalem being given the title: "The City of God," it was an unnoticed town (occupied by the Jebusites). It sat on a hill in the land of Canaan, the land of the Amorites, the Hittites, Sodom and Samaria. It is in this sense that the Amorites, Hittites, Sodom and Samaria are spoken of as Jerusalem's original parents and her sisters. In the book of Deuteronomy it is written: -

- He (the LORD) found him (Jerusalem) in a desert land (Canaan), and in the howling waste of the wilderness; he (the LORD) encircled him, he cared for him, he kept him as the apple of his eye (Deut. 32:10).

The ardent Bible Student could find many more reasons why the Amorites, Hittites, Sodom and Samaria are spoken of as Jerusalem's original parents and her two sisters, but for the sake of simplicity and the context of this chapter which is about Jerusalem's wickedness and idol worship it is enough.

Jerusalem's mother, father and two sisters: -

- Worshipped the goddess of fertility and were morally corrupt.
- Believed other gods had creative power that belonged only to the LORD God.
- Worshipped idols, the sun, moon and the stars.
- Believed other gods had power to grant eternal life, control the universe and their lives.
- Lived in prosperity, excessive luxury and material possessions.
- Men violently indulged in sexual immorality and wickedness.
- Had an excess of leisure time and an abundance of food.
- Did not aid the poor or the less fortunate.
- Where not ashamed of their sins, but proclaimed them in the open.
- Were full of deceit, lies and pride.
- Supported those that did wrong when it was to their own advantage to do so.

SUMMARY: of Jerusalem's Father Mother and Two Sisters.

Ezekiel's statement that Jerusalem's father was an Amorite and her mother a Hittite her older sister Samaria and her younger sister Sodom was a rebuke to the inhabitants of Jerusalem because they had been so influenced by the Amorites Hittites, Samaria and Sodom that they had forsaken God and His ways and embraced the corrupt and false religious practises and gods of these nations.

Jerusalem was More Corrupt than the Hittite, Amorite, Samaria and Sodom.

Ezekiel 16:47-50 ----- ⁴⁷Not only did you (Jerusalem) walk in their (the Hittite, Amorite, Samaria and Sodom) ways and do according to their abominations; within a very little time you were more corrupt than they in all your ways. ⁴⁸As I live, declares the Lord GOD, your sister Sodom and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done. ⁴⁹Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. ⁵⁰They were haughty and did an abomination before me. So I removed them, when I saw it.

The sins of Sodom was pride and arrogance and the fact they were prosperous and had an excess of food, but did not help the poor and needy even though they had an abundance of money and leisure time to do so. Added to these sins the men committed gross abominations before the LORD by attempting to violently force themselves on lot and his household which means the men of the city of Sodom were rapists.

Jerusalem was, Even More Corrupt than Samaria.

Ezekiel 16:51-52 ----- ⁵¹Samaria has not committed half your (Jerusalem) sins. You have committed more abominations than they, and have made your sisters (Sodom) appear righteous by all the abominations that you have committed. ⁵²Bear your disgrace, you also, for you have intervened on behalf of your sisters. Because of your sins in which you acted more abominably than they, they are more in the right than you. So be ashamed, you (Jerusalem) also, and bear your disgrace, for you have made your sisters appear righteous.

This is simply horrifying and tragically sad Jerusalem has committed twice the sins of Samaria, and are so corrupt that they make Sodom appear righteous, how tragic for God's heart to see His people turn so far away from His love, kindness goodness and His ways of honesty, justice and integrity.

The lesson for today: when the human heart completely lets go of God, and gives pride and ego (the devil within) full reign there is no end to depth of deception and the evil mankind is capable of. David would have fully understood this principle when he said, "the LORD'S word is a lamp to his feet and a light to his path." (Psalm 119:105).

Jerusalem has intervened on behalf Samaria and Sodom: means they have acted so extremely wickedly before God that they have made Samaria and Sodom appear righteous and more in the right than the people of Jerusalem are.

Sins of Jerusalem: the inhabitants of Jerusalem had set up idols and altars to other gods in every street of Jerusalem, the public areas and in the Temple of the LORD and even worse were sacrificing their children in fire to Molech. They were perverting justice and killing the innocent for their own gain. Those in secular and religious authority were oppressing the less fortunate to make greater profits and ignoring the poor. The LORD'S answer to Jerusalem's redemption is to be ashamed of their wickedness and suffer the consequences of their disgrace.

God will Restore Sodom, Samaria and Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 16:53-55 ----- ⁵³I will restore their fortunes, both the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters, and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters, and I will restore your (Jerusalem's) own fortunes in their midst, ⁵⁴that you (Jerusalem) may bear your disgrace and be ashamed of all that you have done, becoming a consolation to them. ⁵⁵As for your sisters, Sodom and her daughters shall return to their former state, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former state, and you and your daughters shall return to your former state.

God promises to: -

- Restore Sodom to their former state.
- Samaria to their former state.
- Jerusalem to their former state.

But before He restores Jerusalem she (her inhabitants) they will have to suffer their disgrace and be ashamed of all their gross wickedness and rebellion.

Sodom was a Byword of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 16:56-58 ----- ⁵⁶Was not your sister Sodom a byword in your mouth in the day of your pride, ⁵⁷before your wickedness was uncovered? Now you have become an object of reproach for the daughters of Syria and all those around her, and for the daughters of the Philistines, those all around who despise you (Jerusalem). ⁵⁸You bear the penalty of your lewdness and your abominations, declares the LORD.

Prior to Jerusalem's wickedness being exposed her prideful inhabitants when talking to the people of the surrounding nations were using Sodom as a name to be despised and an example of God's judgment, but now Jerusalem is the city that is despised, mocked and scorned because of their abominations.

The lesson for today: the surrounding nations are not mocking the inhabitants of Jerusalem because they believed in the LORD their God. They despise them because of their hypocrisy, their abominations and their lying and corrupt lifestyle. This principal continues to apply today, sometimes the resistance of those being witnessed to is not always because they are against God or against Christ, but for one of the following four reasons: -

1. When witnessing the resistance is not because of a person's faith in God.
2. A lack of compassion, kindness and acceptance of others in the one witnessing.
3. The person being witnessed to has had bad experiences of those who confess Christ or seen the hypocrisy of some churches.
4. The person witnessing to them is living a lifestyle that is totally contrary to the teachings of Jesus.

God will Deal with Jerusalem in the Same Way they Have Treated Others.

Ezekiel 16:59-63 ----- ⁵⁹For thus says the Lord GOD: I will deal with you (Jerusalem) as you have done, you who have despised the oath in *breaking the covenant*, ⁶⁰yet I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish for you (Jerusalem) an *everlasting covenant*. ⁶¹Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you take your sisters, both your elder and your younger, and I give them to you as daughters, but not on account of the covenant with you. ⁶²I will establish my covenant with you (Jerusalem), and you shall know that I am the LORD, ⁶³that you may remember and be confounded, and never open your mouth again because of your shame, when I atone for you (Jerusalem) for all that you have done, declares the Lord GOD."

The LORD says he will deal with Jerusalem in the same way they have treated others (i.e., without mercy and without compassion), nevertheless even though they have broken the covenant they made with God, he says He will eternally atone for all their wickedness and when they accept their elder and younger sisters (Samaria and Sodom) then they will know that the LORD is their God and be ashamed of their sin.

The Covenant the LORD had with Israel: When the Temple of the LORD in Jerusalem (that Solomon built) was completed the Ark of the Covenant was brought into it and the temple, was filled with a cloud so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud and the glory of the LORD filled the Temple of God. Solomon prayed and the glory of the LORD filled the temple and the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD'S House.

Then the LORD said His eyes will be open and His ears attentive to the prayer that is made in the temple because He has chosen and consecrated it that His name would be there forever and His eyes and His heart will be there for all time.

Then the LORD entered into a Covenant with Jerusalem and she became His city.

The LORD'S Covenant: if the LORD'S people humble themselves, seek him in prayer and turn from their wicked ways God will hear their prayer forgive their sin and prosper their land and the throne of Jerusalem will always have a king of Israel on it, but if the LORD'S people turn from the LORD and forsake His statutes and serve other gods to worship them, then God will cast the people out of His sight and bring Jerusalem and everything the people do to ruin.

(2 Chron. 5:2, 13-14) (2 Chron. 7:1-2) (2 Chron. 7:15-16) (2 Chron. 7:13-22).

Though Israel has broken this covenant the LORD said, He would eternally atone for Israel's sin, even though the Covenant He had with them was broken. This was partly fulfilled through Cyrus the king of Media-Persia who the LORD called His anointed Shepherd (Isaiah 45:1). At the end of Israel's seventy years in captivity Cyrus conquered the empire of Babylon and gave Israel written permission to return to their land and re-build Jerusalem and the Temple of God.

Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah the people of Israel now united as one nation triumphantly returned with loud singing and great rejoicing to their beloved city Jerusalem. Multitudes of Israelite families who had fled into the surrounding nations to escape the cruelty of the invading Assyrian armies and those of Judah who had fled to foreign nations to escape the terror of Babylon's armies and the multitudes who had established homes and businesses amongst the nations of Babylon during the seventy year captivity returned to the land of Israel and a time of peace and prosperity followed throughout their land.

But when the passionate and enthusiastic Bible student reads the LORD'S prophetic words, "He will eternally atone for Israel's sin" their mind at the speed of light is immediately transported, to the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and his second return when those who pierced him will see him and weep with tears of sorrow and mourning at which time all God's eternal promises will be fulfilled.

Zechariah a prophet of the Old Testament says: -

- I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn (Zech. 12:10).

This glorious and world changing event will take place when Jerusalem is about to be totally destroyed and the Lord Jesus Christ returns as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign.

The dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish.

The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15).

Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

For further information see titles: -

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The Commonwealth of Israel.

It is important to understand that the promised seed of Abraham and David is Christ, all the promises to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ therefore they are not limited to Israel only but extend and embrace all those who belong to Christ because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew) this means that Jews and Gentiles become one new nation in Christ (also called, a new man, a new creation, the church, the body of Christ and the Kingdom of God).

The Apostle Paul said: -

- Remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands—¹²remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the *COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL* and *STRANGERS* to the *COVENANTS* of *PROMISE*, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles). ¹⁷And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews). ¹⁸For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father. ¹⁹So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone ²¹in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God since in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world.

The practical application of what this means to you: -

If you belong to Christ, all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel also apply to you. The book of Revelation states: -

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

The Glory of the Spiritual Temple God is Building in Christ.

Jews and Gentiles are being united together as one body in Christ to be a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Believing Jews and Gentiles are being prepared by the prophets and apostles teachings and by the influence of Christ and the Holy Spirit to become a majestic and glorious sacred temple in which God dwells for all eternity. When this majestic building is completed there will be nothing so worthy of reverence since God dwells in it; so ancient since the patriarchs and prophets laboured in building it; so solid since love cements it together; so closely united and indivisible since Christ is the corner stone; so exalted since it reaches as high as heaven and to God himself; so full of wisdom since its specifications are the word of God; so full of light since the Holy Spirit dispels every dark corner; so spacious since it is spread over the whole earth; so invincible and indestructible since it is being built by God, by Christ, by the Holy Spirit and by the influence of God's eternal word; so divine since it is a living, vibrant, dynamic temple inhabited by the Holy Spirit and so universal since all its unique stones though spread throughout the world are compacted together in Christ.

God is the master builder of this majestic and glorious temple; Christ is the corner stone; faithful believers are the proper materials; the prophets and apostles are its foundation and the Gospel and love its pillars. Christ is the door and faith is the entrance into it. It is a spiritual building and through, faith and grace this living building is growing into an eternal house fit for the most Holy God to dwell in. It's beauty and radiance will surpass all temples that have ever gone before it since it will be adorned with a vast variety of rich colour made up of Jews and Gentiles of every age, country, sex, and condition: the mightiest of kings, the most renowned lawgivers, the most profound philosophers, the most eminent scholars and all those of whom the world was not worthy have formed this building.

Peter wrote: -

- Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him Will not be put to shame (1 Pet. 2:6).

Every faithful brother and sister in Christ are represented as living stones that God is using to build this spiritual, majestic temple of eternal glory which will be manifested in splendour for all to see when: -

- The Lord himself descends from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ are raised then we who are alive are caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

FOOTNOTE.

Jerusalem in the history of God's revelation to man in those Divine acts by which redemption has been accomplished, Jerusalem by far is the most important site on this earth. It was the Royal City, the capital of the only Kingdom God has (thus far) established among men; here the temple was erected, and here alone, during the Kingdom age, were sacrifices legitimately offered. This was the city of the prophets, as well as the kings of David's line. Here occurred the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, David's greater Son. Upon and assembled group in this city the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost, giving birth to

the Christian church, and here the first great church council was held. Rightly did the chronicler refer to Jerusalem as the city which Jehovah had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put His name there (1 Kings 14:21). Jerusalem felt God's presence. She was assured of His love and as never another city on earth has been, of the LORD'S travail for her worthiness of the destiny to which God had called her.

Jerusalem's future: the Lord Jesus Christ will return to Jerusalem and the inhabitants of the city will mourn over the one who they pierced. A New Jerusalem will be established on earth and the glory of the LORD and of the Lamb will be the light of it. Christ will rule over all nations as King of kings and Lord of lords and bring peace to the entire planet. He will end all forms of war and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into the New City.

For further information concerning Jerusalem, see the title: -

- Jerusalem
- In, Map Locations and People of the Bible (ON WEBSITE MENU).

End.