

## Ezekiel 6 & 7

### The End Isn't Just Near, It's Here

J.D. Farag

KAPONO: Would you join me in a word of prayer? Oh, Lord, yeah, it's Thursday, Lord. And although our bodies may be tired, maybe even our minds, thank You, Lord, for allowing us to be here in person, Lord, and even online.

What a special time that we can come together and worship You, Lord, and lift up Your name in praise and in song, Lord. Would You bless this time as we're in the *Book of Ezekiel*, Lord? May it speak to us. and may we be encouraged, Lord. Thank You again for what You're doing here at this place. We ask this in the mighty name of Jesus, amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. Good evening to you! You can be seated. How you doing tonight? Blessed? All right, all right, all right! Do you think it's going to rain?

[ Laughter ]

I don't know; on the drive here, I was looking for a guy building an ark. I don't know. Did you see anybody? Anyway, it's already been done. Too late for that anyway, so... Hey, before I forget: Tuesday, this upcoming Tuesday, May 2nd 7:00 p.m. is our prayer meeting here in the sanctuary. So hope you're able to come and join with us. So also want to welcome those of you that are joining us online tonight as we make our trek through the Bible chapter-by-chapter, verse-by-verse through every book of the Bible.

We're currently in the book of Ezekiel, and tonight is Chapters 6 and 7, Lord willing; should always preface it that way. So why don't we pray, and we'll just ask God to do that which only He can and bless our time together, in His word. So if you would please join with me. Father in Heaven, thank You.

Lord, we just need to have You settle us down and settle our hearts and quiet our minds. There's so many things that are clamoring for our attention, and we want to give You our attention, our undivided attention. We don't want the distractions, the stress, the business of our lives to in any way encroach upon this time because this is our time together with You, in Your word, in worship and fellowship, one with another.

And so, Lord, we're so protective of it. And we know that You are even more so protective of this time that we have together. So we want to commit it to You. We want to ask You to bless it, of course, but Lord, even more importantly, we want You to be blessed tonight as You're magnified and glorified in our midst.

So Lord, now, as we open up these two chapters that are before us, we need for the Holy Spirit to open it up to our understanding. Because unless You do that for us, Lord, we're going to miss what it is that You have for us, Lord. So will You do that? We're asking You for that in Jesus' name, amen and amen.

All right, so what we're going to see tonight, particularly in *Chapter 7*, is an astounding declaration from God that the end isn't just near, the end is here. Now, this, of course, was a prophecy concerning Judah then, but it has arguably more of an application as a prophecy for us now.

Actually it's for this reason that we have chapters like these in our Bibles such that the intended end is that we would take heed in the end. And I'm just going to ask you if you would please, and myself with you, as we go through this, and in a lot of ways, we're going to get through this, but we're going to have to gut through this.

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How's that for an intro? It's going to get gnarly. I know that's a word from the '80s. And the '80s called. They want their word back. They're not getting it back because I'm using it tonight. It is going to get gnarly, and I'll do my best with the help of the Holy Spirit to expound on and as we exposit the text verse-by-verse, but it's going to get kind of intense again.

But what I'm going to ask of you and of myself is that as we go through this and gut through this, that we do so through the lens of its application to us now, the world now in this present age at this time in human history. And the reason is well because it does. I know we talk about this often. I hope you don't tire of me talking about it. But just by way of a preface lastly, please, please, please, and

I'm just as guilty as anybody when it comes to this, there's this propensity for all of us to disconnect ourselves from the passage, and we do so under the banner of, well, this was for them then. This is not really applicable to me now. And nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, it's the opposite that's true, as I just stated, I'll say the same thing in a different way. It in some ways is more applicable to us now than it was for them then because of the time in which we are living in, and it is the time of the end. And this is not just hyperbole.

The end, as we're going to see is not just near. The end is here. So you ready? Let's jump in.

*Verse 1, Chapter 6, "Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying: "Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them, 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."*

Okay, wow! Ezekiel was to remain silent. And now he finally gets to speak, but it's to the mountains. Why? Oh because that's where their idols were. That's where the worship of their pagan gods were. These high places, as we're going to see again, as I mentioned, I'll try to be careful so as to not be unnecessarily graphic in the detail. But there is graphic detail here. These high places, these worship of these gods and goddesses actually chiefly were very sexual. In fact, it was the worship of Ashtaroth, the fertility goddess, the sex goddess, the goddess of sex, the goddess of fertility, and that was actually the worship. It was very sexual.

Now, why is this important? Because God is saying, now that's it. Time's up. My patience has come to an end. My grace has come to an end. My mercy has come to an end. And now I am sending my prophet Ezekiel to prophesy and say to these mountains where you worship these gods and goddesses in this way that I'm going to destroy them now. It ends now. It ends here and it ends now.

*Verse 4, "Then your altars shall be desolate, your incense altars shall be broken, and I will cast down your slain men before your idols."*

Now, this Ashtaroth worship was — oh, this is horrible. Okay, Lord, help me, please. The Ashtaroth pole — again, it was symbolic. I'll just leave it at that, and you can use your imagination. Don't go too far with that.

But they would set up these high places and these Ashtaroth poles. And by the way, parenthetically, let me say Ashtaroth, a.k.a. Astarte, a.k.a. Ishtar — we already had Resurrection Sunday. That's why I never use that word. I always say "Resurrection Sunday" for that reason, by the way.

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And so I guess I took the liberty of kind of ruining that particular day because we've already celebrated it. It's already past, so happy Resurrection Sunday, so... But that's where that comes from. And oh, by the way — is this okay? Okay, Easter Bunny? What do you know about bunnies, rabbits? Okay, good, then I don't have to take it any further.

One last thing. I will take it this far. The Playboy bunny? Come on, where do you think that comes from? Don't be so naive. That's — the bunny is associated with... Okay, are we okay? All right. Back to our Bible study already in progress.

*Verse 5:* This is where it gets a little bit gnarly again. **“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 all your dwelling places [Verse 6] the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places [Again] shall be desolate, so that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, your idols may be broken and made to cease, [It ends right now] your incense altars may be cut down, and your works may be abolished.**

**The slain [Verse 6] shall fall in your midst, and [I want you to hang on to this] you shall know that I am the Lord. [Hang on to that]**

**“Yet [Verse 8] 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.”**

Now we're going to see this again throughout these two chapters. Remember the visual prophecy that God had Ezekiel do when He had him cut his hair in thirds, and then he took just a little remnant and tied it, braided it to his garment. And that was the little amount of people, that remnant, that God is going to leave that will escape. And that was symbolic of that, a prophecy about that.

Let's talk about this **“You shall know that I am the Lord.”** This declaration is mentioned some 60 times in the *Book of Ezekiel*, which explains the intended purpose of the *Book of Ezekiel*. Let me explain. This is the purpose. This is the reason, if you prefer, as to why it is that God is meting out this horrific, unspeakable judgment on His people. It is for them to know that He is the Lord their God.

And again, we've talked about this. I hope you don't tire of me emphasizing this, but it's the emphasis on “I” am the Lord your God, meaning “they” are not the Lord your God. That is not the Lord your God. I am the Lord your God.

Now, how am I going to get you to know that I am the Lord your God? Oh, I got to do this. That's the only way. I've tried everything else. But you would not listen. So I had my prophet Ezekiel remain silent. And then when I did have him speak, I had him speak to the mountains because the mountains will listen and take heed. So that's why I'm going to have him pronounce and prophesy to the mountains.

So get used to this **“You shall know that I am the Lord.”** We're going to see it a few more times tonight, but it's replete throughout the entire book some 60 times. The most, for me anyway, pronounced time that we see this is in the very well-known *Ezekiel 38* prophecy when this alliance of nations, yet future, already lined up, by the way, at the ready, exactly as God's word through the prophet Ezekiel said it would be, there will be this alliance of nations with Russia and Iran at the helm, and they will advance from the north and they will invade Israel who thinks she's secure, has peace.

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They're confident. So they let down their guard, as it were. And then here comes this allied invasion.

Why?

To take a spoil. But God. But God intervenes. And it seems to indicate this particular prophecy, *Ezekiel 38*, seems to indicate that this is done pretty quick because God intervenes on behalf of His people and destroys this allied invasion of all of these nations that come together against Israel to take a spoil.

And when you get to the end of the chapter, *Ezekiel 38*, you read the words we just read. And it's really God saying, you know why I just did that? You know I just did that, right? Did you see what I just did? I did that. You want to know why? I'm going to tell you why. So that all the nations, all the nations, will know that I am the Lord God of Israel.

The strength of it, the sanctified strength of it, it's like there's no other explanation. This had to be God. That's because it was. I mean, this huge, massive alliance of nations, superior military force invading Israel, an unsuspecting Israel, and they're defeated, and they're destroyed some believe, and I'm of the belief myself that it's within about a 24-hour period. That's how swift this is.

God just says: Really? I've been expecting you. I actually had Ezekiel prophecy this some 2500 years prior to this. Right on time. Right on schedule. So guess what? I'm going to destroy you. How about that? And the reason I'm going to destroy you is so that you all, y'all, know that I am the Lord God of Israel.

There will be — and incidentally, this is strong, too. We're going to see this as well: the strength in some of the — of course, inspired by the Holy Spirit — but this thing of “know.” It's not “believe.” “Believe” is a little bit too ambiguous. You will “believe” that I am the Lord. Nah, that's just too flimsy. No, you'll “know.” There's no question. You will know that I am the Lord.

That's the intended purpose of the *Book of Ezekiel*, which is why it's mentioned so many times in the *Book of Ezekiel, Verse 9*, **“Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations where they are carried captive, [Of course, speaking of Babylon] because [Now hang in there with me on this] 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.”**

Okay, again, just bear with me for a moment. We're going to need to work through this. Let's start with this **“I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me.”**

Is that God saying that His heart was crushed by their adulterous heart? Yes. Or does it mean, as some believe it should be interpreted, that He crushed their adulterous heart which had departed from Me? So which is it? Is it God's heart was crushed, or He crushed their hearts?

Answer? Yes. (Chuckling) I'm not trying to be cute. I couldn't be even if I wanted to. What do you mean? Well, again, stay with me. God — God's heart is grieved, right? But He also will crush their adulterous heart because their adulterous heart has crushed the heart of God.

I tend to lean more towards that interpretation of it, though again, it could be both. And the reason I lean towards that is because of what we're told here that they will loathe themselves. They will hate themselves for what they did. And here's how I get there.

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You know we oftentimes think to ourselves that our sin is not hurting other people. Well, I'm not hurting anybody. Yeah, you are. We don't realize — I'm going to actually say it — I'm going to approach it differently. When we do realize how much our sin has hurt those whom we love, there's a loathing and a hating that “I did that to them.” How much more is there a loathing, a sanctified loathing of ourselves when we realize that we've hurt the heart of God?

Another reason I lean to this is because, and by the way, if you're having a difficult time, you're in good company because this verse is arguably one of the most difficult and astonishing in all of Scripture because it does give us a glimpse of the heart of God as we have in the prophet Hosea vis-à-vis his adulterous wife.

Do you know about this? So you talk about wow, I mean, you talk about a visual prophecy, this prophet Hosea lived this, and God used this as a demonstration of how Israel had this adulterous heart and how Israel had crushed the heart of God. He was married to an adulterous. His wife was an adulterous.

And Hosea was so faithful to her, even though she was unfaithful to him. And this was a demonstration, a picture, a prophecy, really concerning Israel being unfaithful to God, committing spiritual adultery.

And so the whole book of Hosea — and this was actual; this was not hypothetical. This was actual. His wife was actually adulterous and had crushed his heart. And it was God's way of saying through the prophet Hosea: Israel, this is what you've done to Me. You've committed adultery and your adulterous heart has crushed My heart. And that's why I lean towards that interpretation.

And there's one more reason here, and it has to do with this word “abominations.” Now, this is not a word that we're well acquainted with in our day and certainly not a word that's part of our vocabulary. And I think that's because we really don't fully grasp the meaning of the word “abomination.”

I mean, basically, we just know it's bad because it's one of those words that just sounds really bad, right? And depending on how you say it, man, you can really — an abomination! (Growling) And you put some growl in there, some reverb on there, and you can really make that sound horrible. Well, it is.

Why is it?

I'm glad you asked. The reason why is because an abomination — now, watch this — an abomination is anything that replaces that place that only God should have in our lives. Think about the abomination that caused desolation when Antiochus Epiphanes sacrificed a pig, an unclean — this was an abomination in the temple, in the Holy of Holies. It was an abomination, and yet future, we know because of *Daniel 9:27* and *2 Thessalonians 2*, which by the way, we're going to talk a little bit about on Sunday, like we never talk about those two prophecies, but the Antichrist will commit an abomination when he will set himself up in the Temple of God, declaring that he is God, demanding to be worshiped as God in the place of God. That's why it's an abomination.

Now, lest you dismiss this in your life — “Well, I'm not going to commit an abomination.” Ah, not so fast. Maybe something or someone has supplanted that place in your life, in your temple, in that sacred place in your heart where only God should be. In the eyes of God, that is an abomination.

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So again, the strength of this is such that when we read that “I was crushed by their adulterous heart,” I think it's the heart of God that's been crushed because this is an abomination.

And the loathing —and maybe the takeaway for some from this should be something along the lines of never, ever, ever think that your sin doesn't crush the heart of those whom you love, those close to your heart, the impact on your children, the impact on your family, the impact on your wife, the impact on your husband is devastating.

And see, Satan, when he tempts, he always packages the temptation with this wrapping paper that says, Oh, you're not hurting anybody. Don't believe it. Don't be deceived by it. And it doesn't take much.

One last thing, and we'll move on. It doesn't take much. We need to move on. We're only on *verse 9*, mercy! It doesn't take much. Let me explain.

A decision made in the heat of the moment, so to speak can have implications for the rest of your life. And you will loathe yourself. You will hate yourself. You will hate that you ever did that. And you can't go back and undo that which you did. And we're going to see that as well.

Let's move on. *Verse 10*, “**And [Here it is again] they shall know that I am the Lord; I have not said in vain that I would bring this calamity upon them.**” *Thus [Verse 11] 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.’*”

There's the thirds again. Okay, will you just indulge me for just a moment? Many years ago, my first church plant, my wife coined the phrase concerning her husband — that would be me — that I was the “pulpit-pounding, passionate, Palestinian pastor.” And it stuck. And I'm bringing it up again tonight.

Why am I bringing it up again tonight? Because it's biblical right here, *verse 11*: “Pound your fist.” That's my story and I'm sticking with it. No, for real.

Listen. Keep in mind now, Ezekiel has curiously been getting the attention visually, without words, prophesying, and the curiosity of, what's Ezekiel doing now? Man, he's laying on his side.

What's up with that?

Yeah, he's been doing it for, like 400 and how many days? I got the days. 390. 394. 394. Going once, going twice. And now he's — now — he turned on the other side.

What?

Yeah, now that's 40 more days of that. Oh, and then he's making bread. You don't want the recipe for this bread. Remember that? Last week? I do not want that recipe. And all these — he's doing all these things and he's not saying a word. It's — the silence is deafening. It's killing me. But he's got my attention. That's why he's doing it. That's why God has him do it.

So now all of a sudden, this prophet goes from that to now he's pounding his first and yelling, like me right now, and stomping his feet. And you think they are going to maybe — you know, want to know what's going on here? Yeah. I want you to do this. I want you to pound your fists.

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It's going to be so uncharacteristic and so out of character for you, and especially after what I had you do. And now all of a sudden, you're pounding on the pulpit like that Palestinian pastor? You're obviously needing to get your point across. Yes.

See, God has Ezekiel pound his fists and stomp his feet so as to first, get their attention, and this would have done that, and second, communicate to them the severity of what was coming in the end.

Ah... Nah, let's move on. Don't you hate it when I do that? Okay, just real quick. It's a pity, for lack of a better word, when someone who is teaching the word of God does so in a monotonous, nebulous, passionless way.

Now I — this might come off self-serving, but the Lord knows my heart when I say this. I do get passionate, and I do yell. It is a custom in my country. But there's a reason for that. Because it's not what you say. It's how you say what you say. And I can stand up here, by way of an example, and just say, “the end isn't just near, the end is here.”

Now let's move on to the next verse. Or — wait for it — “the end” — (Pounding fist) You get the point. I mean, you're standing to attention now. Whereas if I just, you know, with a monotone and, you know.. (Snoring), right? Okay. You got it. Now we can move on.

**Verse 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. [There's the thirds again] Thus will I spend My fury upon them. Then [Here it is again, verse 13] 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.”**

Ashtaroth. By the way, these idols were very pornographic. There were pornographic images. That's why sexual immorality and pornography is referred to as idolatry.

Many years ago I was in Israel. I had a group I took, and we went through a museum, and I saw one of these idols, and these are actually the idols that archeologists had dug up from this time, these very idols that Ezekiel is prophesying concerning.

And I saw one of them, and I winced; I was like, oh, no! I wanted to make sure none in the group saw it because it was really graphic and very pornographic. Porno - graphic? And these idols that they would make — and it would incite and arouse and excite — and that's the idols that he's talking about, again, very, very sexual.

**So verse 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.”**

That's how the chapter ends. And it does so with just justification. That's not redundant. This is just. This judgment is justified. This severity with which God will make desolate the wilderness and all of their dwelling places is just, and it's just because God has to resort to such drastic and corrective measures to accomplish that which He could not otherwise accomplish.

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*Chapter 7:1, "Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "And you, son of man, thus says the Lord God to the land of Israel: [Okay, well, the mountains, now the land maybe they'll listen] [This is what He's going to say] 'An end! The end has come upon the four corners of the land.*

**Now [Verse 3] 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.** *[The end has come. The end is here. The end has come upon you]*

*[Verse 4] My eye will not spare you, nor will I have pity, but I will repay your ways, and your abominations [Boy, that word keeps coming up] will be in your midst. Then you shall know that I am the Lord!" Thus says the Lord God: [Verse 5] "A disaster, a singular disaster; behold, it has come! An end has come, the end has come; it has dawned for you. Behold, it has come!"*

Wow, wow, wow! (Chuckling) You get the impression that the end has come? Good because the end has come. Now, we have an interesting phrase here and usage of this word here that I want to spend just a little bit of time on because it's very poetic, very prophetic, and it's this phrase **"it has dawned for you."**

Now, doubtless you're familiar with the saying, "it dawned on me." So the origin of this saying, of course, everybody steals it from the Bible, then takes credit for it, and anyway, I don't want to get off on that. I hate it when they do that.

You know, they... anyway, they just yeah... They hijack, you know, the — and then — anyway. It originated in the word of God.

"It dawned on me." What does that mean? What's the origin of that?

Okay, so when the sun comes up, we call it "dawn," right? So it's as if the end has been slumbering, but now the dawn is coming. But the dawn is going to come and dawn on you. But when the dawn comes and dawns on you, it will bring doom to you. It's next to impossible to grasp the powerful strength of this phrase, but it really paints this poignant picture of how the end heretofore has been sleeping, but now it's waking, and it's dawning.

And it has dawned for you, on you, to bring doom to you, and that's what we read, *verse 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."*

They would celebrate during the harvest, and what you would hear from the mountains would be sounds of laughter and song and celebration and joy and rejoicing. Well, you're going to hear from those mountains sounds, but they're not going to be the kind of sounds you're wanting to hear.

**"Now [Verse 8] 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.**

*[And He says it again, verse 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 [Now interesting, this time, though, verse 9] I am the Lord who strikes."*

I am the Lord who heals. I am Lord who provides. The names of God: Jehovah Jireh, Jehovah Tsidkenu, but He's also Jehovah who strikes.



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**“Behold [Verse 10] the day! Behold, it has come! Doom has gone out; the rod has blossomed, pride has budded.” [It is time, the rod of correction]**

Doom. It has come The day, the day has come

**Verse 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. [Verse 12] The time has come.”**

This is probably as good of a time as any to interject that this is where it is of paramount importance to view this through the lens of the world in which we are living today. Dare I say that one could say verse 12 applies to us today, quote, **“The time has come.”**

Question: Are there abominations in our midst? Rhetorical question, obviously. Well, as it was for them then, so too is this true for us now. And notice the common thread woven throughout the fabric of these two chapters where God uses this word, and we read past it and think nothing of it.

It's a very important word. It's the word, “then.” “Then.” That's a “when” word. That's a “time” word.

When?

Then.

When is this going to be?

It will be when “then.” That changes everything, changed the whole complexion of it. So in other words, the end will come then you shall know. **“The time has come. The day draws near.”**

Now we're going to turn a corner here, and I'll try not to rush through this because there's something here for us, as well as there always is. But let's not, again, be too quick to disconnect ourselves from the power that is in this prophetic word.

God is saying the same thing today that He was saying through Ezekiel then. The time has come. Time's up. That's it. In Genesis, God declares that the Spirit of God will not strive with men forever. There's coming a time when God says, That's it. Time's up. I've extended grace. I've been long-suffering. I've been patient. But that time has come to an end. The time has come.

**“The time has come; the day draws near. [Then] ‘Let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn, for wrath is on their whole multitude. For the seller [Verse 13] 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.”**

What's this about? Well, they had these —in that day — it's really the same today in the Middle East and the Jewish culture, certainly in my culture as an Arab. property ownership, you always keep it in the family. So you would sell a property, but you had the ability to buy it back.

And what God's saying is, you ain't getting it back. It shall not turn back. That's not going to happen. And then He's even taking it further and saying nobody is going to strengthen himself who lives in iniquity.

In other words, nobody's going to derive any pleasure, any satisfaction, any strength, anything from their sin, which is only pleasurable for a season, but see, that season has now come to an end. It ends right here, and it ends right now.

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**Verse 14, "They have blown the trumpet and made everyone ready, but no one goes to battle; for My wrath is on all their multitude."**

This was the battle cry. It was always preceded with the sound of the trumpet. Let me see if I can use this. This is the best I got. So you know, if you got something better, let me know. You know the trumpet? Dun-dun-dun! Charge!

See, I told you, that's all I got. So that wasn't too bad, was it? Was it? Was that bad?

Oh, no, the trumpet would sound, and that was the signal because see, they didn't have text alerts back then. So how were they going to know when it was time to go to battle? The trumpet would sound; it was a certain trumpet sound, and they knew, okay, let's go: Charge!

Okay, I'll stop using that. So the trumpet sounds. Time to go, but nobody goes.

Why?

Because they're paralyzed in fear. Because the wrath of God is on all their multitude.

**Verse 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. [There's the thirds again] Those [Verse 16] who survive [The remnant] will escape and be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, each for his iniquity."**

You know how doves can make a kind of a weeping, wailing sound? Yeah, like a sick one? I love the cooing, but, man, sometimes those sounds kind of like, Ho! What happened? That's the sound that they're going to make, like doves. And that's enough of that.

**Verse 17, "Every hand will be feeble, and [Just hang in there with me on this because this is pretty graphic again] every knee will be as weak as water."**

Translated: You're not going to be able to hold your bladder. That's how paralyzed in fear you are. Your knees literally shaking. And you — can I just leave it there? Did you get that? That's what that means, as weak as water. Some render it actually the knees — anyway — release...

**Verse 18, "They will also be girded with sackcloth. Horror will cover them. Shame will be on every face, (Chuckling) baldness on all their heads."**

Really? This keeps coming up, too. What's up with this? Well, there's an explanation for it real quick. So they had a — the way that they would express grief in those days was actually one of three ways: They would gird themselves with sackcloth. They would put ashes on their head. Or they would shave all of their hair.

And whenever they did that, and even to this day in Israel, they will, if somebody, if a loved one dies, they will mourn and grieve in sorrow, and they will shave their heads. And you know that person's in mourning.

So that's what that's talking about, lest you should wonder about the baldness or the receding hairline on the heads of some. In other words, they are mourning. And it was also because hair here was a symbol, really. This is why the Nazarite vow would never let a razor come to your head. It was a noble, honorable symbol of the blessing of God on your life.

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### The End Isn't Just Near, It's Here

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And so this is the reverse of that when you take and remove all of your hair. We talked about this last week, I think, when David's men had — they were totally shamed, just disgraced, publicly shamed when all of their hair was cut off.

*Verse 19, “They will throw their silver into the streets, and their gold will be like refuse [An unclean thing in the original, again, very graphic] 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 other words, the very thing that they strive for and sin to get will be the very thing that doesn't satisfy them. **“What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own soul?”** I mean, it's become worthless now. What good is your riches going to be on the day of judgment?

I've often thought when I've had occasion as a pastor, which I have many times over the years, been with those who are on their deathbed. And I'll tell you, you can have all the money in the world, means nothing. What's that money going to do for you? Nothing. What's that money worth to you? Nothing. It's worthless. And that's what is being described here.

I mean, gold and silver, that which they treasured so greatly and sinned so greatly to obtain, now they're throwing it away.

Why?

It's worth nothing. This is very apropos to our day today. All of the material wealth, the riches of this world, they mean nothing. They mean nothing. They're not going to deliver you on the day of judgment.

*Verse 20, “As for the beauty of his ornaments, He set it in majesty. But they made from it the images of their abominations — [Again, pornographic images] their detestable things. Therefore I have made it like refuse to them.”*

This is, again, one of those words that's hard to kind of in the English, it's lost in the translation, but it's sexually impure, unclean, and carries with it the idea of when Isaiah says, by the way, our own righteousness is as filthy rags, that is a reference to the menstrual cloth, the menstrual rag. Again, I know that's graphic, but it needs to be. That's what our righteousness is like. It's like that in the eyes of God, our own righteousness. And their abominations, their detestable things, they were like that in this sight of the Lord. And God made it like that to them.

**“I will give it as plunderer [Verse 21] into the hands of strangers, and to the wicked of the earth as spoil; and they shall defile it. I will turn My face from them, and they will defile My secret place. For robbers shall enter it and defile it.”**

*[Now verse 23 is interesting] “Make a chain.”*

So now we got another visual. Ezekiel is told by God to make a chain symbolic of being chained up and bound. And here's why. **“For the land is filled with crimes of blood...”** Which is another interesting phrase that's hard to translate because it carries with it the idea of judicial crimes.

What do you mean, judicial crimes?

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These were not crimes committed. These were crimes adjudicated. Does that make sense? In other words, they were crimes that had the blood on the hands of those who unjustly carried out judiciously these crimes.

**“And the city is full of violence. [Verse 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. Destruction comes; they will seek peace, but there shall be none. 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.”**

Oh, interesting. *Jeremiah, Chapter 18*, they were saying that the law will never perish from the priest and the council will never cease from the elders. Huh. It just did. How about that?

Oh, by the way, when we started off in the mountains, *Chapter 6*, when we get to *Chapter 36*, Ezekiel's going to prophesy to the mountains again. Only this time it's not to make the mountains desolate. It's to make them fruitful and plentiful.

And that's when we get into *36, 37*, which, by the way, you can — don't do this unless you want to — you can take those chapters in your Bible when we get there if the Rapture doesn't happen first, which if it does, that'd be great.

But when we get to those chapters, we're going to see that they were fulfilled subsequent to 1948 in a very profound way. So you could, if you want, write on — specifically *Chapters 36 and 37* — check the box: Fulfilled. It's already been fulfilled.

Well, you know what comes after *37*? I know this is deeply profound. *38*. Well, if *36* and *37* have been fulfilled in the last, whatever, 70, 80 years, and *38* comes after *37*, hmm. Just saying.

**Verse 27, lastly, “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, [They brought it on themselves], and according to what they deserve I will judge them; then they shall know that I am the Lord!”**

Wow, what an ending to a chapter! I think it says it all. I do want to say one last thing and end the Bible study this way. And this is important because —and please don't miss this — this study tonight shows that God disciplining them was for the purpose of restoring them. Let me say that again because this has application to our lives today.

Yeah, you've turned your back to Me. I want you to turn back to Me. How am I going to do that? Well, I have to bring down My heavy hand of discipline. I have to justly judge, rightfully judge, and My purpose in doing so is to restore you because I love you. And by the way, that's exactly what God will do. And that's exactly what God will, yet future do, specific to Israel at the end of the 7-year tribulation.

Kapono, come on up. Stand up. We'll pray. Oh, we got through it! Got gut through. We got through, and we had to gut through, but we got through it. Thank You, Lord. Wow! Okay, so here we are again at the conclusion of another tough couple of chapters, but it's a good tough.

And Lord, I pray that we would take heed to this warning, especially given that we are at the end. We talk about it every week in this Your church. And because we know that the end is not just near but here, it has that much-needed affect and impact on our lives, and I pray it would be so for us

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tonight. So thank You, Lord, for this hard word, but this good word. We want to take heed to Your Word. In Jesus' name. Amen.