

**Ezekiel 21**  
**The Sword of the Lord Prophecy**  
**Pastor JD Farag**

KAPONO: Would you join me in prayer? Lord oh, how I pray that we would sing and praise Your holy name. Of course, in our doubts because it seems easier to think about You, Lord, and You're on our mind, Lord when we're down, but I pray that we would praise You in our ups as well, Lord, and everything in between, Lord. In our weakness You are strong, Lord.

Clear our minds, Lord. The only way that we're going to learn something tonight, Lord, is also by humbling us. So would You humble us this evening, Lord, that what is taught this evening, Lord, in Your word would speak directly to us.

We praise You. We thank You for this time that we have here this evening, Lord, to gather and study Your word. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen.

[ Applause ]

Oh, yeah, praise the Lord! I was going to ask you how you're doing tonight, but I think I just got my answer. You can be seated. Welcome. I want to welcome those of you that are joining us online as well. We're so glad that you are.

Hope you don't mind, but I want to begin with an update on our ongoing relief efforts for our Maui Ohana.

First, we want to thank those that gave financially, though we haven't asked for money, nor do we ever ask for money. We do want you to know that 100% of any and all monies sent are getting directly into the hands of those who have the greatest immediate needs financially, particularly. And here's why.

I've been in direct contact with Pastor Steve Santos of Calvary Chapel Westside, whose church was in Lahaina. I say "was in Lahaina." Actually, the building they were renting is still standing. Everything around it burned. But here's the thing: They can't get to it and may not get to it, but keep Pastor Steve Santos and that fellowship in prayer because for something like 30 years they've been meeting at the beach, Beach Park for their Sunday services.

Then their mid-week Bible study was in the building there in Lahaina. And they've, as of late, it's kind of like a "new pharaoh who knew not Joseph." They've had all kinds of legal issues

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with meeting as a public assembly, a religious assembly there at the Beach Park. So he's been battling that before any of this happened.

So anyway, just he's a great brother, a good friend. I reached out to him. We spent quite a bit of time on the phone, and he really was able to apprise me of what the situation is and what the immediate needs are.

So for those that did give, thank you! We've already sent the money and will be sending more. But 100% of the money is going to be distributed to people by way of gift cards initially for places like Costco, etc.

Also, as of right now, hotels are housing people who lost their homes, and the money may be used to pay for those rooms as needed. Right now, they're making them available for those who basically lost everything. And the number of people that lost everything is horrendous and in every sense of the word unimaginable. I mean, it's just — you cannot imagine.

Some of the things he shared with me were just stunning. But he asked me, actually, to mention specifically that Maui tourism has stopped. And what's happening now is it's costing the locals their jobs and their livelihood. And it certainly doesn't help when people are told not to come to Maui. And he asked me if I would just get the word out that people still need to come to Maui because that's actually going to help the locals who are helping those who were in Lahaina because of tourism. And isn't it interesting that it's the locals that are helping the people?

I'm also in contact with a brother in Christ who's there in Maui who oversees a number of new car franchises, new car dealerships. And I don't know if you've thought about this, but a lot of people lost their cars. So we're already working on a plan to replace these vehicles that were lost.

So Steve put me in touch with the dealer principal who put me in touch with his director that oversees all of these dealerships. And we already have a plan in place that we're going to try to work something out to get cars for people who don't have cars. You didn't think about that, did you?

[ Applause ]

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Well yeah, praise the Lord! Now, you got to understand there's a back story you should be aware of here. I'm a — yeah, I'm a car dealer still at heart. You can — I've been in the car business. I'm a car guy. I have been for over 30 years. You can take the guy out of the car business, but you can't take the car business out of the guy.

So when I was talking to Steve, I'm like, yeah, okay, here's a — anyway... so I won't bore you with the details, but the effort is ongoing, and we're, Lord willing, going to be able to coordinate this.

And when the time comes, we're also going to revisit getting boots on the ground, as they say. Right now that's just not really plausible. It's not really feasible. He did mention that Samaritan's Purse is going to put up tents. But here's the problem: Nobody's going to go there. Why? Because everybody left there. There's nobody there.

So another thing, too, and I think I'd be grossly remiss if I didn't mention this. So the people who did survive this, they're gone, and they're probably never going to go back to the island. The death toll — and this is — this is always really difficult because you know to — please don't let it be a number. These are people. And from what Steve shared with me, it's easily over a thousand people. That's conservative.

And so, so many people — my wife and I were kind of doing some research. The last — it might be a little bit outdated, and I'm sure it's been updated. This does not include tourists because any given time, like here on Oahu, you've got thousands of tourists that are visiting. I think I heard one time one number — statistic — again, number that on any given day on Oahu, there's about a quarter of a million tourists at peak, you know, at its zenith.

So Lahaina proper: The population is approximately — and this might be an outdated number — but 12,000 people. I want you to let that sink in. Then you add to that the number of tourists that were there on that particular day. And we're talking about a lot of people and a lot of lives that will never be the same again.

And so — "But God" — we were just talking about this before the Bible study that God has just, you know, He chooses the foolish to confound the wise, the weak to shame the strong. He has just deemed fit in His sovereignty and I'll add His sense of humor to use this church

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and prepare this church and use this church for such a time as this. I mean, we were at the ready. And what a profound privilege to be a small part of what God is doing.

And what God is doing is that which only God can do and is doing on Maui as we speak. And so many miracles and so many testimonies. So let me just real quick — we will get to the Bible study in about an hour or so.

[ Laughter ]

I'm almost done. Bear with me. I want to give you a quick update on the supplies.

So Brother Mike Lao has been keeping me updated. I want to assure you that the supplies that we sent as well as the supplies that were sent are getting to the people.

Now, as of — what day is this? It better be Thursday because it's the Bible study. So it's all a blur now. Anyway, I think this might be as of Tuesday, so it's going to be more now. Sixteen containers have been offloaded, and I mentioned to you —

yeah, praise the Lord, right?

[ Applause ]

So I mentioned to you — and you know what? God is able. I don't want to give too much information because we've had to bypass the authorities who are blocking literally the roadblocks, literally.

So what they did was covertly rent trucks, offloaded these containers, trucked the supplies to churches, to hotels, to community centers. They already had people in place. And as only God can, He orchestrated everything perfectly. And all of the supplies have been distributed, and all of these containers are being offloaded, and all of these trucks are being loaded and driven to these undisclosed locations for distribution despite the roadblocks, literally. All that to say this: Praise the Lord! God is good.

[ Applause ]

So lastly, pray, pray, pray. And then when you're done, pray some more. And that's what we're going to do right now. Would you join with me?

Father in heaven, thank You so much for the profound privilege that is ours here on this island to help our brothers and sisters on Maui.

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Lord, You have seen fit, deemed us worthy recipients, as it were, for such a time as this to be Your hands, Your feet to be used by You to help these people that are sleeping on floors, in cars, if they still have one. And Lord, You're showing Yourself faithful and You're revealing Yourself as You're always so faithful to.

And God, I know there are many miracles that we will never know this side of heaven that are happening. And so many lives are changed, and so many people are getting saved because of this. And so, Lord, thank You because only You can take something this bad and bring good out of it.

And so, Lord, we thank You. Lord, please strengthen the weary first responders, many of whom have been profoundly traumatized, and they themselves now have to be rotated out. So Lord, just provide the right people, the right amount of people at the right place, at the right time to meet the needs of these people. And Lord, not only that, but do it in such a way that is unmistakably You, so nobody's handprint is on it but Yours, so that only You get the glory.

So Lord, thank You. Will You help our brothers and sisters on Maui, please, Lord? Strengthen them, those that are injured and burned, Lord, would You miraculously heal them? Would You strengthen those that are working around the clock, many of whom are sleep deprived? Would You get much-needed medical supplies for the people who need them? Would You give supernatural peace to the people who need supernatural peace and comfort by the Holy Spirit those who are so devastated by this?

And again, Lord, thank You that we can play a part in this Lord, tonight, we are very protective of our time together in Your word. And this is our time on Thursday nights to just be in Your word, be together, fellowship together, worship together, and now be in Your word together. Would You, by the Holy Spirit, be our teacher tonight? Would You speak into our lives? This chapter that's before us is here in our Bibles for a reason. So Lord, would You minister to us from this? We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

All right, so let me kind of circle back just by way of an introduction. In Chapter 20 last week, Ezekiel is crying out to God sort of — well, it was lamentation. I mean, he was just crying out to God concerning the people not listening to him, dismissing him. And they were doing so under the banner of his prophecies being hard-to-understand parables.

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Now keep in mind that Ezekiel is in Babylon while simultaneously Jeremiah is still in Judah. And they're both prophesying the coming destruction in what would be the third siege when the Babylonians would come and this third siege — in this third siege they would take all of the rest of the captives, and they would destroy the temple and, with it, the Davidic kingdom. So no longer would there ever be a king in Jerusalem, in Israel, of Israel, as we're going to see tonight, until the King of kings comes.

Modern-Day Israel subsequent to May 14th, 1948, they don't have a king. They have a government. They have a prime minister. They have a president. They have elected officials, but they don't have a king. Why don't they have a king? Because of this prophecy that we have before us tonight here in Ezekiel.

So here's what's happening: Ezekiel cries out because they're not listening to him. They're not listening to Jeremiah either, Ezekiel. Don't take it personal. So here's what I'm going to do, Ezekiel: They're complaining that you're — they don't understand because you're speaking in riddles, parables. So let's do something different in Chapter 21. Let's do a visual prophecy again.

You know what a visual prophecy is?

That's where we're going to demonstrate this, and we're going to make this very clear in no uncertain terms. And what God is going to do through the prophet Ezekiel is what I'm going to call and affectionately refer to a prophecy being that of the "Sword of the Lord" prophecy. Because after all, there confused. Let's unconfuse them. The sword will do it.

So that's what we're going to see here is this visual prophecy that God, through the prophet Ezekiel is going to now prophesy this coming judgment upon Judah in this third siege by the Babylonians, because He purposed it. That's the purpose prophetically of the prophecy of the sword of the Lord.

As we go through this, you can count — I tried to underline — I lost count. There's so many times the word "sword" is used. I don't want it to be a distraction, but we're going to see it right out of the chute here, verse 1.

**"And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem, preach against the holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel; and say**

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**to the land of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord: "Behold, I am against you, and I will draw My sword out of its sheath and cut off both righteous and wicked from you."**

Is that clear enough for you? We're not talking in riddles anymore now, are we? This is straight talk.

Verse 4, **"Because I will cut off both righteous and wicked from you, therefore My sword shall go out of its sheath against all flesh from south to north, that all flesh may know that I, the Lord, have drawn My sword out of its sheath; it shall not return anymore."**

Is that clear for you? Not you.

It's coming to my ever failing and faulty memory. But I can't remember — I think it was the Apostle Paul by the Spirit said, God is going to remove any and all excuses so you don't have any excuse. You're without excuse. It might have been Peter. Just be nice to me if it's — if I'm wrong — it's probably neither. But God is going to do this in such a way that they will have no excuse. Nobody can say, "Oh, I didn't know."

"Yeah, you did."

"No, but I wasn't clear."

"Oh, yes, you were."

"Yeah, but I didn't understand."

"What did you not understand?"

Now, if you're still trying to hide under that excuse, watch what happens now, verse 6. This is God now saying to Ezekiel: **"Sigh therefore, son of man, with a breaking heart, and sigh with bitterness before their eyes."**

Now, before we go on to verse 7, there's something here that I don't want us to miss because don't think for a second that God is telling Ezekiel to feign this. Do you know what I mean by that?

In other words, I want you to sigh with a broken heart and bitterness in your eyes, a breaking in your heart and bitterness in your eyes. And I want you to do this outwardly. This is not to put on an act. This is more like Ezekiel, I just want you to let it out. Don't hold it in. I want them to see your broken heart. I want them to see the bitter tears in your eyes. I want them

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— you know there's something about a man who cries and a man who sighs. And I want them to see you sigh and cry. I want them to see your broken heart and your bitter tears.

We're going to see why here in verse 7, but it's like God saying to us tonight: Stop trying to put on the mask. Stop trying to just put on that Christian smile when inside — you're dying inside. Your heart is broken. Your tears are bitter. You are hurting deeply. And it's okay to let it out because I want them to see you so they will ask you why, and that's verse 7.

**“And it shall be when they say to you, ‘Why are you sighing?’ that you shall answer, ‘Because of the news.’ [I just heard some really bad news] ‘Because of the news; when it comes, every heart will melt, all hands will be feeble, every spirit will faint, and all knees will be weak as water.”**

You'll forgive me, but this is a euphemism for not being able to control your bladder. I mean that is going to be how fearful they will be, how faint they will become. They will not be able to control their bladder. That's how scared they're going to be. That's why I'm so heartbroken. Thanks for asking. I've just received some horrifying news about what's coming, and that's why I'm crying bitter tears with a broken heart and sighing. I'm in deep pain at what's coming. [And] **"when it comes, every heart will melt."**

That's quite a picture, by the way, isn't it? All hands will be feeble? I mean, it will be so intense that you won't even be able to — it will literally, physically shake you where you won't be able to stand. I'm sorry again, but you're going to wet your pants. You're going to faint at what's coming. And it's coming. [He says] **“Behold, it is coming and shall be brought to pass,’ says the Lord God.”**

Now, this is one of those places and one of those times where you have to ask yourself that question of: Why do we have a chapter like this in our Bibles? Well, would you agree that this is so apropos for us today what's coming?

I wonder. Just bear with me and indulge me for just a moment. As I was preparing for tonight's teaching, I — these verses kind of hit me a little bit hard because as Christians, we taste from a cup of sorrow that non-Christians will never taste from. Let me explain.

As Solomon writes, "With much knowledge comes much sorrow." The world says, "Ignorance is bliss." You know, people are just going about their lives, business as usual, you



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know, eating, drinking, partying. If they only knew what was coming. See, we know what's coming. And what comes packaged with knowing what's coming is a grief and a sorrow and a pain. It's heartbreaking.

I've shared with you very openly — maybe it makes you uncomfortable. I'm sorry if it does, but so many times I'll be out and about, which isn't very much because I don't really get out much. But when I do, you know, I just look at people, and my heart breaks for them because they have no idea what's coming.

And I pray, and it's not a fancy elaborate prayer. I just pray for them, for their salvation. Lord, if they don't know You, if they're not believers, would You bring them to a saving knowledge of You, please?

But this is what got me. And what hit me was, I wonder if we've kind of masked it and hidden it. We know what's coming, and that's why nobody asks us about it, because we put on the smile to cover it up.

You know — it is Peter — this one I know. I better know, and so should you. We just got done with 1 and 2 Peter, right, verse-by-verse. **"Be at the ready; be prepared to give to everyone an answer of that hope that lies within you."**

You know, that has a presupposition in it. The presupposition is, is that someone's going to ask. Notice, Peter, by the Spirit doesn't say: Be at the ready to tell someone about the hope that you have. No. Be at the ready to give an answer when you're asked. That presupposes that someone's going to ask.

"Well, nobody's asked me."

"Well, maybe that's why."

They're looking at your life going: Well, I'm not going to ask him. That's pointless. And then they look at someone like me.

"What is up with you?"

"I'm glad you asked. Do you know what's coming?"

"Why are you so doom and gloom?"

"Do you know what's coming?"

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"Why are you so downcast?"

"Do you know what's coming?"

"Why is your heart so broken?"

"Do you know what's coming?"

It's coming. By the way, this Sunday, Lord willing, the Prophecy Update — spoiler alert. I'm going to pose a question. You know what the question is? What would you do if you knew the Rapture was about to happen? We're going to tackle that question.

No, if you knew — this is Ezekiel.

Now we will finish the chapter. Just give me just a little bit more time on this.

This is Ezekiel. He's been shown what's coming, and it's going to be unspeakable. The horror: Tribulation the likes of which the world has never before seen, nor will ever see again, Jesus's own words, by the way.

So we happen to know that, and nobody's asking us about that. So what's going to happen when, not if, it comes? And what if it's coming sooner than any of us could possibly imagine?

One last thing, and then we'll move on. I think the — well, for lack of a better way of saying it — the lost art, the missing jewel in the Christian church today, I'm speaking broadly, is a genuine brokenness over the lost, this lost and dying world. Our hearts don't break with the things that break the heart of God.

When was the last time we cried bitter tears for the lost because we know what's coming?

When was the last time we allowed someone to see that broken heart and those bitter tears so they would ask us so that we could give them the answer. Because, as the Apostle Paul wrote in the context, by the way, of the rapture, **"we don't grieve like those without hope."** It's a sanctified grieving. We grieve, **"but we don't grieve as those who have no hope."** It's a sanctified sorrow and grief.

And so God now wants Ezekiel to outwardly just let it out and show just how heartbroken he is, so that they'll ask him about why he's like that.

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I think about Nehemiah, the cup bearer. Did you know it was punishable by death to be in the presence of the king as the cup bearer for the king with a countenance that was not joyful? You just kill them.

Nehemiah just receives news about what is happening in Jerusalem. And he is just devastated. But he's got to be the king's cup bearer. And he is probably crying. And the king knows Nehemiah. And he asked Nehemiah, "What's wrong." And Nehemiah says, "I am just heartbroken over Jerusalem."

And for those of you that were with us in the study through the book of Nehemiah, look what God did with that. And he sends Nehemiah, funds the entire project, miraculously rebuilds the wall against all odds. And the opposition? In 53 days, an absolute miracle. All because the king asks Nehemiah, "Why are you so downcast, Nehemiah? This is not like you. What happened?" "I've just received news, that's why."

I wonder. I wonder if the reason why people aren't asking is because our hearts are not breaking for the lost.

Verse 8, **"Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'Son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says the Lord!' Say: 'A sword, a sword is sharpened and also polished! Sharpened to make a dreadful slaughter, polished to flash like lightning! Should we then make mirth? It despises the scepter of My son, as it does all wood. And He has given it to be polished, that it may be handled. This sword is sharpened, and it is polished to be given into the hand of the slayer.'"**

What's this saying? Ezekiel, I'm going to put a polished, bright, almost-can't-look-at-it sword in your hand as a visual prophecy of the sword of the Lord. I'm going to put it in the hand of the slayer.

**"Cry and wail, son of man [Verse 12] for it will be against My people, against all the princes of Israel. Terrors including the sword will be against My people; therefore, strike your thigh. [Now they're watching Ezekiel do this physically, outwardly, visually] "Because [Verse 13] it is a testing. And what if the sword despises even the scepter? The scepter shall be no more," says the Lord God. "You therefore, son of man, prophesy and strike your hands**

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**together. The third time let the sword do double damage. It is the sword that slays, the sword that slays the great men, that enters their private chambers."**

Wow! Picture this because, again, this is a visual prophecy because apparently, it wasn't clear. You needed a visual aid. And this is before PowerPoint. So here's the sword. Notice the third time. That's the third siege, the final siege. Do you get it now? The sword of the Lord, the prophecy of the sword of the Lord; it is going to come the third time. It's going to strike, it's going to slay.

And interestingly, and maybe I'm using my imagination too much here, but can you picture Ezekiel there in the city square in Babylon with this sword in his hand, prophesying this?

I mean, listen, if I'm on my way to get, you know, some bread and hummus, and I see Ezekiel doing that, I'm going to — he's got my attention. I'm listening to what he's saying because that sword's pretty bright, by the way. And this guy's crazy. I'm keeping my distance. The bread and the hummus shop is over here. But (Stumbling over words) but Ezekiel's over here with that sword prophesying this:

**"I have set the point of the sword [Verse 15] against all their gates, that the heart may melt and many may stumble. Ah! It is made bright. It is grasped for slaughter: "Swords at the ready! Thrust right! Set your blade! Thrust left— wherever your edge is ordered! "I also will beat My fists together, and I will cause My fury to rest; I, the Lord, have spoken."**

In other words, I'm gonna be satisfied. But I don't know how Ezekiel pulled this off because he's (Clapping) doing that. But what did he do with the sword? Did he put it down into the ground? I mean, what is this crazy prophet doing? He's getting your attention. That's what he's doing. You're listening now, aren't you?

**"The word of the Lord [Verse 18] came to me again, saying: "And [Verse 19] son of man, appoint for yourself two ways for the sword of the king of Babylon to go; both of them shall go from the same land. Make a sign; put it at the head of the road to the city. Appoint a road for the sword to go to Rabbah of the Ammonites, and to Judah, into fortified Jerusalem. For the king of Babylon [Verse 21] stands at the parting of the road, at the fork of the two roads, to use divination: he shakes the arrows, he consults the images, he looks at the liver."**

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I don't like liver. What is this about looking at the liver? Okay. What's going on here? This is so interesting. It's so fascinating.

So the king of Babylon is consulting using divination, the Babylonian gods for direction. And so now they're at the crossroads. Do I go to the Ammonites or do I go to the Israelites? Do I go to Ammon, modern-day Jordan, or do I go to Judah? So he consults the mediums. He uses divination, the shaking of arrows like a flipping of the coin. Heads: Ammon. Tails: Judah.

That's the arrows' part. He consults the images.

(Chuckling)

I hope this is not going to upset anyone. Is there something about reading the tea leaves? That's a saying, right? Is that a local thing? No? Thank You, Jesus! For once. Okay, good. Okay.

Okay, here we go. Here's — as a kid, my mom, my aunties and my grandmother — the Arabic coffee, you know, the small cups, Turkish coffee? It's really Arabic coffee. But don't tell the Turks that. So very Muah! (Kissing sound) Very, very, very strong coffee. Very good, very good.

So for those of you that went to Israel with us, remember the Turkish coffee? Ho! Anyway, so they would drink the coffee, you know, sip, you know, small. It's very strong. You don't need a big cup. Too much. Small cup. You're done.

They put the cup on the saucer upside down. Let it sit, and they pick it up, and then they read it, and they look for pictures in the coffee grounds that have formed shapes on the inside of the cup, and then they use it like fortune telling. That's reading the tea leaves, or the Turkish coffee cups, if you want. That's what this consulting the image is.

"Okay, Pastor, what about the liver?"

"Well, you ready for this?"

I'm sorry for those of you that had a big dinner. So what they would do is they would look at the liver of these animals that they had sacrificed to their gods, and they would...

(Chuckling)

Do you like liver and onions?

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Thank you, Jesus! Praise the Lord! I know there will not be liver and onions, maybe onions — I like onions — but not liver in heaven. I'm pretty sure.

So they would look at the color of the liver and that's how they would make the decision. So God is telling Ezekiel, okay the King of Babylon is going to now make a decision about are they going to besiege the Ammonites at Rabbah, or are they going to go into Judah? So we're going to flip a coin, look at the liver, arrows, tea leaves, coffee cup, whatever you want, okay?

They think that's what they're doing and that's how they're going to make their decision. But God's in control of the decision they're going to make. How cool is that?

So verse 22, **"In his right hand is the divination for Jerusalem: to set up battering rams, to call for a slaughter, to lift the voice with shouting, to set battering rams against the gates, to heap up a siege mound, and to build a wall. And it will be [Verse 23] to them like a false divination in the eyes of those who have sworn oaths with them. But he will bring their iniquity to remembrance, that they may be taken. [You see what's happening here?]**

**[Verse 24] "Therefore thus says the Lord God: 'Because you have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your doings your sins appear— because you have come to remembrance, [Just hang on] you shall be taken in hand."**

In other words, the King of Babylon thinks he's divining and consulting his, you know, using divination his gods as to: Do I go to Ammon on the left, or do I go to Judah on the right? God's like (Chuckling) okay, go ahead, flip the coin, drink the coffee cups, read the tea leaves, do whatever you want. You're going to Judah. That's what's happening here.

Why?

Verse 25, **'Now to you, O profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day has come, whose iniquity shall end, thus says the Lord God: "Remove the turban, and take off the crown; nothing shall remain the same.**

**[How about this part of the end of verse 26?] Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted."**

That's a sermon right there. God exalts the humble and He humbled the exalted. Translated:

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You've exalted yourself. Now I'm going to humble you. This is the end of the Davidic Kingdom. Take that crown off.

Notice verse 27. **"Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown! [Three times; there's your three sieges again] It shall be no longer, until He comes..."**

Oh, who's "He"?

I'm so glad you asked. That's Jesus, the King of kings. No more king from David's lineage will be on the throne until the King of kings comes and takes His rightful place on the throne of David as the King of Israel.

**"Until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it to Him."**

Notice "him" is capitalized. Notice "he" is capitalized. That's Jesus Christ, Lord of lords, King of kings. Until He comes, the kingdom is done. It's over. It's gone until He comes.

**"And you, [Can't wait!] And you, son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says the Lord God concerning the Ammonites and concerning their reproach,' and say: 'A sword, a sword is drawn, polished for slaughter, for consuming, for flashing.**

**While they see false visions for you, while they divine a lie to you, to bring you on the necks of the wicked, the slain whose day has come, whose iniquity shall end. 'Return it to its sheath. [That sword, verse 30]**

**I will judge you in the place where you were created, in the land of your nativity. I will pour out My indignation on you. I will blow against you with the fire of My wrath and deliver you into the hands of brutal men who are skillful to destroy. [They're pros at it] You shall [Verse 32, last verse] be fuel for the fire. Your blood shall be in the midst of the land. You shall not be remembered for I the Lord have spoken."**

That's the end of the chapter. Let's close in prayer. Yeah, not yet. Not so fast.

Isn't this a little bit — oh, this is why the God of the Old Testament is such a god of wrath! You've heard that, right? It's chapters like this that — people say things like that because of chapters like this But God is judging because He's correcting and He's purifying and He's curing them of their idolatry.

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He's given them so much time to repent. They rejected Him. God is not going to force Himself on His people. You can learn the easy way. You can learn the hard way. You've made your decision. Your mind is made up, your heart is hardened, your fate is sealed. This will come to pass. God said it, and that settles it.

Now, what are we supposed to take away from this chapter tonight? How does this apply to us tonight? Well, several reasons. I'll just give you one.

That which would come to pass, the judgment that would come, this prophecy of the Sword of the Lord upon them, it's coming again: Revelation Chapter 1. It's the sword of the Lord prophecy in its finality because John is describing Jesus, and he says that out of His mouth is this two-edged sword coming out of His mouth.

You know, we know it well, the Ephesians 6 spiritual armor passage. The only offensive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. The word out of His mouth is a double-edged sword.

Hebrews, I think it is, "**The word of God is like a double-edged sword. It cuts, it separates.**" Can I say it like this? It's surgically with precision, prophetically removes what doesn't belong there.

What is God doing? How does this apply to us?

It's the sword of the Spirit that cuts. We say we search the Scriptures, but the Scriptures search us. If the sword of the Spirit is the word of God, and the sword of the Spirit cuts between soul and spirit and bone and marrow that's the take away.

The sword of the Lord in our lives is going to cut in and take out what doesn't belong in our lives. He has to because He loves you. He has to judge you this way to purify you. You'll be fuel for the fire. This is a purifying fire like that of the goldsmith.

This has to happen. I'm doing this because I love you. If I didn't love you, I wouldn't bother. I have to bring My sword of judgment. Judgment has to come. The sword has to cut. I have to do this, and truth be made known you want Me to do this for you. I don't want to. I know you don't want Me to, but I have to.



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I think we would do well — because isn't it true that we're all prone — I'm just as guilty as the next guy — to shy away from chapters like this in God's Word.

I would venture to say nobody, myself included, has any verse in this chapter as a life verse on their wallpaper. If you do, can you talk to me afterwards? I'd like to know about that.

That's really weird. My life verse: 'You shall be fuel for the fire.'

So that's that disconnect that we talked about. We shy away from it when it's the opposite that should happen. We shouldn't shy away from it. We should gravitate to it because this is the sword of the Lord that needs to cut in and take out from us that which has taken up residence in our lives. It's the justice of God. It's the judgment of God. And it's coming, it's coming, it's coming. And it's sooner than any of us could possibly imagine.

One last thing. I think of the Apostle Paul. He's speaking to the body of Christ, the bride of Christ. He says, I want to present you as a pure virgin bride for Jesus, our bridegroom, when He comes.

I wonder sometimes if the trials in our lives as of late is God's way of purifying His bride before He comes to take His bride to that place He prepared for us. I wonder, and maybe I'll speak for myself. I know that my own trials and difficulties in my own life personally, sometimes I wonder if it's just the sword of the Lord cutting into my life, saying I need to get that out. I need to get that out of you and I need to use the sword to do it because if I don't, it's going to kill you. It's going to come at best in between Me and you, and I've got to get it out.

That's what idolatry is, isn't it? And curiously, Israel would never return to the idolatry it knew prior to the Babylonian captivity. In other words, it worked.

What is it in your life, in my life that the sword of the Lord needs to do its work? As hard as it is, as painful as it is, as difficult as it is, let God do it. It's for Your own good. He'll bring good out of it.

I'm trying to end on a — that's the best I got. So Kaponu, come on up, stand up, and let's wrap it up. Some of you were like, thank You, Jesus. You're wrapping it up. What a chapter though, yeah?

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Father in heaven, I did my best. I am so thankful that the Holy Spirit is our teacher and can take a teaching like this and fine tune it to every heart of everyone, myself included. And so, Lord, thank You for this. As tough as it is and hard as it was, it's the truth.

And so Lord, thank You for the truth. Lord, take it from here now by the Holy Spirit, as You're always so faithful to. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.