

EZEKIEL

Chapter 22

The Bloody City

Introduction: This chapter continues the same scenario as chapter 20, with the elders inquiring of God before Ezekiel (20:1-4). In chapters 20-22 God rebukes the elders for their desire to inquire of Him. In this chapter, God is zeroing in on the city of Jerusalem itself, and the inhabitants thereof. This chapter will specify the abominations which the nation was guilty of (vss. 1-12), and announce the fire of judgment upon the nation (vss. 13-22). Lastly, God is lamenting over the reality that no voice was raised against the sins of His nation (vss. 23-31).

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city? yea, thou shalt shew her all her abominations. Then say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD, The city sheddeth blood in the midst of it, that her time may come, and maketh idols against herself to defile herself. Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast shed; and hast defiled thyself in thine idols which thou hast made; and thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come even unto thy years: therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the heathen, and a mocking to all countries. Those that be near, and those that be far from thee, shall mock thee, which art infamous and much vexed. Behold, the princes of Israel, every one were in thee to their power to shed blood. In thee have they set light by father and mother: in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger: in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow. Thou hast despised mine holy things, and hast profaned my sabbaths. In thee are men that carry tales to shed blood: and in thee they eat upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they commit lewdness. In thee have they discovered their fathers' nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was set apart for pollution. And one hath committed abomination with his neighbour's wife; and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter in law; and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father's daughter. In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 22:1-12)

The Abominations the Nation was Guilty of (1-12): God starts off by calling Jerusalem, a “bloody city” (vs. 2) which is repeated throughout this chapter (vss. 2, 3, 4, 12). Jerusalem, which very name means, “city of peace” had become a bloody city. What does this expression mean? Is it named so because they have gone to war and killed surrounding enemies, only defending themselves? No, it is that they have killed *their own people* and slaughtered them before their idols, and *their own land* is filled with their *own* blood; notice “The city shedeth blood in the midst of it” (vs. 3).

- How is the faithful city become an harlot! It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; **but now murderers.** (Isaiah 1:21)
- The Lord Jesus wept over the city and said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, **which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee;** how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!” (Luke 13:34)
- At the death of Christ, the crowd cried out to Pilate, “...**His blood be on us, and on our children**” (Matt. 27:25)
- It was Stephen who declared to the Jews, “**Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?** And they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; **of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murders**” (Acts 7:52)

Yes, Jerusalem has become the city of blood. This stands in contrast to the Mosaic Law which hung on two principle laws; one to love the LORD your God and the second to love your neighbor as yourself:

“And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. (Mark 12:30-31)

It is the “princes” that are guilty for the conduct of the people (vs. 6) and what follows is a list of all the abominations that the princes allowed, even encouraged to take place. (Notice these verses all have the expression “in thee” associated with them, meaning in Jerusalem):

- **Lightly esteemed the father and mother (vs. 7)** The expression “set light” is to lightly esteem (see I Samuel 18:30 and 26:24 where the expression “set by” means

to esteem, thus, “set light” means to lightly esteem). The Jews were commanded to honor mother and father (Ex. 20:12, Duet. 27:16) as believers are today (Ephesians 6:1-3).

- **Oppression of the stranger; vexed the fatherless (orphans) and the widows (vs. 7)** The Jews were required by law to give special consideration to these groups of people (Ex. 22:21-24; 23:9-11; Lev. 19:33-34) as believers are today (James 1:27, 2:1-13; I Tim. 5).
- **Despised mine holy things, and has profaned my Sabbaths (vs. 8)** Treating God’s holy things and days as if they were just another day.
- **Men telling lies, sentencing people to death (vs. 9)** (Matt. 26:60; Acts 6:13 etc.)
- **Offering food to idols and committing lewdness before them (vs. 9)**
- **They have committed various forms of immorality against every member of the family (vss. 20, 11)**
- **They have received bribes to shed innocent blood (vs. 12)**
- **Extortion of their neighbors (vs. 12)**

All this disobedience is a result of the ending statement, “and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord God.”

Behold, therefore I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee. Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the LORD have spoken it, and will do it. And I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, and will consume thy filthiness out of thee. And thou shalt take thine inheritance in thyself in the sight of the heathen, and thou shalt know that I am the LORD. And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my fury upon you. (Ezekiel 22:13-22)

The Fire of God's Refining Judgment (13-22): The judgment of God's wrath is coming. The allegory that is used here is that of a blacksmith, one that works metals. The house of Israel is become dross (the waste of the metal). God has placed His people in the midst of Jerusalem (the furnace) and He will bring the fire of judgment against it (Babylon) that they like the dross will be consumed (vss. 18-22).

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, say unto her, Thou art the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation. There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof. Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 22:23-31)

No voice of objection against the unrighteous conduct of the Priests, the Princes and the Prophets (23-31): Conspiracy among the false prophets has sealed the fate of the nation. God recaps the sins of the nation:

- The **Priests** have violated my law and profaned mine holy things (vs. 26)
- The **Princes** have devoured the people through dishonest gain (vs. 27)
- The **Prophets** have divined lies and seen visions of vanity, saying, "thus saith the Lord God," when the Lord hath not spoken (vs. 28)
- The **People** have used oppression and exercised robbery, and vexed the poor, needy and the stranger (vs. 29)

Unlike the time Moses stood in the gap between God and Israel (Numbers 14:11-20) and Paul in his desire to for the people of Israel (Romans 9:3), here God has found no man to

stand in the gap between His judgment and the people of God. Thanks be unto Jesus Christ who stood in the gap between our sins and God the Father (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The next chapter will be the final chapter before the siege on Jerusalem begins. Then, starting in chapter 25 going through chapter 32 which transpire *during* the siege on Jerusalem, will be the judgment of the Muslim nations.

EZEKIEL

Chapter 23

Two Sisters

Introduction: In this chapter God uses a parable of Aholah and Aholibah to unmask the loathsome nature of the unfaithfulness to God that Samaria and Jerusalem have shown. As revolting as this chapter is, it shows the awfulness of the spiritual adultery whereby the Lord's people, who are one with Him as bride and bridegroom, repudiate their union with Him and give themselves to the heathen nations around them.

The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother: And they committed whoredoms in Egypt; they committed whoredoms in their youth: there were their breasts pressed, and there they bruised the teats of their virginity. And the names of them were Aholah the elder, and Aholibah her sister: and they were mine, and they bare sons and daughters. Thus were their names; Samaria is Aholah, and Jerusalem Aholibah. (Ezekiel 23:1-4)

The Two Sisters (1-4): The parable here is that of two daughters from one mother who commit whoredoms in their youth and bare sons and daughters. The names of the two sisters are Aholah and Aholibah. Aholah is Samaria and Aholibah is Jerusalem. Notice they come from one mother; a reference to the time prior to the splitting of the kingdom. Notice as well the comment in verse 4, "and they were mine" which is a reference to God the Father who bore them.

And Aholah played the harlot when she was mine; and she doted on her lovers, on the Assyrians her neighbours, Which were clothed with blue, captains and rulers, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding upon horses. Thus she committed her whoredoms with them, with all them that were the chosen men of Assyria, and with all on whom she doted: with all their idols she defiled herself. Neither left she her whoredoms brought from Egypt: for in her youth they lay with her, and they bruised the breasts of her virginity, and poured their whoredom upon her. Wherefore I have

delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, upon whom she doted. These discovered her nakedness: they took her sons and her daughters, and slew her with the sword: and she became famous among women; for they had executed judgment upon her. (Ezekiel 23:5-10)

Aholah Which is Samaria (5-10): Aholah is dealt with first, for she is the eldest (vs. 4). Notice God calls her His (vs. 5). Aholah which is Samaria (*Israel - the Northern Tribes*) plays the harlot with her neighbors the Assyrians. Under the reign of King Jehu, Samaria sought alliances with the Assyrians to stem off the threat of the invading Syrian armies (2 Kings 10:32-34), thus making Israel vassal to Assyria. This alliance was Israel's undoing for when she tried to break away, she felt the wrath of the Assyrians (2 Kings 17:4). The very nation to which Samaria had turned for assistance would destroy her:

Wherefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, upon whom she doted. (Ezekiel 23:9)

And when her sister Aholibah saw this, she was more corrupt in her inordinate love than she, and in her whoredoms more than her sister in her whoredoms. She doted upon the Assyrians her neighbours, captains and rulers clothed most gorgeously, horsemen riding upon horses, all of them desirable young men. Then I saw that she was defiled, that they took both one way, And that she increased her whoredoms: for when she saw men pourtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldeans pourtrayed with vermilion, Girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to, after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their nativity: And as soon as she saw them with her eyes, she doted upon them, and sent messengers unto them into Chaldea. And the Babylonians came to her into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their whoredom, and she was polluted with them, and her mind was alienated from them. So she discovered her whoredoms, and discovered her nakedness: then my mind was alienated from her, like as my mind was alienated from her sister. Yet she multiplied her whoredoms, in calling to remembrance the days of her youth, wherein she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt. For she doted upon their paramours, whose flesh is as the flesh of asses, and whose issue is like the issue of horses. Thus thou calledst to remembrance the lewdness of thy youth, in bruising thy teats by the Egyptians for the paps of thy youth. Therefore, O Aholibah, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee, from whom thy mind is alienated, and I will bring them against thee on every side; The Babylonians, and all

the Chaldeans, Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them: all of them desirable young men, captains and rulers, great lords and renowned, all of them riding upon horses. And they shall come against thee with chariots, wagons, and wheels, and with an assembly of people, which shall set against thee buckler and shield and helmet round about: and I will set judgment before them, and they shall judge thee according to their judgments. And I will set my jealousy against thee, and they shall deal furiously with thee: they shall take away thy nose and thine ears; and thy remnant shall fall by the sword: they shall take thy sons and thy daughters; and thy residue shall be devoured by the fire. They shall also strip thee out of thy clothes, and take away thy fair jewels. Thus will I make thy lewdness to cease from thee, and thy whoredom brought from the land of Egypt: so that thou shalt not lift up thine eyes unto them, nor remember Egypt any more. For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will deliver thee into the hand of them whom thou hatest, into the hand of them from whom thy mind is alienated: And they shall deal with thee hatefully, and shall take away all thy labour, and shall leave thee naked and bare: and the nakedness of thy whoredoms shall be discovered, both thy lewdness and thy whoredoms. I will do these things unto thee, because thou hast gone a whoring after the heathen, and because thou art polluted with their idols. Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister; therefore will I give her cup into thine hand. Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou shalt drink of thy sister's cup deep and large: thou shalt be laughed to scorn and had in derision; it containeth much. Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, with the cup of astonishment and desolation, with the cup of thy sister Samaria. Thou shalt even drink it and suck it out, and thou shalt break the sherds thereof, and pluck off thine own breasts: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast forgotten me, and cast me behind thy back, therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms. (Ezekiel 23:11-35)

Aholibah Which is Jerusalem (11-35): Aholibah is dealt with in these verses. Aholibah is Jerusalem who has committed more lewdness than her sister (vs. 11). Enamored with the look and strength of the Babylonians (vss. 12-15) she joined herself to them, defiling herself with them and thereby alienating herself from her God (vss. 16-18). What Aholibah is doing is reminiscent of her adulterous behavior in the land of Egypt (vss. 19-22). Just as God had done to Samaria, He now allows to happen to Jerusalem: the very ones she turned to for assistance will destroy her (vss. 22-30). Aholibah has gone in the way of her sister, drinking of the cup of the judgment of God (vss. 31-35).

The LORD said moreover unto me; Son of man, wilt thou judge Aholah and

Aholibah? yea, declare unto them their abominations; That they have committed adultery, and blood is in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire, to devour them. Moreover this they have done unto me: they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths. For when they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it; and, lo, thus have they done in the midst of mine house. And furthermore, that ye have sent for men to come from far, unto whom a messenger was sent; and, lo, they came: for whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments, And satest upon a stately bed, and a table prepared before it, whereupon thou hast set mine incense and mine oil. And a voice of a multitude being at ease was with her: and with the men of the common sort were brought Sabeans from the wilderness, which put bracelets upon their hands, and beautiful crowns upon their heads. Then said I unto her that was old in adulteries, Will they now commit whoredoms with her, and she with them? Yet they went in unto her, as they go in unto a woman that playeth the harlot: so went they in unto Aholah and unto Aholibah, the lewd women. (Ezekiel 23:36-44)

The Abominations of the Two Sisters (36-44): God will now declare the abominations of Aholah and Aholibah that they have committed. They have committed adultery with the idols of the heathen (vs. 37). They have sacrificed their children to heathen deities (vs. 37). They have defiled God's sanctuary and profaned His Sabbaths (vs. 38-39). Moreover they have invited drunken men unto them from the heathen nations, the Sabeans from the wilderness. They have decorated themselves and played the harlot with them (40-44).

And the righteous men, they shall judge them after the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of women that shed blood; because they are adulteresses, and blood is in their hands. For thus saith the Lord GOD; I will bring up a company upon them, and will give them to be removed and spoiled. And the company shall stone them with stones, and dispatch them with their swords; they shall slay their sons and their daughters, and burn up their houses with fire. Thus will I cause lewdness to cease out of the land, that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness. And they shall recompense your lewdness upon you, and ye shall bear the sins of your idols: and ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 23:45-49)

Judgment upon the Two Sisters (45-49): The Lord is the one judging the two sisters. At the time of Ezekiel God had already sent judgment upon Aholah (Samaria) by the

Assyrian armies. And now He is sending judgment upon Aholibah (Jerusalem) by the hand of the Babylonians, and in the very next chapter Jerusalem is surrounded by the Babylonian hordes.

EZEKIEL

Chapter 24

The Boiling Pot

Introduction: This chapter will complete this first section concerning the judgment on Israel and Jerusalem. (*The subsequent sections – 25 to 32 will deal with the judgment of the Muslim nations, whose chapters transpire during the siege on Jerusalem.*) On the day when the siege and capture of Jerusalem began, the Lord gave the prophet a parable that he acted out concerning the siege and the capture of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel was to set a pot (*Jerusalem*) on the fire, fill it with water and pieces of flesh (*the inhabitants of Jerusalem*). He was to place fuel under it to make it boil furiously (the siege and its severity).

Ezekiel will also witness the sudden death of his wife, whom he was not to mourn over. Ezekiel was to be a symbol of the despair the people felt at the fate of the beloved city Jerusalem.

Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day. (Ezekiel 24:1-2)

Babylon Arrives at Jerusalem (1-2): At this very moment the walls of Jerusalem are being surrounded by the Babylonian armies. The date given is the ninth year, in the tenth month. This date is also given in the historical account in 2 Kings 25:1, by Jeremiah in 39:1 and 52:4. All the warnings by the prophet Ezekiel in the preceding chapters have led to this very day.

And utter a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Set on a pot, set it on, and also pour water into it: Gather the pieces thereof into it, even every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder; fill it with the choice bones. Take the choice of the flock, and burn also the bones under it, and

make it boil well, and let them seethe the bones of it therein. Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the bloody city, to the pot whose scum is therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it! bring it out piece by piece; let no lot fall upon it. For her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the top of a rock; she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust; That it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance; I have set her blood upon the top of a rock, that it should not be covered. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the bloody city! I will even make the pile for fire great. Heap on wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and spice it well, and let the bones be burned. Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, that the brass of it may be hot, and may burn, and that the filthiness of it may be molten in it, that the scum of it may be consumed. She hath wearied herself with lies, and her great scum went not forth out of her: her scum shall be in the fire. In thy filthiness is lewdness: because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it: it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent; according to thy ways, and according to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 24:3-14)

The Boiling Pot (3-14): Ezekiel now is to act out a parable. He is to take a pot and fill it with water (vs. 3). Then he is to take pieces of flesh (vs. 4). Then he was to take bones and place them under the pot to fuel the fire to a vigorous boil (vs. 5).

The interpretation is in verses 6-14. The pot is the city of Jerusalem; the citizens are in that pot. Their sin is the scum that's in the pot. Jerusalem is called the "bloody city" (vss. 6, 9) and this is in reference to their misuse of the Levitical law of covering the blood that is spilt upon the ground. According to Leviticus 17:13 blood was to be covered by dust. Any blood not covered by dust was to be avenged. Thus God is avenging the blood they have spilt (vss. 7-8). Following the boiling of the flesh and burning of the bones, Ezekiel is told to empty the pot and place it back upon the coals to burn the residue in the midst of the pot (vss. 11-12). This is to typify that the sin of the people will be burnt up in the midst of the city, the Lord is cleansing the city from all its lewdness (vss. 13-14).

Also the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the

morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded. And the people said unto me, Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so? Then I answered them, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Speak unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword. And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men. And your tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet: ye shall not mourn nor weep; but ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one toward another. Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 24:15-24)

Death of Ezekiel's Wife (15-24): Ezekiel is now to lose his wife, "the desire of thine eyes" (vs. 16). He is also told that he is not to mourn over her (vss. 16-18). What follows in verses 19 through 25 is the interpretation of this event. Ezekiel and his wife are to represent Israel and the city, and all therein. God is showing that just as Ezekiel lost the "desire of his eyes" (vs. 16) so shall they lose their beloved city, the sanctuary, and the children "the desire of their eyes" (vs. 21). And as Ezekiel was not allowed to mourn for his wife, Israel will not be allowed to mourn in the usual custom, for they will be taken into captivity and "pine away."

Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters, That he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears? In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am the LORD. (Ezekiel 24:25-27)

Ezekiel's Silence (25-27): At the beginning of Ezekiel's ministry he was told that he would be dumb, speaking only when prophesying (Ezekiel 3: 26). Now he is told that this temporary silence would last only until one comes that has escaped from the final destruction of Jerusalem and tells of its fall (see Ezekiel 33:22-23), which marks the end of the second section of Ezekiel.

- Chapters 1-24: Written **before the siege** on Jerusalem

- Chapters 25- 32; Written **during the siege** and eventual fall of Jerusalem
- Chapters 33-48: Written **following the destruction** of Jerusalem