

Ezekiel 19-32

- 5) Lament over Israel's leaders in exile (19:1-14)
- This is a specific type of poetry. It is a song of mourning, what is sometimes referred to as a funeral dirge.
 - This is the first of five laments in Ezekiel, and the only one for Israel. Three laments refer to Tyre (26:17-18; 27:1-36; 28:12-19) and one lament for Egypt (32:1-16).
 - Note that Ezekiel does not refer to them with the title "king" but a more generic word "leader."
 - There are echoes of Gen. 49:8-12 throughout this chapter.
- a) The imagery of a lioness and her cubs (19:1-9)
- i) The lioness and her cubs (19:1-2)
 - (1) The lioness may refer *literally* to Josiah's Queen Hamutal (2 Kings 24:18), or *metaphorically* to the nation of Judah (Gen. 49:9; Num. 23:24; 1 Kings 10:19-20; Isa. 29:1; Mic. 5:8; Rev. 5:5).
 - (2) The cubs probably refer to King Josiah's family, the last four kings of Judah: the brothers Jehoahaz and Zedekiah, Jehoiakim their half-brother, and Jehoiakim's son Jehoiachin/Jeconiah/Coniah.
 - ii) The first cub [cruel Jehoahaz/Shallum?] (19:3-4)
 - (1) Cf. 2 Kings 23:30-31; 2 Chron. 36:1-2 which describe his 3-month reign in 609 BC.
 - (2) Ezekiel's lion is not satisfied with ordinary prey; he develops a particular appetite for human flesh. (Daniel Block)
 - (3) He was taken captive to Egypt by Pharaoh Neco II. (cf. 2 Kings 23:31-35; Jer. 22:11-12)
 - iii) The second cub [either Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, or Zedekiah?] (19:5-9)
 - (1) **Jehoiakim/Eliakim**: Cf. 2 Kings 23:34-24:6; 2 Chron. 36:3-5 which describe his @ 9-year reign from 609/608-598/597 BC.
 - (2) **Jehoiachin**: Cf. 2 Kings 24:8-17; 2 Chron. 36:8-10 which describe his 3-month reign in 597/597 BC.
 - (a) He was imprisoned by the Babylonians for 37 years. (cf. 2 Kings 25:27-30; Jer. 52:31-32)
 - (3) **Zedekiah**: Cf. 2 Kings 24:17-25:7; 2 Chron. 36:10-13 which describe his 11-year reign from 597-586 BC.
 - (a) Jer. 27:1-11 describe ambassadors from Moab, Ammon, Edom, Tyre, and Sidon trying to convince him to rebel against Babylon.
- b) The simile of a vine (19:10-14) (cf. 15:1-8; Isa. 5:1-7; Matt. 21:33-41)
- i) Ideal situation and prosperous growth (19:10-11)
 - ii) Destruction (19:12-14)
 - (1) The "east wind" (19:12) is Babylon.
 - (2) The first "strong thick branch" (19:12) refers to Jehoiachin.
 - (3) The "dry and thirsty land" (19:13) is Babylonian exile.
 - (4) The second "strong thick branch" (19:14) refers to Zedekiah.

c) Israel has had no king since this time. Their next King will be Jesus Christ.

Part four: the fourth collection of messages about Israel's coming judgment (20:1–24:27)

- These seven messages date from the 7th to the 9th year of the exile. [Aug. 14, 591 to Jan. 15, 588 BC] (cf. 21:1; 24:1)
- 1) Message about Israel's rebellion (20:1–44) [Aug. 14, 591 BC]
 - a) Israel's **past** rebellion (20:1-32)
 - i) Introduction (20:1-4)
 - ii) In Egypt (20:5-9)
 - iii) In the wilderness (20:10-26)
 - iv) In the Land (20:27-32)
 - b) Israel's **future** restoration (20:33-44)
 - i) God's direct actions in restoring Israel (20:33-38)
 - ii) God's self-referential motive for restoring Israel (20:39-44)
- 2) Message against the south/parable of the forest fire (20:45–49)
 - a) This is a puzzle as the Negev (the wilderness) has very few trees. It is a dry desert region.
 - b) Ezekiel struggles with the seeming ineffectiveness of his message. (20:49)
 - i) His audience seems to view him as someone not to be taken seriously.
- 3) Message about Yahweh's sword of judgment (21:1–32)
 - a) The **drawn** sword (21:1-7) (cf. chapter 17 and 21:3-5)
 - i) Difficulty of the Hebrew text. (21:2)
 - (1) If sanctuaries (plural), it refers to the many shrines.
 - (2) If sanctuary (singular), it refers to the temple.
 - ii) Yahweh is the ultimate source of this judgment, while Babylon is the immediate, indiscriminate instrument of judgment. (21:3-5)
 - iii) Ezekiel is mourning over a future event. (21:6-7)
 - (1) This is not simply a scare tactic.
 - b) The **sharpened** sword (21:8-17)
 - i) Preparation of the sword (21:8-13)
 - (1) The sword will be used against both common people and leadership.
 - (2) The "princes of Israel" (21:12) were slaughtered (cf. 2 Kings 25:6-7)
 - (a) The interrupted line of David will be restored when Messiah comes. (cf. Gen. 49:9-10; 2 Sam. 7:12-16)
 - (3) Judah's only hope is her Judge!
 - ii) Execution by the sword (21:14-17)
 - (1) Yahweh will have the last clap and the last word. (Daniel Block)
 - c) The sword directed against **Jerusalem** (21:18-27)
 - i) Note that the **ultimate** sword of God's judgment is the **immediate** sword of the Babylonian king. (21:19)

- ii) As the Babylonians approached from the north, one road would branch off to the left and lead down the east side of the Jordan River to Ammon. The other road would veer to the right and lead down west of the Jordan to Jerusalem. (NET Bible) (21:20)
 - iii) Note the three types of divination: shaking the arrows [belomancy/rhabdomancy], consulting idols [necromancy], and examining the irregularities of a sheep's liver [hepatoscopy/hepatomancy]. (21:21)
 - iv) The restoration of the David's line of kings is promised. (21:27)
 - (1) The triple repetition of "ruin" is the strongest superlative in Hebrew.
 - (2) Cf. Gen. 49:10
 - (3) There were no valid claims to the throne until Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey in 33 AD. (M.B.C.)
 - d) The sword directed against **Ammon** (21:28-32)
 - i) While the judgment of Ammon (modern Jordan) may be delayed, it is still guaranteed.
 - ii) Having accomplished God's purpose, the sword of Babylon will no longer be needed. Babylon itself will experience God's wrath at the hand of another nation.
- 4) Message of indictment of Jerusalem (22:1-31)
- a) Revelation # 1: The **reasons** for Jerusalem's judgment (22:1-16)
 - i) Violence and idolatry (22:1-5) (cf. Lev. 19:9-18)
 - (1) Yahweh cannot stand idly by while life is cheapened and His claim to exclusive allegiance is trampled underfoot. (Daniel Block)
 - ii) The sins of the father in 18:10-13. (22:6-12) (cf. Exo. 22:21-27; Lev. 17-26)
 - (1) They did all the evil they could. (John MacArthur)
 - (2) When one forgets God and leaves his ways, the path into every kind of abomination opens before him. (Ralph Alexander)
 - (3) There is abundant evidence that they have abandoned Yahweh's covenant stipulations.
 - iii) Adonai Yahweh's response (22:13-16) (cf. Lev. 26:27-39)
 - b) Revelation # 2: The **smelting process** of Jerusalem's judgment (22:17-22)
 - i) Egypt was understood as the original smelting furnace. (Deut. 4:20; 1 Kings 8:51; Jer. 11:4) Now it shifts to Jerusalem.
 - ii) Judgment and purification from Yahweh Himself will lead to a better understanding of God during the Exile.
 - c) Revelation # 3: The **recipients** of Israel's judgment (22:23-31)
 - i) A survey of Israel's corruption (22:23-29)
 - (1) Physical land (22:24)
 - (2) Prophets (22:25, 28)
 - (3) Priests (22:26)
 - (4) Princes (22:27)
 - (5) People of the land (22:29)
 - ii) Yahweh's response (22:30-31) (cf. Jer. 5:1-6)

- (1) By persistent revolt against the covenant Lord, Jerusalem had dared Him to pour out His indignation, to annihilate them with the fire of His wrath. By their conduct they had brought the covenant curses on their own heads. (Daniel Block)
 - (2) In time past Moses had stood in the breach. (Ps. 106:23). Who will do this now?
 - (a) This does not discredit Jeremiah, Ezekiel, or Daniel.
- 5) Allegory of the sexually-abused-yet-deliberately-unfaithful-sisters (23:1–49)
- Note their similar *origin* (one mother), *position* (sisters), *character* (immoral), *names* (tent), *relationship* with Yahweh (married). (Daniel Block)
 - The names:
 - Northern Israel: Oholah/Aholah means “her own tent/tabernacle”.
 - Southern Judah: Oholibah/Aholibah means “My tent/tabernacle is in her”.
 - The illustration: In this allegory the Lord is depicted as being the husband of two wives. The OT law prohibited a man from marrying sisters (Lev 18:18), but the practice is attested in the OT (cf. Jacob). The metaphor is utilized here for illustrative purposes and does not mean that the Lord condoned such a practice or bigamy in general. (NET Bible) (cf. Jer. 3:6-11)
 - The feeling of nausea which a chapter like this arouses must be blamed not on the writer of the chapter nor even on its contents, but on the conduct which had to be described in such revolting terms. (John Taylor)
- a) The **unfaithfulness** of both (with Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon) (23:1-21)
 - With irony or poetic justice, the objects of her lust become the agents of divinely decreed destruction. (FSB)
 - i) Northern kingdom of Israel (23:5-10)
 - (1) With Assyria
 - ii) Southern kingdom of Judah (23:11-21)
 - (1) With Assyria (23:11-13)
 - (2) With Babylon (23:14-18)
 - (3) With Egypt (23:19-21)
 - b) The **punishment** of Judah (23:22-35)
 - i) Message # 1 (23:22-27)
 - (1) The Pekod, Shoa, and Koa were three Chaldean tribes. (23:23)
 - ii) Message # 2 (23:28-31)
 - iii) Message # 3 (23:32-34)
 - iv) Message # 4 (23:35) (cf. 22:12)
 - c) The **abominations** of both (23:36-49) [This is the focus of the allegory.]
 - i) The charges (23:36-45)
 - ii) The sentencing (23:46-49) (cf. Lev. 20:10)
 - (1) What will happen to the nation should be a warning to the individual adulterous Israelite women in Babylon.

- 6) Allegory of **the copper/bronze/brass boiling pot** (24:1–14) [Jan. 15, 588 BC/Jan. 5, 587 BC]
 - The actual day of judgment by the hands of Babylon has arrived. Chapters 25-33 will address the nations that mocked Israel during this judgment.
 - a) The introduction (24:1-2) (cf. 2 Kings 25:1; Jer. 39:1; 52:4)
 - b) The poem (24:3-5) (cf. Ezek. 11:2-7)
 - i) Perhaps those who had survived so far were thinking that they were the choicest ones who were still safe in Jerusalem.
 - c) The explanation (24:6-14)
 - i) cf. Lev. 17:13
 - ii) While God’s mercy prompts Him to withhold judgment as long as possible to enable people to repent, He does not wait indefinitely. God will eventually and inevitably punish wickedness. (Charles Dyer, MBC)

- 7) Message involving death of Ezekiel’s wife: Judah’s judgment is impending (24:15–27)
 - a) Yahweh’s instructions (24:15-17)
 - b) Ezekiel’s obedience (24:18-24)
 - i) Cf. the normal mourning customs in Jer. 16:5-7.
 - ii) They were not to mourn and weep, not because they were not sad, but because the magnitude of the destruction would render grief inadequate. (Charles Dyer, MBC)
 - iii) Cf. Lev. 26:39 “rot away” (24:23)
 - c) Yahweh’s instructions (24:25-27)
 - i) Ezekiel’s silence would last until 33:21

Part five: the oracles against the Gentile nations (25:1–32:32)

- 1) Against **Ammon** (25:1–7) [East]
- 2) Against **Moab** (25:8–11) [Southeast]
- 3) Against **Edom** (25:12–14) [South-southeast]
- 4) Against **Philistia** (25:15–17) [West]
- 5) Against **Tyre** (26:1–28:19) [North] [Feb. 12, 586 BC?]
- 6) Against **Sidon** (28:20–26) [North]
- 7) Against **Egypt** (29:1–32:32) [South-southwest]
 - a) Oracle against Egypt (29:1) [Jan. 7, 587 BC]
 - b) Ending of ministry (29:17) [Apr. 26, 571 BC]
 - c) Pharaoh's broken arm (30:20) [Apr. 29, 587 BC]
 - d) Oracle against Pharaoh (31:1) [June 21, 587 BC]
 - e) Lament over Pharaoh (32:1) (Mar. 3, 585 BC)
 - f) Pharaoh in Sheol (32:17) [Mar. 17, 585 BC?]