

The Book of Ezekiel (101-120)

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The consequences of resisting the will of the Lord are not always immediately evident. He is merciful and will strive with that heart, or in this case, a nation to bring them to repentance. The seventeenth chapter of Ezekiel is devoted to the history of their defeat and captivity, by Babylon. Also the subsequent failure of the Egyptian army to withstand the second onslaught of the Babylonians. The people of the covenant found it difficult to keep any covenant. Not only did they break the covenant made with the Lord but also that which had been made with Babylon. As a result they brought upon themselves the judgment of the Lord in being taken captive. Even so, the Lord said that He allowed this that He might plead with them, while they are under adverse conditions. Eze. 17:1-21 Of necessity, there are times when the Lord uses adversities, which we bring upon ourselves, to come into our lives that He might get our attention. (v.19-21)

The Lord, who is the author of life, both natural and spiritual, has a purpose in all of His mighty works. He is not hasty in His works. Here, once again, He waits until the tree, Israel, has been brought down, dried up and for all practical purposes, dead. Eze. 17:23-24 However, He is not finished with His mighty works. Out of that which has been destroyed, He will bring forth a great change. The tree which had been brought low, will be exalted. The dry tree will spring to life and be made to flourish. The Lord will plant a twig which would be highly visible to all. It will prosper and grow, spreading it's wings or branches. Becoming fruit bearing, that is prosperous, becoming a tree of great value. It was to become the resting place of every flying fowl, dwelling under the shadow of its mighty wings. In the end, all the trees of the field, the nations of the world, will know that the Lord is in control. He will exalt whom He will exalt and abase those whom He will abase. He is in charge. He is in control.

Historically, after they had been in captivity seventy years, the Lord ultimately reinstated Israel into its land. Prophetically, there is a Messianic message to be found here. The Lord Jesus is the Branch planted on the high mountain and displayed to all. John 12:32 The

place of refuge is to be found in Him. We soon learn to abide under the shadow of His wings. Ps. 57:1 One of the many titles attributed to Him is that of the Branch. He is that Branch, coming from the root of Jesse, upon whom rested the fullness of the seven fold Spirit of the Lord. Isa. 11:1-2 He is to reign over a spiritual kingdom here on this earth for a thousand years. A kingdom of righteousness and purity, in which there will be no sinners. Even if they could get there they would not want to stay. They would not like it. Rev. 20:2-7.

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The Word of the Lord came once again to Ezekiel. Mind you, this is the Word of the Lord and not the word of man. Most likely we get our saying; "that is sour grapes," from this portion of scripture. The Lord said to Ezekiel that the proverb said: the fathers ate the sour grapes, (sinned), and the children's teeth were set on edge or felt the consequences of the sour grapes. Which translated into the idea that as the descendent of the sinner, the child was to bear the responsibility and punishment for the sin of the father. Note also that the Lord stated that this would not be the case in the dealings of Israel with Him. All souls belong to the Lord. He is their creator and their eternal destiny is determined by Him and none other. Eze. 18:1-4

Each and every person shall give an account for themselves, personally, before the Lord. Rom. 14:12 All, rich or poor, small or great, world leaders or common citizens, all will stand before the judgment seat of the Lord and give an answer for their life here on earth. 2 Cor. 5:10 However, it is not necessary that we wait with bated breath and worry, as to the outcome of that appearance before the judge of the whole earth. The wise have already put in their appearance and have eternally settled the matter. The sin's of some have already been confessed to the Lord, therefore they have already stood before the great and true judge. Their sin's are like an open book before the Lord. 1 Tim. 5:24 They have expressed their sorrow for having sinned and violated His Word. They are already judged. They have gained their pardon from the judge who sits on the throne of eternal life. Rom. 8:1 There can be no judgment when there is no condemnation. Judgment begins the moment we are born of the Spirit and become a member of the great and wonderful family of the Lord. 1 Peter 4:17 The blessing of the Lord in the life of those who seek Him changes them from being the most wicked to the purest. Isa. 55:7

There is no doubt but what the theme of this chapter is the souls of mankind.

We are given ample instructions as to how we should live out lives before the Lord. The will of the Lord is made known for the development of a society living in peace with one another and more importantly, with the Lord. The do' and don'ts as required by the Lord with a warning that the souls that sin shall die. The standard of holiness established by the words of this chapter are of the very highest. They are a challenge to all and every Christian. The beauty of the matter is that we are incapable of fulfilling all of these Divine requirements but as we allow the Lord Jesus to live His life in us, we can achieve the very highest life of purity before Him. It is Christ in you which is the hope of His eternal glory being manifest in His people. Col. 1:27.

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The soul that sins, it will die. Eze. 18:4 The soul of man is the creation of the Lord, as such it is His prerogative to deal with it as He will. It is identified by the scriptures as being the blood, the life of the flesh. Lev. 17:11 The blood, the soul life of man and beast is that which motivates the flesh or the body, maintaining life. The emotions of natural life are demonstrated as being a part of this nature of the soul. Obviously, it is the source of decisions which are made, in a spiritual life, which lead either to life eternal or eternal separation from the Lord. He makes a difference between that soul or person who practices sin and the individual who has been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, of whom it was prophesied that, Jesus would pour out His soul unto death. Isa. 53:12 From the multiplicity of animals sacrificed under the Law, to the once for all sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, His is the only acceptable offering for the forgiveness of sin. Heb. 10:10 The sinning soul, justly condemned to eternal death, need not die for Christ has died in their place. If only they will accept Him as Savior and redeemer.

The just, fulfilling the Word of the Lord, will not be responsible for the actions of others, neither the father for the son nor the son for the father. Eze. 18:5-17 The individual living a righteous life will not be held accountable for the misdeeds of another, regardless of family association. The only person in the history of mankind to be held accountable for the iniquity of others is the Lord Jesus. He took upon

Himself the sin and iniquity of the whole of the human race. The Just One suffered for the unjust that they might know eternal life. 1 Peter 2:24 Each and every person shall give an accounting of their own deeds. The righteous may declare His righteousness and subsequent acceptance, while the unrighteous must confess his wickedness and receive a just reward. Yet, if the wicked will turn now from his wickedness, he may be forgiven and accepted. Eze. 16:21-22 Contrarily to what some may believe, the Lord does not take pleasure in the rejecting the ungodly, He would much rather see them turn from their wicked ways and follow His Word. Eze. 18:23

On the other hand, it is a extremely serious matter to turn from the Lord and begin to live a life of unrighteousness. Regardless of all of the past good deeds , the bad decision of turn from a life of holiness will cause the past to be totally disregarded. Eze. 18:24 What fearful consequences are faced when we depart from the Lord. The Lord Jesus spoke of those who would boast of many actions they had been involved in for the Lord but because of a life style contrary to the Word, were rejected. Mt. 7:22-23.

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Who's direction of life is not equitable, just or right. Certainly not the Lord's. Yet the accusation of the people was against the righteous ways of the Lord. They blamed Him, declaring that His ways were inequitable and unfair. Eze. 18:25 Today the cry is similar; too restrictive, too narrow, too strong against sin. Much the same as in that day. As a matter of fact, the mannerism and workings of the Lord are always fair and just. The Lord Jesus is the Branch, the King who will reign and prosper while executing judgment and justice. Jer. 23:5 He is justice personified. The wise and understanding will not quibble about the requirements of the Lord but being wise, will acknowledge that His ways are right and just. Thus, they shall walk in righteousness while the unrighteous will stumble and fall. Hos. 14:9

Sin is a destructive force, its end is the way of death. Regardless of the stature achieved, morally or more important spiritually, sin will bring the condemnation of death upon all. The righteous, if they sin die because of their sin, except they repent. The unrighteous, repenting and turning from their sin, will not die but gain eternal life because they forsake their sin. Eze. 18:26-29 It is just that simple and straight

forward. Jesus, the just one, the sinless one paid the penalty for the sin for all mankind, bearing none. The unjust are all justified through His atonement, that is, His blood shed on the tree, when they come to Him for pardon. 1 Peter 3:18 It is a clear matter of eternal life or eternal death. The choice is up to every individual. Shall we accept His justice or reject it?

A vital question asked of them that each and every human being must ask themselves. Why will we die? Every provision for a beautiful life here and now and for eternity has been made by the Lord. None need die in their sin. No doubt, the Lord marvels at the ignorance of mankind when they disregard all of His preparations for them to live eternally, choosing rather to die in their sins and suffer the consequences of eternal death. The call of the Lord is to cast off all transgressions and iniquity which cannot benefit but will only bring destruction. Exchange it for a new heart and a new spirit. A complete change of the direction of one's life. Eze. 18:30-32 Become a new creation in the Lord Jesus. The old way of living is expelled from the heart and a brand new life is born in the heart and spirit. The perfect heart transplant. He gives us His heart in the place of that old heart, which at its very best was still vile and wicked. 2 Cor. 5:17 Contrary to what some think, the Lord finds no pleasure in rejecting anyone. His great desire is that all would turn from their sin and come to Him for forgiveness. 2 Peter 3:9.

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A lesson on the history of two kings of Israel. A lamentation, a funeral dirge. They are mostly identified as Jehoahaz (Jehovah has grasped, or sustains) and Jehoiachin (Yahweh will uphold). According to the meaning of their names they should have experienced the blessing and protection of Jehovah. However, they continued the abominations that were so common to Israel and consequently lost the Divine protection of Jehovah. Jehoahaz was taken captive by Egypt. Jehoiachin, by Babylon. Once again we encounter the strong message sent by Ezekiel and that is, Israel never seemed to be able to comprehend, that if they forsake the Lord and go after other gods, He will forsake them and they would become extremely vulnerable to being taken captive by heathen nations. Eze. 19:1-9

Next we come to the history of the nation from the stand point of the Lord. Eze. 19:10-14 He saw them as the descendants of a mother

greatly blessed of the Lord. Planted by the waters, she had become exceedingly fruitful and had grown into a great tree, a people, in the land. This immense tree was the source of strong rods or leaders who were powerful men in the Lord. Men such as Moses and Aaron whose rods were demonstrated as rods of power before the Egyptians. Ex. 7:9 Then there is the miracle of Aaron's rod and its demonstration of life and fruitfulness all taking place in one night. A symbol of the Godhead. It budded, blossomed and bore fruit in one night. One rod, three miraculous actions. Added to that was the scepter, the sign of authority and power which the Lord bestowed upon the kings of Israel. That scepter is now to be found in a person, the Lord Jesus. The prophecy. Gen. 49:10 The fulfillment, a kingdom of righteousness. Heb. 1:8

What a powerful nation they would have become had they but followed the Lord. The key to a people blessed of the Lord is to do His will, both then and now. Their actions were so obnoxious to the Lord that He was forced into a denial of marital relationship with them. She is not my wife. Hos. 2:2 The Lord in utter disgust issued a bill of divorcement and put Israel away. Isa. 50:1 The words of the Lord through Ezekiel verify the judgments of the Lord which came upon them because of their vile actions in worshipping other gods, who are not gods. The great tree plucked up by the roots, in anger and fury, cast down, withered and utterly consumed by fire. Their kingdom, their God appointed and Divinely anointed leadership destroyed all because they forsook the Lord. The volume of their wickedness had reach such a great measure that the Lord could no longer tolerate such extreme actions. There is an end to His patience.

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Certain of the elders of Israel seek out Ezekiel that he might contact the Lord on their behalf and subsequently instruct them in the ways of the Lord. The date of this meeting has some very interesting numbers. Eze. 20:1 It took place in the seventh year of captivity. The number seven is used to convey a message of completion, the full complement of a thing or action. In Ezekiel's prophetic utterance during their visit with him, the Lord spoke to them showing both the fullness of His disgust and dislike of their attitudes and actions, plus His plans for the future, or the end of the age. The number five is the number of atonement. All the work of the Lord toward mankind is based on

atonement by blood, the blood of His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus. The number ten is that which relates to the commandments which Israel completely disrespected and disregarded, as is so completely communicated in the words of the Lord to Ezekiel. Eze. 20:2

The Lord is not required to hear the plea of those who sin against Him. Eze. 20:3 Their spiritual attitude had so thoroughly disgusted Him that His ears were closed to their request. Rest assured, that the Lord will turn a deaf ear to those who know better and deliberately sin. Ps. 66:18 As a judge relates the wrong doings of a criminal standing before him at the time of sentencing, so the Lord called upon His prophet to act as a judge and relate the strong emotion of anger against Israel for all their abominations. Eze. 20:4 This is accomplished by the relating of five events where the Lord stretched forth His hand to deliver Israel and help them, only to find that they would violate His honor and His name by their idol worship.

The actions of the Lord, in delivering the children of Israel from Egypt, was based upon the authority of His name. He strongly declared to them that He was the LORD (Jehovah) their God (Elohim, plural of Eloah. Thus revealing the trinity through His name). The Lord lifted up His hand and vowed, making a covenant promise, that He would take them into a home land of their very own. He described the land as the most beautiful and wonderful of all lands. A place flowing with milk and honey. An exceeding fruitful land abounding in all the necessities of life. Eze. 20:5 Would they but keep the Word, the statutes of the Lord, every year there would have been super abundant crops throughout the land. Every sixth year, they would have received a double crop making the seventh year a Sabbatical year wherein they would not have to plant, cultivate or reap their crops. Then every 49th year they would have received a crop so large that it would feed them for the fiftieth year and the next year until the new crops came in. Lev. 25 They had it made but blew it. They rebelled against the Lord.

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When called upon to separate themselves from their own idols and those of Egypt, they refused. The anger of the Lord was kindled against them to such a degree that He was ready to punish them while they were still in Egypt. Eze. 20:8 However, because of His name's

sake, He did not follow through with the feelings of His heart but continued to bless them by delivering them from Egypt and taking them into the wilderness. Eze. 20:9-10

In the wilderness He instructed them in the way that He would have them go by giving them the Law, a code of life whereby they would be blessed of the Lord. They continued with a spirit of rebellion until once again it was in the mind of the Lord to destroy them. Again He refrained from following through on the thoughts of His heart. For His great name's sake and in compassion He spared them by not making a complete end of them. Here He made the decision not to allow the generation of those who came up, out to Egypt to enter into the land of promise. Therefore, they wandered in the wilderness and only their children were led into the land preserved for them by the Lord. Eze. 20:11-17

The second generation, the children raised in the wilderness, knowing and seeing all that had taken place, instead of understanding the cause of all the problems of their parents, followed in the same pattern of rebellion. Through their actions they brought upon themselves the judgments of the Lord. The will of the Lord was to have a people who would worship Him and in so doing would reap the benefits of life, both natural and spiritual. Their trespasses and refusal to do the will of the Lord were acts of self corruption and destruction. Eze. 20:18-26

In spite of all the things which were done against the will of the Lord, He brought them into the land of promise. They immediately polluted the land with their heathenish offerings and worship. When the Lord inquired of them concerning the high place used for sacrifices and offerings they called it Bamah. Eze. 20:27-29 The Lord offered them gifts, a way of life orchestrated by the Lord. One with the fullness of blessing resting upon them, but that stubborn spirit prevailed. It is not that they were not a religious people, for the testimony of the Lord is consistently against their offerings offered to other gods and their false worship of the same. Because of their persistence in disregarding the ways of the Lord, He felt no responsibility, nor compulsion, to take time to respond to their seeking after Him, at this time. Eze. 20:30-31.

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The thoughts of the people were of a negative fashion. They had no

vision of the plan and purpose of the Lord. They expected to be like the heathen and continue to worship the gods of wood and stone. Gods created by man which were inferior to man, therefore not gods at all. Eze. 20:32 In spite of all that they had done in turning away from the Lord, He is still faithful and promised to bring them unto Himself, gathering them from the nations among whom He had scattered them. Demonstrating to them His exceeding great power and wrath. In bringing them unto Himself, He was to confront them face to face, at which time He would plead with them. It is not difficult to place the visit of the Messiah here for it was He who came to His own only to be rejected by them. John 1:11 Jesus dealt with Israel on a personal basis. He was the living Word appearing in the flesh of a man. They saw His mighty works and His love and care for mankind, yet cruelly rejected Him. John 1:14 His message was the call of the Almighty to be reconciled unto the Almighty. Those who listened to Him and His message found the cleansing and forgiveness of sin which may only be found in Him. Isa. 1:18

Those who would be the prized possession of the Lord would all pass under the rod. Eze. 20:37 An act performed by the shepherd as he returned his sheep to the sheepfold at the end of the day. As they passed under the rod they were counted that the shepherd might know that all had returned and none lost. Note Jer. 33:13 Missing just one, he would not leave that sheep outside the fold but would go and search diligently until he had found that one lost sheep. Mt. 18:12 Jesus Himself said that He was sent to rescue the lost sheep of Israel. Mt. 15:24 It is fitting to bestow the shepherd titles upon the Lord Jesus for He is revealed as the Good shepherd. John 10:11 The Great shepherd. Heb. 13:20 and as the Chief Shepherd. 1 Peter 5:4 He is likewise the Shepherd and Bishop of all who will come to Him. 1 Peter 2:25

The rod is that Branch, cut from the tree, thus becomes a type of the Word made flesh, the Lord Jesus. The rod becomes the example, the staff and helper to all who would walk in the ways of the Lord Jesus. The rod is vital to our spiritual welfare. Ps. 23:4 The rod is a teaching element used to instruct and correct. Prov. 13:24 It also is to become a measuring instrument used to measure the Bride of Christ. She is the eternal temple of the Lord. Rev. 11:1 A royal marriage will produce a line of true leadership which will become an everlasting heavenly

order. Rev. 12:5 The only possible way into the eternal kingdom of the Lord is through the incorruptible seed, the Word of the Lord. 1 Pet. 1:23 Coming under the rod indicates a people whose life is lived according to the Word of the Lord.

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A work of cleansing promised. Any action from the Lord which will be extremely beneficial will begin with a cleansing of those involved. Here it is a removal of those who are the rebellious ones. Eze. 20:38 Revivals are the result of a visitation of the Lord where there is a work of sanctification wrought, both in its inception and in its continuance. The harvest is gathered and stored after the grain has been through a process of separation from the chaff. Mt. 3:12 The fan may be likened to the gentle wind of the Spirit blowing on the whole procedure. The chaff which is lighter and has no value, will be blown aside and is thus divided from the valuable grain. This is a course of action which must take place in the end of the age, prior to the marriage of the Lamb and the second coming of the Lord Jesus. The magnitude of the division (50-50) is seen in the five wise and the five foolish virgins, all of them fell asleep, but the wise had made preparation prior to their falling asleep. Therefore when the Bridegroom came for the wedding, they were prepared and anxiously awaiting His presence. Mt. 25:1-13 This is not the second coming, it is the marriage of the Lamb and will be before that moment of time. This is actually more important to the church than His second coming inasmuch as it will take place previous to the tribulation. The woman, the true church in the end of the age, will have been married long enough to give birth to the man child. Rev. 12:2, 5

Those persisting in their false worship of idols are told to continue with such actions, if they will not hear the truth. Eze. 20:39 Indicating that the Lord has reached a place of utter frustration with them. Turning them over to a reprobate mind, as will happen to all who follow their pattern of life. Rom. 1:28 They had polluted His Holy Name by their actions and He wanted nothing more to do with their gifts given in an attempt to appease His anger against them. The Apostle said that the Lord previously had winked at religious ignorance but now under the influence of the gospel of Christ has commanded all mankind, everywhere to repent. Acts 17:30

What lies ahead? His people, composed of Jew and Gentile, are declared to be one, in the revelation of a new man. The old with all of its twists and turns is no longer effective before the Lord. Both are reconciled in one, in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2:15-26 They will all gather in the mountain of His Holiness. A mountain is significant of a high place, an apex or the lofty consummation of a thing. In this case it is the height of His Holiness, His power and glory, which is His church and Bride, the object of His love.

Eph. 5:25 The people whom He has purchased with His very own blood. Acts 20:28.

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One of the wonderful promises of the Lord is found in the words of Isaiah. He declared that in the last days, the LORD's house would be the very highest of all, in other words, the pinnacle of the work of the Lord. Isa. 2:2 We know this to be the perfect Bride of Christ who will be prepared for the wedding of the Lamb through a last day revival. Eph. 5 A return to the holiness of the Lord. A restoration of the standards of purity and righteousness as taught by the Word of the Lord. The last day church will love the Word and adhere to the teachings of the Word as no other generation have ever done. The true Zion of God and the everlasting, eternal Jerusalem will be the source of a wave of scriptural truth which will sweep the world with a mighty ground swell, like a great spiritual tsunami. Isa. 2:3

Isaiah's mountain is not the Law, nor is it mount Sinai. The Apostle wrote that the New Testament Christians do not come to mount Sinai, to the Law.

Heb. 12:18-21 Christ fulfilled the Law. He brought the Law to its completion. Rom. 10:4 Now, under grace, we come to the real Sion of God, the chief corner stone, the Lord Jesus and build our salvation on Him. 1 Peter 2:6 The church is to become the last day Jerusalem, called the heavenly, and she will be just that as she enters into the fullness of the Lord. The intent of the Apostle is very obvious as he identified this true Sion and Jerusalem as the assembly of the first born. Those who have their name written in heaven. A group who are fully justified by Christ and have embraced and experienced the maturity, the perfection which is in knowing the Lord Jesus. Heb. 12:23 They are those who participate in the New Covenant. (most definitely not the old). Heb. 12:24 There is no need to try to

“spiritualize” these things. They are clearly proclaimed in the Word of Truth and will come to pass as the Lord has declared.

Ezekiel’s words show a spirit of regret upon the people. An attitude which produces repentance when seeking the Lord. He also spoke of the Lord receiving them graciously. Definitely, as in all who come to Christ there is a work of sanctification accomplished in those who return unto the Lord. Eze. 20:41 The beauty of the whole action is that they will come to know the LORD. Eze. 20:42 There is no question but what the establishment of a last day Israel is a part of the plan of the Lord for the two witness are to testify there during the tribulation period. Rev. 11:3 The very presence of these two and the reaction toward them gives evidence that the natural Jerusalem does not change its attitude toward Christ. Rev. 11:3-11 Especially the manner in which they die and then the treatment of their dead bodies.

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When we carefully consider the words of the Prophet there is evidence that the move back into the land is not through the motivation of the people but the hand of the Lord consummating His promise to Israel. Eze. 20: 43 It is well documented that after the seventy years in Babylon the Lord opened the door for Israel to return to their land. They are unchanged for they still are remembering their wrongs doings and as all who continue in sin, they loath themselves. The truly repentant, while remembering the past, do not grieve because of that memory but rejoice in the knowledge that their sins have been pardoned. Most assuredly the return of Israel in the fulfillment of this prophecy was in the return led by Nehemiah. Their experiences in that return are to be learned in the books of Nehemiah, Ezra, Haggai and Zachariah as well as other old testament books. They would know beyond the shadow of a doubt that their return was the hand of the Lord doing what He had promised because of His name’s sake and not because of they had changed their hearts. Pretty much sounds like the same old bunch.

Eze. 20:44 Like leaving Egypt, when they left Babylon they were a mixed multitude. Under the impact of the hearing of the Word of the Lord they separated themselves from the mixture, desirous of doing the will of the Lord. That is revival. Neh. 13:3.

Ezekiel's prophecy then turns toward those who had replaced the captives in the land when they were carried into Babylon. They were the very poorest of citizens who were left in the land by Nebuchadnezzar. 2 Kings 25:11-12.

People from the kingdom of Babylon who were not the best of citizenry were also allowed into the land, thus the prophecy was directed toward them. They would soon be removed from the land by fire. Eze. 20:45-49

The Lord has used fire to purify and sanctify and will in the revival that lies before us, purge His church with the Holy Spirit and baptism of fire. The Lord Jesus is depicted as one who will be a refiner and a purifier of silver and gold. Mal. 3:3 That which is superfluous will be burned out of the individual members of the body of Christ or they will not be in that body.

Many of those who were taken captive and most definitely those born in Babylon during the seventy years had not heard read the Law of the Lord. Therefore, to them Ezekiel was speaking in parables too difficult for them to understand. When they returned to the Lord and the land their response to the Word was beautiful. They gave great attention to the Word. Standing when it was read. Its impact on them caused them to worship the Lord, with fervor. They understood, and rejoiced in what they heard. Neh. 8:3, 5, 6, 8-9.

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If we are to take the positive prophecies of Ezekiel and modernize them by exalting Israel, then let's be fair and include all of His prophecies in current events. The next proclamation from the Word of the Lord received by Ezekiel is focused directly on Jerusalem. It is against Israel and in particular directed toward the holy places. Eze. 21:1-2 The LORD is reported to have made a direct statement to Israel, alerting them to the fact that He is against them, and that He will draw His sword from its sheath and place it into action. Thus cutting off from them the righteous and the wicked. His sword will flourish against all flesh from the north to the south and will not be returned once it has been removed from its sheath. Eze. 21:3-5

It is not difficult to find a New Testament prophecy which has the same broad, world wide scope as that of Ezekiel's mighty and effective sword. It is called a great sword, indicating its strength, its broad

scope and its long endurance. It is wielded by the rider of the red horse, the horse and rider producing wars, insurrections, rebellions and murders, all of which have become a sign of the coming of the Lord. Rev. 6:4 With the loosing of this red horse a spirit of the shedding of blood was released on the earth. Let men try as they will to create peace, the prophetic declaration is, that peace has been removed from the earth. Jesus verified a season such as this preceding His second coming by stating that there would be wars and rumors of wars, but the end is not yet. Mt. 24:6 Jeremiah adds a very fitting thought for our time when he said, "We looked for peace, but no good came, and for a time of health and behold trouble." Jer. 8:15 There could hardly be a scripture more fitting to describe the condition of our country today.

Ezekiel was commanded to sigh, literally to groan or mourn to travail for Israel because of the hand of the Lord and His sword which was to be against them. The intensity of his prayer is found in the statement, the breaking, the rupture of his loins. A sure sign that he was to enter into a spirit of prayer a kin to birth pangs. The burden was to be heavy, his spirit was to feel the bitterness which was the experience of the Lord in having to punish His people so harshly. Eze. 21:6 There is destined to be a time, not far hence, when the unsaved inhabitants of this world will exult in what they will feel is the accomplishment of the ages. A time of peace, a calm resting over the whole world. Mankind, under the leadership of the antichrist will have reached that long dreamed of, one world, one people, one language. That however is as yet an unfulfilled sign which will act as an introduction to the coming of the Lord Jesus. 1 Thess. 5:3 This precedes His coming, which will not happen until all the prophecies pertaining to that event have been accomplished.

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Ezekiel, why are you groaning? It's the report that is given concerning the future. It will come to pass. It cannot fail for it is the Word of the Lord. It will be a time of fear such as never has been felt by mankind. The courage of the very bravest will fail them and become like liquid. The hands of the strongest will become completely useless. The strong in spirit will be totally weak. The knees of all will become like water. Eze. 21:7 Jesus spoke of a time in the end of the age when the conditions of the earth and the universe would suddenly begin to show

the signs warning of the last days. He said, the hearts of men would fail them for fear as earthly and celestial signs are displayed. Luke 21:26

This introduced a period of several prophecies given to Ezekiel. The sword is prepared, it is sharpened and highly polished until it will gleam and flash like lightning. Eze. 21:9-10 Meaning that it will be highly active. It is sharpened and polished that it might slaughter many. Is it a time for mirth, for lightness and frivolity? The end of the age is a time of seriousness. To those who are unsaved it will be so because of the uncertainty and fear in their lives. The spiritual, because it is the time of the fulfillment of the marriage between Christ and His church. The sword of judgment makes no difference between the extremely ungodly and the very purest of men, the Lord Jesus. It is to strike out at Him as well. He is the rod, the scion, the son. The fellow, the companion of the Lord against whom the sword was to make warfare and smite the shepherd. Zech. 13:7 He was smitten for all and raised from the dead by the glory of the Lord and now rules eternally.

The one appointed to be the destroyer has received the sword. The hour of the enactment of the prophecy has come. Therefore, cry out and wail for it was to be on the people of the Lord and upon all the princes (the kings, the leaders) of Israel. Terror laying hold upon the leaders because of the sword. Smite the thigh with the hand. The clapping of the hand or as in this case the thigh, was a sign of grief. The placing of the hand upon the thigh, was used as a sign of a sealed covenant, as Abraham did with his servant. Gen. 24:9 This is a call to recognize the conclusion of the old covenant, broken because of the disobedience of the children of Israel. The Lord, because His is eternal when making covenant made it from an eternal standpoint and would never break it. However it takes two to make a covenant, Israel, the other party of the covenant, did not maintain their part of the covenant. Thus it was broken. Heb. 8:9 Now, at this time, all must come to Him through the new covenant. Heb. 8:13.

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The magnitude of the transgressions of the people may be known by the measure of judgment passed on them. By the mere clapping of the prophets hands their punishment was doubled, even tripled. A

statement of the number of attacks which were to be carried out against Israel. Eze. 21:14 Because of their repeated wickedness and complete disregard of the Lord they would know great fear when the enemy with his bright flashing sword would come against them. Whether they would turn to the right or the left, The sword would be there. There was no avenue of escape for them. Until the will of the Lord had been wrought, His fury would not come to a cessation.

In the next prophecy Ezekiel is directed to put up a sign for the king of Babylon to find the best route to come against the land. The king would consult his wizards and necromancers but it would be considered to be a false divination, they all are, for they do not originate with the Lord. The wickedness of the people so far out weighed the promises of his covenant with them that the king of Babylon would not extend mercy to them. Eze. 21:18-24

Periodically there appear prophetic utterances which are directed at the time or person in which they were given. However, they may also fit and foreshadow another future event. The person called the prince of Israel and the dealings of the Lord with him, also portray some of the character of one called the antichrist. The words, "profane wicked prince" communicate volumes. Eze. 21:25 The title of a prince refers to one who is exalted to a position of honor and leadership. There is one, who at one time, that is in the passed eternity, was the highest created of those whom the Lord had in His presence. Only God was of higher position than Lucifer. His place was immediately before the throne of the Lord. He was called the anointed cherub. Eze. 28:14 There is no opposition against the Lord that is as damaging as that which occurs in His immediate presence. As Lucifer, turned on the Lord, so Judas turned and not only betrayed the Lord Jesus but he also sold Him. Mt. 26:15 Jesus was not ignorant concerning the character and ultimate dirty work of Judas. When He chose the twelve He said and one of you is a devil. John 6:70 The sin of rebellion started with the character called Lucifer. He was cast out of heaven. Isa. 14:12 However in the plan and purpose of the Lord, he still has access to heaven. As a matter of fact He doesn't leave the place. He is the accuser of the brethren before the throne of God, accusing them day and night. Rev. 12:10 He is a 24/7 stinker. He is too occupied with his dirty work than to even begin to take a personal interest in any one person.

115

Psalm 7:9-17. Too many look for the antichrist to come into power from a position of political leadership. He is first of all a leader in the last day church who will become apostate as did Lucifer and Judas. He will have been a true Apostle and will have a large following in the church. As a renegade, he will assume the position of the antichrist becoming both a world wide politician and the head of the amalgamated false church, the harlot church, religious Babylon. In the seventy four years that I have been saved almost any and all world leaders in politics or religion have had books written about them being the antichrist but none of them have ever made it. The list is too long to give here and at this time. Obviously, these who prophesied outside of the Word of the Lord missed the mark. The Messianic prophesy recorded in Psalms eight, verses twelve to fourteen give an insight on the enemy within the camp. The one who rose up against Him was not an enemy, one who opposed Him nor one who exalted himself against Him, but it was one of His own. A true friend, a counselor, they had walked together to the house of the Lord. To find other types and symbols of this man look in the scriptures for those like David's son, Absalom.

The Lord spoke to Israel of an appointed time and the arrival of a day when this King of Babylon would overwhelm Israel. The Lord does not work in a haphazard manner nor does He do things on the spur of the moment. He has a plan, a schedule and is adhering exactly to that which has been established from eternity. The Lord spoke concerning this one who was so self exalted and said the profane, wicked leader in Israel had fulfilled his days and that the end had come. Eze. 21:25 The diadem and crown of His office was to be taken away from him. The diadem was the sign of the priesthood. While the crown was the emblem of a politician. He is to be relieved of his position in Israel for his end will come. Eze. 21:26.

The glory and majesty of the kingdom was to be crushed, awaiting the coming of one who would be the possessor of the kingdom, the Messiah. The kingdom rightfully belongs to Him and it will be given unto Him, He is raising it up and is building, a spiritual kingdom, an eternal kingdom.. One of the great mistakes that was made by the people in His first visit to this earth Was that they anticipated the building of a secular kingdom which would bring deliverance to them

from the Romans. Now, in the end of the age as we approach the hour of His visitation we find the same expectance is being perpetrated on the people. Jesus said that His kingdom was not of this world for had it been his followers would have fought for it. John 18:36.

116

Nothing shall remain the same. Eze. 21:27c NKJV. As in that day, the Lord was about to establish a great change in the conditions which prevailed, so in the immediate future there will come drastic changes to the true church. Today, the church is a kin to the church at Laodicea. Luke warm, neither on fire for the Lord nor totally backslidden. A condition which the Lord totally despises, for He said that they would be spewed out of His mouth. This is an extremely serious situation which will fully develop prior to the second coming of Christ. A total lack of a knowledge of the word of the Lord, in the church. For the LORD gives wisdom, out of His mouth come knowledge and understanding. Pr. 2:6

How ironic, that this group are the rich group, a doctrine which is being propagated at this time with the emphasis of many preachers being placed on the wealth of this world. O, most definitely this is according to the prophetic teaching of the Word, thus adding proof to the fact that we are like this Laodicean church and that we are living in the last days. Being a self sufficient church they unfortunately are quoted as saying, that they have need of nothing, that nothing includes the presence of the Lord in their lives. The Lord then gives five conditions which prevail and spoil all the joys of their riches. Worldly wealth, possessions, the latest fashions cannot satisfy. Especially where one has had at least a taste of how wonderful the Lord is. Rev. 3:15-17 The ravages on the spiritual life of one caught up in the web of riches may not yet appear, but then we are not finished yet.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you. Mt. 6:33 The exchange of the Lord is incomparable. Spiritual blessings in great abundance awaits those who will seek the Lord in lieu of the things of this world. Rev. 3:18 His gold is eternal and will not perish. The white raiment is the righteousness of the saints and is a reference to the wedding gown to be worn by the Bride of Christ. The anointing of the eyes is a vital action, for now,

more than ever before it is extremely necessary that the church has the pure teachings of the Word of the Lord, and not the ideas of men who feel that they have the end of the age all figured out. Anointed eyes will have a true vision of the Lord Jesus and will adhere to the Word without deviation. There can be but one interpretation of the Word, and that is His. Anointed eyes will see as He sees and will read with His knowledge and understanding. There is yet great hope for this church as well as the others for in His loving kindness He allows a space of time for repentance. Indeed, there is a great change in the church world coming soon.

117

The church is frequently blind sided by the enemy within, who will strongly draw attention to the enemy without. That which is within the flock is the most dangerous. Jesus warned of false prophets who would appear to be legitimate sheep, by using the wool of a dead sheep. Inwardly they are filled with anger, malice, hatred, revenge (ravens and wolves) and every other satanic spirit which motivates them to deceive. Mt. 7:15 This too becomes a last day sign as the enemy within comes in the guise of a false Christ. How else could he deceive the saints. What is shocking, is the display of what is supposedly the power of the Lord, their demonstrated ability to work all manner of signs and wonders. Thereby deceiving those who are gullible with the possibility that even the very elect of the Lord would follow them. Mark 13:22

This is a last day phenomenon. How can we know? Jesus said; My sheep hear My voice. Listen to His voice (the Word), learn its very special sound and no other voice will be able to imitate His. Grow up, be a mature Christian. Discover the "strong meat" of the Word. Study to show yourself approved of God. Then by becoming intimately acquainted with the Word, there will be the necessary measure of strength and knowledge to be able to discern, that which is true and that which is false. Heb. 5:14 Likewise there is the gift of the Spirit called the discerning of spirits whereby the unclean spirit would be exposed because of its nature. 1 Cor. 12:10 The Spirit of the Lord exposed the sin of Ananias and Sapphira to the Apostle and executed immediate judgment. Acts 5:1-10

Peter spoke of the onslaught against the church and said that it would come in the form of false prophets and false teachers teaching what he called "damnable heresies" disruptive, teachings which mislead. 2 Pet. 2:1 Paul spoke of false apostles, workers of deceit who would disguise themselves as angels of light. 2 Cor. 11:13-14 No marvel, for satan himself does not appear as a frightening figure but also transforms himself into an angel of light. That very fact is indicative of his deceptive appearance, not as what we might conceive of as a frightening satanic figure but as a pleasant eye pleasing being of light. And you always thought he was ugly, gross and weird in appearance. No, he is beautiful, attractive and very definitely appealing in his appearance. Because the Lord had made him to be a beautiful, outstandingly so, creature among the heavenly realms filled with the very epitome of all that is as beautiful as only the Lord can create, he became filled with pride, resulting in his rebellion and downfall. Eze. 28:17.

118

The Ammonites were likewise the subject of the prophetic utterance of Ezekiel. They too, were dweller's of "the land" as well as were the Israelites. The Ammonites were the descendents of Lot, by the incest of his daughters. According to their genealogy they were close kin to Israel but did not serve the God of Israel. There was often conflict between the two nations. Ezekiel pronounced judgment upon them by Babylon as they swept into the land to capture the Israelites. Though they were descendents of the same family as Abraham, they did not subscribe to the promises given Abraham. Salvation is by grace and not by race. Eze. 21:28-32

The next prophecy is directed toward what is termed, "the bloody city." Eze. 22:2 What a contrast exists between what men say about the city and what the feelings of the Lord are toward a city of this nature. The prophecies of the Old Testament pertaining to this city are confirmed to be still in effect by the Lord Jesus and the Word of the Lord concerning the last days. The lament of the Lord Jesus toward Jerusalem was caused by their rejection of Himself. He was to suffer the same murderous fate as the prophets who had come before Him. He justly accused them of stoning the prophets of the Lord by falsely accusing them of being individuals who were wizards or were possessed by a familiar spirit. Stoning unto death was to be the

judgment of such persons. In their actions against these men of God, they wrought a great injustice and thus the guilt of the shedding of innocent blood was upon them. Lev. 20:2, 27 In spite of their extreme sin, the Lord Jesus demonstrated nothing but love and great compassion toward the city and its inhabitants. He came with a message of love, deliverance and freedom fulfilling all the prophetic utterances which foretold of His coming. Luke 19:41-42 Foolishly, and to the extreme loss of their true Messiah, they rejected Him, subsequently bringing judgment upon themselves. Luke 19:43-44.

According to the words of the Lord to Ezekiel he was to expose all the wickedness and the abominations of this particular city. The Lord had chosen the site of the city and made it to be the place of His presence. It was to be the secular and spiritual capital of the nation. The scriptures speak of its beauty and worth. All of that was grossly marred by the actions of its inhabitants which were contrary and in rebellion against the will of the Lord. They were a stubborn people, incapable of receiving correction, while in the mean time, destroying with their own sword, those who came to help them and instruct them in righteousness. Jer. 2:30.

119

In what is being presented from the Word of the Lord there is no animosity, nor purpose other than to seek and find the truth, as it is recorded in the Word. It is an imperative that we properly identify the true "bloody city." The scriptures are really quiet plain as to the emotions of the Lord toward the city of Jerusalem. We begin with a mysterious, unnamed city found in the book of Revelation. This city is destined to be the seat, the place of the throne of the antichrist when he reigns for three and one half years on the earth. The woman, is the amalgamation of the religions of the world which will be united under the insistence of the antichrist. How smart the devil is, almost universally, this woman is taught to be Rome and the Roman Catholic church. That is a clever misdirection concealing the truth of the last day harlot church. Rome will be a part of it, as will every religion on the earth, but positively not the whole of what is presented in Rev. 17:18.

While the Roman church is a presence, to some degree, in perhaps every country of the world. What is more powerful than to fuse all the

religions of the world into one. Consider Isaiah 4:1. The figure is that of a woman. The scriptures speak of the gathering of a religious body in a feminine tense. The number seven is a divine complete number, in other words the final thing. This is the religion of the one world government. The seven women approach one man (the antichrist) requesting that they have the privilege of being called by his name, in other words they seek a polygamous relationship but recognize the value of being willing to bear his name. They will continue their own beliefs and conduct their worship in their customary fashion (their own food and apparel). His name upon them will be the manner of the removal of reproach which some have against religion of any kind. His name makes them legitimate, but at the same time, by their action they condemn themselves into an eternal hell.

Those who would be active in commerce must have the number, NAME or the mark of the beast indelibly tattooed, either in their right hand or forehead. Rev. 13:16-17 The harlot church will be the very center of commercial activity until she is destroyed by a day of severe judgments. Rev. 18:7-19 This city, while called Babylon, is not historic Babylon but the religious Babylon (mixture of confusion) of the last days. Is it circumstantial that the major religions of the world all look toward one city, Jerusalem, as their holy city.

120

A city gains a reputation by the events, planned or unplanned which happen there. Some times it is set apart from all others by drastic circumstances. For all the religious beauty for which Jerusalem was noted it developed a reputation that was most unpleasant as the "bloody city." King Manasseh was as responsible as any for the beginning of such a reputation. It is stated concerning him, that he filled Jerusalem, from one end to the other, with the blood of very many innocent people. 2 Kings 21:16 Then we have the king appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, Jehoiakim who followed in the footsteps of Manasseh and likewise filled the city with innocent blood. These men would have been termed mass murders today. There is a staggering statement made here by the scripture, this was an act, a sin which "the Lord would not pardon." 2 Kings 24:4 Why was there no pardon? Pardon required that the blood of the guilty be shed in order to cover the cry of the blood of the innocent one which had been shed. Gen. 9:6

Jesus rebuked the inhabitants of the city for their rejection of the prophets, the wise men and scribes who came to them with truth, but they rejected their message and tortured and killed some of them. Because of their hard heartedness of heart and complete rejection of the Word of the Lord they were to be made responsible for the blood of all those who were innocent of wrong doing but were murdered by the unbelieving population of the city. Mt. 23:34-35 From the words of the Lord Jesus it is apparent that the actions of the generations past had never had atonement made for them. Blood guiltiness hung over the city like a dark cloud. Their house was desolate, empty and void. Mt. 23:38

The last dispensation which is the dispensation of the anointed message of the gospel ministered by the power of the Holy Spirit has its beginnings in the spilling of innocent blood in Jerusalem. This time, it is the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ who is crucified. Acts 2:36 At the conclusion of the dispensation, once again the spirit of the "bloody city" will rear its ugly head and witness by its actions that it is indeed the "bloody city." The two witnesses are put to death, but not until the conclusion of their ministry. Their dead bodies are exposed to extreme disrespect and hatred as they are left out in the open for three and one half days in the city which the Lord pointed out is where our Lord was crucified. Now He calls it Sodom and Egypt which describes the attitude and nature of the peoples of the earth in the end of the age. Rev. 11:7-13 The scriptures very plainly point out the "bloody city" for us, if we have eyes to see and ears to hear.

(continued in 121-140)