

EZEKIEL 20:45-22:31 | THE LAND AND THE CITY

EZEKIEL 20:45-21:5 | A PARABLE AND ITS INTERPRETATION

- Verses 20:45-48 - The Forest Fire
  - Ezekiel was to make a prophesy **against the forest of the south field** (v. 46). Presumably this is the southern part of Israel, namely Judah and Jerusalem.
  - The prophesy was of a fire that would **devour every green tree in thee** (v. 47). The fire would be so great that **all faces from the south to the north shall be burned** (v. 47). The people of the world would know that it was the Lord that **kindled it** (v. 48).
- Verse 20:46 - Ezekiel's Complaint
  - Ezekiel has become worn down as the messenger. "Must I speak another parable?"
  - We do not know whether Ezekiel simply wanted to "let 'er rip" and speak plainly and bluntly, or if he was weary of the talk of the people in general, or some other matter. Nonetheless, he was growing weary with his role.
- Verses 21:1-5 - Jerusalem and the Land
  - Rather than a parable, Ezekiel is allowed to give a plain message: **I am against thee, and will draw forth my sword...**(v. 3).
  - The prophecy is against **the land of Israel**, but rather than the usual term *eretz Israel*, representative of the land inclusive of its people, the text uses the words *admath Israel*, which is "the soil of Israel." This helps clarify verse 4, when the Lord says, **I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked**. Thus the land will be empty, both of its righteous citizens and its unrighteous.

EZEKIEL 21:6-32 | SIGNS AND THEIR SIGNIFICATION

- Verses 6-13 - The First Sign: *Sighing*
  - Ezekiel was to **sigh** along with **the breaking of thy loins** (v. 6). The **breaking of thy loins** is most likely, *falling to your knees*, as in Daniel 5:6.
  - The significance is easy to see, **A sword, a sword is sharpened** (v. 9) and **it shall be upon my people** (v. 12).
- Verses 14-17 - The Second Sign: *Smiting*
  - Ezekiel is instructed to **smite thine hands together** (v. 14). This is likely similar to our punching our palm with our fist.
  - The meaning of the sword that is **doubled the third time** (v. 14) is unclear, but clearly negative.
  - This sword kills, even **the great men** (v. 14, where Young's Literal translates, *the great one*, perhaps in reference to the King).
  - The picture of **the great men** being chased **into their privy chambers** (v. 14) with the sword is a picture of total invasion.
  - Verses 15-17 simply clarify the totality of the devastation that is to come on the nation.

- Verses 18-32 - The Signification of the Second Sign
  - Ezekiel was to create **two ways** from which the **sword of the king of Babylon may come** (v. 19).
    - Both ways were to **come forth out of one land** (v. 19), namely, Babylon.
    - One way was to **come to Rabbath of the Ammonites** (in modern day Jordan) and the other **to Judah in Jerusalem** (v. 20).
    - The destruction of Rabbath (or Rabbah) is foretold in Amos 1:14, Jeremiah 49:2-3, as well as Ezekiel 21:20 and 25:5. Archaeological evidence supports its destruction at the time of the Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem.
  - The King of Babylon used divination to determine which city to destroy first.
    - Those that **have sworn oaths** (v. 23) will see the divination as a **false divination** (v. 23) and thus claim that the destruction will never happen.
    - The “oath swearers” is likely a reference to Zedekiah, see Ezekiel 17:13. However, the Lord calls him a **profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come** (v. 25).
  - It is of great interest that Zedekiah is called the **profane wicked one**.
    - The Hebrew word translated **profane** is the same word for *wounded or pierced*. See Young’s Literal translation for verse 25.
    - This makes Zedekiah a *type* of the antichrist (compare Revelation 13:3). This also gives support to the idea of a *Jewish* antichrist.
  - The Lord says to Zedekiah, **Remove the diadem, and take off the crown** (v. 26), and that the crown **shall not be the same** (v. 26). In fact, the crown **shall be no more** (v. 27) until it is restored in the last days. In fact, Zedekiah was the last reigning king of the Davidic line.
  - When Messiah comes, He will **restore again the kingdom to Israel** (Acts 1:6).
    - This truth is explicitly stated in clear Messianic terms when Ezekiel is told by the Lord that the crown will **be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him** (v. 27).
    - This phrase echoes back to Genesis 49:10 and is clearly a reference to the last days and the establishment of the “fifth empire” of Daniel, the Kingdom of God.
    - Make note that the re-establishment of the crown is God’s doing. There is no “building the kingdom,” it is God’s work completely.
  - The destruction of the Ammonites (vv. 28-32) is likely a reference to the last days, when God will **pour out mine indignation upon thee** (v. 31) and **thou shalt be for fuel to the fire... and thou shalt be no more remembered** (v. 32).
    - Since the Ammonites continue through today as the Jordanians, this is likely a prophecy of the last days destruction.
    - However, it is possible that the destruction has already occurred and that the modern Jordanians are *not* the Ammonites. In this case, their being forgotten (v. 32) would be true, though the *appearance* of a memory exists, false though it be.