

## Ezekiel Chapter 16.

March 31, 2024.

### Review.

We are studying the book of Ezekiel, and we are in the section of Ezekiel that gives prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem. The immediate fulfillment was the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians in the sixth century before Christ. The real fulfillment concerns the destruction of old Jerusalem by the Romans in the first century. As we study, we are attempting to recognize in Ezekiel the prophetic themes that we have been studying. Again, the strength and clarity of these prophecies is found in the many times the same prophecies are repeated. When we put together the repetition into a continuous prophetic theme, the fulfillment during the last days of the old covenant becomes clear. This big picture shows that we are not "begging the question". There is great value in familiarity with Scripture. Seeing the fulfillment of prophecy in Scripture strengthens our confidence in the scriptures as being the very word of God.

### Last Week.

Last week we studied the first section of Ezekiel 16 which describes Jerusalem as a harlot. In our study, we compared the harlot in Ezekiel 16 to the harlot in Revelation 17 and 18. The harlot in Revelation is also old Jerusalem. The spiritual code name for the harlot in Revelation chapters 17 and 18 is Babylon.

Why Babylon? Israel had escaped the bondage of Egypt 1500 years prior. The bondage in Egypt is a figure of being in bondage to sin and Satan. For this reason, in Revelation 11 old Jerusalem is spiritually called Egypt. Babylon was the nation that brought Judah and Jerusalem into bondage a second time during the sixth century before Christ. The nation that had been delivered from the bondage of Egypt was carried back into bondage again. This time Babylon is the nation holding them in bondage. I believe Babylon at that time is a figure of first century Jerusalem seeking to hold the Jews under the captivity and bondage of the law covenant; and also seeking to bring those back into bondage that had escaped the bondage through hearing and believing the gospel of Christ. This bondage is the subject of Galatians. Paul pleads with the Jews in Galatians: *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* Gal 5:1. In the book of Galatians it is clear that it is old Jerusalem seeking to hold Jews in the bondage of the law. For these reasons, old Jerusalem is spiritually called Babylon. Peter wrote in 1 Peter 5:13: *The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.* I believe Peter was referring to Jerusalem.

### Ezekiel 16:44-63.

#### Summary.

In this section Judah is compared to Sodom and Samaria, and Judah is said to be sister to Sodom and Samaria. Sisters in the sense that all three are very wicked. Sodom had been destroyed and the ten tribes that occupied Samaria were taken captive and dispersed by Assyria, never returning. Now, Judah will also be destroyed. However, all three would return from captivity and worship God under a new covenant.

#### Verses 44-45.

Verses 44 through the end of the chapter continue to describe the harlot.

In verse 44 and 45 old Jerusalem is described as an unfit mother in that she loathed her husband and her children. She is said to have two sisters which also loathed their husbands and their children. These 3 sisters are said to have the same mother. I am going to view the land of Canaan as their mother. The two sisters to old Jerusalem are Samaria and

Sodom. Samaria, of course, was the home of the northern tribes of Israel. The people of Samaria were not true Jews even though they occupied the land previously occupied by 10 of the tribes. In the New Testament the people of Samaria are referred to as Samaritans, and Samaritans were hated by the Jews. Sodom is remembered because of exceeding sinfulness, especially the sin of homosexual practices. Sodom was a Gentile city.

**Verses 46-52.**

In these verses God accuses old Jerusalem of being worse than her two sisters, Samaria and Sodom. They are not like Samaria and Sodom, they are worse. I wonder if the USA hasn't gotten worse than some of the nations that have not had the blessing of the gospel. The daughters of these sisters are the offsprings of the system represented by these three sisters.

**Verse 53.**

Verse 53 speaks of Sodom and Samaria being brought from their captivity. Gentiles were not in captivity to the old covenant law as the Jews were. The law was not given to the Gentiles. However, they were in captivity to sin and Satan. Hearing and obeying the gospel was the method God gave them to escape that captivity. I believe that their being brought from captivity is a figure and prophecy of the gospel going to the Gentiles during the last days of the old covenant age. God says here that when He brings Samaria and Sodom out of their captivity, He will also bring the Jewish captives out of their captivity. The Jews were in captivity to the old covenant law. Bringing Samaria, Sodom, and old Jerusalem out of captivity is a prophecy of the conversion of Gentiles and a remnant of Jews to Christ during the first century. It is worth noticing that it is God that does the "bringing". Remember Joel 3:1. "For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah, and Jerusalem,".

Here are other Old Testament prophecies of heathen nations being brought out of their captivity. While these had a near term fulfillment, they likely speak of the conversion of Gentiles to Christ during the last days of the old covenant age.

*Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the LORD. Thus far is the judgment of Moab* Jeremiah 48:47.

*And afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.* Jeremiah 49:6.

*But it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.* Jeremiah 49:39.

**Verse 54.**

Verse 54 seems to speak of the shame that this remnant would feel for their past sins. Their sins had actually been a comfort to the sinners of Samaria and Sodom. When they saw sinful Israel, they felt that they were not so bad after all.

**Verse 55.**

Verse 55 speaks of the daughters of these three sisters returning from captivity. It is repeated that they will return together. Again, this is a prophecy of their conversion to Christ during the last days of the old covenant age. This verse speaks of them coming together during the last days. God broke down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. Read Ephesians 2:11-13. This is a beautiful picture of Jew and Gentile being brought out of their captivity to form the New Testament Church.

**Verses 56-57.**

Because of pride the Jews did not to take note and take a warning from the destruction of Sodom. They should have taken warning before being humbled by Syria and the Philistines.

**Verses 58-59.**

Their sinful state was open and manifest and would bring them a just punishment, because that by their sins they had broken the covenant that God gave them at Sinai when He gave them the law.

**Verses 60.**

The "everlasting covenant" in verse 60 is the "new covenant" described in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and quoted in Hebrews 8. The old covenant defined their worship based on commandment keeping. The new covenant requirement is faith in Jesus. God says He would remember the Sinai covenant and He would make with them an everlasting covenant. This is why the gospel was to the Jew first; God remembered the old covenant. They were God's chosen people. It was necessary that the gospel go to them first. When Jesus talked to the Samaritan woman in John 4, he clearly saw this transition from old covenant to new covenant. John 4:21-24.

**Verse 61.**

speaks of the shame that would be felt by that remnant of Jews that would believe the gospel and repent. They felt that shame on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 when they said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do". When believing Jews were converted to Christ, they would receive their sisters, Samara and Sodom. This prophecy gives us a picture of the first Jewish church and the fact that this Jewish Church received the Gentiles into the gospel churches, as such believing Gentiles were the daughters of the Jewish Church. Verse 61 makes it clear that the gospel ingathering would not be according to the terms of the old covenant but according to a new covenant.

**Verse 62.**

When believing Jews are converted to Christ as provided by the new covenant, they would be brought to know the Lord.

**Verse 63.**

Verse 63 speaks again of the shame they would feel upon receiving Christ; also, of the fact that the wrath of God would be pacified by their repentance and by God's forgiveness of their former sins. The old covenant did not provide true forgiveness because it was based on keeping commandments.

In verses 60 through 63 the return from captivity of Jews and Gentiles is tied to the giving of a new covenant. The giving of the new covenant occurred during the last days of the old covenant age; that is, the apostolic period when the gospel was preached throughout the known world. The return from captivity occurred during that period. This is consistent with what Jesus said in Luke 21:22, *For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.*

What a beautiful way to end a chapter that mainly concerns the fact that Israel was a harlot to be destroyed because of her sins. The promise of the new covenant blessings is to the Jewish remnant that received Christ and followed Him to form the New Testament Church; and the promise is to the believing Gentiles that were brought into that first Jewish Church. These Gentiles are represented by Samaria and Sodom which are the sisters to the believing Jews. The sisters are also said to be daughters because they were the offsprings of that Jewish Church.