



HISTORY:

¹After the death of King Solomon, the Israelite nation became divided. 10 of the 12 tribes set up a separate country with their own kings. These 10 northern tribes turned away from the Lord their God. Ezekiel is God's Prophet during the Babylonian exile. His name means "God gives strength."

INTRODUCTION:

CHAPTER 22:1-16 God told Ezekiel to declare judgement against Jerusalem. The matter had gotten so urgent that Ezekiel had to tell both Jerusalem and Judah what their crimes were: killing people, they turned from the real God to serve false gods, they hated their fathers and mothers, they dealt badly with strangers, wicked things against the widows and orphans, not obeying the Sabbath, lying, eating foods that were offered to false gods, guilty of every evil deed, wicked and cruel acts, ungodly sexual sins acted out, killing for money, unfair money practices, and God is saying "They have forgotten Me." Soon the final punishment from God will come to them. God will destroy Jerusalem, and He will scatter them among the nations—sending them to live in foreign countries. The nations round them could see the sin of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem to be ashamed, dishonored, and laughed among the nations. God ends it with "Then you will know that I am the LORD."

LESSON:

I. EZEKIEL 22:17-22

22:17 And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,— The Word of the Lord came to Ezekiel saying...

22:18 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. The Lord's divine Word came to Ezekiel calling him "Son of man." This emphasizes Ezekiel's humanity as the human messenger, and prophet), while God is the Divine Messenger and Source of all. God says, *the Israelites have become dross*" (rubbish) to Him; like the metallic waste metals (copper, tin, iron, and lead) in the fire, when a workman makes silver pure. The things that are not pure metal rises to the top, and the worker throws this waste rubbish away. The people in Judah are like the waste metals.

22:19 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. This divine pronouncement from the Lord God came because they've become **dross** (²impurities that are separated from metals during the refining process). And therefore, becoming dross in the spiritual sense, God had to remove the dross (the worthlessness due to sin), so He could restore holiness. He had to gather Israel in the midst of Jerusalem which meant they would be refined in a furnace of intense judgment, rather than a promise of protection. The goal of this extreme fiery judgment was to burn away the corruption and impurities within the nation.

¹<https://www.easyenglish.bible/bible-commentary/ezekiel1-24-lbw.htm>

² <https://biblehub.com/ezekiel/22-19.htm>

<https://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>



22:20 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. ³The Lord uses this imagery of a smelting process, a common practice in ancient processing of metals to illustrate God's refining judgment. He will turn the city into a smelting furnace. **The metals** mentioned were valuable and used in various applications in the ancient Near East, symbolizing the diverse people of Israel. **The furnace** represents a place of intense heat and purification, often used in Scripture to describe God's judgment (Malachi 3:2-3). **The fiery blast** signifies the Lord's anger) the intensity and thoroughness of God's purifying wrath that will burn against them (reminiscent of the refining fire that removes impurities). **The gathering** here is not for protection, but for judgment. This reflects the historical context of the Babylonian exile, where God allowed His people to be conquered, and exiled due to their persistent idolatry and disobedience (2 Kings 24:10-16). This gathering is a divine act, showing God's sovereignty over the nations and His people. **The melting process** signifies the purging of impurities, a metaphor for the judgment that would lead to the purification of Israel. This is not annihilation, but transformation, as seen in other prophetic texts where judgment leads to eventual restoration (Isaiah 1:25-26). The melting is a painful but necessary process to remove sin and restore holiness. This can be seen as a type of Christ, who through His sacrifice, purifies Believers, removing the dross of sin and refining them into His image (1 Peter 1:7).

22:21 Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. God is in complete control. He knows how to gather a nation together and heap judgment upon them using a heathen nation. The fiery wrath of the Lord is against sin. **The melting** is the intense heated suffering during the Babylonian siege. Just as the metals in a furnace cannot escape the heat, the inhabitant of Jerusalem cannot escape the consequences of their rebellion. **The melting** signifies the complete collapse of the city.

22:22 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. The Lord repeats the phrase: "*melted in the midst of.*" This illustration of silver melting in the midst of the furnace demonstrated that Israel will be melted in the intense heat of suffering; the complete collapse that God will pour out on them, and they will know that this punishment came from the Lord!

II. EZEKIEL 22:23-31

22:23 And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,— The Word of the Lord came to Ezekiel saying...

22:24 Son of man, say unto her, Thou art the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation. The Lord's divine Word came to Ezekiel again, calling him "*Son of man.*" ⁴God had promised rain to the Israelites if they obeyed him. He promised to stop the rain if they did not obey Him (Deuteronomy 11:14-17). They did not obey Him, and He was angry with them. Therefore, God makes it clear that *in the day of His indignation (anger), they will be like a polluted (contaminated) land, a land without rain.*

22:25 There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravaging

³ <https://biblehub.com/ezekiel/22-20.htm>

⁴ <https://www.easyenglish.bible/bible-commentary/ezekiel1-24-lbw.htm>

<https://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>



the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof. There's a plot and scheme going on in the midst of the prophets of Israel; making evil plans. They're like a lion that roars, tearing and killing other animals. They've devoured innocent people, seized treasures and extorted wealth. And they have made many widows in the midst of "her" (Israel).

22:26 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. The priests should have taught the people to know God. They should have been the agents of God for the people. They should have obeyed the law of God, and they should have taught the people as well. But the priests did not obey the law and they did not teach the people. They did not respect the temple or the work of God. They did not keep the Sabbaths as special days. They did not respect the Lord Go, so He says "*I am profaned (treated with irreverence) among the people.*"

22:27 Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. The wicked leaders of Jerusalem were wicked men. They killed people and they stole their wealth like ravening wolves (violent and destructive); wolves in sheep clothing. and thereby destroying souls (lives) to get dishonest gain.

22:28 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 prophets should have spoken against these evil deeds, but they did not. Instead, they smeared them with plaster giving false prophecies. They spoke as if these deeds were good. They lied and said that they spoke the Lord's messages. But the Lord God had not spoken this to the messages (See Ezekiel 13:1-23).

22:29 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. The people of the land did what their leaders did. The leaders had worked together for their own benefit. So, the people cheated and robbed, and vexed (provoked) the poor and needy (destitute), the weak people and the foreigners wrongly.

22:30 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. There were true prophets, for example Ezekiel and Jeremiah. But the leaders and the people would not listen to the true prophets. God looked for someone who would lead the people to do the right things. God looked for a man whom He could trust. He looked for a man who could come to Him on behalf of the country. Such a person would cause them to repent, and turn to God. That person would be like a workman who repairs a wall. Or he would be like a soldier who defends the gap in a city's wall. His actions would be the opposite of the actions of the false prophets. They were acting like bad workers who merely cover a weak wall with paint. And really God did not want to destroy them, but He found no one!

22:31 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. So, God destroyed Judah. *The Lord God says: "I will pour out my anger upon you; I will consume you with the fire of my wrath. I have heaped upon you the full penalty for all your sins."* God's anger and wrath was like a fire that nobody could put out. Ezekiel wrote this as if it had already happened. But the final disaster was still a few years ahead. The end would happen in 586 BC. We know that Christ is our Redeemer who bore the wrath of God for us!

SUMMARY:

17 The Word of the Lord God came to Ezekiel saying: **18** "*Son of man,*" the house of Israel had become dross (worthlessness due to sin), to be thrown into the fire. They're like the rubbish and waste metals that rise to the top while silver is being refined. **19** And because they've become dross, God had to remove the dross. He had to gather Israel in the midst of Jerusalem which meant they would be refined in a furnace of intense judgment. The waste metals had to be discarded. **20** As all these metals are gathered together, God will blow fire into the midst of the furnace to melt it, while His anger and fury gather them, and leaves them there to melt (purify them; removing the dross of sin). **21** God has Ezekiel to repeat again from verse 20, as if they didn't get it. **The melting** signified the complete collapse of the city. **22** Israel will be melted in the intense heat of suffering; the complete collapse that God will pour out His anger upon them, and they will know that this punishment came from the Lord! **(22:17-22).**

23 The Word of the Lord came to Ezekiel again saying: **24** "*Son of man,*" You are a land that has not been cleansed or rained on in the day of wrath.' **25** There is a plot and scheme going on in the midst of the prophets. They're like a roaring lion causing destruction of the prey; devouring souls; lives. And in their greed, they've devoured innocent people, seizing treasures and extorting wealth, and made many widows in the midst of "*her*" (Israel). **26** Israel's priests have violated God's law, and have profaned His holy things. They've made no difference between the holy (set apart) and profane (wicked), neither have they showed a difference between the unclean (polluted) and the clean (spotless), for they have hid their eyes from God's Sabbaths (holy days), and God is profaned (treated with irreverence) among the people. **27** The wicked leaders of Jerusalem killed people, and stole their wealth like ravening wolves (violent and destructive); wolves in sheep clothing, destroying souls (lives) to get dishonest gain. **28** The prophets smeared them with plaster giving false prophecies. They spoke as if these deeds were good, but lied, for the Lord God had not spoken the messages. **29** The people of the land also cheated and robbed, and vexed (provoked) the poor and needy (destitute), the weak people and the foreigners wrongly. **30** God looked for a man that would do right, that would make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before Him for the land, so He wouldn't destroy it: but He found none! **31** Therefore, *The Lord God says: "I will pour out my anger upon you; I will consume you with the fire of my wrath. I have heaped upon you the full penalty for all your sins."* **(22:23-31).**