



Ezekiel and

The WHO

Rev. Charles E. Darnell, PhD

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Scripture quotations

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Edited with the assistance of Teresa Spurling (my wife), PhD, NBCT

Published by
VisionQuest Publishing
Campbellsville, Kentucky 42718-7416




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Introduction



The Old Testament book of Ezekiel contains many illustrations that are not found in other books of the Bible. I have indicated on more than one occasion that the Bible is a wonderful book of puzzles. God doesn't lay out His entire plan for mankind in a chronological order. He establishes His order by events and not necessarily by time. We must remember that God laid out His plan from the end to the beginning so all things fit into their proper place and time. Mankind is the pinnacle of God's creation, and God's intent was for mankind to be obedient to His rules and commandments. Unfortunately, the angel Lucifer had a different idea. By his own actions, he rebelled against God, went against God and became the sinful leader of disobedience among both angels and mankind. As such God, in His omniscience, had built into His plan the need for a Savior to redeem mankind. It was to be mankind's decision whether they would accept the guidance and corrections that God handed out toward their rebellious actions.

One of the most puzzling objects illustrated in the entire Bible is found in the first few chapters of Ezekiel. There are those who have called this object a wheel. Others have termed this object as an Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) and God as an alien. Well, that most certainly doesn't go to any depth to find an answer or even a logical thought. One important concept that we must understand is the factor of the date when this was being recorded. At the time of writing the book of Ezekiel, we should all have knowledge that King David had left the material for the temple to be built by his son, Solomon. Solomon completed the building of the temple and in his old age he was misled by some of his many wives into practices of idol worship that went against the instructions of a Living God. God gave Solomon many warnings to repent and return to the true, pure worship of the God of Israel. That didn't happen and we find the results in 1 Kings 11:9-13, ⁹ *And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice ¹⁰ and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he did not keep what the Lord commanded. ¹¹ Therefore the Lord said to Solomon, "Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant. ¹² Yet for the sake of David your father I will not do it in your days, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. ¹³ However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem that I have chosen."* (ESV)



Solomon's son, Rehoboam listened to the ideas of the younger men and not the older and wiser of the people. The result was that the people of the tribes of Israel turned against the rule of Rehoboam. We find this in 1 Kings 12:16, 19-20, ¹⁶ *And when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, "What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, David." So Israel went to their tents. . . . ¹⁹ So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day. ²⁰ And when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. There was none that followed the house of David but the tribe of Judah only.* (ESV) There appears to be a misquoted statement made between these two sets of scripture. In verse 13 of chapter 11, we see that one tribe was to be given to Solomon's son for David's sake. In the second passage above, we read, in chapter 12 verse 20b, that only Judah would follow the house of David. Is Judah the one tribe that God promised to be given to Rehoboam, or some other tribe besides Judah? Maybe text straightens out itself in chapter 12 verse 23 where we read the following, ²³ *"Say to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people,* (ESV) If my understanding is close to being correct, I understand that the Southern Kingdom is made

up of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and others from the various tribes, including most of Levi, who would not leave the temple at Jerusalem.

Even so, this seems to be strange that, the land of Israel would divide into two separate, distinct nations, called in many passages of scripture, the house of Israel (the northern kingdom) and the house of Judah (the southern kingdom). God, in His wonderful wisdom, saw the need to have certain items of history repeated over the course of time. We seem to be in that period of time labeled the days of the LORD's return. Many people living today desire to be called New Testament Christians and believe there is no need to understand anything from the Old Testament. I think you are very wrong if that is your belief. I just illustrated for you the division of the land of Israel. Do you know why it was so important for God to have me place that in this book? Well, one of the things that doesn't seem to be taught in full, clear detail today is prophecy and how there is a duality of the subject matter. There were items of disobedience in the distant past when God sent prophets to warn the people. There were records of the wrath of God poured out on sinful generations and periods of captivity and slavery with mistreatment, famine, and pestilence upon sinful peoples, even God's chosen people in Jerusalem, and in the two houses of the land of Israel. **The same recorded actions of the people that caused the wrath of God is now being repeated in full detail.** It is recorded that the old nemeses of God, called by the name Lucifer, now labeled as the great serpent, the devil, or Satan, is now the God of this world. Satah, knowing that his time is short, is doing everything he can to mislead as many people as possible into accepting his lies, such as all things are up to the individual to enjoy the freedom of their existence. Even many preachers and priest have become the agents of Satan, spreading these false claims and ideas. The Bible is rarely taught as the word of God anymore and the warnings contained in its pages are viewed as invalid in today's world. That is not so! The examples that are clearly stated in the Bible are there to illustrate for us that those things which happened long ago are being repeated and the wrath to come is going to happen just as it did previously.

Because of the belief of many, I feel it is necessary to take you, my reader, back in history to the days of the Old Testament and show you some of the points of history, of which, you should be aware. We were going through the division of the land of Israel into the two houses. King Rehoboam had traveled back to Jerusalem to gather his forces in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and was going to make war against the new nation of the house of Israel and force them back into his reign. However, a man of God tells the king the following in verse 24, ²⁴ *‘Thus says the Lord, You shall not go up or fight against your relatives the people of Israel. Every man return to his home, **for this thing is from me.**’* So they listened to the word of the Lord and went home again, according to the word of the Lord. (ESV) What are some of the dates for all this? King Solomon ruled at about 970 B.C. If we followed the history of the house of Israel, we would discover that the Assyrian Empire came and took the house of Israel into captivity in 722 B.C. and to this date these people's descendants have not returned to the land of Israel. In fact, for the most part, these descendants don't even know who they are in reality, or they deny that fact and claim it to be a lie. Go read my book *The Thirteenth Tribe of Israel* or my books pertaining to the prophet Jeremiah.

There is also the need to bring Ezekiel into the historical discussion of the time period during which the wrath of God places the people of Jerusalem and Judah into captivity in Babylon. The historical setting for the book of Ezekiel is the early years of the Jewish exile in Babylon. Now, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, took Jewish captives from Jerusalem to Babylon in three stages: In the first stage, in 605 B.C., select Jewish youth were sent to Babylon for training in the language and customs of Babylon. Among those taken were Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. In the second stage, in 597 B.C., 10,000 captives were taken to Babylon, among whom was Ezekiel. In the third and final stage, in 586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar's army totally destroyed both the city of Jerusalem and the temple and carried off most of the remaining inhabitants of Judah to Babylon.

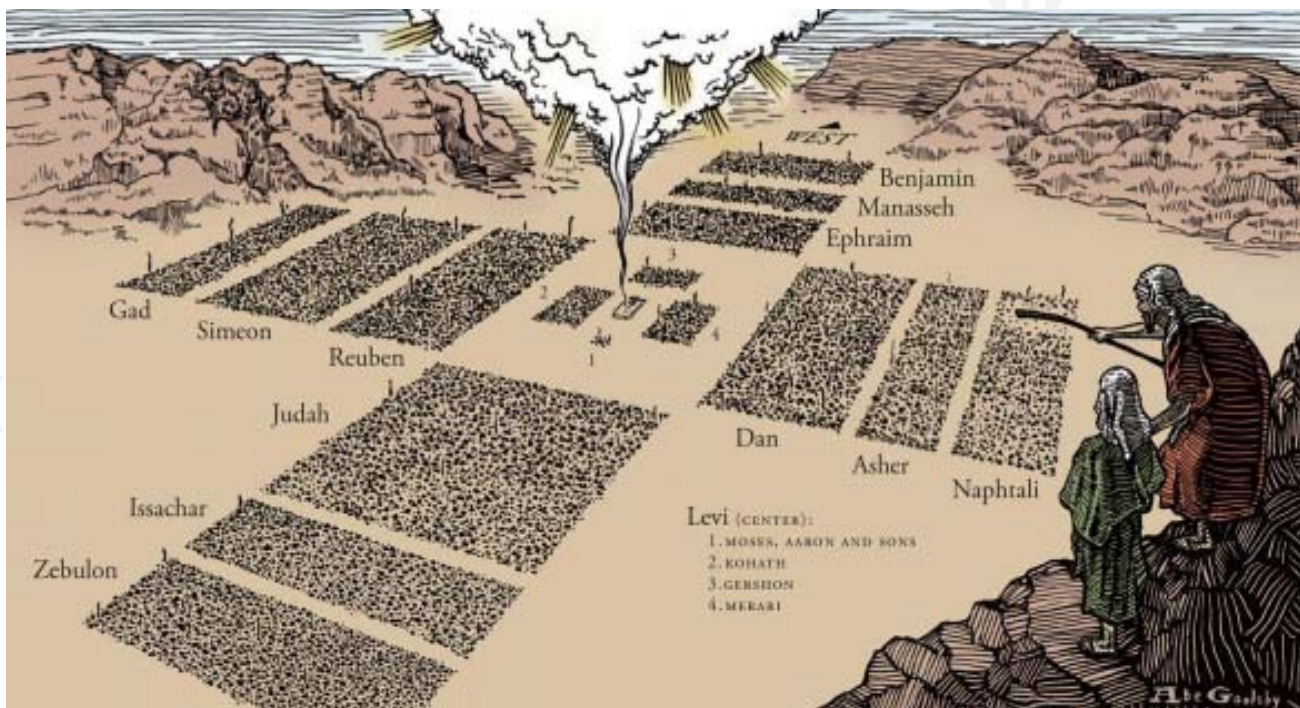
Only the very poor, and a few others, were left in the land. Included in this group was Jeremiah's party with the king's daughters.

Ezekiel's prophecies fulfilled two primary purposes for this time period. First, it delivered God's message of judgment to his spiritually rebellious and faithless people of Judah and Jerusalem and to seven surrounding nations. Secondly, it provided proof to the Jews in exile that God would, at a certain point in time, restore His chosen people and the glory of His kingdom. Ezekiel also pointed out to the people their individual responsibility for sin and its consequences. The people could not simply blame their rebellious ancestors for God's judgment, they were equally at fault, just as we are seeing today, 2,594 years later.

The message of the latter chapters of Ezekiel mainly address God's future plan of redemption, salvation and restoration of purpose and right relationship with God as revealed in the New Testament. It speaks of the restoration of Israel as the Jewish homeland, but more importantly to the spiritual restoration involving God's destiny for spiritual "Israel." This latter group would include all who become part of God's kingdom through faith and commitment to Yeshua the Christ. Through Christ's followers, God will reveal His glory and power and fulfill His plan to take the message of Christ to people of all nations. We are seeing it today!

The WHO

I coined my own term for this device. It is the WHO (Weird Hovering Object). At the time Ezekiel was living on the earth there was no knowledge of a helicopter or a drone. He had nothing to compare this device to and was describing it with simple terms that he could use at that time. Maybe, just maybe, Ezekiel was really seeing the portable throne of God. The WHO went to wherever the Spirit of God commanded it to go. There is a law of geometry that says the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. We could assume that this device always took the approach of the shortest distance and only traveled in straight lines. There are many unknowns in the first chapter of Ezekiel, but we can have fun with the words and attempt to describe what Ezekiel is trying to have us understand. Ezekiel describes the Glory of the Lord in verses 4-10, *4 As I looked, behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, and a great cloud, with brightness around it, and fire flashing forth continually, and in the midst of the fire, as it were gleaming metal. 5 And from the midst of it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had a human likeness, 6 but each had four faces, and each of them had four wings. 7 Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the sole of a calf's foot. And they sparkled like burnished bronze. 8 Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. And the four had their faces and their wings thus: 9 their wings touched one another. Each one of them went straight forward, without turning as they went. 10 As for the likeness of their faces, each had a human face. The four had the face of a lion on the right side, the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four had the face of an eagle.* (ESV) This is not the first time the Bible has introduced us to these living creatures. When the Hebrew people were going through the wilderness, there was an organized manner in which the tabernacle and the camp was set up. The camp was arranged around the tabernacle. The full discription is given in Numbers 2:3-31, however, I am not including all those verses. Here is a summary: On the east were the tribes of Judah, Issachar and Zebulum under the standard of a lion; on the south were the tribes of Reuben, Simeon and Gad under the standard of a man; on the west were the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin (the children of Rachel) under the standard of an ox; on the north were the tribes of Dan, Asher and Naphtali under the standard of an eagle.



Basically, that covers the beginning of the Hebrew people's travels as they journeyed through the wilderness. However, that is not the only place we can find these living creatures. Turn over to the fourth chapter of Revelation and read verses 6-7, ⁶ *and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind:* ⁷ *the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight.* (ESV) These four creatures and their faces probably represent all of God's living creation. All of God's living creation will bring glory and honor to him and eventually be liberated from the curse of sin. The description of these creatures somewhat resembles the cherubs of Ezekiel chapter 1, except, in Ezekiel all the beings look the same. The creatures here have six wings like the seraphs described by the prophet Isaiah symbolizing both humility and swiftness. Note that these are presented as real, rational beings, not just symbols. The eyes reflect extreme intelligence, alertness and awareness of what is going on all around.

In verses 13 and 14 of chapter 1, we read, ¹³ *As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches moving to and fro among the living creatures. And the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.* ¹⁴ *And the living creatures darted to and fro, like the appearance of a flash of lightning.* (ESV) These coals represent the fire of God's holiness (**which purifies and spiritually refines whatever it touches**). They also represent His fiery judgment against sin (**which consumes whatever it touches**). The fire moving back and forth may symbolize the energy and power of the Spirit who is always active and never rests. The flash of lightning may represent an angel. Recall that Yeshua told the Apostles that He saw Satan fall from Heaven as a flash of lightning, Luke 10:18, ¹⁸ *And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.* (ESV)

Verses 15-21 attempts to explain the movement of the WHO. To be truthful, I have no idea how to explain the wheel within a wheel nor to describe how this device functions. Maybe the best attempt I could make would be to state that this was God's chariot (a mobile throne). Verses 22-25 reveal a little more of the functioning of the WHO. The living creatures moved when the WHO moved, their wings stretched out, but their wings were let down when the WHO stopped and was still. Verses 26-27 illustrates for us that Ezekiel saw God sitting on the throne having the appearance of a man. This vision is consistent with the fact that, when God choose to reveal Himself fully, He did so in the human form of Yeshua.

Verse 28 provides to us the appearance of the Glory of God. Let's look at the verse first, ²⁸ *Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness all around. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking.* (ESV) Ezekiel was in humble awe of the majesty of God draped in the mantle of His rainbow as His outer garment as He set on His throne. Now in comparison, visualize today's wayward children as they make a mockery of God's rainbow by using it as a symbol of their rebellion and sinful pagan ways. These children would rather throw off the rainbow and run about naked performing vile things as they desire. If you think for one moment that God doesn't see what you are doing and the mockery you make of His rainbow, you are sadly mistaken. A day of reckoning is coming when you will have to explain all of your carnal actions to a Living God who does punish for those sins you have committed.

This verse does one other thing. It gives the primary purpose of the entire vision given to Ezekiel. This vision was a revelation of God's glory. God revealed His power and magnificence to Ezekiel to inspire and prepare him for the work to which God was calling him. The Lord would continue to appear to Ezekiel throughout his life, guiding and renewing him, so that he would continue to see and share God's glory to the people in exile. This was a statement of HOPE! But God was going to do some correcting of the heart over the seventy years that Judah would spend in exile in Babylon.

Chapter 2

Verses 1-5, ¹ *And he said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you."* ² *And as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me.* ³ *And he said to me, "Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels, who have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me to this very day. ⁴ The descendants also are impudent and stubborn: I send you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God.'* ⁵ *And whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house) they will know that a prophet has been among them.* (ESV) I must state right here that I am not a prophet of God sent to explain to a rebellious house that the wrath of God is about to overtake you. Our forefathers, (yes, I mean yours and mine), were a part or portion of the lost ten tribes of Israel. Our forefathers have been rebelling against God for a very long time. When I first read the verses above, I thought that Ezekiel was being sent to the House of Israel, the Northern Kingdom, however, as I studied the verse it came to me that Ezekiel was in exile in the territory of Babylon and his mission (his calling) would send God's word and inspiration of hope to both houses of Israel. Nevertheless, in the meantime both houses would have to undergo the wrath of exile with which God was punishing both houses. For Judah, the period of exile was seventy years. At the end of this seventy year period, King Cyrus encouraged the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their temple and their city.

On the other hand, the House of Israel was still held captive by the Assyrians, and they had lost their identity as a nation due to lack of a king and loss of their homeland. They became a wandering race of sinful people who were in rebellion against God and still are to this day. We are a part of that rebellious, sinful people, and no one is taking the time to straighten out the records in order to change the belief of the people. The records of just who we are as a people do not reflect, honestly, the fact that we are of the tribe of Manasseh for the most part. Our beliefs in Christ have been changed by false prophets and false ministers. We have given up the truth of God's feast days, God's Commandments and what Yeshua taught as it pertained to the Kingdom of God. We can, in some ways, blame the roaring twenties and the free sex, free love ideas of the sixties as part of my generation's contribution toward the ideas, rebellion and sins of the current generation.

I may not be a prophet, however, I am a child of God who is trying desperately to have the readers of my books to understand the seriousness of the time and situation. God is only becoming more and more angry with the disobedience of His creation. While this nation is going deeper and deeper into it's sin, other nations are hearing the Word of God for the first time and turning toward a belief in Yeshua as Christ and Savior. There are even underground churches in places like Iran that are turning from Islam and Mohammad to Yeshua as Christ and Messiah. There are those in China who are turning to Christ as Lord and Savior under the fear of death if caught meeting in Yeshua's name. Educated men are writing books about the downfall of America, the Suicide of America, America Under Attack and The Harbingers. All are doing everything that God is directing them to address the rebellious people of this nation. The objective is to have them move as far as they can away from the counterfeit religion that is predominate in this country. My books are a little different! They are available on my website (www.vqpub.org) for free. All you have to do is select the book you want and download it for free. All of my writings are in PDF file format.

Chapter 3

There have been many days that this chapter confused me, and I have had to ask God to explain to me what is meant in this chapter. Understand, at the beginning of the chapter, the Spirit of God is still speaking to Ezekiel and providing him with instructions. Allow me to show you my dilemma, look at

verse 5, ⁵ *For you are not sent to a people of foreign speech and a hard language, but to the house of Israel*— (ESV) Now, add verse 7 to this verse, ⁷ *But the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to me: because all the house of Israel have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart.* (ESV) My thoughts continued to take me to the people of the Northern Kingdom who were in exile in Assyria and God was sending Ezekiel to those people. All of this was because of the phrase *the house of Israel*. Actually, Ezekiel was in exile in Babylon with *the house of Judah* and God did not send Ezekiel directly to the Northern Kingdom. God instructed Ezekiel to say to the exiles in Babylon, “Thus says the Lord God.” How God sent word to the people of the Northern Kingdom was through the words of Ezekiel as contained in the book of Ezekiel. We will find another use of the term *the house of Israel* shortly in this third chapter. What I finally understood was a fact that many preachers have overlooked and still do not understand. When God deals with His people, He may be addressing them as their respective House, i.e. either the house of Judah or the house of Israel, or he may be dealing with all the peoples of Israel. Here is another understated fact. Because of God’s scattering of the house of Israel throughout the western countries of Europe, **they lost their identity and became regarded as Gentiles and not Israelis**. Remember, that the people of the Northern Kingdom were never considered to be Jews, only Israelis. The house of Judah represents those who became known as the “Jews.” The fact remains that both sides of the people of Israel, not mattering which house, are a hardheaded, hardhearted, rebellious people. But God told Ezekiel that He was going to make him just as stubborn as they were, and instructed Ezekiel not to be afraid of their words. Ezekiel was to speak what God told him to say, whether they heard or refused to hear.

The remainder of the third chapter makes Ezekiel a Watchman for Israel. We begin to see the object lessons that God puts Ezekiel through to symbolically model for the people. Verses 16-21 of chapter 3 should nudge every Christian with the thought and courage that they are to speak to others, giving them warnings and encouragement with hope as we go through our daily life. Here are those verses, ¹⁶ *And at the end of seven days, the word of the Lord came to me: ¹⁷ “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ¹⁸ If I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, in order to save his life, that wicked person shall die for his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. ¹⁹ But if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, or from his wicked way, he shall die for his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul. ²⁰ Again, if a righteous person turns from his righteousness and commits injustice, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die. Because you have not warned him, he shall die for his sin, and his righteous deeds that he has done shall not be remembered, but his blood I will require at your hand. ²¹ But if you warn the righteous person not to sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live, because he took warning, and you will have delivered your soul.”* (ESV) There are some serious items to consider in this short passage of scripture. Let us recall that we are dealing with the Old Testament. Christ had not been sent in the flesh, as of yet, however, we see terms like wickedness and righteousness as qualifying terms to identify those who are attempting to follow God and those who are out and out wicked. We should also see and understand what is implied in verse 20. There is such a thing as backsliding, it is clearly shown in verse 20. To do such, as stated here, when a person sins and continues to sin and does not repent brings death. The righteous neighbor has a responsibility to warn, and if the righteous neighbor gives no warning, the blood of the sinner rests on their hands. Reread the scripture above.

Verses 22-27 illustrates for us the first object lesson that God put Ezekiel through. Ezekiel is instructed to go home, lay down and be bound, God makes him mute, and he cannot speak unless God gave him a direct word to speak to the people. It appears that this mute condition remained with Ezekiel until the destruction of Jerusalem about seven and a half years later (Ezekiel 24:27 and 33:22). Verse

24:27,²⁷ *On that day your mouth will be opened to the fugitive, and you shall speak and be no longer mute. So you will be a sign to them, and they will know that I am the Lord.*” (ESV) Verse 33:22,²² *Now the hand of the Lord had been upon me the evening before the fugitive came; and he had opened my mouth by the time the man came to me in the morning, so my mouth was opened, and I was no longer mute.* (ESV)

Chapter 4

The second object lesson that God assigned to Ezekiel to demonstrate for the people illustrates the siege of Jerusalem. The beginning instructions for Ezekiel are given in verses 1-3,¹ *“And you, son of man, take a brick and lay it before you, and engrave on it a city, even Jerusalem. ²And put siegeworks against it, and build a siege wall against it, and cast up a mound against it. Set camps also against it, and plant battering rams against it all around. ³And you, take an iron griddle, and place it as an iron wall between you and the city; and set your face toward it, and let it be in a state of siege, and press the siege against it. This is a sign for the house of Israel.* (ESV) Here is an example of the use of *the house of Israel* meaning all Israel and not just the Northern Kingdom. Jerusalem represents the city of God and was Zion for both kingdoms. We begin to see this clearer in verses 4-6,⁴ *“Then lie on your left side, and place the punishment of the house of Israel upon it. For the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their punishment. ⁵For I assign to you a number of days, 390 days, equal to the number of the years of their punishment. So long shall you bear the punishment of the house of Israel. ⁶And when you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, but on your right side, and bear the punishment of the house of Judah. Forty days I assign you, a day for each year.* (ESV) Notice in verse 6, the punishment shifts from *the house of Israel* to *the house of Judah*.

Let’s see if we can examine Biblical text to figure out these two numbers. First, we have the number 390, however there is no clear era in the history of all Israel as a set number of 390 years. Since we are seeing an illustration that involves both houses of all Israel, we need to go back into history and determine what dates come in at what times. We know that the two nations were together in 930 B.C. when the split occurred between Israel and Judah. We also know that Ezekiel was in exile in Babylon, and that the last group were not taken to Babylon until 586 B.C. when the city of Jerusalem was destroyed. We also know that Ezekiel did not complete the writing of his book until about 570 B.C. If we take the first two numbers of 930 and 586, we have a total of 344 years. We could add the extra 16 years that Ezekiel worked on his book, that would take our figure down to the 570 B.C. date. However, we are still short about thirty years to make our total of 390. Our only answer is to go back into history and borrow those thirty years from the reign of King Solomon. We could qualify this with the facts that Solomon, as the king over both houses, was practicing idol worship during his later life.

We could also look through the annuals of Judah’s kings and take the reign of King Manasseh, which was the most outrageous period of the people of Judah’s sinning against their God. We could use the period of between approximately 680 to 640 B.C. as this forty year punishment for the house of Judah.

Finally, we can say that Ezekiel did not lie on his side all day long. We find this in verses 9-17 of this chapter. Verses 9-17,⁹ *“And you, take wheat and barley, beans and lentils, millet and emmer, and put them into a single vessel and make your bread from them. During the number of days that you lie on your side, 390 days, you shall eat it. ¹⁰And your food that you eat shall be by weight, twenty shekels a day; from day to day you shall eat it. ¹¹And water you shall drink by measure, the sixth part of a hin; from day to day you shall drink. ¹²And you shall eat it as a barley cake, baking it in their sight on human dung.” ¹³And the Lord said, **“Thus shall the people of Israel eat their bread unclean, among the nations where I will drive them.”** ¹⁴Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Behold, I have never*

defiled myself. From my youth up till now I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has tainted meat come into my mouth.”¹⁵ Then he said to me, “See, I assign to you cow’s dung instead of human dung, on which you may prepare your bread.”¹⁶ Moreover, he said to me, “Son of man, behold, I will break the supply of bread in Jerusalem. They shall eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and they shall drink water by measure and in dismay.¹⁷ I will do this that they may lack bread and water, and look at one another in dismay, and rot away because of their punishment. (ESV)

We are beginning to see the wrath of God as He is punishing Jerusalem and Judah because of their disobedience. This is a clear understanding of what a famine will look like. We, here in America, have no idea what a true famine looks like nor the number of deaths that will occur due to starvation. The longer this nation continues to mock God with their detestable practices, abortions, gender identity crisis, pride practices of the LBGTQ group and idol worship of sports, wealth, health and stubborn arrogance, the more coals we are placing on our heads as punishment. God is a merciful God, but you need to examine your life, repent of your sins, ask God to forgive you, then change your ways and accept Christ as Lord and Savior. Big Government, Big Pharma and Big Business are not the magic saving grace that you believe they are. Yeshua is the ultimate answer and the **ONLY** means to get you into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Chapter 5

In chapter 5, we see the full destruction of Jerusalem and what some of the people will have to go through. I am going to pass on the object lesson that God puts Ezekiel through prior to the destruction, but I will place verses 5-12 here for you to review. I still understand that those of you who are reading these words and claim to be a New Testament believer have very little information concerning what you might find recorded in the Old Testament. Some of the passages are warnings about what will happen if people keep their stubborn heart and fail to repent and change their ways. Here are the verses from chapter 5,⁵ *“Thus says the Lord God: This is Jerusalem. I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries all around her.⁶ And she has rebelled against my rules by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against my statutes more than the countries all around her; for they have rejected my rules and have not walked in my statutes.⁷ Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you are more turbulent than the nations that are all around you, and have not walked in my statutes or obeyed my rules, and have not even acted according to the rules of the nations that are all around you,⁸ therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, even I, am against you. And I will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations.⁹ **And because of all your abominations I will do with you what I have never yet done, and the like of which I will never do again.**¹⁰ Therefore fathers shall eat their sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers. And I will execute judgments on you, and any of you who survive I will scatter to all the winds.¹¹ Therefore, as I live, declares the Lord God, surely, because you have defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will withdraw. My eye will not spare, and I will have no pity.¹² A third part of you shall die of pestilence and be consumed with famine in your midst; a third part shall fall by the sword all around you; and a third part I will scatter to all the winds and will unsheathe the sword after them. (ESV)*

Chapter 6

God’s anger and His punishment doesn’t get any less in chapter 6. In chapter 5, we witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem. In chapter 6, God releases His anger against idolatry. Following are verses 1-10 from chapter 6,¹ *The word of the Lord came to me:² “Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them,³ and say, You mountains of Israel, hear the word of*

the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God to the mountains and the hills, to the ravines and the valleys: Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places. ⁴ Your altars shall become desolate, and your incense altars shall be broken, and I will cast down your slain before your idols. ⁵ And I will lay the dead bodies of the people of Israel before their idols, and I will scatter your bones around your altars. ⁶ Wherever you dwell, the cities shall be waste and the high places ruined, so that your altars will be waste and ruined, your idols broken and destroyed, your incense altars cut down, and your works wiped out. ⁷ And the slain shall fall in your midst, and you shall know that I am the Lord.

⁸ “Yet I will leave some of you alive. When you have among the nations some who escape the sword, and when you are scattered through the countries, ⁹ then those of you who escape will remember me among the nations where they are carried captive, how I have been broken over their whoring heart that has departed from me and over their eyes that go whoring after their idols. And they will be loathsome in their own sight for the evils that they have committed, for all their abominations. ¹⁰ And they shall know that I am the Lord. I have not said in vain that I would do this evil to them.” (ESV)

Chapter 7

God’s marching with His wrath also continues. We saw the destruction of Jerusalem in chapter 5, chapter 6 was the wrath poured out on the high places of idolatry. We now come to the wrath on the land and the full force upon a sinful people. For this chapter, we use verses 1-4 to begin, ¹ *The word of the Lord came to me: ² “And you, O son of man, thus says the Lord God to the land of Israel: An end! The end has come upon the four corners of the land. ³ Now the end is upon you, and I will send my anger upon you; I will judge you according to your ways, and I will punish you for all your abominations. ⁴ And my eye will not spare you, nor will I have pity, but I will punish you for your ways, while your abominations are in your midst. Then you will know that I am the Lord.* (ESV) There are many people in today’s world who now read about the wrath of God and ask, “How can this be? God is a God of love and mercy and would not do these things!” Surely, you do not understand what love, patience and understanding truly are! God is a God of love! He loved you enough to forgive you, if you repented of your sins. He also loved you so much that He sent His Son to be the sacrificial lamb to atone for all your sins. He only asked you to be obedient to ten rules: Yes! Those ten rules that you cannot stand to be displayed in a school or a public building, because it might remind you of your disobedience and sinful practices. Yes! This is the covenant that the Israelites agreed to abide to in the wilderness. But, there remains one other covenant that is a perpetual covenant that God also established with the Israelites. Satan hates this second covenant with a passion and he will do anything to draw people away from it and ignore it. That is the test covenant that God established in the 31st chapter of Exodus. This covenant is basically the same as the fourth commandment of the first covenant, “to honor the Sabbath day and keep it holy.” Through the pope of that time, Emperor Constantine was pressured in 321 to change the day of worship from the Sabbath to the day of sun worship (Sunday). Mankind has been failing God’s test and avoiding His mark for thousands of years and no one seems to care. Now, as a Father, God is patient and kind to you and allows you to do a lot of things after making up your own mind. If it is an inappropriate decision, God will nudge you through His Spirit to change your ways, and if you do not do that, God will, through love, give you a spanking. Oh, believe me, God is quite capable of giving you a spanking. But when you want to continue following the ways of Satan, desire to be deceived and lead your feet through the pathways of the worldly, God will remove His hand and allow you to corrupt yourself to the limit you want to go. Just remember that there is a judgment day coming, and you will have to answer to every action, every idle word that you spoke and every sinful act you performed in the dark, falsely thinking that God can’t see what you are doing.

Continue reading the verses from chapter 7, read verses 5-13, ⁵ *“Thus says the Lord God: Disaster after disaster! Behold, it comes. ⁶ An end has come; the end has come; it has awakened against you. Behold, it comes. ⁷ Your doom has come to you, O inhabitant of the land. The time has come; the day is near, a day of tumult, and not of joyful shouting on the mountains. ⁸ Now I will soon pour out my wrath upon you, and spend my anger against you, and judge you according to your ways, and I will punish you for all your abominations. ⁹ And my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity. I will punish you according to your ways, while your abominations are in your midst. Then you will know that I am the Lord, who strikes.*

¹⁰ *“Behold, the day! Behold, it comes! Your doom has come; the rod has blossomed; pride has budded. ¹¹ Violence has grown up into a rod of wickedness. None of them shall remain, nor their abundance, nor their wealth; neither shall there be preeminence among them. ¹² The time has come; the day has arrived. Let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn, for wrath is upon all their multitude. ¹³ For the seller shall not return to what he has sold, while they live. For the vision concerns all their multitude; it shall not turn back; and because of his iniquity, none can maintain his life. (ESV)*

The day of judgment and destruction was soon to come for the Israelites. Their rebellion would come to a quick end as they began to suffer the punishment for their detestable behavior. Few would survive. Today it may seem that God is ignoring the evil and immorality that is so widespread in the world; but the Bible assures us, over and over, that “the day of the Lord” is coming. That, too, will be a day of severe judgment, bringing destruction on the entire world. Just as God’s anger and judgment finally came on Judah, so it will come on all those who continue to rebel against God. Those who refuse to study the Old Testament fail to grasp the reasons that Yeshua was sent to usher in the Kingdom of God. Those people also do not understand the covenants nor what the Israelite forefathers made a vow to keep. In breaking those vows, the contract was broken and God did not have to honor the blessings promised to His people. In fact, the other conditions of the contract came into play. That part of the contract was the discipline portion of God’s wrath for disobedience. There are many Americans who enjoy life in the full belief of humanism, believing all things are okay and everything is acceptable if you thought it up in your own mind. Those Americans fail to recall that, aside from Israel, the only other country on the face of this planet to make a covenant with Almighty God is the United States of America. The more you disobey God and dishonor the covenant, the more you bring wrath to yourself, your family, your community, and, well, just about everything else in this nation! The day is coming, make no mistake about that, and this is the warning to inform you that you need to repent, change your ways, and your lifestyle. Listening to Satan’s lies and deceptions are not the answer. They only lead you to an eternity of pain and sorrow! But, it is, and has always been, your choice as to what you believe, and what you set your mind to do. Make good choices for yourself, ask the Holy Spirit to help you and to guide you.

Let’s complete chapter 7 with verses 23-27, ²³ *“Forge a chain! For the land is full of bloody crimes and the city is full of violence. ²⁴ I will bring the worst of the nations to take possession of their houses. I will put an end to the pride of the strong, and their holy places shall be profaned. ²⁵ When anguish comes, they will seek peace, but there shall be none. ²⁶ Disaster comes upon disaster; rumor follows rumor. They seek a vision from the prophet, while the law perishes from the priest and counsel from the elders. ²⁷ The king mourns, the prince is wrapped in despair, and the hands of the people of the land are paralyzed by terror. According to their way I will do to them, and according to their judgments I will judge them, and **they shall know that I am the Lord.**” (ESV)* Do any of the underlined areas in this passage seem to indicate the situation that is happening today? I’m sure that there are many who have no idea what I meant above when I spoke about the covenant the United States has with God. Neither would they understand the discipline portion of the contract. Allow me to take you on another short journey back to the book of Leviticus to show you God’s discipline factors for disobedience. Our

journey takes us to Leviticus 26: 14-46. I know that's a lot of verses, the sad part is that the verses for obedience and the blessings that go with the covenant are the first 13 verses of this chapter in Leviticus. It is a lot easier to adhere to God's rules instead of having to face God's wrath. However, here are all those verses, ¹⁴ *"But if you will not listen to me and will not do all these commandments, ¹⁵ if you spurn my statutes, and if your soul abhors my rules, so that you will not do all my commandments, but break my covenant, ¹⁶ **then I will do this to you:** I will visit you with panic, with wasting disease and fever that consume the eyes and make the heart ache. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. ¹⁷ I will set my face against you, and you shall be struck down before your enemies. Those who hate you shall rule over you, and you shall flee when none pursues you. ¹⁸ And if in spite of this you will not listen to me, then I will discipline you again sevenfold for your sins, ¹⁹ and I will break the pride of your power, and I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze. ²⁰ And your strength shall be spent in vain, for your land shall not yield its increase, and the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit.*

²¹ *"Then if you walk contrary to me and will not listen to me, I will continue striking you, sevenfold for your sins. ²² And I will let loose the wild beasts against you, which shall bereave you of your children and destroy your livestock and make you few in number, so that your roads shall be deserted.*

²³ *"And if by this discipline you are not turned to me but walk contrary to me, ²⁴ then I also will walk contrary to you, and I myself will strike you sevenfold for your sins. ²⁵ And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall execute vengeance for the covenant. And if you gather within your cities, I will send pestilence among you, and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. ²⁶ When I break your supply of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in a single oven and shall dole out your bread again by weight, and you shall eat and not be satisfied.*

²⁷ *"But if in spite of this you will not listen to me, but walk contrary to me, ²⁸ then I will walk contrary to you in fury, and I myself will discipline you sevenfold for your sins. ²⁹ You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters. ³⁰ And I will destroy your high places and cut down your incense altars and cast your dead bodies upon the dead bodies of your idols, and my soul will abhor you. ³¹ And I will lay your cities waste and will make your sanctuaries desolate, and I will not smell your pleasing aromas. ³² And I myself will devastate the land, so that your enemies who settle in it shall be appalled at it. ³³ And I will scatter you among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword after you, and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste.*

³⁴ *"Then the land shall enjoy its Sabbaths as long as it lies desolate, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest, and enjoy its Sabbaths. ³⁵ As long as it lies desolate it shall have rest, the rest that it did not have on your Sabbaths when you were dwelling in it. ³⁶ And as for those of you who are left, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies. The sound of a driven leaf shall put them to flight, and they shall flee as one flees from the sword, and they shall fall when none pursues. ³⁷ They shall stumble over one another, as if to escape a sword, though none pursues. And you shall have no power to stand before your enemies. ³⁸ And you shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. ³⁹ And those of you who are left shall rot away in your enemies' lands because of their iniquity, and also because of the iniquities of their fathers they shall rot away like them.*

⁴⁰ *"But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers in their treachery that they committed against me, and also in walking contrary to me, ⁴¹ so that I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies—if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity, ⁴² then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and I will remember my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. ⁴³ But the land shall be abandoned by them and enjoy its Sabbaths while it lies desolate without them, and they shall make amends for their iniquity, because they spurned my rules and their soul abhorred my statutes. ⁴⁴*

Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not spurn them, neither will I abhor them so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God. ⁴⁵ But I will for their sake remember the covenant with their forefathers, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the Lord.”

⁴⁶ These are the statutes and rules and laws that the Lord made between himself and the people of Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai. (ESV)

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 begins with Ezekiel sitting with the elders when the Spirit of God transported him to the temple in Jerusalem. Ezekiel is shown four things while at the temple. First, he is told to look north of the altar gate, and placed there is the image of jealousy. The Spirit tells him that He will show him still greater abominations. The Spirit takes Ezekiel to the inner court, where he is shown the second perversion, at the wall of the inner court there is a hole and Ezekiel is told to first dig in the wall. Then he is told to go into the room and view the vile abominations that are engraved on the wall of creeping things, loathsome beasts, and all the idols of Israel. The statement is made that there are seventy men in the dark room praising these images. The Spirit tells Ezekiel that there are still greater abominations to see and takes him to the entrance of the north gate of the house of the Lord for their third stop. There sat women weeping for Tammuz. Tammuz was the Babylonian god of vegetation. When plant life died in the fall season, the people mourned what they thought was his death. Judah's women had forsaken the Sovereign Lord for false gods, such as Tammuz, to ask for help and blessing. The Spirit took Ezekiel, for the fourth point, to the entrance of the temple between the porch and the altar. There he saw about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple and their faces toward the east worshiping the sun. Is there any wonder why Almighty God was upset with the house of Judah. Do you understand why God was angry and was going to punish Judah?

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 begins with the Spirit crying in Ezekiel's ears, saying (verses 1-2), ¹ . . . *“Bring near the executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand.”* ² *And behold, six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his weapon for slaughter in his hand, and with them was a man clothed in linen, with a writing case at his waist. And they went in and stood beside the bronze altar. (ESV)* The next few verses are hard for me to record. I know and understand that my God is a just God and a God of mercy. I also know that my God demands justice. If He says His wrath is to be released, I assure you He means exactly that! Its just that it hurts in my heart to know that a large number of people must die because of their unbelief. It is a shame and a pity that mankind will not listen to guidance and warnings. Here are the verses for the remainder of chapter 9. ³ *Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writing case at his waist.* ⁴ *And the Lord said to him, “Pass through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it.”* ⁵ *And to the others he said in my hearing, “Pass through the city after him, and strike. Your eye shall not spare, and you shall show no pity.* ⁶ *Kill old men outright, young men and maidens, little children and women, but touch no one on whom is the mark. And begin at my sanctuary.”* So they began with the elders who were before the house. ⁷ *Then he said to them, “Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out.”* So they went out and struck in the city. ⁸ *And while they were striking, and I was left alone, I fell upon my face, and cried, “Ah, Lord God! Will you destroy all the remnant of Israel in the outpouring of your wrath on Jerusalem?”*

⁹ Then he said to me, “The guilt of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great. The land is full of blood, and the city full of injustice. For they say, ‘The Lord has forsaken the land, and the Lord does not see.’ ¹⁰ As for me, my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity; I will bring their deeds upon their heads.”

¹¹ And behold, the man clothed in linen, with the writing case at his waist, brought back word, saying, “I have done as you commanded me.” (ESV)

Still, a question remains: What is the mark of God? Notice what the man in linen is instructed to perform. He must go through Jerusalem and mark the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it. I’m not trying to make a play on words, but isn’t a sign the same as a mark? If we accept that to be so, then we can easily show what God’s sign is between Himself and mankind. The first place we find God’s sign for mankind is in Exodus 31:13, ¹³ “You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, ‘Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you.” (ESV) We can also find this recorded a little further in the Book of Ezekiel in 20:12, ¹² Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them. (ESV)

The sign that God left with mankind is the observance of the Sabbath. How to convert this sign over to some form of mark has not been revealed to me AT THIS TIME! My human guess is that this may not be a physical mark on the forehead, but, to me, it most certainly is a mark upon the human heart. God knows our heart, I’m sure that the man dressed in linen would also have that ability. Why not use the Aleph Tav, as it is the Hebrew equivalent of the Alpha and Omega? I really don’t know what God uses as His mark, but this sounded good to me, I pray I have not offended my God.

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 describes the Glory of the Lord departing from the temple in Jerusalem. It is a sad day when you understand that God is removing His presence from among His people. A sad and terrible day indeed. The truly sad part is that the people don’t understand why, even with all the warnings, nor by God sending one prophet after another to proclaim to them that God’s wrath will not hold off much longer. God will not reside in a place of sin, therefore He removes His glory! Don’t we also see The WHO (in the event you have forgotten - The Weird Hovering Object) being used between verses 9 and verses 22?

Chapter 11

Ezekiel and the Spirit have not left Jerusalem. The Spirit takes Ezekiel to the east gate of the house of the Lord and sitting there are twenty-five men. The Spirit tells Ezekiel that these are the men who devise iniquity and give wicked counsel in the city. Ezekiel is told to prophesy against these men in verses 5-12, ⁵ *And the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and he said to me, “Say, Thus says the Lord: So you think, O house of Israel. For I know the things that come into your mind. ⁶ You have multiplied your slain in this city and have filled its streets with the slain. ⁷ Therefore thus says the Lord God: Your slain whom you have laid in the midst of it, they are the meat, and this city is the cauldron, but you shall be brought out of the midst of it. ⁸ You have feared the sword, and I will bring the sword upon you, declares the Lord God. ⁹ And I will bring you out of the midst of it, and give you into the hands of foreigners, and execute judgments upon you. ¹⁰ You shall fall by the sword. I will judge you at the border of Israel, and you shall know that I am the Lord. ¹¹ This city shall not be your cauldron, nor shall you be the meat in the midst of it. I will judge you at the border of Israel, ¹² and you shall know that I am the Lord. For you*

have not walked in my statutes, nor obeyed my rules, but have acted according to the rules of the nations that are around you.” (ESV) In verse 13, Ezekiel asked the Spirit, . . . “Ah, Lord God! Will you make a full end of the remnant of Israel?” The Spirit gives Ezekiel a lengthy answer in verses 14-21, ¹⁴ *And the word of the Lord came to me: ¹⁵ “Son of man, your brothers, even your brothers, your kinsmen, the whole house of Israel, all of them, are those of whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, ‘Go far from the Lord; to us this land is given for a possession.’ ¹⁶ Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: Though I removed them far off among the nations, and though I scattered them among the countries, yet I have been a sanctuary to them for a while in the countries where they have gone.’ ¹⁷ Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.’ ¹⁸ And when they come there, they will remove from it all its detestable things and all its abominations. ¹⁹ And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, ²⁰ that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. ²¹ But as for those whose heart goes after their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their deeds upon their own heads, declares the Lord God.”* (ESV) Oh, what a statement of HOPE! Israel is to be regathered from all the lands and countries where God had scattered them. Along with this regathering, Israel will receive a new heart and a new spirit, and will clear up all the abominations in the land. They will live by the statutes and rules that God actually established with the forefathers in the wilderness. As for all of those who desire to continue to worship false gods and detestable things, they will face God’s punishment for disobedience. The Who, with the glory of God above them went up from the midst of the city and stood on the east side of the city. At the same time, the Spirit took Ezekiel back to the exiles in Babylon where he told the people all that had happened in the vision.

Chapter 12

Ezekiel was given instructions to prepare an exile’s baggage as an object lesson for the people. We must remember that Ezekiel was taken to Babylon in the second group of exiles. The last group was not taken until 16 years later. So, Ezekiel could illustrate this object lesson. It is an illustration of the last group being taken to Babylon. In verses 1-6, Ezekiel does as God commands him to illustrate the actions of a person being taken into exile. God says that the people will ask, “What are you doing?” In verses 10-12, we see God’s response to the question raised by the people, ¹⁰ *Say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: This oracle concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel who are in it.’ ¹¹ Say, ‘I am a sign for you: as I have done, so shall it be done to them. They shall go into exile, into captivity.’ ¹² And the prince who is among them shall lift his baggage upon his shoulder at dusk, and shall go out. They shall dig through the wall to bring him out through it. He shall cover his face, that he may not see the land with his eyes.* (ESV) Notice, in verse 13b, what is said. . . . *And I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, yet he shall not see it, and he shall die there.* It is interesting to see this as a carryover from Jeremiah. Recall that Zedekiah was the last king over Judah. He sneaked out of Jerusalem at night, was captured and King Nebuchadnezzar put out his eyes then took him in fetters to Babylon where he died. Just as this is foretold in Ezekiel! Notice also what is stated in verse 16a, . . . *But I will let a few of them to escape from the sword, . . .* Once again, recall passages from Jeremiah. This statement is one of the riddles that tie Jeremiah and Ezekiel together to give us the clues concerning Jeremiah. What happened to him and where did he go? Remember at the end of the book of Jeremiah, there were only four of the six tasks given to Jeremiah as a commission that were completed. When was the planting and the building completed? But, let’s complete the other fact. Text here in Ezekiel says that a few would escape the sword. There is a group in the book of Jeremiah that escaped foul play

all the way around. There was Jeremiah, his scribe Baruch, the king's daughters and the handmaidens of the princesses, a total of eight persons to begin with at that time.

Chapter 12 goes on to show the false prophets and their misguided words in verses 26-28, ²⁶ *And the word of the Lord came to me: ²⁷ "Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, 'The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.' ²⁸ Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord God: None of my words will be delayed any longer, but the word that I speak will be performed, declares the Lord God."* (ESV)

Chapter 13

Chapter 13 begins, with verses 1-3 identifying false prophets, ¹ *The word of the Lord came to me: ² "Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel, who are prophesying, and say to those who prophesy from their own hearts: 'Hear the word of the Lord!' ³ Thus says the Lord God, Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! (ESV) Verses 6-7, ⁶ They have seen false visions and lying divinations. They say, 'Declares the Lord,' when the Lord has not sent them, and yet they expect him to fulfill their word. ⁷ Have you not seen a false vision and uttered a lying divination, whenever you have said, 'Declares the Lord,' although I have not spoken?" (ESV) Verses 8-10, ⁸ Therefore thus says the Lord God: "Because you have uttered falsehood and seen lying visions, therefore behold, I am against you, declares the Lord God. ⁹ My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and who give lying divinations. They shall not be in the council of my people, nor be enrolled in the register of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord God. ¹⁰ Precisely because they have misled my people, saying, 'Peace,' when there is no peace, and because, when the people build a wall, these prophets smear it with whitewash, (ESV) Verses 18-23, ¹⁸ and say, Thus says the Lord God: Woe to the women who sew magic bands upon all wrists, and make veils for the heads of persons of every stature, in the hunt for souls! Will you hunt down souls belonging to my people and keep your own souls alive? ¹⁹ You have profaned me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, putting to death souls who should not die and keeping alive souls who should not live, by your lying to my people, who listen to lies.*

²⁰ *"Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against your magic bands with which you hunt the souls like birds, and I will tear them from your arms, and I will let the souls whom you hunt go free, the souls like birds. ²¹ Your veils also I will tear off and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand as prey, and you shall know that I am the Lord. ²² Because you have disheartened the righteous falsely, although I have not grieved him, and you have encouraged the wicked, that he should not turn from his evil way to save his life, ²³ therefore you shall no more see false visions nor practice divination. I will deliver my people out of your hand. And you shall know that I am the Lord."* (ESV) There seems to be many things that the people of Israel, even while in exile for disobedience, continued to perform on a regular basis. No wonder God is upset with His people. They have accepted the influence of Satan to continue in pagan practices and give false hope to those who are in exile. Notice the last two sentences in verse 23, *"I will deliver my people out of your hand. And you shall know that I am the Lord."*

Chapter 14

There is another group who are addressed by God in the 14th chapter. We find, in verses 1-5, the recorded record from Ezekiel pertaining to the elders. ¹ *Then certain of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. ² And the word of the Lord came to me: ³ "Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their hearts, and set the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I indeed*

let myself be consulted by them? ⁴ *Therefore speak to them and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Any one of the house of Israel who takes his idols into his heart and sets the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and yet comes to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him as he comes with the multitude of his idols,* ⁵ *that I may lay hold of the hearts of the house of Israel, who are all estranged from me through their idols.* (ESV)

As a member of the older generation currently on the earth, I should understand that we all learn from the modeling of the generations before us. We, in turn, are responsible to model for the next generation. Are we teaching our children to worship idols and not God, or are we teaching our children to love God, have a personal relationship with Yeshua and be obedient to God's commandments and rules? What and how were we taught? Was it the truth or did Satan have influence over our parents and grandparents? Did we learn things that were not necessarily the truth pertaining to the teachings of Yeshua? We can learn from the book of Ezekiel. What did God do to punish Israel for their disobedience? Look around you today and see if you don't believe that America is going down the same road that Israel went down during the time of Ezekiel. America needs to repent and change their ways by following God's commandments and rules, or we will suffer the same wrath that Israel faced. The tempo seems to shift somewhat with the elders. Let's look at verses 7-8, ⁷ *For any one of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn in Israel, who separates himself from me, taking his idols into his heart and putting the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and yet comes to a prophet to consult me through him, **I the Lord will answer him myself.** ⁸ *And **I will set my face against that man; I will make him a sign and a byword and cut him off from the midst of my people, and you shall know that I am the Lord.*** (ESV) Now, before I even put the verses into this text I want you to observe what is said in verses 9-10, ⁹ *And if the prophet is deceived and speaks a word, I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand against him and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.* ¹⁰ *And they shall bear their punishment—the punishment of the prophet and the punishment of the inquirer shall be alike—* (ESV) Think about it, God is saying that He would destroy any prophet who tolerated, supported or encouraged the Israelites to worship false gods or other things in place of the true God. In the same manner, ministers today who tolerate immorality in the church, and refuse to confront those who persist in ungodly behavior, will be considered as guilty as the member of the church who is living in sin.*

It even gets a little harsher in the next bit of scripture. Look at verses 13-14, ¹³ *“Son of man, when a land sins against me by acting faithlessly, and I stretch out my hand against it and break its supply of bread and send famine upon it, and cut off from it man and beast,* ¹⁴ *even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness, declares the Lord God.* (ESV) Just think about what this implies. Even if Noah, Daniel and Job desired to intercede on your behalf, God would not listen to their pleas. Those three men would only be received by God due to their own righteousness. Ezekiel's text gives three examples of God's wrath and what influence these three men would have on the outcome. The first example is given in verses 15-16 where God has wild beast to pass through the land. God states that these three men could not save even their sons or daughters, only they alone would be saved. The second example is given in verses 17-18. In these two verses, God would bring the sword to pass through the land and once again these three men would only be able to save themselves due to their righteousness. The third example is in verses 19-20. This time God causes pestilence to pass through the land and only these three men would survive. They would not even be able to save their sons or daughters. Verse 21 gives the four areas of wrath that God is going to bring upon Jerusalem, ²¹ *“For thus says the Lord God: How much more when I send upon Jerusalem my four disastrous acts of judgment, sword, famine, wild beasts, and pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast!* (ESV)

Chapter 15

Chapter 15 is a short chapter where Jerusalem is compared to a useless vine. The verse containing the example is verse 6, ⁶ *Therefore thus says the Lord God: Like the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so have I given up the inhabitants of Jerusalem.* (ESV)

Chapter 16

The English Standard Version's (ESV) heading for chapter 16 is *The Lord's Faithless Bride*. Verse 2 reads in the following manner, ² *"Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations,* (ESV) We go further to verse 7, ⁷ *I made you flourish like a plant of the field. And you grew up and became tall and arrived at full adornment. Your breasts were formed, and your hair had grown; yet you were naked and bare.* (ESV) We are speaking of Jerusalem metaphorically as a young woman. In the following passage, we see God symbolically protecting her and entering into a marriage covenant with Jerusalem as God claimed her for His own.

Verses 8-14, ⁸ *"When I passed by you again and saw you, behold, you were at the age for love, and I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness; I made my vow to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord God, and you became mine.* ⁹ *Then I bathed you with water and washed off your blood from you and anointed you with oil.* ¹⁰ *I clothed you also with embroidered cloth and shod you with fine leather. I wrapped you in fine linen and covered you with silk.* ¹¹ *And I adorned you with ornaments and put bracelets on your wrists and a chain on your neck.* ¹² *And I put a ring on your nose and earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head.* ¹³ *Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing was of fine linen and silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour and honey and oil. You grew exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty.* ¹⁴ *And your renown went forth among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through the splendor that I had bestowed on you, declares the Lord God.* (ESV)

We sometimes use metaphors (word pictures) to express an object in a little different view. We sometimes call a car a she or her. We do the same thing with ships or boats. We have also done this with countries or cities. So, in other words God has claimed Jerusalem as His own and has adorned her with blessing after blessing to put her in a position of greatness.

Look at the United States in a similar manner. God accepted the covenant that our forefathers made with Him when they laid out the rules and wording of our constitution. God knew that we, as a nation, were descendents of Israelites, not Jews, and that He had scattered us from under our Assyrian captors over two thousand years ago. We were following the pathway of Jerusalem and failed in honoring our God who had blessed this nation and wrapped us in fine linen and silk and adorned us with silver and gold. We didn't want to follow God's rules and began making up our own rules just as Jerusalem had done thousands of years ago. We played the whore and was loved physically, as well as spiritually. We began killing our children so we could play the whore even more. We then decided that what we wanted wasn't to have a personal relationship with Yeshua, the Son of God. We wanted to have a physical relationship with someone of the same sex. So, we changed the laws of the land, declared that God did not consider the emotions of mankind and made same sex marriages legal and equal to a God given male/female relationship. They never considered that the purpose of the male/female relationship was to have children. A male/male or a female/female relationship cannot fulfill the intended purpose of God for a male/female marriage. Even with all that, we kept running into this nasty situation that the females were becoming pregnant and they had no desire to have a child. Thus we went back to court and declared that it was for the health of the female to have an abortion and kill the child. We have

become the greatest nation of child murderers on the face of this planet. There is more blood spilled daily in abortion clinics than in many of the wars that this nation has fought in over the last two hundred and fifty years.

What is it that Ezekiel penned from the words of God in this 16th chapter? Review the following in verses 15-22, ¹⁵ *“But you trusted in your beauty and played the whore because of your renown and lavished your whorings on any passerby; your beauty became his. ¹⁶ You took some of your garments and made for yourself colorful shrines, and on them played the whore. The like has never been, nor ever shall be. ¹⁷ You also took your beautiful jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself images of men, and with them played the whore. ¹⁸ And you took your embroidered garments to cover them, and set my oil and my incense before them. ¹⁹ Also my bread that I gave you—I fed you with fine flour and oil and honey—you set before them for a pleasing aroma; and so it was, declares the Lord God. ²⁰ And you took your sons and your daughters, whom you had borne to me, and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. Were your whorings so small a matter ²¹ that you slaughtered my children and delivered them up as an offering by fire to them? ²² And in all your abominations and your whorings you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, wallowing in your blood. (ESV)*

God goes further in admonishing Jerusalem by giving illustrations of Sodom and Samaria in the following text. Verses 48-51, ⁴⁸ *As I live, declares the Lord God, your sister Sodom and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done. ⁴⁹ Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. ⁵⁰ They were haughty and did an abomination before me. So I removed them, when I saw it. ⁵¹ Samaria has not committed half your sins. You have committed more abominations than they, and have made your sisters appear righteous by all the abominations that you have committed. (ESV)*

Once again, I will state that God is a merciful God and it is clearly shown in the closing text of chapter 16. Here are verses 59-63, ⁵⁹ *“For thus says the Lord God: I will deal with you as you have done, you who have despised the oath in breaking the covenant, ⁶⁰ yet I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish for you an everlasting covenant. ⁶¹ Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you take your sisters, both your elder and your younger, and I give them to you as daughters, but not on account of the covenant with you. ⁶² I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the Lord, ⁶³ that you may remember and be confounded, and never open your mouth again because of your shame, when I atone for you for all that you have done, declares the Lord God.” (ESV)*

Chapter 17

Chapter 17 is the second place in the book of Ezekiel where I strongly feel that there are connections between the book of Jeremiah and the book of Ezekiel. The other place in Ezekiel was chapter 12, verse 16a. There are statements made in Jeremiah that are either supported or answered in Ezekiel. I have written out an explanation of the riddle in this chapter of Ezekiel in my book *The Thirteenth Tribe of Israel*. Since I had written this previously, I thought why not use it again to explain this chapter. By doing such, I thought it would explain the meaning of the riddle and increase the understanding of things in Jeremiah. When I went to find where that material was recorded, I came upon a surprise. That material is in the 17th chapter of my other book and this is the 17th chapter of Ezekiel. Coincidence? Maybe, God inspired! Who knows? Whatever may be the situation, here is the content of my other work. Oh, one final note! The verses of text used in the following are from the New King James Version (NKJV) and not the English Standard Version (ESV). I must make a second statement: While using the ESV to support this work, I must clear up one item. The notes written by

Rev. Donald C. Stamps and used throughout the ESV are some of the easiest notes of explanation I've had the pleasure to read or use. Even so, there are a few notes where I do not agree with Rev. Stamps. The notes on Ezekiel 17 happens to be one such place. I will do my best to provide you with explanations and cross references so that you will have sufficient information for you to make up your own mind on who made the notes clearer.

From the prophecy of the Bible, these facts are recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Ezekiel in the form of a riddle and a parable. Together with their explanation, they make up the subject matter of that entire chapter. This chapter opens as follows: Ezekiel 17:1-3, *And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Son of man, pose a riddle, and speak a parable to the house of Israel," and say, "thus says the Lord God: . . ."* The Hebrew word here translated *riddle* is defined as: A puzzle; hence a trick, conundrum, dark saying, hard question, etc. These definitions correspond to our English thought of an enigma, or something proposed and to be solved by conjecture, a puzzling question, or an ambiguous proposition. A parable, on the other hand, is more like a fable or an allegorical representation of something real in its relation to human life and thought. It is represented by something real in nature. Thus the prophet, in his introduction, prepares us to expect the words that follow shall be puzzling or hard to understand. Since the Lord commanded Ezekiel to use this veiled language, we must adjust ourselves accordingly. Proverbs 25:2, *It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter.* Let us, in a spirit that shall be worthy of kings, search out the matter of this riddle, that we notice is put forth to the house of Israel, and not to the Jewish people.

The first part of the riddle is given as follows: Ezekiel 17:3-4, *Thus says the Lord God: "A great eagle with large wings and long pinions, full of feathers of various colors, came to Lebanon, and took from the cedar the highest branch. He cropped off its topmost young twig and carried it to a land of trade; he set it in a city of merchants."*

A few moments of serious thought and consideration should convince us that, whatever else it may mean, the great eagle is intended to represent a means of transportation. The declaration is that it *came* to a certain place, *and took* something that was in that place to which it came, and *carried it to* some other *land*. We are, also, told this means of transportation came to Lebanon. Since Lebanon is a mountain range in Palestine, then the place to which it came, and from which it departed, is most certainly Palestine.

What is taken by the eagle is declared to be a *young twig* that was taken from *the highest branch of the cedar* of Lebanon. Since the personal pronoun *he* is used, having *the cedar* for its basis, it must represent a person. This person is of the masculine gender, and must be a guardian of the *young twig*, hence, this young scion is a person. Furthermore, it is a well established fact that the cedar of Lebanon is a symbol of royalty. We will not need to go elsewhere for proof since the riddle contains within itself such abundant evidence of this fact. It will be made clear as we proceed.

It is true of a twig that it must be set, grafted, or planted in order that it may grow and bear fruit. It is declared of this young royal scion that he was *set*, and the place where he was set was certainly well adapted for an increase of population, or subjects, that is *a city of merchants in a land of trade*.

The second part of this riddle reads as follows: Ezekiel 17:5-6, *"Then he took some of the seed of the land and planted it in a fertile field; he placed it by abundant waters and set it like a willow tree. And it grew and became a spreading vine of low stature; its branches turned toward him, but its roots were under it, so it became a vine, brought forth branches, and put forth shoots."*

The seed of the land is most certainly the people of the land. The land from which *he took* this seed, or people, is Palestine. The people of Palestine are distinctly Israelites. And numerically they are the lost Northern Kingdom of Israel. So, these people who had been taken out of their own land were *planted* in another land. That other land has become to them *a fertile field* located *by abundant waters*. These abundant waters are not the Mediterranean Sea, or the Great Sea as it is called in Scripture. This

new home of the removed people is *by abundant waters*. In their new home, Israel *grew and became a spreading vine*. This riddle is dealing with what has been called the breach in the lineage of Judah, as we shall see, in which the *high* and the *low* princes of the royal house are to exchange places. I am not surprised that this spreading or outreaching vine is said to be of *low stature*, that its branches *turned toward him*, or that *its roots*, or growing power, *were under him*. If under him, then he was over them, i.e., their ruler.

I have no desire to leave my readers in the dark concerning the magnitude of this riddle in the 17th chapter of Ezekiel. Some will question: What is this breach that is mentioned here? We must go back to the 38th chapter of Genesis to find our answers. In verse 2, we find Judah's wife is the daughter of Shua. We go through the three sons born to Judah by the daughter of Shua and the marriage of their first born son Er to Tamar. In the custom of the Hebrew people, if an elder brother died without an heir the next brother was expected to honor his brother, i.e., verse 8, ⁸ *Then Judah said to Onan* (second son), *"Go in to your brother's wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother."* (ESV) Onan also sinned and died. There was a third son, Shelah who was much younger. Judah tells Tamar to stay in her father's house as a widow until Shelah grows up. Judah's wife dies and he went up to Timnah to shear his sheep. When Tamar hears this she removes her widow's cloths, veiled and covered herself and sat at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the way to Timnah. In verses 15-19, we find the following recorded, ¹⁵ *When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, for she had covered her face.* ¹⁶ *He turned to her at the roadside and said, "Come, let me come in to you," for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. She said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?"* ¹⁷ *He answered, "I will send you a young goat from the flock."* *And she said, "If you give me a pledge, until you send it—"* ¹⁸ *He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" She replied, "Your signet and your cord and your staff that is in your hand."* *So he gave them to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him.* ¹⁹ *Then she arose and went away, and taking off her veil she put on the garments of her widowhood.* (ESV) We now know that Tamar is pregnant by Judah.

In Genesis 38:24-26, we find the next recorded fact pertaining to Judah and Tamar, ²⁴ *About three months later Judah was told, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has been immoral. Moreover, she is pregnant by immorality."* *And Judah said, "Bring her out, and let her be burned."* ²⁵ *As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, "By the man to whom these belong, I am pregnant."* *And she said, "Please identify whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff."* ²⁶ *Then Judah identified them and said, "She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah."* *And he did not know her again.* (ESV)

We find the outcome of Tamar's pregnancy in Genesis 38:27-30, ²⁷ *When the time of her labor came, there were twins in her womb.* ²⁸ *And when she was in labor, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand, saying, "This one came out first."* ²⁹ *But as he drew back his hand, behold, his brother came out. And she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" Therefore his name was called Perez.* ³⁰ *Afterward his brother came out with the scarlet thread on his hand, and his name was called Zerah.* (ESV) We find the information we were looking for in these verses. We now know what the breach was and that there are two princes born as twins with the older (high) prince named Perez and the younger (low) prince named Zerah, sometimes called the prince of the red thread. The Messiah would be born through the line of Perez. However, at the time of Jeremiah the position of the throne of David would switch from the high prince to the low prince. That is what this riddle in Ezekiel is trying to get you to understand. It is also a very good indicator of why it is necessary to read and study the Old Testament so that you understand why certain fulfillments of prophecy occur in the New Testament. I must also explain the term breach. There are five Hebrew words used for the word breach. One such word means to break or a gap, another means to bust forward and still another means a loss in a battle or a judgment. As such, we should be able to grasp the many

sins of Israel and Judah as the reasons for God's judgment against them. However, for our word used here, breach would most likely mean a busting forward.

This riddle in Ezekiel further says: Ezekiel 17:7-8, *"But there was another great eagle with large wings and many feathers; and behold this vine bent its roots toward him, from the garden terrace where it had been planted, that he might water it. It was planted in good soil by many waters, to bring forth branches, bear fruit, and become a majestic vine."* Here, we have the record of the arrival of another passenger, who also came to that land of *good soil by many waters*, brought there by the same means of transportation, i.e., *a great eagle with large wings*, as that which brought the royal scion (called the young twig in verse 4 above). This was not the same eagle, but *another eagle*, and here is where this riddle becomes difficult. **It seems the great eagles of this riddle must be ships, and I believe both parts of this riddle must have a ship involved!** However, the first great eagle (ship) must sail for only a relative short distance, in relationship to the second great eagle (ship), because the first royal person (*young twig*) was surely born along the way as Israel wandered overland toward this *fertile field by abundant waters*. I believe this must be true because a prophecy must become a fact of history in order to be a prophecy. Furthermore, I believe this means of transportation (*great eagle*), especially in the second case, to have been a ship of Dan, since it is declared that Dan abode in ships, and they have taken Cedars from Lebanon to make masts for their ships. We know the seaport of Tyre, in Palestine, was the port they must come to for the cedars of Lebanon. *"Yes, for the cedars of Lebanon!"* It makes no difference whether used as masts for their ships, or as types of their royal princesses, who are under the care of the prophet Jeremiah at this point.

The tribe of Dan used the eagle as their standard. They are said to have used great carved eagles with outstretched wings as the figureheads on the bows of their vessels. It is a common thing to symbolize ships under full sail as flying birds. In this riddle, the *long pinions* represent the long sails, which, like wings, carry the great ship, the large bird, or eagle ship, and her passengers to the land of trade and the city of merchants.

I have arrived at the conclusion that the object the writer of Ezekiel has in view, when mentioning the coming of this second ship, is that we may presume another important personage had arrived. After mentioning the ship's arrival, his next expression is: *And behold this vine bent its roots toward him, And stretched its branches toward him, From the garden terrace where it had been planted, That he might water it.*

In my use of the New King James translation, it is unfortunate that certain words do not translate in the same manner. In the King James this verse reads: *"This vine did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation."* Thus, we learn that the person who came in the second ship was a woman, and her inclination and desire was toward the prince who had preceded her into this same land. My question to you is this: If this is not the case, then why is this stated in this manner in the King James Bible written in 1611, and not expressed in the same concept today? Why was *her* changed to *its*? That would indicate to me that learned men of four hundred years ago understood this to be the case. Why not those of today who translated text for a newer version of the Bible? Just for the purpose of curiosity, I'm inserting this verse from the ESV Bible: *and behold, this vine bent its roots toward him and shot forth its branches toward him from the bed where it was planted, that he might water it.* (ESV) It seems that both the NKJV and ESV have made *its* out of *her*. Did someone miss the point? Let us continue.

What follows is still in the manner of the riddle and we are discussing the vine and the essentials for its life and growth, mainly land and water. There follows that which clearly indicates a unity of life, in fact, there was a marriage between the *her* and the *him* of this riddle. More importantly this marriage additionally represents the conclusion of Jeremiah's commission to plant and build. The result of this marriage was that she, also, was *planted* in that land of a *spreading vine*, although the he of

that goodly vine is of *Low Stature*, and bore *fruit*, or offspring, and became *a majestic vine*.

It is true that a prince, in order to be king, can only wed with a princess or daughter of royalty. It will be well for us, at this junction, to remember, that we left Jeremiah and his little royal remnant of king's daughters on their way to a land unknown, or strange, to them. God led Jeremiah to this place where this preserved seed of David's line was to be *planted*, once again take root, and bear fruit!

It is a fact, the man and the woman of this riddle were married. The woman was *planted* in that land of good soil, into which she did *take root*, and these things were accomplished so she *might bear fruit*. In other words, that was the subject of prophecy concerning Jeremiah's commission, his royal charge, and is now recorded as a matter of history. **The analogy is complete!**

The explanation of this riddle makes all these things so clear to me that I am not left to conjecture. Beginning at the eleventh verse, the prophet says: Ezekiel 17:11-12, *Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Say now to the rebellious house: 'Do you not know what these things mean?' Tell them, 'Indeed the king of Babylon went to Jerusalem and took its king and princes, and led them with him to Babylon.'*" I continue with a paraphrase of what happened. The king of Babylon was Nebuchadnezzar, as we know. The king of Jerusalem and the princes thereof were Zedekiah and his sons. Next follows a brief account of Zedekiah's treachery with the king of Babylon, how he rebelled against him, and sent to the king of Egypt for help. Then comes a prophecy concerning the fact that King Zedekiah shall die in Babylon. After this comes the prophetic account of that band of fugitives going to Egypt, and the declaration that they should fall by the sword, etc., all of which I have given in detail. Finally, the outcome of it all, and that which pertains to our immediate subject, begins again with the twenty-second verse. The prophet Ezekiel is still using the symbols of the riddle and explains as follows.

Ezekiel 17:22, *Thus says the Lord God: "I will take also one of the highest branches of the high cedar and set it out."* This is the royal prince who was carried to this new land by the first great eagle. Ezekiel then proceeds to say in verse 22, *"I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and will plant it on a high and prominent mountain."* This is the second importation of royal branches, but this time, it is the *topmost* or one whose right it is to rule, a *tender one*. That is, it is a tender young girl, the topmost one of the young twigs that came by way of the second great eagle.

Where was she planted? Verse 23a gives us the answer. *"On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it!"* This was the Divine reply! What, **ISRAEL**? Lost Israel? Yes, Israel, national Israel. Israel as a nation, but not Jewish-Israel, for that kingdom is overthrown. The Jewish people are gone into Babylonian captivity, the king, with his eyes put out, is doomed to die in chains in a Babylonian prison, the princes are dead, and the king's daughters have escaped from Jerusalem! **We see God's grace to take the topmost one of these tender twigs and plant it here in the height of the mountains of Israel, i.e., the THRONE!**

Ezekiel 17:23b, *"And it (that which was planted) will bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a majestic cedar. Under it will dwell birds of every sort; in the shadow of its branches they will dwell."* The purpose of this is so glaringly clear that the most simple mind can surely see that it refers to the mixed population which Israel, of necessity, must have gathered while being sifted through other countries. The prophet further declares: Ezekiel 17:24, *"And all the trees of the field, i.e., all the people of that kingdom of Israel, shall know that I, the Lord, have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree, dried up the green tree and made the dry tree flourish; I, the Lord, have spoken and have done it."*

What has God done?

**Brought down the HIGH from the throne, removed the descendant of Perez
and exalted the LOW (descendant of Zerah) to the throne!**

What else has God done?

He healed the breach in the lineage of Judah and Tamar, remembered His covenant with David (Ps 89:3-4; 28-37), and kept faith with Jeremiah (allowed him to complete his task to plant and build)!

These trees are royal cedars of which the male heirs of the Perez line have been dethroned in favor of him that was low, Zerah, who is now exalted by being enthroned. A royal princess, in the company of Jeremiah, found her way to this land and united her interests with this prince of Zerah's line: Ezekiel 17:7 KJV, *That he might water it by the furrows of her plantation*. I am safe in saying God has taken the crown from the head of Zedekiah, the high, who was of the Perez line, and has placed it on the head of a prince of Zerah, the low. Zedekiah's daughter, the heir to crown and scepter, made her way with Jeremiah, who had charge of the royal paraphernalia, and **who was divinely commissioned to plant and build anew the plucked up and overthrown house of Judah!** We will see this fully stated in Ezekiel chapter 37!

Jesus the Christ came through the family line of Judah, David, Nathan, and Mary, not through the breach (in fact, completely bypassing the breach). The breach ran through Judah, David, Josiah and Zedekiah. The two branches of the Judah-Pharez-David line diverge at Zedekiah's daughters. One of these lines eventually gave birth to the Messiah. Once again, this will occur through the Judah-Pharez-David side or lineage. However, as I shall prove, the other line, after having been united to the brother line of the Scarlet Thread, is still holding that preserved throne and scepter, and raising up seed to their fathers, Judah and David. Therefore, there shall always be one of David's descendants sitting upon that throne as rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, also known as Israel, and the scepter may not depart from Judah `till **SHILOH COMES!** Shiloh refers to the second coming of Yeshua (Jesus).

Thus, it is that one of these lines holds that scepter, and wears that crown as a fact, but the Judah-David house has a greater son to whom they belong by **RIGHT**. When He comes, as Shiloh, God will give it to Him (Christ or Yeshua), for unto Him shall be the gathering of the people. At that time, the breaches will be healed, and He shall be called **The Restorer of the BREACH**.

The question now is to find where that scepter and throne are today, for we are confronted with the question of Lost Israel, or the *Lost Birthright*, that involves the whole house of Joseph and the many nations into which they were to develop.

I found the following on the Internet and find it supports my belief. I am inserting it here for your reading.

What the Bible says about Descendants of Perez

(From Forerunner Commentary)

Genesis 38:27-30 Of course, the purpose of the thread was to mark the firstborn son—the one who would receive the birthright. The breach, or the potential for estrangement between the brothers, lay in the unexpected reversal of birth order: The boy ready to be born, Zerah, as marked by the thread, became the second born. His older brother was named Perez. David and his dynasty were descendants of Perez. **Christ** also came through this line (**Matthew 1:3-5**, 16; **Luke 3:23-33**).

Whatever happened to Zerah and his descendants?

Cheated of their birthright, the descendants of Zerah separated from the children of Israel soon after the Exodus. This separation explains why so few references to Zerah appear in God's Word. Some of the

children of Zerah went north to Greece. Others went to Troy, near the Dardanelles, which, by the way, bears the name of Zerah's fifth son, Darda. After Troy's fall to the Achaeans (Greeks), a group of Zerahites, under the leadership of Brutus, migrated to Britain via Malta. In England, they founded "New Troy" which the Romans, much later, renamed Londinium, now London.

Other Zerahites settled down in Ireland, after residing for a time in Spain, where they founded the city of Saragossa, literally, the City of Zerah. By the time of David, a princely clan of Zerahites was established as Ireland's royal family, ruling a part of the tribe of Dan, the *Tautha de Danann* (that is, tribe of Dan) of Irish legend, which had also settled there.

Therefore, because of the Zerahite monarchy, the scepter did not depart from Judah ([Genesis 49:10](#)) with the dethroning of Zedekiah and the death of his sons.

However, this fact in itself does not address the question of *David's* monarchy, which [God](#) said was to be everlasting. It fails to address this issue because Zerah's monarchy was *not* David's monarchy. While related, they remained *separate* monarchies, God having established David's much later than Zerah's. The Davidic monarchy was not linked to its Zerahite counterpart. Hence, we cannot claim that God fulfilled His promise of a perpetual throne to *David* through the Zerahite monarchy.

To resolve this issue, God *connected* the two monarchies. To see how, we must return to the time of Jerusalem's fall.

The Babylonians appointed Gedaliah as Nebuchadnezzar's vassal to rule Judah. Jeremiah 41 relates how Ishmael, who was of the "royal family" (verse 1), assassinated Gedaliah (verse 2), probably out of jealousy over the power the Babylonians had bestowed on him. Ishmael took a number of prisoners (verse 10), probably as bargaining chips should his schemes go sour. And sour they went. Ishmael was forced to flee to Ammon (verse 15). His prisoners escaped. Verse 10 mentions something about those prisoners *that* the casual reader might miss. Among them were some VIPs: "Then Ishmael carried away captive all the rest of the people who were in Mizpah, the king's daughters. . . ."

"While none of his sons survived Jerusalem's fall, Zedekiah was survived by at least two daughters. One of these daughters had recently married an Irish prince of the line of Judah through Zerah. In fact, the marriage took place during (or shortly before) the siege of Jerusalem. Thus, Zedekiah's daughter, who was a descendant of Perez, married a man descended through Zerah. Both had Judah as a common ancestor.

It is not fanciful to adduce (*cite as evidence*) that an Irish prince was visiting Jerusalem in the sixth century BC. The ancients were more traveled than many today want to believe, and international relations, complete with ambassadors, protocols, and "diplomatic immunity," were extant (*currently existing, not destroyed or lost*) as well. [Nehemiah 11:24](#) mentions a certain Pethahiah, who was probably one such ambassador. More importantly, he was "of the children of Zerah, the son of Judah, [and] was the king's deputy in all matters concerning the people."

The word *deputy* literally means "hand." In modern idiom (*manner or style*), Pethahiah was the Persian king's "right-hand man." As strange as it may seem, several generations after Jeremiah's day, there was a highly placed Jew (that is, someone of Judah) in the *Persian* court whose task it was to look after the Jews in Palestine.

We do not need to read too much between the lines to understand from this scripture that Ireland had diplomatic relations with the Persians, and Pethahiah, possibly of the Irish royal family, was sent to

Persia to represent the interests of the Jews in Palestine. That is, the Irish king, himself a Jew in that he descended from Judah, felt responsible for the Jews in Palestine. Since he did not enjoy hegemony (*domination, having superior weight, force or influence*) over that part of [the world](#), he looked after their interests through a highly placed person—virtually an ambassador—in the Persian court. Even in today’s complex world of foreign relations, this technique is a common method through which a leader can exercise a measure of control over an area outside his immediate authority.

The marriage of one of Zedekiah’s daughters—of the Perez branch of Judah—to a prince of the Zerah branch healed the breach in Judah’s family. Through this healing, God perpetuated the Davidic monarchy, as required by the unconditional promise to David in [II Samuel 7:16](#). The offspring of the Irish prince and Zedekiah’s daughter would legitimately bring the two branches together indefinitely, as one family, one monarchy maintained the authority of the Davidic monarchy over the “house of Israel,” as God prophesied in [Jeremiah 33:17](#).

Jeremiah received the job of transporting the royal couple back to Ireland.

I will leave you with two questions to think about. First, did you read the bold and underlined statement made on page 24? That statement completes Jeremiah’s commission with the building and the planting. Secondly, if you want to read more concerning the *Lost Birthright* in the preceding paragraph, go to my website (www.vqpub.org) and select the book *The Thirteenth Tribe of Israel* to provide you with more understanding as to which countries constitute a portion of Lost Israel. I will make one more statement: There will be many who will tell you that this is just conjecture and not true. I will say that Satan has been doing his best to deny what is stated here. But, it is up to you to determine if this is a fulfilled prophecy, is truth and is the objective of God to complete.

Chapter 18

The heading for this chapter is: *The Soul Who Sins Shall Die*. I have not repeated the proverb used in the first verses of this chapter, instead I start with verse 4 and I see different views and conditions of a person’s soul in this chapter. Verse 4 makes a general statement, ⁴ *Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die.* (ESV)

In the first situation, I see the condition of a righteous father, verses 5-9, ⁵ *“If a man is righteous and does what is just and right—⁶ if he does not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbor’s wife or approach a woman in her time of menstrual impurity,⁷ does not oppress anyone, but restores to the debtor his pledge, commits no robbery, gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with a garment,⁸ does not lend at interest or take any profit, withholds his hand from injustice, executes true justice between man and man,⁹ walks in my statutes, and keeps my rules by acting faithfully—he is righteous; he shall surely live, declares the Lord God. (ESV)*

In the second situation, we see this righteous father having a wicked and violent son, verses 10-13, ¹⁰ *“If he fathers a son who is violent, a shedder of blood, who does any of these things ¹¹ (though he himself did none of these things), who even eats upon the mountains, defiles his neighbor’s wife,¹² oppresses the poor and needy, commits robbery, does not restore the pledge, lifts up his eyes to the idols, commits abomination,¹³ lends at interest, and takes profit; shall he then live? He shall not live. He has done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon himself.* (ESV)

In the third situation, we have added one more generation. We have this violent son having a son and this son lives in obedience to God’s commandments and rules, verses 14-17, ¹⁴ *“Now suppose this man fathers a son who sees all the sins that his father has done; he sees, and does not do likewise:*

¹⁵ he does not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbor's wife, ¹⁶ does not oppress anyone, exacts no pledge, commits no robbery, but gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with a garment, ¹⁷ withholds his hand from iniquity, takes no interest or profit, obeys my rules, and walks in my statutes; he shall not die for his father's iniquity; he shall surely live. (ESV)

We find three other statements made in chapter 18 that are noteworthy. First, verses 19-20, ¹⁹ "Yet you say, 'Why should not the son suffer for the iniquity of the father?' When the son has done what is just and right, and has been careful to observe all my statutes, he shall surely live. ²⁰ The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself. (ESV) Second, verse 23, ²³ Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live? (ESV) Third, verses 30-32, ³⁰ "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn, and live." (ESV)

Chapter 19

Chapter 19 is a lament for the princes of Israel. In many ways, some of the verses reflect back to chapter 17 and the riddle pertaining to the changing of the high prince to the low prince and the relocation of the throne of Israel. Review verses 10-14 to see this, ¹⁰ Your mother was like a vine in a vineyard planted by the water, fruitful and full of branches by reason of abundant water. ¹¹ Its strong stems became rulers' scepters; it towered aloft among the thick boughs; it was seen in its height with the mass of its branches. ¹² But the vine was plucked up in fury, cast down to the ground; the east wind dried up its fruit; they were stripped off and withered. As for its strong stem, fire consumed it. ¹³ Now it is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land. ¹⁴ And fire has gone out from the stem of its shoots, has consumed its fruit, so that there remains in it no strong stem, no scepter for ruling. This is a lamentation and has become a lamentation. (ESV)

Chapter 20

God addresses the elders of the house of Israel who had come to Ezekiel to inquire of the Lord. Verses 3-6, ³ "Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God, Is it to inquire of me that you come? As I live, declares the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you. ⁴ Will you judge them, son of man, will you judge them? Let them know the abominations of their fathers, ⁵ and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: On the day when I chose Israel, I swore to the offspring of the house of Jacob, making myself known to them in the land of Egypt; I swore to them, saying, I am the Lord your God. ⁶ On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands. (ESV) Verse 7 informs us of the instructions God gave to Israel while in Egypt, ⁷ And I said to them, Cast away the detestable things your eyes feast on, every one of you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the Lord your God. (ESV) Verse 8 teaches us that they rebelled and did not do as God instructed, ⁸ But they rebelled against me and were not willing to listen to me. None of them cast away the detestable things their eyes feasted on, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt.

"Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the

midst of the land of Egypt. (ESV) Doesn't this sound like the actions of a major portion of America, or who call themselves Americans today? God has blessed this nation and lead us to greatness through His blessings. We were the envy of the world for our blessings and for the relationship between us as a people and our God. But, we rejected the statutes and rules of our God. Our people took it upon themselves to change God's rules to a new set of rules made by the people and surprisingly was supported by the judges and courts of the land. We outlawed school prayer, did away with saying the pledge of allegiance, changed laws making it a woman's health issue to have an abortion, condoning same sex marriages, and allowing our children to be cut on and producing a hormone raping of their gender. They now claim that Christians are not tolerant toward society and what society wants in today's world. Oh, how seduced and deceived they are!

Chapter 20 continues to illustrate how the house of Israel rebelled against God time after time. They rebelled in Egypt, God was going to correct them but backed off for His name's sake. God took them to the wilderness and gave them His statutes and His rules, verses 11-13, ¹¹ *I gave them my statutes and made known to them my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live.* ¹² *Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them.* ¹³ *But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness. They did not walk in my statutes but rejected my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live; and my Sabbaths they greatly profaned.*

"Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them in the wilderness, to make a full end of them. (ESV) God was once again going to correct them but backed off again. God spoke to the children and gave them the instructions He had given the older generations. We find recorded in verses 21-24 the results: ²¹ *But the children rebelled against me. They did not walk in my statutes and were not careful to obey my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live; they profaned my Sabbaths.*

"Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the wilderness. ²² *But I withheld my hand and acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out.* ²³ *Moreover, **I swore to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them through the countries,*** ²⁴ *because they had not obeyed my rules, but had rejected my statutes and profaned my Sabbaths, and their eyes were set on their fathers' idols.* (ESV)

Even with all the warnings, and including the mercy of God to back off His wrath for His name's sake, not once but multiple times, we find Israel still rebelling. However, after the scattering of the people, we find that a merciful God declares hope to the people through the restoring of the people and the land. Review verses 33-38, ³³ *"As I live, declares the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out I will be king over you.* ³⁴ *I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out.* ³⁵ *And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face.* ³⁶ *As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, declares the Lord God.* ³⁷ *I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.* ³⁸ *I will purge out the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against me. I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.* (ESV)

We are still dealing with the downfall of Jerusalem and the exiling of the last of the people in Jerusalem before the Babylonian army burns the city and the temple to the ground. God has put off His wrath and punishment for the people and the land on many occasions and through many prophets. It is now coming down to the actual final actions in the destruction of Jerusalem. Chapters 21 through 24 provide for us the details of this final destruction. Beginning with chapter 25, we find God's wrath for

the various countries around Israel who acted as agents of pagan wickedness in the eyes of those in Israel. Let us go forward as God has drawn His sword in Chapter 21.

Chapter 21

Chapter 21 begins as Ezekiel is told, by God, what is about to happen. Verses 1-5, ¹ *The word of the Lord came to me:* ² *“Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem and preach against the sanctuaries. Prophecy against the land of Israel³ and say to the land of Israel, Thus says the Lord: Behold, I am against you and will draw my sword from its sheath and will cut off from you both righteous and wicked. ⁴ Because I will cut off from you both righteous and wicked, therefore my sword shall be drawn from its sheath against all flesh from south to north. ⁵ And all flesh shall know that I am the Lord. I have drawn my sword from its sheath; it shall not be sheathed again. (ESV)*

I do not imagine that Ezekiel has to be told to groan and grieve for the people or the land. These are his fellow citizens, who are in exile, just as he is. They are hearing the news of what is happening in Jerusalem from runners bringing the news, and from Ezekiel as God instructs him to say, “Thus says the Lord.” In verses 6-7, we have the instruction from God to tell the people the following, ⁶ *“As for you, son of man, groan; with breaking heart and bitter grief, groan before their eyes. ⁷ And when they say to you, ‘Why do you groan?’ you shall say, ‘Because of the news that it is coming. Every heart will melt, and all hands will be feeble; every spirit will faint, and all knees will be weak as water. Behold, it is coming, and it will be fulfilled,’ “ declares the Lord God. (ESV)*

Please remember that this is prophecy with a dual purpose! It was prophecy toward the Israelites at the time of Ezekiel about 580-570 B.C. It is also prophecy for the latter days because God’s people, especially in the United States, are not listening to what God is telling them. America has her prophets! They are giving the warnings of the times, and what is about to happen if America does not repent of her sins, dispose of her idols and stop the terrible wickedness and disgrace of defiling the human body. God’s Word tells us that the human body is the temple of God, and we are composed of body, soul and spirit. It is a sin when we violate God’s commandments and rules, change his rules to suit our ego and destroy property and businesses just because they did not go along with your own ideas.

There is an interesting statement made in this chapter. We know that there is a connection between the text of Jeremiah and text of Ezekiel. We went through the riddle in chapter 17, and along with that explanation, I provided information of the breach. The breach is over twins born to Judah and Tamar. It was necessary to know which twin was born first because Judah is the tribe that establishes the kingly lineage of Israel. Because of the hand being exposed, a scarlet thread was tied around that wrist and the hand disappeared. Names were given to these twin boys because of this breach. The first born was Perez (the high - more royal) and Zerah (the low) was the twin with the scarlet thread tied to his wrist. Now look at verses 24-27, ²⁴ *“Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you have made your guilt to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your deeds your sins appear—because you have come to remembrance, you shall be taken in hand. ²⁵ And you, **Q profane wicked one, prince of Israel, whose day has come, the time of your final punishment,** ²⁶ **thus says the Lord God: Remove the turban and take off the crown. Things shall not remain as they are. Exalt that which is low, and bring low that which is exalted.** ²⁷ *A ruin, ruin, ruin I will make it. This also shall not be, until he comes, the one to whom judgment belongs, and I will give it to him. (ESV)* Do you see, and did you understand the connection between Jeremiah and Ezekiel? Do you understand that because of the wickedness of the royal lineage of Judah, the line was broken and was just transferred from a descendant of the Perez (high) line to the Zerah (low) line. Ezekiel prophesies that though David’s family line would continue, through Zerah the low line, there would not be another king from Perez, the high line, until the Messiah comes to establish His kingdom.*

Chapter 22

Chapter 22 begins with the following, verses 1-5, ¹ *And the word of the Lord came to me, saying,* ² *“And you, son of man, will you judge, will you judge the bloody city? Then declare to her all her abominations.* ³ *You shall say, Thus says the Lord God: A city that sheds blood in her midst, so that her time may come, and that makes idols to defile herself!* ⁴ *You have become guilty by the blood that you have shed, and defiled by the idols that you have made, and you have brought your days near, the appointed time of your years has come. Therefore I have made you a reproach to the nations, and a mockery to all the countries.* ⁵ *Those who are near and those who are far from you will mock you; your name is defiled; you are full of tumult.* (ESV) Verses 6-12 provide us with several examples of the sins that were being enacted in Jerusalem, ⁶ *“Behold, the princes of Israel in you, every one according to his power, have been bent on shedding blood.* ⁷ *Father and mother are treated with contempt in you; the sojourner suffers extortion in your midst; the fatherless and the widow are wronged in you.* ⁸ *You have despised my holy things and profaned my Sabbaths.* ⁹ *There are men in you who slander to shed blood, and people in you who eat on the mountains; they commit lewdness in your midst.* ¹⁰ *In you men uncover their fathers’ nakedness; in you they violate women who are unclean in their menstrual impurity.* ¹¹ *One commits abomination with his neighbor’s wife; another lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law; another in you violates his sister, his father’s daughter.* ¹² *In you they take bribes to shed blood; you take interest and profit and make gain of your neighbors by extortion; but me you have forgotten, declares the Lord God.* (ESV)

Jerusalem had become a violent city, full of all sorts of wickedness. There was no longer respect for holy things, the family, or the poor and needy. Sexual immorality was practiced freely by many people, and cheating and bribery were common. All this happened because the people had turned from God and rejected His Word. As a result, God was giving the city over to extreme judgment and destruction. **Today the social and spiritual condition of cities throughout the world is similar to that of ancient Jerusalem. Unless these cities repent, change their attitude toward God, turn from their wicked ways and begin to follow God, they will perish just as Jerusalem did.** Nations, cities and people cannot despise God and His standards and purposes without suffering the consequences at some point.

Instead of being loyal to God and staying separate from evil, the people’s spiritual leaders used their positions for personal financial gain and took part in all kinds of selfish, sinful pleasures. Some people today, who claim to be Christian leaders, are guilty of the same sins, bringing immeasurable shame and harm to the church.

Chapter 23

Chapter 23 brings to us the story of two women. God’s people are pictured as two sisters, Samaria (a city representing the northern kingdom of Israel) and Jerusalem (a city representing the southern kingdom of Judah). Ezekiel describes them as being unfaithful to God and committing spiritual adultery because they have “played the whore” with other nations. Prostitution here represents Israel’s and Judah’s efforts to make alliances (political and military partnerships) with ungodly nations instead of trusting in God alone as their source of strength and protection. Verse 4 names these two women, ⁴ *Oholah was the name of the elder and Oholibah the name of her sister. They became mine, and they bore sons and daughters. As for their names, Oholah is Samaria, and Oholibah is Jerusalem.* (ESV) Verses 5-10 provides the story of Oholah, ⁵ *“Oholah played the whore while she was mine, and she lusted after her lovers the Assyrians, warriors* ⁶ *clothed in purple, governors and commanders, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding on horses.* ⁷ *She bestowed her whoring upon them, the choicest men of Assyria all of them, and she defiled herself with all the idols of everyone after whom*

she lusted. ⁸ *She did not give up her whoring that she had begun in Egypt; for in her youth men had lain with her and handled her virgin bosom and poured out their whoring lust upon her.* ⁹ *Therefore I delivered her into the hands of her lovers, into the hands of the Assyrians, after whom she lusted.* ¹⁰ *These uncovered her nakedness; they seized her sons and her daughters; and as for her, they killed her with the sword; and she became a byword among women, when judgment had been executed on her.* (ESV) We need to study these words more closely in these latter days. First, let's make it as clear as possible that Oholah represents the house of Israel, the northern kingdom, which was the ten northern tribes. These ten tribes were conquered by the Assyrian Empire and taken captive to Assyria. Their identity became lost, in fact they became known as part of the Gentile world and not descendants of the Hebrew patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Israel). Ultimately, they become Britain, the United States and several other English speaking nations. It is for this reason that these few verses in Ezekiel impact these listed countries, and what these words tell to us as our future history. Notice that she, Oholah, was delivered into the hands of her lovers, the Assyrians. As the Assyrians moved toward the northwest so did the house of Israel. But the house of Israel no longer had a king, nor land of their own. They became blended in with the pagan peoples, in the lands they traveled through, to become Britain, and later the United States. Now, let's move forward to the latter days and the outcome of prophecy toward these nations. Notice, in verse 10, the wrath to come! We are still speaking about the Assyrians, and it says that they will *uncover her nakedness; they seized her sons and her daughters; and as for her, they killed her with the sword.* We must identify who present day Assyria is as a country. You may believe this or, on the other hand, you may not believe this, but Assyria today is Germany. Germany is currently on a pathway that will lead them to be the leading nation of a renewed Holy Roman Empire as the Beast of Revelation. At that date, they will pour great wrath upon Britain and the United States, or as this verse reads, *they killed her with the sword.* For those who desire to know the outcome of the United States in the End Times, there it is! We will be destroyed by our proverbial lovers. We have defeated Germany in two world wars, but in the third world war they will destroy us to become the super power of the Holy Roman Empire.

Verses 11-17 tells the story of Oholibah, ¹¹ *“Her sister Oholibah saw this, and she became more corrupt than her sister in her lust and in her whoring, which was worse than that of her sister.* ¹² *She lusted after the Assyrians, governors and commanders, warriors clothed in full armor, horsemen riding on horses, all of them desirable young men.* ¹³ *And I saw that she was defiled; they both took the same way.* ¹⁴ *But she carried her whoring further. She saw men portrayed on the wall, the images of the Chaldeans portrayed in vermilion,* ¹⁵ *wearing belts on their waists, with flowing turbans on their heads, all of them having the appearance of officers, a likeness of Babylonians whose native land was Chaldea.* ¹⁶ *When she saw them, she lusted after them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea.* ¹⁷ *And the Babylonians came to her into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their whoring lust. And after she was defiled by them, she turned from them in disgust.* (ESV) Oholibah represents the house of Judah, the modern day country of Israel. They also had a love affair with the Assyrians, and also a defeat by the Assyrians. The wrath God is going to pour out upon them is shown in verses 22-49, ²² *Therefore, O Oholibah, thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I will stir up against you your lovers from whom you turned in disgust, and I will bring them against you from every side: ²³ the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod and Shoa and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them, desirable young men, governors and commanders all of them, officers and men of renown, all of them riding on horses.* ²⁴ *And they shall come against you from the north with chariots and wagons and a host of peoples. They shall set themselves against you on every side with buckler, shield, and helmet; and I will commit the judgment to them, and they shall judge you according to their judgments.* ²⁵ *And I will direct my jealousy against you, that they may deal with you in fury. They shall cut off your nose and your ears, and your survivors*

shall fall by the sword. They shall seize your sons and your daughters, and your survivors shall be devoured by fire. ²⁶ They shall also strip you of your clothes and take away your beautiful jewels. ²⁷ Thus I will put an end to your lewdness and your whoring begun in the land of Egypt, so that you shall not lift up your eyes to them or remember Egypt anymore.

²⁸ “For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will deliver you into the hands of those whom you hate, into the hands of those from whom you turned in disgust, ²⁹ and they shall deal with you in hatred and take away all the fruit of your labor and leave you naked and bare, and the nakedness of your whoring shall be uncovered. Your lewdness and your whoring ³⁰ have brought this upon you, because you played the whore with the nations and defiled yourself with their idols. ³¹ You have gone the way of your sister; therefore I will give her cup into your hand. ³² Thus says the Lord God:

“You shall drink your sister’s cup that is deep and large; you shall be laughed at and held in derision, for it contains much; ³³ you will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow. A cup of horror and desolation, the cup of your sister Samaria; ³⁴ you shall drink it and drain it out, and gnaw its shards, and tear your breasts;

for I have spoken, declares the Lord God. ³⁵ Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you have forgotten me and cast me behind your back, you yourself must bear the consequences of your lewdness and whoring.”

³⁶ The Lord said to me: “Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Declare to them their abominations. ³⁷ For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. With their idols they have committed adultery, and **they have even offered up to them for food the children whom they had borne to me.** ³⁸ Moreover, this they have done to me: they have defiled my sanctuary on the same day and profaned my Sabbaths. ³⁹ **For when they had slaughtered their children in sacrifice to their idols, on the same day they came into my sanctuary to profane it.** And behold, this is what they did in my house. ⁴⁰ They even sent for men to come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and behold, they came. For them you bathed yourself, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with ornaments. ⁴¹ You sat on a stately couch, with a table spread before it on which you had placed my incense and my oil. ⁴² The sound of a carefree multitude was with her; and with men of the common sort, drunkards were brought from the wilderness; and they put bracelets on the hands of the women, and beautiful crowns on their heads.

⁴³ “Then I said of her who was worn out by adultery, Now they will continue to use her for a whore, even her! ⁴⁴ For they have gone in to her, as men go in to a prostitute. Thus they went in to Oholah and to Oholibah, lewd women! ⁴⁵ But righteous men shall pass judgment on them with the sentence of adulteresses, and with the sentence of women who shed blood, because they are adulteresses, and blood is on their hands.”

⁴⁶ For thus says the Lord God: “Bring up a vast host against them, and make them an object of terror and a plunder. ⁴⁷ **And the host shall stone them and cut them down with their swords. They shall kill their sons and their daughters, and burn up their houses.** ⁴⁸ Thus will I put an end to lewdness in the land, that all women may take warning and not commit lewdness as you have done. ⁴⁹ And they shall return your lewdness upon you, and you shall bear the penalty for your sinful idolatry, and you shall know that I am the Lord God.” (ESV)

Chapter 24

We now come to chapter 24 and the final siege of Jerusalem, followed by its destruction by the Babylonians. Ezekiel was instructed to record that very date as the date the king of Babylon laid siege to Jerusalem. Ezekiel was instructed to give the following parable to those in exile, verses 3-12, ³ *And utter a parable to the rebellious house and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: “Set on the pot, set it on; pour in water also; ⁴ put in it the pieces of meat, all the good pieces, the thigh and the shoulder; fill it with choice bones. ⁵ Take the choicest one of the flock; pile the logs under it; boil it well; seethe also its bones in it.*

⁶ *“Therefore thus says the Lord God: Woe to the bloody city, to the pot whose corrosion is in it, and whose corrosion has not gone out of it! Take out of it piece after piece, without making any choice. ⁷ For the blood she has shed is in her midst; she put it on the bare rock; she did not pour it out on the ground to cover it with dust. ⁸ To rouse my wrath, to take vengeance, I have set on the bare rock the blood she has shed, that it may not be covered. ⁹ Therefore thus says the Lord God: Woe to the bloody city! I also will make the pile great. ¹⁰ Heap on the logs, kindle the fire, boil the meat well, mix in the spices, and let the bones be burned up. ¹¹ Then set it empty upon the coals, that it may become hot, and its copper may burn, that its uncleanness may be melted in it, its corrosion consumed. ¹² She has wearied herself with toil; its abundant corrosion does not go out of it. Into the fire with its corrosion!* (ESV) God gives Ezekiel this parable to inform His rebellious people that Jerusalem would be like a cooking pot and its inhabitants like pieces of meat and choice bones. The Babylonians would consume the meat and bones. After the pot was emptied, it would be completely purified by the fire of judgment until its copper glowed and its impurities burned away. Ezekiel goes on with the parable in verses 13-14, ¹³ *On account of your unclean lewdness, because I would have cleansed you and you were not cleansed from your uncleanness, you shall not be cleansed anymore till I have satisfied my fury upon you. ¹⁴ I am the Lord. I have spoken; it shall come to pass; I will do it. I will not go back; I will not spare; I will not relent; according to your ways and your deeds you will be judged, declares the Lord God.”* (ESV) Because Jerusalem refused to let God cleanse her from impurity, she had to face His judgment. In the same way, all people who reject God’s Son will face God’s wrath at the end of time. Only God’s judgment will finally cleanse the world from sin.

Ezekiel’s most difficult experience in his life was about to happen. We find this in verses 15-18, ¹⁵ *The word of the Lord came to me: ¹⁶ “Son of man, behold, I am about to take the delight of your eyes away from you at a stroke; yet you shall not mourn or weep, nor shall your tears run down. ¹⁷ Sigh, but not aloud; make no mourning for the dead. Bind on your turban, and put your shoes on your feet; do not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men.” ¹⁸ So I spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died. And on the next morning I did as I was commanded.* (ESV) God told Ezekiel that he would lose his wife, whom he loved dearly, yet he was not to grieve her death publicly or go through the usual customs of mourning. By this command, however, God did not forbid Ezekiel the right to grieve privately over the loss of his wife. Ezekiel’s refusal to show any outward expression of grief was a sign that God would not allow the people of Jerusalem to grieve their loss. The collapse of the city and the temple would be so devastating that the people would not even know how to begin to express their sorrow—if they were even alive to do so.

The people came to Ezekiel and wanted to know what his actions had to do with them. Verses 19-25, ¹⁹ *And the people said to me, “Will you not tell us what these things mean for us, that you are acting thus?” ²⁰ Then I said to them, “The word of the Lord came to me: ²¹ ‘Say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the pride of your power, the delight of your eyes, and the yearning of your soul, and your sons and your daughters whom you left behind shall fall by the sword. ²² And you shall do as I have done; you shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of*

men.²³ *Your turbans shall be on your heads and your shoes on your feet; you shall not mourn or weep, but you shall rot away in your iniquities and groan to one another.*²⁴ *Thus shall Ezekiel be to you a sign; according to all that he has done you shall do. When this comes, then you will know that I am the Lord God.*' (ESV)

Chapter 25

The next eight chapters contain prophecies against the nations around Israel and Jerusalem.

Prophecy against Ammon: Verses 1-7,¹ *The word of the Lord came to me:*² *"Son of man, set your face toward the Ammonites and prophesy against them.*³ *Say to the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord God: Thus says the Lord God, Because you said, 'Aha!' over my sanctuary when it was profaned, and over the land of Israel when it was made desolate, and over the house of Judah when they went into exile,*⁴ *therefore behold, I am handing you over to the people of the East for a possession, and they shall set their encampments among you and make their dwellings in your midst. They shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk.*⁵ *I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and Ammon a fold for flocks. Then you will know that I am the Lord.*⁶ *For thus says the Lord God: Because you have clapped your hands and stamped your feet and rejoiced with all the malice within your soul against the land of Israel,*⁷ *therefore, behold, I have stretched out my hand against you, and will hand you over as plunder to the nations. And I will cut you off from the peoples and will make you perish out of the countries; I will destroy you. Then you will know that I am the Lord.* (ESV)

Prophecy against Moab and Seir: Verses 8-11,⁸ *"Thus says the Lord God: Because Moab and Seir said, 'Behold, the house of Judah is like all the other nations,'*⁹ *therefore I will lay open the flank of Moab from the cities, from its cities on its frontier, the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim.*¹⁰ *I will give it along with the Ammonites to the people of the East as a possession, that the Ammonites may be remembered no more among the nations,*¹¹ *and I will execute judgments upon Moab. Then they will know that I am the Lord.* (ESV)

Prophecy against Edom: Verses 12-14,¹² *"Thus says the Lord God: Because Edom acted revengefully against the house of Judah and has grievously offended in taking vengeance on them,*¹³ *therefore thus says the Lord God, I will stretch out my hand against Edom and cut off from it man and beast. And I will make it desolate; from Teman even to Dedan they shall fall by the sword.*¹⁴ *And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel, and they shall do in Edom according to my anger and according to my wrath, and they shall know my vengeance, declares the Lord God.* (ESV)

Prophecy against Philistia: Verses 15-17,¹⁵ *"Thus says the Lord God: Because the Philistines acted revengefully and took vengeance with malice of soul to destroy in never-ending enmity,*¹⁶ *therefore thus says the Lord God, Behold, I will stretch out my hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethites and destroy the rest of the seacoast.*¹⁷ *I will execute great vengeance on them with wrathful rebukes. Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I lay my vengeance upon them."* (ESV)

Chapter 26

Prophecy against Tyre, because of the number of verses in this chapter I am only using certain passages, verses 2-6, ² *“Son of man, because Tyre said concerning Jerusalem, ‘Aha, the gate of the peoples is broken; it has swung open to me. I shall be replenished, now that she is laid waste,’* ³ *therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves.* ⁴ *They shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers, and I will scrape her soil from her and make her a bare rock.* ⁵ *She shall be in the midst of the sea a place for the spreading of nets, for I have spoken, declares the Lord God. And she shall become plunder for the nations,* ⁶ *and her daughters on the mainland shall be killed by the sword. Then they will know that I am the Lord. (ESV) Verse 7,* ⁷ *“For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will bring against Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses and chariots, and with horsemen and a host of many soldiers. (ESV) Verses 11-14,* ¹¹ *With the hoofs of his horses he will trample all your streets. He will kill your people with the sword, and your mighty pillars will fall to the ground.* ¹² *They will plunder your riches and loot your merchandise. They will break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses. Your stones and timber and soil they will cast into the midst of the waters.* ¹³ *And I will stop the music of your songs, and the sound of your lyres shall be heard no more.* ¹⁴ *I will make you a bare rock. You shall be a place for the spreading of nets. You shall never be rebuilt, for I am the Lord; I have spoken, declares the Lord God. (ESV) Verses 19-21,* ¹⁹ *“For thus says the Lord God: When I make you a city laid waste, like the cities that are not inhabited, when I bring up the deep over you, and the great waters cover you,* ²⁰ *then I will make you go down with those who go down to the pit, to the people of old, and I will make you to dwell in the world below, among ruins from of old, with those who go down to the pit, so that you will not be inhabited; but I will set beauty in the land of the living.* ²¹ *I will bring you to a dreadful end, and you shall be no more. Though you be sought for, you will never be found again, declares the Lord God.” (ESV)*

Chapter 27

We find the Lord instructing Ezekiel to raise a lamentation over Tyre, Verses 2-3, ² *“Now you, son of man, raise a lamentation over Tyre,* ³ *and say to Tyre, who dwells at the entrances to the sea, merchant of the peoples to many coastlands, thus says the Lord God: “O Tyre, you have said, ‘I am perfect in beauty.’ (ESV) Tyre had a great fleet of commercial trade ships. This chapter pictures Tyre as a great and beautiful ship bringing merchandise and treasures to many nations. Yet God’s judgment would break the ship to pieces, and many would mourn its destruction. Compare this chapter with Revelation 18, where God destroys the world’s center of commerce. Verse 36, ³⁶ *The merchants among the peoples hiss at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever.’” (ESV)**

Chapter 28

Prophecy against the prince of Tyre: Verses 2-8, ² *“Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord God: “Because your heart is proud, and you have said, ‘I am a god, I sit in the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas,’ yet you are but a man, and no god, though you make your heart like the heart of a god—* ³ *you are indeed wiser than Daniel; no secret is hidden from you;* ⁴ *by your wisdom and your understanding you have made wealth for yourself, and have gathered gold and silver into your treasuries;* ⁵ *by your great wisdom in your trade you have increased your wealth, and your heart has become proud in your wealth—* ⁶ *therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you make your heart like the heart of a god,* ⁷ *therefore, behold, I will bring foreigners upon you, the most ruthless of the nations;*

and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom and defile your splendor. ⁸ They shall thrust you down into the pit, and you shall die the death of the slain in the heart of the seas. (ESV)

A Lament over the King of Tyre: Verses 11-19, before I insert the text of these verses, I'd like to ask a question: Have you ever wondered what Satan looked like before he decided to rebel against God? These verses will give you a pretty clear picture of the beauty of Lucifer prior to his decision to challenge God and become Satan. As Satan he is the master liar, the deceiver of the world and the one who opposes God and His plan for mankind. Here are those verses, read with interest, ¹¹ *Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me: ¹² "Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord God: "You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. ¹⁴ You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. ¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. ¹⁶ In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁷ Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. ¹⁸ By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. ¹⁹ All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever."* (ESV) Did you notice the shifting between the prince and the king of Tyre in these two sections of chapter 28? My understanding would indicate that the prince is a secondary person under the influence of a greater spirit. The illustration would be on the order of the Beast and the Antichrist in revelation. The Antichrist is the representative on earth, i.e. the prince, and the Beast (king) is Satan controlling the discord from the spirit realm. Here is a personal question: Do you see where Pride and Greed may lead? Be warned!

Prophecy against Sidon: Verses 20-23, ²⁰ *The word of the Lord came to me: ²¹ "Son of man, set your face toward Sidon, and prophesy against her ²² and say, Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, and I will manifest my glory in your midst. And they shall know that I am the Lord when I execute judgments in her and manifest my holiness in her; ²³ for I will send pestilence into her, and blood into her streets; and the slain shall fall in her midst, by the sword that is against her on every side. Then they will know that I am the Lord. (ESV)*

Israel gathered in Security: Verses 24-26, ²⁴ *"And for the house of Israel there shall be no more a brier to prick or a thorn to hurt them among all their neighbors who have treated them with contempt. Then they will know that I am the Lord God. ²⁵ "Thus says the Lord God: When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and manifest my holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they shall dwell in their own land that I gave to my servant Jacob. ²⁶ And they shall dwell securely in it, and they shall build houses and plant vineyards. They shall dwell securely, when I execute judgments upon all their neighbors who have treated them with contempt. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God."* (ESV)

Chapter 29

Prophecy against Egypt: God had much to say to Ezekiel about Egypt. In fact, the chapters from 29 through 32 are all concerning Egypt. Ezekiel begins receiving the word of the Lord concerning Egypt, verses 2-3, ² *“Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt; ³ speak, and say, Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lies in the midst of his streams, that says, ‘My Nile is my own; I made it for myself.’ (ESV) Verses 6-11, ⁶ Then all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord. “Because you have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel, ⁷ when they grasped you with the hand, you broke and tore all their shoulders; and when they leaned on you, you broke and made all their loins to shake. ⁸ Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will bring a sword upon you, and will cut off from you man and beast, ⁹ and the land of Egypt shall be a desolation and a waste. Then they will know that I am the Lord. “Because you said, ‘The Nile is mine, and I made it,’ ¹⁰ therefore, behold, I am against you and against your streams, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Cush. ¹¹ No foot of man shall pass through it, and no foot of beast shall pass through it; it shall be uninhabited forty years. (ESV) Do you see the carryover of pride from the prophecy pertaining to Tyre? Do you also see the insertion of ego in this prophecy toward Egypt? Continuing we review verses 18-20, ¹⁸ *“Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre. Every head was made bald, and every shoulder was rubbed bare, yet neither he nor his army got anything from Tyre to pay for the labor that he had performed against her. ¹⁹ Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and he shall carry off its wealth and despoil it and plunder it; and it shall be the wages for his army. ²⁰ I have given him the land of Egypt as his payment for which he labored, because they worked for me, declares the Lord God. (ESV)**

Chapter 30

A lament for Egypt: Verses 2-5, ² *“Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus says the Lord God: “Wail, ‘Alas for the day!’ ³ For the day is near, the day of the Lord is near; it will be a day of clouds, a time of doom for the nations. ⁴ A sword shall come upon Egypt, and anguish shall be in Cush, when the slain fall in Egypt, and her wealth is carried away, and her foundations are torn down. ⁵ Cush, and Put, and Lud, and all Arabia, and Libya, and the people of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword. (ESV)*

Egypt shall fall to Babylon: Verses 21-26, ²¹ *“Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and behold, it has not been bound up, to heal it by binding it with a bandage, so that it may become strong to wield the sword. ²² Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt and will break his arms, both the strong arm and the one that was broken, and I will make the sword fall from his hand. ²³ I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them through the countries. ²⁴ And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put my sword in his hand, but I will break the arms of Pharaoh, and he will groan before him like a man mortally wounded. ²⁵ I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh shall fall. Then they shall know that I am the Lord, when I put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he stretches it out against the land of Egypt. ²⁶ And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries. Then they will know that I am the Lord.” (ESV)*

Chapter 31

Pharaoh to be Slain: Verse 2, ² *“Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his multitude: ‘Whom are you like in your greatness?’ (ESV) Verse 18, ¹⁸ ‘Whom are you thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? You shall be brought down with the trees of Eden to the world below. You shall lie among the uncircumcised, with those who are slain by the sword. ‘This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, declares the Lord God.’ (ESV)*

Chapter 32

A lament over Pharaoh and Egypt: Verse 2, ² *“Son of man, raise a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him: ‘You consider yourself a lion of the nations, but you are like a dragon in the seas; you burst forth in your rivers, trouble the waters with your feet, and foul their rivers. (ESV) This lamentation mocks Pharaoh, who believed that he was as strong as a lion or a great sea monster. However, he would have to answer to God as all world leaders will have to do at the end of history. Egypt is pictured as going to the same grave as other nations that had been punished for their cruelty and injustice. All of these once mighty nations, and their leaders, will suffer similar humiliation. Verse 20, ²⁰ They shall fall amid those who are slain by the sword. Egypt is delivered to the sword; drag her away, and all her multitudes. (ESV) Verse 22, ²² Assyria is there, and all her company, its graves all around it, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, (ESV) Verse 24, ²⁴ Elam is there, and all her multitude around her grave; all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who went down uncircumcised into the world below, who spread their terror in the land of the living; and they bear their shame with those who go down to the pit. (ESV) Verse 26, ²⁶ Meshech-Tubal is there, and all her multitude, her graves all around it, all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword; for they spread their terror in the land of the living. (ESV) Verse 29, ²⁹ Edom is there, her kings and all her princes, who for all their might are laid with those who are killed by the sword; they lie with the uncircumcised, with those who go down to the pit. (ESV) Verse 30, ³⁰ The princes of the north are there, all of them, and all the Sidonians, who have gone down in shame with the slain, for all the terror that they caused by their might; they lie uncircumcised with those who are slain by the sword, and bear their shame with those who go down to the pit. Verse 31-32, ³¹ ²⁹ *“When Pharaoh sees them, he will be comforted for all his multitude, Pharaoh and all his army, slain by the sword, declares the Lord God. ³² For I spread terror in the land of the living; and he shall be laid to rest among the uncircumcised, with those who are slain by the sword, Pharaoh and all his multitude, declares the Lord God.” (ESV)**

Chapter 33

Ezekiel is Israel’s Watchman! Verses 1-9, ¹ *The word of the Lord came to me: ² ‘Son of man, speak to your people and say to them, If I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from among them, and make him their watchman, ³ and if he sees the sword coming upon the land and blows the trumpet and warns the people, ⁴ then if anyone who hears the sound of the trumpet does not take warning, and the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. ⁵ He heard the sound of the trumpet and did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But if he had taken warning, he would have saved his life. ⁶ But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any one of them, that person is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at the watchman’s hand.*

⁷ “So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸ If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. ⁹ But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul. (ESV)

Why Will You Die, Israel? Verses 10-11, ¹⁰ “And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, Thus have you said: ‘Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we rot away because of them. How then can we live?’ ¹¹ Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel? (ESV) God is not pleased with the prospect of bringing judgment on spiritually rebellious people. He wants everyone to turn to him for salvation so that they will not die without being forgiven of their sins. Verses 12-16, ¹² “And you, son of man, say to your people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him when he transgresses, and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall by it when he turns from his wickedness, and the righteous shall not be able to live by his righteousness when he sins. ¹³ Though I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, yet if he trusts in his righteousness and does injustice, none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered, but in his injustice that he has done he shall die. ¹⁴ Again, though I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ yet if he turns from his sin and does what is just and right, ¹⁵ if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has taken by robbery, and walks in the statutes of life, not doing injustice, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ¹⁶ None of the sins that he has committed shall be remembered against him. He has done what is just and right; he shall surely live. (ESV)

Jerusalem Struck Down: Verses 21-22, ²¹ In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month, a fugitive from Jerusalem came to me and said, “The city has been struck down.” ²² Now the hand of the Lord had been upon me the evening before the fugitive came; and he had opened my mouth by the time the man came to me in the morning, so my mouth was opened, and I was no longer mute. (ESV) News came to Ezekiel and the exiles in Babylon that Jerusalem had been conquered, fulfilling Ezekiel’s prophecies and confirming his message to the people. His ministry changed at this point. He now began to prophesy about redemption and restoration for Judah at some future time.

Chapter 34

Prophecy against the Shepherds: Verses 1-6, ¹ The word of the Lord came to me: ² “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord God: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? ³ You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. ⁴ The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. ⁵ So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. ⁶ My sheep were scattered; they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them. (ESV)

The Lord God will seek them out: Verses 11-16, ¹¹ “For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. ¹² As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³ And I will bring them

out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. ¹⁴ I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵ I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. ¹⁶ I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice. (ESV) Because of the failure of Israel's leaders, the Lord Himself would take charge of His people. He would care for His flock and individually judge between the sheep, rams and goats. Verses 23-24, ²³ And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴ And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the Lord; I have spoken. (ESV) God would also make a new covenant of peace with the people.

The Lord's Covenant of Peace: Verses 25-31, ²⁵ "I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild beasts from the land, so that they may dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. ²⁶ And I will make them and the places all around my hill a blessing, and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. ²⁷ And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land. And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I break the bars of their yoke, and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them. ²⁸ They shall no more be a prey to the nations, nor shall the beasts of the land devour them. They shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. ²⁹ And I will provide for them renowned plantations so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the reproach of the nations. ³⁰ And they shall know that I am the Lord their God with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, declares the Lord God. ³¹ And you are my sheep, human sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, declares the Lord God." (ESV) The Shepherd (Yeshua) will finally restore the peace and perfection that characterized life before sin entered the world. This covenant, also called the "new covenant" will reach its highest fulfillment when God establishes His eternal kingdom in the new heaven and the new earth. Then there will be "showers of blessing" and the full presence of God among His people.

Chapter 35

Prophecy against Mount Seir: Verses 1-15, ¹ The word of the Lord came to me: ² "Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it, ³ and say to it, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, Mount Seir, and I will stretch out my hand against you, and I will make you a desolation and a waste. ⁴ I will lay your cities waste, and you shall become a desolation, and you shall know that I am the Lord. ⁵ Because you cherished perpetual enmity and gave over the people of Israel to the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of their final punishment, ⁶ therefore, as I live, declares the Lord God, I will prepare you for blood, and blood shall pursue you; because you did not hate bloodshed, therefore blood shall pursue you. ⁷ I will make Mount Seir a waste and a desolation, and I will cut off from it all who come and go. ⁸ And I will fill its mountains with the slain. On your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines those slain with the sword shall fall. ⁹ I will make you a perpetual desolation, and your cities shall not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

¹⁰ "Because you said, 'These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will take possession of them'—although the Lord was there—¹¹ therefore, as I live, declares the Lord God, I will deal with you according to the anger and envy that you showed because of your hatred against

them. And I will make myself known among them, when I judge you.¹² And you shall know that I am the Lord.

“I have heard all the revilings that you uttered against the mountains of Israel, saying, ‘They are laid desolate; they are given us to devour.’¹³ And you magnified yourselves against me with your mouth, and multiplied your words against me; I heard it.¹⁴ Thus says the Lord God: While the whole earth rejoices, I will make you desolate.¹⁵ As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so I will deal with you; you shall be desolate, Mount Seir, and all Edom, all of it. Then they will know that I am the Lord. (ESV)

Chapter 36

Prophecy to the Mountains of Israel! In these verses, God speaks directly to the promised land, as if it were a person. He promises to restore the wasted and abandoned land as a place of blessing and prosperity. This prophecy will be fully realized when Israel, both houses, possesses the Holy Land during Christ’s millennial reign on earth. Verses 1-3,¹ *“And you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel, and say, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord.² Thus says the Lord God: Because the enemy said of you, ‘Aha!’ and, ‘The ancient heights have become our possession,’³ therefore prophesy, and say, Thus says the Lord God: Precisely because they made you desolate and crushed you from all sides, so that you became the possession of the rest of the nations, and you became the talk and evil gossip of the people, (ESV)* We continue and see the results of this prophecy to the land of Israel. Verses 8-15,⁸ *“But you, O mountains of Israel, shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to my people Israel, for they will soon come home.⁹ For behold, I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown.¹⁰ And I will multiply people on you, the whole house of Israel, all of it. The cities shall be inhabited and the waste places rebuilt.¹¹ And I will multiply on you man and beast, and they shall multiply and be fruitful. And I will cause you to be inhabited as in your former times, and will do more good to you than ever before. Then you will know that I am the Lord.¹² I will let people walk on you, even my people Israel. And they shall possess you, and you shall be their inheritance, and you shall no longer bereave them of children.¹³ Thus says the Lord God: Because they say to you, ‘You devour people, and you bereave your nation of children,’¹⁴ therefore you shall no longer devour people and no longer bereave your nation of children, declares the Lord God.¹⁵ And I will not let you hear anymore the reproach of the nations, and you shall no longer bear the disgrace of the peoples and no longer cause your nation to stumble, declares the Lord God.” (ESV)*

The Lord’s Concern for His Holy Name. Because Israel had defied and dishonored God by their wicked behavior, they were defeated and scattered among the nations. Verses 16-21,¹⁶ *The word of the Lord came to me:¹⁷ “Son of man, when the house of Israel lived in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their deeds. Their ways before me were like the uncleanness of a woman in her menstrual impurity.¹⁸ So I poured out my wrath upon them for the blood that they had shed in the land, for the idols with which they had defiled it.¹⁹ I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries. In accordance with their ways and their deeds I judged them.²⁰ But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned my holy name, in that people said of them, ‘These are the people of the Lord, and yet they had to go out of his land.’²¹ But I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to which they came. (ESV)*

I will put My Spirit Within You! Verses 22-38, There is a very important statement made in this passage. God has a plan that will vindicate His Holy Name and the actual fact is given in verse 23. God will vindicate His name through His people, Israel. Israel defied and dishonored God’s name but they will also praise and honor God’s name. This vindication will be completed by and through Israel.

²² “Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. ²³ And **I will vindicate the holiness** of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God, when **through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.** ²⁴ **I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land.** ²⁵ **I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.** ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And **I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.** ²⁸ You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. ²⁹ And I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. And I will summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you. ³⁰ I will make the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field abundant, that you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations. ³¹ Then you will remember your evil ways, and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves for your iniquities and **your abominations.** ³² It is not for your sake that I will act, declares the Lord God; let that be known to you. **Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel.**

³³ “Thus says the Lord God: On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt. ³⁴ And the land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by. ³⁵ And they will say, ‘**This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.**’ ³⁶ Then the nations that are left all around you shall know that I am the Lord; I have rebuilt the ruined places and replanted that which was desolate. I am the Lord; I have spoken, and I will do it.

³⁷ “Thus says the Lord God: This also I will let the house of Israel ask me to do for them: to increase their people like a flock. ³⁸ Like the flock for sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the Lord.” (ESV)

So many wonderful statements of TRUTH and HOPE are stated in this passage of scripture. We have already been informed that through Israel, that means all Israel including the lost ten tribes or the Northern Kingdom of the house of Israel, God’s Holy Name will be vindicated (v. 23). But look further, in verse 25, we are cleansed of our uncleanness. In verse 26, we receive a new heart and a new spirit. In verse 27, we see that we will follow God’s statutes and follow His rules. You can get a preview of these 17 rules on my website (www.vqpub.org) in the little booklet, *The 17 Things God Wants You to Know and to Honor*. In verse 31, we will remember our evil ways and loathe ourselves for what we have done, but praise the Lord, Yeshua has forgiven us of our sins. Have you ever wondered where the Garden of Eden was located? I would be willing to state that the Garden of Eden was Jerusalem and the country of Israel is the land of Eden, read verse 35 very carefully.

Chapter 37

The Valley of Dry Bones! Chapter 37 contains some very interesting statements and conditions. Notice in verse 1 that the Spirit of God took Ezekiel to a valley full of bones that are on the surface of the earth. There is no name given for this valley and none of these bones are buried. Let’s look at verses 1-6, ¹ **The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones.** ² **And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry** (being very dry

indicates they had been there for a very long time).³ *And he said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered, “O Lord God, you know.”*⁴ *Then he said to me, “Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.*⁵ *Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.*⁶ *And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord.”* (ESV) I had a question in my head that I couldn't clear up. Why did God's Spirit tell Ezekiel to prophesy over these bones? Couldn't God have commanded these bones to do what Ezekiel was instructed to tell them? Then it came to me, Ezekiel was in exile in Babylon and there were very few people in Jerusalem or Israel. Their hope meter wasn't registering very high at that time. This was a vision to assure the exiles that God's power would restore them to their place in the promised land though their circumstances seemed hopeless at that moment. So Ezekiel did as he was commanded. Let's look at verses 7-8,⁷ *So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone.*⁸ *And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them.* (ESV) We see that bones, sinews, flesh and skin had come together over the bones to cover them, but they were not alive. Recall that every person on this planet, in whatever time period, goes to Hades (the grave) when they die. We also could say that if you died in Old Testament times, and if you were obedient to God's Commandments, your soul would go to Abraham's Bosom. In New Testament times, and a co-heir to Yeshua, your soul would go to Paradise. It seems from the passages we have looked at that there is a two step process to have these bones come to life. Until the breath is placed in these bodies, there is no life. Notice also, there is no clear word picture that these bodies were vertical or horizontal at this time. Another point to make, and to follow up with, is that there is no time period given between these two actions. Putting the body back together is one thing, but putting the breath into that body is another thing and a separate action. Nothing was indicated that these two events happened at the same time. Verses 9-10,⁹ *Then he said to me, “Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.”*¹⁰ *So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.* (ESV) There are two words that indicate to me that these bones may have been involved in a battle and their bones are there where they died. The two words are: slain (normally, we do not use the term slain to indicate a person died, especially by natural causes); and, an exceedingly great army. Army is the second term, normally indicating a group of trained soldiers prepared for battle. Verses 11-14.¹¹ *Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.’”¹² *Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel.*¹³ *And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people.*¹⁴ *And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the Lord; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the Lord.”* (ESV) Many times people see two different sides to a situation and say, “on the other side of the coin.” It seems that we have one of those situations here. At the beginning of this chapter, Ezekiel was taken to a valley. We assume it to be someplace in Israel. The discussion remained at that location through verse 10. Now it seems the situation has changed, God's Spirit tells Ezekiel that these bones are the whole house of Israel. These bones “say” Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off. This goes one step further and, in verse 12, we find recorded, *Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel.* If God is opening graves and bringing bodies to Israel, they must not be in the land of Israel! Furthermore, in verse 14, God says,¹⁴ *And I will put my Spirit within you, and**

you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the Lord; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the Lord.”

I Will Be Their God, They Shall Be My People: The verses between 15 and 28 provide the information to make the statements I’ve made in this chapter feasible. We have been talking about the house of Israel and the house of Judah, the two kingdoms that make up all Israel. The situations are different and the disobedience was different. The house of Israel went so far that God gave them a bill of divorce and scattered them among the people wherever the Assyrians went. The house of Judah went back to their homeland after the exile in Babylon. With the encouragement from King Cyrus, they rebuilt the temple and the land. Here are those verses.

¹⁵ The word of the Lord came to me: ¹⁶ “Son of man, take a stick and write on it, ‘For Judah, and the people of Israel associated with him’; then take another stick and write on it, ‘For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with him.’ ¹⁷ And join them one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. ¹⁸ And when your people say to you, ‘Will you not tell us what you mean by these?’ ¹⁹ say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am about to take the stick of Joseph (that is in the hand of Ephraim) and the tribes of Israel associated with him. And I will join with it the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, that they may be one in my hand. ²⁰ When the sticks on which you write are in your hand before their eyes, ²¹ then say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land. ²² And I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. And one king (Yeshua) shall be king over them all, and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms. ²³ They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

²⁴ “My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes. ²⁵ They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children’s children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever. ²⁶ I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. ²⁷ My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ²⁸ Then the nations will know that I am the Lord who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.” (ESV)

We only need to clear up one item. David is used twice in this passage as the king over all Israel. I have to clarify that just a little. David will be the King over Jerusalem. David is also the forefather of the Messiah who is Yeshua, who will be the King of kings and Lord of Lords over the entire earth.

Chapter 38

Prophecy against Gog: There are many people who believe they understand the battle of Gog and Magog, sometimes called the battle of Armageddon. Actually, because they refuse to read the entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments, they miss the fact that there are two, repeat two, battles of Gog and Magog. One is here in Ezekiel and the other is in Revelation. They are not one and the same! There is one key statement that clearly shows that they are not the same. In Ezekiel Chapter 39:9, it indicates that this first battle requires seven years for the people of Israel to burn all the weapons of war. This is not a battle that takes place at the beginning of the Tribulation, a period of seven years. Actually, this battle would have to be fought at least 3 and one-half years before the beginning of the

Tribulation. Revelation chapter 20:9 indicates God sent fire from heaven and destroyed all of this vast army without anyone having to fight. There are two different battles called Gog and Magog. Let's review Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 for information of this first battle of Gog and Magog. Verses 1-6 provide for those of us who are the players on the Gog side of this battle. Here is that list, ¹ *The word of the Lord came to me:* ² *“Son of man, set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him* ³ *and say, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.* ⁴ *And I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armor; a great host, all of them with buckler and shield, wielding swords.* ⁵ *Persia, Cush, and Put are with them, all of them with shield and helmet;* ⁶ *Gomer and all his hordes; Beth-togarmah from the uttermost parts of the north with all his hordes—many peoples are with you.* (ESV) These peoples are a mixed race group of people. We need to review the table of nations in Genesis 10 to see some of these players. First, we must understand that **Gog** is a person who is identified as the chief prince over the lands of **Magog**, **Meshech** and **Tubal** (we would consider these three lands to be either Russia or Turkey). These are three of the sons of Japheth, who is a son of Noah. Normally, Japheth is considered as the progenitor of the Caucasian races. We very quickly see that this army is made up of multiracial peoples. Let's list the remaining peoples and how they go back to Noah. **Persia** is Iran of Semite descent. **Shem** is considered the progenitor of the brown (sandy skin colored) races. **Cush** is Ethiopia and **Put** is Libya. They are sons of Ham. Ham is considered the progenitor of the black skin races. **Gomer** is north of the Black Sea and a part of the descendants of Japheth. Finally, **Togarmah** is Armenia, also part of the descendants of Japheth. Most of these nations lie north of Israel, but also from the east and the west. Totally, a mighty group of warriors who fall under the control of God to perform His work to vindicate His Holy Name before His people, Israel. Verses 7-9, explains that this group will be called at a future date, ⁷ *“Be ready and keep ready, you and all your hosts that are assembled about you, and be a guard for them.* ⁸ *After many days you will be mustered. In the latter years you will go against the land that is restored from war, the land whose people were gathered from many peoples upon the mountains of Israel, which had been a continual waste. Its people were brought out from the peoples and now dwell securely, all of them.* ⁹ *You will advance, coming on like a storm. You will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your hordes, and many peoples with you.* (ESV) Verses 10-12, ¹⁰ *“Thus says the Lord God: On that day, thoughts will come into your mind, and you will devise an evil scheme* ¹¹ *and say, ‘I will go up against the land of unwalled villages. I will fall upon the quiet people who dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having no bars or gates,’* ¹² *to seize spoil and carry off plunder; to turn your hand against the waste places that are now inhabited, and the people who were gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell at the center of the earth.* (ESV) Verses 14-16, ¹⁴ *“Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say to Gog, Thus says the Lord God: On that day when my people Israel are dwelling securely, will you not know it?* ¹⁵ *You will come from your place out of the uttermost parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great host, a mighty army.* ¹⁶ *You will come up against my people Israel, like a cloud covering the land. In the latter days I will bring you against my land, that the nations may know me, **when through you, O Gog, I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.*** (ESV) Verses 19-23, ¹⁹ *For in my jealousy and in my blazing wrath I declare, On that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel.* ²⁰ *The fish of the sea and the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the field and all creeping things that creep on the ground, and all the people who are on the face of the earth, shall quake at my presence. And the mountains shall be thrown down, and the cliffs shall fall, and every wall shall tumble to the ground.* ²¹ *I will summon a sword against Gog on all my mountains, declares the Lord God. Every man's sword will be against his brother.* ²² *With pestilence and bloodshed I will enter into judgment with him, and I will rain upon him and his hordes and the many peoples who are with him torrential rains and hailstones,*

fire and sulfur.²³ So I will show my greatness and my holiness and make myself known in the eyes of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord. (ESV)

Chapter 39

Chapter 39 is a continuation of chapter 38. Ezekiel is still speaking what God instructs him to say against Gog and those with him. Verses 1-4,¹ “*And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.*”² *And I will turn you about and drive you forward, and bring you up from the uttermost parts of the north, and lead you against the mountains of Israel.*”³ *Then I will strike your bow from your left hand, and will make your arrows drop out of your right hand.*”⁴ *You shall fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your hordes and the peoples who are with you. I will give you to birds of prey of every sort and to the beasts of the field to be devoured.* (ESV) Verses 7-8,⁷ “*And my holy name I will make known in the midst of my people Israel, and I will not let my holy name be profaned anymore. And the nations shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel.*”⁸ *Behold, it is coming and it will be brought about, declares the Lord God. That is the day of which I have spoken.* (ESV) Verses 9-10,⁹ “*Then those who dwell in the cities of Israel will go out and make fires of the weapons and burn them, shields and bucklers, bow and arrows, clubs and spears; and they will make fires of them for seven years,*”¹⁰ *so that they will not need to take wood out of the field or cut down any out of the forests, for they will make their fires of the weapons. They will seize the spoil of those who despoiled them, and plunder those who plundered them, declares the Lord God.* (ESV) Verses 11-13,¹¹ “*On that day I will give to Gog a place for burial in Israel, the Valley of the Travelers, east of the sea. It will block the travelers, for there Gog and all his multitude will be buried. It will be called the Valley of Hamon-gog.*”¹² *For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them, in order to cleanse the land.*”¹³ *All the people of the land will bury them, and it will bring them renown on the day that I show my glory, declares the Lord God.* (ESV) Verses 21-24,²¹ “*And I will set my glory among the nations, and all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid on them.*”²² *The house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God, from that day forward.*”²³ *And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity, because they dealt so treacherously with me that I hid my face from them and gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they all fell by the sword.*”²⁴ *I dealt with them according to their uncleanness and their transgressions, and hid my face from them.* (ESV)

The Lord Will Restore Israel: Verses 25-29,²⁵ “*Therefore thus says the Lord God: Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel, and I will be jealous for my holy name.*”²⁶ *They shall forget their shame and all the treachery they have practiced against me, when they dwell securely in their land with none to make them afraid,*”²⁷ *when I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from their enemies’ lands, and through them have vindicated my holiness in the sight of many nations.*”²⁸ *Then they shall know that I am the Lord their God, because I sent them into exile among the nations and then assembled them into their own land. I will leave none of them remaining among the nations anymore.*”²⁹ *And I will not hide my face anymore from them, when I pour out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, declares the Lord God.”* (ESV)

Chapter 40

Vision of the New Temple: Verses 1b-4,¹ . . . *on that very day, the hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me to the city.*”² *In visions of God he brought me to the land of Israel, and set me down on a very high mountain, on which was a structure like a city to the south.*”³ *When he brought me there, behold, there was a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring*

reed in his hand. And he was standing in the gateway. ⁴ And the man said to me, “Son of man, look with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart upon all that I shall show you, for you were brought here in order that I might show it to you. Declare all that you see to the house of Israel.” (ESV)

The East Gate to the Outer Court: Verses 5-17, ⁵ And behold, there was a wall all around the outside of the temple area, and the length of the measuring reed in the man’s hand was six long cubits, each being a cubit and a handbreadth in length. (A long cubit, must have been about 24 inches in length.) So he measured the thickness of the wall, one reed; and the height, one reed. ⁶ Then he went into the gateway facing east, going up its steps, and measured the threshold of the gate, one reed deep. ⁷ And the side rooms, one reed long and one reed broad; and the space between the side rooms, five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the vestibule of the gate at the inner end, one reed. ⁸ Then he measured the vestibule of the gateway, on the inside, one reed. ⁹ Then he measured the vestibule of the gateway, eight cubits; and its jambs, two cubits; and the vestibule of the gate was at the inner end. ¹⁰ And there were three side rooms on either side of the east gate. The three were of the same size, and the jambs on either side were of the same size. ¹¹ Then he measured the width of the opening of the gateway, ten cubits; and the length of the gateway, thirteen cubits. ¹² There was a barrier before the side rooms, one cubit on either side. And the side rooms were six cubits on either side. ¹³ Then he measured the gate from the ceiling of the one side room to the ceiling of the other, a breadth of twenty-five cubits; the openings faced each other. ¹⁴ He measured also the vestibule, twenty cubits. And around the vestibule of the gateway was the court. ¹⁵ From the front of the gate at the entrance to the front of the inner vestibule of the gate was fifty cubits. ¹⁶ And the gateway had windows all around, narrowing inwards toward the side rooms and toward their jambs, and likewise the vestibule had windows all around inside, and on the jambs were palm trees. (ESV)

The Outer Court: Verses 17-19, ¹⁷ Then he brought me into the outer court. And behold, there were chambers and a pavement, all around the court. Thirty chambers faced the pavement. ¹⁸ And the pavement ran along the side of the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates. This was the lower pavement. ¹⁹ Then he measured the distance from the inner front of the lower gate to the outer front of the inner court, a hundred cubits on the east side and on the north side. (ESV)

The North Gate: Verses 20-23, ²⁰ As for the gate that faced toward the north, belonging to the outer court, he measured its length and its breadth. ²¹ Its side rooms, three on either side, and its jambs and its vestibule were of the same size as those of the first gate. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits. ²² And its windows, its vestibule, and its palm trees were of the same size as those of the gate that faced toward the east. And by seven steps people would go up to it, and find its vestibule before them. ²³ And opposite the gate on the north, as on the east, was a gate to the inner court. And he measured from gate to gate, a hundred cubits. (ESV)

The South Gate: Verses 24-27, ²⁴ And he led me toward the south, and behold, there was a gate on the south. And he measured its jambs and its vestibule; they had the same size as the others. ²⁵ Both it and its vestibule had windows all around, like the windows of the others. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits. ²⁶ And there were seven steps leading up to it, and its vestibule was before them, and it had palm trees on its jambs, one on either side. ²⁷ And there was a gate on the south of the inner court. And he measured from gate to gate toward the south, a hundred cubits. (ESV)

The Inner Court: Verses 28-43, ²⁸ Then he brought me to the inner court through the south gate, and he measured the south gate. It was of the same size as the others. ²⁹ Its side rooms, its jambs, and its vestibule were of the same size as the others, and both it and its vestibule had windows all around. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits. ³⁰ And there were vestibules all around, twenty-five cubits long and five cubits broad. ³¹ Its vestibule faced the outer court, and palm trees were on its jambs, and its stairway had eight steps.

³² Then he brought me to the inner court on the east side, and he measured the gate. It was of the same size as the others. ³³ Its side rooms, its jambs, and its vestibule were of the same size as the others, and both it and its vestibule had windows all around. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits. ³⁴ Its vestibule faced the outer court, and it had palm trees on its jambs, on either side, and its stairway had eight steps.

³⁵ Then he brought me to the north gate, and he measured it. It had the same size as the others. ³⁶ Its side rooms, its jambs, and its vestibule were of the same size as the others, and it had windows all around. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits. ³⁷ Its vestibule faced the outer court, and it had palm trees on its jambs, on either side, and its stairway had eight steps.

³⁸ There was a chamber with its door in the vestibule of the gate, where the burnt offering was to be washed. ³⁹ And in the vestibule of the gate were two tables on either side, on which the burnt offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering were to be slaughtered. ⁴⁰ And off to the side, on the outside as one goes up to the entrance of the north gate, were two tables; and off to the other side of the vestibule of the gate were two tables. ⁴¹ Four tables were on either side of the gate, eight tables, on which to slaughter. ⁴² And there were four tables of hewn stone for the burnt offering, a cubit and a half long, and a cubit and a half broad, and one cubit high, on which the instruments were to be laid with which the burnt offerings and the sacrifices were slaughtered. ⁴³ And hooks, a handbreadth long, were fastened all around within. And on the tables the flesh of the offering was to be laid. (ESV)

Chambers for the Priests: Verses 44-47, ⁴⁴ On the outside of the inner gateway there were two chambers in the inner court, one at the side of the north gate facing south, the other at the side of the south gate facing north. ⁴⁵ And he said to me, This chamber that faces south is for the priests who have charge of the temple, ⁴⁶ and the chamber that faces north is for the priests who have charge of the altar. These are the sons of Zadok, who alone among the sons of Levi may come near to the Lord to minister to him. ⁴⁷ And he measured the court, a hundred cubits long and a hundred cubits broad, a square. And the altar was in front of the temple. (ESV)

The Vestibule of the Temple: Verses 48-49, ⁴⁸ Then he brought me to the vestibule of the temple and measured the jambs of the vestibule, five cubits on either side. And the breadth of the gate was fourteen cubits, and the sidewalls of the gate were three cubits on either side. ⁴⁹ The length of the vestibule was twenty cubits, and the breadth twelve cubits, and people would go up to it by ten steps. And there were pillars beside the jambs, one on either side. (ESV)

Chapter 41

The Inner Temple: Verses 1-26, ¹ Then he brought me to the nave and measured the jambs. On each side six cubits was the breadth of the jambs. ² And the breadth of the entrance was ten cubits, and the sidewalls of the entrance were five cubits on either side. And he measured the length of the nave, forty cubits, and its breadth, twenty cubits. ³ Then he went into the inner room and measured the jambs of the entrance, two cubits; and the entrance, six cubits; and the sidewalls on either side of the entrance, seven cubits. ⁴ And he measured the length of the room, twenty cubits, and its breadth, twenty cubits, across the nave. And he said to me, "This is the Most Holy Place."

⁵ Then he measured the wall of the temple, six cubits thick, and the breadth of the side chambers, four cubits, all around the temple. ⁶ And the side chambers were in three stories, one over another, thirty in each story. There were offsets all around the wall of the temple to serve as supports for the side chambers, so that they should not be supported by the wall of the temple. ⁷ And it became broader as it wound upward to the side chambers, because the temple was enclosed upward all around the temple. Thus the temple had a broad area upward, and so one went up from the lowest story to the top story through the middle story. ⁸ I saw also that the temple had a raised platform all around; the foundations

of the side chambers measured a full reed of six long cubits.⁹ The thickness of the outer wall of the side chambers was five cubits. The free space between the side chambers of the temple and the¹⁰ other chambers was a breadth of twenty cubits all around the temple on every side.¹¹ And the doors of the side chambers opened on the free space, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south. And the breadth of the free space was five cubits all around.

¹² The building that was facing the separate yard on the west side was seventy cubits broad, and the wall of the building was five cubits thick all around, and its length ninety cubits.

¹³ Then he measured the temple, a hundred cubits long; and the yard and the building with its walls, a hundred cubits long;¹⁴ also the breadth of the east front of the temple and the yard, a hundred cubits.

¹⁵ Then he measured the length of the building facing the yard that was at the back and its galleries on either side, a hundred cubits. The inside of the nave and the vestibules of the court,¹⁶ the thresholds and the narrow windows and the galleries all around the three of them, opposite the threshold, were paneled with wood all around, from the floor up to the windows (now the windows were covered),¹⁷ to the space above the door; even to the inner room, and on the outside. And on all the walls all around, inside and outside, was a measured pattern.¹⁸ It was carved of cherubim and palm trees, a palm tree between cherub and cherub. Every cherub had two faces:¹⁹ a human face toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side. They were carved on the whole temple all around.²⁰ From the floor to above the door, cherubim and palm trees were carved; similarly the wall of the nave.

²¹ The doorposts of the nave were squared, and in front of the Holy Place was something resembling²² an altar of wood, three cubits high, two cubits long, and two cubits broad. Its corners, its base, and its walls were of wood. He said to me, "This is the table that is before the Lord."²³ The nave and the Holy Place had each a double door.²⁴ The double doors had two leaves apiece, two swinging leaves for each door.²⁵ And on the doors of the nave were carved cherubim and palm trees, such as were carved on the walls. And there was a canopy of wood in front of the vestibule outside.²⁶ And there were narrow windows and palm trees on either side, on the sidewalls of the vestibule, the side chambers of the temple, and the canopies. (ESV)

Chapter 42

The Temple's Chambers: Verses 1-20, ¹ Then he led me out into the outer court, toward the north, and he brought me to the chambers that were opposite the separate yard and opposite the building on the north. ² The length of the building whose door faced north was a hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty cubits. ³ Facing the twenty cubits that belonged to the inner court, and facing the pavement that belonged to the outer court, was gallery against gallery in three stories. ⁴ And before the chambers was a passage inward, ten cubits wide and a hundred cubits long, and their doors were on the north. ⁵ Now the upper chambers were narrower, for the galleries took more away from them than from the lower and middle chambers of the building. ⁶ For they were in three stories, and they had no pillars like the pillars of the courts. Thus the upper chambers were set back from the ground more than the lower and the middle ones. ⁷ And there was a wall outside parallel to the chambers, toward the outer court, opposite the chambers, fifty cubits long. ⁸ For the chambers on the outer court were fifty cubits long, while those opposite the nave were a hundred cubits long. ⁹ Below these chambers was an entrance on the east side, as one enters them from the outer court.

¹⁰ In the thickness of the wall of the court, on the south also, opposite the yard and opposite the building, there were chambers¹¹ with a passage in front of them. They were similar to the chambers on the north, of the same length and breadth, with the same exits and arrangements and doors,¹² as were

the entrances of the chambers on the south. There was an entrance at the beginning of the passage, the passage before the corresponding wall on the east as one enters them.

¹³ Then he said to me, “The north chambers and the south chambers opposite the yard are the holy chambers, where the priests who approach the Lord shall eat the most holy offerings. There they shall put the most holy offerings— the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering—for the place is holy. ¹⁴ When the priests enter the Holy Place, they shall not go out of it into the outer court without laying there the garments in which they minister, for these are holy. They shall put on other garments before they go near to that which is for the people.”

¹⁵ Now when he had finished measuring the interior of the temple area, he led me out by the gate that faced east, and measured the temple area all around. ¹⁶ He measured the east side with the measuring reed, 500 cubits by the measuring reed all around. ¹⁷ He measured the north side, 500 cubits by the measuring reed all around. ¹⁸ He measured the south side, 500 cubits by the measuring reed. ¹⁹ Then he turned to the west side and measured, 500 cubits by the measuring reed. ²⁰ He measured it on the four sides. It had a wall around it, 500 cubits long and 500 cubits broad, to make a separation between the holy and the common. (ESV)

Chapter 43

Ezekiel had the wonderful experience of being shown the entire story concerning Jerusalem, the Temple, and the people of the house of Israel. In the beginning of his writings, we saw the Glory of the Lord and The WHO chariot of God. We learned that Ezekiel was the Watchman for Israel and that God’s instructions would go through him to the people in exile. A little further, we see the beginning of God’s wrath toward Israel. In chapter 10, we see the Glory of the Lord withdrawing from the Temple and leaving Jerusalem. Then comes the wrath of God and the addressing of all the wickedness of the people. Ezekiel also foretells the people of the hope and promises that God has prepared for them. God shows them the punishment He is going to bring upon the nations around Israel who had mocked and mistreated Israel. We even see the vision of the future when Satan is destroyed through the passage concerning the king of Tyre. Finally, we get toward the last of the book of Ezekiel, and we see the gathering of both houses, the house of Judah and the house of Israel, and the return to Israel by all those who had been scattered. A draftsman in white linen clothing shows Ezekiel the plan and structure of the Temple, to be built in chapter 42. This brings us down to our current chapter of 43 where we see The Glory of the Lord Filling the Temple. Can we say that The WHO was bringing God back to the Temple? If we use the words to describe the sound of The WHO, along with the two location references: One, to the Temple being destroyed; and also, two, with the exiles at the Chebar canal, isn’t this describing The WHO? Let’s review this chapter: Verses 1-5, *¹ Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing east. ² And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east. And the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone with his glory. ³ And the vision I saw was just like the vision that I had seen when he came to destroy the city, and just like the vision that I had seen by the Chebar canal. And I fell on my face. ⁴ As the glory of the Lord entered the temple by the gate facing east, ⁵ the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple. (ESV) Verses 6-9, ⁶ While the man was standing beside me, I heard one speaking to me out of the temple, ⁷ and he said to me, “Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel forever. And the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoring and by the dead bodies of their kings at their high places, ⁸ by setting their threshold by my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them. They have defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed, so I have consumed them in my anger. ⁹ Now let them put away their whoring and the dead bodies of their kings far from me, and I will dwell in their midst forever. (ESV)*

Verses 10-12,¹⁰ “As for you, son of man, describe to the house of Israel the temple, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and they shall measure the plan.¹¹ And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple, its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, that is, its whole design; and make known to them as well all its statutes and its whole design and all its laws, and write it down in their sight, so that they may observe all its laws and all its statutes and carry them out.¹² This is the law of the temple: the whole territory on the top of the mountain all around shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the temple. (ESV) The most basic element of the law of God’s Temple is holiness, which requires spiritual purity and separation from all sin and evil. As living temples of the Holy Spirit, Christ’s followers must live by the Spirit’s standard of holiness and remain free from spiritual impurity. For the moment, recall what Yeshua said from the New Testament. Here are four examples from Matthew: Matthew 5:17-20,¹⁷ “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.¹⁹ Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (ESV) Matthew 7:21-23,²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.²² On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’²³ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’ (ESV) Matthew 15:3,³ He answered them, “And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?” (ESV) Matthew 19:16-17,¹⁶ And behold, a man came up to him, saying, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?”¹⁷ And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments.” (ESV)

The Altar: Verses 13-17,¹³ “These are the measurements of the altar by cubits (the cubit being a cubit and a handbreadth): its base shall be one cubit high and one cubit broad, with a rim of one span around its edge. And this shall be the height of the altar:¹⁴ from the base on the ground to the lower ledge, two cubits, with a breadth of one cubit; and from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge, four cubits, with a breadth of one cubit;¹⁵ and the altar hearth, four cubits; and from the altar hearth projecting upward, four horns.¹⁶ The altar hearth shall be square, twelve cubits long by twelve broad.¹⁷ The ledge also shall be square, fourteen cubits long by fourteen broad, with a rim around it half a cubit broad, and its base one cubit all around. The steps of the altar shall face east.” (ESV) There are some very strong statements made to Ezekiel in the remaining portions of his book. The instructions God gave to him may seem to be confusing but we will review what is said and attempt to figure this out.

Verses 18-27,¹⁸ And he said to me, “Son of man, thus says the Lord God: These are the ordinances for the altar: On the day when it is erected for offering burnt offerings upon it and for throwing blood against it,¹⁹ you shall give to the Levitical priests of the family of Zadok, who draw near to me to minister to me, declares the Lord God, a bull from the herd for a sin offering.²⁰ And you shall take some of its blood and put it on the four horns of the altar and on the four corners of the ledge and upon the rim all around. Thus you shall purify the altar and make atonement for it.²¹ You shall also take the bull of the sin offering, and it shall be burned in the appointed place belonging to the temple, outside the sacred area.²² And on the second day you shall offer a male goat without blemish for a sin offering; and the altar shall be purified, as it was purified with the bull.²³ When you have finished purifying it, you shall offer a bull from the herd without blemish and a ram from the flock without blemish.²⁴ You shall present them before the Lord, and the priests shall sprinkle salt on them and offer them up as a burnt offering to the Lord.²⁵ For seven days you shall provide daily a male goat for a sin offering; also,

a bull from the herd and a ram from the flock, without blemish, shall be provided. ²⁶ Seven days shall they make atonement for the altar and cleanse it, and so consecrate it. ²⁷ And when they have completed these days, then from the eighth day onward the priests shall offer on the altar your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, and I will accept you, declares the Lord God.” (ESV) The idea of participating again in the ritual of animal sacrifices after Christ Himself has already made the highest and final sacrifice has been a difficult issue for interpreters. Some insist that the sacrifices described here cannot be literal, or actively a part of real life, because Yeshua’s perfect sacrifice for mankind’s sinfulness fulfilled all of God’s requirements and made Old Testament sacrifices obsolete. That may all be very true, but it has been said, the Holy Word of God will define itself, therefore, we need to look closely to the words given in these verses between 18 and 27 just to give us some starting information. Notice, between this passage range, there are three levels of participants: First, there is the **prophet** who is the direct agent between God and man, who is the actual person to purify the altar (v. 20); second, there are the **Levitical Priest of the Family of Zadok** who are the only priests allowed to minister to God directly (v.19); third, there are **the priest** who perform the duties around the Temple complex (i.e., v. 24). We also learn that the purification ritual takes seven full days (v. 26). From the eighth day onward, the priests shall offer the burnt offerings and your peace offerings. We have much more to learn before the book of Ezekiel comes to a close.

Chapter 44

The Gate for the Prince: Verses 1-3, ¹ Then he brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces east. And it was shut. ² And the Lord said to me, “This gate shall remain shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it, for the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered by it. Therefore it shall remain shut. ³ Only the prince may sit in it to eat bread before the Lord. He shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gate, and shall go out by the same way.” (ESV) There appears to be two different people who may use the east gate. One is the Lord, the God of Israel and the other is the prince. Now, I must attempt to identify who we are speaking about. We should all know who God is, but, there is this statement that He has used this gate before. When did He do that? He did it when the Glory of God came into the Temple (Ezek 43:4). I must jump forward to gather a few verses to even attempt to explain who the prince is. First, the prince is not Yeshua. We can see this in several passages of scripture: The prince makes a sin offering for himself (Ezek 45:22). He leads the people in worship (Ezek 45:17). He has biological children (Ezek 46:16). I propose that the prince that is spoken of is David.

Verses 4-8, ⁴ Then he brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple, and I looked, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple of the Lord. And I fell on my face. ⁵ And the Lord said to me, “Son of man, mark well, see with your eyes, and hear with your ears all that I shall tell you concerning all the statutes of the temple of the Lord and all its laws. And mark well the entrance to the temple and all the exits from the sanctuary. ⁶ And say to the rebellious house, to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: O house of Israel, enough of all your abominations, ⁷ in admitting foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, to be in my sanctuary, profaning my temple, when you offer to me my food, the fat and the blood. You have broken my covenant, in addition to all your abominations. ⁸ And you have not kept charge of my holy things, but you have set others to keep my charge for you in my sanctuary. (ESV) If I had something to compare this with, it would be a guided tour of today taking tourist on a tour of the Temple. I don’t think that is what God had in mind.

Verses 9-14, ⁹ Thus says the Lord God: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, shall enter my sanctuary. ¹⁰ But the Levites (these are the ones I called the servant priests in chapter 43) who went far from me, going astray from me after their idols when Israel went astray, shall bear their punishment. ¹¹ They shall be ministers in

my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the temple and ministering in the temple. They shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before the people, to minister to them. ¹² Because they ministered to them before their idols and became a stumbling block of iniquity to the house of Israel, therefore I have sworn concerning them, declares the Lord God, and they shall bear their punishment. ¹³ They shall not come near to me, to serve me as priest, nor come near any of my holy things and the things that are most holy, but they shall bear their shame and the abominations that they have committed. ¹⁴ Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the temple, to do all its service and all that is to be done in it. (ESV)

Rules for Levitical Priests: Verses 15-31, ¹⁵ “But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, shall come near to me to minister to me. And they shall stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood, declares the Lord God. ¹⁶ They shall enter my sanctuary, and they shall approach my table, to minister to me, and they shall keep my charge. ¹⁷ When they enter the gates of the inner court, they shall wear linen garments. They shall have nothing of wool on them, while they minister at the gates of the inner court, and within. ¹⁸ They shall have linen turbans on their heads, and linen undergarments around their waists. They shall not bind themselves with anything that causes sweat. ¹⁹ And when they go out into the outer court to the people, they shall put off the garments in which they have been ministering and lay them in the holy chambers. And they shall put on other garments, lest they transmit holiness to the people with their garments. ²⁰ They shall not shave their heads or let their locks grow long; they shall surely trim the hair of their heads. ²¹ No priest shall drink wine when he enters the inner court. ²² They shall not marry a widow or a divorced woman, but only virgins of the offspring of the house of Israel, or a widow who is the widow of a priest. (I would think that means another Levitical Priest of Zadok.) ²³ They shall teach my people the difference between the holy and the common, and show them how to distinguish between the unclean and the clean. ²⁴ In a dispute, they shall act as judges, and they shall judge it according to my judgments. They shall keep my laws and my statutes in all my appointed feasts, and they shall keep my Sabbaths holy. ²⁵ They shall not defile themselves by going near to a dead person. However, for father or mother, for son or daughter, for brother or unmarried sister they may defile themselves. ²⁶ After he has become clean, they shall count seven days for him. ²⁷ And on the day that he goes into the Holy Place, into the inner court, to minister in the Holy Place, he shall offer his sin offering, declares the Lord God.

²⁸ “This shall be their inheritance: I am their inheritance: and you shall give them no possession in Israel; I am their possession. ²⁹ They shall eat the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering, and every devoted thing in Israel shall be theirs. ³⁰ And the first of all the firstfruits of all kinds, and every offering of all kinds from all your offerings, shall belong to the priests. You shall also give to the priests the first of your dough, that a blessing may rest on your house. ³¹ The priests shall not eat of anything, whether bird or beast, that has died of itself or is torn by wild animals. (ESV)

In chapter 43, there was a discussion pertaining to the reason for any sacrificial offering at this newly built Temple. Learned men have failed to review their Biblical history. The tribe of Levi was not to receive a land inheritance, instead they were to receive their source of substance from the offerings made at the Temple. It would seem that would be the case here in the book of Ezekiel. If God rejoined the two houses together and brought all Israel into the land, they would truly need the land from the Red Sea to the Euphrates River. We need to consider God’s Old Testament test for mankind and bring it into this discussion. The test for all mankind is in Exodus 31. It is the second covenant that God established with His people in the wilderness. That covenant was a perpetual covenant between God and His people to keep His Sabbath day holy. Mankind has broken that covenant and we will have to pay for that transaction. Consider that Ezekiel was receiving a latter day prophecy. During the millennial period with Yeshua as King of the Earth and David as King of Jerusalem, we see that the Temple is

there. God is only looking out for and providing for the priests and their families. That really should not change anything in mankind's understanding of the Kingdom of God. This situation would be a test during the millennial period to see if mankind would honor God's set of rules given in Ezekiel. Once the Day of the Lord is completed, we would all be children of God living in the New Jerusalem and God would be in His Temple. No need for any further sacrifice!

Chapter 45

The Holy District: Verses 1-5,¹ *“When you allot the land as an inheritance, you shall set apart for the Lord a portion of the land as a holy district, 25,000 cubits long and 20,000 cubits broad. It shall be holy throughout its whole extent. ² Of this a square plot of 500 by 500 cubits shall be for the sanctuary, with fifty cubits for an open space around it. ³ And from this measured district you shall measure off a section 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 broad, in which shall be the sanctuary, the Most Holy Place. ⁴ It shall be the holy portion of the land. It shall be for the priests, who minister in the sanctuary and approach the Lord to minister to him. (this section is for the Levitical Priest of Zadok) and it shall be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary. ⁵ Another section, 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 cubits broad, shall be for the Levites (the other priest) who minister at the temple, as their possession for cities to live in. (ESV) Doesn't this match with what I suggested as a solution to the paradox of the need for sacrifices?*

Verse 6,⁶ *“Alongside the portion set apart as the holy district you shall assign for the property of the city an area 5,000 cubits broad and 25,000 cubits long. It shall belong to the whole house of Israel. (ESV) Is this set aside for the city of Jerusalem?*

The Portion for the Prince: Verses 7-8,⁷ *“And to the prince shall belong the land on both sides of the holy district and the property of the city, alongside the holy district and the property of the city, on the west and on the east, corresponding in length to one of the tribal portions, and extending from the western to the eastern boundary ⁸ of the land. It is to be his property in Israel. And my princes shall no more oppress my people, but they shall let the house of Israel have the land according to their tribes. (ESV) Verse 9,⁹ *“Thus says the Lord God: Enough, O princes of Israel! Put away violence and oppression, and execute justice and righteousness. Cease your evictions of my people, declares the Lord God. (ESV) Verses 10-12,¹⁰ *“You shall have just balances, a just ephah, and a just bath. ¹¹ The ephah and the bath shall be of the same measure, the bath containing one tenth of a homer, and the ephah one tenth of a homer; the homer shall be the standard measure. ¹² The shekel shall be twenty gerahs; twenty shekels plus twenty-five shekels plus fifteen shekels shall be your mina. (ESV) Verses 13-17,¹³ *“This is the offering that you shall make: one sixth of an ephah from each homer of wheat, and one sixth of an ephah from each homer of barley, ¹⁴ and as the fixed portion of oil, measured in baths, one tenth of a bath from each cor (the cor, like the homer, contains ten baths). ¹⁵ And one sheep from every flock of two hundred, from the watering places of Israel for grain offering, burnt offering, and peace offerings, to make atonement for them, declares the Lord God. ¹⁶ All the people of the land shall be obliged to give this offering to the prince in Israel. ¹⁷ It shall be the prince's duty to furnish the burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings, at the feasts, the new moons, and the Sabbaths, all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel: he shall provide the sin offerings, grain offerings, burnt offerings, and peace offerings, to make atonement on behalf of the house of Israel. (ESV) We could possibly make two statements from these verses. First, we are going to revert back to an agrarian society. Look at the grains named and the animals named here along with bulls, rams and goats in other verses. Second, we are giving these to the prince. I guess we could call it a tax, and the prince provides the sin, grain and burnt offering to the Temple.****

Verses 18-20,¹⁸ “Thus says the Lord God: In the first month, on the first day of the month, you shall take a bull from the herd without blemish, and purify the sanctuary.¹⁹ The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and put it on the doorposts of the temple, the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and the posts of the gate of the inner court.²⁰ You shall do the same on the seventh day of the month for anyone who has sinned through error or ignorance; so you shall make atonement for the temple. (ESV) Verses 21-25,²¹ “In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall celebrate the Feast of the Passover, and for seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten.²² On that day the prince shall provide for himself and all the people of the land a young bull for a sin offering.²³ And on the seven days of the festival he shall provide as a burnt offering to the Lord seven young bulls and seven rams without blemish, on each of the seven days; and a male goat daily for a sin offering.²⁴ And he shall provide as a grain offering an ephah for each bull, an ephah for each ram, and a hin of oil to each ephah.²⁵ In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month and for the seven days of the feast, (The Feast of Booths or Tabernacles.) he shall make the same provision for sin offerings, burnt offerings, and grain offerings, and for the oil. (ESV)

Chapter 46

The Prince and the Feasts: Verses 1-8,¹ “Thus says the Lord God: The gate of the inner court that faces east shall be shut on the six working days, but on the Sabbath day it shall be opened, and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened.² The prince shall enter by the vestibule of the gate from outside, and shall take his stand by the post of the gate. The priests shall offer his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be shut until evening.³ The people of the land shall bow down at the entrance of that gate before the Lord on the Sabbaths and on the new moons.⁴ The burnt offering that the prince offers to the Lord on the Sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish.⁵ And the grain offering with the ram shall be an ephah, and the grain offering with the lambs shall be as much as he is able, together with a hin of oil to each ephah.⁶ On the day of the new moon he shall offer a bull from the herd without blemish, and six lambs and a ram, which shall be without blemish.⁷ As a grain offering he shall provide an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as he is able, together with a hin of oil to each ephah.⁸ When the prince enters, he shall enter by the vestibule of the gate, and he shall go out by the same way. (ESV) Verses 9-10,⁹ “When the people of the land come before the Lord at the appointed feasts, he who enters by the north gate to worship shall go out by the south gate, and he who enters by the south gate shall go out by the north gate: no one shall return by way of the gate by which he entered, but each shall go out straight ahead.¹⁰ When they enter, the prince shall enter with them, and when they go out, he shall go out. (ESV) Verses 11-12,¹¹ “At the feasts and the appointed festivals, the grain offering with a young bull shall be an ephah, and with a ram an ephah, and with the lambs as much as one is able to give, together with a hin of oil to an ephah.¹² When the prince provides a freewill offering, either a burnt offering or peace offerings as a freewill offering to the Lord, the gate facing east shall be opened for him. And he shall offer his burnt offering or his peace offerings as he does on the Sabbath day. Then he shall go out, and after he has gone out the gate shall be shut. (ESV) Verses 13-15,¹³ “You shall provide a lamb a year old without blemish for a burnt offering to the Lord daily; morning by morning you shall provide it.¹⁴ And you shall provide a grain offering with it morning by morning, one sixth of an ephah, and one third of a hin of oil to moisten the flour, as a grain offering to the Lord. **This is a perpetual statute.**¹⁵ Thus the lamb and the meal offering and the oil shall be provided, morning by morning, for a regular burnt offering. (ESV) This is only my suggestion, that this is a test during the millennial period.

Verses 16-18,¹⁶ *“Thus says the Lord God: If the prince makes a gift to any of his sons as his inheritance, it shall belong to his sons. It is their property by inheritance. ¹⁷ But if he makes a gift out of his inheritance to one of his servants, it shall be his to the year of liberty. Then it shall revert to the prince; surely it is his inheritance—it shall belong to his sons. ¹⁸ The prince shall not take any of the inheritance of the people, thrusting them out of their property. He shall give his sons their inheritance out of his own property, so that none of my people shall be scattered from his property.”* (ESV)

Boiling Places for Offerings: Verses 19-20,¹⁹ *Then he brought me through the entrance, which was at the side of the gate, to the north row of the holy chambers for the priests, and behold, a place was there at the extreme western end of them. ²⁰ And he said to me, “This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, and where they shall bake the grain offering, in order not to bring them out into the outer court and so transmit holiness to the people.”* (ESV) Verses 21-24,²¹ *Then he brought me out to the outer court and led me around to the four corners of the court. And behold, in each corner of the court there was another court— ²² in the four corners of the court were small courts, forty cubits long and thirty broad; the four were of the same size. ²³ On the inside, around each of the four courts was a row of masonry, with hearths made at the bottom of the rows all around. ²⁴ Then he said to me, “These are the kitchens where those who minister at the temple shall boil the sacrifices of the people.”*

Chapter 47

I find no reason to have to attempt to understand something in Chapters 47 and 48. Therefore I am inserting the wording of both chapters with limited additional comments.

Water Flowing from the Temple: Verses 1-12,¹ *Then he brought me back to the door of the temple, and behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar. ² Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east; and behold, the water was trickling out on the south side.*

³ *Going on eastward with a measuring line in his hand, the man measured a thousand cubits, and then led me through the water, and it was ankle-deep. ⁴ Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was knee-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was waist-deep. ⁵ Again he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass through, for the water had risen. It was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. ⁶ And he said to me, “Son of man, have you seen this?”*

Then he led me back to the bank of the river. ⁷ As I went back, I saw on the bank of the river very many trees on the one side and on the other. ⁸ And he said to me, “This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and enters the sea; when the water flows into the sea, the water will become fresh. ⁹ And wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish. For this water goes there, that the waters of the sea may become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes. ¹⁰ Fishermen will stand beside the sea. From Engedi to Eneglaim it will be a place for the spreading of nets. Its fish will be of very many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea. ¹¹ But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt. ¹² And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.” (ESV) This sounds like the River of Life in Rev. 22:1-2. Compare the above with the verses from Revelation,¹ *Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.* (ESV)

Division of the Land: Verses 13-23, ¹³ Thus says the Lord God: “This is the boundary by which you shall divide the land for inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel. **Joseph shall have two portions.** ¹⁴ And you shall divide equally what I swore to give to your fathers. This land shall fall to you as your inheritance.

¹⁵ “This shall be the boundary of the land: On the north side, from the Great Sea by way of Hethlon to Lebo-hamath, and on to Zedad, ¹⁶ Berothah, Sibraim (which lies on the border between Damascus and Hamath), as far as Hazer-hatticon, which is on the border of Hauran. ¹⁷ So the boundary shall run from the sea to Hazar-enan, which is on the northern border of Damascus, with the border of Hamath to the north. This shall be the north side.

¹⁸ “On the east side, the boundary shall run between Hauran and Damascus; along the Jordan between Gilead and the land of Israel; to the eastern sea and as far as Tamar. This shall be the east side.

¹⁹ “On the south side, it shall run from Tamar as far as the waters of Meribah-kadesh, from there along the Brook of Egypt to the Great Sea. This shall be the south side.

²⁰ “On the west side, the Great Sea shall be the boundary to a point opposite Lebo-hamath. This shall be the west side.

²¹ “So you shall divide this land among you according to the tribes of Israel. ²² You shall allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the sojourners who reside among you and have had children among you. They shall be to you as native-born children of Israel. With you they shall be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel. ²³ In whatever tribe the sojourner resides, there you shall assign him his inheritance, declares the Lord God. (ESV)

Chapter 48

Continuation of the Division of the Land: Verses 1-29, ¹ “These are the names of the tribes: Beginning at the northern extreme, beside the way of Hethlon to Lebo-hamath, as far as Hazar-enan (which is on the northern border of Damascus over against Hamath), and extending from the east side to the west, **Dan**, one portion. ² Adjoining the territory of Dan, from the east side to the west, **Asher**, one portion. ³ Adjoining the territory of Asher, from the east side to the west, **Naphtali**, one portion. ⁴ Adjoining the territory of Naphtali, from the east side to the west, **Manasseh**, one portion. ⁵ Adjoining the territory of Manasseh, from the east side to the west, **Ephraim**, one portion. ⁶ Adjoining the territory of Ephraim, from the east side to the west, **Reuben**, one portion. ⁷ Adjoining the territory of Reuben, from the east side to the west, **Judah**, one portion.

⁸ “Adjoining the territory of Judah, from the east side to the west, shall be the portion which you shall set apart, 25,000 cubits in breadth, and in length equal to one of the tribal portions, from the east side to the west, with the **sanctuary** in the midst of it. ⁹ The portion that you shall set apart for the Lord shall be 25,000 cubits in length, and 20,000 in breadth. ¹⁰ These shall be the allotments of the **holy portion**: the priests shall have an allotment measuring 25,000 cubits on the northern side, 10,000 cubits in breadth on the western side, 10,000 in breadth on the eastern side, and 25,000 in length on the southern side, with the sanctuary of the Lord in the midst of it. ¹¹ This shall be for **the consecrated priests, the sons of Zadok**, who kept my charge, who did not go astray when the people of Israel went astray, as the Levites did. ¹² And it shall belong to them as a special portion from the holy portion of the land, a most holy place, adjoining the territory of the Levites. ¹³ And alongside the territory of the priests, the **Levites** shall have an allotment 25,000 cubits in length and 10,000 in breadth. The whole length shall be 25,000 cubits and the breadth 20,000. ¹⁴ They shall not sell or exchange any of it. They shall not alienate this choice portion of the land, for it is holy to the Lord.

¹⁵ “The remainder, 5,000 cubits in breadth and 25,000 in length, shall be for common use for the city, for dwellings and for open country. In the midst of it shall be **the city**,¹⁶ and these shall be its measurements: the north side 4,500 cubits, the south side 4,500, the east side 4,500, and the west side 4,500.¹⁷ And the city shall have open land: on the north 250 cubits, on the south 250, on the east 250, and on the west 250.¹⁸ The remainder of the length alongside the holy portion shall be 10,000 cubits to the east, and 10,000 to the west, and it shall be alongside the holy portion. Its produce shall be food for the workers of the city.¹⁹ And the workers of the city, from all the tribes of Israel, shall till it.²⁰ The whole portion that you shall set apart shall be 25,000 cubits square, that is, the holy portion together with the property of the city.

²¹ “What remains on both sides of the holy portion and of the property of the city shall belong to **the prince**. Extending from the 25,000 cubits of the holy portion to the east border, and westward from the 25,000 cubits to the west border, parallel to the tribal portions, it shall belong to the prince. The holy portion with the sanctuary of the temple shall be in its midst.²² It shall be separate from the property of the Levites and the property of the city, which are in the midst of that which belongs to the prince. The portion of the prince shall lie between the territory of Judah and the territory of Benjamin.

²³ “As for the rest of the tribes: from the east side to the west, **Benjamin**, one portion.²⁴ Adjoining the territory of Benjamin, from the east side to the west, **Simeon**, one portion.²⁵ Adjoining the territory of Simeon, from the east side to the west, **Issachar**, one portion.²⁶ Adjoining the territory of Issachar, from the east side to the west, **Zebulun**, one portion.²⁷ Adjoining the territory of Zebulun, from the east side to the west, **Gad**, one portion.²⁸ And adjoining the territory of Gad to the south, the boundary shall run from Tamar to the waters of Meribah-kadesh, from there along the Brook of Egypt to the Great Sea.²⁹ This is the land that you shall allot as an inheritance among the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions, declares the Lord God. (ESV)

The Gates of the City: Verses 30-35,³⁰ “These shall be the exits of the city: On the north side, which is to be 4,500 cubits by measure,³¹ three gates, the gate of Reuben, the gate of Judah, and the gate of Levi, the gates of the city being named after the tribes of Israel.³² On the east side, which is to be 4,500 cubits, three gates, the gate of Joseph, the gate of Benjamin, and the gate of Dan.³³ On the south side, which is to be 4,500 cubits by measure, three gates, the gate of Simeon, the gate of Issachar, and the gate of Zebulun.³⁴ On the west side, which is to be 4,500 cubits, three gates, the gate of Gad, the gate of Asher, and the gate of Naphtali.³⁵ The circumference of the city shall be 18,000 cubits. And the name of the city from that time on shall be, *The Lord Is There*.” (ESV)

In some ways this listing for the allocation of the land of Israel is different from the one given in Joshua. I guess the significant change is with the tribe of Levi. Joshua 13:14 indicates that there is no land allocation made for the tribe of Levi. This is what that verse reads,¹⁴ *To the tribe of **Levi** alone Moses **gave no inheritance**. The offerings by fire to the Lord God of Israel are their inheritance, as he said to him.* (ESV)

Also, you must take notice that the name Joseph is not given in the list, well maybe, but not exactly. Ezek 47:13 answers that question,¹³ *Thus says the Lord God: “This is the boundary by which you shall divide the land for inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel. **Joseph shall have two portions**.* There is a story in the book of Genesis on how Joseph received a double portion. Jacob (Israel) is dying and Joseph takes his two sons to see Jacob. Jacob ask who the two boys are and Joseph tells him. Jacob adopts Joseph’s two sons in Gen. 48:5,⁵ *And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are.* (ESV) Furthermore Jacob placed Ephraim the younger over Manasseh the older, Gen 48:20,²⁰ *So he blessed them that day, saying, “By you Israel will pronounce blessings, saying, ‘God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh.’” Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh.* (ESV)

So, if you take the list of names of the tribes you now have 13 and not 12. The only way that you have 12 tribes is to not only remove Joseph but also to remove Levi, and replace these two with Ephraim and Manasseh. The full story and all of its twists and turns are recorded in my book *The Thirteenth Tribe of Israel*, available for free on my website www.vqpub.org.

To examine the full list recorded in the 48th chapter of Ezekiel you would find 18 divisions of land allocated. Here is that list:

1 Dan	Verse 1
2 Asher	Verse 2
3 Naphtali	Verse 3
4 Manasseh	Verse 4
5 Ephraim	Verse 5
6 Reuben	Verse 6
7 Judah	Verse 7
The Sanctuary	Verse 8
The Holy Portion	Verse 10
The Consecrated Priests, the sons of Zadok	Verse 11
8 Levites	Verse 13
The City	Verse 15
The Prince (King David)	Verse 21
9 Benjamin	Verse 23
10 Simeon	Verse 24
11 Issachar	Verse 25
12 Zebulun	Verse 26
13 Gad	Verse 27

There really are 13 tribes. Actually, if you add Joseph there are 14 tribes, however if you go back to the adoption that Jacob made of Joseph's sons, he told his son that any other children born of him would be known by his name and not associated with Jacob (Israel), Gen 48:6. *And the children that you fathered after them shall be yours. They shall be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance.* (ESV)

That concludes our study of the book of Ezekiel. I know that my viewpoint is different from others, however, it is what the Holy Spirit gave to me along with the assignment to write. Therefore, I do so with great pleasure. I can only pray that this study has been helpful to you in understanding more of the Old Testament. Hopefully, you now understand the view of both the time of Ezekiel, as an exile in Babylon, and the prophecy that appears to inform us of the path that we are on. This includes the wrath of God that will be poured out upon us for our disobedience of God's rules and laws. Even with the wrath, there is a great and grand view of the re-gathering of both houses of Israel. This would include the placement of both houses in the land of Israel, along with the joy and pleasure of being with God, His Son and all the prophets, along with others who have gone before us to be in paradise. Praise God!



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