



Ezekiel 5-6

Tape #7315
Ezekiel 5-6
By Chuck Smith

Is before the destruction of Jerusalem. Ezekiel was taken captive by the Babylonians, probably in the second invasion. There are those who are captives in Babylon, who are hoping for an immediate return to the land. They feel that they're not to really take roots. To hang loose, as Israel makes a treaty with Egypt, they feel that the combined powers will be able to defeat the Babylonian army. There are false prophets among them that are encouraging them in this, saying, "Just a matter of time, and you'll be going home! So don't settle down, just rent motels you know, until we're out of here, and back home again!"

Now Jeremiah is prophesying that they are going to be in captivity for seventy years. He has sent letters telling them to just settle down, build houses, plant vineyards. It's going to be quite awhile before they'll return to the land. Ezekiel is telling them that the worst is yet to come, as far as the inhabitants of Jerusalem are concerned. That the judgment of God is not yet complete, and that the city of Jerusalem is to be destroyed.

Now as we said last week as we were studying chapters four and five, that, or three and four, that Ezekiel, as with some of the other prophets, used interesting methods to get the message across. In chapter five here, we find him now again using rather strange ways of getting the attention of the people, so that he can get the message across to them. The Lord said to him...

Son of man, take a sharp knife, and a barber's razor, and cause it to pass over your head, and upon your beard: and then take balances to weigh, and divide the hair (5:1).

So he's, he's to shave himself. Head and beard just with a barber's razor, and the sharp knife, just to shave himself. Then take the hair, take balances, and weigh the hair in the balances.

And a third part of the hair you're to burn with fire there in the middle of the city, and when the days of the siege are fulfilled: you are to take a third part and smite about it with a knife: and a third part you will scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them (5:2).

So the prophet is telling of the judgment of God that is yet to come, and a third part of the people will die from the pestilence and from hunger during the siege of the Babylonians. Then when the Babylonians finally make a breach into the city, a third part of the people, or half of the remaining people actually, will be slain by the sword. Then the third part will be scattered through the world as slaves, captives to the Babylonians. Thus the, the hair, part of it being chopped with a sword, part of it being burned with the fire, and part of it being thrown up, and let the wind just scatter it. He was illustrating what was going to happen to the nation.

Now he's also to take a few of the hairs, and bind them in his skirt. [Just a few that will be preserved by the Lord, and taken care of.] And then take of them again, and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; for thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel. And thus saith the Lord God; This is Jerusalem: [The nation] and I have set in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her (5:3-5).

Jerusalem was more or less the center of the, of the world at that time. The ancient first civilized empires are really empires, were of course the Egyptians, and the Ethiopian, and the Babylonian. Between the two great empires, lay of course, Jerusalem, Israel. Very strategically located between the Asian and the African continents, and thus there in the center. But the Lord said...

She has changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries that are round about her: for they have refused my judgments and my statutes, and they have not walked in them (5:6).

Now God established a tremendous judicial system among the nation of Israel that was so perfect, that it has become the model of judicial systems throughout history! Basically, our constitution and judicial system

was modeled after the laws and the judgments that God had established for the people of Israel. They're recognized to be basic laws for man's living with one another in a society, and for the preservation of a society, they are essential.

God laid out for them the various judgments that would be forth coming for various crimes. The statutes, the rules, by which they were to live. By following these judgments and these statutes they would be a great nation, they would be a powerful nation, it would be a great place to live! Because, you could live in freedom, but you could also live in security, and in safety. You could go out in the streets at night, and not have to worry. You could go to the store without having to fear. You could shop at South Coast Plaza and not have to worry about being mugged. Because the laws and the statutes, the judgments that God had set, if they were followed, would reduce the crime, would create a secure environment by which people could live.

But God's complaint is that they did not keep His judgments. In fact, they became worse than the other nations. The judicial system became corrupted. The prophets cried out against the bribery, and the extortion that was taking place. Judges were being bribed, and it said that judgment was no longer forth coming.

If you want to know about our judicial system today, just ask your attorney what chance you have of getting a fair trial. He'll tell you, "When you go into court, anything can happen." You cannot depend on justice forthcoming. There's a lot I could say, but, I won't.

So they refused God's judgment, and as the result, the land was filled with unrighteousness, perverseness, crime.

Therefore [Because of this] thus saith the Lord God; Because you have multiplied more than the nations that are round about you, and you have not walked in my statutes, and you have not kept my judgments, neither have you done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you; Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, am against thee, and I will execute the judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations (5:7-8).

"You are not exercising judgment, you have forsaken real judgment. All kinds of corruption, it's filled! Of course when we get in our study next week, the Lord again does a very interesting thing. He tells, as Jeremiah sees this wall, and the Lord said, you know, "dig a hole through the wall", and when he came inside of, of the room, he looked around and the walls were filled with all kinds of filth, and pornography, and every horrible thing. Just the walls covered with this stuff! Then the Lord said, "Ezekiel I've allowed you to go into the minds of the leaders. This is the corruption that's going on in the leaders!" Thus he saw just, the inner workings of the minds of the people. He saw what God sees. That which goes on in the mind of an individual.

This corruption that had permeated the society was destroying the society. There is no society that can continue when judgment begins to fail. When the judicial system breaks down, no society can continue. That society is going to collapse, and God declares, "I am against it, I will set myself against thee, and I will execute the judgments that you've been failing to execute."

And I will do in thee that which I have not done whereunto I will not do any more the like, because of all of your abominations (5:9).

Now this particular prophecy does not deal with just Israel at that time. This prophecy goes on to the further judgment of God that took place in 70 A.D. when God judged them for their treatment and rejection of His Son. When Pilate was determined to release Jesus, but the chief priest inspired the people to demand His crucifixion, and they cried out, "Crucify Him!", Pilate then said, "Bring me a basin!", and he washed his hands in their presence, and he said, "I wash my hands of this man's blood, see ye to it!" It was then they uttered that fateful, and horrible cry, "His blood be upon us, and on our children!" In 70 A.D., again Jerusalem underwent a horrible siege.

Josephus speaks about it in his book, "The Wars of the Jews". You read about the things that were transpiring during the siege. How that they were uh, crime was so rampant within the city, it wasn't a safe place to be! People were starving and fighting and killing each other for food. How of course when the Roman soldiers came, and how they devastated with the sword. Again, the remnant of the Jews were scattered into the world.

Once more Jerusalem is going to experience the horrible ravages of war, and of terror. Jesus in Matthew

twenty four, as He was giving the signs of His coming, and the ending of the age, said that there was going to come a time of great tribulation, such as the world has never seen before, or will ever see again. This is that period that Daniel prophesied in Daniel twelve, when he speaks about the unparalleled judgments or tragedies, that will come upon the people. It is then that Jesus warned the Jews, when they see this abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, in the holy place, then they were to flee to the wilderness, not even bothering to stop in the house to get a coat, just escape. That is yet to come, but then, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall they see the sign of the Son of man coming with clouds and great glory.”

Now this particular verse in Ezekiel, verse nine, “And I will do in thee that which I have not done, whereunto I will not do anymore the like”, is, is the equivalent of what Daniel said in, in the twelfth chapter of Daniel, where he declares, “And at that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time, and that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” But a time of trouble, worse than they had ever experienced as a nation, and of course, that then is equivalent with what Jesus said in Matthew twenty four. “For there shall then be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world, to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” The three passages are parallel and speak of that same event. The Lord said...

Therefore (5:10)

And, and this happened of course during the siege, just shortly after Ezekiel’s prophecy in Lamentations we dealt with it as Jeremiah was just still in the state of shock as we mentioned, as he was looking at the ruins of the city of Jerusalem, sitting there in shock over the horrible things that he had seen. Where the people finally, in desperation, so hungry they reverted to cannibalism. Ezekiel prophesies that here.

during the siege the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; [Cannibalism in order to survive the tremendous hunger.] and I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds (5:10).

So the nation of Israel was scattered. Scattered again after the Babylonian captivity. God had promised, and of course, we’ll get that as we move along, but God had promised that though He had scattered them and they became as dead, yet He would revive them and bring them back.

Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord God; Surely, because you have defiled my sanctuary with all of your detestable things, and with all of your abominations (5:11),

They actually had, had built altars unto the, the other gods there within the temple grounds, defiled under the reign of Manasseh.

and therefore will I also diminish thee; and neither shall my eye spare, and neither will I have any pity (5:11).

God will turn His back upon them. God will not rescue them again. Now over and over and over, throughout their history, when they would turn away from God, and begin to worship these other gods, then God would allow them to be defeated by their enemies, to be overcome and overrun by the enemies. Their enemies would oppress them, and then they would cry unto the Lord, and they would turn unto the Lord, during the times of national calamity. God would hear their cries, and God would raise up spiritual leadership that would lead the nation into a spiritual revival, turning back to God. As they turned back to God, God would bless them, and they would be delivered from their enemies. They would again, become strong and powerful, and, and prosperous, wealthy!

But again in their prosperity, they would turn their backs on God. After a time, and they would go back and worship these other gods, until again, they became captives to their enemies, and overrun, and overcome. Again, they would cry unto the Lord, until finally, God said, “Look when your desolation comes, don’t cry unto me! You cry unto the gods you’ve been worshiping, let them help you. I’m through! I’m resigning! I’m not gonna bail you out again!”

Over, and over throughout their history, God had bailed them out from these situations, and, and finally God said, “That’s it! As I live”, says the Lord, and there’s no stronger oath that God can take than that of His eternal character! “As I live saith the Lord, Surely because you have defiled my sanctuary with all these

detestable things and all, then I'm also gonna diminish thee, and my eye will not spare, and neither will I have any pity." God had pity on them, God sent deliverance, God said, "I'm not going to have pity any more!"

A third part of you will die with a pestilence, and with the famine, [That's that of which the hair was burned] they will be consumed in the midst of thee; [There in the city of Jerusalem] a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; [When the Babylonians finally made the breach into the city] and then the rest would be scattered, a third part to all the winds, drawing out his sword against them (5:12). [Even as they're scattered, they're not gonna be safe.] And thus shall my anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted: and they shall know that I the Lord have spoken it in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them (5:12-13).

Now all the way through the book of Ezekiel, as he speaks of these events that are going to happen, God repeats over, and over, and over again, "When these things take place, then they shall know that I the Lord hath spoken". One of the purposes really of prophecy is to prove that the Bible is the word of God. If a person will look at the scriptures with a sound, logical, intelligent mind, and as they read these prophecies, and as they look at history, and see how these prophecies were fulfilled, then surely there is ample, and strong evidence that the Bible is indeed the word of God. God said, "When this happens, they will know that I have spoken, that I am God, that I have spoken these things". The fulfillment of the prophecy is actually the affirmation, and the proof that God was the author of that prophecy.

Moreover [The Lord said] I will make thee waste, [And I] and a reproach among the nations that are round about thee, in the sight of all that pass by. [Of course that was the cry of, of Jeremiah, how wasted the city of Jerusalem was, how empty the streets, how desolate and forlorn, and thus God will bring His judgment upon those who had turned their backs on Him.] And so [verse fifteen] it shall be a reproach and a taunt, an instruction and an astonishment unto the nations (5:14-15),

So first of all, they would be a reproach. Now back in the law in the book of Leviticus, there God predicted through Moses, how that the people would turn away from the Lord, and would worship other gods, how they would establish idols and all, and they would refuse to obey His commandments. God spoke of the way He would chastise them. In, first of all, sort of, a warning. Then, next He would get a little tougher, and then, if they still didn't hearken, He'd get tougher. If they still didn't hearken, He'd get tougher, and finally, in verse thirty two, chapter twenty six of Leviticus, "And I will bring the land into desolation, and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it", and that's what we read here, "They are an astonishment." The people when they see the utter desolation of the land will be astonished! When they see these cities destroyed, and uninhabited, they would be astonished. "And I will draw out a sword after you", we've just read that haven't we? "And your land shall be desolate, your cities will be wasted, and then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it laid desolate, you will be in your enemy's land. Even then shall the land rest and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate, it shall rest, because it did not rest in your sabbaths when you dwelt upon it."

Now God said, "When I bring you into the land and all, you're to plant for seven years, for six years, the seventh year, you're to just let the land lie fallow, and just, you're not to farm it the seventh year. Let the land rest." They were in the land for four hundred and ninety years, and they never followed that law. They planted year, after year, after year, after year, never giving the land any rest. So God said, "Four hundred and ninety years, divided by seven, you owe me seventy years." The land had seventy years of rest coming. "So I'll let you stay scattered throughout the world for seventy years, until the land has had its sabbath, and then I'll bring you back."

It's sad today that they still don't really give the land rest but just keep planting it year after year. It would seem that in the return, they would, they would you know go back to the law of God and say, "Hey let's give the land the seventh year as a rest!" But actually they've, they've learned now how to even utilize the land even more, planting multiple crops during the year. A winter crop, and a summer crop. Now with the tomato plants and all, down in the Jordan valley, they, they use lights at night so they can actually grow tomatoes three times as fast, as they're used to be able to grow them. Get them to market all the quicker, but then they can get three crops of tomatoes in a year. So far from resting, they're really overworking the land

now. So the, the Lord spoke about, these are the four things that will happen. "They will become a reproach and a taunt." People will taunt them, they will jeer them.

You know, you have to think of the taunting that Jesus received when He was on the cross, by the, by the leaders of the Jews. How they taunted Him! "If you be the Messiah, come on down, save yourself, then we will believe you! He said He trusted in God, let God deliver Him if He will have Him!" You know, and the taunts that were tossed at Jesus as He hung there!

But now the Lord is saying through their prophet Ezekiel that, "They will be taunted, they will be a reproach". It's, it's strange, it's weird, it's not logical that throughout the world, the Jews have been so persecuted, hated without cause. Just as the Lord said that they would become a reproach and a taunt. It, and it, people you say, "Well why do you hate the Jew?" They can't tell you! They really don't know! But anti-Semitism has been unfortunately a very sad, and bitter thing throughout the world.

Yet, God said, "I will bless those that bless you, and curse those that curse you." Never be caught up in anti-Semitism if you want to be blessed of God! Because God will not bless you if you take an anti-Semitic position. Better that we should support, and stand behind these people. Someone says, "But they're not perfect you know! They are just...", and you just stand behind them and say, "What they, you know they've done some bad things too!" Still, I don't want to be in the position of cursing them, lest I be cursed of God. I believe that one of the reasons why God has blessed our church so abundantly is that we have sought to bless the nation of Israel. But it's just basic. God said, "I will bless those that bless you", and we're being blessed! God is keeping His word! So not only that, they were instruction.

You see, these things all happened to them as examples for us, to instruct us. We're to look at what happened to them, and learn lessons from what happened to them. God intends that we learn from history, because those who do not learn from history, are doomed to make the same mistakes. So what happened to them should be instructive to us. We should learn to follow the Lord, and to serve the Lord, and not to forsake Him. Because if you forsake Him, He will forsake you, and its lessons are there! Then finally, they were an astonishment. People were to be astonished when they saw the judgment of God that was brought against the disobedient nation. Again He said...

I the Lord hath spoken it (5:15).

I think that He says this over sixty times in the book of Ezekiel. Then, He says, "And when this happens, you will know, you will know." Referring to Israel, "When this happens then you will know, then you will know." Then finally, as we get to some of the further prophecies, when this happens, then the world will know. "The nations will know, that I the Lord have spoken it. I have said it, and I have done it." The Lord said, and the nations will know.

So prophecy again is for the purpose of bringing to you that knowledge that God is working, and God is accomplishing that which He said He would.

When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, which will be for their destruction, and I will send to destroy you: I will increase the famine upon you, and break your staff of bread: [The staff of life, they'll run out of wheat, of bread.] So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee (5:16-17);

Of course when a person is starving their body is malnourished, then their body is not able to fight off the pestilences, the diseases. Many times as many people die from the, the accompanying diseases as die from just the, actually the weakened body is susceptible to the pestilences. Pestilence breaks out and it's horrible! A flu virus can go through and wipe out an entire community that is suffering from malnutrition. "So I will send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they will bereave thee", and all.

and I will bring the sword upon you. [The third part] For I the Lord [There He is again, "I the Lord"], have spoken it (5:17).

All the way through, "I have spoken it."

Chapter 6

And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Son of man, set your face towards the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them (6:1-2),

Now as we come later on in the book of Ezekiel, when we get to chapter thirty six, it is interesting because again he prophesies to the mountains of Israel. Here the prophecy is of the impending judgment upon the mountains of Israel. How they're going to be made desolate, how He's gonna destroy the altars and the high places of worship for the pagan gods. He's telling about how these mountains are gonna be made desolate.

But then when you get to chapter thirty six His prophecy to the mountains of Israel, are as, they're going to be covered with trees again. They're, the fields are to be planted with grain and with wheat, and the waste places are gonna be inhabited again, and there's a total reversal. Chapter thirty six is really a reversal of the prophecy in chapter six. When the purposes of God's judgment have been accomplished. He brings them back into the land. Then the mountains will be covered with trees, and then those prophesies are being fulfilled today! The prophesies of thirty six, chapter thirty six, coming to pass today. When we get there, you'll see the marked contrast in these two prophesies to the mountains of Israel.

Say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord (6:3);

The people won't listen anymore to the word of the Lord, so "you mountains". Remember the other prophet that said, "O earth, earth, earth!" You know, people quit listening! So, you remember Jesus when the Pharisees said, "You better tell your disciples to be quiet! You know that's blasphemy!" He said, "I'll tell you something fellas, if they would, at this time be quiet, the very rocks would start to cry out!" And, "Earth, earth, earth hear!" In that case, the earth would've been speaking, crying out.

Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains, to the hills, to the rivers, to the valleys; Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places (6:3).

Those were the places that were built on the tops of the mountains, the altars where they had their idols, where they had made their sacrifices to the false gods that they had embraced. God is prophesying that these places of pagan worship were to be destroyed. The people of God have been invaded by the pagan religions, but worse than that, they had embraced the pagan religions.

The United States today is being invaded by pagan religions. The tragedy is that we are embracing these pagan religions. That whole series that we did on the pagan invasion was to try to demonstrate how paganism has invaded our nation, and how we have taken up with the pagan religions.

Your altars will be desolate, the images shall be broken: ["These idols that you have made."] and I will cast down the slain men before these idols. And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols; and scatter your bones round about your altars (6:4-5).

That was a way of desecrating. It was a dead person, a dead body was considered to be unclean. If you touched a dead body, you could not go into the temple to worship God until you had gone through the ceremonial cleansings. Thus, the dead bodies were, were considered defiled, and thus to scatter the bones on the altars spoke of the defilement of the altars that would take place. These altars to these false gods. "And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols", defiling them, "scatter your bones upon your altars".

In all your dwellingplaces the cities shall be laid waste, the high places shall be desolate; [Now the high places were again, the places of worship for these pagan gods.] that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, and your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, and your works abolished. And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and you shall know that I am the Lord (6:6-7).

"I'm gonna do these things, and when I do, you will know that I am the Lord."

To what gods were they burning their incense, offering their prayers, building their altars and images? To the pagan gods. The goddess Ashtoreth. Over, and over again the prophets are complaining because of the worship of Ashtoreth. Who was Ashtoreth? The pagan goddess of fertility, represented by these little pornographic idols that were designed to arouse, and stimulate a person sexually. Ashtoreth was worshiped in sexual rites. It is worshiping sex, letting that become the primary major issue of your life.

Now living in a culture sophisticated society, we no longer make little graven images. But we take photos and put them in slick magazines. Same thing! As people pour through those magazines, and they are, and they begin to lust, and desire, that's the same as, as the worship of Ashtoreth. There is no difference at all between that which we do today in becoming absorbed in pornography. No difference between that, and

what they were doing in their making of these little idols for Ashtoreth, and becoming enflamed in their passions. Worshiping sex.

There were others who were worshiping just pleasure, in any form. Their lives were devoted to pleasure, the theater, and all types of pleasure experiences. That was called the worship of Molech in those days, the god of pleasure.

Still others worshiping power. They wanted to rule, they wanted to control, they wanted to possess. They were just taken up with their possessions. They had to have the fanciest car, the biggest home, you know the most. Sort of represented by those little things you see on the bumper stickers, "The man who dies with the most toys wins!" That's sort of a, a description of, of the worship of Molech. The man who is seeking to amass all of these things. That's his life, in just the gaining of possessions, money, power.

These were the idols that they worshiped. These were the altars to these gods that they had built. Their worship of these gods was in keeping with the god that they worshiped. God said, "It's gonna come to an end". He will not share His glory with another! Those people that turned from Him and began to worship other gods, will surely be brought down. "The flame will fall in the midst of you, and you will know that I am the Lord."

And yet I will leave a remnant, that ye will have some that shall escape the sword among the nations, when you shall be scattered through the countries (6:8).

God will always have His faithful remnant. Those who know, though driven from the land will be faithful to God. Think of Daniel in the midst of that horrible Babylon corrupted scene. Here is Daniel, the man of God, faithful unto God. I love to read the book of Daniel! I love this young fellow, when he was young, when he became old like me, but when he was young, he was so committed to the Lord! He purposed in his heart he wasn't gonna defile himself. He was gonna live for God in the midst of this pagan culture. How his life was a outstanding example of faithfulness to God in the midst of a perverted culture.

God had His remnant, God always has His remnant. God has His remnant today, those who truly look to Him, and believe and trust in Him. We read that even during the time of the great tribulation, book of Revelation, that God will have His remnants, a hundred and forty four thousand, that He will seal and protect, during this great tribulation. That they would not be hurt of the plagues that will be poured out upon the world at that time. God's remnant. "And I will leave a remnant, that there will be some that will escape the sword among the nations, when you are scattered throughout the countries." Because when they're scattered, He was gonna send the sword after them, but a remnant He would protect.

And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart (6:9),

Another translation is, "I will break their whorish heart". The commentators are equally divided on just how it should be translated. But we do know that the heart of God yearns after His people. God speaks of His undying love. God speaks of, "How can I let thee go!" And He speaks of the tremendous love that He has! God loves you with a love that you will never understand! It's beyond your comprehension. Paul prayed for the Ephesians, "That you might have the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and that you might comprehend with all things, what is the length, and the breadth, and the depth and the height, and to know the love of Christ, which passes human understanding!" The love of Jesus Christ for you, so great that you cannot understand it. It's beyond our comprehension. It's a love that is deeper than any love that can be experienced on the human level. It's a, it's a quality, a depth of love that exceeds anything you can possibly think of! God's love for you. "For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son." What a tremendous love! God manifested His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for you.

Now if God loved you in your ungodly state, when you were rebelling against Him, doing your own thing, and just being very ugly and unloving, if God loved you then, how much more now that you have returned that love! You're reciprocating, you're loving God now. It said, "We love Him, because He first loved us." That's exactly what God is looking for, the feedback from His love. As we mentioned this morning, the lyrics of that old song, "The greatest thing you'll ever learn is to love, and be loved in return." God loves you. But God desires your love, He wants you to love Him. He wants that love to be reciprocated.

But these people had a whorish heart. Rather than being true to God, faithful unto God, they were

unfaithful in their relationship with God. They began to as the Lord said, "Commit adultery", spiritual adultery. They were to be married unto God. They were to be God's people, married unto God. But now they were taking up with other gods. Having affairs with these other gods. Allowing these other things to become paramount in their heart. Their hearts were not after God anymore. Their hearts were after these other things. These other things took the preeminence in their lives.

It's important for each of us to examine our own lives, our own hearts, and ask the question, "What is the preeminent desire of my life? What is the controlling factor in my life? What is the standard by which I measure things? Is God really first?" It's possible to deceive yourself and to live in a state of deception. Because we go through certain religious exercises. Because we actually study the Bible! But the Bible speaks about the deception of, of reading, and not doing, not following through. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." Attending Bible studies, but still living after the flesh, and sowing to the flesh, and allowing the flesh to rule.

In those cases, we're no different, nor no better off than the Jew who was going to temple. Under Josiah there was that reformation. They cleaned the temple out, they reinstituted temple worship, they were going to temple, but they were also still serving these other gods. They had not forsaken the pagan altars, even though they were now just adding the temple, so it becomes one further thing of, of worship. But He said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind." Those should be like swords piercing and cutting, so that we can see what's going on in our hearts. Be honest with ourselves, and take an honest evaluation.

God is complaining because of their whorish hearts. "Broken with their whorish heart", He said.

which have departed from me, and with their eyes, which go whoring after their idols: [They're, you know, they're holding onto the hand of God saying, "Oh yes Lord, I love you!", and looking around at all of the other attractive things.] and they shall loathe themselves for the evils (6:9)

When they look and see what they have done, and what the consequences are, they will loathe themselves, "How could I have done that?" How often when a person gets caught up in a sin, and, and gets carried away with this sin, when they finally come out of it, when they finally come to their senses, they say, "How could I have done that!" They loathe themselves, they loathe what they have done! They look back, and they think, "I can't believe! How could I have done that?" Thus God speaks of them loathing themselves because of the evil...

that they committed and of all of their abominations. [And again] They shall know that I am the Lord, and that I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them (6:9-10).

"I wasn't just talking! They weren't just empty threats when I said I'm gonna destroy them, I'm gonna send the sword, and I'm gonna destroy them, scatter them. Those weren't empty threats. And when it's accomplished, they will know that they weren't empty threats! That I said what I meant, and I meant what I said."

Thus saith the Lord God; [Now the prophet is told by the Lord] Smite with your hand, and stamp with your foot (6:11),

Now he must have been an interesting character to be around. Suddenly you know, you see him shaving his head and everything, and measuring this stuff out, and burning it and throwing it to the wind. Lying on one side, you know for three hundred and ninety days, rolling over and lying on the other side for another forty days, and eating this weird bread that he made out of weeds and everything else! You know, and now as he's standing there, he starts clapping his hands, stomping his foot! They say, "Well what's happening now!"

and say, Alas [A term of, of actual despair] for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! [Cry of dismay!] for they shall fall by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence (6:11).

Now these people you see, that he was prophesying to, they were, they had other prophets say, "Hey hang loose boy, we're going back! You know, Babylon's gonna be defeated! We'll soon be back in Jerusalem! Oh happy days! You know, you don't have to worry about anything. We're gonna make it! Our alliance with Egypt is gonna see us through!" Here's Ezekiel clapping his hands, stomping his foot and saying, "No, no, no! It's gonna be famine, it's gonna be sword, it's gonna be scattering!"

He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; he that remains [If you try to escape, you'll, you'll die of the pestilence.] and those that remain will be besieged, and will die by the famine: and thus will I accomplish my fury upon them. And then shall you know that I am the Lord (6:12-13),

Boy I mean, He is trying to get His point across to you friends! "Then you will know that He is the Lord!" What's it gonna take? Again He said, "And after all of this they do not hearken unto me, then I will do this. And if for that they don't..."

You know there are easy ways to learn the lessons, and there are hard ways to learn the lessons. God starts out with the easy ways. He says, No, no, no! Don't do that!" You ignore Him, and you do it, and He gives you a swat. He said, "I've told you not to do that!" Still, you do it! So He grabs you and twists the ear! "Told you not to!" If you persist in the evil, it will ultimately destroy you, and that's exactly what God is seeking to spare you from. The destruction that comes from sin.

God has only forbidden you those things that of their own nature and character will destroy you when you persist in them. God has not forbidden you to do one good, healthy, blessed thing. You can do every good, blessed thing you want to do, and you'll have God's smile of approval, and favor! God's not trying to hold you back from anything that is good for you. But He's trying to spare you from those things that will bring pain, and suffering, and sorrow, and death. He's faithful in warning. He gets even stronger in the warnings, until you finally have rebelled, and you give Him no alternative, and He has to let the nature take its course. The sin that you have persisted in, it then brings its inevitable consequences, and you are destroyed by your own sin.

Then you say, "Well God why did you allow this!", or, "Why did God allow...", hey! Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute! God did everything in the world to turn you away from that sin! Everything short of violating your free will God did, to wake you up! To help you to see what was happening! You ignored the warnings of God over, and over, and over again, until finally, your sin brought its own inevitable consequence, and you were destroyed, or will be destroyed by it. "They will know that I am the Lord"...

when their slain men shall be among their idols(6:13),

When they will see the corpses, the dead bodies strewn among the idols. Professor Shiloh, the late Professor Shiloh, who did, who led the archeological teams in the diggings that were done back in the eighties, the site of Offal, the ancient city of Jerusalem at the time of Jeremiah. As they began to uncover the houses that were destroyed by the Babylonian army, when they finally broke into the city, they found literally hundreds of these little idols in these houses that had been destroyed. Hundreds of these idols! The very idols that God was speaking about in the text here in Ezekiel! The very idols that Jeremiah was crying against! They found them just ten years ago, as they were uncovering the ruins of Jerusalem in that particular era.

The word of God again became graphically illustrated by the spade of the archeologists, as we saw exactly what the prophets were talking about. People were slain in their houses among their idols. All of these little idols that they had worshiped. But idols, when it came down to it, and you were really facing the crisis of life and death, the idols could not help you, they could not deliver you. Thus they were slain among their idols. "And they will know that I am the Lord when their slain men shall be among their idols"...

round about their altars, upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, [The places where they worshiped these false gods] under every thick oak, and the place where they did offer sweet savour to all of their idols (6:13).

They were out among nature. They became you know, enamored with mother nature, and the worship of their gods in nature. Worshiping and serving the creation, rather than the Creator! How illogical can you get? Worshiping the creation, rather than the Creator! Taking a rose, looking at the beautiful symmetry of the petals, seeing those deep, rich, indescribable colors, holding it to your nose, and taking a deep breath, inhaling, and smelling that special rose aroma. Say, "Ah that's God!" That's stupid! That is a creation of God! It's fine to take the rose, it's fine to admire the petals, it's fine to just enjoy the, the brilliance, and the depth of the colors. It's fine to enjoy the aroma, but when you do, say, "God is such a glorious Creator who can create a rose to reproduce itself, and bring such beautiful color and aroma! That's the creation of a

marvelous loving God!” Worship the Creator, rather than the creation. But men always when they, when they get involved in, in false religions, it’s always stopping short, and it’s worshipping the creator, uh, the creation, rather than the Creator, aspects of creation.

The fact that God has given to us this marvelous capacity of reproduction for the continuation of the human race! Fantastic! I marvel at the miracle of life, the miracle of birth, the miracle of conception, I marvel at this! How that the cells you know come together, divide, and develop, and the genes, the codes and everything, and finally the child is born! You hold there in your hands that little child that is alive, breathing, that has the potential of developing language skills, has the potential of, of walking and talking, and developing a personality, the whole thing! I marvel at God’s wisdom!

But to worship the, the sex powers, or, or the excitement of a sexual experience, that, that’s wrong! Can’t you see it? It’s totally wrong! We’re to respect God’s creation, stand in awe, and marvel at what God has done. But we’re not to misuse, we’re not to pervert the purposes of God in creation.

That’s what happened to these people. That’s why their culture, their nation was destroyed. Because no nation can exist when it tries to forsake the laws of God, and the judgments of God, and the statutes of God. That nation is going down the tubes fast! So God closes out saying...

I will stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yes, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblath, [Which was down near the Dead sea, on the southeastern part of the Dead sea, and beyond Diblath there of course is nothing but the Arabian wilderness, Diblath.] in all their habitations: and they shall know [Here it is once more, “They shall know”] that I am the Lord (6:14).

Oh may we know it! Father we ask that You would bless now the study of Your Word to our hearts. Give us eyes to see, ears to hear. Open up our eyes Lord that we would not be deceived. Open up our ears Lord that we might understand. That we might walk Lord in Your ways. That we would not be stubborn and rebellious in our hearts, forcing You Lord to take stronger measures with us until You bring us to Your truth. May we surrender ourselves in obedience to Your truth. In Jesus’ name, Amen.