

Ezekiel Part 29 (Ezekiel 23:22-49)

1. This passage (verses 22-35) contains four messages of judgment to come upon Oholibah (Judah, especially Jerusalem).
 - a. God would bring the Babylonians to punish Judah just as He brought the Assyrians to punish Samaria (vv. 22–27).
 - b. God would allow the people they hated to ravage their land and destroy Jerusalem and the temple (vv. 28–31).
 - c. Next, she would suffer the same fall as her sister Oholah - the cup He hands them will be large and deep and they will have to drink it (vv. 32–34).
 - d. Judah would bear their own sin, abandoned of any source of help (v. 35).
2. There is no greater punishment than to be isolated in a time of judgment and despair.
3. First - the Babylonians were definitely used by God as a chastening instrument against Judah and Jerusalem.
4. They came against Jerusalem from all sides, with the men of Pekod, Shoa, Koa, and Assyria, all groups in the eastern part of the Babylonian Empire.
5. The Assyrians and Babylonians were known for their cruelty in battle.
6. Using the image of punishing a prostitute, God described how the invaders would strip the nation, expose her lewdness, and mutilate her body. It isn't a very beautiful picture.
7. The second message condemned idolatry and its influence on foreign involvement that began when the people left Egypt. (Exodus 32)
8. The Moabites introduced Baal worship in the Balaam/Balak incident of Numbers 22–25.
9. The third message (vv. 32–34) uses the image of the cup, a familiar image in Scripture for experiencing suffering. (Jeremiah 25:15–29; 49:12; Lamentations 4:21; Habakkuk 2:16)
10. The cup He hands them will be large and deep and filled with the wrath of the Lord, and they will have to drink it.
11. The final message explained why God judged His people: they had forgotten Him (22:12) and had cast Him behind their backs—that is, they rejected Him and left Him out of their thinking and living.
12. The two accused sisters have been presented to the court and their crimes have been explained.
13. All that remains is for the judge to sum up the case and describe the sentence, which Ezekiel does in 23:36–49.

14. They have no defense and they can't take their case to a higher court. God's verdict is true and final.
15. Ezekiel includes Samaria in this summation so that Judah can't say that God's judgment of the Northern Kingdom was unjust.
16. All the evidence was presented and there could be but one decision: guilty as charged.
(Read 23:36-49)
17. What were their sins? Idolatry, injustice, unbelief (depending on the heathen nations for help), followed by blatant hypocrisy.
18. They worshiped idols and killed innocent people, and then marched piously into the temple to worship Jehovah!
19. They prostituted themselves to heathen nations when, if they had trusted the Lord, He would have taken care of them and delivered them.
20. They even sacrificed their own children, sons and daughters who really belonged to God ("whom they bore to Me").
21. When Judah should have remained a separated people, their leaders took part in an international conference against Babylon and joined themselves with the enemies of the Lord.
(v. 40)
22. The prophet described how the Jewish leaders at the meeting behaved like harlots preparing to serve a customer, but he compared the meeting to a drunken brawl" a "carefree crowd" that didn't want to face the fact that Babylon was going to win.
23. From God's point of view, Judah was nothing but a worn-out adulteress soliciting "lovers," and their sin was something He would not accept.
24. As Samaria had sinned by patronizing Assyria, so Judah was playing the harlot by seeking the help of pagan nations instead of trusting the Lord.
25. That being the case, Judah would be treated like an adulteress and even worse.
26. The Law of Moses called for the adulteress to be stoned, prostitutes to be burned, and murderers to be put to death, probably by stoning.
27. Judah would be punished for adultery, prostitution, and shedding innocent blood. Their sins would find them out. (verse 47)