

Ezekiel Part 25 (Ezekiel 21:18-32)

1. *God now directs the army (Ezek. 21:18–27).*
2. **21:18-23** The pagan nations of that day used many forms of divination to discern the will of the gods, and Ezekiel pictured the Babylonian army at a fork in the road, trying to discover which way to go.
3. The question - should they go to Rabbah, the capital of Ammon, and attack the Ammonites; or should they go to Jerusalem to attack the Jews?
4. When the Lord told Ezekiel to “mark [appoint] two ways,” he probably sketched on the ground a map of the roads looking like an inverted Y, and at the juncture stuck a “signpost” into the ground.
5. Remember the plan of Jerusalem drawn on a wet clay brick back in 4:1–8?
6. It was God’s will that the army attack Jerusalem, so He overruled the soothsayers and diviners and made sure their decision was for Jerusalem.
7. This doesn’t mean that their system of divining was accurate or even proper, but that the Lord used it to accomplish His purposes.
8. Nebuchadnezzar decided to attack Jerusalem, so he appointed his captains and made his plans.
9. The people in Jerusalem were hoping he would attack the Ammonites, and when the word came that Jerusalem was his target, they hoped the diviners would say they had made a mistake.
10. **21:24-27** But God was in control and there had been no mistake.
11. Zedekiah had sworn an oath of allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar and had broken it (21:23; 2 Kings 24:20), and Nebuchadnezzar would not stand for this kind of rebellion.
12. Zedekiah’s sins had finally caught up with him.
13. Ezekiel paused to give a special message to Zedekiah, whom he refuses to call a king but refers to as a prince.
14. He calls him profane and wicked, a man who has committed iniquity and will suffer because of it. He would lose his crown and his throne.
15. The day had arrived when God would turn everything upside down. Those who were “great and mighty” would be humbled, and those who were humble would be exalted.

16. Once again, God added a brief word of hope: the Messiah would one day come, the true Son of David and Israel's King, and would claim the Davidic crown and reign over His people (v. 27).
17. *God completes the task (Ezek. 21:28–32).*
18. But what about the Ammonites?
19. When God directed the Babylonian army to Jerusalem, did this mean He would not judge the Ammonites for their sins against Him and the Jewish people?
20. They would rejoice to see Babylon ravage the land of Judah and set fire to Jerusalem and the temple.
21. Along with Judah and the other nations, Ammon had joined the alliance against Babylon, so Ammon had to be punished. (Jeremiah 27:1ff)
22. Their own false prophets and diviners would give them a false hope that they had been spared. (Ezek. 21:29)
23. However, God hadn't told Nebuchadnezzar to put his sword in its sheath (v. 30).
24. The message closed with another fire.
25. God would "blow" against the furnace and make it hotter, and then He would pour out the molten metal on His enemies.
26. The Ammonites would become fuel for the fire and the nation would disappear from the earth.
27. We should come away from the study of chapters 18 to 21 understanding the tragedy of rebellion against the Lord.
28. Israel had a long history of rebellion, but the other nations weren't any better, except that Israel was sinning against the light of God's Word.
29. If any people had the obligation to obey and serve the Lord, it was Israel, for the Lord had blessed them abundantly.
30. Instead of becoming a holy nation to the glory of God, they became like all the other nations and failed to be God's light to the Gentiles.
31. And yet, seen throughout this series of messages is the theme of Israel's hope.
32. The prophet reminded them that God had promised to regather them from the Gentile nations and one day give them their King and their kingdom.