

## EZEKIEL 20:45-21:32 – “BABYLON, THE SWORD OF GOD, A SWORD AGAINST THE AMMONITES”

### OBSERVATION

Monday 7:30pm, H 106 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by doughnut/vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell # 714 425 9221; email – [ptwente@gmail.com](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com) For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column.

#### THE SWORD OF THE LORD:

*Eze 20:45 Furthermore the word of the LORD came to me, saying,*

*Eze 20:46 "Son of man, set your face toward the south; preach against the south and prophesy against the forest land, the South,*

*Eze 20:47 and say to the forest of the South, 'Hear the word of the LORD! Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I will kindle a fire in you, and it shall devour every green tree and every dry tree in you; the blazing flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be scorched by it.*

*Eze 20:48 All flesh shall see that I, the LORD, have kindled it; it shall not be quenched." ' "*

*Eze 20:49 Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! They say of me, 'Does he not speak parables?' "*

*Eze 21:1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying,*

*Eze 21:2 "Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem, preach against the holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel;*

*Eze 21:3 and say to the land of Israel, 'Thus says the LORD: "Behold, I am against you, and I will draw My sword out of its sheath and cut off both righteous and wicked from you.*

*Eze 21:4 Because I will cut off both righteous and wicked from you, therefore My sword shall go out of its sheath against all flesh from south to north,*

*Eze 21:5 that all flesh may know that I, the LORD, have drawn My sword out of its sheath; it shall not return anymore." ' "*

*Eze 21:6 Sigh therefore, son of man, with a breaking heart, and sigh with bitterness before their eyes.*

*Eze 21:7 And it shall be when they say to you, 'Why are you sighing?' that you shall answer, 'Because of the news; when it comes, every heart will melt, all hands will be feeble, every spirit will faint, and all knees will be weak as water. Behold, it is coming and shall be brought to pass,' says the Lord GOD."*

*Eze 21:8 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,*

### INTERPRETATION

#### THE DECISION TO BRING GOD'S JUDGMENT TO ISRAEL: (vs. 20:45-49)

45 Here begins a new prophecy, and most properly a new chapter should here begin; for the next chapter is of the same argument with this, and an explanation of it, and an enlargement upon it.

46 Son of man, set your face toward the south (The Negev, the target of God's judgment), and preach toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the south field; for Judah stood south from Babylon. (Ez. 13:17; 20:46; 21:2; 25:2; 28:21;n 29:2; 35:2; 38:2)

47 And say to the forest of the south, Hear the word of the LORD; Thus says the Lord GOD; Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree, in you, and every dry tree, strong and weak in Jerusalem: the blazing flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned in it.

48 All flesh - All the people shall see that this war is a judgment of the Lord.

It shall not be quenched - Till the whole land shall be utterly ruined.

49 Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! they say of me, Does he not speak parables? The people said that the prophet spoke unclearly; therefore he desires the Lord to give them a plain declaration of it.

#### THE DRAWING OF GOD'S SWORD: (vs. 21: 1-7)

1 Ezekiel will repeat this three times in this chapter. God told him that he was going to speak to a rebellious and hardheaded people. God also said at that time He would make Ezekiel's head harder than theirs. It's possible that a little of that hardness got down to his heart, and so he could really lay it on the line to these people. You actually love the man for this, for, if his feelings had entered into it, this man would have been crushed by the message that he had to give.

2 Set your face toward Jerusalem - This is a continuation of the preceding prophecy; and in this chapter the prophet sets before them, in the plainest language, what the foregoing metaphors meant, so that they could not complain of his parables.

3 And say to the land of Israel, Thus says the LORD; Behold, I am against you, and will draw my sword out of its sheath, and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked. That is such which seem to have an outward show of righteousness by observation of the ceremonies of the law.

4 Seeing then that I will cut off the righteous and the wicked, therefore shall my sword go forth from its sheath against all flesh from south to north, through all the land of Israel.

5 That all flesh may know that I the Lord have drawn forth my sword out of his sheath it shall not return any more; that is, into its sheath, until it has done all its work; meaning that the Chaldean army should not return to their own land until they had executed the whole will of God upon the Jews; this is the fire that should not be quenched, and here ends the explanation of the said prophecy. (Is. 57:1-13; Ezekiel chapter 5)

6 Sigh therefore, thou son of man, with breaking heart; and with bitterness sigh before their eyes, as though you were in extreme anguish.

7 And it shall be, when they say to you, Why are you sighing? You answer, because of the great noise of the army of the Chaldeans. For the news; because it comes and every heart shall faint or melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water: behold, it is coming, and shall be brought to pass, says the Lord GOD. (Ez. 33:21-news reached Jan. 585 BC, five months after it happened)

#### THE DISTRESS WHICH GOD'S SWORD WILL BRING: (vs.8-17)

8 Either this is a new prophecy of another sword, distinct and different from that of the Chaldeans, even possibly of the sword of the Romans.

### APPLICATION

Ezekiel, a priest and a prophet, was taken to Babylon as a captive in the second deportation around 597BC.

For the first 24 chapters, God tells us about the coming judgment of Jerusalem/(& Israel). Why so many chapters? So we can understand why He brings/brought judgment on unbelieving, idolatrous Israel and what is important to Him.

Note the applicability to the US today!!

vs. 46-47 – Judah and Jerusalem were the southern kingdom, which was the place this judgment is directed. Those listening to this prophecy were well aware that the northern kingdom had been conquered by Assyria some 140 years earlier, but is directed toward the south. This judgment comes from the LORD Himself! Should not Israel's history be a real warning for the United States?

vs. 48 – purpose of judgment – all flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it!

v. 2 – The targets of this prophesy – Jerusalem, holy places, land if Israel itself – also the targets of Armageddon!

Vs. 3-4 – the coming trial will affect the righteous and the wicked!

v.5 – the truth will be obvious

vs. 6-7 – turmoil which the prophet will experience

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*Eze 21:9 "Son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says the LORD!' Say: 'A sword, a sword is sharpened And also polished!'*

*Eze 21:10 Sharpened to make a dreadful slaughter, Polished to flash like lightning! Should we then make mirth? It despises the scepter of My son, As it does all wood.*

*Eze 21:11 And He has given it to be polished, That it may be handled; This sword is sharpened, and it is polished To be given into the hand of the slayer.'*

*Eze 21:12 "Cry and wail, son of man; For it will be against My people, Against all the princes of Israel. Terrors including the sword will be against My people; Therefore strike your thigh.*

*Eze 21:13 "Because it is a testing, And what if the sword despises even the scepter? The scepter shall be no more," says the Lord GOD.*

*Eze 21:14 "You therefore, son of man, prophesy, And strike your hands together. The third time let the sword do double damage. It is the sword that slays, The sword that slays the great men, That enters their private chambers.*

*Eze 21:15 I have set the point of the sword against all their gates, That the heart may melt and many may stumble. Ah! It is made bright; It is grasped for slaughter:*

*Eze 21:16 "Swords at the ready! Thrust right! Set your blade! Thrust left— Wherever your edge is ordered!*

*Eze 21:17 "I also will beat My fists together, And I will cause My fury to rest; I, the LORD, have spoken."*

*Eze 21:18 The word of the LORD came to me again, saying:*

*Eze 21:19 "And son of man, appoint for yourself two ways for the sword of the king of Babylon to go; both of them shall go from the same land. Make a sign; put it at the head of the road to the city.*

*Eze 21:20 Appoint a road for the sword to go to Rabbah of the Ammonites, and to Judah, into fortified Jerusalem.*

*Eze 21:21 For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the road, at the fork of the two roads, to use divination: he shakes the arrows, he consults the images, he looks at the liver.*

### INTERPRETATION

9 The sword was unsheathed in the foregoing verses; here it is fitted up to do execution, which the prophet is commanded to lament. Look at how the sword is described here. It is *sharpened*, that it may cut and wound, and make *a dreadful slaughter*.

10 It is sharpened to make a dreadful slaughter; it is polished that it may flash or glitter and so cause fear: should we then make mirth? It despises the rod of my son, meaning, the scepter showing that it will not spare the king, who would be as the son of God, and in His place. as every tree, that is, the rest of the people (other nations).

11 And he has given it to be polished, that it may be handled: the sword is sharpened, and it is polished, to give it into the hand of the slayer, that is, to the army of the Chaldeans.

12 Cry and wail, son of man: for it shall be upon my people, it shall be upon all the princes of Israel: terrors by reason of the sword shall be upon or against My people: smite therefore upon your thigh. (*Is. 13:6, 19*)

13 **Because it is a testing** - This will be a trial of strength and skill between the Chaldeans and the Jews; and a trial of faith and patience to the righteous. **And what if the sword, (Nebuchadnezzar), despises even the rod or scepter? -** Overthrow Zedekiah? It will do so; for the regal government of Judea shall be no more. Or, it is tried; that it the sword. Nebuchadnezzar has already shown himself strong and skillful.

14 The sword has been doubled, and it shall come the third time. Nebuchadnezzar came against Judea three times: against Jehoiakim; against Jeconiah; against Zedekiah. The sword had already been doubled; it is to come now the third time, i.e., against Zedekiah.

15 All their gates - Both of cities, of palaces, and of private houses. The prophet addresses the sword. **And many may stumble** - literally, “to the multiplication of stumbling blocks” that is, so that the causes of their fall may be more numerous.

16 Another rendering is: “Turn thee backwards! get thee to the right! Set thee forwards! Get thee to the left! O where is your face appointed?”

17 The Lord smites together His hands in anger, man in consternation. When the sword has done its business, and just vengeance is taken, the fury of the Lord shall cease; it shall proceed no further, it shall be kept within due bounds, and no more or further rage.

### THE DISCOVERY OF THEIR SINS THAT WERE DESERVING OF GOD’S JUDGMENT: (vs. 18-24)

18 Immediately after the former; for this respects the same prophecy about the sword, and the way of its coming, and the cause of it.

19 Also, son of man, mark two ways, that the sword of the king of Babylon may come: both ways shall come forth from one land: and choose a place, choose it at the head of the road to the city. This was spoken because when Nebuchadnezzar came against Judah his purpose was also to go against the Ammonites, but doubting in the way which enterprise to undertake first he consulted with his soothsayers and so went against Judah.

20 Appoint or mark a way, that the sword may go or come to Rabbah of the Ammonites, and to Judah in Jerusalem the fortified, that is, to the tribe of Judah that kept themselves in Jerusalem.

21 For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the road, at the fork of the two roads, to use divination: he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver. That is he used conjuring and sorcery.

### APPLICATION

#### vs. 9-11 – the slaughter that will result

#### vs. 12-13 – the sorrow that will come upon God’s people

#### vs. 14-15a – the strength of the Babylonian sword

#### vs. 15b-17 – the suffering that will result

#### vs. 18-22 – the choice which the Babylonian king had. The pagan king is using pagan means to determine his choice. But God was behind it all!

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### OBSERVATION

*Eze 21:22 In his right hand is the divination for Jerusalem: to set up battering rams, to call for a slaughter, to lift the voice with shouting, to set battering rams against the gates, to heap up a siege mound, and to build a wall.*

*Eze 21:23 And it will be to them like a false divination in the eyes of those who have sworn oaths with them; but he will bring their iniquity to remembrance, that they may be taken.*

*Eze 21:24 "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because you have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your doings your sins appear—because you have come to remembrance, you shall be taken in hand.*

*Eze 21:25 'Now to you, O profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day has come, whose iniquity shall end,*

*Eze 21:26 thus says the Lord GOD: "Remove the turban (priesthood), and take off the crown I (kingly rule); Nothing shall remain the same. Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted.*

*Eze 21:27 Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown! It shall be no longer, Until He (Shiloh) comes whose right it is, And I will give it to Him." '*

*Eze 21:28 "And you, son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the Ammonites and concerning their reproach,' and say: 'A sword, a sword is drawn, Polished for slaughter, For consuming, for flashing—*

*Eze 21:29 While they see false visions for you, While they divine a lie to you, To bring you on the necks of the wicked, the slain Whose day has come, Whose iniquity shall end.*

*Eze 21:30 'Return it to its sheath. I will judge you In the place where you were created, In the land of your nativity.*

*Eze 21:31 I will pour out My indignation on you; I will blow against you with the fire of My wrath, And deliver you into the hands of brutal men who are skillful to destroy.*

*Eze 21:32 You shall be fuel for the fire; Your blood shall be in the midst of the land. You shall not be remembered, For I the LORD have spoken. ' "*

### INTERPRETATION

22 He had probably written on two arrows; one, Jerusalem; the other, Ribbah or Riblath; the third, left blank. He drew, and that on which Jerusalem was written came to his hand; in consequence of which he marched immediately against that city. It was ripe for destruction; and had he marched before or after, it would have fallen; but he never considered himself as sure of the conquest till now.

23 To Zedekiah and his ministers, who had bound themselves by the oath of the Lord to be faithful to the Chaldeans, and to pay them the promised tribute. The oaths may refer, farther, to the alliances formed with the Egyptians, Ammonites, and others. They will not believe that Nebuchadnezzar shall succeed against them, while they expect the powerful assistance of the Egyptians. (*2 Kings 24:17-20*)

24 Their unfaithfulness to Nebuchadnezzar was a type of their general unfaithfulness to their covenant God. **You shall be taken in hand** — namely, of the king of Babylon.

#### THE REGAL DYNASTY OF THE HOUSE OF DAVID THAT WOULD END: (vs.25-27)

25 And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, meaning Zedekiah who practiced with the Egyptians to make himself high and able to resist the Babylonians, whose day has come, when iniquity shall end.

26 Thus says the Lord GOD; Remove the turban, and take off the crown. This may refer to the priest's attire: for Jehozadak the priest went into captivity with the king. This shall not be the same: exalt the humble, that is low, and abase him that is high.

27 It, Israel's present regal government, shall be overthrown or overturned. And it shall be no more, until He comes, whose right it is; and I will give it to Him. That is, to the coming of the Messiah: for though the Jews had some sign of government later under the Persians, Greeks and Romans, yet this restitution was not till Christ's coming and at length would be accomplished as was promised.

#### THE DESTRUCTION OF THE AMMONITES: (vs. 28-32)

28 Their reproach - Wherewith they reproached Israel in the day of Israel's afflictions. The diviners of the Ammonites made false prophecies of victory. They would never recover their power, but in time would be wholly forgotten.

29 While they see false visions for you- Though the Jews and Ammonites would not believe that you, that is the sword, would come upon them, and said that the prophets who threatened spoke lies, yet you will as surely come as though you were already on their necks.

30 **I will judge you** - This seems to refer to Nebuchadnezzar, who, after his return from Jerusalem, became insane, and lived like a beast for seven years; but was afterwards restored, and acknowledged the Lord.

31 Like a mighty flood, which should sweep them away for their sins and transgressions; and particularly for their reproaches of God and his people, which caused his indignation to rise, and him to pour it out upon them in such a manner: I will blow - As those who melt down metals blow upon the metal in the fire, that the fire may burn the fiercer.

32 The empire of the Chaldeans was destroyed, and the power transferred to the Persians; the Persian empire was destroyed, and given to the Greeks; the Grecian empire was destroyed, and given to the Mohammedans; and the destruction of the Mohammedans is at no great distance.

### APPLICATION

vs. 23 – the consideration he made of “the iniquity”

vs. 24 – the consequence based on the discovery of Zedekiah’s transgression and sins

vs. 25 – the character of Zedekiah is described

vs. 26 – the crown is removed

vs. 27 – the coming of a future king-none other than Jesus the Messiah! Ps. 132:11

vs. 28 - the destruction is coming

vs. 29 – the deception would not stop the coming of God’s judgment

vs. 30-31 – their deliverance into the hand of the Babylonians was certain

vs. 32 – the demise of the Ammonites was prophesied by Ezekiel

## **EZEKIEL 20:45-21:32 – “BABYLON, THE SWORD OF GOD, A SWORD AGAINST THE AMMONITES”**

### **OBSERVATION**

### **INTERPRETATION**

### **APPLICATION**

*Eze 20:45*

Questions: 1. Which year of captivity did chapter 20 begin (Ez. 20:1-seventh)? What year will Jerusalem fall? (Ez. 33:21-twelfth) (Chapter 24 begins in the ninth year)  
2. Is God going to use Babylon to strike all of Israel, not already taken captive by the Assyrians? Just the bad or the bad and the righteous?  
3. Who really chose which fork of the road that Nebuchadnezzar chose –v. 21?  
4. What similarities can you see between Judah in the time of Ezekiel and the US today?

**THE DECISION TO BRING GOD’S JUDGMENT TO ISRAEL:**  
**(vs. 20:45-49)**

**THE DRAWING OF GOD’S SWORD: (vs. 21:1-7)**

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