

Ezek. 24:1 Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Ezek. 24:2 Son of man, write thee the name of the day, *even* of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day.

The important thing to note in these verses is that God is giving Ezekiel this message on the very day that Nebuchadnezzar would begin his final siege against Jerusalem. The NIV Commentary places this date around December/January 589/588 BC. This would make sense to me basing his captivity as beginning in 597 BC (cf chapter 1). I don't give much thought to the different dates I find when researching some events, because I know when I peruse the books in heaven, the dates will be exact.

I think the Lord delights in giving details that affirm the prophet as a man of God and that declare His character and power before His people.

Ezek. 24:3 And utter a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Set on a pot, set *it* on, and also pour water into it:

Ezek. 24:4 Gather the pieces thereof into it, *even* every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder; fill *it* with the choice bones.

Ezek. 24:5 Take the choice of the flock, and burn also the bones under it, *and* make it boil well, and let them seethe the bones of it therein.

Point is made that this message is a parable, an illustration or story of the truth it conveys. Ezekiel didn't have to act out this message; he just had to tell the story. He is to tell the people to picture putting a pot of water on to boil. Into this pot they would place the best pieces of meat still on the bone. JFB reminded me that this would be in direct reference to chapter 11:

Ezek. 11:2 Then said he unto me, Son of man, these *are* the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city:

Ezek. 11:3 Which say, *It is* not near; let us build houses: this *city is* the caldron, and we *be* the flesh.

In chapter 11 the city was pictured as a caldron, a big brass pot (cf v11 below) that would protect its people. Instead, the city of Jerusalem would be the pot that brought a slow, agonizing death to its people. The wording of verse 5 indicates that bones will also be the fuel for the fire that boils the contents of the pot. JFB also had an interesting comment on this:

The bones *under* the pot are those having no flesh and used as fuel, answering to the poorest who suffer first, and are put out of pain sooner than the rich who endure what answers to the slower process of boiling.

Ezek. 24:6 Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the bloody city, to the pot whose scum *is* therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it! bring it out piece by piece; let no lot fall upon it.

Ezek. 24:7 For her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the top of a rock; she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust;

Ezek. 24:8 That it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance; I have set her blood upon the top of a rock, that it should not be covered.

"scum" = disease, rust

The Lord references Jerusalem as a bloody city because of the many innocent lives that were lost there due to the wickedness and idolatry of the people. The

meat in the pot is diseased and/or the pot is rusty. Either way, the meat being cooked in the pot will be consumed. The people of Jerusalem (represented by the meat) will all die, without consideration of their standing in society. The reference to casting lots would seem to be a reference to seeing who would live and who would die. God is not going to allow the casting of lots in this instance. Just as the people were public with their sin (on top of a rock, not covered with dust) so will their judgment be before the nations; everyone will be affected by the judgment. A couple of commentaries made reference to the fact that innocent blood calls out for God's vengeance in reference to the innocents who had been killed due to the wickedness of the people just as did the blood of Abel.

Gen. 4:9 And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper?

Gen. 4:10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

Ezek. 24:9 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the bloody city! I will even make the pile for fire great.

Ezek. 24:10 Heap on wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and spice it well, and let the bones be burned.

Ezek. 24:11 Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, that the brass of it may be hot, and may burn, and *that* the filthiness of it may be molten in it, *that* the scum of it may be consumed.

God continues to declare that this judgment is directly from His hand even though He is using the Babylonians. He will ensure that the fire is great (effective for the purpose). He intends for all to be destroyed. After destroying the contents (the people), the pot (the city) is to be purged with fire as well. The purpose is to destroy all the filthiness out of the city. I like the wording of the CJB for verse 11:

Put the empty pot on the coals, heat it till its copper bottom glows, till its impurity melts inside it, and its scum is burned away.

Ezek. 24:12 She hath wearied *herself* with lies, and her great scum went not forth out of her: her scum *shall be* in the fire.

Ezek. 24:13 In thy filthiness *is* lewdness: because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.

"filthiness" = religious impurity, moral contamination

"lewdness" = evil plan, wickedness; in other words, planning to do evil

I like the wording of the CJB for these verses:

But the effort is in vain: its layers of scum will not leave it; so into the fire with its scum! Because of your filthy lewdness, because you refused to be purified when I wanted to purify you; now you will not be purified from your filth until I have satisfied my fury on you.

How did God try to purify the people? He sent the prophets to declare His word and warn the people to repent or face His wrath.

Our lives can get to the point that God will decide to take our life from us in consideration of the wicked influence we have on others. If we continue to

refuse to respond to God's overtures and warnings to us, His longsuffering will come to an end and judgment will be pronounced. Once He pronounces judgment, it's too late to have a change of heart. This reminds me of a verse in Hebrews:

Heb. 10:30 ... The Lord shall judge his people.

Heb. 10:31 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

Ezek. 24:14 I the LORD have spoken *it*: it shall come to pass, and I will do *it*; I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent; according to thy ways, and according to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord GOD.

The first half of this verse reminds me of verses in Isaiah:

Is. 14:24 The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:

Is. 46:11 ... yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed *it*, I will also do it.

Is. 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

God's word is sure; what He declares will be done. God does not delight in judgment; He would rather we repent and obey. Once He declares judgment, however, it is too late for repentance. He does not change His mind out of pity and will not regret or be sorry for His action. We will be judged according to the way we live and the actions we take.

My first thought is: I am so thankful that I have been imputed the righteousness of God in Jesus; therefore, my judgment will be for rewards—not condemnation.

2Cor. 5:21 For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

My second thought: God did change His mind regarding His decision to destroy the Israelites in the wilderness. Why? In deference to the honor of His name—not due to pity for the Israelites.

Ex. 32:10 Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.

Ex. 32:11 And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?

Ex. 32:12 Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people.

Ex. 32:13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit *it* for ever.

Ex. 32:14 And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

God's honor before the Egyptians/nations was at stake as the nations looked on to see how He would provide for His people. God's honor was at stake in keeping His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

(7/07) As I read through this section of Exodus again, it seems to be more thinking out loud than declaring judgment. So it is really not a correct comparison.

**Ezek. 24:15 Also the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
Ezek. 24:16 Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down.**

Ezek. 24:17 Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not *thy* lips, and eat not the bread of men.

Ezek. 24:18 So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.

"desire" = the object of his affection, his beloved

This seems to be a different message from the Lord. God tells Ezekiel that He is going to take the life of his wife. I think the best description for *stroke* in verse 16 is "death at the hand of God." When his beloved wife dies, Ezekiel is forbidden to mourn or weep. The Hebrew for *mourning* includes "to tear the hair or beat the breast," in other words, an outward show of sorrow. The Hebrew for *weep* includes "to bemoan or complain"; neither is he to shed any tears. In no way is he to indicate publicly that he is mourning or sorrowing over the death of his wife.

Evidently, the next morning Ezekiel told the people God's message to him, and in the evening his wife died and he did as he was commanded.

Ezekiel followed God as LORD. He accepted the truth that God is the author of life and death.

Psa. 139:14-16 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all *my members* were written, *which* in continuance were fashioned, when *as yet there was* none of them.

Job 31:13-15 If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant, when they contended with me; What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?

Deut. 32:39 See now that I, *even I, am* he, and *there is* no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither *is there any* that can deliver out of my hand.

1Sam. 2:6 The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

Ezekiel didn't even question the Lord as to His decision to take his wife. Maybe he was just speechless at the thought. His faith and confidence in the character of God empowered him to obey without question. I believe he knew that he would be reunited with his wife.

I honestly can't imagine being able to comply with such a request without the supernatural provision of God through His Spirit, and I am sure that He provided for Ezekiel in just that way.

Ezek. 24:19 And the people said unto me, Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so?

Ezek. 24:20 Then I answered them, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Even though Ezekiel had told the people what was going to happen, he hadn't told them why. They knew there was a reason for the wife's death and Ezekiel's lack of public grief. They wanted to know why.

Ezek. 24:21 Speak unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword.

Ezek. 24:22 And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall not cover *your* lips, nor eat the bread of men.

Ezek. 24:23 And your tires *shall be* upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet: ye shall not mourn nor weep; but ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one toward another.

Ezek. 24:24 Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

The Lord had prepared Ezekiel for the people's questions. He was told to tell them in effect that his wife represented God's sanctuary, the temple, in Jerusalem. They had taken such pride in the beauty of the temple and had taken the God for whom it was built to honor for granted. Just as God had taken the life of Ezekiel's wife, so He was going to *profane* (wound, dissolve, defile, break) the temple in Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians. The Lord uses three phrases to describe the temple:

- "the excellency of your strength" – After looking at the Hebrew, I get the idea that this phrase references the security and strength that God's people boasted was theirs as God's chosen people and as represented by the temple.
- "the desire of your eyes" – This seems to be describing the great pride the people took in the beauty of the temple.
- "that which your soul pitieth" – Interestingly enough, in spite of the way they had defiled the temple through their idolatrous practices, they would not be happy to see anything happen to it. It's destruction would cause them great sorrow.

God is declaring that not only will He destroy the temple, He will also destroy (through the Babylonians) their loved ones who had been left behind and were still living there.

WHEN this judgment comes to pass, God is telling the people in Babylon that they are not to mourn; they are to respond to this terrible event in just the same way that Ezekiel responded to the death of his wife. They are not to mourn publicly before the Babylonians; they could only mourn privately with each other. WHEN this judgment occurs just as God has foretold through His prophet, the people will “know that I am the Lord GOD.”

Ezek. 24:25 Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters,

Ezek. 24:26 That he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears?

Ezek. 24:27 In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

We are reminded in these verses that Ezekiel has been struck dumb (unable to speak) by the Lord and allowed to speak only when he has a message from God to be delivered to the people. The Lord is telling him that there will be a messenger who survives the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and who will come and tell Ezekiel and the Jewish community in Babylon the terrible news. When Ezekiel personally hears the news from the mouth of this messenger, he will no longer be dumb. This fact will be another affirmation that God has been the one controlling Ezekiel’s speech and that he has been proclaiming the truth from God.

(1/07) Sad to say, I know I would have far fewer regrets if I had been so in submission to the Lord that my mouth had only been able to utter words according to His will and his purpose.

It stands out to me that God reiterates over and over again through His prophets that He is acting so as to make the people “know” that He is the LORD, YHWH, the self-existent, eternal, almighty God—not only of Israel, but of the universe. People may choose to reject Him now and may even choose to deny that He exists, but one day ALL of His creation will have to acknowledge Him as GOD!

Is. 45:22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and *there is none else*.

Is. 45:23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in righteousness*, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

Rom. 14:11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

Phil. 2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

Phil. 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;

Phil. 2:11 And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.