

Ezek. 7:1 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Although the word *moreover* is not in the Hebrew, this would seem to introduce a new message from the LORD to Ezekiel.

Ezek. 7:2 Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD unto the land of Israel; An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land.

It seems odd that the Lord would address the land, but the context clarifies that the land is inclusive of the people by the use of the phrase “thy ways” in the following verse. The “four corners of the land” is an expression that directs the message to the entire nation. As I read the word *end*, my mind immediately questioned, “The end of what?” I think it would be correct to say the end of God’s patience and longsuffering in waiting for them to repent of their rebellion and wickedness.

Ezek. 7:3 Now is the end come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thine abominations.

When God’s patience and longsuffering reach His limit, His next response will be in anger. The Israelites had decided to break covenant and reject the blessings associated with obedience, so now God is going to judge them according to their choice. They will be judged according to their wicked way of living. The severity of their judgment will be in direct proportion to their wickedness and idolatry.

Ezek. 7:4 And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

The Lord is declaring that His judgment will be enacted without pity or compassion. This is a radical statement from One Whose character possesses a never-ending supply of mercy and compassion. It sounds like a contradiction, until we recognize this judgment as an act of love. The writer of Proverbs recognized chastening as an act of love.

Prov. 19:18 Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

The Lord affirms that truth in His letter to the church at Laodicea.

Rev. 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

I like the phrasing of The Complete Jewish Bible for the middle part of the verse:

“...but I will bring your ways upon you, and your disgusting practices will be done among you...”

In other words, if they want to worship idols, He is going to cause them to live among other idol worshippers.

“ye shall know...” – Surely if the people have to experience the withdrawal of God’s protective hand and are made to experience life dependent upon the idols they have chosen to worship and the effects of the lifestyle that accompany that worship, they will recognize that YHWH is the one and only GOD. Surely this will cause them to repent of their sin and turn back to Him.

Ezek. 7:5 Thus saith the Lord GOD; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come.

Ezek. 7:6 An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come.

Again, emphasis is made that this message is from YHWH, the God of Israel. A couple of translations indicate the wording is referencing the idea of evil upon evil. The Hebrew does include the idea of *first* for the word *only*, which would indicate more to follow. The word *watcheth* includes “the idea of abruptness in starting up from sleep.” In other words, at the point the Lord’s patience ceases, judgment starts—and the time is now.

Ezek. 7:7 The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains.

The morning is a time of a new beginning of activity. The *morning* being referenced here is in connection to the day of judgment. I like the wording of the NAS for this verse.

Your doom has come to you, O inhabitant of the land. The time has come, the day is near—tumult rather than joyful shouting on the mountains.

Ezek. 7:8 Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee, and accomplish mine anger upon thee: and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense thee for all thine abominations.

Ezek. 7:9 And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense thee according to thy ways and thine abominations *that* are in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD that smiteth.

I’m always surprised at the amount of repetition in these messages from the Lord. There is no way the people can mistake His meaning. Other observations:

- The judgment is soon to come.
- This judgment is a direct result of God’s anger.
- God’s anger is going to be “poured out.” It is not going to come in a controlled release. The effects will be experienced suddenly with full force. This reminds me of the final seven bowl judgments during the tribulation period that are detailed in Revelation 16.

Rev. 16:1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

- The punishment will fit the crime.

“ye shall know” – cf verse 4

Ezek. 7:10 Behold the day, behold, it is come: the morning is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded.

This statement ties in directly with verse 7. I decided to do a word search on the word *rod*. It is often used in reference to God’s actions against the wicked and foolish.

Psa. 89:32 Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

Prov. 10:13 In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but a rod *is* for the back of him that is void of understanding.

Its proper use on one's son is an act of love.

Prov. 13:24 He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

It's a description of God's chosen human authority to inflict the judgment of God.

Is. 10:5 O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger...

The only other reference to a blossoming rod was an instance of affirming God's will in the choice of the high priest.

Num. 17:8 And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.

I think there is reason to consider all of these truths in context here. You could say that God is exercising His rod of judgment in loving discipline because of the extent of pride and wickedness in the nation. You could also say that it is a reference to Nebuchadnezzar, the proud ruler of the Babylonians whom God had chosen as the rod that would inflict judgment; and the fact that the rod is blossoming is a sign that affirms the will of God in the matter.

Ezek. 7:11 Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness: none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs: neither shall there be wailing for them.

The Hebrew for the word *violence* included "oppressor." This would seem to be referencing Nebuchadnezzar as the rod of wickedness. Nebuchadnezzar was the logical "rod" for God to wield upon His people at this time because of his prideful, wicked character. He will inflict the judgment of God without hesitation. Because the message is regarding the judgment of Israel, I believe the last half of this verse is a reference to the people of Israel. Though a small remnant will be spared destruction (as we learned in chapter 5), the nation will effectively be destroyed. There won't even be enough left to provide a proper funeral (as referenced by the wailing). The prophet Jeremiah supports this thought.

Jer. 16:4 They shall die of grievous deaths; they shall not be lamented; neither shall they be buried; *but* they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.

Jer. 16:5 For thus saith the LORD, Enter not into the house of mourning, neither go to lament nor bemoan them: for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the LORD, *even* lovingkindness and mercies.

Jer. 16:6 Both the great and the small shall die in this land: they shall not be buried, neither shall *men* lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them:

Ezek. 7:12 The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath *is* upon all the multitude thereof.

Ezek. 7:13 For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, although they were yet alive: for the vision is touching the whole multitude thereof, which shall not return; neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life.

Upon reading these verses I understood that the coming judgment would effectively remove any reason for rejoicing on the part of someone who acquired new possessions or any reason for someone to sorrow over the fact that they had had to sell treasures due to financial hardship because the nation was being taken captive. I did not, however, make the connection to the year of Jubilee until looking at a few commentaries. I think the NIV explanation was easily understood.

“Most likely this example was given with the law of the sabbatical year (Dt 15:1-2) or the Year of Jubilee in mind (Lev 25:13-16). According to that law, if one sold land to pay for a debt, that land reverted to him on the sabbatical year or the Year of Jubilee, whichever came first. Ezekiel maintained that if one sold land under this arrangement, he would not realize its return since neither he nor the buyer would be in the land of Judah seven years hence. Though the buyer might rejoice over the fact that he would never have to return the land, it would not be a time of rejoicing for either party. When judgment came, neither would own the property. Babylon would possess it!”

Ezek. 7:14 They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready; but none goeth to the battle: for my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.

The sounds of the trumpet were used as a signaling device. The call to prepare for battle had been sounded, but no one is responding. They are experiencing the wrath of God and have no courage to try and go it alone. Their false gods have obviously proven impotent.

Ezek. 7:15 The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within: he that is in the field shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.

Ezek. 7:16 But they that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.

Outside the walls of the city is the camp of the enemy. Inside the city they will experience terrible sickness and starvation. Most of the people will die as a result of one or the other. A few, however, will *escape* or become refugees according to the Hebrew. This makes me think of the words of a song that Cynthia Clawson sang so beautifully that is based on a psalm.

Psa. 11:1 In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee *as* a bird to your mountain?

This remnant will recognize that their judgment was deserved and will grieve that they ever rebelled against the Lord. They will recognize that God is their mountain of protection. Maybe they will remember the words of the psalmist.

Psa. 18:2 The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, *and* my high tower.

Ezek. 7:17 All hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall be weak *as* water.

Ezek. 7:18 They shall also gird *themselves* with sackcloth, and horror shall cover them; and shame *shall be* upon all faces, and baldness upon all their heads.

Ezek. 7:19 They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity.

Verse 17 seems to give an answer as to why the trumpet call for battle was ignored. The people will be too weak to respond. They will display all the outward signs of mourning and repentance, but the time of God's mercy has passed. The people will finally understand how wrong they were to equate wealth with power. More importantly, they will understand how utterly worthless their idols are to provide them any protection from the wrath of God.

Both money and idols are useless when it comes to filling the stomach. They may have gold and silver in abundance, but what good is it going to do them? The gold and silver and the idolatry with which it is associated are identified as the *stumblingblock* of their iniquity, the cause of their ruin.

This makes me think of how I believe many people will feel once the rapture takes place. It would seem that the context indicates that they recognize the danger around them. They are sorrowing because of the results of their sin, but there is no indication of true repentance for their sin. Again, this reminds me of the tribulation time detailed in the book of Revelation.

Rev. 6:15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

Rev. 6:16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

Rev. 6:17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Ezek. 7:20 As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty: but they made the images of their abominations *and* of their detestable things therein: therefore have I set it far from them.

The *ornament* could be a reference to the temple, the city and/or the nation. The land of promise was described as a land flowing with milk and honey.

Lev. 20:24 But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I *am* the LORD your God, which have separated you from *other* people.

The city was chosen as the one place on earth where God chose to place His name.

2Kings 21:7 And he set a graven image of the grove that he had made in the house, of which the LORD said to David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:

The temple was recognized as a place of beauty and was blessed by God.

1Kings 9:3 And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

1Kings 9:4 And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, *and* wilt keep my statutes and my judgments:

1Kings 9:5 Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.

1Kings 9:6 *But* if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments *and* my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them:

1Kings 9:7 Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people:

1Kings 9:8 And at this house, *which* is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house?

1Kings 9:9 And they shall answer, Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil.

I wanted to include this section from 1King because it so specifically states the consequences for rebelling against YHWH and turning to worship false gods. God is always faithful to His word. His word never fails.

Psa. 89:34 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

Psa. 119:89 For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

Ezek. 7:21 And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey, and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil; and they shall pollute it.

Ezek. 7:22 My face will I turn also from them, and they shall pollute my secret place: for the robbers shall enter into it, and defile it.

These verses continue to emphasize the truth of all that has been stated before. The land of Israel is going to be taken over by the Gentile nations. They will take away everything that is valuable and will pollute/defile it with their wicked ways. God is not going to intervene in their destruction; in fact, He is “giving it” to them. The land as well as the people will be virtually destroyed.

I think “my secret place” has to be a reference to the temple—the place of His covering (from the Hebrew for *secret*). In other words, they are going to take as plunder the beautiful temple vessels and furnishings.

Ezek. 7:23 Make a chain: for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence.

Ezek. 7:24 Wherefore I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses: I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease; and their holy places shall be defiled.

The root for *chain* is a reference to binding. The context shows that the heathen are the ones invading, so the chains must be for the binding of those who would be taken captive. They will be taken with violence and cruelty. This judgment is meant to humble the people, especially those who were in positions of wealth and power. The people had already defiled the temple with their idol worship (cf 5:11), but the fact that God allowed heathen people to plunder the temple would further testify to the fact that His hand was in this judgment. It was no longer recognized as the place where He met with His people.

Ezek. 7:25 Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and *there shall be none.*

Ezek. 7:26 Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour; then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients.

These verses indicate that the people will finally think to turn to God for help and instruction from a true prophet, but it will be too late. This brings to mind another verse from previous studies.

Amos 8:11 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:

The Hebrew for *peace* is a reference to safety, and they will remember too late that God is their only source of true protection. The spiritual leaders of the people will prove to be ineffective. It's their lack of faithfulness to the Lord that has contributed to the problem. Jeremiah made point of this truth.

Jer. 50:6 My people hath been lost sheep: **their shepherds have caused them to go astray**, they have turned them away *on* the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace.

Verse 25 made me think of another verse.

Is. 57:21 *There is no peace*, saith my God, to the wicked.

"mischief...rumour" – I'm not quite sure what this is saying. Matthew Henry's explanation made sense to me.

"...for there shall come *mischief upon mischief* to ruin you, and *rumour upon rumour* to frighten you, like the waves in a storm, one upon the neck of another."

Ezek. 7:27 The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

I like the wording of the NLT for this verse.

The king and the prince will stand helpless, weeping in despair, and the people's hands will tremble with fear. I will bring against them the evil they have done to others, and they will receive the punishment they so richly deserve. Then they will know that I am the LORD!"

Everyone from the king down to the common people will be afraid. They will know that God is on the throne. (cf verse 4)