

EZEKIEL: PROPHET IN EXILE [SEASON TWO]

Chapters 25-32 [and 35]

Review Chapters 1-24

Messages:

- Indictment of Judah, Jerusalem, and the elders of the exilic communities; all strata of leadership and society for rampant idolatry
- Judgment – “they will know that I am the Lord”
- Death of Ezekiel’s wife – sign that the Temple (their “stronghold, joy, glory, delight of their eyes, heart’s desire” – 24:25) would be destroyed

Chronological Indicators: precision regarding the years of Ezekiel’s exile, the siege of Jerusalem, and the fall of the Temple and beyond is important

- from 5th year of Ezekiel’s being exiled (1:2) in 592 BC, through 6th (8:1), 7th (20:1), 9th (24:1), 10th (29:1), 11th (26:1; 30:20; 31:1), 12th (32:1, 17; 33:21-22), 27th (29:17)
- Ezekiel was partially “muted” until the messenger would arrive with the news about Jerusalem (24:26-27; 33:22).

Oracles against Foreign Nations: Overview of Chapters 25-32 and 35

Purposes of these Oracles of Judgment (that occur in most of the prophets)

- Encourage the faithful among God’s people
- God’s justice reaches to those nations as well
- “They will know that I am the LORD”

Additional Purposes for Ezekiel’s Audience

- These hostile neighbors and major powers would also be overtaken by Nebuchadnezzar. Judah was not singled out as the sole target. Nebuchadnezzar’s military reach would extend to Egypt.
- The first one is Ammon: Ezekiel’s audience may have thought Ammon was getting a “pass” (21:18-23 [21:23-28 Hebr])—not a chance.
- “There will no longer be for the children of Israel briars and thorns that cause irritation and pain from all who despise them and surround them; they shall know that I am the Sovereign LORD” (28:24)

Maps

- Israel’s “neighbors” and more far-flung enemies: Ammon, Moab and Seir [both overrun by peoples from the East], Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, Egypt and her allies
- Tyre’s emporium – trading network across the Mediterranean
- Literary “map”

<u>Ammon/Moab/Edom/Philistia</u>	<u>Tyre/prince of Tyre</u>	<u>Sidon</u>	<u>[interval]</u>	<u>Egypt/Pharaoh/“residue”</u>
Ch. 25 [+ch. 35 Edom]	Chs. 26-28	28:21-23	28:25-26	Chs. 29-32

Highlights of these Chapters

- Brief declarations against Ammon and Moab (origins Gen 19:36-39) – malicious attitudes towards God’s people; both would be given over to the “sons of the East”
 - Ammon (25:2-7)
 - long history of aggression (selected examples): Judg 10:6-11:40 (Jephthah); 2 Sam 10 and 1 Chr 19:1-20:3 (David and Joab); Amos 1:13-15 (Ammonites ripped open pregnant women in their attack on Gilead)
 - Triumphant exultation at Judah’s distress
 - Judgment: overrun by desert nomadic tribes (tents; Rabbah will become pasture for camels and sheep); cut off; given as plunder; destroyed
 - “and you will know that I am the LORD”
 - Moab (with “Seir” – a link to Edom [Gen 32:3; 36:8-9]) - 25:8-11
 - Ruth from Moab; king of Moab harbored David’s family (1 Sam 22:3-4); but later subjugation to David (2 Sam 8:2); hostile relations with northern kingdom of Israel (2 Kgs 3); Jehoshaphat against Moab, Ammon with complicated involvement of men from Mt. Seir as well (2 Chr 20)
 - Judgment: Major towns noted
 - “and you will know that I am the LORD”
- Declarations against Edom and Philistia for violence and vengeance
 - Edom (25:12-14; 35:1-15)
 - Long tradition (Gen 27:29-40): Isaac’s blessing to Jacob – “be mighty over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you”; to Esau – “by your sword you will live, and your brother you will serve; when you become restless, you will break his yoke from your neck”
 - Enmity between David and Edom (1 Kgs 11: 14-22; 1 Chr 18:11-13)
 - Continued aggression during reign of Jehoram (2 Chron 21:8-10) and Ahaz of Judah (2 Chron 28:16-17)
 - Data from Obadiah: Edom was exultant and actively involved as Zion and the Temple were ravaged (see also Psalm 137:7; Joel 3:19)
 - Ezekiel 25:12 – they took revenge; 35:5 – harbored ancient hostility and delivered Israelites to the sword (in 587 BC); 35:10-15 – declared intent to take possession of and devour Judah and Israel; hated them; spoke contemptibly against them and rejoiced at their destruction
 - Judgment: God will take vengeance through the hand of Israel (25:15); Edom (*‘edom*) given over to “bloodshed” (*dam*) (35:6); the land will be a desolate waste filled with corpses (35:7-9, 14-15)
 - “they will know My vengeance” (25:14); “you/they will know that I am the LORD” (35:4, 9, 15)
 - Philistia (25:15-17)
 - The history is a long one (“ancient hostility”), going back to the narratives in 1 Samuel (capture of the ark; penetrating the heartland of Israel on multiple

occasions; the threat of Goliath; death of Saul) and continuing through hostilities during the reign of Ahaz (1 Chr 28:18)

- Judgment: “cut off” (verbal root is *karat*) the “Kerethites,” a term infrequently used to refer to Philistines (Zeph 2:4-7) along with those who inhabit the coast.
 - “they will know that I am the LORD, when I take vengeance on them”
- Judgment of and lament for Tyre and prince of Tyre (chs. 26-28) – multiple perspectives on its demise because source of Baal worship, economic domination, and a hub for slave trade (Amos 1:9)
- **Historical lens – next session**
 - “Allegorical” – Tyre (an island emporium) depicted as a merchant ship; prince of Tyre as a proud ruler; both will come to disgraceful ends
- Sidon (28:21-23) – who might ask “what did we do?”
- Sigh of relief for Israel (28:24-26) – nasty neighbors gone; back in their own land in safety; “they will know that I am the LORD”
- Judgment and lament against Pharaoh and Egypt (chs. 29-32) – because Israel/Judah were repeatedly tempted to depend on them (29:6-7,16)
- They will succumb to Nebuchadnezzar (ch 29)
 - Disaster forthcoming for Egypt, her cities, allies (ch. 30)
 - Allegorical representation of Pharaoh (ch 31)
 - Lament over the disaster and glimpse into the “resting place” of the hordes (ch 32)