

Pentwater Bible Church

Book of Ezekiel

Message 11

November 8, 2015



The Major Prophets in Church of the Gesu by Giovanni Battista Gaulli Cir. 1639-17-9

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Message Eleven

The Idolaters Are Slain

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GOD KILLS THE IDOLATERS

EZEKIEL 6:11-7:13

¹¹Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Smite with thy hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas! because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel; for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence. ¹²He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine: thus will I accomplish my wrath upon them. ¹³And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, on all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the places where they offered sweet savor to all their idols. ¹⁴And I will stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate and waste, from the wilderness toward Diblah, throughout all their habitations: and they shall know that I am Jehovah.

⁷¹Moreover the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, ²And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto the land of Israel, An end: the end is come upon the four corners of the land. ³Now is the end upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways; and I will bring upon thee all thine abominations. ⁴And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity; but I will bring thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. ⁵Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: An evil, an only evil; behold, it cometh. ⁶An end is come, the end is come; it awaketh against thee; behold, it cometh. ⁷Thy doom is come unto thee, O inhabitant of the land: the time is come, the day is near, a day of tumult, and not of joyful shouting, upon the mountains. ⁸Now will I shortly pour out my wrath upon thee, and accomplish mine anger against thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways; and I will bring upon thee all thine abominations. ⁹And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will bring upon thee according to thy ways; and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I, Jehovah, do smite, ¹⁰Behold, the day, behold, it cometh: thy doom is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded. ¹¹Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness; none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of their wealth: neither shall there be eminency among them. ¹²The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn; for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof. ¹³For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, although they be yet alive: for the vision is touching the whole multitude thereof, none shall return; neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life (ASV, 1901)

ALERT THE IDOLATERS TO WHAT IS COMING

Ezekiel 6:11

¹¹Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Smite with thy hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas! because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel; for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence (ASV, 1901).

Now the Lord commands Ezekiel to proceed with His judgment upon Israel with a strong gesture to alert them to what is coming. He says to Ezekiel, “*Smite with thy hand, and stamp with thy foot,*” which is a known way to alert others for mourning or rejoicing. In Hebrew it is better translated as “*Pound with your hand and stamp with your foot*”. Smiting (clapping) hands together, was a sign of rejoicing (2 Kings 11:12; Psalms 98:8) or mockery (Job 27:23; Lamentations 2:15; Ezekiel 21:14, 17; 22:13; 25:6, “clapped your hands”; Nahum 3:19). The phrase here was a symbol of contemptuous ridicule ending the idolatry (cf. Ezekiel 25:6). The clapping of the hands was also a custom of the paid Jewish mourners. Stamping ones foot is also a common symbol for ending some undesirable activity by the person with authority. One says, “he put his foot down over that activity, essentially ending it.” This illustration punctuates and sets the tone for the admonition what follows. God now tells Ezekiel that the decision has been made in the divine councils and now “*they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.*”

WHO WILL DIE OF WHAT MEANS?

EZEKIEL 6:12

¹²He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine: thus will I accomplish my wrath upon them (ASV, 1901).

God in His earnestness of following through on what He has prophesied through Ezekiel make a decree. The three judgments, *sword*, *famine*, and *pestilence*, are divided between those *far off*, *nearby*, and *any who are left*. The swords of the Babylonian army will get many after they starved the city through a blockade. Pestilence always follows war. With no food and war wounds disease follows. Obviously, this judgment includes everybody. There was now no way for the people to escape the wrath of God when they continued their wicked practices after sufficient warning. It would only be when these judgments overwhelmed them that they would realize the extent of their depravity and God’s holiness. This might have been an irksome task for Ezekiel to keep repeating these warnings. The constant flow of warnings to the Jews left them without excuse for the results of their abdominal practices.

THE REALIZATION WILL COME TO ISRAEL

Ezekiel 6:13-14

¹³And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, on all the tops of the

mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the places where they offered sweet savor to all their idols. ¹⁴And I will stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate and waste, from the wilderness toward Diblah, throughout all their habitations: and they shall know that I am Jehovah (ASV, 1901).

God now clearly states that the entire nation will know who God is when they see all the dead among the idols surrounding the pagan altars. This is His Royal Seal of the events to be conducted very soon. The place of their death will be exactly where they offered incense and their adoration to the idols. God is using the place where they worshipped in abominable adoration to the Canaanite occultic gods to be the death ground for the Jews. The desolation will extend from the southern *wilderness* (around Beersheba) to *Riblah*, near the northern border of modern Lebanon. Riblah was where Zedekiah the king was captured fleeing. He was captured by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, and there his eyes were blinded after his children were killed (2 Kings 25:5, 7; Jeremiah 39:6–7; 52:8–11, 26–27). Riblah is a city on the Orontes River in Syria. The text says Diblah. There is no mention of a city named Diblah in Judah. However, it is probably meant to be Riblah due to the similarities of the Hebrew letter for R is *resh* (ר) and D is *dalet* (ד). A Scribe could easily have copied these in error.

THE BABYLONIAN INVASION IS NEAR

Ezekiel 7:1-4

¹ Moreover the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, ² And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto the land of Israel, An end: the end is come upon the four corners of the land. ³ Now is the end upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways; and I will bring upon thee all thine abominations. ⁴ And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity; but I will bring thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah (ASV, 1901)

The frequency of the warnings seems to the modern reader as unnecessarily repetitious. However they were necessary to provide to all the certainty of the impending judgment of God upon the nation Israel. The pleas of the God had fallen on deaf ears. The people by and large did not care and even went so far as to characterize the true prophets as false because their message was contrary to how the people and their leaders wanted to behave. God is now saying that *An end: the end is come upon the four corners of the land*. No part of the land would be exempt. Interestingly God says that He will bring *upon thee all thine abominations*. He will no longer have pity upon Israel for her conduct and their repayment is now immanent. Israel was being repaid in a divine sense for the detestable practices she committed. God is going to repeat verses 3 and 4 in 8 & 9. In the midst of the judgment they will know that it is God who is doing this and also what it is they have done.

THE DOOM WILL COME UPON THE LAND

Ezekiel 7:5-9

⁵Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: An evil, an only evil; behold, it cometh. ⁶An end is come, the end is come; it awaketh against thee; behold, it cometh. ⁷Thy doom is come unto thee, O inhabitant of the land: the time is come, the day is near, a day of tumult, and not of joyful shouting, upon the mountains. ⁸Now will I shortly pour out my wrath upon thee, and accomplish mine anger against thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways; and I will bring upon thee all thine abominations. ⁹And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will bring upon thee according to thy ways; and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I, Jehovah, do smite (ASV, 1901).

Ezekiel is told to repeat what God is saying. God says, “An evil, an only evil; behold, it cometh. An end is come, the end is come; it awaketh against thee; behold, it cometh..” In saying this He means that what was about to come upon Jerusalem had no historical parallel. They had like so many today have a uniformitarian view of world events. Namely, the way things are today are as they have always been and always will be. Many do not believe in divine judgment or that many of their activities constitute sin in God’s economy. The manner of the written warning is becoming more urgent as can see from the style of the Hebrew text. The Hebrew phrases are becoming short and choppy, and the words “coming” or “came” occur six times in verses 5–7. Ezekiel had been proclaiming, Disaster! A here-to-fore unknown disaster is coming. A sense of urgency is being conveyed. Sin had run its course and only judgment was left. There was no turning back now because God says, “Now will I shortly pour out my wrath upon thee, and accomplish mine anger against thee,” Because of the repetition of the warnings there is an element of monotonous tiring on God’s patience for the degree and volume of sins the Jews were committing against Him. Nearing the day of judgment there would be panic, not joy, upon the mountains. Those who had been leisurely practicing their idolatry on the high places (*joyful shouting, upon the mountains*) would be thrown into a state of apprehension when overtaken in judgment. Such is the case with the segments of the population that are without God’s Spirit living within them. During the coming Tribulation men will realize that it is God who is bringing the calamities on the earth and they will defy Him. After nearly half of mankind had been destroyed and much of the earth is ruined.

The Forth Bowl Judgment-Revelation 16: 8-9

Revelation 16: 8-9

⁸And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. ⁹And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory, ¹⁰ And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, ¹¹ And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds (KJV).

The fourth Trumpet judgment will destroy one-third of the light source causing a partial darkening of the earth. This judgment makes the sun hotter so that men on the earth are scorched with increased temperatures. Again those on the earth that have aligned themselves with the satanic government blaspheme God and do not repent of their sins. They will recognize that God is doing all this to them and still they will not repent. They

have aligned themselves with the sins of the world and the satanic deception brought through the Antichrist. The people and especially the leaders of ancient Israel realized that the judgment coming upon them was from God and most did not care. They were in a sense blaspheming the name of God for their desired lifestyle was being interrupted and they did not like it. The fifth bowl judgment will result in the fourth blackout of the end times. The entire kingdom of the beast (Antichrist) will become dark. Only the refuge areas in the three Trans Jordanian nations where light will continue to exist. In addition to the darkness men receive a gnawing pain that causes them to blaspheme God all the more. There will be a thick darkness, which can be felt too. This parallels the plagues in Egypt (Exodus 10:21-23).

THE CLOSENESS OF THE CALAMITY

Ezekiel 7:10-13

¹⁰Behold, the day, behold, it cometh: thy doom is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded. ¹¹Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness; none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of their wealth: neither shall there be eminency among them. ¹²The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn; for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof. ¹³For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, although they be yet alive: for the vision is touching the whole multitude thereof, none shall return; neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life (ASV, 1901).

God still assuring the nation Israel that the doom is a foregone conclusion uses imagery of a rod or a branch that has buds appearing indication the full bloom is near in time. Most view the rod as Nebuchadnezzar and the bud as how near he was to breaking through the walls of Jerusalem to get at the people. It was his pride that carried him to desire the earth as his domain to conquer. In verse eleven the rod becomes a symbol for the judgment, which will be used to flog, the disobedient people that is, *a rod of wickedness*.

God's judgment would have a devastating effect on the economy. When it struck, none of the people would be left, none of that crowd. Nothing of value would remain. Because of the Captivity, property and material possessions became worthless. All of the people's personal possessions would become the property of the Babylonians. The property owners would be torn from their land and carried to Babylon. God through Ezekiel says, "*let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn; for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.*" The buyer who normally rejoiced over a good business deal should not be happy because he would not be able to possess the land he had purchased. And one forced to sell his land should not grieve because he would have lost it anyway. Normally according to the Mosaic Law when land was sold in Israel, the transaction was always temporary.

Every 50 years after seven Sabbaths, during the Year of Jubilee, the property reverted to its original owners (Leviticus 25:10, 13-17). However, God's coming judgment would prevent original owners from reclaiming their properties; they would be in exile along with the buyers. In ancient Israel, land wasn't sold in *fee simple* as we are used to. This is a permanent and absolute tenure of an estate in land with freedom to dispose of it at will. Since God was the real landowner, Israel was simply a tenant under conditions of obedience. When land was "sold," what the buyer received was only the *use* of the land,

not clear title. There were conditions under which a kinsman of the seller could “redeem” the land back to the original family such as we see in the book of Ruth. Here Boaz performs the role of the “Kinsman-redeemer.” By his intervention, the forfeited lands are returned to Naomi. All this is according to the temporary ownership of the land under the Mosaic Law. God is the actual landowner, the fee simple holder and can assign its temporary rights to anybody He decides to. In this case it is the Babylonians. In the twentieth century after being out of the land for 1878 years (since the Roman destruction of 70 AD) God exercised His rights under the fee simple ownership and restored the Jews to the land of Israel in 1948 on the eastern banks of the Mediterranean Sea.

No human effort could hinder God from accomplishing His plan in 586 B.C. Though they would call soldiers to battle by the trumpet, no one would go into battle. Jerusalem would try to defend herself, but she would fall with little resistance to a foe with God’s force behind him.

NEXT MESSAGE: THE BABYLONIAN INVASION IS NEAR

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