
SUNDAY SERMON

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church

Willow, Alaska

Date: June 19, 2016

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 05.01-17

Text: Ezekiel 05.01-17

Subject: EZEKIEL SERIES –The sign of the sharp knife: famine, pestilence, and the sword

Part 1 – The Prophet Prepares the Sign. (1-4)

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the prophet Ezekiel has been called of God to be the prophet to speak and show signs to the whole house of Israel – not Judah only, but to the whole house of Israel.

Ezekiel 3:1-5 *Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel. 2 So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. 3 And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. 4 And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. 5 For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel;*

We saw, in the preceding chapter 4, how Ezekiel spoke to the nation as a sign while lying on his side for three hundred and ninety days and again on his right side for forty days – a day for a year – eating the

bread of affliction cooked with cow's dung. He did not speak with his lips, but with his actions to show them what the LORD would do with the nation. In our lesson today, we see yet another sign – another speaking to the nation by a sign.

1 And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor, and cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard: then take thee balances to weigh, and divide the hair.

A sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor – A razor is used as a symbol of the sword of an enemy in scripture.

Isaiah 7:17-25 *The LORD shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria. 18 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. 19 And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes. 20 In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard. 21 And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep; 22 And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land. 23 And it shall come to pass in that day, that*

every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it shall even be for briers and thorns. 24 With arrows and with bows shall men come thither; because all the land shall become briers and thorns. 25 And on all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.

The “razor” was the king of Assyria – Shalmaneser, who besieged Samaria and led away captive the entire northern kingdom Israel.

And cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard:

– The head is representative of the Jews. The whole hair being shaven off was significant of severe and humiliating treatment.

then take thee balances to weigh, and divide the hair. –

This signifies that several distinct punishments would be inflicted on them, and these according to the righteous judgment of God. Balances are a symbol of justice.

2 Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled: and thou shalt take a third part, and smite about it with a knife: and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them.

Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled: -- Burned in the city.

And thou shalt take a third part, and smite about it with a knife: -- Killed with the sword in the city of Jerusalem.

And a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them. – Escaped from Jerusalem –

3 Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts.

These are they that were left in the land of Judea by Nebuzaradan, for vinedressers and husbandmen, and such as returned out of Egypt into the land of Judah.

Jeremiah 44:28 *Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs.*

4 Then take of them again, and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; for thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel.

Then take of them again, -- That is, of that small number which he had bound in his skirt.

and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire: this was fulfilled in Gedaliah and the Jews that were with him, over whom the king of Babylon had made him governor, who were slain by Ishmael;

Jeremiah 41:1-3 *Now it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, and the princes of the king, even ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and there they did eat bread together in Mizpah. 2 Then arose Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword, and slew him, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land. 3 Ishmael also slew all the Jews that were with him, even with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found there, and the men of war.*

for thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel; -- from this barbarous murder of Gedaliah and his men, judgment came upon all the house of Israel; a war commenced between Ishmael and Johanan the son of Kareah; and afterwards Nebuzaradan carried captive great numbers of them that were left in the land.

Part II - The LORD Speaks Against Jerusalem. (5-11)

5 Thus saith the Lord GOD; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her.

Amazing this! The LORD GOD had set up Jerusalem in the midst of the nations and countries round about. It is the city of Jerusalem that is designed by the city portrayed upon the tile; and the same is signified by the head of the prophet that was to

be shaved; that being not only the chief city of Judea, but of the whole world.

Jerusalem was set in the midst as the chief of them. The LORD had distinguished Jerusalem from the other nations by his peculiar favors and blessings, both natural and spiritual. Jerusalem was in the midst of a land flowing with milk and honey. Jerusalem had the house and worship of God in it; which was the symbol of his presence, and his word and services.

Jerusalem should have excelled these other nations in true religion, devotion, and holiness, and set an example for them.

The Jews generally understand this of the natural situation of Jerusalem. Jarchi interprets it of the middle of the world; as if it was mathematically placed in the center of the earth. Kimchi says it was in the midst of the continent; and so its air was better than others; and these sort of writers often speak of the land of Israel being in the navel or center of the earth; they say that the Sanhedrim sat in the middle of the world; and therefore is compared to the navel; because it sat in the temple, which was in the middle of the world.

6 And she hath changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries that are round about her: for they have refused my judgments and my statutes, they have not walked in them.

“For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. Jerusalem, unto which much had been

committed had greatly sinned against the LORD, refusing his judgments and statutes refusing to walk in them. The other nations about them had not been so wicked as Jerusalem.

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye multiplied more than the nations that are round about you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you; 8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, am against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations.

Because of their stubborn refusal to walk in the LORD statutes and judgments, doing worse than the nations about them, the LORD GOD promises to be against them – and will execute judgments so that the nations around them will see those judgments.

9 And I will do in thee that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like, because of all thine abominations.

And I will do in thee that which I have not done, -- The LORD would do to them unlike He had done in any other nation, or to any other people.

- Not even in the old world, when the flood was brought upon the world of the ungodly;
- not in Sodom and Gomorrah, when they were destroyed by fire from heaven;
- not in Egypt, when he inflicted his plagues on Pharaoh and

his people; nor among the Canaanites, when they were drove out of their land for their abominations:

and whereunto I will not do any more the like; at least not of a long time; and, besides, this may not only refer to the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, but also by the Romans.

because of all thine abominations; -- the wickednesses of all sorts that were committed among them, which were abominable to the Lord, and particularly their idolatries. These were the causes why he would do, or suffer to be done, things that were never seen, known or heard of before.

10 Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds.

Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; -- Which was long ago threatened by the Lord, and prophesied of by Moses;

Leviticus 26:27-29 *And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; 28 Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. 29 And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.*

This prophecy was fulfilled at several times in the people of Israel, as at the siege of Samaria;

2 Kings 6:26-29 *And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king. 27 And he said, If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress? 28 And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to morrow. 29 So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.*

at the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar;

Lamentations 4:10 *The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.*

and at the siege of the same city by Titus Vespasian, as Josephus relates; for though these instances only show that mothers ate their children, yet no doubt the fathers took part with them; and if mothers, who are naturally more tender, could do this, it is much more reasonable to suppose that fathers did the same:

and the sons shall eat their fathers; -- this, though nowhere recorded, yet doubtless was done; it being as reasonable to think that a son might eat his father as a father his son, though both monstrously shocking.

11 Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD; Surely, because

thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity.

Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, -- This is a form of an oath, and shows that what is after said should certainly be done; God would not repent of it, nor revoke it.

surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary, with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations:

They had defiled the sancturay with their idols and idolatrous worship, which were detestable and abominable to the Lord.

King Manasseh, one of the most wicked kings, not only built altars for Baal in the house of the Lord, but set up in it a graven image of the grove;

2 Kings 21:1-5 *Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hephzi-bah. 2 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. 3 For he built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. 4 And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I put my name. 5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.*

therefore will I also diminish thee; -- as Judah and Israel lessened his glory by such abominable actions, so he threatens that he would lessen their privileges and blessings. as they took away from him the worship and honor that were due to him, so he would take away from them their state, his sanctuary, word, and ordinances, and deprive them of everything that was valuable and excellent.

neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity; -- when in the greatest misery and distress. One would think that seeing such utter misery on those who were of His chosen nation, the LORD would spare or have pity – but he would not!

Part III- The LORD Speaks of the How he shall Destroy Them (12-17)

12 A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.

This is a fulfilment of the picture made by the Prophet Ezekiel as he shaved the hair from his head and beard and divided it. Pestilence, A sword in the midst, and a sword to follow those scattered.

13 Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted: and they shall know that I the LORD have spoken it in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them.

Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, -- Finished, perfected, consummated, by bringing the above judgments upon them, pestilence, famine, and sword, and by scattering them to every wind.

and I will cause my fury to rest upon them; to continue and abide upon them, and not move, at least for the space of threescore and ten years;

Zechariah 1:12 *Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?*

and I will be comforted; -- by taking vengeance on them. The LORD would give them justice for their sins so satisfying his justice, and easing him of his enemies.

Isaiah 1:24 *Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:*

and they shall know that I the Lord have spoken it in my zeal when I have accomplished my fury in them; -- that is, they shall find by experience that what the Lord had spoken by his prophets, and had threatened to bring upon them, was said in earnest, and arose from a jealousy for his own glory.

14 Moreover I will make thee waste, and a reproach among

the nations that are round about thee, in the sight of all that pass by.

Moreover I will make thee waste, --That is, their land; which, being without inhabitants, lay untilled; and so became barren and unfruitful.

and a reproach among the nations that are round about thee, in the sight of all that pass by; -- who, seeing it in this desolate condition, shall throw out their taunts and jeers upon it.

Lamentations 2:15-16 *All that pass by clap their hands at thee; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city that men call The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth? 16 All thine enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they hiss and gnash the teeth: they say, We have swallowed her up: certainly this is the day that we looked for; we have found, we have seen it.*

15 So it shall be a reproach and a taunt, an instruction and an astonishment unto the nations that are round about thee, when I shall execute judgments in thee in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes. I the LORD have spoken it.

The Prophet Jeremiah also prophesied of these reproaches, taunts, and astonishments.

Jeremiah 24:9-10 *And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places*

*whither I shall drive them. **10** And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.*

16 When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for their destruction, and which I will send to destroy you: and I will increase the famine upon you, and will break your staff of bread: 17 So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it.

It is God who sends famine on nations for His own purpose. In this, He would break the staff of bread and increase the famine on them. The famine would be followed with evil beasts – beasts of prey which should bereave those of Israel. Pestilence and blood would follow for the LORD would bring the sword upon thee. They were helpless to withstand notwithstanding their own personal resolve.

Part IV – Application for us here today.

No doubt the LORD has brought us to this study to remind us that the things written aforetime were written for our learning. How can we expect to be pompous and proud in our sins and rebellion against God? Do we think we have power to withstand, even if we were armed to the teeth? Safety is of the LORD and not by bows, arrows, spears, pistols, guns, and such things. Shall we not take judgment of ourselves and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God that He, and he alone, may exalt us in due time – if we are at all to be

exalted again.

Romans 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

1 Corinthians 10:6-15 *Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. 7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. 8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. 9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. 10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. 15 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.*

Let us not dare to be as Israel was – for we stand in high privilege even more than they having been brought to repentance and belief of the Savior – and placed in the Lord’s church. Let us never be stubborn concerning the service of God and the ordinances of the LORD.

Hebrews 10:19-31 *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, **20** By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; **21** And having an high priest over the house of God; **22** Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) **24** And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: **25** Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. **26** For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, **27** But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. **28** He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: **29** Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? **30** For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. **31** It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

Those of us who have been brought into the New Covenant by the LORD are not likely to fall by the same kind of thing as Israel did in those days, but we are admonished to take warning. Why is that? Because each and every one of us have the old nature still in us which continually lusts against the Spirit so that we cannot do the things

which we would. Remember as those who are brought into the covenant, we –

- Hear the voice of the good shepherd and shall follow him – and will not hear the voice of others.
- He who has begun a good work in us shall perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.
- Can never be separated from the love of God in Christ Jesus and are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
- Have the spiritual insight to understand the devices of the wicked one because our teacher and comforter, the Holy Ghost, continually dwells with us.
- But we trust not in ourselves – and though trouble and trials are sure because they are appointed us of our God – we, like the Apostle Paul, have the sentence of death in ourselves.
 - *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: **2Co. 01.09.***

Nay, we dare not trust the arm of flesh – for it shall fail, but we trust our God who has delivered us and who does daily deliver us, and in whom we trust, shall deliver us yet into that eternal kingdom.

“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;
But we will remember the name of the LORD our God!” (Psalms 20.7)