
SUNDAY SERMON

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church

Willow, Alaska

Date: September 17, 2017

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 20:1-49

Text: Ezekiel 20:1-49

**Subject: EZEKIEL SERIES – Jehovah Vindicated –
Future Judgment of Israel – Parable of the forest of
the south field.**

Let us remember that the prophet Ezekiel was among those who were taken captive by King Nebuchadnezzar and his army. He was among the princes, and the might men of valor taken to Babylon by the King of Babylon. Now he is in the land where he was given the words of this book by the LORD GOD. You will recall that he was rightly named as one sent to prophesy to the WHOLE HOUSE OF ISRAEL. The northern kingdom of Israel, whose capital was Samaria, was taken captive and carried away by the king of Assyria, Shalmaneser, in about the year 721 BC. This was more than 120 years before Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came and besieged Judah and Jerusalem.

Most of the chapters we have studied look back to that besieging and destroying.

- **Elders inquire of the LORD in the seventh year, the fifth month, and the tenth day of the month. (Verses 1-4).**

1 *And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth*

month, the tenth day of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the LORD, and sat before me. 2 Then came the word of the LORD unto me, saying, 3 Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye come to enquire of me? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be enquired of by you. 4 Wilt thou judge them, son of man, wilt thou judge them? cause them to know the abominations of their fathers:

It has been almost a year since the elders came to inquire of the LORD in the land of Babylon. **Ezekiel 8:1** *And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me.*

- **Ezekiel makes them know the abominations of their fathers (Verses 5-9).**

5 ¶ And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, I am the LORD your God; 6 In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands: 7 Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. 8 But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I

will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. 9 But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt.

- **Ezekiel continues to show them how they committed abomination after being brought out of Egypt (Verses 10-26).**

10 ¶ Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. 11 And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. 12 Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them. 13 But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them. 14 But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out. 15 Yet also I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands; 16 Because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths: for their heart went after their idols. 17 Nevertheless mine eye spared them from destroying them, neither did I make an end

of them in the wilderness. 18 But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols: 19 I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; 20 And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God. 21 Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my sabbaths: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness. 22 Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth. 23 I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries; 24 Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols. 25 Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live; 26 And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the LORD.

- **Ezekiel recounts their idolatry and whoredom (Verses 27-32).**

27 ¶ Therefore, son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Yet in this your

fathers have blasphemed me, in that they have committed a trespass against me. 28 For when I had brought them into the land, for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to them, then they saw every high hill, and all the thick trees, and they offered there their sacrifices, and there they presented the provocation of their offering: there also they made their sweet savour, and poured out there their drink offerings. 29 Then I said unto them, What is the high place whereunto ye go? And the name thereof is called Bamah unto this day. 30 Wherefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? and commit ye whoredom after their abominations? 31 For when ye offer your gifts, when ye make your sons to pass through the fire, ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day: and shall I be enquired of by you, O house of Israel? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be enquired of by you. 32 And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.

- **God's promise to bring Israel into the bond of the covenant when they come back to their land (Verses 33-44).**

33 ¶ As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you: 34 And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out.

35 *And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. 36 Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD.*

Hosea 2:14-20 *Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. 15 And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor [called trouble in Joshua] for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. 16 And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, that thou shalt call me Ishi [my husband]; and shalt call me no more Baali [my Lord]. 17 For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name. 18 And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely.*

CF: **Isaiah 2:3-4** *And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

Isaiah 11:6-12 *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. 10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. 11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. 12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.*

19 *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. 20 I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD.*

37 *And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: 38 And I will purge out*

from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

Most commentators think this occurred when the remnant of some 43,000 returned to the land from Babylon after the 70 years captivity. I disagree. I believe the section from verse 33 through 44 all go together as prophecy of their return from all the nations among which they are scattered in the last day. Now let us notice the 37th and 38th verses:

And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: -- The nation as a whole shall pass under the rod. This is an expression which means shows a separation of the elect and the non-elect of Israel. God will bring them (the nation) into the bond of the covenant. Question is: "What covenant?" This is the New Covenant. This is the same covenant in which the first members of the Lord's Church were brought into - and the same covenant into which we, as gentiles, have been grafted. What are the benefits of that covenant?

Jeremiah 31:31-34 *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel;*

*After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. **34** And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

This covenant is re-iterated in Hebrews 8:7-12 and 10:16-17.

And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. – The Lord will separate them – purge out FROM AMONG YOU the rebels. These rebels purged from those brought into the covenant shall not enter into the land of Israel and those brought into the covenant shall know that HE IS THE LORD!

39 As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD; Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me: but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols.

This is the same as saying: "I would rather have you open idolaters than hypocrites, thinking you can worship Me and yet at the same time serve idols." This is not a *command* to serve idols, but a judicial declaration of God's giving up of the half-idol, half-Jehovah worshippers to utter idolatry, if they will not serve

Jehovah alone. Sound familiar? It is so with us – if we will not serve the LORD GOD alone and worship him alone, then we are like these hypocrites!

40 For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things.

The LORD will bring them back to their land! All the house of Israel, all of them in the land, shall serve the LORD! And there – in their own land – will the LORD accept them. There will the LORD require their offerings, and the first-fruits of their offerings with all their holy things. IN THEIR LAND!

41 I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen.

All the house of Israel shall once again institute their sacrifices in their land. Many will say, “I don’t see the need of this – Christ has been sacrificed and that is the end of all blood sacrifices.” For us, as gentiles, that is true. This book of Ezekiel and other prophecies make it abundantly clear that Israel shall reinstitute the animal sacrifices in their land. In this way, the LORD shall be sanctified (set apart) in them before the heathen.

42 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I

lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers. 43 And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed.

Ye shall know more fully by experience that he is your God, who is the great, good, wise, and faithful God, who performs his word; you shall know, and love, fear, obey, and worship him alone, and according to his will.

And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall lothe yourselves I your own sight for all your evils that you have committed. –

Hosea 5:15-6:1 *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early. 1* *Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.*

Zechariah 12:8-9 *In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. 9* *And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.*

Zechariah 12:10-14 *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me*

*whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. **11** In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. **12** And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; **13** The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; **14** All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.*

44 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

This 44th verse clearly acquaints us with the fact that all God did (and does) for this people was (and is) of free, mere mercy, and for his own sake, not theirs.

- **Parable of the forest of the south field (Verses 45-48).**

45 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 46 Son of man, set thy face toward the south, and drop thy word toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the south field; 47 And say to the forest of the south, Hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every

dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein. 48 And all flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it: it shall not be quenched.

This is a parable of the forest of the south field which speaks of Jerusalem which is south of Babylon. This reiterates the details of God's judgment on Israel, Judah, and Jerusalem.

- **Ezekiel tells the LORD what the elders are saying (Verse 49).**

49 Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! they say of me, Doth he not speak parables?

Why would the LORD speak to them in parables? Is it not the very same reason our Lord Jesus Christ said he spoke to the multitudes in parables?

Matthew 13:10-15 *And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. 12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. 13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. 14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and*

*shall not perceive: **15** For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.*

Thanks be to God that some of us have been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven. We have been shown the LORD and his great mercy and love for us! Do you know him? Is Jesus Christ your savior and LORD? Are you ashamed of him? Do you confess him in your life? Are you following him and doing His will? Do you worship him and love him?