

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

You told Jerusalem, “I will direct my jealousy against you, that they [the Babylonians] may deal with you in fury” (Ezek 23:25). I worship you today as a jealous God, the God who fiercely desires my undivided love and loyalty. You are jealous and avenging: “the LORD takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies” (Nah 1:2). All praise to the LORD, the “consuming fire” (Deut 4:24)! Hallelujah!

Today in Your Word

Today you shared with me more of Ezekiel’s prophecy to the exiles in Babylon. The people were still not convinced that you would cut off everyone from your holy city Jerusalem. After all, the city had seen two deportations already (604 and 597 BC), and there were still princes, priests and prophets left. Surely the presence of a few righteous people would keep the city from becoming empty and desolate. In reply, you told Ezekiel to prophesy against Jerusalem. Your flashing sword was poised to strike and it would cut off both “the righteous and the wicked” (Ezek 21:2–4). The upright people who remained could not save the city from your avenging sword. They, like Daniel and Ezekiel, would be removed from Jerusalem, and the city would sit forsaken and alone (Lam 1:1). This teaches me that there comes a time when the sins of a city or nation must be punished, and the righteous can no longer hold back the tide of judgment. How important it is to be salt and light while there is still time! Ezekiel went on to list all the sins of the “blood city” (Ezek 22:2). It wasn’t just idolatry that had brought your avenging sword; the people were murderers, adulterers, and thieves. They profaned your Sabbaths and oppressed widows and orphans. They despised their parents and committed all kinds of sexual immorality. The priests had done violence to your law, the prophets had lied in your name, and the princes had killed to gain more wealth. You said, “I sought for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the breach before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none. Therefore I have poured out my indignation upon them” (Ezek 22:30–31). This teaches me that a righteous leader can sometimes turn a city or a nation from the path of destruction. May I always be that kind of leader! Ezekiel concluded today’s reading with the story of Oholah (Samaria) and Oholibah (Jerusalem), two sister-cities who “played the whore in their youth.” Your graphic depiction of their wickedness teaches me that idolatry is like adultery. When I trade you for something else, I commit spiritual prostitution, and when I join myself to unbelievers, I commit spiritual whoredom (Ezek 23:14–17). I must strive to make sure that I never join Christ with Satan (2 Cor 6:14–15)!

Reflection

Ezekiel 23 confronts me with the seriousness of sin. Spurgeon said, “When men talk of a little Hell, it is because they think they have only a little sin and believe in a little Savior. But when you get a great sense of sin, you need a great Savior, and feel that if you do not have Him, you will fall into a great destruction and suffer a great punishment at the hands of the Great God!” (1892). Amen to that!

Request

Father, never let me be lulled into complacency by the siren song of sin. Guard me from the temptations of the enemy and keep me close to your heart!

Thanksgiving

Thank you for reminding me how ugly and disgusting sin really is. May I always reject its seductive call!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Farewell to Sin](#)” – Daniel S. Warner.

Meditation Verse: Ezekiel 22:30.