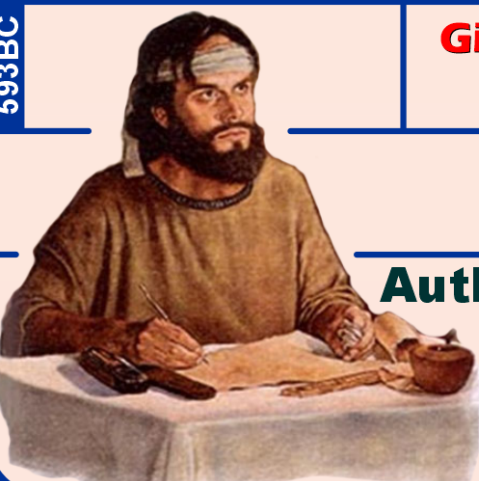


PARABLE OF TWO SISTERS

23b

EZEKIEL

BOOK OF EZEKIEL – OUTLINE

INWARD➡Personal		OUTWARD↩Peoples		ONWARD ➡Prophetic									
1 — 3		4 — 24		25 — 32		33 — 48							
Ezekiel's Call to Ministry - Ezekiel Birth (623BC) and Ministry Years (593-571BC) 597BC is the 2nd Deportation; Ezekiel taken at age 25 593BC Ezekiel begins Ministry at age 30		Sinfulness of Israel and Fall of Jerusalem - A Disobedient Nation (4-7) - A Departed Glory (8-11) - A Disciplined Nation (12-24) - The Futility of False Optimism (12-19) - The History of Judah's Corruption (20-24)		Judgment on Nations that Opposed Israel - Ammon (25:1-7) - Moab (25:8-11) - Edom (25:12-14) - Philistia (25:15-17) - Tyre (26:1—28:19) - Sidon (28:20-24) - Egypt (29-32)		Restoration of Israel in the Future - Return of Israel to the land (33-39) - Restoration of Israel in the Kingdom (40-48) - Promised Land; Millennial Temple, and the Glory of God							
593BC		Given BEFORE the siege of Jerusalem		587BC		Given DURING the siege of Jerusalem		586BC		Given AFTER the siege of Jerusalem		571BC	
								The City Destroyed 7 Years Prophesying <u>JUDGMENT</u>					
								The City Restored 15 Years Prophesying <u>HOPE</u>					
Author: Ezekiel (“God strengthens”) Place: Babylonia Time: About 22 years (593-571BC)													
Events: 605BC — FIRST Siege upon Israel by Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel taken) Ezekiel 17 years old													
597BC — SECOND assault upon Jerusalem (Ezekiel taken) Ezekiel 25 years old													
593BC — Ezekiel at age 30 called by God to testify against Israel Ezekiel 30 years old													
586BC — THIRD assault upon Jerusalem (City & Temple destroyed) Ezekiel 37 years old													

INTRODUCTION: EZEKIEL 23

PARABLE OF TWO SISTERS (Ezekiel 23)

Israel's Lustful Youth (Ezekiel 23:1-4)

Samaria's Prostitution (Ezekiel 23:5-10)

Jerusalem's Prostitution (Ezekiel 23:11-21)

Jerusalem's Judgment For Prostitution (Ezekiel 23:22-35)

- **First Oracle Against Jerusalem (Ezekiel 23:22-27)**
- **Second Oracle Against Jerusalem (Ezekiel 23:28-31)**
- **Third Oracle Against Jerusalem (Ezekiel 23:32-34)**
- **Fourth Oracle Against Jerusalem (Ezekiel 23:35)**

**A Summary Judgment for Israel's Unfaithfulness
(Ezekiel 23:36-49)**



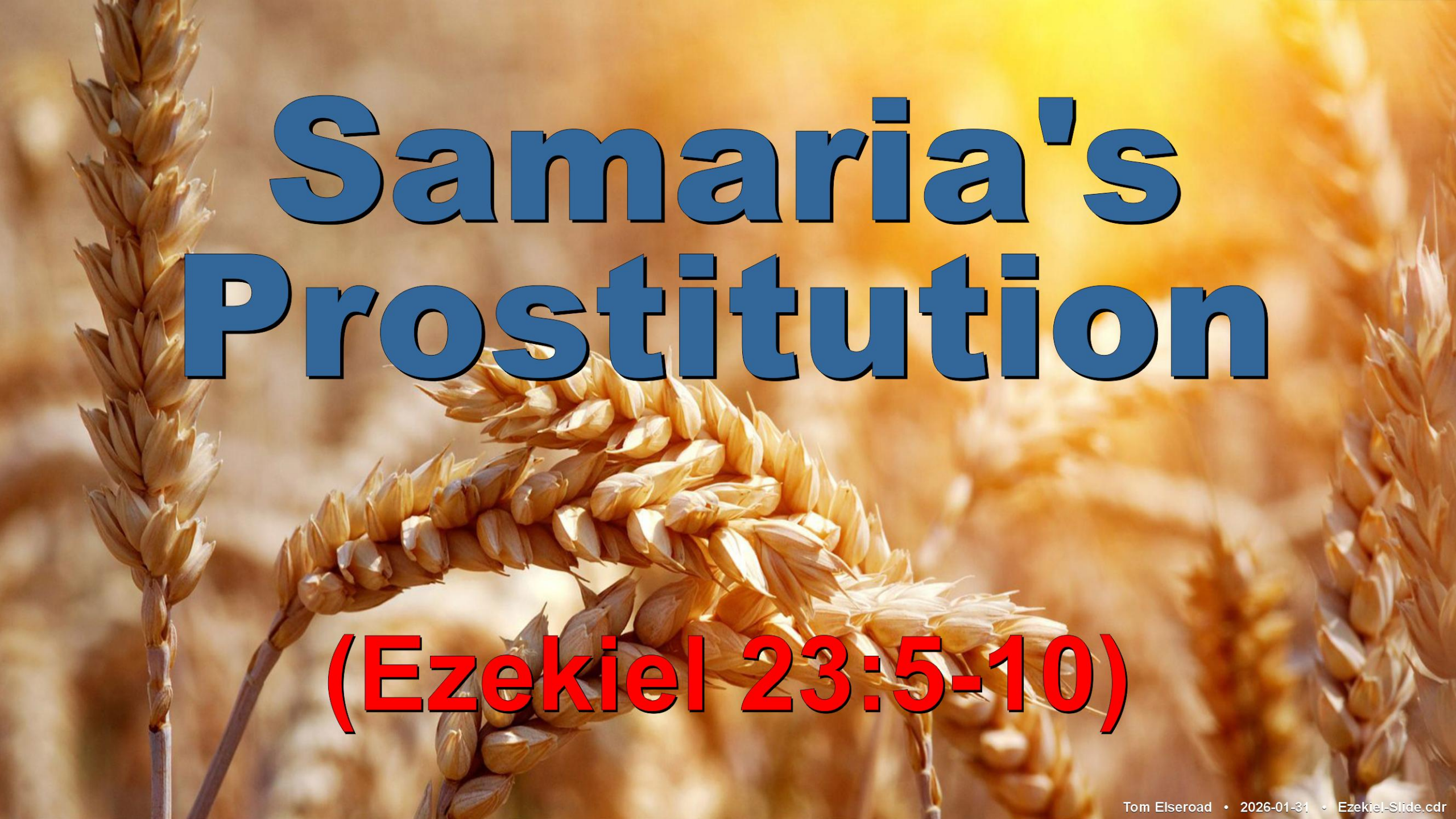
PARABLE OF TWO SISTERS

Ezekiel 23



Israel's Lustful Youth

(Ezekiel 23:1-4)



Samaria's Prostitution

(Ezekiel 23:5-10)



Jerusalem's Prostitution

(Ezekiel 23:11-21)

JERUSALEM'S JUDGMENT FOR PROSTITUTION

Ezekiel 23:22-35



First Oracle Against Jerusalem

(Ezekiel 23:22-27)

**Therefore, Oholibah, thus says the
Lord GOD: 'Behold, I will stir up your
lovers against you, From whom you
have alienated yourself, And I will
bring them against you from every
side:**

EZEKIEL 23:22



Therefore, Oholibah, thus says the Lord GOD: 'Behold, I will stir up your lovers against you, From whom you have alienated yourself, And I will bring them against you from every side: (Ek.23:22)

- **Here Ezekiel gave four oracles, each beginning with the words, “thus says the Lord GOD” (Ek.23:22, 28, 32, 35).**
- **Those that Jerusalem despised would be the ones who would punish her.**



**The Babylonians, All the Chaldeans,
Pekod, Shoa, Koa, All the Assyrians
with them, All of them desirable
young men, Governors and rulers,
Captains and men of renown, All of
them riding on horses.**

EZEKIEL 23:23



The Babylonians, All the Chaldeans, Pekod, Shoa, Koa, All the Assyrians with them, All of them desirable young men, Governors and rulers, Captains and men of renown, All of them riding on horses. (Ek.23:23)

- **God would bring her lovers against her, including the Babylonians. This included the men of Pekod and Shoa and Koa, and all the Assyrians.**
- **These three tribes (Pekod, Shoa, and Koa), along with the Assyrians, were part of the Babylonian Empire and were represented in Babylon's army.**
- **Ezekiel was saying that the combined army of Babylon and her allies would descend on Jerusalem.**



**And they shall come against you With
chariots, wagons, and war-horses, With
a horde of people. They shall array
against you Buckler, shield, and helmet
all around. 'I will delegate judgment to
them, And they shall judge you
according to their judgments.**

EZEKIEL 23:24



And they shall come against you With chariots, wagons, and war-horses, With a horde of people. They shall array against you Buckler, shield, and helmet all around. 'I will delegate judgment to them, And they shall judge you according to their judgments. (Ek.23:24)

- **When the Babylonians would attack Jerusalem with military officers' weapons, and well-protected soldiers the city would not escape.**
- **This is a literal prediction of the siege that the Babylonians planted about Jerusalem.**
- **Chariots and wagons are vehicles used for military operations.**



**I will set My jealousy against you, And
they shall deal furiously with you; They
shall remove your nose and your ears,
And your remnant shall fall by the
sword; They shall take your sons and
your daughters, And your remnant shall
be devoured by fire.**

EZEKIEL 23:25



I will set My jealousy against you, And they shall deal furiously with you; They shall remove your nose and your ears, And your remnant shall fall by the sword; They shall take your sons and your daughters, And your remnant shall be devoured by fire. (Ek.23:25)

- The punishment God would inflict on her in His anger through Babylon would be like a mutilation.**
- They will cut off your noses and your ears, and those who are left will fall by the sword.**
- The word “remnant” can have the idea of a small number of believers. Here it simply means the residue of those remaining.**



**They shall also strip you of
your clothes And take away
your beautiful jewelry.**

EZEKIEL 23:26



They shall also strip you of your clothes And take away your beautiful jewelry. (Ek.23:26)

- **In Mesopotamia facial mutilation was a frequent punishment for adultery.**
- **A guilty woman would be rendered so grotesque that she would be forever undesirable to anyone else.**
- **She would be forced to bear her shame and guilt publicly.**



They shall also strip you of your clothes And take away your beautiful jewelry. (Ek.23:26)

- **In the same way Jerusalem would be rendered unattractive to any more potential lovers.**
- **Some of Jerusalem's children would be carried away as slaves, others would be burned by fire, and her possessions (clothes and jewelry) would be stripped away.**



**'Thus I will make you cease your
lewdness and your harlotry
Brought from the land of Egypt,
So that you will not lift your eyes
to them, Nor remember Egypt
anymore.'**

EZEKIEL 23:27



'Thus I will make you cease your lewdness and your harlotry Brought from the land of Egypt, So that you will not lift your eyes to them, Nor remember Egypt anymore.' (Ek.23:27)

- **God's punishment would cure Judah's lust; she would no longer look to Egypt for help.**
- **The Lord would allow this to teach Oholibah to abhor the Egyptians as political partners.**





Second Oracle Against Jerusalem

(Ezekiel 23:28-31)

**For thus says the Lord GOD:
'Surely I will deliver you into
the hand of those you hate,
into the hand of those from
whom you alienated yourself.**

EZEKIEL 23:28



For thus says the Lord GOD: 'Surely I will deliver you into the hand of those you hate, into the hand of those from whom you alienated yourself. (Ek.23:28)

- **This second oracle repeats (for emphasis) several points stated in Ezekiel 23:22-27.**
- **The Lord also announced that He would turn Jerusalem over to those whom she had come to hate, namely, the Babylonians.**



**They will deal hatefully with you,
take away all you have worked for,
and leave you naked and bare. The
nakedness of your harlotry shall be
uncovered, both your lewdness and
your harlotry.**

EZEKIEL 23:29



They will deal hatefully with you, take away all you have worked for, and leave you naked and bare. The nakedness of your harlotry shall be uncovered, both your lewdness and your harlotry. (Ek.23:29)

- **Here Ezekiel adds that when the Babylonians were done, Jerusalem would be left naked and bare.**
- **The Babylonians would hate her, rob her of her property, and leave her naked and ashamed (586 B.C.).**



**I will do these things to you because
you have gone as a harlot after the
Gentiles, because you have become
defiled by their idols.**

EZEKIEL 23:30



I will do these things to you because you have gone as a harlot after the Gentiles, because you have become defiled by their idols. (Ek.23:30)

- **Though ashamed, this punishment would come because of her promiscuity in seeking aid from other nations and becoming perverted by their idols.**
- **This punishment would come on her because she committed political adultery with the nations and had defiled herself with their idolatry (Ex.20:1-7; Du.17:14-20).**



**You have walked in the way
of your sister; therefore I will
put her cup in your hand.**

EZEKIEL 23:31



**You have walked in the way of your sister;
therefore I will put her cup in your hand. (Ek.23:31)**

- **Since she had sinned like her sister, she would be punished in a similar way, by sword and exile.**
- **God said, You will drink your sister's cup.**
- **She had behaved as her older sister, so the Lord would give the cup of His wrath to her to drink (Is.51:17, 22; Je.25:15-17, 28; Hk.2:16; Zc.12:2; Mt.20:22; 26:39; Rv.14:10), the same cup Oholah had to drink.**





Third Oracle Against Jerusalem

(Ezekiel 23:32-34)

**Thus says the Lord GOD: 'You shall
drink of your sister's cup, The deep
and wide one; You shall be laughed
to scorn And held in derision; It
contains much.**

EZEKIEL 23:32



Thus says the Lord GOD: 'You shall drink of your sister's cup, The deep and wide one; You shall be laughed to scorn And held in derision; It contains much. (Ek.23:32)

- **This third judgment against Jerusalem differs in that it is a poem.**
- **The point of the poem, which might be titled “The Cup of God’s Judgment,” is that Jerusalem was to take part in Samaria’s judgment because she had taken part in Samaria’s sin.**
- **The cup (v.31) God will bring will be “deep and wide” and will bring scorn and derision.**



**You will be filled with drunkenness
and sorrow, The cup of horror and
desolation, The cup of your sister
Samaria.**

EZEKIEL 23:33



You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, The cup of horror and desolation, The cup of your sister Samaria. (Ek.23:33)

- **The concept of drinking a cup of judgment occurs throughout the Bible (Ps.75:8; Is.51:17-23; Je.25:15-19; 51:7; Hk.2:16; Rv.17:3-4; 18:6).**
- **The “contents” of the cup were the ruinous effects of sin — sorrow, ruin, and desolation — accumulated by the nation.**



**You shall drink and drain it, You
shall break its shards, And tear
at your own breasts; For I have
spoken,' Says the Lord GOD.**

EZEKIEL 23:34



You shall drink and drain it, You shall break its shards, And tear at your own breasts; For I have spoken,' Says the Lord GOD. (Ek.23:34)

- **The Lord also promised that Oholibah would indeed drink from the large cup of God's judgment from which Oholah had drunk.**
- **Drinking this cup would make her an object of scorn as well as drunk and sad.**
- **She would even madly gnaw the fragments of the earthenware cup or shatter it to pieces.**
- **She would also tear at her breasts, probably in remorse over how she had used them to seduce her lovers.**





Fourth Oracle

Against

Jerusalem

(Ezekiel 23:35)

**Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
'Because you have forgotten Me and
cast Me behind your back, Therefore
you shall bear the penalty Of your
lewdness and your harlotry.'**



EZEKIEL 23:35



Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because you have forgotten Me and cast Me behind your back, Therefore you shall bear the penalty Of your lewdness and your harlotry.' (Ek.23:35)

- **This fourth oracle presents the main reason Jerusalem was to be judged.**
- **She had forgotten God (Ek.22:12) and thrust Him behind her back.**
- **Jerusalem's illicit affairs with other nations came after she forgot her source of protection and openly rejected God.**
- **Because of this rejection, she must bear the consequences of her lewdness.**





Summary Judgment for Israel's Unfaithfulness

(Ezekiel 23:36-49)

The LORD also said to me: "Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominations.

EZEKIEL 23:36



The LORD also said to me: "Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominations. (Ek.23:36)

- **Ezekiel reviewed the sin and judgment of Samaria and Jerusalem.**
- **The history and judgment of both countries had been presented separately (Ek.23:1-35), but now they were combined for the sake of comparison.**



**For they have committed adultery,
and blood is on their hands. They
have committed adultery with their
idols, and even sacrificed their sons
whom they bore to Me, passing them
through the fire, to devour them.**

EZEKIEL 23:37



For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. They have committed adultery with their idols, and even sacrificed their sons whom they bore to Me, passing them through the fire, to devour them. (Ek.23:37)

- **The Lord called Ezekiel to pass judgment on Oholah and Oholibah (Ek.20:4; 22:2).**
- **She shed innocent blood in their unfaithfulness (Ex.20:13; Lv.18:21; 20:1-5).**
- **Their spiritual adultery consisted of idolatry, and their bloodshed was the practice of child sacrifice in connection with idolatry.**



**Moreover they have done this to
Me: They have defiled My
sanctuary on the same day and
profaned My Sabbaths.**

EZEKIEL 23:38



Moreover they have done this to Me: They have defiled My sanctuary on the same day and profaned My Sabbaths. (Ek.23:38)

- **The sins of both nations were idolatry (Ek.23:36-39) and foreign alliances (Ek.23:40-44), and their judgments were the same (Ek.23:45-49).**
- **They made the temple unclean (Ex.20:24-26) and treated the Sabbath as any other day of the week (Ex.20:8-11; Lv.19:3, 30).**



**For after they had slain their children
for their idols, on the same day they
came into My sanctuary to profane
it; and indeed thus they have done
in the midst of My house**

EZEKIEL 23:39



For after they had slain their children for their idols, on the same day they came into My sanctuary to profane it; and indeed thus they have done in the midst of My house (Ek.23:39)

- The apex of their spiritual adultery was child sacrifice.**
- Child sacrifice is one of the most detestable practices of the Canaanite religions, and had infiltrated both Israel and Judah.**
- The people were so hardened by sin that on the very day they sacrificed their children to their idols, they entered the temple with their children's blood on their hands and the smoky smell of burning flesh embedded in their clothes.**
- Their very presence profaned and desecrated the house of God!**



Furthermore you sent for men to come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and there they came. And you washed yourself for them, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with ornaments.

EZEKIEL 23:40



Furthermore you sent for men to come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and there they came. And you washed yourself for them, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with ornaments. (Ek.23:40)

- **Both countries enticed foreign nations into illicit alliances.**
- **Ezekiel painted a vivid picture of the sisters preparing themselves for lovers (i.e., enticing other nations to help them).**
- **The harlot sisters sent for men and when they arrived the girls bathed themselves for them, painted their eyes, and put on jewelry.**



**You sat on a stately couch, with
a table prepared before it, on
which you had set My incense
and My oil.**

EZEKIEL 23:41



**You sat on a stately couch, with a table prepared before it,
on which you had set My incense and My oil. (Ek.23:41)**

- **They had made themselves as attractive as possible, like a prostitute does for her lover.**
- **They used the things that they should have used only for the worship of Yahweh to entice her lovers (Arabians, Moabites, and Edomites).**
- **The whole atmosphere of the reception was like that of a drunken orgy.**



The sound of a carefree multitude was with her, and Sabeans were brought from the wilderness with men of the common sort, who put bracelets on their wrists and beautiful crowns on their heads.

EZEKIEL 23:42





The Sabeans

Sabeans raiders stole Job's oxen and donkeys, and struck down his servants. They only left one man to report the incident to Job (Jb.1:13-15)

Isaiah prophesied victory over three cultures: the Egyptians, Cushites, and the Sabeans (Is.45:14)



Sabean Bronze Plaque

The Queen of Sheba, or the Queen of the South, who traveled a long way to hear Solomon's wisdom, was likely a Sabean (1Ki.10:1-13).

The sound of a carefree multitude was with her, and Sabeans were brought from the wilderness with men of the common sort, who put bracelets on their wrists and beautiful crowns on their heads. (Ek.23:42)

- **The enticements of the two sisters drew a carefree crowd of Sabeans from the desert and men from the rabble.**
- **The word “Sabeans” may also be translated “drunkards.” Ezekiel may have chosen this word because of its double meaning.**
- **The wild nomadic Sabeans may have behaved like drunkards. Today we might say, drunken sailors.**



**Then I said concerning her who
had grown old in adulteries, 'Will
they commit harlotry with her now,
and she with them?'**

EZEKIEL 23:43



Then I said concerning her who had grown old in adulteries, 'Will they commit harlotry with her now, and she with them?' (Ek.23:43)

- **The reputation of the sisters was so well known that even the lower elements of society knew where to find them.**
- **The Lord marveled that the nations would find Samaria and Jerusalem attractive partners since they had proved to be such unsatisfying lovers for so long.**
- **There is hardly anyone more pathetic and disgusting than an old prostitute.**



**Yet they went in to her, as men go
in to a woman who plays the harlot;
thus they went in to Oholah and
Oholibah, the lewd women.**

EZEKIEL 23:44



Yet they went in to her, as men go in to a woman who plays the harlot; thus they went in to Oholah and Oholibah, the lewd women. (Ek.23:44)

- **The sisters were using their charms to gain others' favors, so God reduced them to the status of prostitutes (v.3).**
- **This appropriately pictures Israel and Judah turning to pagan nations for help and being molested by them.**



**But righteous men will judge them
after the manner of adulteresses,
and after the manner of women
who shed blood, because they
are adulteresses, and blood is on
their hands.**

EZEKIEL 23:45



But righteous men will judge them after the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of women who shed blood, because they are adulteresses, and blood is on their hands. (Ek.23:45)

- **God said that righteous men would sentence them to the punishment adulteresses deserved.**
- **Who were these “righteous men”?**
- **Certainly they were not the nations that ultimately destroyed the sisters, because those nations had previously committed adultery with them.**



But righteous men will judge them after the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of women who shed blood, because they are adulteresses, and blood is on their hands. (Ek.23:45)

- **Most likely the “righteous men” were the prophets of God raised up to denounce sin and pronounce judgment.**
- **They functioned like elders who decided the fate of someone accused of fornication (Du.22:13-21).**



**For thus says the Lord GOD:
'Bring up an assembly against
them, give them up to trouble
and plunder.**

EZEKIEL 23:46



For thus says the Lord GOD: 'Bring up an assembly against them, give them up to trouble and plunder. (Ek.23:46)

- **The Lord commanded a group of soldiers to attack these cities and to terrorize and plunder them.**
- **God was to use a foreign group to bring the unfaithful kingdoms into judgment and take them into exile.**



The assembly shall stone them with stones and execute them with their swords; they shall slay their sons and their daughters, and burn their houses with fire.

EZEKIEL 23:47



The assembly shall stone them with stones and execute them with their swords; they shall slay their sons and their daughters, and burn their houses with fire. (Ek.23:47)

- **The judgment for adultery was death (Lv.20:10), generally by stoning (Lv.20:27; Jn.8:3-5).**
- **The judgments for idolatry in a city were the sword and fire (Du.13:12-16).**
- **The assembly, a mocking way of referring to the foreign nations, would stone them and cut them down with swords, and flames and would engulf their houses.**



**Thus I will cause lewdness to
cease from the land, that all
women may be taught not to
practice your lewdness.**

EZEKIEL 23:48



Thus I will cause lewdness to cease from the land, that all women may be taught not to practice your lewdness. (Ek.23:48)

- **This is a prediction that God would cure His people of open idolatry by the captivity.**
- **Ezekiel uses “women” as a metaphor for all of God's people.**



**They shall repay you for your
lewdness, and you shall pay
for your idolatrous sins. Then
you shall know that I am the
Lord GOD.**

EZEKIEL 23:49



They shall repay you for your lewdness, and you shall pay for your idolatrous sins. Then you shall know that I am the Lord GOD. (Ek.23:49)

- **These judgments would be enacted against these “sisters.”**
- **These are the same judgments Ezekiel pronounced earlier (Ek.16:40-41).**
- **They would provide a warning to other nations.**



PARABLE OF TWO SISTERS

23b

EZEKIEL