



EZEKIEL: *Death and Resurrection*

A Bible Study with John Oswalt

EZEKIEL 21–22

Background: One of the primary ways leaders in the ancient world attempted to figure out the future was through “divination,” that is, magical means. Here the mention of “arrows...images...liver” (21:21) refers to three of these means. How arrows thrown into the air might fall, how images left out at night might look in the morning, or the shape of the liver of a sacrificial animal might look were all thought to be signs or “omens” of what should be done or what was going to happen. Verse 23 suggests that the omens were to go to Jerusalem and the people could not believe that because of Nebuchadnezzar’s covenant with them. But they had broken that covenant!

Nebuchadnezzar’s army, coming down the international highway from Damascus, could branch off to the left, and take the Kings’ Highway to Ammon, or could stay on the main highway and continue to Jerusalem.

1. Notice that the materials in chapter 21 are united by references to “the sword.” How many do you count?
2. How was Ezekiel to act as he pronounced these words? What does this tell us about the heart of God?
3. In verses 8–17 against whom is the sword primarily directed? Upon whom does Ezekiel place primary responsibility to the coming disaster? (Think about previous things Ezekiel has said. Notice also verses 25–27.)
4. What are verses 28–33 saying about the fate of Ammon?
5. What are the two sins for which Ezekiel is called upon to pronounce judgment on Jerusalem (22:1–5)? How might they be related (cf. 20:31)?

6. How do we sacrifice our children to our idols today?
7. List the sins described in verses 6–12. Do you see any pattern? What is the major emphasis?
8. What does the last statement in verse 12 tell us about the basis of ethical behavior?
9. Compare the picture of Jerusalem in verses 17–22 with that of 11:2–3. How are the two pictures similar and different?
10. What are the sins of each of the groups in verses 23–29 and what is the significance of the pairings?
11. Compare verse 30 with the account in Gen 18:24–33? What are your reflections?