



EZEKIEL: *Death and Resurrection*

A Bible Study with John Oswalt

EZEKIEL 23–24

Background: This is the conclusion of the prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem. The siege began on January 15, 588 BC, and concluded on July 18, 586 BC two and a half years later. That the city was able to endure this long is a testimony to its remarkable defensibility. We can also get some sense of how terrible conditions were in the city at the end of two and a half years. Notice that it took six months for the news of the fall to reach Ezekiel (January 8, 585, 33:21).

- Oholah is “her tent” and Oholibah is “my tent is in her.” That Judah is named the latter seems sadly ironic.
 - Possibly as early as the reign of Omri (885–874) Israel had entered into an alliance with the Assyrians. Ahaz (735–715) took Judah into a similar alliance. Then Jehoiakim made an alliance with Babylon (Chaldea) in 605.
 - Although Babylon is east of Judah, even southeast, any attack by them would come from Judah’s north (23:24) because the Arabian desert stood between them.
1. Notice when the prostitution of the two sisters began (23:3, 8, 19, 27). What do you make of this statement?
 2. Why do you think an alliance with another nation was pictured as prostitution? How is the metaphor appropriate?
 3. Thinking of punishment as being forced to drink a cup of vile-tasting, intoxicating liquor, think of Jesus’ prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. What is the connection?
 4. Look at 23:37–39. What are the people doing? What is the terrible contradiction in their behavior? How are we sacrificing our children to idols today?
 5. What had the false prophets and priests said of Jerusalem in 11:3–9? Now at the end of the section (chapter 23), what does Ezekiel say? What does the presence of the blood in the meat mean about the meat (see Leviticus 7:14)? What about the pot itself?

6. Notice the pronouns in 24:13–14. Who is destroying Jerusalem? What is the importance of that idea?
7. What is the significance of Ezekiel's actions when his wife dies? Why is it important that he does this? Why is Ezekiel struck dumb (verse 27)?
8. What are our idols today? Is our worship of them really such a bad thing?