



# EZEKIEL: *Death and Resurrection*

A Bible Study with John Oswalt

## EZEKIEL 6–7

Background: Worship centers were often found on mountaintops, perhaps because one was thought to be closer to the gods there. Thus, because of the principle of continuity, if some place was a consecrated worship center it was a mountain top, a “high place.”

An “abomination” (Heb. *to‘eba*, something abhorrent) is anything contrary to the order of nature. Ezekiel conveys this sense of abhorrence with his almost exclusive use (some 60 times, only 9 times elsewhere) of a particular term for “idol” appearing here first in Ezekiel 6:4. It is the word *gillulim*. It seems to come from a root meaning “round,” and almost certainly it refers to the round things left in the road after a herd of animals pass by. Probably the best English equivalent is the Anglo-Saxon “turd.” This is the more shocking in a usually literarily elegant writing.

“Know that I am Yahweh” appears some ten times between Exodus 7 and 14. There, it is the delivering power of Yahweh that produced that result.

1. What was Judah being judged for in chapter 5? Now what are they being judged for in chapters 6 and 7? Why that order, do you think?
2. How many times does some form of “abomination” appear in the two chapters? See the background above. Why should an idol be seen as an abomination?
3. Count the number of times that some version of “know that I am Yahweh [the Lord]” appears in these two chapters. What are the circumstances in each case that produce this knowledge? Why do you think it is repeated so many times? Note the background above. How might the people, with Jerusalem under threat, have been using the phrase? How does this apply to us?
4. Why is God so violently opposed to idol worship? Is it jealousy for his own prerogatives, concern for us, or what? What’s the problem? How does that translate into today?

5. Ezekiel 6:10 speaks of one of the purposes of predictive prophecy. What is it? (Look at Lev 26:30.)
6. The English “I will punish you according to your ways” (7:4, 9) translates a terser Hebrew, “I will put on you according to your ways.” A slangy translation might be, “I will give you what you’ve got coming to you.” How does this way of expressing the concept give a slightly different sense than the English? See also Ezekiel 7:27.
7. In many ways Ezekiel 7:10 is a good topic sentence for verses 10–22. What has budded, and what has it blossomed into? (Think about Aaron’s rod, Num. 17:3–10.) What are people depending on for their deliverance (cf. vv. 19–22)? How do these ideas capsule the human problem?