

Ezekiel 22 - Israel's Covenant Violations; Regathering of Israel for Judgement; Objects of God's Judgment

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Ezekiel 22

- (iii) Three messages against Jerusalem (22:1-31)
 - (a) Cause of judgment: Israel's covenant violations enumerated (22:1-16)

- 1 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
 - 1 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
 - 1 This message came to me from the LORD:
 - 1 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
 - A new revelation from God now comes to Ezekiel...

- 2 "And you, son of man, will you judge, will you judge the **bloody** city? Then inform her of all her abominations.
- 2 "And you, son of man, will you judge, will you judge the bloody city? Then cause her to know all her abominations.

2 "Now, Son of Man, will you truly judge that blood-stained city? Then make her aware of all of her detestable practices.

2 Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city? yea, thou shalt shew her all her abominations.

- "...bloody" - in v1-5 Ezekiel emphasized the theme of "blood." Ezekiel used this term more than any other prophet, 55x in Ezekiel and 8x in this chapter alone (Cf. v2,3,4,6,9,12,13,27)

— The repetition depicts Jerusalem as a city rife with violence and bloodshed ("bloody city")

— As the capital of Israel, Jerusalem's sins were especially noteworthy because what happened there eventually led to the destruction of Israel's larger society, which always followed its leaders

- In 20:4, the Lord instructed Ezekiel to expose the sins of the previous generations.

However in 22:2, the Lord demanded that the prophet make Jerusalem aware of all her abominations.

— This shift signifies that Ezekiel's generation must confront its own transgressions rather than merely focus on the guilt of previous generations. Thus, while in 20:4 the focus was on the sins of past generations, in 22:2 it becomes about the city's own present sins.

3 And you shall say, 'This is what the Lord GOD says: "A city shedding blood in her midst, so that her time is coming; and a city that makes idols, contrary to her *own good*, for defilement!

3 You shall say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "A city shedding blood in her midst, so that her time will come, and that makes idols, contrary to her *interest*, for defilement!

3 "You are to say, 'This is what the Lord GOD says: "The city keeps on shedding blood within her, hastening her time to be judged. She crafts idols that defile her.

3 Then say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD, The city sheddeth blood in the midst of it, that her time may come, and maketh idols against herself to defile herself.

- This verse exposes Jerusalem's two primary sins: violence (murder) and idolatry

4 You have become guilty by the blood which you have shed, and you have become defiled by your idols which you have made. So you have **brought your days closer and have come to your years**; therefore I have made you a disgrace to the nations, and an object of mocking to all the lands.

4 You have become guilty by the blood which you have shed, and defiled by your idols which you have made. Thus you have brought your day near and have come to your years; therefore I have made you a reproach to the nations and a mocking to all the lands.

4 ""You're guilty because of the blood that you've shed. You were defiled by the idols that you've made. You've caused your judgment day to draw near and have even come to the end of your life. Therefore, I've made you an object of derision among the nations and to other lands.

4 Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast shed; and hast defiled thyself in thine idols which thou hast made; and thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come even unto thy years: therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the heathen, and a mocking to all countries.

- "...brought your days closer and have come to your years" - these two primary transgressions (murder and idolatry) have moved up the timetable for judgment, which was now unavoidable

- Because of God's judgment for Israel's sins, all nations would scorn Jerusalem. Because of their murder and idolatry, God ordained the city to become a source of reproach and mockery.

5 Those who are near and those who are far from you will make fun of you, **you of ill repute, full of turmoil.**

5 Those who are near and those who are far from you will mock you, you of ill repute, full of turmoil.

5 Those who are both near and far away from you will scoff at you, because your reputation will be infamous and full of turmoil.

5 Those that be near, and those that be far from thee, shall mock thee, which art infamous and much vexed.

- The extent of the shame of Jerusalem would be vast, with both nearby and distant nations joining in deriding Jerusalem

- "...you of ill repute, full of turmoil" - shows God's disappointment with Jerusalem's failure to achieve exaltation among the nations, which was His original goal (Cf. Deut 26:19; Jer 13:11; 33:9)

— Through murder and idolatry, Jerusalem had defiled the very person and character of god, especially His holiness. Thus, the time for her judgment had arrived.

6 "Behold, **the rulers of Israel, each according to his power**, have been among you for the purpose of shedding blood.

6 "Behold, the rulers of Israel, each according to his power, have been in you for the purpose of shedding blood.

6 ""Watch out! Each of the princes of Israel has misused his authority to shed blood.

6 Behold, the princes of Israel, every one were in thee to their power to shed blood.

- "...the rulers of Israel" - v6-12 lists the sins of Israel; the focus of this passage is almost entirely on the leadership of Israel.
 - This emphasizes the theme repeated throughout the OT prophets and continues into the NT: that Israel's leadership is guilty of leading the nation away from God (Cf. Matt 23:1-36).
 - The leadership of Israel bore responsibility for both the bloodshed and the idolatry that necessitated God's judgment. From Ezekiel's perspective, the recent kings leading the nation astray were:
 - Manasseh (2 Kings 21:1-18; 2 Chr 32:33—33:20)
 - Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:31-33; 2 Chr 36:1-3)
 - Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:36—24:7; 2 Chr 36:4-5)
 - Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:8-9; 2 Chr 36:9)
 - Zedekiah (2 Kings 24:17-20; 25:1-7; 2 Chr 36:11-16)
 - All these kings did evil in the eyes of the Lord
- "...each according to his power" - each of these kings abused their authority to engage in murder and idolatry

7 They have **treated father and mother with contempt** among you. They have **oppressed the stranger in your midst**; they have **oppressed the orphan and the widow among you**.

7 They have treated father and mother lightly within you. The alien they have oppressed in your midst; the fatherless and the widow they have wronged in you.

7 They've treated mothers and fathers among you with contempt. They've oppressed the foreigner among you. They've maltreated the orphan and the widow among you.

7 In thee have they set light by father and mother: in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger: in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow.

- Verses 7-8 list five specific sins that the population of Jerusalem committed on a regular basis:

- "...treated father and mother with contempt" - dishonored their parents, in violation of Ex 20:12; 21:17; Lev 19:3; 20:9; Deut 27:16
- "...oppressed the stranger in your midst" - the stranger passing through or the alien resident became victims of oppression, in violation of Ex 22:21; 23:9; Lev 19:33; Deut 24:17; 27:19
- "...oppressed the orphan and the widow among you" - in violation of Ex 22:22-24; Deut 24:17; 27:19

8 You have **despised My holy things** and **profaned My Sabbaths**.

8 You have despised My holy things and profaned My sabbaths.

8 ""You have despised my sacred things and profaned my Sabbaths.

8 Thou hast despised mine holy things, and hast profaned my sabbaths.

- "...despised My holy things" - a reference to objects dedicated to temple service, in violation of the entire book of Leviticus, which distinguishes between the sacred and the profane
- "...profaned My Sabbaths" - violating Ex 20:8

9 Slanderous men have been among you for the purpose of shedding blood, and among you they have **eaten at the mountain shrines**. In your midst they have **committed outrageous sin**.

9 Slanderous men have been in you for the purpose of shedding blood, and in you they have eaten at the mountain *shrines*. In your midst they have committed acts of lewdness.

9 Slanderous men live among you, intent on shedding blood. They've eaten at the top of mountain shrines. They've crafted plans to do evil things among you.

9 In thee are men that carry tales to shed blood: and in thee they eat upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they commit lewdness.

- The focus now shifts away from Israel's leaders to the general public who followed them (v9-12). The people who followed in the same acts as Israel's leaders were guilty of their own list of sins:

- "...eaten at the mountain *shrines*" - participated in idolatrous feasts, which included immoral sexual acts, in violation of Deut 12:1-3; 16:21-22
- "...committed outrageous sin" - or "committed acts of lewdness" meaning they engaged in sexual impurities, in violation of Lev 18; 20

10 Among you they have **uncovered their fathers' nakedness**; among you they have **abused her who was unclean in her menstruation**.

10 In you they have uncovered *their* fathers' nakedness; in you they have humbled her who was unclean in her menstrual impurity.

10 They've revealed the nakedness of their father in your midst. They've humiliated those among you who were unclean due to their impurity.

10 In thee have they discovered their fathers' nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was set apart for pollution.

- "...uncovered *their* fathers' nakedness" - refers to incest, in violation of Lev 18:7-9,11-13,27
- "...abused her who was unclean in her menstruation" - sexual intercourse during menstruation, in violation of Lev 18:19; 20:18

11 And one has **committed abomination with his neighbor's wife**, another has **outrageously defiled his daughter-in-law**, and another among you has **sexually abused**

his sister, his father's daughter.

11 One has committed abomination with his neighbor's wife and another has lewdly defiled his daughter-in-law. And another in you has humbled his sister, his father's daughter.

11 One of you commits detestable practices with his neighbor's wife. Another sexually defiles his daughter-in-law. Another humiliates his sister, his own father's daughter.

11 And one hath committed abomination with his neighbour's wife; and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter in law; and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father's daughter.

- "...committed abomination with his neighbor's wife" - adultery, in violation of Lev 18:20; 20:10
- "...outrageously defiled his daughter-in-law" - another form of incest, in violation of Lev 18:15; 20:12
- "...sexually abused his sister, his father's daughter" - another form of incest, in violation of Lev 18:9; 20:17

12 Among you they have **taken bribes to shed blood**; you have **taken interest**, you have **injured your neighbors by oppression**, and **you have forgotten Me**," declares the Lord GOD.

12 In you they have taken bribes to shed blood; you have taken interest and profits, and you have injured your neighbors for gain by oppression, and you have forgotten Me," declares the Lord GOD.

12 They take bribes among you to shed blood. You've taken usury and exacted interest. You've gained control over your neighbor through extortion. And you've forgotten me," declares the Lord GOD.

12 In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD.

- "...taken bribes to shed blood" - contract killing, in violation of Ex 23:8; Deut 27:25
- "...taken interest" - the Law allowed Jewish people to loan money to Gentiles and collect interest, but they were not allowed to collect interest from loans to fellow Jews (Lev 25:36; Deut 23:19-20; 24:10-12)
- "...injured your neighbors by oppression" - they failed to love their neighbor as themselves, in violation of Lev 19:18
- "...you have forgotten Me" - they had forgotten God, which violated the first commandment (Ex 20:2-3; Deut 5:7)

13 "Behold, then, I strike with My hand your profit which you have made and the bloodshed which is among you.

13 "Behold, then, I smite My hand at your dishonest gain which you have acquired and at the bloodshed which is among you.

13 "Watch out! I'm vehemently angry about the unjust gains that you've earned, and about the blood that has been shed among you.

13 Behold, therefore I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee.

- Because of these sins (dishonest gain and the shedding of innocent blood), judgment was unavoidable. Judgment came in two ways: by dispersion (v13-16) and by the "smelting furnace" (v17-22)

14 Can your heart endure, or can your hands be strong for the days that I will deal with you? I, the LORD, have spoken and will act.

14 Can your heart endure, or can your hands be strong in the days that I will deal with you? I, the LORD, have spoken and will act.

14 Can your heart stand up to this? Can your hands remain strong when I deal with you? I, the LORD, have spoken and will fulfill this.

14 Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the LORD have spoken it, and will do it.

- Two rhetorical questions, each with an emphatic answer of No

- In the days that God would execute judgment upon His people, no one would be able to withstand it

15 And I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you among the lands, and **I will eliminate your uncleanness from you.**

15 I will scatter you among the nations and I will disperse you through the lands, and I will consume your uncleanness from you.

15 I'm going to disperse you among the nations and scatter you to other lands. I'm going to put an end to your uncleanness.

15 And I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, and will consume thy filthiness out of thee.

- Because Israel's inhabitants remained unrepentant, they were condemned to worldwide dispersion

— This statement far exceeds what happened under the Babylonian Captivity, when the Jewish people remained together as a nation, just in Babylon and not Israel

- "...I will eliminate your uncleanness from you" - God's intention through this worldwide dispersion of the Jews was to completely remove His people's sinfulness

— "eliminate" - *tamam*, "to be complete" or "to be finished." The Babylonian Captivity failed to achieve this goal of sinlessness.

16 Then you will defile yourself in the sight of the nations, and you will know that I am the LORD."'"

16 You will profane yourself in the sight of the nations, and you will know that I am the LORD."'"

16 When you've been defiled in the sight of the nations, then you'll know that I am the LORD."'"

16 And thou shalt take thine inheritance in thyself in the sight of the heathen, and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.

- As a consequence of this worldwide dispersion, Israel would be profaned (defiled) among the nations. This condition would persist until the Jewish people came to recognize their God.

The Regathering of Israel

See (2) **The Re-Establishment of Israel** in [Pre-Tribulational Events](#).

(b) Means of judgment: the smelting furnace (22:17-22)

17 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

17 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

17 This message came to me from the LORD:

17 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

- The Lord once again came to Ezekiel with a new revelation, this time using the image of Jerusalem as a smelting furnace or a "furnace of affliction" (Cf. Is 48:10)

— The metaphor of a furnace is used throughout the OT, reflecting Israel's need for refinement. Many OT passages confirm that Israel's purging would be achieved through a fiery judgment (Cf. Is 1:22,25; 48:10; Jer 6:27-30; 9:7; Zech 13:9; Mal 3:2-3).

18 "Son of man, the house of Israel has become waste metal to Me; all of them are bronze, tin, iron, and lead in the smelting furnace; they are the waste metal of silver.

18 "Son of man, the house of Israel has become dross to Me; all of them are bronze and tin and iron and lead in the furnace; they are the dross of silver.

18 "Son of Man, Israel has become like dross to me. All of them are like remnants of bronze, tin, iron, and lead in a furnace—the dross left over from smelting silver.

18 Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver.

- The Lord now explains why Israel needed to be purified. His treasured possession (Cf. Deut 7:6) had become like dross ("waste metal") to Him.

- "...waste metal" - can refer to the base metal itself before smelting (Cf. Is 1:22,25), but here it refers to the impurities that separate from silver during the melting process. Only

fire can remove these impurities.

— To achieve the highest grade of purification, the entire block of metal has to be placed in the midst of the furnace

19 Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD says: 'Because all of you have become waste metal, therefore, behold, **I am going to gather you** into the midst of Jerusalem.

19 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because all of you have become dross, therefore, behold, I am going to gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.

19 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says, 'Because all of you have become dross, watch out! I'm going to gather all of you at the center of Jerusalem,

19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.

- Jerusalem would become the furnace, thus the regathering for judgment (v15-16) would include the city

— This verse presupposes the re-establishment of the Jewish state—perhaps not entirely, but undoubtedly including Jerusalem—prior to the start of this judgment (the Tribulation period)

- "...I am going to gather you" - the first regathering, in unbelief and in preparation for judgment. This regathering may not be complete (it isn't), but will definitely include Jerusalem.

— This regathering follows the dispersion described in v15-16, and is intended for the specific judgment of the Tribulation

20 As they gather silver, bronze, iron, lead, and tin into the smelting furnace to blow fire on it in order to melt *it*, so I will gather *you* in My anger and in My wrath, and I will place you *there* and melt you.

20 As they gather silver and bronze and iron and lead and tin into the furnace to blow fire on it in order to melt *it*, so I will gather *you* in My anger and in My wrath and I will lay you *there* and melt you.

20 just like a smelter gathers all the silver, bronze, lead, and tin to the center of a furnace and injects fire in order to melt it, I'm going to gather you in my anger and rage, make you settle down—and then I'm going to melt you down.

20 As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you.

- The process of the "melting" of Israel will begin as soon as the process has reached a certain point

- Ezekiel uses a simile to compare the regathering of Israel to the gathering of impure metals—brass, iron, lead, and tin—for the purpose of subjecting them to intense heat
- This comparison illustrates the reason for Israel's regathering, and God's words support it: So will I gather you in mine anger and in my wrath (Cf. 20:33-34). The regathering of the Jewish people is both a consequence of wrath and a precursor to further judgment, serving as a means of judgment in preparation for additional judgment.

21 And I will gather you and blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and you will be melted in the midst of it.

21 I will gather you and blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and you will be melted in the midst of it.

21 Indeed, I'm going to gather you together and exhale the fire of my fury, and then you'll be melted from the inside out

21 Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof.

- "...I will gather you and blow on you" - God will personally ensure that His people will suffer the fiery wrath of God during this period

- "...My wrath" - the Great Tribulation

- Israel's purification from sin would result from God's anger

- "...in the midst of it" - refers to what will happen in Jerusalem

— It is important to remember that Ezek 20 and 22 speak of two distinct gatherings for Tribulation judgments: one in the wilderness and another in Jerusalem.

— Ezek 20 focuses on the group of Jews in the wilderness; Ezek 22 deals with the group in Jerusalem

— Zechariah 12:7 also mentions these two groups, discussing the Jews in Jerusalem and the "tents of Judah" outside the land in the context of the Campaign of Armageddon

22 As silver is melted in the furnace, so you will be melted in the midst of it; and you will know that I, the LORD, have poured out My wrath on you."

22 As silver is melted in the furnace, so you will be melted in the midst of it; and you will know that I, the LORD, have poured out My wrath on you."

22 like melting silver at the center of a furnace. When you've been melted from the center out, then you'll know that I am the LORD. I'll pour out my anger on you!"

22 As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my fury upon you.

- "...you will be melted" - the purpose of this "melting" is not destruction, but purification. At the completion of this judgment, God's people will know that God's wrath has been poured out on them, leading to the salvation of those who have been purged.

— The same point is made in Zech 13:8-9, which states that in this purification process, two-thirds of the Jews alive at the time will die while one-third will be refined and left clean

(c) Objects of the judgment (22:23-31)

This passage returns the focus to the reasons behind the coming judgment of Jerusalem. It addresses the corruption across all levels of Jewish society, but the emphasis is predominantly on the leadership class.

(1) Princes (22:23-25)

23 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

23 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

23 This message came to me from the LORD:

23 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

- Another revelation from God to Ezekiel, offering another explanation for the severity with which God was going to punish His people

24 "Son of man, say to her, 'You are a land that is not clean or rained on in **the day of indignation**.'

24 "Son of man, say to her, 'You are a land that is not cleansed or rained on in the day of indignation.'

24 "Son of Man, tell her, 'You're a land that hasn't been purified, one that hasn't been rained on in the day of indignation.'

24 Son of man, say unto her, Thou art the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation.

- God described the condition of Israel at the time: not cleansed (unclean). Due to this impurity before God, they would be severely punished.

- "...the day of indignation" - the future Tribulation period. The primary designation in the OT for the Tribulation is "the Day of the Lord" but the OT also refers to this period as "the indignation" (Cf. Is 26:20; Dan 11:36)

25 There is a conspiracy of her **prophets** in her midst like a roaring lion tearing the prey. **They have devoured lives; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows** in the midst of her.

25 There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured lives; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in the midst of her.

25 There's a conspiracy of prophets within her, and like a roaring lion tearing its prey, they've devoured people, and confiscated treasures, and taken precious things. They've

added to the population of widows within her.

25 There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof.

- Verses 25-28 highlight three groups of people responsible for the nation's impurity: prophets (v25), priests (v26), and princes (v27)

- "...prophets" - these were impostors who conspired to deliver false prophecies

- "...They have devoured lives" - their deceitful religious appearance misled the common people

- "...they have taken treasure and precious things" - their actions were driven by greed. The degree of comfort in their prophecies was determined by the amount of "treasure and precious things" given to them in payment.

- "...they have made many widows" - those who did not recognize them as prophets faced severe consequences as these impostors turned their wives into widows

(2) Priests (22:26)

26 Her **priests have done violence to My Law** and have **profaned My holy things**; they have made **no distinction between the holy and the common**, and they have **not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean**; and **they have closed their eyes from My Sabbaths**, and I am defiled among them.

26 Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane, and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they hide their eyes from My sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

26 Her priests have violated my Law and profaned my sacred things. They didn't differentiate between what's sacred and what's common. They didn't instruct others to discern clean from unclean things. They refused to keep my Sabbaths. "I'm constantly being profaned among them.

26 Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

- "...priests have done violence to My Law" - meant to be teachers of God's commandments, the priests instead led the nation in breaking them.

- "...profaned My holy things" - they were supposed to care for God's holy things, but instead profaned them

- "...no distinction between the holy and the common" - they failed to distinguish between the holy and the common, which Lev 10:10 obliged them to perform.

- "...not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean" - they also did not teach the people the difference between the clean and the unclean, which was also their responsibility (Cf. Lev 10:11)
- "...they have closed their eyes from My Sabbaths" - those expected to take the lead in observing God's sabbaths were instead taking the lead in profaning them

(3) Officials (22:27)

- 27 Her leaders within her are like wolves tearing the prey, by shedding blood *and* destroying lives in order to make dishonest profit.
- 27 Her princes within her are like wolves tearing the prey, by shedding blood *and* destroying lives in order to get dishonest gain.
- 27 Her princes within her are like wolves tearing their prey apart. They shed blood, destroying souls, and make unjust gain.
- 27 Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.
- The nation's leadership (princes) actively shed blood and destroyed souls to obtain dishonest gain. They were exploiting their own people to enrich themselves.

(4) Prophets (22:28)

- 28 And her prophets have coated with whitewash for them, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, 'This is what the Lord GOD says,' when the LORD has not spoken.
- 28 Her prophets have smeared whitewash for them, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' when the LORD has not spoken.
- 28 "Her prophets whitewashed all of these things through false visions and lying divinations. They kept on saying, "This is what the Lord GOD says...", when the LORD has not spoken.
- 28 And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken.
- This verse returns to the discussion of the false prophets (Cf. v25)
- Ezekiel had accused them of offering false promises of peace amid turmoil (Cf. 13:10-11,14-15), but now he expands the charges using the figure of untempered mortar again.
- This metaphor refers to a whitewash covering over a wall built haphazardly with stones piled on top of each other. Such a wall might keep animals out, but it is useless as a defense against an army because it is without strength.
- The "whitewash" was the false visions and divining lies spoken by these false prophets. They used the correct prophetic formula, "Thus says the Lord," but God had not revealed anything to them.

— The point of this verse is that the false prophets were guilty of lying and giving false hope to their people, when in reality God was ready to judge them severely

(5) People (22:29-31)

29 The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery, and they have oppressed the poor and needy, and have oppressed the stranger without justice.

29 The people of the land have practiced oppression and committed robbery, and they have wronged the poor and needy and have oppressed the sojourner without justice.

29 The people of the land were vigorously oppressive and took possession of plunder by violence. They've afflicted the poor and the needy and unjustly treated the foreigner.

29 The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.

- Every accusation above was directed at the leadership class within Israel. Unfortunately the general public tended to follow the direction set by the leadership.

— The leadership engaged in oppression and committed robbery, so the people did as well. The leadership took advantage of the poor and wrongfully oppressed the foreigner, so the people did as well.

— The point of this verse is to show that the people disobeyed the Mosaic Law just as much as their leadership did

30 I searched for a man among them who would build up a wall and **stand in the gap** before Me for the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found no one.

30 I searched for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found no one.

30 I sought for a man among them to build the wall and stand in the breach in my presence on behalf of the land so that it won't be destroyed, but I found no one,

30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

- "...stand in the gap" - a great picture of what Jesus Christ would eventually do for us...stand in the gap of sin that separates us from a holy God

— However in Israel at that time, God looked for someone, anyone, who could do this, and He couldn't find a single person. Thus, judgment was inevitable.

31 **So** I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; I have brought their way upon their heads," declares the Lord GOD.

31 Thus I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; their way I have brought upon their heads," declares the Lord GOD.

31 so I poured my indignation over them. With my fierce anger, I've consumed them. I brought the consequences of their behavior upon them,' declares the Lord GOD."

31 Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD.

- "So" - therefore. Because of the actions described in v25-30, God will pour out His indignation upon Israel.

- "...I have poured...I have consumed...I have brought" - notice the past tense of these verbs, all of which will happen in the prophetic future during the Tribulation period

— Often in Scripture, God will speak of a future event in the past tense (prophetic past tense). He does this to convey the fact that in God's mind, even though the events have not happened yet, they are so sure to happen that it's like they have already taken place.