

45). November 2-8—Ezekiel

1) Ezk 5:5–6,16—Female Imagery for Jerusalem ~ (593-571)

Ezekiel personifies Jerusalem as a woman who has “changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations” (Ezk 5:6), emphasizing her guilt from abandoning her responsibility as the Lord’s chosen city “in the midst of the nations” (Ezk 5:5). Jerusalem was set apart as the Lord’s holy city, yet she proves more rebellious than the pagan nations surrounding her. Her rejection of divine statutes brings the “evil arrows of famine” (Ezk 5:16) as a covenant curse (compare Deu 28:52-57), breaking her “staff of bread” (Ezk 5:16) and leaving her defenseless. The feminine imagery throughout Ezekiel’s prophecies portrays Jerusalem not merely as a geographic location but as a bride who has betrayed her divine husband, making her judgment both corporate and deeply personal. This pattern of personifying covenant cities as women appears throughout prophetic literature, allowing prophets to express both intimate relationships and devastating betrayal by the offspring of God’s chosen or covenant people.

2) Ezk 8:14—Women Weeping for Tammuz ~ (593-571)

Ezekiel witnesses women sitting at the north gate of the Lord’s temple, weeping for Tammuz, a Mesopotamian fertility god associated with vegetation cycles who allegedly died and descended to the underworld each year. These women participate in pagan mourning rituals within the very temple courts dedicated to Jehovah, demonstrating how deeply idolatry has penetrated Jerusalem’s worship. The placement of this abomination at the temple’s north gate—the direction associated with divine judgment and enemy invasion (Jer 1:14-15)—symbolically foreshadows the Babylonian destruction coming from the north. This syncretistic worship, blending Canaanite fertility religion with temple rituals, represents one of the “greater abominations” (Ezk 8:13) that provokes the Lord’s judgment and eventual departure of His glory from the temple (Ezk 10:18-19).

3) Ezk 9:6—Women and Girls to be Killed ~ (593-571)

The Lord commands divine executioners to kill everyone in Jerusalem without mercy—“old and young, both maids, and little children, and women”—sparing only those marked on their foreheads who had mourned over the city’s abominations (Ezk 9:4). The inclusion of maids and women among the slain emphasizes that judgment falls upon all who participated in or tolerated idolatry, regardless of age or gender. The slaughter begins “at my sanctuary” with the elders, demonstrating that those closest to the Lord bear the greatest responsibility for covenant breaking. This vision of comprehensive destruction, where even children and young women face death, reveals the severity of corporate judgment when a covenant people wholly reject the Lord and defile His sacred temple.

4) Ezk 13:17-23—False Prophetesses ~ (593-571)

During the sixth century BC, Ezekiel repeatedly lambasted false prophets—both male and female (e.g., Ezk 13:17-23;). In Chaldea, some deceptive females from the Israelite captives prophesied “out of their own imagination” (Ezk 13:17, BSB). They pretended to speak for God either because they were deceived or they deliberately prostituted a prophet’s position for money. As soothsayers, they counterfeited the Lord’s order with séances, divinations, and magic.

The KJV of Ezekiel 13:18 is confusing: “Woe to the women that sew pillows to all armholes.” Perhaps these fraudulent prophetesses lounged on pillows or bolsters, which was the practice in the ancient world. But other translations clarify that the women sewed magic charms onto bands that they wore on their wrists, finger joints, elbows, or sleeves (NIV, YLT, NKJV, NASB). The Hebrew word “*keseth*/ a cushion or pillows/covering a seat or bed/magic bands” is used only here across the entire Bible, so we do not have other examples to compare (Ezk 13:18, 20).

Ezekiel excoriated these false prophetesses: “Will ye hunt the souls of my people . . . will ye pollute me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to my people that hear your lies?” (Ezk 13:18-19). Even though they had become servants of the devil, God held these wayward women responsible for undermining His prophets. They were liable for their delusions as they initially had the light of Christ to judge between right and wrong (Moro 7:18-19). These deceptive women instigated significant spiritual damage for a mere handful of food. God prophesied against them and promised: “I will deliver my people out of your hand: and ye shall know that I am the LORD” (Ezk 13:23).

The presence of prophetesses across the OT included four prophetesses of Jehovah: Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, and Isaiah’s wife as (Ex 15:20; Jdg 4:4; 2 Kgs 22:14; Isa 8:3). Six centuries later in the NT, we again find references to righteous prophetesses (i.e., Anna in Lk 2:36, Philip’s four daughters in Act 21:9, and Corinthian women who prayed and prophesied during ordinances in 1 Cor 11:5). The prophetesses among the Corinthian saints veiled their heads as a sign of their power and authority to join in their ordinances (1 Cor 11:2, 10).

Interestingly, the false prophetesses also used veils or handkerchiefs over their heads as a counterfeit to ensnare God’s people. The adversary, who works to usurp God’s authority, had the clairvoyant women in Ezekiel’s time also use veils to counterfeit God’s order and seduce the less discerning (Ezk 13:18). Ezekiel had described his own divine call as a precedent to how God works (Ezk 2-3). The OT has other false prophetesses or sorcerers, including King Saul’s female medium who he asked to tell him the future instead of repenting and asking a prophet of God (1 Sam 28). (*See *Ex 22:18; *1 Sam 28:7-25; *Anna; *Deborah [2]; *Huldah; *Miriam*)

5) Ezk 14:16–23; 23:4, 10, 25, 47; 24:21, 25—**Daughters** ~(593-571)

Throughout Ezekiel’s prophecies, daughters represent both the tragic victims of divine judgment and the stubborn continuation of covenant breaking across generations. When the Lord declares that even the righteousness of Noah, Daniel, and Job could not deliver “son nor daughter” from His four sore judgments—“the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence” (Ezk 14:20-21)—He emphasizes that corporate sin brings corporate consequences that even the most righteous cannot prevent. Individual righteousness saves only individual souls; parents cannot shield their children from the judgment their generation has earned through idolatry and covenant rebellion.

The allegorical sisters Aholah (Samaria) and Aholibah (Jerusalem) “were mine, and they bare sons and daughters” (Ezk 23:4), representing the Lord’s covenant relationship with Israel and Judah. Yet their spiritual adultery results in enemies discovering their nakedness, taking “her sons and her daughters, and slew her with the sword” (Ezk 23:10). The graphic imagery of conquering armies dealing “furiously” with Jerusalem, taking away noses and ears, seizing sons and daughters, and devouring the remnant by fire (Ezk 23:25) depicts the complete destruction of family structures and generational continuity. The invaders would “stone them with stones, and dispatch them with their swords; they shall slay their sons and their daughters, and burn up their houses with fire” (Ezk 23:47), leaving no possibility of rebuilding the covenant community through natural succession.

Most poignantly, the Lord tells Ezekiel that when He profanes His sanctuary, “the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth,” their “sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword” (Ezk 24:21). He takes away “their strength, the joy of their glory” and simultaneously, “their sons and their daughters” (Ezk 24:25). The temple and the children represent parallel losses. The link between the temple’s destruction and the loss of children is understood in breaking God’s covenant of eternal families. God’s covenant people lose both their sacred center and their future generations when they abandon the Lord. Their wickedness destroys their present worship and future hope.

Within these severe prophecies appears a remnant promise: “therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters” (Ezk 14:22). These surviving children, brought forth from the destruction, become living testimonies to God’s justice. When the exiles see the survivors’ “ways and their doings,” they will understand “that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezk 14:23). The daughters and sons serve as witnesses—both to the necessity of judgment and to the Lord’s covenant mercy that preserves a remnant even in righteousness’s absence. This pattern foreshadows the greater gathering of scattered Israel in the last days, when the Lord will again gather His sons and daughters from among all nations (1 Ne 22:3-12).

6) Ezk 16:20—**Daughters Sacrificed** ~(593-571)

Jerusalem sacrificed her daughters and sons—children “borne unto me,” belonging to the Lord through covenant—to pagan gods, likely through fire in the valley of Hinnom (compare 2 Kgs 23:10). This ultimate perversion of covenant relationship transforms what should have been holy offspring raised to serve Jehovah into burnt offerings for Molech and Baal, making child sacrifice the Lord’s primary indictment against Judah’s spiritual adultery. (*See *Deu 12:31; *Jer 7:31*)

7) Ezk 16:41; 23:48—**Women as Literal and Figurative Harlots** ~(593-571)

The Lord executes judgment upon Jerusalem “in the sight of many women” as a warning to all female observers not to follow her example of spiritual adultery and lewdness (Ezk 16:41). Jerusalem’s public humiliation—having her houses burned and her harlotry exposed before watching women—serves as an object lesson “that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness” (Ezk 23:48), demonstrating that covenant breaking brings inevitable and visible consequences as a warning to future generations. (*See *Pro 6:26*)

8) Ezk 16:46–61—**Sister Samaria, Sister Sodom, and their Daughters** (Fictional) ~ (593-571)

Ezekiel shockingly portrays Jerusalem as having two sisters: Samaria (the elder) and Sodom (the younger), each with their own daughters representing surrounding cities and populations. Jerusalem's sin surpasses even Sodom's wickedness, making the destroyed city appear "more righteous" by comparison (Ezk 16:52). The Lord identifies Sodom's core iniquity as "pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness" combined with failure to help "the poor and needy" (Ezk 16:49). These include sins of prosperity and neglect in addition to sexual immorality. Jerusalem commits abominations so extreme that she actually justifies her sisters' behavior, bearing her "own shame for thy sins . . . more abominable than they" (Ezk 16:52).

Yet this genealogy of shame transforms into a promise of restoration. The Prophet Ezekiel often looked to the future when the Lord would restore the captivity of "Sodom and her daughters, and . . . Samaria and her daughters" along with Jerusalem (Ezk 16:53), reuniting the sisterhood in redemption rather than judgment. When Jerusalem receives her sisters as daughters "but not by thy covenant" (Ezk 16:61), the Lord establishes "an everlasting covenant" (Ezk 16:60) that supersedes the broken Mosaic covenant. This remarkable prophecy envisions even Sodom's restoration, suggesting God's redemptive reach extends beyond Israel to include Gentile cities previously destroyed for wickedness. Jerusalem will "be confounded" yet experience God's peace "for all that thou hast done" (Ezk 16:63), receiving both humiliation and divine forgiveness simultaneously. The sister-daughter imagery emphasizes that covenant restoration includes not only Israel's scattered tribes but also those thought permanently lost to judgment.

9) Ezk 18:6, 11, 15; 22:11; 33:26—**Illicit Sexual Partners: Neighbor's Wife, Daughter-in-Law, and Sister** ~ (593-571)

Ezekiel repeatedly condemns sexual violations that break both covenant law and family bonds, listing adultery with a "neighbour's wife" alongside idolatry and oppression of the poor as defining sins that disqualify righteousness (Ezk 18:6, 11, 15). The prophet catalogs Jerusalem's sexual depravity: men committing "abomination with his neighbour's wife," lewdly defiling a "daughter in law," and humbling a "sister, his father's daughter" (Ezk 22:11). These violations desecrate the most fundamental social structures—marriage, extended family relationships, and blood kinship. Jerusalem's broken covenant extended from the temple to the bedroom.

The progression from neighbor's wife to daughter-in-law to sister demonstrates escalating moral collapse, moving from adultery to incest within increasingly intimate family circles. Mosaic law explicitly forbade sexual relations with a daughter-in-law under penalty of death (Lev 18:15; 20:12) and prohibited uncovering a sister's nakedness (Lev 18:9; 20:17). These crimes against family members compound the guilt beyond simple adultery, violating kinship bonds that should inspire protective love rather than predatory lust.

The Lord's rhetorical question, "You have relied on your swords, you have committed detestable acts, and each of you has defiled his neighbor's wife. Should you then possess the land?" (Ezk 33:26, BSB). Israel's sexual immorality directly threatens their inheritance. A people who cannot honor marriage covenants and family relationships cannot maintain their land covenant with God. The defilement of neighbors' wives, daughters-in-law, and sisters represents the complete breakdown of the covenant community, where those who should protect women instead exploit them, making divine judgment inevitable. (*See *Lev 18:6-18*)

10) Ezk 18:6; 22:10; 36:17—**Menstruating Women** (Fictional) ~ (593-571)

Ezekiel used menstrual uncleanness under the Mosaic Law as a powerful metaphor for Israel's spiritual corruption during the Babylonian exile. The prophet condemned those who violated God's laws against illicit sexual relations by comparing them to the Mosaic definition of avoiding intimacy when a woman had her period (Ezk 18:6; 22:10). He compared Israel's entire lifestyle to menstrual impurity (Ezk 36:17). These references reflect Levitical law (Lev 15:19-24; 18:19; 20:18) that required separation during menstruation. Ezekiel's repeated use of this imagery emphasized that Israel's idolatry, violence, and covenant breaking had rendered the nation as ceremonially unclean as menstrual blood, requiring divine cleansing and restoration before they could return to God's presence.

11) Ezk 19—**Mother of Judah's Princes** ~ (593-571)

Ezekiel portrayed the queen mother as a "lioness among the lions" who raised her royal sons in a competitive and desperate kingdom (Ezk 19:2, BSB). With Judah referenced as a "lion's whelp" in Genesis 49:9, the imagery of a lioness ruling in the Davidic lineage was appropriate. However, she lost her influence as a major player in political decisions as she and her sons fell to foreign powers.

This queen mother refers either to Hamutal or Nehushta (2 Kgs 23:31, 36; 24:8, 18). The first cub represents King Jehoahaz, who reigned only three months before Pharaoh Neco carried him captive to Egypt in 609 BC (2 Kgs 23:31-34). The second cub represents King Jehoiachin (or possibly Jehoiakim), taken to Babylon. If the lioness is Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah, then her sons both served as Kings, Jehoahaz and Zedekiah (2 Kgs 23:31; 24:18).

Ezekiel shifted his metaphor, describing her as a fruitful vine whose strong branches became royal scepters, but divine fury uprooted her and fire consumed her fruit. This lamentation mourned not only the loss of Judah's kings but also a mother's personal tragedy of watching her sons destroyed. The queen mother's transformation from a nurturing lioness to a transplanted vine in the wilderness captured both Jerusalem's devastation and the end of the Davidic monarchy in 586 BC. (*See *Hamutal; *Nehushta*)

12) Ezk 22:7—**Mother and Widow** ~ (593-571)

Ezekiel condemned Jerusalem's elite for violating the Torah's explicit commands to honor parents (Ex 20:12) and protect the unprotected, including widows, orphans, and strangers (Ex 22:21-24; Deu 24:17-21). The prophet's accusation "they set light by father and mother" meant treating parents with contempt or failing to provide for them, a crime punishable by death under Mosaic law (Ex 21:17; Lev 20:9). Jerusalem's leaders oppressed the very people God commanded Israel to protect, revealing the city's complete moral collapse. This violation of covenant obligations against society's most defenseless members—mothers without sons to support them and widows without husbands to provide for them—demonstrated that Jerusalem deserved the divine judgment coming through Babylon. Ezekiel's catalog of sins showed that the city's destruction in 586 BC resulted not from political miscalculation but from systemic rejection of God's law.

13) Ezk 23—**Sister of Samaria** (Fictional) ~ (593-571)

Ezekiel personified Samaria and Jerusalem as two sisters, Aholah ("her own tent") and Aholibah ("my tent is in her"), daughters of one mother who represented the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah (Ezk 23:4). Samaria fell to Assyria in 722 BC, while Jerusalem faced Babylonian threats during Ezekiel's prophetic ministry (593-571 BC). Both kingdoms formed political alliances with foreign powers and adopted their religious practices.

The text depicted both women as having pursued lovers from their youth in Egypt, representing Israel's early entanglements with foreign nations and gods (Ezk 23:3, 8, 19-21). Aholah lusted after Assyrian officers and committed spiritual adultery through idolatry, leading to her violent death at their hands (Ezk 23:5-10). Aholibah watched her sister's destruction but became even more corrupt, pursuing both Assyrian and Babylonian alliances while adorning herself seductively for foreign envoys (Ezk 23:11-18, 40-42).

Both women committed the ultimate abomination by sacrificing their covenant children to idols, then entering Jehovah's sanctuary the same day to worship (Ezk 23:37-39). The prophet pronounced judgment: both women would drink the cup of suffering, face public humiliation and dismemberment, and watch their children slaughtered by the very nations they had pursued (Ezk 23:25-27, 32-34, 46-47). This allegory warned that other women must learn from their lewdness, showing how covenant unfaithfulness brings devastating consequences (Ezk 23:48-49). (*See *Pro 6:26*)

14) Ezk 23:4, 10, 25, 47—**Daughters** (Fictional) ~ (593-571)

In Ezekiel's allegory, the daughters born to Samaria (Aholah) and Jerusalem (Aholibah) represented the inhabitants of both kingdoms. These children symbolized covenant people born to mothers who had committed spiritual adultery through idolatry and foreign alliances.

The daughters suffered the consequences of their mothers' unfaithfulness. When Assyria conquered Samaria, they took her sons and daughters captive (Ezk 23:10). Similarly, Babylon would take Jerusalem's children, slaying them with the sword and burning their houses (Ezk 23:25, 47). These daughters, though born from covenant marriages to Jehovah (Ezk 23:4), faced violence and destruction because their mothers had pursued foreign lovers and idols. The allegory emphasized that covenant unfaithfulness affects entire communities, with innocent children bearing the brutal consequences of their parents' spiritual adultery.

15) Ezk 24:18—**Wife of Ezekiel** ~ (593-571)

Ezekiel's wife died suddenly during the Babylonian exile, shortly before Jerusalem's fall in 586 BC. The Prophet showed his deep love for her by calling his wife "the desire of thine eyes" (Ezk 24:16). Her death became a typological sign for Israel (Ezk 24:18), when God commanded Ezekiel not to mourn publicly for her death. Despite his grief, Ezekiel obeyed God's command not to weep, cover his lips, eat mourners' bread, or perform traditional mourning rituals (Ezk 24:17). God created a parallel sign between her loss and the exiles' loss when Jerusalem and her temple fell (Ezk 24:15-24). Ezekiel's wife's death became a powerful sign of national tragedy, demonstrating the cost of prophetic ministry where personal loss served God's purposes.

16) Ezk 26:6, 8—**Tyre's Daughters Slain in the Fields** (Fictional) ~(593-571)

Ezekiel prophesied that Tyrus/Tyre's daughters in the field would be slain by the sword. These "daughters" represented the mainland settlements dependent on the fortified island city of Tyre, a wealthy Phoenician city-state. When Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon besieged Tyre around 586-573 BC, he employed a calculated military strategy: building siege forts and mounts against these outlying communities before attacking the main city (Ezk 26:8). The daughters in the field faced brutal warfare as Babylonian armies swept through the coastal plain, slaughtering inhabitants of the unprotected villages. Their destruction would demonstrate Jehovah's sovereignty over foreign nations, teaching even Tyre "that I am the LORD" (Ezk 26:6). This feminine imagery of mother city and daughter settlements emphasized the comprehensive nature of judgment, where both the powerful center and its dependent communities faced devastation.

17) Ezk 32:16—**Daughters Lament** ~(593-571)

"This is the lament they will chant for her; the daughters of the nations will chant it. Over Egypt and all her multitudes they will chant it, declares the Lord GOD" (BSB). (*See *Jer 9:17-20*)

18) Ezk 44:22—**Eligible and Ineligible Wives for Levitical Priests** ~ (593-571)

Ezekiel's vision of the restored temple included marriage restrictions for priests serving at the altar. Priests could not marry widows or divorced women, but could marry virgins from the house of Israel or widows of priests. These restrictions paralleled earlier Levitical law requiring the high priest to marry only a virgin (Lev 21:13-14), though regular priests had fewer limitations (Lev 21:7). The stricter requirements in Ezekiel's vision elevated all temple priests to standards previously reserved for the high priest alone.

By limiting priests to virgins or priestly widows, the law ensured ritual purity and prevented priests from marrying women who might have been defiled by prior relationships with non-Israelites or covenant breakers. This restriction protected the sanctity of priestly families who would serve in the millennial temple, emphasizing that those approaching God's presence must maintain the highest standards of holiness in their marriages and households. (*See *Lev 21:7, 13-14*)

19) Ezk 44:25—**Women a Priest Can and Cannot Bury** ~(593-571)

In Babylon, Ezekiel has a vision of a restored temple that included burial restrictions for priests serving at the altar. Priests could not defile themselves by touching dead bodies, but could bury their mothers, daughters, or unmarried sisters. This law paralleled earlier Levitical restrictions (Lev 21:1-3, 11) that permitted priests to mourn only their closest blood relatives while maintaining ritual purity for temple service.

The inclusion of mothers and daughters acknowledged the priest's obligation to honor and care for immediate female family members even in death. The restriction to unmarried sisters reflected the understanding that married sisters belonged to their husbands' families and would be buried by their husbands' households. These regulations balanced priestly duty to maintain ceremonial cleanliness with the sacred responsibility to provide proper burial for one's closest female relatives.

The vision may give instructions for the post-exilic second temple in Jerusalem, or in the far distance, a prophecy of the millennial temple. In restored temples we see family obligations essential to God's covenants. (*See *Lev 21:1-3, 11*)