

Cuppa Cafe

Daily devotions
from God's Word...



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The Grind

Savor the taste of our previous brew



Since everything in the Bible leads into and prepares the way for what comes after it, refresh yesterday's Brew to let the previous passage get you ready for today's verses. Though you should have already explored the passage, personally with Jesus, here is the heart of what we saw, together.

In the previous passage, verses 14-17, the LORD climaxes and concludes His explanation of Ezekiel's dramatic actions as a prophecy of judgment against the rebellious descendants of Jacob turned Israel.

14 The linking word, "**so**" introduces a conclusion drawn from what was said in the previous passage. Climaxing the judgments pronounced in verses 5-12, the LORD now explains more fully the upshot of the trial. In v.13, He explained the aftereffects of the guilty verdict and sentence of death on Him and on Israel's rebellious descendants. Now, He describes the impact of the trial on Israel's neighbors. The first line states the obvious. As the object of God's wrath poured out full strength, and divorced from her benefactor husband, Jerusalem "**will turn into a ruin**." Set on the hill of Zion to illuminate the world with the LORD's majesty and glory and attract converts to Him, the ridiculed remains of Jerusalem will now become an absurd imitation of itself "**in the eyes of the surrounding nations and all who pass by**." The great tragedy here is not the coming judgment that will fall on Jerusalem and the destruction of National Israel, but the nation's failure to fulfill its high calling (cf. Gen. 12:1-3).

So Therefore (based on the outcome of the trial)

I will turn you into a ruin, I, the Eternal one, your ex-husband will transform Jerusalem into a pile of rubble **a mockery in the eyes of the surrounding nations** a grotesque lampoon of your former self in the opinion of neighboring countries

and as well as

to all who pass by. Those who travel nearby.

15 This verse continues to describe Jerusalem's new role in God's plan. Instead of a thing of beauty to admire, Jerusalem "**will become an object of mockery and taunting and horror**." Arousing scorn in those who see what's left of the once majestic stronghold, neighbors and passersby will hurl insults at Jerusalem, at the same time they will also recoil in horror at what's happened to her. Instead of drawing converts to her majesty as God intended, she will now serve as "**a warning to all the nations around you**." The LORD goes on to explain how Jerusalem will become an omen of potential or even impending danger. By viewing Jerusalem's shattered condition, brought down to the dust from her arrogant past, "**They will see what happens when the LORD punishes a nation in anger** [or, makes an entire country pay for misbehaving Him, in all His divine fury] **and rebukes** [or, reprimands] **it** [like a disobedient child]." If He could do what He did to Jerusalem, what chance does anyone else have to avoid God's revenge? 1Peter 4:17 says almost the same thing: "**For the time has come for judgment, and it must begin with God's household. And if judgment begins with us, what terrible fate awaits those who have never obeyed God's Good News?**" The closing remark, "**says the LORD**,"

affirms that this is a divine promise rather than some idle threat, a guarantee that the LORD Himself will pass judgment on the world and carry out the sentence – just as He did with Jerusalem. Unable to illuminate the world about God’s righteousness and justice, Jerusalem will now share the same message through its reproach. Even in failure, the world would learn through the awful judgment of Jerusalem and Israel that God deals with everyone in righteousness and justice. If prosperity could not succeed, a nation in ruins will still get the job done.

(And) Plus, what’s more,

You will become an object of mockery you rebellious descendants of Jacob turned Israel, will become a scary shell of your former selves

and taunting as well as a target of put-downs

and horror. fear, shock, or disgust

You will be a warning to all the nations around you. You rebellious descendants of Jacob turned Israel, will serve as a cautionary example to all your pagan neighbors

They will see what happens They will notice what takes place

when after

the LORD punishes a nation in anger the Eternal One collects a debt from a country while He is furious at it

and plus

rebukes it, expresses His severe disapproval of it

says the LORD I’m quoting the Eternal One on this

16 To make sure that the nations understand that the same judgment against Jerusalem could also happen to them, the LORD compares the punishment from v.15 to the siege He brought against Jerusalem. He describes Himself as an archer who **“will shoot against them deadly, destructive arrows of famine.”** The main weapon of a siege was famine. No one could get in or out of the city, leaving its citizens to live on whatever food it already had – for as long as it lasts. That explains the reference to famine. The reference to arrows borrows an image from an army that has its opponents surrounded. Instead of attacking and risking the lives of its own soldiers, the army would rain arrows down on their unfortunate captives until they were all dead. The army of Xerxes allegedly used this tactic to defeat the 300 Spartans who successfully blocked his army at Thermopylae Pass. Blending the two images together, the LORD paints a picture of Himself launching **“deadly, destructive arrows of famine”** with intent to kill, or as He puts it **“which I will shoot to destroy you.”** The LORD announces to the nations, **“I will prolong a famine on you,”** so no matter how long it takes, the people under siege will run out of food. To make certain they do, He also intends to **“remove the bread supply,”** to cut off the main staple of their diet.

I will shower you with the deadly arrows of famine to destroy you. I will rain down lethal shafts of starvation on you rebels to wipe you out

The famine will become more and more severe The food shortage will become progressively worse

until every crumb of food is gone. Up to the point no trace of food is left

17 Famine was the theme of v.16, and deadly as scarcity of food may be, it isn’t the entire punishment God intends to bring on the disobedient nations. So, the LORD adds, with the linking word, **“and”** more disasters **“along with the famine”** in v.17: wild animals, disease, war, and the sword. Like the plagues He brought on Egypt, God will visit these plagues on the disobedient nations. While they are different, the plagues here would remind the nations of what God did to Egypt, the mightiest nation on earth at the time of the Exodus. In this way, He would extinguish any hope they might have of escaping His wrath. Even if they can dominate their neighbors, they have no more chance of surviving the divine onslaught than Jerusalem. He underscores this

with devastating language expressed through words like, attack and rob, disease and war, and the sword of the enemy. The sword was more than a weapon for assault. As we saw earlier, it is also a weapon of pursuit. The sword represents the enemy both attacking and hunting down survivors until everyone is either dead or captured. In this way, the prophet extends his audience beyond Israel to the world. Intensified punishment calls for even greater affirmation, so the LORD offers a more emphatic form of guarantee, “**I, the LORD, have spoken**” than He used to back up the simpler announcement in v.15: “**says the LORD.**” Unlike the present tense in v.15 that merely tacks the LORD’s guarantee on the announcement, the past tense, “**have spoken,**” makes it sound as though the plagues have already happened.

And On top of that

along with the famine, besides starvation

wild animals will attack you untamed beasts will pounce on you rebels

and rob you of your children. Plus carry off your offspring

Disease and war will stalk your land, Cancers as well as bloodshed will haunt your country

and plus

I will bring the sword of the enemy against you. I will set up a confrontation with the military power of your foes (they will think they’re attacking you for their own benefit, but they will really be working for me)

I, the LORD, have spoken!” I, the Eternal One personally guarantee this.



Now
Serving

The Brew

Let us pour you a fresh cup, ground verse-by-verse from today’s passage

In today’s passage, verses 1-7, the LORD states His intention to wage war on the mountains, hills, ravines, and valleys of Israel for collaborating with His idolatrous ex-wife. So, please open your Bibles to Ezekiel Chapter 6, and let me pour you a hot CuppaJesus from today’s brew, starting with v.1.



WHAT TO LOOK FOR TODAY

Here are the main items in the text that will lead you to its understanding.

	Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5	Verse 6	Verse 7
Links	Again	And 2x	And 4x	And	And	Wherever, and 2x	The place, and
Persons	Me (Zeke), the LORD	Son of man (Zeke)	The Sovereign LORD 2x, I 2x	I (LORD), people (Rebs)	I (LORD)	I (LORD)	I alone, the LORD
Places	To (me), from (the LORD)	Israel, against (the mountains)	From, against, Israel, to 2x, upon	In front of (your idols)	In front of (your idols), around (your altars)		
Things	A message	The mountains of, them		All your altars, your places of worship,	There	You, desolation, your pagan shrines, your	Corpses, you, that

				your, your idols		altars, your idols, your places of worship, all the religious objects, you	
Words	Came	Turn, face, prophesy		Will be demolished will be destroyed, will kill	Will lay, scatter	Live, will be, will destroy, will be demolished, will be smashed, will be torn down, have made, will be destroyed	Will be littered with, will know, am

Pay careful attention to every item as you follow today's devotional in your study Bible. We have already grouped them by colors in "Today's Text," so you can follow the writer's flow of thought for yourself. Capture and grasp what he is trying to tell you with matching color pencils to draw lines connecting items to others in the same color-family, and a black pencil to cross-link items from different color-families that still have something to do with one another. Use circles, boxes, triangles, etc. to identify topics and themes (triangles, for instance, might represent the Trinity). Also mark with asterisks, etc., the ones you need to look up later for more information or greater details.

TODAY'S TEXT

NEW LIVING TRANSLATION

- 1 Again a message came to me from the LORD: (cf. Ezek. 3:16)
- 2 "Son of man, turn and face the mountains of Israel and prophesy against them.
- 3 Proclaim this message from the Sovereign LORD against the mountains of Israel. This is what the Sovereign LORD says to the mountains and hills and to the ravines and valleys: I am about to bring war upon you, and I will smash your pagan shrines. (They suffer for the sins of the rebels, just like Eden)
- 4 All your altars will be demolished, and your places of worship will be destroyed. I will kill your people in front of your idols.
- 5 I will lay your corpses in front of your idols and scatter your bones around your altars.
- 6 Wherever you live there will be desolation, and I will destroy your pagan shrines. Your altars will be demolished, your idols will be smashed, your places of worship will be torn down, and all the religious objects you have made will be destroyed.
- 7 The place will be littered with corpses, and you will know that I alone am the LORD.

THE EXPANDED BIBLE

- ¹ Again the ·LORD spoke his word [^Lword of the LORD came] to me, saying:
- ² "·Human [^TSon of man; 2:1], ·look [^Lset your face] toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them.
- ³ Say, 'Mountains of Israel, listen to the word of the Lord God. The Lord God says this to the mountains, the hills, the ravines, and the valleys: [^LLook; ^TBehold] I ·will [or am about to] bring a sword against you, and I will destroy your ·places of idol worship [^Lhigh places; ^Cpagan worship sites; Deut. 12; 2 Kin. 23:8].
- ⁴ Your altars will be ·destroyed [desolated] and your incense altars ·broken down [smashed]. ·Your people will be killed [^LI will throw down your slain] in front of your idols.

⁵ I will lay the dead bodies of the Israelites in front of their idols, and I will scatter your bones around your altars.

⁶ In all the places you live, cities will become ·empty [desolate; laid waste]. The ·places of idol worship [·high places; 6:3] will be ruined; your altars will become ·lonely [wasted] ruins. Your idols will be ·broken [smashed] and ·brought to an end [ruined]. Your incense altars will be cut down, and ·the things you made [your works; or the idols/religious objects you have made] will be wiped out.

⁷ ·Your people will be killed and [·The slain will] fall among you. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

THE SCRIPTURES 1998

1 And the word of יהוה came to me, saying,

2 “Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Yisra’el, and prophesy against them.

3 “And you shall say, ‘O mountains of Yisra’el, hear the word of the Master יהוה !’ Thus said the Master יהוה to the mountains, to the hills, to the ravines, and to the valleys, “Look, I Myself am bringing a sword against you, and I shall destroy your high places.

4 “And your altars shall be ruined, your sun-pillars shall be broken in pieces. And I shall make your slain fall in front of your idols,

5 and lay the corpses of the children of Yisra’el in front of their idols, and scatter your bones all around your altars.”

6 “In all your dwelling places the cities shall be destroyed and the high places deserted, so that your altars are broken and bear their punishment. And your idols shall be smashed and made to cease, and your sun-pillars cut down, and your works blotted out.

7 “And the slain shall fall in your midst, and you shall know that I am יהוה.”

THE NET BIBLE

1 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 “Son of man, turn toward¹ the mountains of Israel and prophesy against them:

3 Say, ‘Mountains of Israel,² Hear the word of the sovereign LORD!³ This is what the sovereign LORD says to the mountains and the hills, to the ravines and the valleys: I am bringing⁴ a sword against you, and I will destroy your high places.⁵

4 Your altars will be ruined and your incense altars will be broken. I will throw down your slain in front of your idols.⁶

5 I will place the corpses of the people of Israel in front of their idols,⁷ and I will scatter your bones around your altars.

6 In all your dwellings, the cities will be laid waste and the high places ruined so that your altars will be laid waste and ruined, your idols will be shattered and demolished, your incense altars will be broken down, and your works wiped out.⁸

7 The slain will fall among you and then you will know that I am the LORD.

TODAY’S DEVOTIONAL

1 The word “**again**” introduces a new message. The previous one began in Ezek. 3:16 and was directed against the rebels. Now, the LORD wants Ezekiel to direct a prophecy against a different target. The word “**came**” contends the message originated outside of Ezekiel. He did not think this up or come to the following conclusions on his own. It also implies that the source sent the message to him. Once again, Ezekiel identifies the LORD as the source of what he is about to say, to claim divine authority for it and so, discourage resistance

to it. On official business, Ezekiel merely carries out the function of a prophet, receiving a message from God in order to deliver it in His name.

Again Once more

a message came to me a communication arrived at my heart

from the LORD: originated by the Eternal One

2 The LORD address Ezekiel as **"Son of man,"** a descendant of Adam and therefore a member of the fallen race in need of redemption. This separates him from the rebellious descendants of Jacob turned Israel whom he prophesied against since 3:16. Up to now, he has been facing the rebels and directing God's words at them. Now, God orders to **"turn and face the mountains of Israel"** who have been serving as witnesses for the covenant lawsuit/divorce petition that God filed against the rebels. In this way, he can direct the words of this message at them, or as the LORD puts it, **"prophesy against them."** Adopting the position of confrontation, this message is **"against"** or, unfavorable to the mountains, just as the previous message was hostile and unfriendly to the rebels. The LORD must judge them to show how futile it was for the people to seek refuge on the high places and in the low places of Israel. Even under the sixth seal, at the sight of God and the Lamb ruling the universe: **"everyone—the kings of the earth, the rulers, the generals, the wealthy, the powerful, and every slave and free person—all hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. And they cried to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to survive?"** (Rev. 6:15-17). The cry of earth's inhabitants parallels the pleading of the martyrs beneath the altar. As the IVP New Bible Commentary says: *"The last day reveals the identity of him who has ultimate authority over the universe and the irresistible judgment of the Lamb; but the end of their exercise of authority and judgment is the triumph of the kingdom of grace and glory (see 21:1-22:5)."*

Paul explains how the LORD our righteousness will reverse the injustices and right every wrong of the present evil age when He returns, in Rom. 8:18-25, saying: **"Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us."** So Israel's mountains suffer for the sins of the rebels just as the whole creation still suffers for the sins of Adam and Eve. One day, Christ will come to judge the whole earth, setting the heavens on fire and melting the entire creation – including the mountains (2 Pet. 3:10, 12). No one who has rejected the LORD's chosen King will survive. But as the LORD will save a remnant or handful of humanity, so He will also rescue a new earth from the old.

"Son of man, Descendant of Adam, and a member of the fallen race that needs redeeming from sin

turn and face the mountains of Israel confront the high places of the Promised Land

and prophesy against them. so you can let me speak through you to express my displeasure with them

3 After assigning him what to do in v.2, **"the Sovereign LORD"** now gives Ezekiel the hostile message He wants the prophet to deliver that will show He is at odds with **"the mountains of Israel."** He is both the source [**"from the Sovereign LORD"**] and the architect of the indictment [**"This is what the Sovereign LORD says"**]. As a prophet, Ezekiel is the LORD's agent through whom He, Himself warns the high places **"the mountains and hills"**, as well as the low places **"the ravines and valleys"** of what He is about to do to them. The people had made idols of creation and chose these places as locations for practicing idolatry, so the LORD speaks to them as unwilling, yet culpable collaborators with the idolatrous rebels (cf. Rom. 8:20). Thus they suffer for the sins of their defiant tenants just as the creation suffers for Adam and Eve's willful disobedience. Josiah outlawed these

illegitimate sanctuaries and shrines in 622 BC because the Law required sacrifices exclusively at the Jerusalem Temple. But his successor, Jehoiakim allowed the people to return to their former practices. Normally situated on hilltops, they were called "high places" more for their religious function since Jer. 7:31 refers to their existence in the Hinnom Valley.

More than mere punishment of the rebels, the siege and its awful casualties will purge the land of every trace of idolatry. The "[war](#)" refers to the aggressive efforts of the Babylonians against the rebels that will simultaneously "[smash](#) [or, rid the Promised Land of] [your](#) [that is, the mountain's and rebels'] [pagan shrines](#)." The LORD personally identifies Himself twice to underscore the divine nature of Ezekiel's message and mission. Ezekiel's message is therefore infallible, its goal, inescapable, thereby guaranteeing his mission, success.

[Proclaim this message from the Sovereign LORD](#) Deliver this communication authored by the Eternal One

[against the mountains of Israel](#). to denounce the high places in the Promised Land

[This is what the Sovereign LORD says](#) I am quoting your former Husband and covenant Master, the Eternal One on this

[to the mountains and hills](#) aimed at the high places dedicated to idols

[and to the ravines and valleys](#): that also exist in the dried out riverbeds and lowlands

[I am about to bring war upon you](#), I, the Eternal One, your Ex and former Covenant partner am poised to ravage your slopes with armed conflict

[and I will smash your pagan shrines](#). at the same time, I will also wreck your idolatrous sanctuaries and shrines

4 Elaborating on the "[pagan shrines](#)" of v.3, the LORD develops what they entail, in detail, calling them "[altars](#)" and "[places of worship](#)." That "[All](#)" of them "[will be demolished, and will be destroyed](#)," underscores the LORD's intention to exterminate every trace of idolatry from the land. Because the rebels had polluted the Temple with their "vile images and detestable sins" (5:11), the LORD threatened to exterminate or "cut them off completely". Since the LORD intended to remove both the idolaters and their places of desecration, He now adds: "[I will kill your people in front of your idols](#)." Not only will this demonstrate how powerless the idols are to prevent the LORD from carrying out His will in a head to head confrontation with them, but it will also rid the land of anyone who might practice idolatry. In His final triumph over every false god, as the flood cleansed the pre-Noahic world of sin and sinners, so the LORD – pointing forward to the Kingdom established through sanctification by His Son – will purge idolatry from His sacred land.

[All your altars will be demolished](#), Wherever you made sacrifices to your false-god lovers will be leveled to the ground

[and your places of worship will be destroyed](#). At the same time your so-called sacred sanctuaries (where you thought you could safely cheat on me) will be annihilated

[I will kill your people](#) I, the Eternal One will slaughter your idol worshipers

[in front of your idols](#). Right before the idols you worshiped in my place, daring them to stop me

5 Developing His intention to personally "[kill your people in front of your idols](#)," the LORD explains, "[I will lay your corpses in front of your idols and scatter your bones around your altars](#)." The first part parallels making a mockery of Jerusalem in the sight of anyone who could see its ruins. As the Creator will reduce the once majestic city to a mere shell of its former self, so He will also dry up the stream of those who enthusiastically went to the high places to worship nature. In stark contrast to the righteous who will ascend to heaven from this fallen world, the lifeless carcasses of the wicked will lay still and silent at the feet of their phony heroes. The LORD will show their so-called sacred places for the dead ends they truly are. Verse 5 also echoes Lev. 26:30 as it reminds us of Josiah's practice of burning the bones of idolaters on the altars of high places in the Land as his way of shutting down those defiant sites of disobedience (2Kings 23:20). To David, "[God will scatter the](#)

bones of [His true people's] enemies" (Ps. 53:5) as the ultimate punishment for wickedness, a thought he repeated in Ps. 141:7, warning, "Like rocks brought up by a plow, the bones of the wicked will lie scattered without burial." As the LORD scatters exiles from the Promised Land, as good as dead, around the world, so He will also scatter the lifeless remains of the wicked around the altars they dedicated to their false-god lovers. The word translated "idols," here is a favorite of Ezekiel. A pun on the word for "dung-pellets," it ridicules Israel's false-gods as "dung-idols" who frequent the manure piles of animals.

I, the Eternal One

will lay your corpses in front of your idols will spread the carcasses of the rebels/idol-worshipers at the feet of their false-god lovers

and at the same time, I will

scatter your bones around your altars. Sprinkle your skeletons all about your places of sacrifice

6 As God banished Cain from His presence and made him a homeless wanderer, so He will also make the descendants of the rebels, under the same penalty of death as those who died during the siege of Jerusalem, unable to find peace from their rebellious past. "Wherever you live [He guarantees] there will be desolation," so they cannot escape their fate. He describes this, "desolation," with five images of damage so severe that it is beyond survival or repair. Once again, He personally guarantees, "I will destroy your pagan shrines," and illustrates the outcome of His campaign against idolatry four ways: "Your altars will be demolished, your idols will be smashed, your places of worship will be torn down, and all the religious objects you have made will be destroyed." The broader expression "your places of worship will be torn down," reinforces the parallel pronouncement "Your altars will be demolished." In the same way the absolute phrase "all the religious objects you have made will be destroyed," consummates the simpler declaration, "your idols will be smashed." In this way, the LORD progressively strengthens what He says to extinguish any hope of cheating Him out of complete payback for their arrogance and sins. The extermination of God's rebellious Old Covenant people paves the way for His Messianic New Covenant remnant – of reinserted Jews and ingrafted Gentiles (Rom. 11).

Wherever you live there will be desolation, No matter where you are, you cannot escape the fate of those who died during the siege

and so that

I will destroy your pagan shrines. I, the Eternal One will wreck your idolatrous sanctuaries

Your altars will be demolished, The tables where you made sacrifices to your false-god lovers will be leveled to the ground

your idols will be smashed, your false-god lovers will be dashed to pieces

your places of worship will be torn down, your so-called sacred sanctuaries (where you thought you could safely cheat on me) will be bulldozed

and plus

all the religious objects you have made will be destroyed. Every manmade thing you dedicated to your idols will be wiped out

7 The LORD used Ezekiel's dramatic actions in Chapter 4 to show that He will lead the attack on Jerusalem, slay the wicked, and chase anyone who tries to get away with intent to kill. In other words, to bring the rebels to justice, He must become their enemy (5:8) and a warrior who fights against them with arrows and the sword (5:16, 17). Waging war against the mountains, the invincible God will not end His campaign against idolatry, at the root of every sin, until all His foes are dead and defeated. So, the LORD sums up His efforts to purge idolatry from the Land with a morbid outcome: "The place will be littered with corpses." No one will survive His crusade. The words, "the place" refers to the whole of Palestine as a battleground, covered or "littered with

The place will be littered with corpses, The entire Promised Land will be covered with carcasses and as a result



Let Jesus pour you a fuller bodied, more flavorful CuppaJ from today's brew



1. Open your Bible to today's passage and **review** today's brew.
2. **Savor** the passage, one verse at a time, **listening** for God's still small voice.
3. **Follow** the trail you marked in each verse, **pause** to look up the terms you flagged for further consideration, and **write** whatever the Spirit brings to mind.

[illegible]

v.2

v.3

v.4

v.5

v.6

v.7