

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 14-18, the LORD's Day will spell defeat for National Israel, a day of terror and mourning.

14 This second poem that began with v.10 is far more detailed than the shorter version in verses 2-9. To justify divorcing Israel and intensify the consequences she will face for cheating on Him with idols, the LORD graphically illustrates how He has run out of patience with her and will punish her for her sins. Ezekiel sees and describes a catastrophic end for national Israel. Later prophets like Daniel confirm that this end will be a Day of Vindication, just as Isaiah turned the Day of the LORD, initially a day of deliverance for the faithful into a Day of Judgment and Destruction for spiritual traitors as well as those who never believed in Him in the first place.

Verses 14-18 develop the themes of wickedness and pride from verses 10-13 to illustrate the beating that will kill His unfaithful bride – unless they reconcile with the Suffering Servant who resumes the march to the altar with the remnant who rely on Him for salvation. To avoid any misunderstandings, the NT describes this relation as an engagement, allowing for those who desert Christ before He returns when the marriage will take place. A third of the unfaithful will die in Jerusalem during the siege from famine. Another third who, try to break the blockade will die by the sword. The rest who, seem to get away are destined to die in the same fire as those who died in the city – another way of saying the share they same fate – death for their sins. While some die right away, the sentence of death hangs over the captives in exile as well as every Jew to this day who does not put their faith in Messiah Jesus, the Suffering Servant. In this way, Ezekiel shows the exiles, his audience, that the future of the Jews lies with them rather than those who remained in the land – either as victims of the siege or the foolish ones who gave away their Abrahamic birthright, in the irresponsible Spirit of Esau, through intermarriage. That's why Nehemiah told the half-breeds "**Sanballat the Horonite** [who had diluted his family's claim to priesthood through intermarriage with outsiders according to Neh. 13:28], **Tobiah...the Ammonite** [a backstabbing distant relative of Israel descended from an incestuous encounter between Lot and his younger daughter after they fled from Sodom, see Gen.19:38], and **Geshem the Arab** [an even more distant relative, descended probably from Abraham's grandson, Kedar, the second son of Ishmael – Abraham's son with his wife Sarah's handmaiden, Hagar]...**you have no share, legal right, or historic claim in Jerusalem.**"

Ezekiel believed that these Old Covenant people – divorced from God and His enemies – were doomed unless they entered the New Covenant to receive the sure mercies God promised to David (Isa. 55:3). The writer of Hebrews actually says that "**that old system deals only with food and drink and various cleansing ceremonies—physical regulations that were in effect only until a better system could be established ... [and] ... That is why he is the one who mediates a new covenant between God and people, so that all who are called can receive the eternal inheritance God has promised them. For Christ died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant.**" No one "receives the

eternal inheritance God has promised them" through Abraham unless Christ under the New Covenant "sets them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant."

Sin paralyzes the sinner, graphically illustrated by the three progressively crippling expressions "walks in [or, follows] the advice of the ungodly...stands in the way of [or, hangs out with] sinners...[and] sits in the seat of mockers [who show an over-inflated sense of ego by making fun of others]" in Ps.1 – eventually paralyzed not because of sin's self-destructive physical or psychological effects, but because they cannot move against the brick wall of God's "fury against them all" that blocks their way. Self-confident because of the pride that has ripened into a switch the LORD will use to beat them (verses 10-11), the rebels expect to avert the disaster of the siege and exile by turning to their army. As usual, "the trumpet calls Israel's army to mobilize," confident that Jewish troops will once again save the day. But, now that the LORD, "the warrior" (Exod. 15:3) and their former defender had become their enemy (Ezek. 5:8), they could have saved themselves the trouble. Without the LORD, their army is unable to move, paralyzed by the LORD's fury pushing against them (v.14), striking the very blows that spelled their doom (Ezek. 7:9). Thus, "the trumpet calls Israel's army to mobilize," but no one answers the call. Instead of marching out to meet the foe, "no one listens," or, literally, "makes a move" to engage the enemy in combat. Ironically, the Hebrew word translated "move" is the same word for "walk" in Ps. 1. Having joined the ungodly pagans around them and behaving worse than those who don't know God, they now sit in the wheelchair of the crippled, frozen where they are and unable even to assemble for battle. That's how grim the picture is for the rebels. Without God on their side, they are helpless and defenseless – easy prey for the Babylonian army. Unopposed and descending on the sitting ducks in Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar's troops intensify Isaiah's prediction of Assyria's swift conquest of Damascus and Samaria – Maher-shallal-hash-baz – the name he gave to one of his own sons as a sign that "rushing to the spoil; he [Sennacherib] hastens to the prey." All the rebels can do is sit and watch the invaders surround their city to destroy it – and them.

"The trumpet calls Israel's army to mobilize, The proud rebels summon their home grown troops as usual to defend them and repel the invaders

but yet

no one listens, not a single soldier shows up, or makes a move

for because

my fury is against them all. The Eternal One's outrage against sin is blocking/paralyzing every one of them

15 Connected by context, v.15 presents and explains in detail, the "fury" mentioned at the close of v.14 with three components: "war," "disease and famine." This isn't the first time God's wrath has descended on His former wife in the form of these plagues (cf. 6:11-12 and 5:16-17). Representing a siege rather than its outcome, line 1 shows how God's fury targets "all" the rebels, both "within," and "outside the city" of Jerusalem. To make sure that this is the last time the city, hence Israel rebels against Babylonian rule, Nebuchadnezzar has set up a blockade to bring city-dwellers to their knees with "disease and famine," and ordered his troops to wage "war" on any who would try to escape. Without an army to defend it or repel invaders, the city is helpless – completely at the mercy of its attackers – a fitting image of divine fury working against them. Line 2 explains the outcome of the siege in the same order as line 1 laid it out. "Those outside the city walls will be killed by enemy swords," or, "war," while "Those inside the city will die of famine and disease," the classic results of encirclement by an enemy determined to suffocate a city. Left to fend for themselves, the rebels will eventually realize that their former defender has turned against them. As v.13 warned, "Not one person whose life is twisted by sin will ever recover," so they will fail to get over the consequences of their sins.

There is war outside the city Combat to the death surrounds Jerusalem

and plus

disease and famine within. Plague and starvation exist inside the besieged city.

Those outside the city walls will be killed by enemy swords. A violent death awaits anyone who tries to run the blockade.

Those inside the city will die of famine and disease. Whoever stays within Jerusalem's walls will succumb to starvation and plague.

16 From the external results of sins, the prophet turns to the internal consequences of suffering for them. As Ezekiel himself illustrated earlier in 5:12 – **"A third of your people will die in the city from disease and famine. A third of them will be slaughtered by the enemy outside the city walls. And I will scatter a third to the winds, chasing them with my sword."** A third of the rebels will break the blockade after two thirds die from the "war," "disease and famine" in v.15. Instead of crowing to celebrate their "escape" from the siege, these "survivors" [or, better "fugitives"] who escape to the mountains will moan like doves, weeping for their sins. As Noah's dove sought the refuge of a place to land after its flight over the flood waters, so these pigeons who found rest in the Promised Land after fleeing from Egypt will ironically try to catch their breath on some of the same high places where they cheated on the LORD with their idol-lovers. Rather than focusing on their temporary escape, or brief relief from punishment – they will mourn over the way they have twisted God's plans for them into tragedy.

The survivors who escape to the mountains Those who get away and make it to the high places surrounding the besieged city

will moan like doves, will sigh like pigeons (instead of crowing with jubilation over breaking out)

weeping for their sins. Virtually mourning over the way they twisted God's will for them.

17 Continuing to describe the toll taken by the battle with un-forgiven sin, Ezekiel tells us that in place of feeling energized, the third who evade the fate of their dead comrades will feel drained by it all. Running away from the jewel of God's holy hill to stay alive is bad enough, but separated from God, that is divorced and driven from her former husband, she is exhausted. Sapped of strength, stripped of hope, and struggling to survive she experiences the effects of separation from her husband benefactor – fear and weakness – symbolized by "Their hands hanging limp," at their sides like birds too tired to fly. Overwhelmed with anxiety, they are helpless – unable to do anything for, or to defend themselves. At the same time they will be so frightened that "their knees will be weak as water," unable to support them or to take another step. Some translations like the NET Bible say, **"their knees will be wet with urine,"** another way of saying that fright has forced them to lose control. Without her husband for the first time in nearly a millennium, she is entirely spent – alone, unable to sustain herself, and with nothing left to give – the epitome of paralysis from sin.

Their hands will hang limp, They won't be able to lift a finger.

their knees will be weak as water. Their legs won't be able to support their own weight

18 Breaking away from the outward symptoms of fear, Ezekiel returns to the idea of mourning, represented by moaning like a dove in v.16, and elaborates on their feelings of deep sorrow and regret for their detestable sins. As Adam and Eve hid themselves among the trees, ashamed to stand naked before the Creator after they sinned, so also the survivors **"will dress themselves in burlap,"** to cover their embarrassment with the humblest clothing. In fact, the coarse, crude fibers of burlap, or sackcloth, symbolize the **"horror and shame"** that covers every inch of them like a shabby garment of their disgrace. As the prophet pointed to the way the Suffering Servant Messiah will substitute for those who put their faith in Him, so the rebels Ezekiel represented with his dramatic actions now express their own regret for the sins he symbolically bore for them. As he shaved his head to project the shame and humiliation awaiting them for their sins in 5:1, so now the rebels **"will [also] shave their [own] heads in sorrow and remorse"** – a drastic sign of mourning – after Ezekiel's prophecies of their demise are fulfilled. This is all they can do in the helplessness and despair of the exile. In fulfillment of this prophecy, Ps. 137:1-4 reports that, ***"Beside the rivers of Babylon, we sat and wept as we thought of Jerusalem. We put away our harps, hanging them on the branches of poplar trees. For our captors demanded a song from us. Our tormentors insisted on a joyful hymn: "Sing us one of those songs of Jerusalem!" But how can we sing the songs of the LORD while in a pagan land?"*** (regret vs. repentance)

As you can see from the Psalmist's perspective, while these verses point ultimately to the repentance of God's Israel, Messiah's remnant the church, in the immediate sense they describe the rebels' regret – their sadness, sorrow and disappointment over losing the city of Jerusalem and the Promised Land. Regret, no matter deep or genuine, is not the same as repentance. Feeling bad because your hopes or expectations are unfulfilled will not save anyone. Isaiah repeatedly reports that the exiles, though regretful, still tried to blame God instead of themselves for the exile. While the exiles on the whole missed the Promised Land, only a handful – the remnant of those who chose God like Jacob – expressed a desire to return to the mighty God (Isa. 10:21). Still under the same death penalty as those who died during the siege (Ezek. 5:4), Jews to this day must trust Christ rather than self-righteousness for salvation since He died to rescue them from the penalty for the sins they committed under the old covenant (Heb. 9:15).

They will dress themselves in burlap; The fugitives will wrap themselves in sackcloth

horror and shame will cover them. dismay and humiliation will blanket them from head to toe

They will shave their heads in sorrow and remorse. The fugitives will scrape themselves bald to express despair and regret for what they have lost [Jerusalem, the Promised Land, loved ones, prestige, and wealth (Ezek. 7:11). Repentance will come later when they finally accept responsibility for what's happened, Ezek. 6:9.



The Brew

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

In today's passage, verses 19-22, the LORD doubles down on His financial blow to National Israel's ego from 7:11. So, please open your Bibles to Ezekiel Chapter 7, and let me pour you a hot CuppaJesus from today's brew, starting with v.19.



WHAT TO LOOK FOR TODAY

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

	Verse 19	Verse 20	Verse 21	Verse 22
Links	Like, and, neither, nor, for, only	And 2x, therefore	As, and	As, and
Persons	They, their 3x, them 3x (Rebs), the LORD's	They, their 2x, them (Rebs), I (the Eternal One)	I (the Eternal One), foreigners, the most wicked of nations, they (ungodly nations)	I, my 2x (the Eternal One), them (Rebs), these robbers
Places	In the streets, out, on, up	To (them)	To (foreigners), to (the most wicked of nations)	From (them/Rebs)
Things	Money, it 2x, worthless trash, silver, gold, that day of anger, greed	Beautiful jewelry, it, detestable idols, vile images, all wealth	It 2x, plunder (gold and silver of verses 19, 20)	Eyes, treasured/Most Holy (place)
Words	Will throw, tossing, will save, will satisfy/feed, can trip	Were proud of, used to make, will make disgusting	Will give, will defile	Will turn, invade, defile

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

19 "They will throw their money in the streets, tossing it out like worthless trash. Their silver and gold won't save them on that day of the LORD's anger. It will neither satisfy nor feed them, for their greed can only trip them up.

20 They were proud of their beautiful jewelry and used it to make detestable idols and vile images. Therefore, I will make all their wealth disgusting to them.

21 I will give it as plunder to foreigners, to the most wicked of nations, and they will defile it.

22 I will turn my eyes from them as these robbers invade and defile my treasured place [land].

THE EXPANDED BIBLE

¹⁹ The people will throw their silver into the streets, and their gold will be like *trash* [filth; an unclean thing]. Their silver and gold will not save them from the LORD's *anger* [wrath]. It will not satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs, because it *caused them to fall* [was their stumbling block] into sin.

²⁰ They were proud of their beautiful jewelry [*or* They used God's ornaments for their own prideful means; ^cthe ornaments could refer to the temple treasures] and used it to make their *idols* [abominable images] and their *evil statues*, which I hate [detestable/abominable idols]. So I will turn their wealth into *trash* [filth; an unclean thing].

²¹ I will give it to foreigners as loot from war and to the *evil* [*or* most wicked] people in the world as *treasure* [plunder], and they will *dishonor* [desecrate; defile; ^critually] it.

²² I will also turn [^lmy face] away from the *people* [^lhouse] of Israel, and they will *dishonor* [desecrate; defile; ^critually] my treasured place. Then robbers will enter and *dishonor* [desecrate; defile; ^critually] it.

THE SCRIPTURES 1998/2009

19 'They throw their silver into the streets, and their gold becomes as filth. Their silver and their gold is unable to deliver them in the day of the wrath of יהוה. They do not satisfy their appetite, nor fill their stomachs, because it has been their stumbling-block of crookedness.

20 'And the splendor of His ornaments, He set it in excellency. But they made from it the images of their abominations and their disgusting matters. Therefore I shall make it like filth to them.

21 'And I shall give it for a prey into the hands of strangers, and to the wrong of the earth for a spoil, and they shall profane it.

22 'And I shall turn My face from them. And they shall profane My secret place, for destroyers shall enter it and profane it."

THE NET BIBLE

19 They will discard their silver in the streets, and their gold will be treated like filth. Their silver and gold will not be able to deliver them on the day of the LORD's fury. They will not satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs because their wealth was the obstacle leading to their iniquity.

20 They rendered the beauty of his ornaments into pride, and with it they made their abominable images—their detestable idols. Therefore I will render it filthy to them.

21 I will give it to foreigners as loot, to the world's wicked ones as plunder, and they will desecrate it.

22 I will turn my face away from them and they will desecrate my treasured place. Vandals will enter it and desecrate it.

TODAY'S DEVOTIONAL:

19 Verses 10-13 introduce wickedness and pride as the grounds for destroying National Israel in verses 2-9. In verses 14-18, the LORD begins to strip His rebellious ex-bride of what made her so arrogant and self-satisfied, depriving her of the ability to defend herself or repel invaders. Verses 19-22 continue to attack the causes of her pride, starting with wealth in verses 19-21, and ending with the Temple in v.22. Last minute heroics by her army, the funds to bribe her most ferocious enemies, and the misguided belief that Jerusalem was invulnerable to attack because of God's presence – corrupted faith in God into self-reliance. Instead of continuing in Jacob's footsteps, depending on God rather than self, his descendants had regressed, reversing their great ancestor's repentance and returning to the self-made pit from which God had delivered him.

Quoting a well-established proverb, Paul warned Timothy, "the love of money is the root of all evil" (1Tim. 6:10). The illusion of security, the satisfaction of getting whatever you want, and the false impression of power and prestige fueled a millennium-long affair with wealth that left His unfaithful bride in the arms of two glittering rivals: gold and silver. In the past, Israel had used finances to bail themselves, at least temporarily out of many troubles, but not this time. Powerless to undo a blockade and buy food to avoid famine, all the money in the world wouldn't do them any good. So, the things the rebels valued more than the covenant and loved more than their divine husband – would suddenly looked no better than garbage, and they **"will throw their money in the streets, tossing it out like worthless trash."** The expression **"worthless trash,"** translates the Hebrew word for "unclean," in the sense of menstrual impurity. In effect, then, the Israelites will consider their former lovers no better than the most repulsive symbol in the Bible, of what offends God. In this way, their sins will become as detestable to them as they are to God. Ezekiel adds, **"their silver and gold won't save them on that day of the LORD's anger"** to remind them of God's unwillingness to accept their precious assets as payment for their sins to avoid the judgment of siege and exile. The last line has two parts. The first sums up the first, two lines – **"satisfy,"** short for satisfy their souls, refers to making peace with God for sin; **"feed,"** refers to meeting the most basic human need in the world – tying both failures of finances to provide security for this life or the next. The second part of the last line, **"for their greed can only trip them up,"** explains why finances, despite the illusion that they do, cannot keep us safe, stable, and free from danger. Instead of the solution to problems, **"greed,"** or, the love of money, is actually the cause of them. The Israelites took God's repeated postponement of the judgment they deserved for granted and never expected it to end. Confusing its army and money for the way God kept solving its problems they thought they could take care of themselves. Ezekiel corrects the misunderstanding, pointing out that by luring us to itself money actually pulls us away from God – the only One Who can stabilize our lives and keep us safe, indefinitely.

"They will throw their money in the streets, tossing it out like worthless trash. Their silver and gold won't save them on that day of the LORD's anger. It will neither satisfy nor feed them, for their greed can only trip them up."

20

They were proud of their beautiful jewelry and used it to make detestable idols and vile images. Therefore, I will make all their wealth disgusting to them.

21

I will give it as plunder to foreigners, to the most wicked of nations, and they will defile it.

22

I will turn my eyes from them as these robbers invade and defile my treasured land.



A Tastier CuppaJ

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][illegible]

v.21 _____

v.22