

Ezekiel Part 22 (Ezekiel 20:23-38)

1. **20:23–29** God also promised to disperse them among the nations if they continued to rebel.
2. This was an obvious reference to the exile in Babylon, which was current history for Ezekiel and His people.
3. God gave His law, but the people rejected it, desecrated the Sabbath, and “lusted” after idols.
4. God therefore “gave them over” to the practice of idolatry and the disobedience of His laws. (v. 25)
5. He let them become defiled (v. 26) to prepare them for judgment so that they might realize Jehovah alone was God.
6. The “Therefore” of v. 27 introduces a new word for the people.
7. Their sins of the past continued so Ezekiel centered on the primary sin of the people, which was idolatry.
8. God’s people quickly adopted the practices of the Canaanites
8. The rhetorical question “What is this place you go to?” indicts the people without allowing a response.
9. The people must have thought they could worship other gods without God knowing.
10. But God knows the actions and hearts of His people. So, the people took the land God gave them and filled it with pagan altars and “high places.” (vv. 27–29)
11. **20:30–39** The message in the remainder of chap. 20 turns to the future.
12. The elders came to the prophet for a word from God. God said that because of their idolatry, child sacrifice, and continuance of sins of their fathers, he would not answer them. (vv. 30–31)
13. The elders who came to Ezekiel were as guilty as their ancestors, a point made at length in Ezekiel 18.
14. Therefore they were to be judged by the wrath of God and would go into exile. (v. 33)
15. Finally, God promised to gather a remnant of them from the nations and bring them into the wilderness where He will deal with their sins and cleanse them of their rebellion. (vv. 34–36)
16. The history of the exodus continued to be a model for the message as Ezekiel spoke of the wilderness days as a time of purification. (vv. 37–39)
17. The “rod” was an instrument of discipline, correction, and punishment.

18. This was another way of communicating the purpose of the exile, which was to “purge” and purify those who rebelled against God. (v. 38)
19. The Hebrew for “bond” rarely occurs and means “to be in obligation to the covenant.”
20. Israel and Judah had repeatedly rejected God in favor of worshiping Baal, Molech, and other idols.
21. Ezekiel’s message was a declaration of the impending judgment that results from allegiance toward idols.
22. God was therefore saying, “Go and serve your idols” because judgment is irrevocable.