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## **WEDNESDAY SERMON**

**Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church**

**Willow, Alaska**

**Date: August 06, 2017**

**Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 17:1-24**

**Text: Ezekiel 17:1-24**

**Subject: EZEKIEL SERIES – Parable of two Great Eagles and explanation**

Let us remember that we are approaching the study of Ezekiel, as we do with all scripture, believing the words mean precisely what they say. Sometimes, the Lord or the prophet, uses similes, metaphors, and figures of speech in the writing as the LORD did in chapter 16. In this chapter, we have the simile of two eagles and a vine which represent the kings of Babylon and Egypt, and the condition of the Jews, who are threatened with ruin for their treachery; and yet a promise is made of the raising up of the house of Judah, and family of David, in the Messiah.

The prophet Ezekiel is bidden of the LORD to deliver a riddle or parable to the house of Israel, (Eze 17:1). The riddle or parable is concerning two eagles and a vine, which is delivered, (Eze 17:3); and the explanation of it is in (Eze 17:11). Then the destruction of the Jews is threatened for their treachery to the king of Babylon, (Eze 17:16). The chapter is closed with a promise of the Messiah, and the prosperity of his kingdom, (Eze 17:22).

**1 ¶ *And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable unto the house of Israel; 3 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; A great eagle with***

***great wings, longwinged, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar:***

**Great Eagle** -- This great eagle was Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, as it is explained, [Eze 17:12](#); who is compared to an eagle for his power and authority. The eagle is the king of birds, therefore, he is called a Great Eagle because of his swiftness and voraciousness in conquering and subduing kingdoms.

**with great wings;** -- In the book of Daniel, Babylon was signified by a lion with eagle's wings. **Daniel 7:4** *The first* (of the four great beasts which rose from the sea) *was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.* You may remember that this kingdom was the head of Gold, and was the richest and greatest kingdom of the gentile world kingdoms – full of feathers, which had divers colors. The prophet Daniel interpreted the dream of the great image whose head was of gold, by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

**Daniel 2:37-38** *Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. 38 And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. **Thou art this head of gold.***

**Came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar:** -- Lebanon is the northern border of the land of Judea,

where Nebuchadnezzar apparently invaded it; here was the mountain and forest of Lebanon, famous for the cedars which grew there. There are many references in scripture about the Cedars of Lebanon.

**4 He (the great eagle) cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffick; he set it in a city of merchants. 5 He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field; he placed it by great waters, and set it as a willow tree.**

He cropped off the top of his young twigs, undoubtedly a reference to his taking of the very best of the people to Babylon.

**2 Kings 24:11-16** *And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it. 12 And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. 13 And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said. 14 And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. 15 And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. 16 And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a*

*thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.*

***6 And it grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs.***

We are not expressly told what these words mean in the explanation of this chapter which begins in verse 11 and continues to the end of the chapter. It appears to mean that the people who were taken captive by the king of Babylon (called the seed of the land) became the spreading vine of low stature which turned toward the King of Babylon. In other words, they submitted themselves to his reign.

***7 There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers: and, behold, this vine did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation. 8 It was planted in a good soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine. 9 Say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Shall it prosper? shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither? it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring, even without great power or many people to pluck it up by the roots thereof. 10 Yea, behold, being planted, shall it prosper? shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the furrows where it grew.***

**There was also another great eagle with great wings and**

**many feathers** – In the same way, but to a lesser degree, this speaks of another king - the king of Egypt to whom the king of Judah had sent ambassadors seeking help of him.

**Ezekiel 17:15** *But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things? or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?*

Consider that the term "long-winged" of [Eze 17:3](#) is omitted, as Egypt had not such a wide empire and large armies as Babylon. Egypt was a far lesser kingdom.

***this vine did bend her roots toward him*** -- literally, "thirsted after him with its roots"; expressing the longings after Egypt in heart of the Jews for help against the King of Babylon. Zedekiah sought the alliance of Egypt, thinking that the King of Egypt could help them defend against the king of Babylon. But this did not prosper.

**Jeremiah 37:5** *Then Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they departed from Jerusalem.*

**11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 12 Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these things mean? tell them, Behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon;**

**Say now: --** This is the order which the LORD gave to his prophet to explain the riddle (the parable).

**To the rebellious house; --** to the house of Judah, which have been, and still are, rebellious against me, and are now entering into rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar.

**Know ye not? --** are ye so blockish that you do not know what is meant? or are you so secure that you will not consider it, but run on your own ruin?

**The king of Babylon, --** Nebuchadnezzar, is that first great eagle who held such great power – power given him of the Lord so that the Lord was pleased to call Nebuchadnezzar “his servant.” Amazing, isn’t it? That God sets up kings and tears down kings. He uses them for his own purpose, in this case, to chastise His own people.

**Jerusalem –** Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem by way of Lebanon in the north.

**Hath taken the king thereof and the princes thereof; --** the king of Israel, and his seed, and nobles are the branches and twigs cropped off, these are taken, conquered, made captives and **led them with him to Babylon.**

**2 Kings 24:11-16** *And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it. 12 And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him*

*in the eighth year of his reign. **13** And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said. **14** And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. **15** And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. **16** And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.*

**13 And hath taken of the king's seed, and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the mighty of the land: 14 That the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand.**

**2 Kings 24:17-19** And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah. 18 Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 19 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

Nebuchadnezzar had commanded Zedekiah concerning the kingdom – and his kingdom would stand as long as he kept the king's word.

**2 Chronicles 36:11-13** *Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. **12** And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the LORD. **13** And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel.*

**15** ***But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things? or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?***

**But he rebelled against him,** -- Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon, broke the covenant he entered into, and violated his oath. How did he do that?

**in sending his ambassadors into Egypt;** -- to form an alliance with the king of Egypt, and obtain help from him to break off the Babylonian yoke; this is signified by the vine "bending *its* roots, and shooting forth *its* branches towards another great eagle", the king of Egypt, [Eze 17:7](#);

**that they might give him horses and much people;** with both which Egypt apparently abounded, for King Solomon, had many years before, brought horses out of Egypt. ([1Ki 10:28](#)). At

this time in Judea there was a scarcity both of horses and men because of the multitude of captives which the king of Babylon had carried away. For this reason, Zedekiah sent to Egypt for both, for recruits of men; and for horses to form a cavalry, to free himself from the king of Babylon, and defend himself and people against him.

**shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such *things*?** -  
- that is guilty of breaking an express law of God, which forbids the kings of Israel multiplying horses, and sending to Egypt for them;

**Deuteronomy 17:14-16** *When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; 15 Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. 16 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.*

Too, King Hezekiah chose to place confidence in the army of flesh instead of trusting the LORD:

**Isaiah 31:1** *Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but*

*they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!*

In all this, Hezekiah showed base ingratitude to the king of Babylon, who had set him upon the throne, and put him in a comfortable and flourishing condition.

**or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?** -- shall one guilty, as of the other crimes, so of breach of covenant, and of perjury, escape the vengeance of God and man? he shall not.

**16 *As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die.***

**Jeremiah 39:7** *Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon.*

**Jeremiah 52:11** *Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.*

**17 *Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company make for him in the war, by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons: 18 Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape.***

How can those hired against another prosper when the LORD is against such? Aiding another when he is in breach of the Lord's

covenant cannot hope to prosper – no, he shall not escape.

**19 *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head. 20 And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me. 21 And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it.***

What was the rebellion and folly of Zedekiah and the Jewish nobles? The LORD had commanded them to submit themselves to the king of Babylon and live – but Zedekiah refused. He chose to seek help from Egypt (in scripture a type of the world). Even in a great time of trouble – with Nebuchadnezzar coming upon him, he turned away from the LORD and unto the world for help. This was his rebellion. It would be our rebellion. Let us always trust our LORD in time of peace and safety and in time of tribulation and trouble. He is our rock – our high tower, our shield, and exceeding great reward!

**22 ¶ *Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent:***

**I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar; --**  
Nebuchadnezzar had took one of the family of David, and set, him upon the throne, signified by taking of the seed of the land,

and planting it, [Eze 17:5](#); but without success;

**Ezekiel 17:5** *He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field; he placed it by great waters, and set it as a willow tree.*

Wherefore the Lord here promises that he will "also", take one and plant it, which should thrive and prosper: by the "high cedar" is meant the Jewish nation, which the Lord chose and set on high above all nations of the earth distinguishing it with peculiar blessings and favors; this is why it may be compared to the high and spreading cedar.

**Numbers 24:5** *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!*

By "the highest branch" of it the tribe of Judah, who prevailed above his brethren, because from him came the chief ruler, (Lion of the tribe of Judah) and from whence the Messiah was to come, and did.

**Genesis 49:10** *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*

**Revelation 5:5** *And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.*

**23 In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it**

***shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.***

In the highest part of the land of Israel, as Jerusalem is said to be. No matter where one is located in the land of Israel – he is said to “go up” to Jerusalem. The cedar is the royal house of David. This tender one is the Messiah, the Son of David. It is the same promise as given in the book of Isaiah. *“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots”* ([Isa 11:1](#)). *“For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground”* ([Isa 53:2](#)).

**Ezekiel 20:40** *For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things.*

***24 And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have spoken and have done it.***

**And all the trees of the field shall know**, -- All the nations of the World, and the great ones, and the mighty men of the earth, shall know and acknowledge, when these things are accomplished.

**that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish:** -- It is amazing to see that God is able to look on every one who is proud and abase him – that is to cast down the present high trees and green trees (the nations and rulers of this world); and to exalt those who are seen as the off-scouring of the world – the poor, but the redeemed of the LORD. O, beloved, the meek shall inherit the earth and delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

**Matthew 5:5** Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

**Psalm 72:7** In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.

**I the Lord have spoken and have done *it*;** -- Notice – “have done it.” God’s promise is as sure as can be – for his words shall not fall in the street – but what he has purposed and said shall surely come to pass! “IT IS DONE!” “IT IS DONE!”