

EZEKIEL 7

COMPLETE AND UTTER DESTRUCTION

In this chapter, fair warning is given to the people of God concerning the destruction of their land, which was now hastily approaching. Jehovah, through His prophet, sends notice of it, to show them that the thing was certain and near; but sadly, He finds them to be deaf, stupid, and unmoved.

When the town is going up in smoke and flames, people do not dream up fine words and flowery expressions in which to give warning of it. Rather, they cry through the streets, with a loud and terrifying shout, "Fire! Fire!" So also, the prophet here proclaims, "An end! an end! it has come, it has come; behold, it has come" (verses 2, 3, and 6). The people had flattered themselves with hopes that they would shortly see an end of their troubles. "Yes," says God, "an end has indeed come – but not a happy end like you desired. It is the end which you have been so often warned of – that final end which Moses wished you to consider" (Deut. 32:29). This end was long in coming, but it had finally come now. Although the ruin of unrepentant sinners comes slowly, it comes surely.

This miserable end was coming from God's wrath; it was not blended, as it sometimes is, with mixtures of mercy. These people in Ezekiel's time had become a vessel of wrath, prepared for destruction. And although the Lord sometimes does remember mercy in the midst of His wrath, He here says, "My eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity" (verses 4 and 9). Persons who have made light of mercy when it was offered to them shall have judgment without mercy. There is no escape from His judgments, for no one ever hardened his heart against Him and prospered. Those who strengthen themselves in their wickedness will discover – too late – that they have only weakened and ruined themselves (Ps. 52:7).

Although the majority of the people would be cut off by these righteous judgments, yet a few of them would escape (verse 16); but they would not be any better for it. They would have no comfort or satisfaction in their own minds, for wherever they went, they would carry about with them their guilty consciences. Moreover, they would have no benefit from their wealth and riches, which they imagined they could use to bribe their enemies and buy their friends. Even God's Temple would not help these people in that day of trouble (verses 20-22). They had prided themselves in this magnificent structure, and promised themselves security from it; but this confidence would also fail them. God had bestowed great honor upon His people by setting up His sanctuary among them (verse 20). It was beautiful because it was holy; He had set it up in majesty, and everything about it was glorious; and it helped make His people more illustrious

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ A description of the utter destruction coming upon God's people - verses 1-15
- ❖ The few who would escape would suffer great distress - verses 16-22
- ❖ Great ruin would be the outcome of the people's great sins - verses 23-27

among their neighbors. But alas! They had done great dishonor to the Lord by profaning His holy sanctuary with their images of their idolatrous deities, which they set up in rivalry against Jehovah. The Lord's ordinances and their privileges will justly be taken away from those who have despised and profaned them. Those who will not be governed by the power of Godliness are unworthy to be honored with the *privileges of Godliness*.



Beginning in verse 23, we have the scene of a prisoner being arraigned. "Make a chain," commands the prophet. With this, the criminal was to be bound and brought before the tribunal of Divine justice; there he was to stand in fetters, as a notorious villain, to receive the sentence of his doom. All those who break the restraining bands of God's law will find themselves bound by the unbreakable chains of His judgments.

The indictment is now drawn up against the prisoner (verse 23): "The land is full of bloody crimes!" It was full of the guilt of innocent blood, which had been shed under the pretense of justice. The city of David – the holy city, that should have been the pattern of righteousness, and that should have been the protector of the righteous and the punisher of wrong – this city was now full of violence. And so judgment was pronounced, based upon this indictment. God would reckon with these people – not only for the profaning of His sanctuary, but also for the perverting of justice between man and man. Since they had walked in the ways of the heathen, and had done even worse than them; God would now bring the worst of the heathen upon them, in order to destroy them and lay them waste. They had filled their houses with goods that were unjustly gotten, and they had used their pomp and power for the crushing and oppressing of the weak; and now the Lord would allow their houses to be possessed by those who had no right to them. Since they had defiled the Temple by setting up the images of other gods, He would remove the tokens of the presence of their own God. They had followed one sin with another, and now He would pursue them with one judgment upon another – with utter destruction (verse 25).

As we study this solemn chapter, let us make application of its awakening content to ourselves, in relation to the last great Day of Judgment. Yet a little while, and the cry will be, "The end is come!" And if the archangel's trumpet was to sound right now, would we be prepared? For those who love the Lord, there is indeed laid up a crown of glory, which the righteous Judge will give them. But the question is this: is Jesus precious to us in His Person, in His work, and in His saving grace? If so, we may look forward with holy joy to the approach of this great day! Blessed shall be the day when the end shall forever come to sin, sorrow, suffering, sickness, and pain!

Lord, we repent of times when we have despised and profaned Your ordinances and the privileges that we enjoy from them. We pray for grace that we may be governed by the power of true Godliness! Amen.