



Welcome back!

**Let's pray.**

We have talked some in prior studies about the so-called Palestinians. You may be aware that the Palestinians are called "refugees". However, they are not like any other refugees in the world. This information comes from an article by Elliott Abrams\*.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) works in 130 countries with a staff of about 11,000 to help about 17 million refugees. In 2016 it resettled 190,000 people. One of its core missions is "ending statelessness."

On the other hand, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) exists only to help Palestinians. Its mission appears to be "never ending statelessness."

Because of its unique and irrational standard for what it calls a "refugee", UNRWA, with a staff of 30,000 ensures that the number of "refugees" continues to grow. With no plan to resettle them other than Israel's complete destruction, the Palestinian "refugee" population has grown from 750,000 to 5 million.

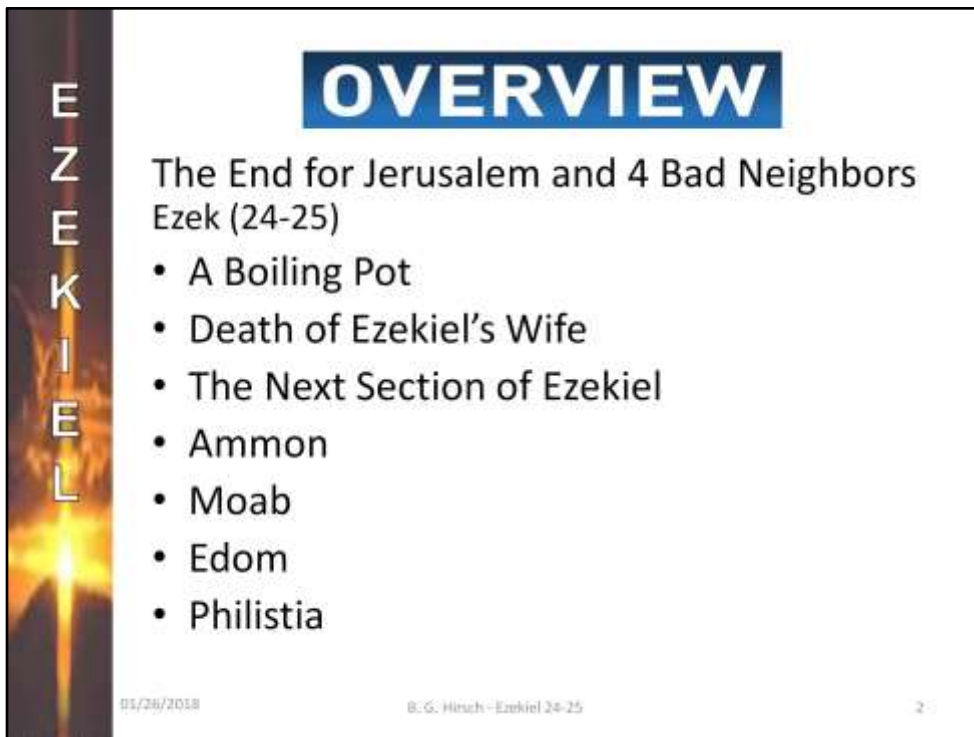
According to UNRWA individuals that have "Palestinian" ancestry and who were born in and are citizens of a different country are nevertheless considered "Palestinian refugees" by UNRWA.

To quote Mr. Abrams, "In other words, if you were born in Amman, Jordan to a mother and father born in Amman, Jordan, and you are all Jordanian citizens, you are still a 'refugee' according to UNRWA. In fact the vast majority of 'Palestinian refugees' whom UNRWA helps in Jordan are Jordanian citizens. Under normal international definitions, and UNHCR definitions, they are not 'refugees' at all. To make the point even more strongly, under UNRWA definitions one can be a U.S. citizen and a "Palestinian refugee." This is absurd."

The USA is the biggest contributor to both agencies. Helping the UNHCR is worthwhile, helping the UNRWA, not so much...

I would also highly recommend that you read Vice President Pence's speech before the Israeli Knesset.  
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\* Elliott Abrams is an American diplomat, lawyer and political scientist who served in foreign policy positions for Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush.

The slide features a vertical title 'EZEKIEL' on the left, with each letter aligned with a corresponding image of a city in flames. The main title 'OVERVIEW' is in a blue box at the top center. Below it, the text 'The End for Jerusalem and 4 Bad Neighbors Ezek (24-25)' is followed by a bulleted list of topics. At the bottom, there is a date '01/28/2018', a name 'B.G. Hirsch - Ezekiel 24-25', and a page number '2'.

In this lesson we will study chapters 24 and 25 of the book of Ezekiel.

We will finally come to the end of God's messages of destruction for Jerusalem and Judah. This is because the promised destruction will occur.

Ezekiel's wife will die, and we will discover why the LORD orders Ezekiel not to mourn.

Before moving to chapter 25, we will look at the next major section of the book of Ezekiel, and I will give a brief introduction to the next 8 chapters.

We will begin our look at the next section with God's messages to four of Israel's bad neighbors: Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia.

As always, feel free to ask questions or comment at any time.

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## Review

- Ezekiel, a priest, a prophet, and a watchman in Babylon continues his ministry to the exiles – now 588 B.C.
- LORD brought a specific indictment against Jerusalem and the people
- People of Jerusalem likened to dross
- The LORD listed 5 corrupt groups of leaders
- Disturbing allegory of Ohola and Oholibah

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Let's review.

Ezekiel, a priest from Jerusalem, was taken to Babylon 10 years ago in Nebuchadnezzar's second conquest in 598 B.C. During his time in Babylon, Ezekiel, as the LORD's prophet and watchman, has been giving the LORD's message of judgment upon the nation of Israel to the exiles in Babylon. We have now arrived at the final siege of Jerusalem, and it is around 588 B.C. as we begin our study.

The last time we met, the LORD brought a specific indictment against Jerusalem and its people. He listed the sins of the people and spoke seven times of their shedding blood.

The LORD likened the people of Jerusalem to dross, the waste product that is produced from smelting silver. God states that He will cause the people to be burned like dross is burned.

The LORD then listed five groups of corrupt leaders that had been instrumental in leading the people astray, sealing their fate.

Lastly, we heard the disturbing allegories of the wicked sisters Ohola and Oholibah, who the LORD said were Samaria and Jerusalem. We listened as God described how he had judged Samaria, and how he would judge Jerusalem by using their lovers to destroy them.

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## A Boiling Pot

- Siege of Jerusalem starts
- Ezekiel told to give parable of a boiling pot – reverse of parable from chapter 11
- People of Jerusalem and the city will burn to ashes like the residue boiled in the pot
- The LORD will cleanse Jerusalem of its corruption with fire as the pot was cleaned
- An escapee from Jerusalem will come to Ezekiel and Ezekiel will no longer be mute

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Let's read chapter 24 of Ezekiel verses 1 – 14. (*Read verses 1-14.*)

The long awaited siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar begins. It is now January 15, 588 B.C. Even though Ezekiel is hundreds of miles away in Babylon he knows what is happening.

When we studied chapter 11, we discussed a strange saying that the people of Jerusalem were using, "This city is the cauldron, and we are the meat." The intent of this saying was to give them comfort, because it meant that the people were protected in the midst of city as the meat was protected by the metal pot. They were not cast out as the exiles had been.

Now however, Ezekiel is told by the LORD to give a similar parable with a very different meaning. Ezekiel is told to utter the parable. So it is not clear whether Ezekiel acted it out or not.

In the parable meat is cooked in a boiling pot until it is well boiled, and the corrosion or scum is not skimmed off. The LORD then pronounces woe to the bloody city whose corruption is still in her. The pieces are then brought out in no particular order, indicating the destruction or removal of the people of the city by force.

God then says that the blood shed in the city was placed on a rock contrary to the law as stated in Lev 17:13. Rather than the blood being covered with dust, the LORD says that He will place the blood on a bare rock so that it can't be covered, and the LORD's wrath will come against Jerusalem.

Ezekiel either relates or builds a great fire to cause the contents of the pot to be burned away leaving a clean pot. This represents the LORD's fury and wrath upon Jerusalem. The LORD says that He would have cleansed Jerusalem, but they would not be cleansed. Therefore the LORD will carry out the sentence. The end has come.

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## Death of Ezekiel's Wife

- Ezekiel told his wife will die
- Ezekiel told not to mourn publicly
- People ask why Ezekiel is behaving as he is
- Ezekiel gives God's message and God's reason for Ezekiel's behavior
- Ezekiel no longer mute after receiving news of Jerusalem's destruction

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Let's read chapter 24 of Ezekiel verses 15 – 27. (*Read verses 15-27.*)

The word of the LORD comes once more to Ezekiel, and he receives one of the hardest tasks ever give to any prophet of the LORD.

Ezekiel is told by the LORD that his wife will die. That this would be a great loss to Ezekiel is made clear by the LORD saying that the LORD would "take away" the "desire of your eyes". However, despite the grief that Ezekiel will feel, Ezekiel is commanded by the LORD not to mourn publicly.

The LORD is not being insensitive to Ezekiel's sorrow. In fact, the LORD acknowledges Ezekiel's pain by saying, "Sigh, but not aloud". So, the LORD knows Ezekiel's grief, because it represents the LORD's sorrow at the destruction that is coming to His people and to Jerusalem, which the LORD calls "My sanctuary". Ezekiel could sorrow privately, but not publicly.

Verse 17 describes 5 actions that were customary of traditional mourning for the ancient Israelites. These included:

1. Sighing (Job 3:24, Ps 31:10, Is 21:2, Jer 45:3)
2. Removing of one's turban – a priest such as Ezekiel routinely wore a turban (Lev 16:4)
3. Removing one's sandals (2 Sam 15:30)
4. Covering one's lips (Mic 3:7)
5. Eating special mourning bread (Hos 9:4)

I have included scriptural references for these practices in the notes.

Naturally, after Ezekiel's wife died, the people asked why Ezekiel was not doing any of the traditional mourning practices. As the LORD had planned, this gave Ezekiel the opportunity to give the people the LORD's message.

Essentially, the LORD tells the people that Jerusalem, the place of their pride, their delight, their hope and longing, and the home of the sons and daughters they had left behind; the LORD will destroy and profane. And, even though Ezekiel has a right to mourn, since his wife's life was not ended by God's wrath. The people have no right to mourn Jerusalem, which was destroyed as judgment from God for their evil and abominable practices. The Bible gives no instruction to mourn for those who are executed as judgment for their sins.

This period of God's wrath is now done. The end, for the time being, of the covenant people in the Promised Land is over. It was time to move forward towards the LORD's promise of living in exile and looking forward to God's promised restoration of Israel.

Lastly, the LORD tells Ezekiel that an escapee from the destruction of Jerusalem will come to Ezekiel. When that occurs, Ezekiel, who has only been able to speak in the last six years when the LORD gave him a message, will no longer be mute. This will also serve as a sign to the people. (next slide)

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## The Next Section of Ezekiel

- Eight chapters: 25 – 32
- Deal with nations surrounding Israel
- Seven major nations; 12 nations mentioned overall
- Three divisions
  - Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia (25)
  - Tyre & Sidon (26 – 28)
  - Egypt & others (29 -32)

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Now, we begin a new section of the book of Ezekiel. Chapters 25 – 32 deal not with Israel, but with the nations that surround Israel. However, the LORD still intends this as instruction for Israel as it is being related to the exiles in Babylon.

In the eight chapters of this new section of Ezekiel, we will mention 12 nations and God's pronouncements against them. Seven nations are the primary focus, a five nations receive just a mention.

There will be three lessons in these eight chapters. This follows the flow of the material presented.

The first lesson, which I will present today covers Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia.

The second lesson covers Tyre and Sidon, and has some incredible information about Satan.

The third lesson will cover Egypt and some additional nations.

One major nation is not mentioned in these chapters, and that is Babylon. This is due to the fact that Babylon would conquer each of these nations.

Before we begin, you might be asking why the LORD is including this and why it is relevant. So let's examine a few passages, one in the Old Testament and two in the New Testament.

Let's read Gen 12: 1-3. (*read Gen 12:1-3*)

Notice that the LORD will punish the nations that come against Israel, and history bears witness to this passage. Ezekiel proves that Israel will also be punished for sin. However, the LORD is the only one who is allowed to administer punishment to Israel, and no one is allowed to rejoice over Israel's misfortune.

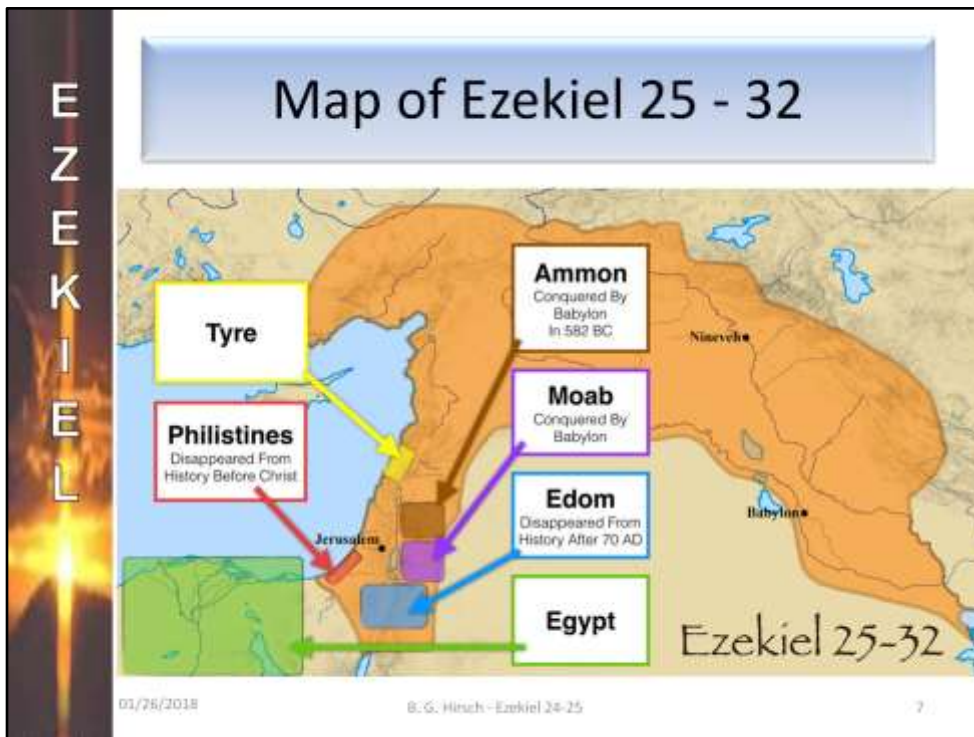
Let's read 1Peter 4:17-18. (*read 1Peter 4:17-18*)

You can see from this passage that if God begins His judgement with the nation of Israel, then what will happen to the ungodly nations?

Now let's read Matt 25:31-46. (*read Matt 25:31-46*)

Please note that this is a judgment of nations. The sheep and goat nations are judged based upon their treatment of who? Israel. However, everyone does not agree with this interpretation. You should do your own study. (next slide)





Here is a map that will give you a feeling for where the countries we are discussing were located.

You can also see where the Assyrian capital of Nineveh and the Babylonian capital of Babylon were located in relation to Israel and the nations in chapters 25 – 32. The other, briefly mentioned, nations are not shown on this map.

Today, as I stated, we will deal with four of these nations, Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia.

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## Ammon

- Ammonites were spoken of in chapter 21:28 - 32
- Ezekiel to prophesy against (i.e. set his face toward) the Ammonites
- Long history of enmity towards Israel
- They rejoiced over Israel's misfortune
- Therefore the LORD will cause Ammon to be destroyed

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Let's read chapter 25 of Ezekiel verses 1 – 7. (*Read verses 1-7.*)

We saw the LORD speak against the Ammonites in chapter 21 verses 28 to 32. In that study, I mentioned that we would hear about the Ammonites again in chapter 25, and here we are.

Ammon originated from an incestuous union between Lot and his younger daughter in Gen 19:38.

The LORD directs Ezekiel to set his face toward, or to prophesy against the Ammonites.

The Ammonites had long been a foe of Israel's:

- They oppressed Israel in Judges 10:6 to 11:33.
- David fought them in 2Sam 10 and 12.
- They attacked Judah in 2Chr 20.

The LORD condemned the Ammonites for their behavior towards Israel, and because they rejoiced over Israel's misfortune and destruction. And because of this, the LORD would obliterate the Ammonites from among the countries.

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EZEKIEL

## Moab

- The LORD speaks against Moab and Seir (a mountain in Edom)
- Moab declared that Judah was like the other nations because it had fallen to Babylon
- The LORD will give Moab into the hands of Babylon (men of the East)
- Moab will be forgotten

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Let's read chapter 25 of Ezekiel verses 8 – 11. *(Read verses 8-11.)*

Moab originated from an incestuous union between Lot and his older daughter in Gen 19:37. Chemosh was the deity of the Moabites.

During the Exodus, the LORD would not permit the Israelites to disturb Moab because they were descended from Lot.

However, King Balak hired Balaam to curse the children of Israel in Numbers 22, because the Moabites feared the large numbers of the Jewish people. The LORD frustrated King Balak by making Balaam bless the Israelites rather than curse them. Nevertheless, Balaam helped King Balak by advising him to send Moabite women to seduce the Jewish men. The subsequent sin of Israel caused the LORD's wrath to fall on them until Phineas acted by killing a flagrant couple, and cooled God's wrath.

- The children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years in Judges 3:12-14.
- King Saul fought Moab in 1Sam 14:47.
- David's mighty men fought with Moab in 2Sam 23:20.

Moab was prophesied against in Jer 48, Is 15 & 16, and Amos 2.

The LORD says that He will judge Moab because they said Israel was just like all the rest of the nations. They said this because Babylon had defeated them just as it had the other nations. The implication was that Judah's God was unable to save them.

Therefore, the LORD says that He will clear the territory of the Moabites, and the Moabites would be heard from no more.

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A vertical graphic on the left side of the slide featuring the word "EZEKIEL" in white capital letters, with a bright, glowing sun or starburst effect at the bottom.

## Edom

- Edom descended from Esau
- Long time foe of Israel
- Conquered by King David
- Herod last known Idumean
- Took advantage of siege of Jerusalem to raid and annex Judean territory
- The LORD says He will with Edom according to His anger and fury

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Let's read chapter 25 of Ezekiel verses 12 – 14. (*Read verses 12-14.*)

The land of Edom was settled by the descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother. You will find the story of Esau in Gen 25 starting in verse 23.

Herod the Great was the last Idumean (descended from Edom) that is mentioned in the Bible. Herod practiced Judaism, but he was not in fact of Jewish descent.

David conquered Edom and all but destroyed them in 2Sam 8. Psalm 137 verse 7 asks for Edom to be destroyed to the foundations. And the book of Obadiah lists a great deal about Edom.

Because Edom conspired to take vengeance upon Israel after the siege, the LORD will leave Edom desolate.

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## Philistia

- Ancient enemy of Israel
- Primary enemy during period of Judges
- Weakened by King Saul, but eventually Saul and Jonathan killed
- King David defeated them
- The LORD promised to eliminate them
- Assyria eventually conquered and assimilated them

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Let's read chapter 25 of Ezekiel verses 15 – 17. *(Read verses 15-17.)*

The Philistines are one of the most mentioned nations in the Old Testament. They were originally a seafaring people from Crete. They were non-Semitic and they settled on the Mediterranean coast of Canaan during the period of the Book of Judges. They founded five principalities - Gaza, Asheklon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath.

The Philistines were the primary enemy during the period of the Judges. They fought frequently with Israel, and they had superior weapons.

King Saul weakened the Philistines, but ultimately, Saul and his son Jonathan were killed by the Philistines in battle.

David as a boy defeated the Philistines champion Goliath. Later David for a period under King Saul hid with the Philistines (1Sam 29). Eventually David as King of Israel subjugated the Philistines during his reign as recorded in 2Sam 5.

Because of the long hatred of Israel, the Philistines took advantage of Israel's defeat to take vengeance. Therefore the LORD says that He will eradicate the Philistines from the sea coast. Assyria conquered and assimilated the Philistines. There is virtually no record of the Philistines after the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

Questions? Please read chapters 26, 27, and 28 for next week. This will really be some fascinating material. Come and see.

**Let's pray.**