

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Ezekiel: Effective Ministry To The Spiritually Rebellious Part XXVII: God's Sovereignly Directing The Sword Toward Ammon (Ezekiel 21:28-32)

I. Introduction

- A. When we see the Lord level His punishment on another party for their sin, we may be tempted to think we are above such punishment, being innately better than the other party.
- B. Galatians 6:1 instead calls us to be meek in such situations, to consider ourselves lest we also be tempted.
- C. Ezekiel 21:28-32 provides an illustration of this truth in the case of the Ammonites (as follows):

II. God's Sovereignly Directing The Sword Toward Ammon, Ezekiel 21:28-32.

- A. Continuing in the theme of the sword that was begun back in Ezekiel 21:1, God told Ezekiel in Ezekiel 21:28a to predict that after prophesying about God's sword being sent to Jerusalem instead of Ammon when Babylon's king came to the fork in the road between these two choices (Ezekiel 21:18-23), that God was then directing the sword of His punishment toward the Ammonites.
- B. This would be a shock to the Ammonite people: they "thought they had escaped Nebuchadnezzar's attack," so they were "relieved and happy . . . thankful that Jerusalem would suffer in their place," Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament, p. 1269.
- C. Indeed, after Jerusalem fell and Nebuchadnezzar had set up the puppet governor Gedaliah in Judah, the Ammonites had likely (cf. Jeremiah 40:11-41:10) "tried to set up another government in Israel that would be opposed to Babylon -- probably so Nebuchadnezzar would again attack Jerusalem instead of Ammon!" (Ibid.)
- D. However, God's justice was equally applied to all men, be they His people in Judah or their relative nation of the Ammonites east of Judah, so the Lord had Ezekiel prophesy that the sword that had been polished for Jerusalem (Ezekiel 21:9, 11) would also be polished for use on Ammon for its sin against God, Ezek. 21:28b.
- E. False prophets with false visions and lying divinations had predicted liberty for Ammon from Babylonian oppression, giving the Ammonites relief, but regardless of these predictions, the sword of God would truly be laid on the necks of the wicked men in Ammon who were to be slain, for their day of judgment had come, their punishment from God that was due to the full, Ezekiel 21:29.
- F. The sword would be returned to its sheath only after the people of Ammon had been slain in the land of their ancestors where they had been created regardless if Nebuchadnezzar's divination had directed him to attack Jerusalem instead of Ammon, for God in the land of the Ammonites themselves would pour out His wrath in fiery anger upon them, handing them over to brutal men who were skilled destroyers, Ezekiel 21:30-31.
- G. The Ammonites would be fuel for the figurative fire of God's judgment, their blood would be shed in their own homeland, and they would be remembered no more, a solemn affirmation by the Lord, Ezekiel 21:32. "Ammon's doom would be worse" than that of Judah, "for no promise of restoration is given her (v. 32) as there is for Israel," Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Ezekiel 21:28-32.
- H. These invaders were not Babylonians, but Ezekiel 25:4 claims they were "people of the East," possibly nomadic invaders from the desert, Ibid. God's figurative judgment fire against Judah (Ezekiel 20:45-49) would also consume the Ammonites even if God used different attackers than the Babylonians, Ibid.

Lesson: *Though the Ammonites were relieved that Babylon's king Nebuchadnezzar had followed his divination to attack Jerusalem and Judah instead of Ammon, from God's perspective, this did NOT mean the Ammonites would escape God's judgment. To the contrary, the Ammonites were wicked like Judah's people, so God would send His sword in the form of likely fierce, cruel nomadic warriors to destroy the Ammonites in their own land, and worse than in the case of Judah's judgment, the Ammonites would be consumed with no future as a nation.*

Application: *(1) If we see another party experiencing God's punishment, may we consider ourselves lest we also be tempted to sin and depart from sin lest we end up an object of far more severe discipline from the Lord! (2) Also, if we note a fellow believer is overcome with a fault, Galatians 6:1 calls us to restore him in a spirit of meekness, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted. We must always remember that we ourselves are sinners just like anybody else, and so learn to handle sin and divine judgment in others in a spirit of true humility. (3) Just because we do not see the Lord exhibiting His fierce anger against our sin while He is administering punishment on others does not mean He is not angry at our sin. As in the case of the Ammonites, we should respond to God's severe discipline of another party as a window of opportunity He has granted us to repent lest we likewise be punished!*