

God's Love for Jerusalem

Ezekiel 16

Group ¹	C	V	Description
God's Grace to Unfaithful Jerusalem	16	1-5	Ezekiel told to let Jerusalem know that for their abominations they were as children abandoned at birth
		6-7	God called them to LIVE!
		8-14	God provided for them as a parent cares for a child
		15-22	Jerusalem abused God's provision and sinned in idolatry
		23-29	Alliances with other nations didn't help
		30-43	Jerusalem will be judged as an adulterous wife and harlot who receives nothing
		44-52	Jerusalem is like her "Sisters" Samaria and Sodom but worse
		53-59	God will restore
The Covenant Remembered		60-63	God will remember his covenant and Jerusalem will remember too and be ashamed of their sins and be silent in forgiveness

Reflections

This chapter is a summary of how God has and will deal with the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem's history would be worthy of much more space than the focus of this article would allow. However, a brief history is encapsulated in the first five verses in the form of an allegory.

At the time of God's choosing (the exodus from Egypt), Jerusalem was a city of the Hittites and shortly after that it was taken by the Jebusites, one of Canaanite tribes, which is when it became known as Jerusalem.² Prior to that it had been known as Salem (see Genesis 14) or something similar. Upon being taken by the Israelites, it flourished into a great city during the times of the kings. However, the people misplaced their confidence in themselves and in idols rather than in God who had blessed them.

Their idolatry would result in God allowing their enemies to pillage and destroy the city but not fully. God promised to restore those taken into captivity when His anger was completed. This is as a result of the people of Israel not keeping their covenant with God, which He warned would happen if they didn't (see Deuteronomy 28-29). Finally, God promises restoration from captivity, which is in keeping with the covenant God made with Israel (see Deuteronomy 30).

Why does God do this? The answer is given in verses 60-63.

Ezekiel 16:60-63 NASB "Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you. **61** Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you receive your sisters, *both* your older and your younger; and I will give them to you as daughters, but not because of your covenant. **62** Thus I will establish My covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the LORD, **63** so that you may remember and be ashamed and never open your mouth anymore because of your humiliation, when I have forgiven you for all that you have done," the Lord GOD declares.

¹ (NASB) "Group" column from the headings in the NASB text.

² (Orr "Jebus; Jebusi; Jebusite")

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God wants us to remember our covenant with those of us who have placed their faith in God, in this particular case, it is with the people of the Israelite nation. He is faithful in keeping the covenant by allowing the captivity and devastation to occur in response to the people breaking the covenant. He will also be faithful in keeping the covenant by allowing a remnant to return to Jerusalem after a time.

We can't take covenant keeping for granted, although we often do. Why? Consider this example of the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem and the nation of Israel. If God is faithful in keeping the good promises if the nation remains faithful, He has to be just as faithful in keeping the evil promised if the covenant is broken.

God's faithfulness is long-suffering. How is that shown? By the fact that over 700 years pass before God allows the judgments to be executed on His people for their idolatry and the broke covenant. This is consistent with the character of God. This should remind us that if God was willing to do this in the past, He will be just as faithful to do the same in the future.

There and Then: Here and Now

Answer the questions below as you reflect on your own life and this part of our study³: *my LOG vs others SPECK*. Here are some possible responses I've identified from the text that might apply to anyone.

S - Are there *sins* for me to avoid or confess?

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P - Are there *promises* from God for me to claim?

•

E - Are there *examples* for me to follow or avoid?

•

C - Are there *commands* for me to obey?

•

K - How has this passage increased my *knowledge* about God / Jesus / Holy Spirit?

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Key Words: Old Testament, Prophecy, Ezekiel, Jerusalem, Idolatry, Remnant, Covenant



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3 *Navigator Bible Study Handbook* (The Navigators), with additions & Matthew 7:1-5.