**Faith Foundations 2023-2024**

**The Book of Ezekiel**

**Session 13—Ezekiel 21-22**

**In these two chapters of Ezekiel, God continues His tirades against His people, and this time He focuses on a topic that has been less prominent thus far: the issue of the violence committed by the Israelites. God at this point had heavily criticized His people for their idolatry, but He had not yet said much about their shedding of innocent blood. That will change in these chapters, and God will threaten to bring the same kind of violence back upon His people that they have committed against the weak and vulnerable in their midst.**

**Read Ezekiel 21:1-5. What metaphor does God use to describe the future punishment against His people?**

**Whom does God threaten to “cut off?” Why would both of these groups be affected?**

**According to verse 5, what will happen as a result of God’s punishment of His people?**

**Read Ezekiel 21:6-13. What did God want Ezekiel to do, and why?**

**What was Ezekiel supposed to tell the people?**

**What is the difference between the sword and the rod? Which one will God use in this case, and why?**

**How does God want Ezekiel to react to this news?**

**Read Ezekiel 21:14-17. Why did God want Ezekiel to clap his hands? What would happen when he clapped?**

**Read Ezekiel 21:18-23. What are the two ways Nebuchadnezzar could go at the signpost?**

**How will Nebuchadnezzar decide which way to go?**

**Which way does Nebuchadnezzar decide to go, and what does he bring with him?**

**According to verse 23, what would the people of Jerusalem think about the omens that Nebuchadnezzar received? Were they right or wrong?**

**Read Ezekiel 21:24-27. According to verse 24, why would Jerusalem ultimately fall?**

**What did the “prince of Israel” need to do, and what did this action symbolize?**

**Who is “the one to whom judgment belongs?” When will He come?**

**Does God’s command in the last sentence of verse 26 sound familiar to you? Where have you heard this before, and how does it relate to “the one to whom judgment belongs” (see Luke 14:11)?**

**Read Ezekiel 21:28-32. Against whom does Ezekiel prophesy in this passage?**

**What did this group plan to do? Which “profane wicked” people would they attack?**

**Would these people’s plans be successful? What would eventually happen to them?**

**Read Ezekiel 22:1-5. For what does God specifically criticize Israel in this passage?**

**How would the other nations perceive Israel because of its sins?**

**Read Ezekiel 22:6-12. What specific sins of Israel does God enumerate in this passage?**

**Read Ezekiel 22:13-16. What punishments does God threaten against Israel?**

**Read Ezekiel 22:17-22. To what does God compare the Israelites in this passage?**

**How does God use this metaphor to proclaim how He will deal with the Israelites?**

**Read Ezekiel 22:23-31. Of what does God accuse the Israelite leaders (priests, prophets, and kings) in this passage?**

**According to verse 30, was there anyone in Israel who could stand up against God’s wrath and avert it?**

**What is “their way” that is described in verse 31? How has it come back upon the people?**

**Israel’s idolatry and violence went hand in hand: they committed violent and oppressive acts specifically because they had abandoned the God who taught them to do otherwise. In return, God would bring an even greater amount of violence upon His people at the hands of Babylonians. Yet He still considered Israel to be His people, as is evident by His oracle against the Ammonites who presumed to rise up against Jerusalem opportunistically during the Babylonian invasion. And He also promised to provide “one to whom judgment belongs,” who would wear the crown of the king of Israel and rule His people with justice and righteousness. And the one who wears this crown is, as we all know, Jesus Christ!**