

Ezekiel Part 28 (Ezekiel 23:1-21)

1. Chapter 16 is the message of the orphan who became a harlot. The theme of chap. 16 centers on the seduction of Judah by Canaanite worship.
2. Chapter 23 addresses the political alliances with ungodly nations that spelled doom for both Israel (Samaria), the Northern Kingdom, and Judah (Jerusalem), the Southern Kingdom.
3. Chapter 16 focuses on Judah alone while chap. 23 focuses on both Judah and Samaria (Israel).
4. In this parable Oholibah, Judah, observed the behavior and downfall of Oholah, Samaria, which fell to Assyria in 722 B.C.
5. Tragically, Judah did not learn from the things it saw in the demise of Israel.
6. Judah too became a harlot worse than the northern kingdom of Israel..
7. This parable declared that Judah also was marked for a fall that came in 586 B.C.
8. Chapter 23 can be divided into four sections:
 - (1) vv. 1–10 introduce the two sisters and describe the harlotry of Oholah (Samaria);
 - (2) vv. 11–21 describe the harlotry of Oholibah (Judah);
 - (3) vv. 22–35 presents four oracles of judgment concerning Oholibah;
 - (4) vv. 36–49 review the record of the two sisters and predicted judgment.
9. **23:1–4** This parable is about two daughters who are introduced in vv. 1–4.
10. The phrase “mother” of these daughters in verse 2 is a reference to the common origin of Jerusalem/Judah and Samaria/Israel.
11. The mention of Egypt in verse 3 makes specific reference to the bondage common to both Israel and Judah prior to the Exodus.
12. They did not learn their prostitution at home but from their task masters in Egypt.
13. When the Israelites came out of Egypt, they rebelled against God and Moses and finally made a golden calf that they worshiped as a substitute for Yahweh.
(Exodus 6:9; 16:2–3; 17:3, 32:1–10,23-24)
14. From the days of Israel’s youth, they were guilty of unfaithfulness. God did not discard Israel but was faithful to His promises made to Abraham. (Deuteronomy 7:6–11)
15. These two daughters represented the period of the divided kingdoms. The Northern Kingdom after 931 B.C. was Israel, and the capital was at Samaria.
16. This kingdom-daughter was named Oholah, which means “her tent.” (verse 4)

17. The other kingdom-daughter was Jerusalem, who was called Oholibah, meaning “my tent is in her.” (verse 4)
 18. This name is a reminder that God had selected Jerusalem as the place for his “tent” or place of worship.
 19. Oholah was called the “older” sister probably because the Northern Kingdom was the first to set up official shrines; they endorsed pagan worship under Jeroboam I. (1 Kings 12:25–33)
 20. Also, the Northern Kingdom was the first to establish political alliances with foreign nations, particularly the Assyrians. (Hosea 8:9)
 21. **23:5–10** Oholah’s record of prostitution with Assyria is summarized by describing how she lusted for the handsome young Assyrian warriors.
 22. The political alliance with Assyria also spilled over into the area of worship. (verse 7–8)
 23. The capture of sons and daughters and the slaying of Oholah with the sword referred to the exile that came with the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. at the hands of Shalmaneser V. (verse 9-10) (2 Kings 18:9)
 24. **23:11–21** The younger sister, Oholibah (Judah), witnessed the perversions of the older sister Oholah (Samaria), as well as the destruction but did not profit from the knowledge of tragic consequences.
 25. Instead Judah indulged in the same lifestyle and became more depraved than Israel. (verse 11)
 26. She lusted after the same kind of political alliances that proved to be the downfall of Samaria (vv. 12–13).
 27. Just as Oholah had been attracted to the Assyrians, Oholibah was attracted to the Babylonians.
 28. The sight of the Babylonians aroused a desire to be allied with them. (verse 15–16)
 29. Messengers were sent, the alliance was consummated, and Judah’s defilement was complete.
 30. But the alliance was no sooner complete than Judah was repulsed by the Babylonians. Judah turned away in disgust.
 31. God likewise was repulsed by Judah’s actions, and He turned away from them in disgust. (verse 18-21)
 32. The trite but true principle that “The one thing we learn from history is that we fail to learn from history” is true for individuals as well as nations.
- All the examples of the sins of the past that are recorded in the Word of God shout the warnings of sin’s ultimate consequences, but, amazingly, people still reject God and choose a life of sin and rebellion. (cf. Galatians 6:7–10)