
SUNDAY SERMON

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church

Willow, Alaska

Date: July 03, 2016

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 06.01-14

Text: Ezekiel 06.01-14

Subject: EZEKIEL SERIES –Prophecy to the mountains, rivers, and valleys of Israel.

Thus far, in the first five chapters of this marvelous book, we have seen the vision of God given to Ezekiel in chapter 1. We saw the filling of the Spirit and his commission to the whole house of Israel in chapters 2 and 3. We remember how he was told they nation would not listen to his words, but that told him not to be dismayed though they did forbear to hear. God had given him the mission to preach to his own people who could understand his words – and had equipped Ezekiel with a forehead harder than flint so he could withstand their looks. We saw him again filled with the Spirit and how he portrayed Jerusalem on a tile in front of him, then lay on his left side for 390 days and on his right side 40 days while eating the bread of affliction cooked with cow’s dung. This was a sign to the nation about how strait their situation would become so that they ate bread by weight and water by measure. The sons would ultimately eat their fathers and the fathers the sons because of the lack of food in the land. Ezekiel then was commanded to take a razor and shave the hairs of his head and beard – then divide them and weigh them. He would burn a third with fire in the city; smite a third with a knife; and scatter a third in the wind – so the LORD would draw out a sword after these. He would keep a few in his skirts, then burn them with fire. The LORD promised to scatter them and make them, a reproach among the

nations – while he sent on them famine, evil beasts, pestilence, and blood. Now we come to the 6th chapter with God’s message to the mountains, rivers, and valleys of Israel. This message continues through the 7th chapter, but we shall, as the LORD directs, speak from the 6th chapter today.

Ezekiel will not again prophesy to the mountains of Israel until the 36th chapter where it speaks of the LORD covering the land with people once more where He promises to multiply men upon the land and increase the fruit. In that chapter, he also promises to gather them from all the places where they are scattered and bring them to their own land – then to sprinkle clean water upon them and cleanse them from all their filthiness and their idols. He promises to give them a new heart and a new spirit – and put His spirit in them. He promises to make the desolate land become like the garden of Eden and the waste and desolate and ruined cities shall become fenced and inhabited. This speaks of the millennium.

Let us now consider chapter six.

1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them,

The prophecy is directed to *the mountains of Israel*; the prophet must *set his face towards* them. If he could see so far off as the land of Israel, *the mountains* of that land would be first and furthest seen; towards them therefore he must look, and look boldly and steadfastly, as the judge looks at the prisoner, and directs his speech to him, when he passes sentence upon him. Though *the mountains of Israel* be ever so high and ever so

strong, he must *set his face against* them, as having judgments to denounce that should shake their foundation. *The mountains of Israel* had been *holy mountains*, but now that they had polluted them with their high places God set his face against them and therefore the prophet must. The people of Israel had greatly polluted the land with the blood of the innocents as they offered their children to idols sending them through the fire. Israel is here put, not, as sometimes, for the ten tribes, but for the whole land. *The mountains* are called upon to *hear the word of the Lord*, to shame the inhabitants that would not hear. Let us remember that Ezekiel was the prophet to the whole house of Israel, not Judah only.

3 *And say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys; Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places.*

The prophets might as soon gain attention from the *mountains* as from that *rebellious and gainsaying people*, to whom they all day long *stretched out their hands in vain*. *Hear, O mountains! the Lord's controversy* ([Mic 6:1-2](#)),

CF: Micah 6:1-2 *Hear ye now what the LORD saith; Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice. 2 Hear ye, O mountains, the LORD'S controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth: for the LORD hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel.*

God's cause will have a hearing, whether we hear it or no. But

from *the mountains the word of the Lord echoes to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys*; for to them also *the Lord God* speaks, showing that the whole land is concerned in what is now to be delivered and shall be witnesses against this people that they had fair warning given them of the judgments coming, but they would not take it; nay, they contradicted the message and persecuted the messengers, so that the prophet Ezekiel might more safely and comfortably speak to *the hills and mountains* than to the people who lived there.

4 *And your altars shall be desolate, and your images shall be broken: and I will cast down your slain men before your idols.*

Idolatry was a very grievous sin in Israel. Israel had committed spiritual adultery in turning from the living God to stocks, which having mouths, spoke not; having ears, heard not; having feet, walked not – and the Israelites who bowed to them had become like them. In the LORD's jealousy for his people, he would make their altars desolate; he would break down their images, and cast down their men whom he had killed with the sword, beasts, and pestilence before their idols to which they had bowed. As the Prophet Jeremiah had said to Judah:

Jeremiah 2:12-13 *Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. 13 For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*

Their Attitude Toward their Idols: CF: **Jeremiah 44:24-29**
Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the

women, Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah that are in the land of Egypt: **25** Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying; Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: ye will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows. **26** Therefore hear ye the word of the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord GOD liveth. **27** Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. **28** Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs. **29** And this shall be a sign unto you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall surely stand against you for evil:

Queen of Heaven: Moses warned the Israelites against the worship of the sun and moon and stars and all the host of heaven, practiced by the people of Canaan. It seems probable from the cakes which were offered, the so called, "Queen of Heaven" is to be identified with the Assyrian Ishtar and the Canaanite Astarte, the worship itself was of a grossly immoral and debasing character.

Deuteronomy 4:14-19 *And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it. 15 Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: 16 Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, 17 The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, 18 The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth: 19 And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.*

This was part of the reason the nations (the Kenites, the Kenizites, the Kdamonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaims, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites – Gen. 15.18-21) who inhabited this land were cast out of it.

Leviticus 20:23 *And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred [them.*

5 And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols; and I will scatter your bones round about your altars.

And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols; -- expose to open shame, while the carcasses of idolaters recall to mind their shameful folly and sin.

I will scatter your bones round about your altars, -- as unworthy to be honorably lamented and buried in the earth. They had so highly provoked the God of heaven; they are made dung who served dunghill gods. You shall thus be a defilement to your supposed sacred altars and worship, and an abhorrence to all those who later look upon the scene.

6 In all your dwellingplaces the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate; that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, and your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, and your works may be abolished.

In all your dwellingplaces the cities shall be laid waste, -- Their houses upon which they had bestowed so much labor and carefulness. They, like us, must have given great care to their dwellingplaces, but the LORD declared they should be no more, but should be laid waste.

And the high places shall be desolate; -- the high places are places of worship, specifically of idolatrous worship. It is idolatrous worship which the LORD bring judgment.

That your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, --
As it must be because the cities in which they were set up shall be made desolate.

And your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, -- Images and idols made of gold and silver, or of wood and stone.

And your works may be abolished. -- Not only the works of their hands, but of their brain in planning and purposing; all the idolatrous works which they had devised which was contrary to the pure word and worship of God – all would be abolished.

7 And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

When the slain shall fall thus in your sight, you shall know two things you would not regard before.

1. That idols are vanity and snares.

2. Ye shall know that I am the LORD and the all which is profane shall fall, i.e. the idols, and altars; and other implements of idol-worship, made holy by unholy men, shall be profaned, cast down, defiled, and trod under foot in the sight of the Jews, as God threatens; then they shall know and be assured that Jehovah God is the only Lord and God.

8 ¶ Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries.

When the LORD draws out the sword against Israel to destroy them, still He reserves to himself a remnant – a very small number compared to the whole – and these should be scattered through the countries. Some were in Babylon, some went down to Egypt and some were in other nations at this time. It is through this reserved remnant that God shall bring Messiah in to bless all nations that the promise to Abraham should be fulfilled.

9 And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.

And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, -- There shall that remnant remember my precepts which they violated, my mercies which they abused, my threats which they despised, my promises which they refused, my prophets whom they persecuted, my judgments which have executed. In their own land they forgot and sinned, in a strange land they shall remember and weep; so the remnant is bettered by afflictions. At liberty they were captives to sin and idols; when in captivity they shall remember that bondage.

because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: -- As God repented himself that he had made man upon looking at the evil in the days of Noah –

here He is broken with their whorish hearts – which hearts would still have forgotten God, if he had not broken their hearts with judgments; but they remembered when broken, and this breaking was the occasion or cause of their remembering God.

and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations. – Lothe themselves with a mixture of grief towards God who is offended, and a grief of indignation against themselves offending, and of abhorrence of the offence, and shame before all for it. It is good they could be ashamed and blush at their disobedience and sin!

10 *And they shall know that I am the LORD, and that I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them.*

They would understand that Jehovah God is LORD and that idols were nothing. Moreover, they would understand that God had not made an empty promise of judgment to them – no what he had said, he did perform suddenly and without remedy.

11 ¶ *Thus saith the Lord GOD; Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.*

Here, the LORD God commands the prophet to do two things: (smiting with the hand – and stamping with the feet), and both signify a mixture of affection in the person; wonder and amazement, indignation and displeasure, grief and sorrow, pity and sympathy. The LORD required these of the prophet, to show both the evil of sin he did see, and the evil of sufferings

which he did foresee, on Israel. Alas for the evils coming on the house of Israel! Remember that Ezekiel is in the land of Babylon near the River Chebar – so his prophecy and words are not for Judah only, but for the whole house of Israel.

12 *He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine: thus will I accomplish my fury upon them.*

He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; -- either by his early and voluntary flight from his own country; or, he that is carried away captive, and sent by the enemy into a far country. The LORD would shoot the arrow of pestilence or disease after them.

And he that is near shall fall by the sword; -- who stays in his own country, or dwells near to Jerusalem, or would retire to it when the Babylonians approach, but is taken before he can get to Babylon.

And he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine; -- Anyone who survives and is not slain by pestilence and sword, but is shut up and besieged where he sought safety shall die of starvation.

Thus I will accomplish my fury; -- I will satisfy my just displeasure, and give them full measures of punishment; I will fulfil my threats.

13 *Then shall ye know that I am the LORD, when their slain*

men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols.

Then shall ye know that I am the LORD, -- When those who lightly survive see their slain men among their idols and their altars! When they see them in every high hill, under every tree tree and under every thick oak where they offered sweet savour to all their idols – they shall know, by these slain that Jehovah GOD is the LORD and there is none else. They will know that when he says a thing, it shall come to pass and none shall hinder it! He is God alone!

14 *So will I stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yea, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblath, in all their habitations: and they shall know that I am the LORD.*

So will I stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, -- This speaks of the greatness of the blow. God shall strike hard when he stretches out his hand, and therefore you find a mighty hand joined with outstretched arm. The land shall be utterly desolate – empty, void, and good for nothing.

yea, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblath, in all their habitations: and they shall know that I am the LORD. – Diblath is thought to be in the borders of Moab - and so was part of that terrible wilderness through which the Israelites passed. But the desolation of all the habitations of Israel should be worse than what they had passed through

enroute to the promised land.

It is clear from this that idolatry is a thing hated of the LORD, for he is a jealous God who demands that we love him supremely with all our hearts, minds, soul, and strength. Indeed, he said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me!" For those of us who have fled from our sins to our blessed redeemer, Jesus Christ, we know that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. He is our great shepherd who continually leads the sheep of His pasture – so then how could we turn again to the weak and beggarly things of this world – and trust in uncertain riches that get themselves wings.

1 Corinthians 10:11-14 *Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.*

Beloved, if we are bidden to flee from it, then it is certain that our hearts can deceive us and cause us to fall into idolatry. But, like fornication, we are bidden to flee from idolatry!

Colossians 3:5-7 *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 6 For*

*which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: **7** In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.*

Remarkable statement! Here, the LORD tells us that covetousness is idolatry. Exactly what is covetousness? First, we need to define the verb "covet." To covet means to desire with concupiscence or with fleshly appetite. To covet means to desire culpably; to long for (what belongs to another). (The ordinary sense.) Covetousness is the noun state of that kind of desire. The Greek word from which covetousness is translated is: πλεονεξία pleh-on-ex-ee'-ah which is found 10 times in the NT and is translated as (1) covetousness, (2) greediness, and (3) covetous practice. Let's look at a couple of the instances of the last two. O, brethren, let us never be greedy! Let us never follow covetous practices – for these are idolatry. They take away the heart from the blessed savior, Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:17-22 *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, **18** Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: **19** Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with **greediness.** <4124> **20** But ye have not so learned Christ; **21** If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: **22** That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;*

2 Peter 2:12-16 *But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they*

*understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; **13** And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; **14** Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices <4124>; cursed children: **15** Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; **16** But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.*

Luke 12:15-32 [Jesus speaks to the company of the man who asked him, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." (12.13). *And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. **16** And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: **17** And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? **18** And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. **19** And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. **20** But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? **21** So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. **22** And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. **23** The life*

*is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. **24** Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? **25** And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? **26** If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? **27** Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **28** If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? **29** And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. **30** For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. **31** But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. **32** Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

In this, I think you will agree that we see the “love of money” as being the root of all evil. Money = things. We cannot serve God and mammon – wealth. It is definitely not sin for a child of God to be rich – if the LORD be pleased to cause him to prosper, but let us not set our heart – our thoughts, our affections, our mind on uncertain riches.

- There is a vast difference in trusting a job to supply our needs rather than trusting in God who richly supplies the job and all things.
- There is a vast difference in doing a good job to preserve our name and deserve promotion – rather than do our work as unto the LORD in order to honor him in doing the very best job

possible.

- God forbid that any one of us should covet that which belongs to our neighbor either his house, his wife, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his ass, his side by side, his boat, his fur coat, his diamond studded Rolex or anything that is thy neighbor's.

In closing, let us remember why the LORD so harshly judged this nation who had turned from God to idols. Remember these things are written for our admonition – on us who live in the end of the age. Shall we even think of turning from God, his word, his service, to that which is no god. God forbid!