

Reading Guide for Ezekiel 22

This chapter is composed of three oracles (vv. 1–16, 17–22, and 23–31), each beginning with a message-reception formula. All three focus on Jerusalem and follow the pattern of a judgment oracle, consisting of accusation (i.e., list of charges) followed by a sentence, or pronouncement of punishment (usually marked by “Therefore…”).

AGAINST JERUSALEM, THE BLOODY CITY (22:1-16)

Jerusalem is indicted for their violence, oppression, and sexual immorality. The recurring theme in this oracle is that it is a city guilty of “shedding blood,” even being called “the bloody city,” a designation used for Nineveh in Nahum 3:1. The punishment for their sin is exile from the land (v. 15)

Message-reception Formula (22:1)

Command to Judge Jerusalem (22:2-3a)

Judgment Oracle (23:3b-5)

Accusation: Jerusalem is Guilty of Bloodshed and Idolatry (22:3b-4a)

Sentence: Jerusalem is Held in Derision (22:4b-5)

Judgment Oracle (22:6-16)

Accusation: Jerusalem is Guilty of Bloodshed, Idolatry, and Immorality (22:6-12)

Sentence: The People Will be Scattered (22:13-16)

JERUSALEM MELTED LIKE DROSS IN A FURNACE (22:17-22)

The second oracle begins by comparing the house of Israel to dross, which is the undesirable material removed in the process of purification (v. 18). The metaphor continues in the following pronouncement of judgment, though now it refers to the destruction of Jerusalem (vv. 19-22). As metal is placed in a furnace and melted down by fire, so the people will be gathered in Jerusalem and be destroyed (“melted down”) by the fire of God’s wrath.

Message-reception Formula (22:17)

Judgment Oracle (22:18-22)

Accusation: The People of Israel Have Become Like Dross (22:18)

Sentence: The People Inside Jerusalem Will “Melt” Inside of It (22:19-22)

PAST AND FUTURE INDIGNATION UPON JERUSALEM (22:23-31)

This oracle begins with the land having suffered under the curse of God’s past indignation (v. 24). However, rather than bring about repentance, sin continued to permeate through every facet of society (vv. 25-29). Because no intercessor for the land could be found (v. 30), the Lord will bring further indignation (v. 31).

Message-reception Formula (22:23)

Judgment Oracle (22:24-31)

Accusation: Permeation of Sin Throughout Society (22:24-29)

Consequences of Past Indignation (v. 24)

The Sin of the Prophets/(Rulers?) (v. 25)

The Sin of the Priests (v. 26)

The Sin of the Officials (v. 27)

The Sin of the Prophets (v. 28)

The Sin of the People of the Land (v. 29)

Sentence: Fire of God’s Wrath (22:30-31)

No Intercessor was Found (v. 30)

The Future Indignation of the Lord (v. 31)