

## **The Book of Ezekiel, Teacher's Guide**

### **Lesson 3: Judgment on the Mountains and the End Has Come**

#### **Ezekiel 6:1–7:27**

##### **Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)**

Doctrinally, these two chapters press home the seriousness of false worship and the certainty of the day of reckoning. The high places were not a minor irregularity; they were spiritual adultery, Israel giving to idols the devotion that belonged to the LORD alone. The teacher must help the student feel why God aims His judgment so precisely at these shrines: because worship is never neutral, and unauthorized worship is not a smaller sin than open rebellion but a deeper one, a betrayal of the heart. This connects forward to the abiding New Testament principle that God will be worshiped in spirit and in truth (John 4:23–24), by the pattern He has revealed and not by the inventions of men. The aim is to drive home that the same God who tore down the high places still calls His people to worship Him only as He has authorized, and that the refrain you shall know that I am the LORD reveals a God whose judgments are always purposeful, always reaching toward the knowledge of Himself, never the tantrum of blind rage.

Equally at stake is the doctrine of the day of the LORD and the futility of every false security. Chapter seven hammers the word end until the student can feel the door closing. The teacher must guard against two errors. The first is to read the day of the LORD as merely an ancient event with no bearing on us; Scripture plainly carries the theme forward to a final, universal day of judgment (Acts 17:30–31; 2 Peter 3:10). The second error is to soften the warning about wealth into a vague caution; the text is blunt that silver and gold, the very things people trust most, will be flung into the streets as unclean and cannot deliver a single soul. Here the teacher should point clearly to Christ. The wrath these chapters announce is real, and the only refuge from it is not riches, not religious shrines, not human effort, but the blood of Christ received in trusting, obedient faith (Romans 5:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:9). Take care not to imply that any sinner's prayer or mere mental assent purchases this safety; the deliverance is found in turning to the Lord on His terms (Acts 17:30; 2:38).

Finally, this lesson aims at the student's own heart and conscience. It would be easy to keep these chapters at a comfortable distance, as a record of ancient Israel's sins. The teacher's task is to bring the high places home. Every student has shrines, familiar securities quietly enthroned where God belongs, and every student is tempted to trust silver and gold in place of the living God. The goal is not merely that the student understand the day of the LORD as a doctrine, but that he examine himself, name his own idols, and turn from them. The capstone question deliberately asks for one named idol and one concrete act of repentance this week, so that the abstract truth, God will be known as the only true God, becomes a real surrender in the student's life now, while it is still called today.

## Question 1

### Student Question:

*In Ezekiel 6:1–7 God tells Ezekiel to set his face toward the mountains and prophesy against the high places, altars, and idols. What does this teach us about how seriously God takes false and unauthorized worship, and why does He aim His judgment so specifically at the places where His people gave their devotion to idols?*

### Commentary and Teaching Notes

The chapter opens with a striking command: Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them. God directs Ezekiel to address not people but places, the very hills and ridges of the land. This is deliberate. The mountains and high places had become the stage for Israel's idolatry, and so the judgment is aimed at the scene of the sin. The land itself has been defiled, and the land itself will bear the marks of God's response.

The high places, altars, and incense stands named here were the apparatus of a worship God had expressly forbidden. From the beginning Israel had been commanded to tear down such shrines, not to build them (Deuteronomy 12:2–3). Instead they had filled the hilltops and the shade of the green trees with their own invented worship, borrowing the practices of the surrounding nations. The judgment falls precisely where the rebellion was planted.

Notice the grim detail that the slain will fall before their idols and the bones of the worshipers will be scattered around their altars (6:4–5). The point is unmistakable: the idols that could not save them in life are exposed as helpless in death. The worshipers and the worshiped lie together in ruin. God is making the bankruptcy of false worship visible to the eye.

And yet even in this opening judgment the refrain sounds for the first time: and you shall know that I am the LORD (6:7). This is the key that unlocks the whole passage. The destruction is not an end in itself. Its purpose is revelation, that a people who had forgotten their God in the crowd of idols would finally know, by hard experience, who alone is God.

### Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Stress that unauthorized worship is treated by God as a grave sin, not a minor irregularity; the high places provoked His judgment.
- Connect the command to prophesy against the high places back to Deuteronomy 12:2–3, where God had commanded Israel to destroy such shrines, not erect them.
- Point out that judgment falls at the scene of the sin; God's response is targeted and just, not arbitrary.
- Highlight the helplessness of the idols, exposed when their worshipers fall slain before them; what cannot save in life cannot save in death.
- Introduce the refrain you shall know that I am the LORD as the controlling purpose of the whole oracle, that judgment aims at the true knowledge of God.

## Discussion Prompts

- Why do you think God treats unauthorized, self-invented worship so seriously, and what does that say about how we ought to approach Him today?
- What does it reveal about idols that their worshipers fall slain before them, unable to be rescued by the very gods they trusted?
- How does the refrain you shall know that I am the LORD change the way you read this judgment, and what is God ultimately after in it?

## Question 2

### Student Question:

*The people had built shrines on nearly every high hill and under every green tree (6:13). What are the high places in your own life, the comfortable, familiar things you have quietly enthroned and given a devotion that belongs to God alone?*

### Commentary and Teaching Notes

Verse eight introduces a thread of mercy woven through the severity: Yet will I leave a remnant. God will not utterly consume His people. Some will escape the sword and be scattered among the nations, and even in exile they will not be forgotten. This is the steady pattern of God's dealings throughout Scripture, judgment that is real and severe, but never the final word for those who will turn back to Him.

What the remnant will do is described with painful honesty: they that escape shall remember me among the nations, and they shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations (6:9). This is not shallow regret over consequences. It is the deep, self-confronting sorrow of true repentance, in which a person finally sees his sin as God sees it and is grieved to the core.

God describes Himself as broken by their whoring heart that departed from Him and their eyes that went after their idols (6:9). The language is the language of a wounded spouse. Idolatry is portrayed not as a dry doctrinal error but as the betrayal of a covenant love. God feels the wound of His people's unfaithfulness, and that wounded love is itself a mercy, for a God who did not care would simply walk away.

The student should see that God's aim in the whole painful process is restoration, not mere destruction. He scatters them so that the survivors will remember Him; He lets them feel the bitterness of their idols so that they will loathe the sin and turn home. This is the heart of a God who, even in wrath, remembers mercy (compare Habakkuk 3:2).

### Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Highlight the remnant as a recurring sign of God's mercy in judgment; He never utterly abandons a people who will return to Him.
- Distinguish true repentance (loathing oneself for sin as God sees it) from mere regret over painful consequences.
- Note the spousal language of a whoring heart and wandering eyes; idolatry is covenant betrayal, not a neutral mistake.
- Show that God is moved and wounded by His people's unfaithfulness, which underscores that His judgment flows from grieved love, not indifference.
- Keep the aim of judgment in view: God scatters and chastens in order to bring the remnant to genuine remembrance and return.

### **Discussion Prompts**

- What is the difference between loathing yourself for sin in true repentance and merely feeling sorry that you got caught or hurt?
- How does the picture of God as a wounded spouse, grieved by His people's wandering eyes, change the way you think about your own sin?
- Where has God used a painful season to bring you to genuine remembrance of Him and a real turning back?

### **Question 3**

#### **Student Question:**

*Six times in these chapters God says the purpose of His judgment is that they shall know that I am the LORD (6:7, 6:10, 6:13, 6:14, 7:4, 7:27). What does this repeated refrain reveal about God's ultimate aim even when He is tearing things down, and how does it correct the idea that God's wrath is merely blind anger?*

#### **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

In verses eleven through fourteen the prophet is told to make dramatic gestures, to smite with his hand and stamp with his foot and cry, Alas, over all the evil abominations of the house of Israel. The judgment is portrayed as comprehensive: the one far off shall die of pestilence, the one near shall fall by the sword, and the one who remains and is besieged shall die of famine. There is no hiding place; the sword, famine, and pestilence reach everyone.

Again the high places are named as the locus of the sin: their slain shall be among their idols, round about their altars, upon every high hill, on all the tops of the mountains, under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they offered sweet savour to all their idols (6:13). The very catalogue of their shrines becomes the catalogue of their graves.

And once more the refrain seals the passage: then shall ye know that I am the LORD (6:13–14). God will stretch out His hand and make the land desolate from the wilderness toward Diblath.

The purpose of the desolation is restated so that the student cannot miss it: through the ruin, they will at last know the LORD.

It is worth pausing on how relentless this repetition is. Three times in chapter six the refrain falls (6:7, 6:10, 6:13–14). God is not merely punishing; He is teaching, hammering one lesson into a people who had grown deaf. The very monotony of the phrase is mercy, the patience of a God who keeps saying the one thing they most need to hear until they hear it.

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- Note the comprehensiveness of the judgment by sword, famine, and pestilence; no human refuge remains when God acts against persistent sin.
- Observe that the places of idol worship become the places of death; the sin and its judgment are inseparably linked.
- Trace the threefold repetition of the refrain in chapter six and stress that the repetition itself is purposeful, a God patiently teaching the one truth that matters.
- Avoid presenting the judgment as cruelty; the stated goal is always knowledge of the LORD, which is the people's true good.
- Apply the principle that God will go to great lengths to break our deafness and bring us to know Him truly.

### **Discussion Prompts**

- Why do you think God repeats you shall know that I am the LORD so many times, and what does that relentless repetition tell you about His patience?
- What does it mean that the places of their worship became the places of their death, and how does that warn us about our own idols?
- Where in your life has God had to repeat a lesson many times before you finally heard it?

### **Question 4**

#### **Student Question:**

*God promised that even in judgment He would leave a remnant who would remember Him and loathe themselves for the evils they had committed (6:8–9). Where in your own walk has God used a painful season to bring you to honest self-knowledge and genuine repentance rather than mere regret?*

### **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

Chapter seven opens with a change of tone and tempo. Where chapter six was a steady oracle against the high places, chapter seven is a rapid, breathless alarm. An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land. Now is the end come upon thee (7:2–3). The word end, repeated in quick succession, tolls like a bell announcing that the long-delayed reckoning has finally arrived.

God declares, I will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thine abominations (7:3-4). The judgment is just and personal: it answers the people's own conduct. There is no arbitrariness here. What is coming is the harvest of what they have sown, measured out by a righteous God who repays according to a person's ways.

The refrain reappears in a slightly altered form: and ye shall know that I am the LORD (7:4). Even in this chapter of crashing judgment, the controlling purpose holds. The point of the end is not annihilation for its own sake but the unmasking of every false god, so that the living God is at last acknowledged for who He is.

The repeated cry the end is come carries a sobering lesson for every age. The people of Jerusalem had assumed they had time, that the warnings were distant, that life would go on as before. Ezekiel tears that assumption away. The day they thought was far off was in fact at the door. Scripture repeatedly warns against this very presumption, the assumption that the day of accounting is always somewhere over the horizon (compare 2 Peter 3:3-4).

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- Emphasize the sudden shift in tempo; chapter seven is an alarm bell, the long-warned day now arriving.
- Note that the judgment is according to their ways, just and personal recompense, not arbitrary destruction.
- Carry the refrain forward: even in the announcement of the end, God's aim is that they shall know that I am the LORD.
- Confront the presumption that the day of reckoning is always distant; the people thought they had time and did not.
- Connect the principle to the New Testament warning against scoffers who assume the day of the Lord will never come (2 Peter 3:3-10).

### **Discussion Prompts**

- Why is it so dangerous to assume that the day of accounting before God is always far off?
- What does it mean that God judges according to our ways, and how does that assure us His judgment is just?
- How does the suddenness of the end in this chapter speak to the way you are living right now?

### **Question 5**

#### **Student Question:**

*Ezekiel 7 announces that the end has come and that this is the day of the LORD's wrath, no longer distant but now upon them (7:2-7, 7:10-12). How does Scripture's teaching on a coming day of reckoning shape the way a faithful person ought to live, and why is it dangerous to assume the day of accounting is always far off (compare 2 Peter 3:3-10)?*

## **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

Verses five through nine intensify the alarm. An evil, an only evil, behold, is come. An end is come, the end is come; it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come (7:5–6). The Hebrew plays on the similarity between the words for end and for the dawning of a day; the morning is come upon thee, the time is come, the day of trouble is near. The reckoning is no longer a threat in the future tense; it has broken like daybreak.

Twice in this section God says, mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity (7:4, 7:9). This is one of the hardest notes in the chapter, and it must be handled with care. It does not mean God is cruel or has ceased to love. It means that the time for warning has passed and the time for the consequences has come; a holy God will not indefinitely withhold the just result of persistent, unrepented rebellion. His patience, long extended, is not infinite when it is met only with hardness.

Again the refrain anchors the passage: and ye shall know that I am the LORD that smiteth (7:9). Even the smiting is revelatory. Through it the people will come to know the LORD not as a distant idea but as the living God who acts, who keeps His word, who is to be reckoned with.

The phrase the day of trouble is near, and not the joyful shouting of the mountains, suggests the end of the ordinary festival gladness once heard on the hills. Even the familiar rhythms of life are about to cease. The teacher can draw out how thoroughly judgment disrupts the patterns people assume will simply continue forever.

## **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- Explain the wordplay on end and dawning; the reckoning breaks like an inescapable daybreak.
- Handle mine eye shall not spare with care; it marks the end of the season of warning, not a loss of God's holy love.
- Stress that God's patience, though long, is not endless when met with persistent hardness; this guards against presumption.
- Keep the refrain in view: the people will know the LORD that smiteth, the living God who acts on His word.
- Note how judgment ends the ordinary, assumed rhythms of life; nothing we presume will simply continue forever is guaranteed apart from God.

## **Discussion Prompts**

- How do you hold together God's long patience and the truth that His patience with unrepented sin is not endless?
- What does it mean to know the LORD that smiteth, and how is even God's discipline a form of self-revelation?

- Which ordinary rhythms of your life do you simply assume will continue forever, and how should the nearness of God's day reshape that assumption?

## Question 6

### Student Question:

*The text says the buyer should not rejoice and the seller should not mourn, because the day had come that swallowed up the ordinary business of life (7:12–13). Where have you let the buying and selling, the gains and losses of daily life, crowd out a sober readiness for the day you will stand before God?*

### Commentary and Teaching Notes

Verses ten and eleven return to the cause beneath the catastrophe. Behold the day, behold, it is come; the morning is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded. Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness (7:10–11). The imagery of a blossoming rod pictures sin coming to full flower; the people's pride and violence have ripened, and now comes the harvest.

The phrase pride hath budded is worth dwelling on. Beneath the idolatry and the violence lay an arrogant heart, a people who had exalted themselves and their own ways above the LORD. Pride is the root from which so much other sin grows, and here it is named as a chief reason the rod of judgment must fall (compare Proverbs 16:18).

The text says none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs; neither shall there be wailing for them (7:11). The judgment is so total that the usual social structures, even the customary mourning, will collapse. There will be no one left to lament in the ordinary way. The scope of the loss is meant to shock the hearer into sober reflection.

The student should see the moral logic at work: sin, left to grow, comes to a harvest. What is sown in pride and violence ripens into ruin. This is not fate but the moral order God built into His world, that a person and a people reap what they sow (compare Galatians 6:7). The mercy is that God warns us long before the harvest, calling us to uproot the budding rod while there is still time.

### Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Explain the image of the blossoming rod; sin allowed to grow comes to full and bitter harvest.
- Name pride as the root beneath the idolatry and violence; arrogance exalting self above God lies at the heart of the rebellion.
- Note the totality of the judgment, where even ordinary mourning collapses, to convey the gravity of unchecked sin.
- Draw out the moral order: people and nations reap what they sow (Galatians 6:7); this is just consequence, not blind fate.



- Emphasize the mercy in the warning; God exposes the budding rod beforehand so it may be uprooted in repentance.

### Discussion Prompts

- How does the image of sin blossoming like a rod help you understand the danger of tolerating small sins?
- Why is pride so often the hidden root of other sins, and where do you see it budding in your own heart?
- If we truly reap what we sow, what are you sowing right now, and what harvest is it heading toward?

### Question 7

#### Student Question:

*God declares that their silver and gold could not deliver them and would be cast into the streets as an unclean thing, because their wealth had become the stumbling block of their iniquity (7:19). What does this teach us about the true worth of money and possessions, and about the folly of trusting riches for the security only God can give?*

#### Commentary and Teaching Notes

Verses twelve and thirteen apply the nearness of the end to the everyday world of buying and selling. The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn, for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof (7:12). Ordinarily a buyer rejoices over a good purchase and a seller grieves over a loss, but the coming judgment makes both reactions pointless. The whole economy of gain and loss is about to be swept away.

The seller shall not return to that which is sold, although they were yet alive (7:13). This likely alludes to the year of jubilee, when sold land would return to its owner; but no jubilee restoration will matter when the land itself is laid waste and the people carried into exile. The familiar guarantees and securities of property and commerce dissolve before the day of the LORD.

The lesson here is pointed for any age that measures life by acquisition. The people of Jerusalem, like people in every generation, were absorbed in the daily business of getting and spending, gaining and losing, as if that were the substance of life. Ezekiel declares that this whole preoccupation is about to be exposed as trivial in the face of God's reckoning.

The teacher should help the student feel the warning without dismissing honest work and stewardship. The point is not that commerce is evil but that it must never become the center of life or the ground of our security. When the day of the LORD comes, the question will not be what we bought or sold, but whether we knew and obeyed the living God (compare Luke 12:15–21).

## Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Show how the nearness of judgment empties ordinary gain and loss of their assumed importance.
- Note the likely allusion to jubilee; even the customary restoration of property cannot help when the land is laid waste.
- Confront the human tendency to measure life by acquisition; getting and spending is not the substance of life.
- Balance the warning: the text condemns trusting in commerce, not honest work and faithful stewardship.
- Connect to Jesus' warning that a person's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions (Luke 12:15).

## Discussion Prompts

- How does the truth that wrath swallows up both gain and loss reframe the way you think about your daily financial worries?
- Where have you let buying and selling, gaining and losing, become the real center of your attention and identity?
- What would it look like to hold your possessions loosely, as a steward rather than an owner who finds security in them?

## Question 8

### Student Question:

*Honestly, how much of your sense of safety and well-being is quietly resting on your finances, your savings, or your possessions, and what would change in you if you truly believed that silver and gold cannot deliver you in the day of the LORD?*

## Commentary and Teaching Notes

Verses fourteen through eighteen depict the collapse of every defense. They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready; but none goeth to the battle, for my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof (7:14). The trumpet of war sounds, but no one answers; the people are paralyzed. When God Himself is against a nation, no rallying call can muster a defense.

The threefold scourge appears again: the sword is without, the pestilence and the famine within; he that is in the field shall die with the sword, and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him (7:15). There is no safe place, neither field nor city. The survivors who escape to the mountains will mourn like doves of the valleys, every one for his iniquity (7:16). At last they will grieve, not over their losses merely, but over their sin.

All hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall be weak as water (7:17). The picture is of utter human helplessness. They will gird themselves with sackcloth, and horror will cover them, and

shame will be upon all faces, and baldness upon all their heads (7:18). The proud people are reduced to mourning and shame. Every prop they leaned upon has been knocked away.

The teacher can draw out how thoroughly God strips away false confidence. The people had trusted in their walls, their weapons, their wealth, their worship of idols, and their own strength. One by one these are shown to be nothing. The mercy hidden in this stripping is that a people emptied of every false hope is finally in a position to look to the only true Hope, the LORD Himself.

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- Note that the trumpet sounds but none answers; no defense avails when God Himself stands against persistent sin.
- Stress that there is no safe place, neither field nor city; false securities offer no refuge in the day of wrath.
- Observe that the survivors finally mourn over their iniquity, not merely their losses; judgment produces true grief over sin.
- Highlight the picture of total human helplessness, feeble hands and knees weak as water, to humble every self-confidence.
- Draw the mercy from the stripping; only a heart emptied of false hopes will look to the LORD as its true and only refuge.

### **Discussion Prompts**

- What false confidences in your own life might God need to strip away before you will truly look to Him?
- What is the difference between mourning over the losses sin brings and mourning over the sin itself?
- How can the experience of human helplessness become, in God's hands, a doorway to genuine trust in Him?

### **Question 9**

#### **Student Question:**

*These chapters portray the day of the LORD as a real and certain day of wrath against persistent, unrepented sin, yet they also hold out a remnant who will know the LORD. The New Testament teaches that the final day of the Lord is just as certain, but that Christ Himself is now our refuge from the wrath to come (Romans 5:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10; 5:9; Acts 17:30–31). What do these passages teach about how the wrath of God is satisfied and how a person actually escapes it, and how is that deliverance received by a trusting, obedient response to the gospel rather than by silver, gold, or any work of our own?*

### **Commentary and Teaching Notes**

Verse nineteen contains the chapter's most pointed warning about wealth: They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be as an unclean thing. Their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD. The treasure they trusted is flung into the gutters as worthless, helpless to buy a single hour of safety.

The reason is given with searching honesty: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels, because it is the stumbling block of their iniquity (7:19). Their wealth could never satisfy the soul, and worse, it had become the very thing over which they stumbled into sin. What they had made their security had become their snare. This is the abiding danger of riches in every age (compare 1 Timothy 6:9–10).

Verse twenty adds that they had taken the beauty of God's ornament and turned it to pride, and made the images of their abominations from it; therefore God set it far from them. The good gifts of God, gold and silver and beauty, had been perverted into idols. The very blessings became occasions for idolatry, and so God removes them. A gift made into a god must be taken away.

Here the teacher must point clearly forward. Silver and gold cannot deliver in the day of wrath, and neither can any human resource or work. The New Testament declares that we are not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18–19). The only deliverance from the wrath these chapters announce is found in Christ, received in trusting, obedient faith, never purchased by wealth, religion, or our own effort (Romans 5:9).

### **Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues**

- Stress that silver and gold cannot deliver in the day of wrath; no amount of wealth purchases a moment's safety before God.
- Show that riches never satisfy the soul and can become the stumbling block of iniquity, the very snare we trusted as security (1 Timothy 6:9–10).
- Note that God's good gifts, perverted into idols, are removed; a blessing made into a god must be taken away.
- Point clearly to Christ; we are redeemed not with silver and gold but with His precious blood (1 Peter 1:18–19).
- Guard against any notion that deliverance from wrath is bought by wealth, religion, or human works; it is received by faithful obedience to the gospel (Romans 5:9).

### **Discussion Prompts**

- How much of your sense of security quietly rests on your money and possessions, and what does this verse say to that?
- In what way can a good gift from God, like wealth or even a relationship, become a stumbling block that draws you into sin?

- If silver and gold cannot deliver you in the day of the LORD, where is true deliverance found, and how is it received?

## Question 10

### Student Question:

*Looking back over these two sobering chapters, name one specific idol or false security the Lord has exposed in you through this study, and one concrete way you will turn from it this week so that you may truly know that He is the LORD.*

### Commentary and Teaching Notes

The chapter closes by reaching into the heart of Jerusalem's pride, the temple itself. God says He will turn His face from His people and they will pollute His secret place; robbers will enter it and defile it (7:22). The very sanctuary they presumed would protect them, the holy place they had treated almost as a good-luck charm, will be profaned. Their misplaced confidence in the building, apart from obedience to the God of the building, will be shattered.

Make a chain, for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence (7:23). The judgment answers the moral corruption that had filled the land. God will bring the worst of the nations to possess their houses, and the pomp of the strong will cease, and their holy places will be defiled (7:24). The arrogance of a people who thought themselves untouchable is brought low.

Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none (7:25). They will search desperately for a saving word, a vision from a prophet, instruction from a priest, counsel from the elders, but it will fail; the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients (7:26). In the day of judgment the guidance they had ignored will no longer be found when they finally want it.

The chapter ends, fittingly, with the refrain that has run through both chapters: I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am the LORD (7:27). This is the climactic statement of purpose. Through the whole terrible reckoning, the one aim has held steady. A people who forgot their God in a crowd of idols will, at the end of it all, know that He alone is the LORD.

### Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Show that even the temple offers no protection apart from obedience; trusting a holy place as a charm, while disobeying its God, is exposed as folly.
- Note that the judgment answers real moral corruption, bloody crimes and violence that filled the land; God's wrath is righteous response, not caprice.
- Observe that the guidance they ignored becomes unavailable when they finally seek it; there is a danger in despising God's word until the day we desperately want it.

- Bring the whole study to rest on the closing refrain; they shall know that I am the LORD is the controlling purpose of all the judgment in these chapters.
- Apply the central truth: God's severest dealings still aim at the true knowledge of Himself, which is the highest good He can give a people.

#### **Discussion Prompts**

- How can we, like Jerusalem, be tempted to trust in religious things, buildings, traditions, or routines, while disobeying the God behind them?
- What warning do you hear in the truth that the guidance they ignored became unavailable when they finally sought it?
- As you finish these two chapters, what does it mean for you personally to truly know that He is the LORD, and how should that knowledge change you?