

Rewriting Sacred History**Ezekiel 20:1–31**

Veritas Adult Community

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Introduction

Preamble (vv. 1–4)

Israel's Rebellion in the Distant Past (vv. 5–26)

Phase I: Israel's Rebellion in Egypt (vv. 5–9)

Phase II: Israel's Rebellion in the Desert—the First Generation: (vv. 10–17)

Phase III: Israel's Rebellion in the Desert—the Second Generation: (vv. 18–26)

Israel's Rebellion in the Recent Past (vv. 27–31)

Phase IV: Israel's Rebellion in the Land (vv. 27–29)

Phase V: Israel's Rebellion in Exile (vv. 30–31)

Israel's Prospects for the Future (vv. 32–44)

Phase VI: Israel in the Desert of the Peoples (vv. 32–38)

Phase VII: Israel on YHWH's Holy Mountain (vv. 39–44)

Exposition**A. The Call for Israel's Arraignment (vv. 1–4)**

“Make known to them the abominations of their ancestors.”

B. Israel's Past Rebellion (vv. 5–31)**1. Israel's Rebellion in the Distant Past (vv. 5–26)****Phase I: Israel's Rebellion in Egypt (vv. 5–9)**

a. The context of the rebellion—YHWH's amazing grace (vv. 5–6).

(1) YHWH chose Israel to be the object of his affection.

(2) YHWH bound himself by oath to the Israelites.

(3) YHWH had revealed himself to Israel in Egypt.

(4) YHWH promised on oath to take Israel out of Egypt and deliver the people into their own territory.

b. The nature of the rebellion—Israel's remarkable stupidity (vv. 7–8a)

c. YHWH's response to the rebellion—his firm concern for the truth (vv. 8b–9).

Phase II: Israel's Rebellion in the Desert—the First Generation: (vv. 10–17)

a. The context of the rebellion—YHWH's amazing grace (vv. 10–12)

(1) Despite Israel's rebellion in Egypt he took them out.

(2) YHWH revealed his will at Sinai.

- (3) YHWH gave to his people the gift of the Sabbath.
- b. The nature of the rebellion—Israel’s persistent stupidity.
- c. YHWH’s response to Israel’s rebellion— his firm concern for the truth (vv. 13c–17)

Phase III: Israel’s Rebellion in the Desert—the Second Generation: (vv. 18–26)

- a. The context of Israel’s Rebellion—YHWH’s amazing grace (vv. 18–20)
- b. The Nature of the Rebellion—Israel’s remarkable stupidity (v. 21a).
- c. YHWH’s Response to Israel’s Rebellion—his firm commitment to the truth (vv. 21b–26)

Four Problems with verses 25–26:

- How can God give Israel “not good decrees” (חֲקִים לֹא צוּרִים)?
- How can he give Israel “judgments by which they could not live” (מִשְׁפָּטִים לֹא יִחִי בָהֶם)?
- How can God defile (וַאֲטַמֵּא) Israel?
- How can he intentionally devastate his people devastate (לְמַעַן אֲשַׁמֵּם) his people, and if he does, how can annihilated people acknowledge him as YHWH?

Clues to the answer:

- (1) Ezekiel plays with words and with his audience.
- (2) V. 25 unpacks v. 23.
- (3) An inspired prophet cannot contradict himself (vv. 10, 13, 16, 19, 21, 24; v. 25)
- (4) The verb “defile” here means “Declare defiled.”
- (5) The word for devastate can mean emotional devastation (3:13).

2. Israel’s Rebellion in the Recent Past (vv. 27–31)

Phase IV: Israel’s Rebellion in the Land (vv. 27–29)

- a. The Context of Israel’s Rebellion—YHWH’s amazing grace (v. 28a)
- b. The Nature of Israel’s Rebellion—the rejection of YHWH’s grace (vv. 27b, 28b, 29).
- (c) YHWH’s Response to the Rebellion – Silence!!!!

Phase V: Israel’s Rebellion in Exile (vv. 30–31)

- a. The context of the rebellion (missing)
- b. The Nature of Israel’s Rebellion (vv. 30–31a)
- c. YHWH’s Response to the Rebellion (v. 31b)

Lessons from Ezekiel 25:1–31)

- 1. The primary motivation behind divine activity is revelatory—that the world may know who YHWH is.
- 2. God often interprets history quite differently from the way humans do.
- 3. The divine reputation depends upon the fate and welfare of his people.