

No Sanctuary City Here!**Ezekiel 22:17–31**

Veritas Adult Community

February 23, 2020

The Text**In the Smelter of God's Wrath (22:17–22)**¹⁷Now the following message of YHWH came to me:

¹⁸Human, the house of Israel has become dross to me. All of them are copper, tin, iron, and lead **inside** the refining furnace; they have become the dross of silver. ¹⁹Therefore, thus has the Lord YHWH declared:

Because all of you have become dross, look out! I will gather you **inside** Jerusalem, ²⁰Just as silver, copper, iron, lead, and tin are gathered **inside** a refining furnace, so one may blow on the ore with fire to melt it down, so I will gather you in my fury and in my wrath. Then I will dump you in and melt you down. ²¹I will gather you and blow on you with the fire of my wrath. Then you will be melted **inside** the city. ²²As silver is melted **inside** a refining furnace, so you will be melted **inside** the city. Then you will know that I am YHWH. I have poured out my wrath upon you.

The Unmanned Breach (22:23–31)²³The following message of YHWH came to me:²⁴Human, say to her:

You are a land that had not been cleansed or deluged on the day of wrath, ²⁵whose princes behave like roaring lions inside her, tearing their prey. They devour humans; they seize wealth and treasures; they have multiplied the number of her widows inside her. ²⁶Her priests have done violence to my instruction. They have desecrated what is sacred to me, failed to distinguish between the holy and the profane, and to teach the difference between the clean and the unclean, and have closed their eyes to my sabbaths. As a result, I am profaned in their midst. ²⁷Her officials behave like wolves inside her tearing their prey—spilling blood and destroying lives for illicit profit. ²⁸Her prophets have smeared (the wall) for them with plaster, seeing false visions, serving them with deceitful divinations, and declaring: “Thus has the Lord YHWH declared . . .” when YHWH has not even spoken. ²⁹The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery. The poor and needy they have oppressed, and the alien they have treated without justice. ³⁰I looked for a man from their midst who would repair the wall and stand in the breach before me, on behalf of the land to prevent its destruction, but I could not find anyone. ³¹Therefore I have poured out my indignation on them, and in the fire of my fury consumed them. I have held them accountable for their conduct.

The declaration of the Lord YHWH.

Exposition

A. In the Smelter of God's Wrath: No Sanctuary City Here! (vv. 17–22)

1. **The Metaphor (v. 18)**
2. **The Interpretation (vv. 19–22)**

Verse 20

Verses 21–22a

Just as silver, copper,
iron, lead, and tin
are gathered
so one may blow on the ore
with fire
to melt it down,
so I will gather [you]
in my fury and in my wrath.
Then I will dump you in
And melt you down.

inside a furnace I will gather you
and blow on you
with the fire of my wrath.
Then you will be melted down **inside the city**
As silver is melted down
inside a refining furnace
so you will be melted down
inside the city.

B. The Rationale for the Judgment of Jerusalem: The Unmanned Breach (22:23–31)

1. **The Thesis Statement (22:23–24)**
2. **The Crimes of Israel's Leaders (22:25–29)**
 - a. The Charges Against the Princes (25)
 - b. The Charges Against the Priests (26)
 - (1) They treated YHWH's Torah with violence (*ḥāmas*).
 - (2) They desecrated the "holy things" (*qodāšîm*).
 - (3) They blurred the boundaries between the sacred and the profane.
 - (4) They failed to instruct the people concerning cleanness and uncleanness.
 - (5) They have led the way in the neglect of the sabbaths,
 - c. The Charges Against the Judges (v. 27)
 - d. The Charges Against the Prophets (v. 28)
 - e. The Charges Against the People of the Land (v. 29)
3. **YHWH's Response to the Crimes of Israel's Leaders (22:30–31)**

C. Lessons from These Two Prophecies

1. There is no sanctuary for those who claim to be the Lord's special treasure but are dross in his eyes.
2. The call to leadership is primarily a call to responsibility, not privilege.
3. Those called into divine service are charged with maintaining the sanctity of God.
4. The survival of the church depends upon leaders responding to the call of God to stand in the breach.