

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 27 & 28:

VERSE TWENTY-SEVEN

“Her princes in her midst are like wolves tearing the prey, shedding blood and destroying lives in order to get dishonest gain”.

פְּתִיחַ חֲמֹסוֹ תוֹרְתִי וַיִּחַלְלוּ קִדְשֵׁי בֵּין-קִדְשׁ לְחַל לֹא
הִבְדִּילוּ וּבֵין-הַטָּמֵא לְטָהוֹר לֹא הוֹדִיעוּ וּמִשְׁבַּתוֹתַי הֶעֱלִימוּ
עֵינֵיהֶם וַאֲחַל בְּתוֹכָם

(noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s שָׂר/shar "her princes" + prep. ב/B "in" + קִרְב/qereb "her midst, inside her" + prep. כ/K "like" + noun-m-pl זֵאֵב/ze'eb "wolves" + verb-qal-part-m-pl const. טָרַף/taraph "tearing..." + noun-m-s טֶרֶף/tereph "prey" + prep. ל/L "to" + verb-qal-inf-const. שָׁפַךְ/shaphak "pour out" + noun-m-s דָּם/dam "blood" + prep. ל/L "to" + verb-piel-inf. const. אָבַד/abad "to destroy" + noun-f-pl נַפְשׁ/nephesh "souls/lives" + prep. לְמַעַן/l'ma'an "in order to" + verb-qal-inf. const. בָּצַע/batsa' "gain" + noun-m-s בִּצְעָה/betsa' "dishonest gain").

VERSE TWENTY-EIGHT

“And their prophets have covered over in whitewash for them seeing false visions and divining lies for them saying ‘Adonay Yahweh says...’ yet Yahweh has not spoken”.

שָׂרֵיהֶם בְּקִרְבָּהּ כִּזְאָבִים טָרְפֵי טָרֶף לְשֹׁפְרֵי-דָם לְאָבַד
נִפְשׁוֹת לְמַעַן בָּצַע בָּצַע

(conj. ו/w "and" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s נְבִיא/nabiy' "her prophets" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl טוּחַ/tuach "coated, plastered" + prep. w/ suf-3rd-m-pl ל/L "for them" + adj-m-s תַּפְּחֵל/taphel "whitewash" + verb-qal-part-m-pl חָזָה/chazah "seeing" + noun-m-s שֹׁוא/shawe' "falsehood" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-part-m-pl קָסַם/qasam "divinizing" + prep w/ suf-3rd-m-pl ל/L "for them" + noun-m-s כָּזַב/kazab "a lie" + verb-qal-part-m-pl אָמַר/amar "saying" + adv. כֹּה/koh "thus" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-m-s אָמַר/amar "said" + proper noun יְהוָה/yhwh "Adonay Yahweh" + conj. ו/w "yet" + proper noun יְהוָה/yhwh "Yahweh" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + verb-piel-part-3rd-m-s דָּבַר/dabar "has spoken").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 27 & 28:

1. Again we have mention of shedding blood for the purpose of receiving dishonest gain.

2. Yahweh states in verse twenty-seven, **“Her princes in her midst are like wolves tearing the prey, shedding blood and destroying lives in order to get dishonest gain”**.
3. Our word translated as “princes” is the masculine, plural noun, שָׂרִים/shar, “prince, chief, leader”. Hence while the royal family is certainly in view, the establishment chain of command as a whole can be included here.
4. Bloodshed was on the rise in the city. As previously stated, when a nation loses its moral compass, crime and injustice will be on the rise as people no longer have the moral compass that dissuades such activity.
5. During this time people were persecuted and in certain instances murdered. This was done for “dishonest gain”.
6. Our word translated as “dishonest gain” is the masculine, singular noun, noun-m-s בִּצְעָה/betsa‘, “profit, unjust gain, covetousness”. It is frequently used in the negative sense to gain through violence or in an unjust manner (cp. Prov. 1:19; 15:27; Prov. 28:16).
7. Jethro exhorts Moses to choose elders who hate "dishonest gain".
8. It is used of the "plunder" taken by the kings opposing the Israelites (Judg. 5:19).
9. It is preceded in our verse by the preposition, לְמַעַן/l'ma'an, “in order that, for the purpose of”. Thus the motivation for such bloodshed was to receive ill-gotten revenue.
10. It reminds me of the many corrupt people we have in Washington who have lined their pockets with illicit funds over the years.
11. Ezekiel told us about two of these princes earlier (Ezek. 19:3-6 cp. 22:6, 13).
12. He continues in verse twenty-eight where the false prophets are again mentioned.
13. He states, **“And their prophets have covered over in whitewash for them seeing false visions and divining lies for them saying ‘Adonay Yahweh says...’ yet Yahweh has not spoken”**.
14. Whitewash was no way to repair a wall. It would be comparable to a spackle or perhaps stucco.
15. It may make the wall “look” nice but was not really a quality repair. When the rain and hail come, it will be destroyed.
16. The false prophets told the people that there would be peace and prosperity, when indeed, war famine and plague were on their way (Ezek. 13:10-15).
17. While the real McCoy’s like Ezekiel and Jeremiah were given true communications from Yahweh, these false prophets were uttering “false visions and lies”.
18. They were thus culpable in harming the people by misleading them not unlike those who put out misinformation in our media today.
19. They claimed that Yahweh had been giving them communication, when in fact He had not!!!
20. It is apropos that the false prophets are mentioned here a second time in this section, this time they are mentioned alongside the rulers, thus implying that the poor choices their rulers made were the result of receiving false prophesy at least in certain instances (cp. Jer. 8:10, 11; 23:25-32; 37:19; Lam. 2:14).

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 29 & 30:

VERSE TWENTY-NINE

“The people of the land have engaged in oppression, committed robbery and afflicted the needy. They have oppressed the sojourner without justice”.

עַם הָאָרֶץ עָשְׂקוּ וְגָזְלוּ וְעָנִי וְאֶבְיֹן הִוָּנוּ
וְאֶת־הַגֵּר עָשְׂקוּ בְּלֹא מִשְׁפָּט

(noun-m-s const. [emphatic pos.]. עַם/'am "people of..." + f-s w/ d.a. אֶרֶץ/'erets "the land" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl עָשְׂקוּ/'ashaq "they have oppressed" + noun-m-s עֲשֵׂק/'osheq "oppression" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl גָּזַל/gazel "robbed" + noun-m-s גְּזֵל/gazel "a robbery" + conj. ו/w "and" + adj-m-s עָנִי/'aniy "afflicted" + conj. ו/w "and" + adj-m-s אֶבְיֹן/'ebiyon "needy" + verb-hiph-perf-3rd-c-pl יָנַח/yanah "they have oppressed" + sign d.o. אֶת/'eth [untranslated] + noun-m-s w/ d.a. גֵּר/ger "the sojourner" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl עָשְׂקוּ/'ashaq "they have oppressed" + prep. ב/B "in" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + noun-m-s מִשְׁפָּט/mish'pat "justice").

VERSE THIRTY

“And I have sought out from them a man who could build up the wall and stand in the breach before Me, so that I might not destroy the land, but I did not find one”.

וְאֶבְקַשׁ מֵהֵם אִישׁ גִּדְר־גֹּדֵר וְעָמַד בְּפִרְץ לְפָנַי בְּעַד הָאָרֶץ
לְבַלְתִּי שְׁחַתָּהּ וְלֹא מָצָאתִי

(conj. ו/w "and" + verb-piel-imperf-1st-c-s [waw consec] אֶבְקַשׁ/baqash "I have sought" + prep. w/ suf-3rd-m-pl מִן/min "from them" + noun-m-s אִישׁ/'iysh "a man" + verb-qal-part-m-s גִּדְר־גֹּדֵר/gadar "make a wall" + noun-m-s גֹּדֵר/gader "a wall" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-part-m-s עָמַד/'amad "standing" + prep. ב/B "in" + noun-m-s w/ d.a. פִּרְץ/perets "the breach" + prep. ל/L "before" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-1st-c-s פָּנֵה/paneh "my face" + prep. בְּעַד/ba'ad "behind" + noun-f-s w/ d.a. אֶרֶץ/'erets "the land" + prep. ל/L "to" + prep. בְּלִתִּי/bil'tiy "not" + verb-piel inf. const. שְׁחַתָּה/shachath "to destroy it" + advers. conj. ו/w "but" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + verb-qal-perf-1st-c-s מָצָאתִי/matsah "I found").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 29 & 30

1. Yahweh begins to wrap up His indictment against the Jewish people in verse twenty-nine where He lays out a laundry list of infractions of which they are guilty.

2. He states in verse twenty-nine, **“The people of the land have engaged in oppression, committed robbery and afflicted the needy. They have oppressed the sojourner without justice”**.
3. Whereas He had focused on select groups of people earlier, here He switches to a more general tone and lists things that “the people of the land” have committed.
4. Among them are oppression and robbery. Our word for “oppression” is the qal, perfect of אָשַׁף/ ‘ashaq, paired with its cognate noun, “to oppress, get deceitfully, defraud, do violence”.
5. In view is the fact that they had taken advantage of certain ones harming and stealing from them via hook and crook.
6. In certain instances, they had committed outright robbery, taking money and possessions by force.
7. He also notes that they have “afflicted the needy”. Our word for “needy” is the masculine, singular adjective, אִבְיוֹן/ ebiyon, “One in the state of wanting, a needy or poor person”.
8. It is not as if it is okay to steel from the rich (though try convincing the U.S. congress of this), but it is a whole other thing to take advantage of those who are already in need!
9. However that is exactly what the people were doing. They were afflicting those who were already on the edge, having difficulty securing food and shelter.
10. It is not unlike what we have seen in the many cities of our nation that have defunded the police, bringing about huge crime waves that hurt those who are already struggling in the inner city, many of whom are minorities.
11. Along with the needy, sojourners or aliens were among the chief victims of the crimes of the nation as the Jewish people are said to have “oppressed the sojourner without justice”.
12. Our word for “justice” is the masculine, singular noun, מִשְׁפָּט/ mish’pat, “justice, ordinance, custom, manner”.
13. It refers to the legal, governmental laws and procedures and how they applied, usually translated as “judgment”, which often does an injustice (no pun intended) to the word.
14. Usually when one hears the word “judgment”, he immediately envisions a courtroom ruling or case precedent. However this word connotes the function of all three branches of government, executive, legislative and judicial.
15. In view are individuals that have been deprived of their basic human rights under the law. They have not received justice as they should have under the law.
16. Aliens did not have the same rights as a citizen of Israel (citizenship has to mean something).
17. However, the alien was subject to the same laws in general as the native Jews were (Lev. 16:29; 17:12, 15; Num. 15:16).
18. In the Law, it was forbidden to oppress the alien or sojourner in the nation of Israel (Exo. 22:21)
19. Rather than oppress, Jews had to do certain things to look out for the alien (Lev. 23:22).
20. Instead they had taken advantage of these folks and denied them the rights and protections they had under the law.
21. Yahweh continues in verse thirty where He states, **“And I have sought out from them a man who could build up the wall and stand in the breach before Me, so that I might not destroy the land, but I did not find one”**.

22. In view is a metaphorical wall like one that would protect a city. God says that he is searching for one man who could stand up and afford protection to the nation.
23. So goes the believer and so goes the nation. Nations can be preserved by having +V in them.
24. However, God is stating that no such +V exists, as it had 114 years ago when the Assyrian invasion was repelled.
25. It is not that God is stating if they had just one righteous person, he could deliver the nation. He has already demonstrated that such is most assuredly not the case (Ezek. 14:14, 20).
26. A +V believer or handful of +V believers could only deliver themselves.
27. He is also not stating that there is not one, single righteous man in Israel (Ezekiel is there).
28. However, for the most part, beyond His prophets, there is not any rank-and-file person in Israel that God can hold up and say, this is a person I would consider sparing the nation over.
29. This is a huge indictment against the Jewish people. While they were supposed to represent the POG to the human race, to include those sojourning among them, they have instead turned against the POG completely, persecuted the alien and do not have any believers who can stand up and lead God to spare the nation for at least a few more years!

EXEGESIS OF VERSE 31:

VERSE THIRTY-ONE

“And I have poured My indignation upon them. I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath. I have given their ways upon their heads declares Adonay Yahweh”.

וְאֶשְׁפַּךְ עֲלֵיהֶם זַעַמִּי בְּאֵשׁ עֵבְרָהּ כְּלִימָם דְרָכָם בְּרֹאשָׁם
נִתְּנִי נְאֻם יְהוָה פ

(conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-1st-c-s שֶׁפַךְ/shaphak "I have poured out" + prep. w/ suf-3rd-m-pl עַל/al "upon them" + noun-m-s w/ suf-1st-c-s זַעַם/za'am "my indignation" + prep. ב/B "with" + noun-f-s const. אֵשׁ/esh "fire of..." + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s עֵבְרָה/‘eberah "wrath" + verb-piel-perf-1st-c-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl. כָּלָה/kalah "I have consumed them" + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl דְרָכָם/derek "their ways" + prep. ב/B "on" + noun-m-s w/ suf-34d-m-pl רֹאשָׁם/ro'sh "their heads" + verb-qal-perf-1st-c-s נָתַן/nathan "I have given" + noun-m-s const. נְאֻם/ne'um "a declaration of..." + proper noun יְהוָה יְהוָה/adonay yhwah ").

ANALYSIS OF VERSE 31:

1. Yahweh closes out the section with a summary statement in verse thirty-one.
2. He states “**And I have poured My indignation upon them. I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath. I have given their ways upon their heads declares Adonay Yahweh**”.
3. Note that He phrases these events as having occurred in the past tense, utilizing the perfect in all three clauses.
4. Such is something that only God is capable of. He places events that are yet to occur in the past tense so as to indicate the surety of their fulfillment.
5. There are still between 1 to 2 years prior to their fulfillment. However they are stated as if they have already occurred.
6. Note that He again brings their ways back down on their heads.
7. God is very much into poetic justice and will repay these bloody murders at the cost of their own blood and their own lives.
8. This is not the first time He has promised this to them (Ezek. 7:3; 9:10; 11:21; 16:43).

***The End of Chapter Twenty-Two
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