

Oholah and Oholibah

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 1 – 3:

VERSE ONE

“And the word of Yahweh came to me saying”

וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר

(conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-m-s [waw consec] הָיָה/hayah "it came about" + noun-m-s const. דְבַר/dabar "word of..." + proper noun יְהוָה/yhwh "Yahweh" + prep w/ suf-1st-c-s אֵל/el "to me" + prep. ל/L [untranslated] + verb-qal-inf. const. אָמַר/amar "saying").

VERSE TWO

“Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother”.

בְּנֶ-אָדָם שְׁתֵּי נָשִׁים בָּנוֹת אִם־אַחַת הָיוּ:

(noun-m-s const. בֶּן/ben “son of...” + noun-m-s אָדָם/adam “man” + adj-f-pl שְׁנַיִם/shenayim “two” + noun-f-pl אִשָּׁה/ishah “women” noun-f-pl const. בָּת/bath “daughters of...” + noun-f-s אִם/em “mother” adj-f-s אַחַד/echad “one” + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl. הָיָה/hayah “they were”).

VERSE THREE

“Now they played the harlot in Egypt in their youth. It was there that their breasts were pressed and there that their virgin bosom was handled”.

עָשׂוּ הָדֵי בְתוּלֵיהֶן: וְתִזְנִינָה בְּמִצְרַיִם בְּנְעוּרֵיהֶן זָנּוּ שָׁמָּה מֵעַכְשָׁיו שְׂרִייהֶן וְשָׁם

(conj. – intro. ו/w "now" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl. [waw consec.] זָנְהוּ/zanah "they played the harlot" + prep. ב/B "in" + properr noun מִצְרַיִם/mitserayim "Egypt" + prep. ב/B "in" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-pl. נְעוּרֵיהֶן/ne'uriym "their youth" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl זָנְהוּ/zanah "they played the harlot". + adv. שָׁם/sham "there" + verb-pual-3rd-perf-c-pl מָעַקְּ/ma'ak "they were pressed" [note intensive of pual stem] + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-pl שָׁד/shad "their breasts" + conj. ו/w "and" + adv. שָׁם/sham "there" + verb-piel-perf-3rd-c-pl עָשָׂה/‘asah "they

did" + noun-m-pl const. דָּד/dad "**breasts/nipples of...**" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-pl בְּתוּלִים/bethuliyim "**of their youth**").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 1 – 3

1. Chapter twenty-three wraps up the last of the communications given to Ezekiel during the seventh year of the imprisonment of Jehoiachin.
2. We are met in verse one with the familiar phrase, **“And the word of Yahweh came to me saying”**
3. As was the case in previous instances, we do not know how much time has passed since the previous communications. Nor do we know on what occasion Ezekiel received this communication.
4. We simply know that on some occasion, during the second half of the seventh year, Ezekiel receives this symbolic communication regarding two women.
5. Yahweh states in verse two, **“Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother”**.
6. We are reminded of the woman/sister analogy given in chapter sixteen. In that story, God gives a history lesson going all the way back to Israel’s beginning and then notes how she became unfaithful.
7. Here He will get right to the topic of spiritual infidelity as we see in verse three.
8. Note too that we have *two* women in view, not one. This will be a story of the southern kingdom of Judah as well as the northern kingdom of Israel.
9. They are both daughters of the same woman as they were born from the same family so to speak.
10. In verse three, God notes **“Now they played the harlot in Egypt in their youth. It was there that their breasts were pressed and there that their virgin bosom was handled”**.
11. Again we go all the way back to Egypt. Realize that that there was a huge pagan influence in Egypt and the Jews succumbed to it while there (Ezek. 20:6-8).
12. They never really shucked the pagan idolatry they learned while in Egypt. They held on to it and took their idols with them, even offering sacrifices and causing their sons and daughters to pass through the fires while in the wilderness (Ezek. 20:7; 20:25, 26; Amos 5:25-27)!!!
13. Of course there was no split between Judah and the northern tribes in Egypt. That split came later during the reign of Solomon’s son, Rehoboam (I Kings 12:1ff).
14. However each of the kingdoms had a past in Egypt and all twelve of those tribes were exposed to the pagan apostasies that were prevalent there.
15. Here God uses marital/sexual infidelity to describe the spiritual infidelity that these women (Judah/Israel) had engaged in.
16. Yahweh states that it was there, in Egypt, that the infidelity first occurred. It was there that these young women were had their bodies “handled” so to speak with their lovers (false gods of Egypt).
17. This was not mere dabbling in the occult, but full on engagement in false religion.
18. Note the presence of the piel stems of both of our verbs, מָעַק/ma‘ak, “pressed” and עָשָׂה/‘asah, “handled”.

19. The piel stem is an intensive stem in the Hebrew language. It is used as a conscious choice by the author or speaker to implement it instead of the standard qal stem.
20. In other words, their breast were thoroughly squeezed or pressed and their virgin bosom was thoroughly handled.
21. This was full on love making. The pagan gods of Egypt did not merely get to second base with these women.
22. The women in turn were fully committed to this sexual exchange. This is not a case of rape or molestation. The young women sought these gods out and fornicated with them.
23. Note that they are young women at the time. They are also said to be virgins up until the point of the sexual encounters.
24. They are not yet married to Yahweh, officially becoming His wife (Ezek. 23:4).
25. Note that they had not yet consummated their marriage relationship with Yahweh at the time. That occurred when they entered into contract via the Mosaic Law.
26. However they had been betrothed to Him and should not have been hanging around with their Egyptian suitors in the first place!
27. Hence, the nations had slept around before becoming the wife of Yahweh (Ezek. 23:4).
28. This would have been forgivable. However they continued to court these lovers after the consummation to Yahweh while in the wilderness and beyond, to this very day (cp. Lev. 17:7; Josh 24:4)!!!

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 4:

VERSE FOUR

“And their names were Oholah, the greater, and Oholibah, her sister, and they were Mine. They bore sons and daughters. As for their names Samaria is Oholah and Jerusalem is Oholibah”.

וּשְׁמוֹתָן אֹהֶלָה הַגְּדוֹלָה וְאֹהֶלִיבָה אַחֹתָהּ וַתְּהַיְינָה לִּי
וַתֵּלֶדְנָה בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת וּשְׁמוֹתָן שְׁמֵרוֹן אֹהֶלָה וִירוּשָׁלַם
אֹהֶלִיבָה:

(conj. ו/w "and" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-pl שֵׁם/shem "their names" + to be verb [supplied] "were" + proper noun אֹהֶלָה/'ahalalah "Oholah" + adj-f-s w/ d.a. גְּדוֹל/gadol "the greater" + conj. ו/w "and" + proper noun אֹהֶלִיבָה/'ahaliyah "Oholibah" + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-f-s אַחֹת/'achoth "her sister" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl [waw consec] הָיָה/hayah "they became" + prep w/ suff-1st-c-s ל/L "unto me" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl [waw coonsec] יָלַד/yalad "they begot/bore" + noun-m-pl בָּנִים/ben "sons" + conj. ו/w "and" + noun-f-pl בָּתִּים/bath "daughters" + conj. ו/w "as for" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-pl שֵׁם/shem "their names" + proper noun שְׁמוֹתָן/shomiyon + to be verb [supplied] "is" + proper noun אֹהֶלָה/'ahalalah "Oholah" + conj. ו/w "and" + proper noun יְרוּשָׁלַם/y'rushalam "Jerusalem" + to be verb [supplied] "is" + proper noun אֹהֶלִיבָה/'ahaliyah "Oholibah").

ANALYSIS OF VERSE 4:

1. Verse four gives us some additional insight as to the identity of these two women mentioned in verses two and three.
2. Yahweh states in the first two clauses of verse four, **“And their names were Oholah, the greater, and Oholibah, her sister, and they were Mine.**
3. While our previous wedding/marriage analogy involved the nation of Israel as *one woman*, here Yahweh pictures two women who represent the two capital cities of the two nations of Israel.
4. Here Yahweh gives us their names, “Oholah”, the greater of the two and her sister, “Oholibah”.
5. The names are significant in that each means something with regard to the two cities history. Each name is based on the Hebrew noun, אֹהֶל/'ohel “tent, tabernacle, dwelling”.
6. Oholah literally means “her own tent” and Oholibah literally means “my tent is in her”.
7. Note that Oholah is called “the greater” not the older, as it is translated in NASB.
8. Samaria was nowhere near an older city than Jerusalem. However the northern kingdom would be considered “greater in that she possessed the land and people of 10 tribes as opposed to the two that resided in Judah and Jerusalem.

9. Further Yahweh states that the two of them were His. In view are two wives that were betrothed and married to Him.
10. We find that the two women represent cities and by extension the countries in which they dwell.
11. He states in the next clause that “...**They bore sons and daughters...**”
12. Such is indicative that each nation was filled with people, residents, citizens.
13. The people of the nation are often referred to as the children of the nation and the nation herself as the “motherland”.
14. He continues in the final clause of the verse by stating, “...**As for their names Samaria is Oholah and Jerusalem is Oholibah**”.
15. Samaria was the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel after the ten northern tribes had broken off from the southern kingdom of Israel (I Kings 12:1).
16. The land for the city was a hill purchased by Omri, the fourth king of the northern kingdom (I Kings 16:24ff).
17. He and his son, Ahab, turned it into a major center of pagan worship.
18. It is called “Oholah” here by Yahweh. As previously stated the name literally means “her own tent/tabernacle” and is a reference to the system of worship she set up for herself to rival that in Jerusalem (I Kings 12:32ff).
19. Note that it is “her own tent” not Yahweh’s tent that she possesses.
20. Jerusalem, on the other hand, is called “Oholibah” which means “My tent/tabernacle is in her” and is a reference to the fact that God’s temple still existed in Jerusalem all the way up to the end (Ezek. 5:11; 8:6; 9:6; 23:38 cp. Ex 25:8; Le 26:11, 12; Jos 22:19; Ps 76:2).
21. This rivalry of where one should worship continued all the way up to Jesus’ day (John 4:20).
22. Having Yahweh’s tabernacle was a privilege. However it worked to indict her as she had defiled His temple time and again.
23. Note that women with Yahweh’s tent and the one with her own tent both belong to Yahweh and both are guilty of the same sins against Him!

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 5 & 6

VERSE FIVE

“Now Oholah played the harlot when she was Mine, and lusted over her lovers, the Assyrians *her* neighbors.

וּתְזֹן אֶהְלָה תַּחְתִּי וְתַעֲגֹב עַל-מְאֵהָבֶיהָ אֶל-אַשּׁוּר קְרוֹבִים:

(conj. - introd. ו/w "now" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] זָנְהָ/zanah "she played the harlot" + proper noun אֶהְלָה/ahalah "Oholah" + prep. w/ suf-1st-c-s תַּחַת/tachath "under me" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] עָגַב/agab "she lusted" + prep. עַל/al "over" + verb-piel-part-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s אָהַב/aheb "her lovers" + prep. אֶל/el "unto" + proper noun אַשּׁוּר/ashur "Assyrians" + adj-m-pl קְרוֹב/qarob "those near").

VERSE SIX

“Governors and officials clothed in purple, all of them handsome young men, horsemen, mounted to ride horses”

לְבָשֵׁי תְכֵלֶת פְּחוֹת וּסְגָנִים בְּחֹרֵי חֶמֶד כֻּלָּם פְּרָשִׁים
רַכְבֵּי סוּסִים:

(verb-qal-pass-prt-m-pl const. לָבַשׁ/labesh "clothed" + noun-f-s תְּכֵלֶת/t^ekeleth "purple" + noun-m-pl פְּחוֹה/pechah "governors" + conj. ו/w "and" + noun-m-pl סְגָן/sagan "officials" + noun-m-pl const. בְּחֹרֵי/bachud "young men" + noun-m-s חֶמֶד/chemed "desirable/pleasant" + noun-m-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl כֻּלָּ/kol "all of them" + noun-m-pl פְּרָשׁ/parash "horsemen" + verb-qal-part-m-pl const. רָכַב/rakab "mounted to ride" + noun-m-pl סוּס/sus "horses").

*Note the piel stem of hagab in verse five.

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 5 & 6:

1. Yahweh continues with His description of the two girls' behavior, focusing on Oholah in verse five.
2. He states **“Now Oholah played the harlot when she was Mine, and lusted over her lovers, the Assyrians *her* neighbors”**.
3. The Hebrew literally reads that Oholah was “under me” when this infidelity occurred. Such is a reference to her being under Yahweh's authority as His lawfully wedded wife. However she strayed from the marriage bed He had provided for her.
4. While Oholah demonstrated infidelity while in Egypt, her major attraction was to that of the Assyrians.

5. We have skipped forward in history from the Jews infidelity in Egypt and in the wilderness to the times of the Assyrian Empire, just prior to the demise of the northern kingdom.
6. Recall that Oholah is representative of Samaria as well as the ten tribes of Northern Israel.
7. He also notes that the Assyrians were their “neighbors” or “those close”.
8. The home of the Assyrians was actually far off (cp. Ezek. 23:40).
9. However as they conquered more and more land they in essence became their neighbors.
10. Indeed the Assyrian Empire was just to the north and east of the borders of Israel just prior to her demise.
11. It is perhaps for this reason that they are described by the masculine, plural adjective, **קָרוֹב**/qarob, “those near”.
12. They most assuredly possessed a spiritual nearness as the Jews sought the same pagan deities as that of their Assyrian counterparts.
13. The Jews were warned repeatedly to remain aloof from the neighboring nations so as to not pick up on their ways (cp. II Kings 17:7ff; Ezek. 11:12).
14. They had an affinity for the Assyrians who were the major super power of the time.
15. He continues in verse six where He describes the Assyrians noting that there were **“Governors and officials clothed in purple, all of them handsome young men, horsemen, mounted to ride horses.”**
16. Our word for “purple” is the feminine, singular noun, **תְּכֵלֶת**/t^ekeleth and is a reference to the violet/purple dyes made from shell fish sourced in the Mediterranean.
17. Having clothing in such color indicated wealth, for such clothing was expensive.
18. Many of these tiny mollusks had to be caught and then crushed to produce the rare dye.
19. They are said to be handsome young men, men of stature, “governors and officials”.
20. What’s more, they are said to be “horsemen”, indicating that they held military prowess.
21. Horses were rare in Israel and this is why we so often find the Jews riding donkeys (I Sam. 12:3; 25:20 I Sam. 17:23).
22. Israel was enticed into lusting after such men. The language is similar to that in chapter sixteen (esp. 16:28).
23. Yahweh had chosen Israel to be different and special among all of the nations. Yet she wanted to be just like the powerful nations of her time.
24. **Principle:** God gives us a higher calling. We are not to be impressed with the cosmos and emulate the behavior and activities of the reversionists in our periphery.
25. The Jews made a treaty with the Assyrian (Rather than rely on Yahweh!!!) when Menahem gave the king of Assyria 1000 talents of silver (cp. II Kings 15:19).
26. Ahaz and Hoshea did the same thing during the reign of Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser (II Kings 16:17; 17:3).
27. It is not as if the Jews were forbidden to have any contact or interaction with the nations around them.
28. David was helped mightily by Hiram, king of Tyre (II Sam. 5:11).
29. However the Israelites passed up on Yahweh and put their hope in the Assyrians. In addition to making binding treaties, they also took on their pagan ways. Such was a grave violation of Bible Doctrine.

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 7 & 8:

VERSE SEVEN

“And she poured out her fornication on them , all of the choicest of the sons of Assyria and all of whom she lusted after. She was defiled by all of their idols”.

עֲגַבָּהּ בְּכָל־גִּלּוּלֵיהֶם נִשְׁמָאָה: וְנָתַתְּן תְּזִנוּתֵיהֶן עֲלֵיהֶם מִבְּחָר בְּנֵי־אַשּׁוּר כָּל־ם וּבְכָל־
 אֲשֶׁר

(conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s נָתַן/nathan "she gave" + noun-f-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s תְּזִנוּת/taz^enuth "fornication" + prep w/ suff-3rd-m-pl עַל/‘al "upon them" noun-m-s const. מִבְּחָר/mid^echar "best, choicest" + noun-m-pl בְּנֵן/ben "sons of..." + proper noun אֲשּׁוּר/’ashur "Assyria" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-m-pl כָּל/kol "all of them" + conj. ו/w "and" + prep. ב/B "with" + noun-m-s const. כָּל/kol "all of..." + rel pron. אֲשֶׁר/’asher "whom" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-f-s עֲגַבָּ/‘agab "she lusted" + prep. ב/B "with" + noun-m-s const. כָּל/kol "all..." + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-m-pl גִּלּוּל/gillul "their idols" + verb-niph-perf-3rd-f-s תָּמְאָ/tame’ "she was defiled")).

VERSE EIGHT

“For she did not abandon her harlotries in Egypt, for in her youth they laid with her and they themselves had handled her virgin breasts and poured out their fornications upon her”.

וְאֶת־תְּזִנוּתֵיהֶן מִמִּצְרַיִם לֹא עָזָבָה כִּי אוֹתָהּ שָׁכְבוּ בְנֵעוּרֶיהָ
 וְהִמָּזָה עֲשׂוּ דְדָדִי בְּתוּלֵיהָ וַיִּשְׁפְּכוּ תְזִנוּתָם עָלֶיהָ:

(conj. ו/w "for" + sign. d.o. אֶת/’eth [untranslated] + noun-f-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s תְּזִנוּת/tazenuth "her harlotries" + prep. מִן/min "from" + proper noun מִצְרַיִם/mits^erayim "Egypt" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo’ "not" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-f-s עָזַב/‘azab "she forsook/abandoned" + conj. כִּי/kiy "for" + sign. d.o. w/ suf-3rd-f-s אֶת/’eth "with her" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl שָׁכַב/shakab "they laid" + prep. ב/B "in" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s נְעוּרִים/ne‘uriym "her youth" + conj. ו/w "and" + pron-3rd-m-pl הֵם/hem "themselves" + verb-piel-perf-3rd-c-pl עָשָׂה/‘asah "they handled" + noun-m-s const. דָּד/dad "breast of..." + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s בְּתוּלִים/b^ethuliyim "her virginity" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd m-pl [waw consec] שָׁפַךְ/shaphak "they poured out" + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl תְּזִנוּת/taz^enuth "their fornications" + prep. w/ suf-3rd-f-s עַל/‘al "upon her").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 7 & 8:

1. Having met these handsome, successful men from Assyria, Oholah wastes no time getting more acquainted with them.
2. We read in verse seven that **“...she poured out her fornication on them , all of the choicest of the sons of Assyria and all of whom she lusted after. She was defiled by all of their idols”**.
3. Note that she is not interested in one or a few of them but all of them.
4. Note the repetition of the masculine, singular construct of כָּל/kol , “all”.
5. “She poured out her fornication on **ALL** of the choicest of the sons of Assyria”. That is to say **“ALL** of whom she lusted after”. She was also defiled by **“ALL** of their idols”.
6. Such speaks of the fact that Israel sought foreign alliances with them as well as sought out their religious beliefs and customs and adopted them as well.
7. This was not a slight hobby, but a full on lifestyle of whoredom (cp. Ezek. 16:15).
8. Again, it is not as if the Jews couldn’t have some contact and trade with their neighbors. But they were to rely on Yahweh’s provision and not have binding treaties or contracts with the Gentile world (cp. Ezek. 23:30; Psa. 106:9ff).
9. They were most assuredly not to entertain or engage in their religious practices!
10. At the crux of this matter is the fact that she never forgot nor completely dropped the habit of infidelity that she learned in Egypt.
11. We learn in verse eight, **“For she did not abandon her harlotries in Egypt, for in her youth they laid with her and they themselves had handled her virgin breasts and poured out their fornications upon her”**.
12. While she was deflowered as a young virgin by the Egyptian religion. She now reverts back to such whoredom in her elder years as Yahweh’s wife.
13. The infidelity she had learned while in Egypt was never forsaken or abandoned. She clung to these things and pursued the Assyrians in a like manner.
14. Hosea notes that they had an affinity for both nations (Hos. 7:11).
15. While in Egypt she had her virgin body handled. She again lusts after the religion and political affiliation with Assyria.
16. Indeed she had taken on her pagan beliefs and had worshipped the Assyrian Deities.
17. Hence they never completely shucked the paganism their forefathers learned in Egypt.
18. They would do well for a time, but then would fall right back into the degenerate pagan beliefs of whatever nation they were mingling with (I Kings 12:28; II Kings 10:29; II Kings 17:16).

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 9 & 10:

VERSE NINE

“Therefore I gave her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians over whom she lusted”.

עֲלֵיהֶם:לְכֵן נָתַתִּיהָ בְיַד־מְאַהֲבֶיהָ בְיַד בְּנֵי אַשּׁוּר אֲשֶׁר עָגְבָהּ

(prep. ל/L [untranslated] + adv. כֵּן/ken "therefore" + verb-qal-perf-1st-c-s נָתַן/nathan "I gave" + prep. ב/B "into" + noun-f-s const. יָד/yad "hand of.." + verb-piel-part-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s אֶהָב/’aheb "her lovers" + prep. ב/B "into" + noun-f-s const. יָד/yad "hand of.." + proper noun אַשּׁוּר/’ashur "Assyrians" + rel. pron. אֲשֶׁר/’asher "whom" + verb-qal-per-3rd-f-s עָגְבָהּ/’agab "she lusted" + prep. w/ suff-3rd-m-pl עָל/’al "over them").

VERSE TEN

“They themselves uncovered her nakedness. They took her sons and daughters but they slew her with the sword, and she became famous among women as they executed judgment on her”

מָה גָלוּ עֲרוֹתֶיהָ בְּנִיָּהּ וּבְנוֹתֶיהָ לְקָחוּ וְאוֹתָהּ בַּחֶרֶב הִרְגוּ וְתַהֲיֶינָם לְנָשִׁים וְשִׁפּוֹטִים עָשׂוּ בָהּ:

(pron-3rd-m-pl הֵם/hem [emphat.] "themselves" + verb-peil-perf-3rd-c-pl גָּלוּ/galah "they uncovered" + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-f-s עֲרוֹתָהּ/’erawah "her nakedness" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s בָּנֵי/ben "her sons" + conj. ו/w "and" + noun-f-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s בָּת/bath "her daughters" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl לָקַח/laqach "they took" + conj. – advs. ו/w "but" + sign d.o. w/ suf-3rd-f-s "her" + prep. ב/B "with" + noun-f-s w/ d.a. חֶרֶב/chereb "the sword" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-m-c-pl הִרְגוּ/harag "they slew" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] הָיָה/hayah "she became" + noun-m-s שֵׁם/shem "name" + prep. ל/L "for" + noun-f-pl w/ d.a. אִשָּׁה/’isha "the women" + conj. ו/w "and" + noun-m-pl שִׁפּוֹט/shephot "judgment" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl עָשׂוּ/’asah "they executed" + prep. w/ suf-3rd-f-s ב/B "on her").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 9 & 10:

1. Yahweh continues with the saga of Oholah in verse nine where He notes, “Therefore I gave her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians over whom she lusted”.
2. In view is the poetic justice that God so often loves to deliver. If the Jews of Samaria/Israel were so impressed with the Assyrians and their lifestyle, then they can become part of Assyrian.
3. God gave her just exactly what she wanted. She was impressed with this nation, wanted to be like this nation and wanted to worship the false god’s of this nation.
4. Through poetic justice, He gave her just what she wanted and just what she deserved.

5. We read in verse ten, **“They themselves uncovered her nakedness. They took her sons and daughters but they slew her with the sword...”**
6. While she wanted to be part of the nation, she did not at all envision how it would come about.
7. The Assyrians first put her under tribute (1st cycle of discipline – II Kings 15:19; 16:17; 17:3).
8. Then they eventually resorted to war and destroyed the nation and took many exiles away during the time of Shalmaneser (II Kings 18:9).
9. The slaying of the woman with the sword is symbolic of the Assyrians destroying the nation and killing many in battle.
10. The taking of her sons and daughters speaks of the deportation and captivity of those who remained at the end of the war.
11. Those dispersed never returned to the land and their descendants did not begin to return until the twentieth century.
12. Yahweh states in the final clause of verse ten, **“...and she became famous among women as they executed judgment on her”**
13. Our phrase translated as “she became famous among women” literally reads “she became a name for women”. In other words she was a name that the other women (nations) recognized as becoming so evil and receiver her just deserts (cp. Jer. 22:8; Ezek 36:3).
14. We saw similar imagery earlier in the book (Ezek. 16:31ff).
15. We may say that she was not merely famous but “notorious” among the nations.

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 11 – 12:

VERSE ELEVEN

“Now her sister Oholibah saw *this*, but her lustfulness was more corrupt than hers and her fornications were greater than the fornications of her sister”.

וַתֵּרֶא אַחֹתָהּ אַהֲלִיבָה וַתִּשְׁחַת עֲגַבָּהּ מִמֶּנָּה וְאֶת־תִּזְנוּתֶיהָ
מִזְנוּנֵי אַחֹתָהּ:

(conj.- introd. ו/w "now" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] רָאָה/ra'ah "she saw" + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-f-s אַחֹת/’achoth "her sister" + proper noun אַהֲלִיבָה/’ahaliybah "Oholibah" + conj - adverb.. ו/w "but" verb-hiph-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] שְׁחַת/shachath "it was corrupt" + noun-f-s const. w/ suf-3rd-m-s עֲגַבָּה/’egabah "her lustfulness" + prep. w/ suf-3rd-f-s מִן/min "from her" + conj. ו/w "and" + sign. d.o. אֶת/’eth [untranslated] + noun-f-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s תִּזְנוּת/taz’enuth "fornication" + prep. מִן/min "than" + noun-m-pl זְנוּנֵי/z’enuyim "fornications of" + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-f-s אַחֹת/’achoth "her sister").

VERSE TWELVE

“She lusted over the sons of Assyria who were near, governors and officials magnificently clothed, mounted horsemen all of them handsome young men”.

אֶל־בְּנֵי אַשּׁוּר עָגַבָּה פְּחֹת וּסְגָנִים קְרָבִים לְבָשֵׁי מְכָלֹל
פְּרָשִׁים רֶכְבֵי סוּסִים בַּחֹרֵי חֶמֶד כָּלָם:

(prep. אֶל/’el "unto" + noun-m-pl const. בְּנֵי/ben "sons of..." + proper noun אַשּׁוּר/’ashur "Assyria" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-f-s עָגַב/’agab "she lusted" + noun-m-pl פְּחֹת/pechah "governors" + conj. ו/w "and" + noun-m-pl סְגָנִי/sagan "officials" + adj-m-pl קְרָב/qarob "those near" + noun-m-pl פְּרָשִׁי/parash "horsemen" + verb-qal-part-m-pl const. רָכַב/rakab "riding" + noun-m-pl סוּס/sus "horses" + noun-m-pl const. בַּחֹרֵי/bachur "young men" + noun-m-s חֶמֶד/chemar "desirable/pleasant" + noun-m-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl כָּל/kol "all of them").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 11 & 12:

1. Having finished describing the abominations of Oholah (Samaria) God naturally move on to the second sister, Oholibah (Jerusalem).
2. Judah and Jerusalem had seen all of the sins committed by their northern neighbors as well as her demise at the hands of the Assyrians in 722 BC.
3. She was very culpable and knew what the end game would be in such matters.

4. She should have known that her end would be similar to her sister's if she too engaged in such corrupt behavior, but that did not stop her.
5. Yahweh states in verse eleven **“Now her sister Oholibah saw *this*, but her lustfulness was more corrupt than hers and her fornications were greater than the fornications of her sister”**.
6. Not only did she repeat the folly of her sister, she went several steps beyond and her lustfulness and fornications were even greater (cp. Ezek. 16:47-51; Jer. 3:8-11).
7. Note the language which is used. She did not simply repeat the folly of her sister. Rather, her lustfulness was “more corrupt”.
8. Our word translated as “corrupt” is the hiphil perfect of **שָׁחַח**/shachath, “to corrupt, destroy”.
9. The hiphil stem is causative, indicating that her lustfulness was caused to be corrupted.
10. The cause of course is the volition of the nation which, having seen all that occurred in the northern kingdom decided to pursue the same course to an even greater degree.
11. Such speaks of the greater degree of idolatry/spiritual infidelity which the nation pursued.
12. Their culpability in seeing the results earned by the northern kingdom in part makes her sins worse as she most assuredly should have know better!!!
13. After all, she not only had Bible Doctrine telling her to remain aloof from close ties to pagans and false religion, she had just seen her sister destroyed as a result of such stupidity!
14. She lusted first over the Assyrians. We see similar language used of the men of Assyria as we saw earlier in the text.
15. In verse twelve we read **“She lusted over the sons of Assyria who were near, governors and officials magnificently clothed, mounted horsemen all of them handsome young men”**.
16. She too was overly impressed with the Assyrian empire, wanting to be part of it, wanting to be like it and embracing their religious beliefs, just like ten northern tribes had done.
17. Note that they are referred to as “those near” where the masculine, plural adjective **קָרוֹב**/qarob is employed, “near, neighboring”.
18. Indeed, by this time the Assyrian empire was right on their door step as they had taken all of the land of the northern kingdom with only Judah remaining (see map).
19. Having seen the stealth and glory of this kingdom, she really had an eye for it.
20. During the reign of Ahaz, Judah courted Assyria, hoping in the Assyrians for deliverance rather than relying on God (II Kings 16:7ff).
21. Not surprisingly, she would be victimized in the same way as the southern Kingdom of Judah was right on the brink of the 5th cycle of discipline at the hands of Sennacharib of Assyria, not long after the destruction of the northern kingdom.
22. However, they did not completely capitulate to the Assyrians, in that they were able to muster some +V and Yahweh chose to save them in the days of Hezekiah (II Kings 18:1ff).
23. However the very next generation fell prey to the same kind of lustfulness over the neighboring nations, to include the Babylonians as we shall see in the next section (II Kings 21:1ff).
24. Hence she was not satisfied with the Assyrians, she lusted even more for an additional lover, the Chaldeans (cp. Ezek. 16:28).

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 13 – 15

VERSE THIRTEEN

“And I saw that she had been defiled, both of them in the same way”

וַאֲרָא כִּי נִטְמְאָה דְּרַךְ אַחַד לְשִׁתֵּיהֶן:

(conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-1st-c-s רָאָה/ra'ah "I saw" + conj. כִּי/kiy "that" + verb-niphal-perf-3rd-f-s נִטְמְאָה/tame' "she had been defiled" + noun-f-s דְּרַךְ/derek "way" + adj-m-s אֶחָד/’echad "same" + prep ל/L "unto" + adj-f-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-pl שְׁנַיִם/shenayim "both").

VERSE FOURTEEN

“So she increased her fornications and she saw men portrayed on the wall, images of Chaldeans portrayed in vermillion”.

וַתֹּסֶף אֶל-תִּזְנוֹתֶיהָ וַתִּרְא אַנְשֵׁי מִחֻקָּה עַל-הַקִּיר צִלְמֵי
(כַּשְׂדִּיִּים) [כַּשְׂדִּיִּים] חֻקָּיִם בַּשָּׁשָׁר:

(conj. ו/w "so" + verb-hiph-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] יָסַף/yasaph "she increased" + prep. אֶל/’el "unto" + noun-f-pl w/ suff-3rd-f-s תִּזְנוֹת/tazenuth "her fornications" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] רָאָה/ra'ah "she saw" + noun-m-pl אֲנָשִׁים/’ish "men" + verb-pual-part-m-s חֻקָּה/chaqah "portrayed" + prep. עַל/’al "on" + noun-m-s w/ d.a. קִיר/qiyr "the wall" + noun-m-pl const. צִלְמֵי/tselem "images of..." + proper noun כַּשְׂדִּיִּים/kasdiym "Chaldeans" + verb-qal-pass. part-m-pl חֻקָּק/chaqaq "portrayed" + prep. ב/B "in" + noun-m-s w/ d.a. שָׁשָׁר/shashar [2xs] "red/vermillion").

VERSE FIFTEEN

“Girded with belts at their waistbands, turbans flowing upon their heads, the appearance of officers all of them like the sons of Babylon Chaldea, the land of their origin”.

(noun-m-pl const. חָגוּר/chagor "girded..." + noun-m-s אֲזוֹר/’ezor "belts" + prep. ב/B "at" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-m-pl מַתְּנַיִם/mathenayim "their loins/hips" + adj-m-pl const. סָרוּחַ/saruach "flowing" + noun-m-pl טְבוּל/tebul "turbans" + prep. ב/B "on" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-m-pl רֹאשׁ/ro'sh "their heads" + noun-m-s const. מַרְאֵה/mare'eh "appearance of..." + noun-m-pl שְׁלִישׁ/shaliysh "officers" + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-m-pl כֹּל/kol "all of them" + noun-f-s const. דְּמוּת/demuth "likeness" + noun-m-pl const. בְּנֵי/ben "sons of..." + proper noun בָּבֶל/babel "Babylon" + proper noun כַּשְׂדִּיִּים/kasiym "Chaldea")

+ noun-f-s const. אֶרֶץ/erets "land of..." + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl מוֹלֶדֶת/moledeth "their birth/origin").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 13 – 15

1. Yahweh says of Oholibah (Jerusalem) **“And I saw that she had been defiled, both of them in the same way”**.
2. Both women allowed themselves to be seduced and then defiled in the same way, by succumbing to the false religions of the nations around them (II Kings 17:18, 19).
3. The Jews of the southern kingdom of Judah fell for Assyria just as their neighbors to the north had. However, if that were not enough, she increased upon her fornications by pursuing the Chaldeans’ religion and lifestyle as well.
4. We read in verse fourteen, **“So she increased her fornications and she saw men portrayed on the wall, images of Chaldeans portrayed in vermillion”**.
5. Our word translated as “increased” is the hiphil, perfect of יָסַף/yasaph, “to add, increase, do something again”.
6. It speaks of her pursuing spiritual fornications in addition to those sins already committed with the Assyrians, those committed during the time of the rise of the Chaldean Empire.
7. The hiphil stem is a causative stem, indicating that she was *caused* or *moved* to act in such a manner.
8. The “cause” was her unchecked rampant OSN, which had an affinity for false religion and pagan rituals.
9. An immediate question is “On what wall did she see engravings of Chaldean officers?”
10. Note the definite article is used, indicating that a particular wall is in view, “the wall”.
11. We will find that the Jews of Judah had actually sent emissaries to Babylon to view their religion directly (cp. Ezek. 23:40, 41).
12. In Babylon there was a wall with these heroes/deities portrayed on it. The Jews were unfortunately very impressed.
13. They had walls portraying pagan deities just as the Jews had in their own temple (cp. Ezek. 8:10 cp. Isa. 46:1).
14. Note that there are “images” of such men. Our word translated as “images” is the masculine, plural noun, תְּסֵלִים/tselem, “image, representation, likeness”.
15. It is the same word used in Genesis, where man is said to be made in the “likeness of God” (Gen. 1:26; 5:1).
16. The Jews (as well as Church Age saints) are forbidden to make any image or likeness so as to incorporate it into any form of worship (Exo. 20:4).
17. We have a God who, though He has manifested Himself in certain instances, we do not have a visual of what He looks like.
18. Believers are to resist the idea of clinging to any visual representation of God and walk by faith.
19. The Babylonians clung to their idols. Such would not deliver them when the time of their demise came any more than such idols delivered the Jews (Jer. 50:2).
20. The Babylonians are said to be portrayed in “vermillion”. Our word for vermillion is the masculine, singular noun שָׁשָׁר/shashar, “red, vermillion”.

21. Why is this detail mentioned? Recall that the Assyrians were dressed in purple (cp. 23:6).
22. It must be remembered that to have any type of dyed cloth was a sign of considerable wealth in the ancient world.
23. To make red dye, one would extract tens of 1000s of small worms (tolah) from the bark of trees and crush them. The blood made a red dye which could be used to color clothing. It was a very expensive practice.
24. While the Assyrians favored purple, the Chaldeans liked red as their color of choice.
25. However we are not viewing literal men being clothed in red, but those whose images are on the wall in Chaldea. Hence, they had woven this color into the brick work of their wall.
26. Some of Ezekiel's audience may have observed such walls as they had been living in the land of Babylon for years now.
27. He continues in verse fifteen where He states such men were **“Girded with belts at their waistbands, turbans flowing upon their heads, the appearance of officers all of them like the sons of Babylon Chaldea, the land of their origin”**.
28. The Jews were overly impressed with such images. It is undeniable that they had a huge affinity for the Babylonian Empire.
29. The belts in view were not those that merely held one's clothes in place. These are weapons belts as these are warriors (cp. I Sam. 18:4).
30. They are also presented as wearing turbans, also a sign of wealth and dignity (cp. Job 29:14; Ezek. 24:17).
31. In view were most likely the deified heroes whom the Chaldeans worshipped or else the representation of their gods. Note that such ones had the “appearance” of officers (cp. Isaiah 46:1; Jeremiah 29:3; 50:2).
32. Note that Babylon Chaldea is called “their land of their origin” here. The Jews should have been focusing on the land of *their own* origin, a land of milk and honey that the Lord had graciously bestowed upon them.
33. Recall that the people Ezekiel is addressing are the dispersed Jews, living in the land of Babylon. This pronouncement should have served to remind them that they were in a foreign land and not in the land of their own origin but that of the Chaldeans.
34. Hence, they need not be involved in any more of the Chaldeans' false religion as it had done nothing to deliver them in the days of Jehoiachin.

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 16 & 17:

VERSE SIXTEEN

“And she lusted over the sight which was before her eyes and she sent messengers to them in Chaldea”

(וַתַּעֲגֹב) [וַתַּעֲגֹבָהּ] עֲלֵיהֶם לְמַרְאֵה עֵינֶיהָ וַתִּשְׁלַח מַלְאָכִים
 אֵלֵיהֶם כְּשַׂדִּימָה:

(conj. ו/w “and” + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s[waw consec] עֲגֹב /‘agad “she lusted” + prep. w/ suf-3rd-m-pl עַל /‘al “over them” + prep. ל/L “unto” + noun-s const. מַרְאֵה /mare’eh “sight/appearance of...” + noun-f-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s עֵינַי /‘ayin “her eyes” + conj. ו/w “and” + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] שְׁלַח /shalach “she sent” + noun-m-pl מַלְאָךְ /mal’ach “messengers” + prep w/ suf-3rd-m-pl אֶל /‘el “to them” + proper noun כְּשַׂדִּימָה /kas’diyim “Chaldea”).

VERSE SEVENTEEN

“And the sons of Babylon came to her to the bed of love and defiled her with their fornications and she was made unclean by them, but her soul became alienated from them”.

וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵלֶיהָ בְּנֵי-בָבֶל לְמִשְׁכַּב הַדִּים וַיִּטְמְאוּ אוֹתָהּ
 בְּתִזְנוֹתָם וַתִּטְמַא בָּם וַתִּקַּע נַפְשָׁהּ מֵהֶם:

(conj. ו/w “and” + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-m-pl [waw consec] בָּאוּ /bo’ “they came” + prep. w/ suf-3rd-f-s אֶל /‘el “to her” + noun-m-pl const. בְּנֵי /ben “sons of...” + proper noun בָּבֶל /babel “Babylon” + prep. ל/L “to” + noun-m-s const. מִשְׁכָּב /mishkab “couch/bed of...” + noun-m-pl דִּים /dod “love” + conj. ו/w “and” + verb-piel-imperf-3rd-m-pl [waw consec] טְמְאוּ /tame’ “they defiled” + sign. d.o. w/ suf-3rd-f-s אֶת /‘eth “her” + prep. ב/B “with” + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl תִּזְנוֹת /taz’enuh “their fornications” + conj. ו/w “and” + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] “she became unclean” + prep.w/ suf-3rd-m-pl בְּ /B “by them”. + conj – advers. ו/w “but” + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] יָקַע /yaqa’ “she alienated” + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-f-s נַפְשָׁהּ /n’phesh “her soul” + prep w/ suf-3rd-m-pl מִן /min “from them”).

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 16 & 17:

1. Yahweh continues to expound on how Oholibah not only duplicated the fornications of her sister but went well beyond them in finding an additional lover in the form of the Chaldean Empire.
2. He states in verse sixteen, **“And she lusted over the sight which was before her eyes and she sent messengers to them in Chaldea”**

3. The Jews of Judah fell head over heels in lust (not love) with their Chaldean neighbors. So much that when word of the idols and images which were upon their walls reached their ears, they sent ambassadors to see for themselves.
4. Such is analogous to the Jews seeking out friendly ties with them, relying on them for help rather than Yahweh.
5. It also speaks to the degree that they were very interested in and accepting of the degenerate religious beliefs that the Chaldeans held.
6. We read about the emissaries sent to Babylon in Ezek. 23:40, 41.
7. Hezekiah received visitors from Babylon during his reign (II Kings 20:12ff).
8. However there must have been much more contact and contamination in the early years based on what we are learning here in Ezekiel.
9. This envoy opened up the door for a great deal of contact between the Jews and Babylonians.
10. We read in verse seventeen, **“And the sons of Babylon came to her to the bed of love and defiled her with their fornications and she was made unclean by them, but her soul became alienated from them”**.
11. In view, the nation embraces the Chaldeans by relying on them for protection at first and then adopting their culture and religious beliefs.
12. The Babylonians are thus said to defile Oholibah. Our word translated as “defiled” is the piel, perfect of נִזְטָ /tame’ “to make unclean, pollute, defile, cause to be filthy”.
13. The piel stem is an intensive stem where by this pollution and defilement were full on, thoroughly made.
14. Hence, she has this affair with the Chaldeans by which she has become defiled, defiled in the sense that this is spiritual adultery committed against her husband, Adonay Yahweh.
15. However over time she becomes alienated from the Chaldeans. Our word translated as “alienated” is the qal, perfect of יָקַע /yaqa’ “to alienate, dislocate, separate”. It is the same verb used of Jacob’s hip being dislocated (Gen. 32:26).
16. Hence she backed off and began to pull away from Babylon.
17. The NASB translates this verb as “she became disgusted”.
18. Whatever the case, she did not want to continue on with Babylon in the way she had initially. Probably because of the danger they meant to the nation.
19. Indeed, in courting Babylon, she was brought under tribute to Nebuchadnezzar, a condition she soon sought to end (II Kings 23:34-24:5).
20. While initially placed under tribute to the king of Babylon, Judah rebelled against them during the time of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah.
21. The Jews attempted to gain alliances with both Egypt and Assyria in an attempt to stave off the attack which the Babylonians brought against them (Ezek. 17:15).
22. Such attempts were futile and would not save the nation from the juggernaut of Nebuchadnezzar’s army.
23. Having first slept with the Assyrians and then the Chaldeans, she then turns back to the Egyptians. In every instance she demonstrates a complete lack of desire and dependency on Yahweh, her true husband.

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 18 – 20:

VERSE EIGHTEEN

“And she revealed her fornications and uncovered her nakedness and My soul became alienated from her as it had become alienated from her sister”.

נִקְעָה נַפְשִׁי מֵעַל אַחֹתָהּ: וַתִּגַּל תַּזְנוּתֶיהָ וַתִּגַּל אֶת־עֲרוּתָהּ וַתִּקַּע נַפְשִׁי מֵעַל־יָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר

(conj. ו/w “and” + verb-piel-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] גַּלָּה/galah “she revealed” + noun-f-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s תַּזְנוּת/taz^enuth “her fornications” + conj. ו/w “and” + verb-piel-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] גַּלָּה/galah “she uncovered” + sign. d.o. אֶת/eth [untranslated] + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-f-s עֲרוּהָ/erwah “her nakedness” + conj. ו/w “and” + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] יִקַּע/yaqa “it became alienated” + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s נַפְשִׁי/nephesh “my soul” + prep. מִן/min “from” + prep w/ suf-3rd-f-s עַל/al “upon her” + prep. כ/K “as” + rel. pron. אֲשֶׁר/’asher “when” + verb-qal-perf-3rd-f-s נִקְעָה/naqa “it had become alienated” + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s נַפְשִׁי/nephesh “my soul” + prep. מִן/min “from” + prep. עַל/al “upon” + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-f-s אַחֹת/’achoth “her sister”).

VERSE NINETEEN

“And she increased her fornications remembering the days of her youth when she had fornicated with the Egyptians”.

בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: וַתִּרְבֶּה אֶת־תַּזְנוּתֶיהָ לְזִכַּר אֶת־יוֹמֵי נְעוּרֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר זָנְתָה

(conj. ו/w “and” + verb-hiph-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] רָבָה/rabah “she multiplied/increased” + sign. d.o. אֶת/eth [untranslated] + noun-f-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s תַּזְנוּת/taz^enuth “her fornications” + prep. ל/L “unto” + verb-qal-inf. const. זָכַר/zakar “remembering” + sign. d.o. אֶת/eth [untranslated] noun-m-pl const. יוֹם/yom “days of...” + noun-m-pl w/ suf-3rd-f-s נְעוּרִים/ne’uriym “her youth” + rel. pron. אֲשֶׁר/’asher “when” + verb-qal-perf-3rd-f-s זָנְתָה/zanah “she had fornicated” + prep. ב/B “with” + noun-f-s-const. אֶרֶץ/’erets “land of...” + proper noun מִצְרַיִם/mits^erayim “Egypt”).

VERSE TWENTY

“And she lusted over her lovers whose flesh is the flesh of donkeys and whose seminal emission is the seminal emission of horses”.

וַתַּעֲגֹבָה עַל פְּלִגְשֵׁיהֶם אֲשֶׁר בְּשֶׁר-חַמּוֹרִים בְּשָׂרָם וְזִרְמַת
 סוּסִים זִרְמָתָם:

(conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-s [waw consec] + עֲגַב/‘agab "she lusted" + prep. עַל/‘al "over" + noun-f-pl w/ suf-3rd-m-pl פְּלִגְשֵׁי/piylegesh "her lovers" + rel. pron. אֲשֶׁר/‘asher "whose" + noun-m-s const. בְּשָׂר/basar "flesh of..." + noun-m-pl חַמּוֹר/chamor "donkeys" + to be verb [supplied] "is" + noun-m-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl בְּשָׂר/basar "their flesh" + conj. ו/w "and" + noun-f-s const. זִרְמָה/zirmah "issue/ semen of..." + noun-m-pl סוּס/sus "horses" + to be verb [supplied] "is" + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl זִרְמָה/zir^emah "their issue/semen").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 18 – 20

1. Here Oholibah is viewed as continuing on the affair even though she was alienated from her lovers.
2. Yahweh states in verse eighteen, **And she revealed her fornications and uncovered her nakedness and My soul became alienated from her as it had become alienated from her sister”.**
3. Recall that earlier in our section Oholibah was alienated from her lovers. However here we realize that Yahweh is alienated from Oholibah, having observed the spiritual adultery she has pursued.
4. Recall earlier that God stated that all who engaged in idolatry had become “estranged” from Him (Ezek. 14:1ff).
5. Similar language is used where he is said to be alienated or set apart from Judah.
6. Note that He specifically states that His “soul became alienated from her”.
7. Yes, God has soul. It is in this sense that we are created in His image. The real you exists completely apart from your body and will endure forever. You can’t exterminate a soul.
8. The Bible speaks about God’s soul in this verse as well as others (Lev. 26:11; Judg. 11:16; Jer. 32:41).
9. Remember that though there are certain manifestations of God, God is non-corporal, not possessing a body (Acts. 7:48, 49).
10. He states that His soul became alienated from her in the same way it had occurred with her sister. In other words, God pulls back from Judah the same way He had from the ten northern tribes.
11. Once, God pulls away, certain protections and blessing were no longer readily available as He had given them over to their passions and allowed them pursue them under the energy of the flesh (cp. Psa. 78:59; 106:40; Jer. 6:8; 12:8).
12. He continues in verse nineteen, **“And she increased her fornications remembering the days of her youth when she had fornicated with the Egyptians”.**

13. Recall that earlier this woman fornicated with the Assyrians and then got tired of them and moved to the Chaldeans.
14. Here she changes her tastes again and goes back to the original lover, that of the Egyptians, the lover she had as a young woman.
15. Note the subtle shift from the perfect tense that of the qal infinitive of זָכַר/zakar, “remembering”.
16. It was in Egypt that she first engaged in pagan spiritual adultery against Yahweh (Ezek. 20:5ff; 23:3).
17. Now as an adult woman, having experienced many lovers, she ponders on “the good old days” of her experiences with the Egyptians.
18. At this point she has moved back to her original lover. Note that when she fell prey to the Chaldeans and ended up under tribute, she turned to the Egyptians for help by sending envoys (cp. Ezek. 17:15 cp. II Kings 25:1; Jer. 27:5-8; Ezek. 29:6, 7).
19. The Egyptians are viewed as huskier lovers as Yahweh describes them in verse twenty where He states **“And she lusted over her lovers whose flesh is the flesh of donkeys and whose seminal emission is the seminal emission of horses”**.
20. Egypt is viewed as a real animal or “love machine” in this instance (cp. Jer. 5:8).
21. Again the degree of spiritual adultery was great as they had adopted the practice of child sacrifice. It was in Egypt that she first learned such atrocities (cp. Ezek. 16:26; 17:15).
22. Their adultery is blend of both religious degeneracy as well as political ties that forsook Yahweh as they true protector and defender.
23. Our word for “lovers” is the feminine, plural noun, פִּילְגֶּשֶׁת/piylegesh. The word refers to a “concubine”. A concubine was a real wife, but one of second class who didn’t have the rights and privileges of a regular wife (Gen. 16:3; 35:22; Judg. 19:1-5).
24. Here it is translated as “lovers” in that a woman did not have “concubines” and Judah is clearly being presented as a female throughout this passage. The NASB renders it “paramours”.
25. Note that she had a special relationship with the Egyptians that she did not share with the Assyrians or Chaldeans. They are not referred to as פִּילְגֶּשֶׁת/piylegesh.
26. In view are those who have a close connection to the nation, but in no way are full-fledged husbands and protectors as Yahweh had been to them throughout the years.
27. Such will be readily apparent when neither political alliance nor worship of idols will be able to deliver them in the time of the end.