

## Why Jerusalem Fell IX

As we bring to a close our study of the reasons Jerusalem fell, Zephaniah (3:2) identified seven characteristics of the inhabitants of Jerusalem that resulted in their fall as a nation: 1) Rebellion; 2) Moral Pollution; 3) Oppressing of the people; 4) Not Obeying the voice of Jehovah through the prophets; 5) Refusal to receive instruction; and 6) Not trusted in Jehovah. The final straw in the equation was that she “Drew not near to her God.”

Israel “drew” to *approach*; “to” properly denoting motion *towards*; to her God.

Israel had numerous reasons to be thankful: Ezekiel 16:1-15 – “Again the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations; and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto Jerusalem: Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of the Canaanite; the Amorite was thy father, and thy mother was a Hittite. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to cleanse thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. No eye pitied thee, to do any of these things unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, for that thy person was abhorred, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee weltering in thy blood, I said unto thee, Though thou art in thy blood, live; yea, I said unto thee, Though thou art in thy blood, live. I caused thee to multiply as that which groweth in the field, and thou didst increase and wax great, and thou attainedst to excellent ornament; thy breasts were fashioned, and thy hair was grown; yet thou wast naked and bare. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord Jehovah, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with brodered work, and shod thee with sealskin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and covered thee with silk. And I decked thee with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a ring upon thy nose, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thy head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and brodered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil; and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper unto royal estate. And thy renown went forth among the nations for thy beauty; for it was perfect, through my majesty which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord Jehovah... But thou didst trust in thy beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy whoredoms on every one that passed by; his it was.”

(You are encouraged to read the entire dissertation of Ezekiel 16 to understand the extent of Israel’s failure to draw near to her God, and thus contributing to her fall.)

Everyone makes a choice in life as to the direction they will turn. Will we draw near to God as individuals and a nation, or will we draw not near our God? Asaph said, “For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: Thou hast destroyed all them that play the harlot, departing from thee. But it is good for me to draw near unto God: I have made the Lord Jehovah my refuge, That I may tell of all thy works” (Psa. 73:27-28). Therefore, “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded.” (James 4:8).