EZEKIEL 16

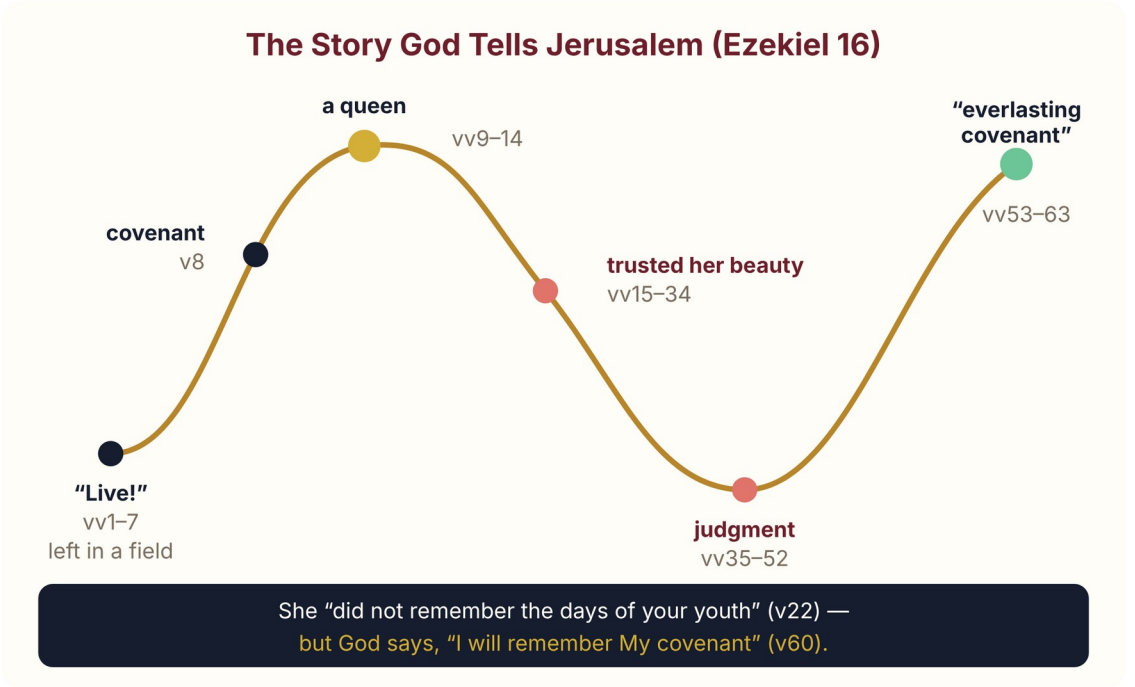
The Foundling Bride and the Everlasting Covenant

> *“Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you.”*
> EZEKIEL 16:60

Where Ezekiel has brought us

1. Ezekiel 16 carries no date of its own; it falls between the oracles of 592 BC (8:1) and 591 BC (20:1).

2. The story is of a baby girl left to die, rescued by God, married to Him and made a queen — who then became unfaithful.



Found in a Field, Made a Queen

God said "Live!", made a covenant, washed, clothed and crowned her.

EZEKIEL 16:3

and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem, "Your origin and your birth are from the land of the Canaanite, your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes how humble Jerusalem's start was: it was a Canaanite city long before David took it.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is grace from beginning to end. The baby had nothing: no family that wanted her, no care, no future.

Live (חָיָה)

CHAYAH · "LIVE, BE KEPT ALIVE"

Chayah means to live, to be kept alive. The newborn was left in the open field, unwashed and unwanted, "squirming in your blood" (v6) — the word bus pictures her kicking and thrashing.

Trusting the Gift, Not the Giver

God's gifts handed over to idols — even her children.

EZEKIEL 16:15

"But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries on every passer-by who might be willing.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik calls this among the strongest rebukes in Scripture. Clothing became decorations for high places, gold became images, and the oil and bread God gave were offered to idols.

WHAT IT MEANS

Watch the word "My." God says it was "My gold" and "My silver" (v17), "My oil and My incense" (v18), "My bread" (v19) — and she gave it all to idols.

Beauty (יֹפִי)

YOPHI · "BEAUTY, LOVELINESS"

Yophi is beauty, loveliness. In v14 Jerusalem's beauty was perfect "because of My splendor" (hadar); in v15 the same beauty becomes the problem: "But you trusted in your beauty."

Paying for What Destroys

Shrines on every street, alliances with Egypt, Assyria and Chaldea.

EZEKIEL 16:23

"Then it came about after all your wickedness ('Woe, woe to you!' declares the Lord GOD),

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik, quoting Feinberg, on the double cry of v23: 'The repeated woe is partly threat and partly lament.'

WHAT IT MEANS

God's word for what Judah did is unfaithfulness — she was His wife and she "takes strangers instead of her husband" (v32). She built shrines "at the top of every street" (v25) and leaned on Egypt, Assyria and Chaldea for security.

Languishing (אָמַל)

AMAL · "DROOP, BE WEAK, SICK"

Amal means to droop, to be weak or sick. God's diagnosis in v30 is not first about her actions but about her heart: "How languishing is your heart."

The Verdict of a Jealous Husband

Her lovers become her judges; then God's fury is calmed.

EZEKIEL 16:36

Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because your lewdness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered through your harlotries with your lovers and with all your detestable idols, and because of the blood of your sons which you gave to idols,

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes that under the Law both adultery and murder carried the death penalty (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22; Num 35:16–21), and Judah was guilty of both — unfaithfulness to God and the blood of her children.

WHAT IT MEANS

"Therefore, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD" (v35). God brings the case to its verdict.

Jealousy (קִנְאָה)
QINAH · "ZEAL, JEALOUS LOVE"

Qinah is zeal, ardor, a husband's jealous love. God says, "I will bring on you the blood of wrath and jealousy" (v38).

Like Mother, Like Daughter

Her sisters Samaria and Sodom look righteous beside her.

EZEKIEL 16:44

"Behold, everyone who quotes proverbs will quote this proverb concerning you, saying, 'Like mother, like daughter.'

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik, following Vawter and Hoppe, explains that 'elder' and 'younger' refer to size and importance, not age: Samaria, the northern kingdom that fell to Assyria in 722 BC, and Sodom.

WHAT IT MEANS

"Like mother, like daughter" (v44). Jerusalem behaved like the Canaanites she came from.

Disgrace (כְּלִמָּה)
KELIMMAH · "SHAME, HUMILIATION"

Kelimmah is shame, humiliation. Twice in v52 God says, "bear your disgrace."

The Everlasting Covenant

God remembers what she forgot and forgives all she has done.

EZEKIEL 16:53

"Nevertheless, I will restore their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, and along with them your own captivity,

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes that most see the "everlasting covenant" (v60) as the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Ezekiel 36:25–27, fulfilled in Christ's blood.

WHAT IT MEANS

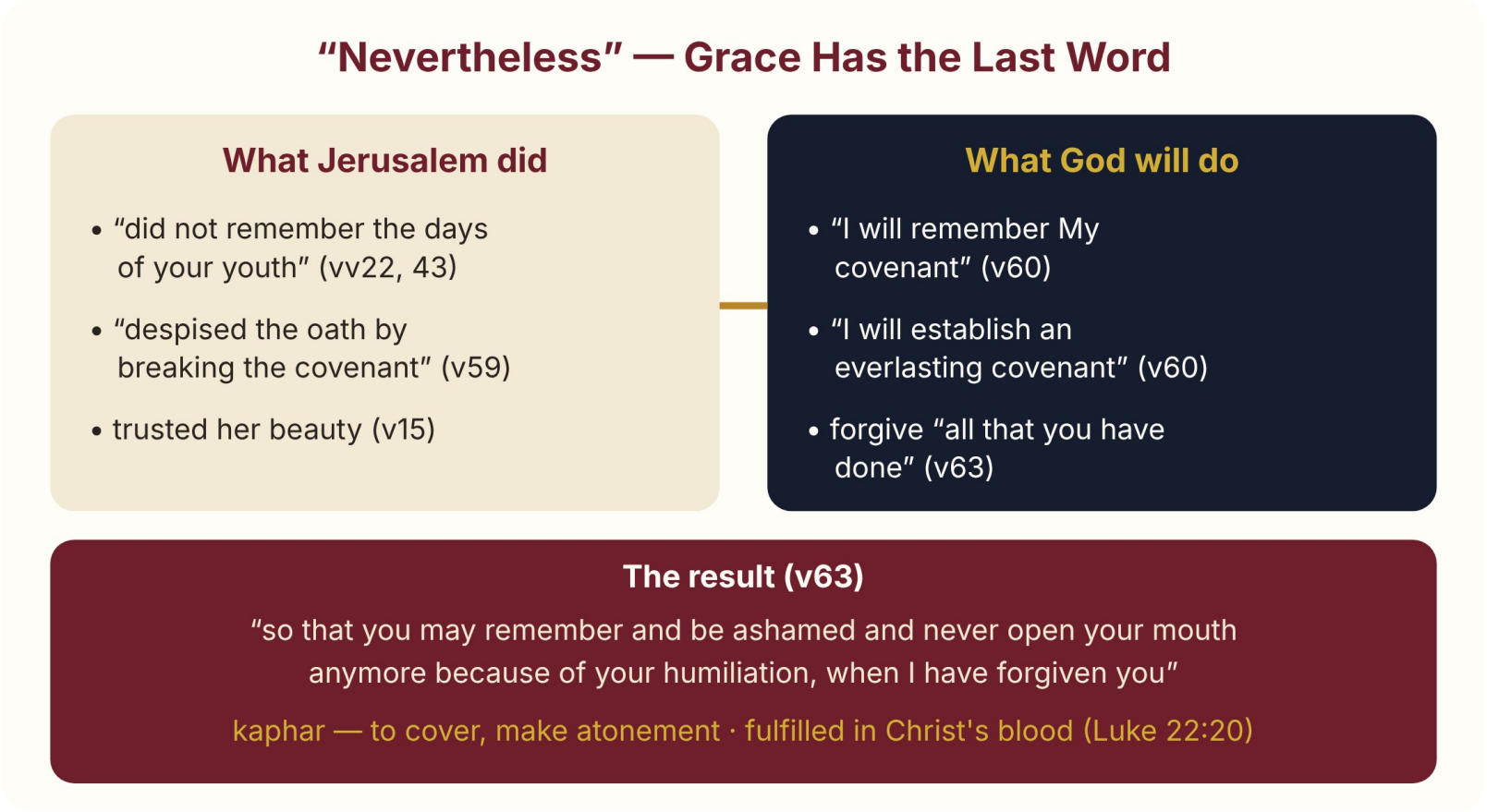
After everything, one word changes the story: "Nevertheless" (v60). She forgot the days of her youth; God remembers His covenant from those days.

Forgiven (כָּפַר)

KAPHAR · "COVER, MAKE ATONEMENT"

Kaphar means to cover, to make atonement — the great word of the Day of Atonement. In v63 God says He will forgive "all that you have done."

She Forgot; God Remembered



Jerusalem's forgetting and God's remembering meet in an everlasting covenant and full forgiveness (vv22, 43, 59–63).

What to carry from this chapter

1

Grace speaks first.

Before she could do anything, God said over the dying baby, “Live!”

2

Chosen because loved.

Guzik points to Deuteronomy 7:7–8: God chose Israel not because she was impressive, but because He loved her.

3

The edge of His garment.

Kanaph, the skirt God spread over her (v8), is the same pledge of marriage Ruth asked of Boaz.

4

The gift is not the Giver.

Her beauty was perfect “because of My splendor” (v14) — and the fall began when she trusted it (v15).

More to carry

5

A sick heart.

Amal pictures a drooping, languishing heart with no will to resist (v30).

6

Idols never pay.

She gave gifts to her lovers instead of receiving them (v34) — every idol costs more than it gives.

7

Jealousy with a limit.

Guzik, quoting Alexander: ‘God takes his commitments in personal relationships seriously’ — yet God says, “I will calm My fury” (v42).

8

Forgiveness that covers.

Kaphar in v63 means to make atonement; God Himself provides the covering for “all that you have done.”

Talk it through

1. Where was I when God found me and said “Live!”, and how often do I remember it?

2. What gift from God am I most tempted to trust instead of trusting Him?

3. What has an idol cost me that it never paid back?

4. Why does God's jealousy over His people show love rather than pettiness?

5. How does the word “Nevertheless” in v60 change the way I see my worst failures?

CLOSING

Jerusalem forgot the field where God found her, but God never forgot His covenant. In Christ He has established an everlasting covenant and forgiven all that we have done — leaving us nothing to boast about and everything to thank Him for.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides and reflection journal: see the Ezekiel study page.