

Talks For Growing Christians

Study Guide for
Ezekiel

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Lesson 1

Ezekiel's Vision Ezekiel 1

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God must judge His wayward people.
2. God will not forsake His wayward people.

practical application

What will your reaction be when you see the Lord?

questions

1. When Ezekiel was called by the Lord to be a prophet, he saw a great vision of God. A visible manifestation of God such as this is called a _____.
2. Complete this brief outline of Ezekiel's prophecy:
 - a. Chapters 1-24 The D _____ of God's Glory
 - b. Chapters 25-32 The S _____ of God's Glory
 - c. Chapters 33-48 The R _____ of God's Glory
3. Where was Ezekiel being held a captive when God gave him this vision? In what year had he been taken captive? What king had been taken into captivity with him? How old was Ezekiel when he was taken captive? How old was he when he was given the vision?
4. Were most of the prophecies in the book of Ezekiel given before or after the final fall of Jerusalem to Babylon? What is the overall theme of the prophecy of Ezekiel?
5. What was the main message the Lord was communicating to Ezekiel in this great vision?
6. What was the significance of the description of the "whirlwind (storm wind) from the north"?
7. The 4 living creatures with their 4 faces and 4 wings along with their fast-moving wheels with rims full of eyes emphasize the _____ of God, while the burning coals, fire and lightning speak of God's _____.

answers

1. A visible manifestation of God is called a theophany. Specifically, Ezekiel saw a visible manifestation of the glory of God (v 28).
2. A brief outline of this book of Ezekiel would be:
 - a. Chapters 1-24 The Departure of God's Glory
 - b. Chapters 25-32 The Scope of God's Glory
 - c. Chapters 33-48 The Return of God's Glory
3. Ezekiel had been taken captive in 597 BC and was being held captive in Babylon when God gave him the vision. He was 25 years old when taken captive, and 30 at the time of the vision. King Jehoiachin had been taken captive along with Ezekiel.
4. Most of the book of Ezekiel contains prophecies that were given *before* the final fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians. This is important to remember when discerning the meaning of this great vision. The overall theme of the prophecy of Ezekiel *is* the glory of God.
5. The main message the Lord was communicating to Ezekiel for His people was that He must judge His wayward people. The nation of Judah had forsaken the Lord and His Word. They had broken God's covenant with them, and therefore they were subject to God's sure judgment.
6. The enemies of Judah, including the Babylonians, always swept in (v 4) and attacked Jerusalem from the north. Even the sound "like the noise of an army" is described here (v 24).
7. The description of the living creatures emphasizes the omniscience of God, while the burning coals, fire and lightning speak of His judgment.

discuss / consider

Discuss the significance of Ezekiel receiving this vision from God while being a captive with the Jewish people in Babylon. Consider how the captives must have been encouraged by God's continuing communication with them, even after they had experienced His judgment. Why would the appearance of the likeness of a rainbow (v 28) have been a further encouragement?

challenge

How often are you prompted to "bow down" in worship before our awesome and almighty God? Are you prepared to be totally humbled when someday you face the Lord in all His glory?

memorize

"This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking. And He said to me, 'Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you.'" Ezekiel 1:28b

Lesson 2

Ezekiel's Call Ezekiel 2

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God's messengers will experience resistance to the Word.
2. God's messengers must internalize the Word.

practical application

God gives us strength to do what He calls us to do.

questions

1. Here in chapter 2, the Lord spoke _____ to Ezekiel and _____ him to be a prophet, not just to the kingdom of Judah, but to the whole house of Israel (v 3).
2. The Lord addressed Ezekiel as "Son of Man" more than ____ times in the book of Ezekiel. What did this phrase emphasize regarding Ezekiel?
3. In Daniel 7, the term Son of Man takes on _____ implications, so much so that at the time of our Lord, the expression "Son of Man" carried both the meaning from the Book of Ezekiel and the meaning from the Book of Daniel.
4. The scroll that God placed before Ezekiel had writing on both sides which was very unusual. What was the meaning associated with this unique, double-sided writing?
5. God instructed Ezekiel to eat the scroll. What was the symbolic meaning of this instruction?

answers

1. In this chapter, the Lord spoke directly to Ezekiel and appointed him to be a prophet for Him to the whole house of Israel.

2. The phrase “Son of Man” is an important expression and is used more than 20 times in the Book of Ezekiel. This phrase emphasized the fact that Ezekiel, although called to the high office of a prophet, was a mere man, still a human being like the rest of us.

3. In Daniel 7, the expression “Son of Man” takes on Messianic implications. In reference to our Lord, the expression conveyed both His Deity and His Humanity. He was the Son of Man in that He was fully human, just as we are – yet apart from sin. And He was the Son of Man in that He was fully divine and the predicted Messiah in line with the prophecy of Daniel.

4. The unusual characteristic of the scroll opened to Ezekiel with its writings on both sides expressed the meaning that the Lord had much that He wanted to communicate to Israel.

5. The meaning of the symbolic act of Ezekiel eating the scroll was that Ezekiel was to internalize the Word of God. It had to be worked into his soul and become an integral part of his conscious and subconscious self before he could speak forth the Word as God’s prophet.

discuss / consider

Discuss the sources of resistance in the hearts and minds of unbelievers. Consider the reasons why so many people are hesitant to hear and understand what the Word of God has to say to them.

challenge

Has studying and meditating on the Word of God become a daily desire and habit for you? Are you finding the Word “in your mind and written on your heart”? Paul wrote, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15 NASB)

memorize

“And [the Lord] said to me, ‘Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you.’ Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and He set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me.” Ezekiel 2:1b-2

Lesson 3

Ezekiel's Commission Ezekiel 3

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. A watchman must warn the people.
2. A watchman must wait for directions.

practical application

Remember, the cultural barriers are the easy hurdle.

questions

1. Where was Tel-abib (v 15) located? Who were the captives mentioned in this verse? Where had they come from?
2. What caused Ezekiel to be angry as the Spirit lifted him up in the vision (v 14)?
3. God commissioned Ezekiel to be a _____ (v 17). In this role, what was Ezekiel's primary responsibility?
4. Under what circumstances would God hold Ezekiel accountable as a watchman?
5. What were the specific instructions that the Lord gave to Ezekiel in verses 25-27 regarding his responsibilities to the house of Israel?

answers

1. Tel-abib was located in Babylon where the Jewish captives from Jerusalem lived beside the river (or canal) Chebar. Ezekiel was among the captives who had been brought to Babylon in 597 BC.
2. Ezekiel was not angry because he was reluctant to do the job God had called him to, but rather because of the sinful condition of God's people.
3. God commissioned Ezekiel to be a watchman for the house of Israel. Ezekiel had the serious responsibility of warning the people of Israel of God's coming judgment because of their sins.
4. If Ezekiel did not warn the wicked among the people of Israel, they would die and he would be held accountable. If Ezekiel did not warn the righteous people who turned away from their righteous ways, they would die and he would be held accountable. If Ezekiel *did* warn the wicked people and if he *did* warn the righteous people who had turned from their righteous ways, then he would have fulfilled his responsibilities and would not be held accountable. (See verses 18-21.)
5. Ezekiel received directions of restriction at this time (vs 25-27). He was not to freely circulate among the people and preach, but was to go out and proclaim the Word of the Lord only where and when the Lord directed him.

discuss / consider

Discuss the barriers to effective evangelism today. How can cultural barriers be overcome? How can the barriers of hardened and rebellious hearts be overcome? Consider resources available to help overcome these barriers.

challenge

Have you shared the gospel message with people who refused to hear it? Have you become discouraged and stopped sharing the good news? Remember, Ezekiel was told by God that some would refuse to hear, but he was to continue to share the Word of the Lord at His time and place, as there would be some who would hear. "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching." (2 Timothy 4:2)

memorize

"Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them a warning from Me. When I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them 'Thus says the Lord God.' He who hears, let him hear, and he who refuses, let him refuse; for they are a rebellious house." Ezekiel 3:17, 27

Lesson 4

Ezekiel's Signs Ezekiel 4

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The siege of Jerusalem was predicted by Ezekiel.
2. The famine in Jerusalem was predicted by Ezekiel.

practical application

Don't expect only pleasant jobs in Christ's service.

questions

1. What did the 3 signs or object lessons that God gave to Ezekiel symbolically portray?
2. Name 2 other prophets who had used dramatic illustrations in their ministry.
3. What were the points of the lesson illustrated by the clay tablet and the iron plate?
4. What was the point of the lesson illustrated by Ezekiel lying on his side?
5. What was the point of the lesson illustrated by Ezekiel's cooking and eating the bread?

answers

1. The 3 signs or object lessons symbolically portrayed the coming siege and fall of Jerusalem. Ezekiel was prophesying from Babylon where he and other fellow Jews were already captives. However, Jerusalem had still not fallen and the Temple was still standing.
2. The prophet Jeremiah (ch 24, 27) was using dramatic illustrations in Jerusalem at the same time Ezekiel was giving these object lessons to the people in Babylon. Isaiah used drama (ch 20) to illustrate the way captives would be taken away by the king of Assyria.
3. The clay tablet made by Ezekiel illustrated in detail that the Babylonian army would soon surround Jerusalem with a siege. The iron plate set up between Ezekiel and the clay “model” of the city was to indicate that God had cut off Jerusalem from His help and He would not listen to their cries for help.
4. Ezekiel lying on his side represented him symbolically bearing the sins of the house of Israel. Other than the fact that the days in verse 5 represented years, and alluded to the length of Israel’s sin and/or punishment, we cannot be certain what the specific number of days (390, 40) mean. We do know, however, that the main point of the object lesson was that Jerusalem was about to be put under siege because of the sins of the nation.
5. Ezekiel’s cooking of the bread over a fire of dung, eating the small portions of bread, and drinking small amounts of water, portrayed the severe famine that would take place as a result of the siege of Jerusalem. The purpose of the siege was, of course, to starve the people of the city.

discuss / consider

Discuss how drama can be used effectively in various areas of ministry. Consider the importance of the direct sharing and preaching of God’s Word during the same presentations.

challenge

Has God ever asked you to perform unpleasant tasks in His service? Did you accept them and accept them willingly? Did you learn lessons of obedience and faithfulness from the experience? Think of Ezekiel when you are asked to take on unpleasant tasks in the Lord’s service.

memorize

“He said to me, ‘Son of man, surely I will cut off the supply of bread in Jerusalem; they shall eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and shall drink water by measure and with dread, that they may lack bread and water, and be dismayed with one another, and waste away because of their iniquity.’” Ezekiel 4:16-17

Lesson 5

Ezekiel's Sword Ezekiel 5

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. Much death in Jerusalem was predicted by Ezekiel
2. Horrible death in Jerusalem was predicted by Ezekiel.

practical application

Don't forget that God is holy as well as God is love.

questions

1. Why did Ezekiel prophecy to the people of Israel who were already in Babylon about the coming siege and fall of Jerusalem?
2. In chapter 4, the *fact* of the siege was portrayed in the first sign of the intricate clay tablet made by Ezekiel. The *length* of the siege was portrayed by the second sign of Ezekiel lying on his side for many days. The *conditions* during the siege were portrayed by the third sign of the meager amount of food and drink Ezekiel ate. Here in chapter 5, the _____ of the siege are portrayed by Ezekiel shaving his head and dividing the cuttings of his hair.
3. In the days of Ezekiel, what did the shaving of the head symbolize?
4. Ezekiel was to shave off the hair of his head with a sharp sword and divide up the cuttings of his hair into 3 equal portions by weight. What did the cutting off and dividing up of his hair represent?
5. What was perhaps the most appalling condition that would result from the long siege in Jerusalem? Had this terrible situation been predicted?

answers

1. Many of the captives in Babylon as well as many of the people still in Jerusalem were convinced that God would never let His Temple be destroyed or the city of Jerusalem conquered. However, the idolatry and immorality of the people had gone too far. Jerusalem was soon to fall and the magnificent temple built by Solomon was about to be destroyed.
2. Here in chapter 5, the results of the siege are dramatized by Ezekiel shaving his head and dividing up his hair.
3. In the days of Ezekiel, shaving one's head was a sign of mourning and humiliation.
4. Ezekiel's cutting off of his hair pictured the separation between the Lord and His people. Just as the hair of a man's head is closely linked with his body, so was the former fellowship of God and His people. But that close fellowship had been broken as the people of Israel had turned away from God in their wickedness. Therefore God would separate Himself from His people while they would reap what they had sown. They would die by plague, famine and sword. Further, Ezekiel's shaved head and beard represented the defiled condition of the nation because under the Law, the priests were not to shave their heads or beards. Ezekiel was a priest. (See Leviticus 21:5.)
5. The horrible reality of cannibalism would take place in Jerusalem as the Babylonian siege continued (vs 9-10). This had been predicted long before. Read Deuteronomy 28:49-53 in this connection. More of the details are given in chapter 4 of Lamentations.

discuss / consider

Consider why a just and holy God must judge sin. Discuss why God's love is not contradictory to His wrath.

challenge

Are you still abiding under the wrath of God as an unbeliever? God offers the gift of salvation to you today. The work of Christ on the cross for your forgiveness is complete. Receive the free gift now by believing and trusting in God's only Son, Jesus Christ.

memorize

"And you, son of man, take a sharp sword, take it as a barber's razor, and pass it over your head and your beard; then take balances to weigh and divide the hair." Ezekiel 5:1

"Thus says the Lord God, 'Indeed I, even I, am against you and will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations. And I will do among you what I have never done, and the likes of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations.'" Ezekiel 5: 8, 9

Lesson 6

Ezekiel's Prophetic Sermon I Ezekiel 6

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God judged the idolatry of Israel because of His holiness.
2. God preserved a remnant in Israel because of His grace.

practical application

Let your escape be the means of coming to know the Lord.

questions

1. In chapters 4 and 5 of Ezekiel we saw a series of dramatic object lessons or actions that Ezekiel performed to convey the truth of the coming fall of Jerusalem. All of these action pictures were part of Ezekiel's *silent* ministry. Here in chapter 6, God opens Ezekiel's mouth, and he pronounces God's judgment on Judah and Jerusalem as part of his speaking or _____ ministry.
2. Why was Ezekiel told by the Lord to prophesy against the mountains of Israel?
3. What had gradually taken place on the so-called high places regarding the worship of the people of Israel?
4. Was the pounding of fists and stamping of feet in verse 11 a sign of rejoicing or derision?
5. Who would be included in the remnant spoken of in verses 9 and 10? What did the Lord say about those who would be in the remnant?

answers

1. When God opened Ezekiel's mouth and he pronounced God's judgment on Judah and Jerusalem, it was part of Ezekiel's spoken or prophetic sermon ministry.
2. Ezekiel was told by the Lord to prophesy against the mountains of Israel because on most of the mountains of Israel were the altars and shrines to the pagan deities.
3. On the mountains and hills of Israel were the so-called high places where worship was taking place. Under the Law, sacrifices unto the Lord were to be offered only at the central sanctuary in Jerusalem, at the Temple. As Israel departed from the Lord and the Law, at first, sacrifices to the Lord were offered at the high places, and then idolatry infiltrated all of Israel. Altars and shrines to the foreign gods and idolatrous images were built and sacrificing to these pagan deities took place more and more. Eventually, immoral practice such as idolatrous religious prostitution became common in these high places.
4. The pounding of fists or clapping of hands and the stamping of feet were probably, in this context, a sign of derision. Here the godly remnant (vs 8, 9) was expressing relief that God's righteous character was being vindicated and His righteous standards maintained.
5. The godly remnant spoken of in verses 9 and 10 included not only the remnant that returned from the Babylonian captivity but also includes the godly remnant in Israel of the last days. There has never been a complete end to the people of Israel and God has always preserved a godly remnant of Jewish believers. In Romans 11, in response to his rhetorical question, ". . . has God cast away His people?", Paul answered, "Certainly not!" "Even so then, at this time there is a remnant according to the election of grace." (See Romans 11:1a and 5.)

discuss / consider

Discuss the ramifications of the frequent recurrence in this chapter of the phrase "you will know that I am the Lord." It is used not only in this chapter but more than 60 times in the book of Ezekiel. Would you consider this a promise made by the Lord or a purpose of the Lord? Who did it concern?

challenge

Can you relate the word "escape" with "forgiveness"? Has the marvelous truth of God's forgiveness touched your heart in such a way as to open your eyes to the opportunity of escape from a life of sin and loneliness? Turn to the Lord today and experience His love, compassion and grace. (Read John 3:16.)

memorize

"Yet I will leave a remnant, so that you may have some who escape the sword among the nations, when you are scattered through the countries." Ezekiel 6:8

Lesson 7

Ezekiel's Prophetic Sermon II Ezekiel 7

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. There is an end to God's patience with sinful people.
2. There is a day when God will judge sinful people.

practical application

What is the real value of your silver and gold?

questions

1. Ezekiel had been taken into captivity in 597 BC and prophesied from Babylon. Jeremiah lived and prophesied in Jerusalem during this same time. The king referred to in the last verse of chapter 7 is _____, who was taken into captivity along with Ezekiel.
2. Who is the prince referred to in verse 27? Who was it that put him in his position as the puppet king of Judah?
3. The word "end" mentioned in verses 2, 3, and 6 refers to the end of what?
4. The "day" mentioned in verse 12 refers to what date or event?
5. Who are the "survivors" whose actions are described in verses 16, 17 and 18?

answers

1. The king who was taken into captivity along with Ezekiel and mentioned in the last verse of chapter 7 is Jehoiachin. He was the king who would mourn when Jerusalem and the Temple was destroyed in 586 BC.
2. The prince referred to in verse 27 is Zedekiah, the last king of Judah. He ruled from 597 BC to 586 BC. He was the puppet king of Judah, installed by the Babylonians when Jehoiachin was taken into captivity.
3. The “end” mentioned in verses 2, 3, and 6 refers to the “end” of Jerusalem and the Kingdom of Judah, because the period of God’s patience was over and His wrath would be poured out against Israel’s abominations. God would use the Babylonians as His rod of correction and punishment.
4. The “day” mentioned in verse 12 is the day when the Lord would allow the Babylonian army to sweep in and conquer Jerusalem and destroy the Temple in 586 BC. In this day God would allow the pagan Babylonians to enter the Temple, God’s secret place, and desecrate it because Israel had already desecrated it with their idolatry (vs 20-24).
5. The “survivors” mentioned in verse 16 refer to the godly remnant. They not only mourn the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple, but they repent. They realize that it is because of their iniquity that God has allowed this to happen.

discuss / consider

“The day” of Ezekiel certainly looks forward to a day in the future when God will judge this sinful world. Read Isaiah 61:2 and Revelation 6:17 in this connection. Discuss the details of the “day of vengeance” in the Isaiah passage, the “day of God’s wrath” in the Revelation passage and the coming Tribulation. Are there signs that the “day of judgment” may not be too far off?

challenge

As we experience personal, local and world-wide financial turmoil in these days, what an opportune time to become fully aware of the very transient value of money, investments and material possessions in the world system. Give eternal value to your financial possessions by offering them and using them for the Lord’s work in this world!

memorize

“I will do to them according to their way, and according to what they deserve I will judge them; then they shall know that I am the Lord!”
Ezekiel 7:27b

“Those who survive will escape and be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, each for their iniquity.” Ezekiel 7:16

Lesson 8

Ezekiel's Vision of Abominations in the Temple Ezekiel 8

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God sees the wickedness of His people.
2. God exposes the wickedness of His people.

practical application

Would you let God hold an open house in your life today?

questions

1. How many months following Ezekiel's great vision in chapter 1 did this vision of abominations in the Temple occur? Where was Ezekiel when he had this vision?
2. Were the elders who came to see Ezekiel in verse 1 the elders mentioned in verses 11 and 12?
3. Describe the similarities of Ezekiel's vision of a likeness of a man in verse 2 and his first vision mentioned in chapter 1, verses 26b and 27.
4. Was the glory of the Lord still present in His Temple in Jerusalem when God gave Ezekiel this vision of chapter 8?
5. What were the 4 areas of idolatry and wickedness exposed to Ezekiel in verses 5-16?

answers

1. Ezekiel's vision of the abominations here in chapter 8 occurred 14 months after his great vision of chapter 1. The vision came as Ezekiel was sitting in his house in Babylon with the elders who had come to see him.
2. The elders who came to see Ezekiel at his house (v 1) were not the same elders mentioned in verses 11 and 12. The elders of verses 11 and 12 are the unfaithful Jewish leaders in Jerusalem who Ezekiel sees in this vision. They are involved in idolatry in the Temple area.
3. The descriptions in both visions of a likeness of a man included the appearance of the color of amber, brightness and fire, with some form of division at his waist.
4. The glory of the Lord was still present in His Temple in Jerusalem when Ezekiel received this vision (ch 8). The departure of the glory of the Lord from the Temple is recorded in chapters 10 and 11 of Ezekiel.
5. The 4 areas of idolatry and wickedness in the Temple and exposed to Ezekiel were:
 - a. The idol of jealousy was standing in the north entrance to the inner court of the Temple. Ezekiel called it the idol of jealousy because it provoked the Lord to jealousy.
 - b. The 70 elders were offering incense to the images of beasts and even creeping things that were carved on the walls in the Temple complex.
 - c. The women were weeping for Tammuz. He was a pagan deity who supposedly died each year and was mourned until he came back to life again in the Spring of the year when he brought the life-giving rains.
 - d. A group of 25 men, probably priests, were worshiping the sun in the east with their backs to the Temple. This was a deliberate turning of their backs on the work that the Lord had given them to do.

discuss / consider

Consider and discuss this thought: Your character is revealed by what you do behind closed doors or in the dark.

challenge

Are you not concerned about God's reaction to the hidden sin in your life? Are you unconcerned because you believe that God cannot see your hidden sin, or because you believe that He won't expose and judge the sin, or because you don't care about God's judgment of the sin? The book of Ezekiel, a portion of God's inspired Word, should convince you to openly confess your hidden sins, call upon the Lord for the strength to overcome them, escape His judgment and rejoice in His forgiveness.

memorize

"And He said to me, 'Go in, and see the wicked abominations which they are doing there . . . Therefore I also will act in fury. My eye will not spare nor will I have pity; and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not bear them.'" Ezekiel 8: 9,18

Lesson 8

Ezekiel's Vision of Executions in Jerusalem Ezekiel 9

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The glory of God demands that the ungodly face the judgment of God.
2. The mark of the cross protects the godly from the judgment of God.

practical applications

1. Do you have the mark of the cross?
2. Do we sigh over sin?

questions

1. In Ezekiel's vision in this chapter, who are the six men of verses 1 and 2 and why were they sent by God?
2. Who is the man clothed in linen (v 2) and what was the purpose of his "writer's inkhorn"?
3. In the broad outline of the book of Ezekiel, chapters 1-24 are about the departure of God's glory from the Temple. Here in chapter 8, we see the first stage of this departure. Why does God's glory depart from the Temple?
4. The mark (v 4) to be placed on the forehead of the godly Jews in the city is a *tam*, the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. In the ancient Hebrew script, the *tam* was shaped like a _____.
5. In Ezekiel's vision, what were the executioners instructed to do with the people who had the mark on their forehead? What were they instructed to do with all the people who did not have the mark?

answers

1. The six men in Ezekiel's vision in this chapter are the guards or executioners, probably angelic beings sent by God to carry out His judgment. The execution was to start in the temple area where the idolatry of the people was centered.
2. The seventh man in the vision (v 2), was clothed in white linen suggesting purity, and he had the writing case of a scribe at his waist. He was to use this to put a mark on the forehead of each godly person in the city. This man also appears in the vision recorded in chapter 10.
3. In Ezekiel's vision, God's glory departs from the Holy of Holies to the threshold of the Temple because of the idolatry and wickedness of the people. God is holy and He must judge sin. His glory is a moral glory. It demands the judgment of the ungodly.
4. The mark which was to be placed on the forehead of each godly person in the city was the Hebrew letter *lam*, and was shaped like a cross.
5. In Ezekiel's vision, the executioners were instructed to stay away from anyone who had the mark on their forehead (v 6). The executioners were instructed to slay all of the other people, young and old, men, women and children.

discuss / consider

Discuss the protection from death afforded the people in the city of Jerusalem who had the "mark of the cross" on their foreheads. Consider this spiritual picture of salvation for us today, the judgment that "the mark of the cross" protects us from, and who experienced God's judgment in our place.

challenge

If you have not seen your need for protection from God's judgment, would you recognize your sin today and turn to Jesus, the One who took God's judgment in your place? He will provide eternal protection for you from God's holy judgment if you turn to Him in repentance.

If you already have accepted God's gift of salvation and protection from judgment through the work of Christ on the cross, do you remember to express your gratitude to God daily for your salvation, praising him for his mercy and grace?

memorize

"Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone who has the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." Ezekiel 9:6a

Lesson 10

Ezekiel's Vision of the Departure of God's Glory from the Temple Ezekiel 10

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The judgment of God must fall on unholy people.
2. The glory of God must withdraw from unholy worship.

practical application

Don't let Icabod ruin your church ministry.

questions

1. Cherubim, such as those mentioned in verse 3, are a high-ranking class of _____.
2. The 4 cherubim associated with the whirling wheels (vs 8-12) were full of eyes. These eyes emphasize the _____ of God. He sees all and knows all.
3. In verse 3 of chapter 9 and here in the 4th verse of chapter 10, we see in Ezekiel's vision that the glory of God departed from over the Ark of the Covenant in the _____ of _____ and moved to the threshold of the Temple. In verses 18 and 19 we see the 2d stage of the departure of God's glory as the glory cloud moved from the Temple threshold to God's throne-chariot above the cherubim. In verse 19, in the 3d stage of the departure, the glory of God moved to the door of the _____ gate.
4. The cloud mentioned in verse 4 of chapter 10 is known as the _____ glory.
5. The burning of Jerusalem (v 2) that we see here in Ezekiel's vision literally took place when the _____ conquered Jerusalem and burned the city. Read 2 Kings 25:8-9.

answers

1. Cherubim are a high-ranking class of angels.
2. In Ezekiel's vision, the wheels being full of eyes (v12) emphasize God's omniscience.
3. In the Temple, the Ark of the Covenant was in the holy of holies. After the glory of God moved to God's throne-chariot, it then moved to the door of the east gate.
4. “. . . and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory.” The cloud here in verse 4 is known as the Shekinah (dwelling of God) glory.
5. The burning of Jerusalem in Ezekiel's vision (v 2), literally took place when the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem and burned the city.

discuss / consider

Discuss how you would discern whether the glory of God has departed from a particular ministry or church that you are involved in or familiar with. What would be the basic factors that you would consider?

challenge

Are you being a positive influence in keeping worship Christ-centered and holy in your church?
Do you encourage to the godly men who are worship leaders, and do you pray for them regularly?

memorize

“Then the glory of the Lord departed from the threshold of the Temple and stood over the cherubim. When they went out, the wheels were beside them; and they stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.” Ezekiel 10: 18, 19b

Lesson 11

Israel's Restoration Declared Ezekiel 11

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God is opposed to the wicked counsel of the ungodly.
2. God is preserving a remnant in Israel.
3. God is reluctant to remove His presence.

practical application

Remember, God can read your mind.

questions

1. In review, remember that Ezekiel was in _____ at this time along with many other Jewish captives. Jerusalem had not yet fallen and the _____ in Jerusalem had not yet been destroyed. Here in the vision, Ezekiel is lifted up and brought to the _____ gate of the Temple area in Jerusalem.
2. Are the 25 men that Ezekiel saw in the vision (v 1) the same 25 men that he saw worshiping the sun in Ezekiel 8:16?
3. In verse 7 of this chapter, who is being referred to by the phrase, "Your slain whom you have laid in its midst, *they are the meat . . .*"?
4. God assured Ezekiel that a remnant in Israel was being preserved. Was this remnant in Jerusalem?
5. In verse 23 the "glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city." What is this mountain called today?

answers

1. At the time of Ezekiel's vision, he was in Babylon along with many other Jewish captives. Jerusalem had not yet fallen and the Temple had not yet been destroyed. In his vision, Ezekiel was transported by the Spirit to the east gate of the Temple area.

2. The 25 men that Ezekiel saw in his vision recorded here in chapter 11 are *not* the same men that he saw worshipping the sun in Ezekiel 8:16. The 25 men in chapter 8 were priests in "the inner court of the Lord's house." The 25 men here in chapter 11 are civil leaders, and they were giving wicked counsel, directly opposed to what God had declared, to the people of Jerusalem (vs 2-4). Their wickedness would meet with God's judgment (vs 8-12).

3. "Your slain whom you have laid in its midst, they are the meat . . ." refers to the righteous men of Jerusalem who had spoken the truth and who had been slain by the wicked civil leaders.

4. The remnant that God declared He would preserve were *not* the people in Jerusalem. The remnant would be from among those who had been "scattered among the countries." The inhabitants of Jerusalem were erroneously convinced that God was preserving *them* and giving *them* the land. Read verses 14-21.

5. The mountain spoken of in verse 23 upon which the glory of the Lord stood is called the Mount of Olives. It is located immediately east of the Kidron Valley which is immediately east of the Temple Mount. Today the Mount of Olives affords one of the best views of the "old city" of Jerusalem.

discuss / consider

Read and discuss chapters 9-11 in the book of Romans in light of God's promise of a saved remnant of Jewish people mentioned here in Ezekiel 11: 17-21. Consider how clear the Scripture is regarding the remnant being saved Jews of the future and not saved Gentiles of the Church today.

challenge

How often does the thought occur to you that God is fully aware of what is going on in your mind? God says here in Ezekiel 11:5, "I know the things that come into your mind." While we are cleaning up our external behavior to look good to those around us, is God at the same time pleased with our godly thoughts and imaginations?

memorize

"Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God."
Ezekiel 11:19,20

Lesson 12

Judah's Captivity Portrayed Ezekiel 12

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The fate of King Zedekiah was dramatized by Ezekiel.
2. The fear of the coming siege was dramatized by Ezekiel.

practical application

Don't let delay turn into denial or doubt.

questions

1. Ezekiel accomplished his prophetic ministry through signs, s_____ and v_____.
2. From chapter 12 on to chapter 24, prophetic signs are given by Ezekiel to emphasize the certainty and causes of the coming judgment on J_____ and J_____. Here in chapter 12 are two of Ezekiel's signs; the sign of the baggage and tunneled wall and the sign of the _____.
3. The sign dramatized by Ezekiel tunneling through the wall especially illustrated the attempted escape from Jerusalem by whom?
4. The people of Israel were relying on the false teaching of two proverbs (vs 22, 27). What was this false teaching, and how did the Lord respond to it?

answers

1. Ezekiel accomplished his prophetic ministry through signs, sermons and visions. As with Jeremiah, Ezekiel was known for his use of object lessons or dramatic signs to illustrate and drive home the Lord's message(s) to the people.
2. Ezekiel emphasized the certainty and the causes of the coming judgment on Judah and Jerusalem. Here in chapter 12, he used the sign of the baggage and the tunneled wall and the sign of the trembling hands. Ezekiel acted out this object lesson before the people to illustrate the fear and trembling that would come upon them when the Babylonian army would surround them and cut off any escape.
3. Ezekiel's dramatization of tunneling through the wall illustrated the attempted escape of King Zedekiah from Jerusalem. He is called the prince in the verses of this chapter. Read Jeremiah 52:1-11 in regard to Zedekiah's attempted escape.
4. The false teaching of the two proverbs here in chapter 12 was that the Lord's judgment against Judah and Jerusalem was to be delayed until the distant future or perhaps not occur at all. The Lord responded clearly and forcefully, as He called the people a "rebellious house," and declared to them through Ezekiel that His judgment would be certain and soon (vs 23-28).

discuss / consider

It is difficult to understand how the people of Israel could ignore the prophets of that day regarding their sinful and wicked living and the warnings of judgment to come. Is it not just as hard to understand how the people of our day ignore the warnings of Scripture? Discuss the possible reasons people today "have ears but do not hear and have eyes but do not see" (Ezekiel 12:2), and why there are so many "scoffers" in our midst. (See 2 Peter 3:3.)

challenge

How would your thinking, behavior and service to the Lord change if you were keenly aware that Jesus could come at any moment to take all believers to be with Himself? We do not know when He will come, but we do know He could come at any moment. Rather than living with denial, doubt and apathy toward your kingdom service, live today with anticipation, hope and zeal for the Lord's work. Jesus could come today!

memorize

"Son of man, you dwell in the midst of a rebellious house, which has eyes to see but does not see, and ears to hear but does not hear; for they are a rebellious house." Ezekiel 12:2

"I am the Lord. I speak, and the word which I speak will come to pass; it will be postponed no more; for in your days, O rebellious house, I will say the word and perform it." Ezekiel 12:25

Lesson 13

Israel's False Prophets Judged Ezekiel 13

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God is against false prophets who practice deception in the midst of His people.
2. God is against false prophetesses who practice divination in the midst of His people.

practical application

Watch out for foxes among ruins.

questions

1. The false prophets and prophetesses were practicing their deception both in the city of _____ as well as in the city of _____.
2. The false prophets were deceiving the people, convincing them that _____ was near.
3. Give a general definition of the "Day of the Lord."
4. What were the two categories of false prophets in ancient Israel?
5. What was the spiritual meaning of "plastering the wall with untempered mortar" (vs 10-14)?
6. What were the results of the false prophetesses' occult practices noted in verses 18 and 19?

answers

1. The false prophets and prophetesses were practicing their deception both in Babylon and in Jerusalem. Remember, there were already many Jewish captives in Babylon, and Jerusalem had not yet fallen to the Babylonians.
2. The false prophets were deceiving the people into believing that peace was near. See verses 10 and 16.
3. The “Day of the Lord” could be defined as any time that the Lord intervenes in the affairs of nations.
4. The two categories of false prophets in ancient Israel were the false prophets of the foreign gods such as the prophets of Baal, and the false prophets who claimed they were true prophets of the Lord. This latter category of false prophets claimed that they had seen visions from the Lord and that they were inspired of the Lord. But they were lying and deceiving the people.
5. The spiritual meaning of plastering walls with untempered mortar was that the false prophets were covering up or whitewashing the sins of the people. The responsibility of the prophets was to shore up the wall and stand in the gaps of the wall, the wall representing the moral and spiritual defenses of the nation. But these false prophets had failed in their responsibility (v 5).
6. The results of the false prophetesses’ occult practices as noted in verses 18 and 19 were that innocent people were having curses put on them and the deaths of the wicked were being delayed.

discuss / consider

Discuss the many “social communities” in which false prophets may be found (political, religious, educational, etc.) Consider the many different messages of deception and the cleverness of those who would lead both unbelievers and believers from the truth. Identify the motives of these false prophets and prophetesses.

challenge

Are you alert to the “foxes among ruins,” that is, the false prophets and prophetesses in our world today? Are you diligently reading and learning from God’s Word that you may be able to distinguish between the truth of His Word and the deceptions of the false prophets who are so bold in their lies?

memorize

“Thus I will accomplish My wrath on the wall and on those who have plastered it with untempered mortar; and I will say to you, ‘The wall is no more, nor those who plastered it, that is, the prophets of Israel who prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and who see visions of peace for her when there is no peace,’ says the Lord.” Ezekiel 13:15, 16

Lesson 14

Israel's Idolatrous Heart Revealed Ezekiel 14

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. An individual can pass the point of no return.
2. A nation can pass the point of no return.

practical application

Don't become exhibit "A" in a negative way.

questions

1. What did God reveal about the elders who came to speak with Ezekiel here in verse 1 of chapter 14?
2. What was the judgment of God to be of an elder who did not repent of his noted sin?
3. What was the point God made to Judah when He introduced the names of the three righteous men: Noah, Daniel and Job?
4. Which one of the three righteous men mentioned in question 3 was living in Babylon at the time of Ezekiel's messages recorded in this chapter?
5. Was the remnant of captives that was brought from Jerusalem to Babylon a righteous or an unrighteous remnant? Why were they brought to Babylon?

answers

1. God revealed something new about the elders who we see in this chapter and who were the same elders who came to speak with Ezekiel in chapter 8. God revealed that they were guilty of idolatry themselves. It was not open idolatry, but idolatry of the mind. They were not literally bowing down to images, but they had idolatrous hearts (v 3), which caused them to stumble into sin (v 4).
2. God would cut off from among His people any of these elders who did not repent and turn away from this “idolatry of the heart”. They would then have no chance of return.
3. The point God made by introducing the names of three righteous men was that even if these outstanding men of God had been in the midst of the people Israel, the people would still not have been delivered from their wickedness. The nation was ripe for judgment and had passed the point of no return.
4. Daniel was living in Babylon at the time of Ezekiel’s messages that are recorded in this chapter.
5. The remnant that was taken to Babylon from Jerusalem was an unrighteous remnant. They were brought to Babylon so the Jewish people there could hear first-hand of their sinfulness and understand the righteousness of God’s judgment of Jerusalem (vs 22, 23).

discuss / consider

In verse 13 of this chapter, God speaks of “persistent unfaithfulness.” Consider the nation of America; has this nation been “persistent” in its unfaithfulness? Is this nation reaching a point of no return regarding God’s judgment? Are there other nations similarly persistent in unfaithfulness today?

challenge

Are there any idols in your heart today? If so, would you be able to identify them? Have you found any idols there that have caused you to “stumble into iniquity” and be “estranged” from God? Are you experiencing a lack of God’s leading or direction? There is no better time than now to repent, cast these idols out, and with God’s help, draw near to Him and find peace as He directs your life.

memorize

“Son of man, when a nation sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it; I will cut off its supply of bread, send famine upon it, and cut off man and beast from it.” Ezekiel 14:13

Lesson 15

Israel's Fruitlessness Illustrated Ezekiel 15

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. A fruitless vine is good for nothing.
2. A fruitless vine is given to the fire.

practical application

Where's the fruit?

questions

1. In chapters 15, 16 and 17, Ezekiel gives 3 parables to portray the condition of the people of Jerusalem. Ezekiel here in chapter 15 speaks of the woody portion of the vine plant. When the vine itself is bad and its wood is useless, what conclusions can be drawn regarding the fruit of this vine?
2. List 3 other portions of Scripture that speak about the condition of God's vine, the house of Israel.
3. Would the Jewish people listening to Ezekiel as he gave this parable have understood who was being pictured as the fruitless vine?
4. In verses 4 and 5, the Lord said to Ezekiel that the vine would be thrown into the fire and charred at both ends. This is likely a reference to the attacks Judah had experienced from the north, by the nation of _____, and from the south, by the nation of _____.

answers

1. God had intended that Israel, His vine, would bear spiritual fruit. However, the vine itself had gone bad as Ezekiel clearly details in the previous chapters. It therefore was bearing no fruit at all. A vine that bears no fruit is worthless – even the wood of the vine has no value.
2. Hosea 10:1-2, Isaiah 5:1-7 and Jeremiah 2:21 all speak about the people of Israel as God’s vine and their poor and unworthy condition because of their iniquities.
3. The people of Israel would have been able to understand the meaning of the parable because of the earlier prophetic references to them as the fruitless vine.
4. The burning or charring of the vine at both ends most likely refers to the attacks against Judah from the north by Assyria and from the south by Egypt. The ultimate burning of the middle of the vine, the city of Jerusalem, came as Nebuchadnezzar attacked and burned the city in 586 BC.

discuss / consider

Here in chapter 15, Israel is pictured as a vine planted in the land of Canaan. In New Testament Scripture such as John 15, Jesus describes Himself as the true vine, and His followers as the branches. Discuss the implications of both portions of Scripture and how they relate to God’s people, both in Ezekiel’s day and in our day, as to being fruit-bearing or fruitless.

challenge

Have you taken time alone recently to examine your life to see if there is fruit-bearing? Are the hours and days of your life spent in obedient service to the Lord and bearing fruit in the kingdom, or are they spent in the labor and activity of fruitless works? Turn to the true vine and abide in Him in obedience. Jesus said, “I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in Him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

memorize

“Therefore says the Lord God: Like the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so I will give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will set my face against them.” Ezekiel 15:6, 7a

Lesson 16

Jerusalem's Rescue and Rebellion Ezekiel 16:1-34

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. As a helpless orphan, Jerusalem was rescued by the Lord.
2. As an adulterous prostitute, Jerusalem rebelled against the Lord.

practical application

Don't forget to remember!

questions

1. In Ezekiel's parable here in chapter 16, what was the special relationship that God entered into with the beautiful young lady?
2. In verse 3, why does Ezekiel refer to the father and mother of the orphan (in the parable) as an Amorite and a Hittite, respectively?
3. Verses 4-14 describe God's _____ and _____ toward Jerusalem, as well as His special plans for the city.
4. What was particularly wicked about the relationship of the harlot Jerusalem with her lovers as explained in the parable in verse 33?
5. List the 3 sins of Jerusalem described in verses 15, 16-19 and 20-21.

answers

1. The relationship is pictured as one of marriage (v 8), as God said, “so I spread My wing over you . . . and entered into a covenant with you.”
2. The father and the mother of the orphaned child (the city of Jerusalem), are referred to as an Amorite and a Hittite because these two groups of Canaanites were inhabitants of Jerusalem when the Children of Israel came into the land.
3. God’s mercy and compassion for the dying baby orphan (the city of Jerusalem) are described in verses 4-14.
4. Verse 33 explains the particular wickedness of Jerusalem’s rebellion, as she not only was guilty of adulterous relationships with the surrounding heathen nations, but she even “made payments to all her lovers.”
5. The sin noted in verse 15a was pride; the sin found in verses 16-19 was the use of God-given gifts in the practice of idolatry; and the sin of the city found in verses 20 and 21 was the abominable sin of child sacrifice.

discuss / consider

Can the pro-choice attitude which has resulted in the great number of child abortions in our country and around the world today be compared with the pro-choice attitude of the inhabitants of Jerusalem in Ezekiel’s day which resulted in their practice of child sacrifice (vs 20,21)? Does God consider the sinful situation today an abomination, as He considered the sacrificing of children in Ezekiel’s day?

challenge

As we have seen this chapter, forgetting what God has done for His people can lead to terrible sin. This can happen today as it did to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. What daily or regular biblical practices can help you to remember all that God has done for you, so that you might not rebel or turn against Him in sin?

memorize

“When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love; so I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine.” Ezekiel 16:8

“But you trusted in your own beauty, played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who would have it.” Ezekiel 16:15

Lesson 17

Jerusalem's Adultery and Shame Ezekiel 16:35-63

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God would judge His people for not remembering their roots.
2. God will restore His people and they will be ashamed.

practical application

There is hope for you!

questions

1. In the first part of Ezekiel's parable in chapter 16, there is an analogy between Jerusalem and an adulterous wife. In the second part of the parable, the analogy is between Jerusalem and her sisters, the cities of _____ and _____. Why were these two particular cities used in the analogy?
2. Under the Law, any city that was proven to be given over to idolatry was to be put to the edge of the sword and burned (Deuteronomy 13:12-16). What judgment did God bring upon Jerusalem that would fit this description?
3. What was the foundational cause of Jerusalem's wickedness?
4. God demonstrated great mercy toward Jerusalem in spite of their great sinfulness. His promise of restoration of Jerusalem and Israel was manifest in what way?
5. We are told in this chapter that upon receiving the promise of restoration, Jerusalem/Israel will finally remember their past sinful ways. Describe their reaction to the memories of the past.

answers

1. In the second part of the parable here in chapter 16, Jerusalem's sisters are identified as the cities of Samaria and Sodom. Samaria was to the north of Jerusalem, Sodom to the south, with Jerusalem being like the "middle" sister; Both Samaria and Sodom had been prominent and well-known cities like Jerusalem; and both of these cities had been judged for their evil and wicked ways.
2. The judgment "by sword and by fire" that God allowed against Jerusalem was the conquering and destruction of the city by the powerful Babylonian armies (vs 40, 41).
3. The bottom-line cause of Jerusalem's wickedness was that they had not remembered the days of their youth (v 43). They had forgotten how God had blessed them, and they had forgotten the covenant God had made with them.
4. God said He would establish a new covenant with the Jewish people, and restore His special people not only to the land but also to the Lord (vs 60-63).
5. The reaction of the Jewish people to God's marvelous mercy will be twofold. First, they will remember their past, and then, having remembered the grievous sinfulness of their past, they will be ashamed.

discuss / consider

How far does God go in His patience, or how long will He wait to bring judgment against the wickedness of a nation? Discuss the sinful ways of the country you are living in and the sinful actions of the country that may bring God's judgment. Could God's judgment already be underway?

challenge

If you are in a situation where you think you have fallen too far into sin for God to restore, or if you know a friend in that situation, are you willing to turn back to the Lord in shame and confession and receive His forgiveness, or encourage your friend to do the same? As you receive His forgiveness in Christ, the Lord will save you and restore you.

memorize

"And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I am the Lord, that you may remember and be ashamed because of your shame, when I provide you an atonement for all you have done", says the Lord God." Ezekiel 16: 62, 63

Lesson 18

Israel's Captive King and Victorious King Ezekiel 17

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. A king was taken into captivity by the eagle of Babylon.
2. A king broke his covenant by favoring the eagle of Egypt.
3. A king will be planted on the mountain of Jerusalem.

practical application

Keep your promises!

questions

1. Why is the word of the Lord to Ezekiel concerning the two eagles called a riddle? Why is it also called a parable?
2. In what year did Nebuchadnezzar, the eagle of Babylon, invade Judah and take a number of influential Jews, including Ezekiel and King Jehoiachin, captive? Who did Nebuchadnezzar then place in authority in Jerusalem as a puppet king? (This king is described in the parable as the "seed of the land.")
3. In the parable, the second great eagle appears in verse 7. Who does this eagle represent? Who broke his covenant with Nebuchadnezzar to favor the second great eagle?
4. When Ezekiel wrote this parable, the first part of the parable had already taken place – King Jehoiachin was already a captive in Babylon. Had the second part of the parable, including the political dealings with Egypt, yet taken place?
5. In the final portion of this parable (vs 22-24), who is represented by the sprig from the highest branches of the cedar tree? What mountain is spoken of in verses 22 and 23?

answers

1. Here in chapter 17, the word of the Lord to Ezekiel is called a riddle to emphasize that it was an obscure story and requires an interpretation. It is called a parable because it emphasizes that God was illustrating His dealings with the nation of Judah.
2. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah for the 2nd time in 597 BC. After taking many of the influential Jews captive, he set up Zedekiah as a puppet king in Jerusalem. Zedekiah was to submit to Nebuchadnezzar's authority and not try to rebel.
3. The second great eagle (v 7) represents Egypt. King Zedekiah broke his covenant with Nebuchadnezzar as he favored Egypt and turned to them for help in trying to regain Judah's freedom.
4. When Ezekiel wrote this parable, the second part of the parable, Zedekiah's breaking of the covenant and dealings with Egypt had not yet taken place. It is therefore a prophetic warning. Zedekiah's political dealings with Egypt would fail and Nebuchadnezzar would return and deliver a final blow to Jerusalem and Judah. This happened in 586 BC. See Jeremiah 52: 3b-14.
5. The Lord Himself is represented by the sprig from the highest branches of the cedar tree. This prophecy states that the Lord will be placed on the mountain of Jerusalem when He returns and literally reigns from this mountain city.

discuss / consider

The prophetic message given in this chapter in verses 22-24 is another statement concerning the return of our Lord and the establishment of His literal kingdom when He will reign from the city of Jerusalem. Discuss the fact that this is not a prophecy now being fulfilled in the church while our Lord is rejected by this world, but takes place when all the nations (represented by all the trees in verse 24) will acknowledge the Lord and submit to Him as the rightful King.

challenge

Have you considered the fact that when you break a promise with someone you are committing a serious sin? Read again verses 11-21. Be very careful when making promises, and do not sin by breaking a promise. Be a person of your word!

memorize

"Therefore thus says the Lord God: 'As I live, surely My oath which he despised, and My covenant which he broke, I will recompense on his own head.'" Ezekiel 17:19

"On the mountain height of Israel I will plant [the young twig]; and it will bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a majestic cedar."
Ezekiel 17: 23a

Lesson 19

Israel's False Proverb Ezekiel 18

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. Individuals are held accountable for their own sins.
2. The Lord does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked.

practical application

Throw the scale out!

questions

1. The false and popular proverb stated here in verse 2 of chapter 18, was circulating among the Jewish people both in Babylon and in Jerusalem during the time Ezekiel was ministering the Word of the Lord to the captives in Babylon. What was meant by the sour grapes of the proverb?
2. God refutes the false proverb by giving three examples to establish three principles. In verses 5-9, an example is given of a righteous man who does right. In verses 10-13, an example is given of a wicked son of a righteous father. In verses 14-19, an example is given of a righteous son of a wicked father. What is the principle God is establishing in each case?
3. In verses 21-32 of this chapter, the terms life and death refer to physical life and physical death, not eternal life and death. The context here is that the Jewish people had turned away from _____ and were facing physical death at the hands of the _____.
4. God does provide a way of escape. How could the House of Israel escape? See verses 27 and 30-32.

answers

1. In the false proverb, the sour grapes referred to the bad attitude of the people of Jerusalem and Judah - that they were not to blame for the sad conditions they found themselves. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel refute the false proverb, and continued to declare that the sins of the people had gone beyond the point of no return and that Jerusalem would not be saved from God's judgment.

2. The principles given in the three examples are: 1. The righteous man would live. 2. The wicked son would die for his sins and the righteousness of his father would not help him. 3. The wicked father would die for his iniquity and the son would live because of his righteousness. These principles are summarized in verse 20, and the overall truth is that individuals are held accountable for their own sins.

3. The Jewish people had turned away from the Lord and were facing physical death at the hands of the Babylonians. It was because of their own sins and breaking of God's covenant that God was using the Babylonians as His rod and ax of discipline.

4. In verses 27 and 30-32, the Lord makes it clear that Israel's way of escape was for them to turn from their wicked ways, repent, and have a new heart and spirit.

discuss / consider

How do we know that the life and death issues in verses 21-32 refer to physical and not eternal life and death? Consider the importance of context not only in this portion of scripture, but as an overall hermeneutical principle.

challenge

When you are sharing the good news of the Gospel, do you remember not only to emphasize the eternal penalty of sin and the free offer of forgiveness because of the finished work of Christ on the cross, but also the truth that God takes no pleasure in the eternal death of anyone and that it is His will that all be saved?

memorize

"But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die." Ezekiel 18:21

"For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies, says the Lord God. Therefore turn and live." Ezekiel 18: 32

Lesson 20

Israel's Lamentation Ezekiel 19

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The sad story of the two lions called for lamentation.
2. The sad story of the tall vine called for lamentation.

practical application

Look forward to the coming Lion of Judah!

questions

1. Who was the king in Jerusalem when the lamentations of this chapter were given by Ezekiel? Was the Temple still standing?
2. In the first lamentation (vs 1-9), concerning the last kings of Judah, who is it that is likened to a lioness, and who is likened to the cubs of the lioness? Was there any hope of the last kings coming back to power at the time Ezekiel wrote these lamentations?
3. In the second lamentation of Ezekiel (vs 10-14), who is represented by the tall vine? Who is represented by the strong branches?
4. In verse 12, the east wind, called the "sirocco," represents what force that dried the fruit of Judah?

answers

1. Zedekiah was reigning as the puppet king in Jerusalem at the time Ezekiel wrote these lamentations. The city had not yet been plundered and the Temple was still standing. However, it was only a matter of a few years and the kingdom of Judah would be no more. The lamentations emphasized that the hope for any last minute help for Judah was futile.

2. In the first lamentation, Judah is likened to a lioness and her cubs are the kings of Judah. Two of the cubs represent two of the last kings of Judah, Jehoahaz, who had already been taken as captive to Egypt, and Jehoiachin, who had already been taken captive to Babylon. These two kings would later die in captivity with no eulogies of praise.

3. The tall vine in the second lamentation represents the kingdom of Judah, and the strong branches represented the kings of Judah. Ezekiel had already given the parable of the fruitless vine in chapter 15, and we see here in chapter 19 more prophecy concerning her lack of fruitfulness.

4. The east wind of verse 12 was the force of the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, who dried and devoured the fruit of Judah and Jerusalem, broke her strong branches and consumed them (vs 12-14).

discuss / consider

In the future, will there be songs of praise or lamentations of sadness for our nation? What kind of covenants and treaties are we involved in as a nation? Is there a “force” that will consume any fruit that our nation has produced, and if so, what will this “force” be? How can our nation be turned back from the many evils now present? Consider how we should pray for our nation and its leaders?

challenge

In view of the fall of Judah and the end of the kings of Israel in the distant past, are you now steadfast in your hope of the coming King, the Lion of Judah, our Lord Himself, once rejected as the true king of Israel, but soon to come and be received as the rightful King in the line of David? Does this hope not only prompt you to look forward to the coming Lion of Judah, but also to prepare and be ready for His coming?

memorize

“Your mother was like a vine in your bloodline, planted by the waters, fruitful and full of branches because of many waters . . . but she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground, and the east wind dried her fruit.” Ezekiel 19: 10, 12a

Lesson 21

Israel's Rebellion, God's Restoration Ezekiel 20

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God's grace to Israel in the past is evident in their preservation.
2. God's grace to Israel in the future will be evident in their restoration.

practical application

Don't explain away the Bible as a parable.

questions

1. How did the Lord respond to the inquiries of the elders of Israel in verse 1?
2. Verses 5-32 review the history of Israel when they had been unfaithful during ____ periods of her history. Describe these periods of unfaithfulness and the principle sin of the people in each period.
3. In spite of the rebelliousness of Israel, God in His grace _____ them.
4. In verses 33-44, the time of Israel's history shifts from their past to the present time and into the future. These verses show us God's dealings with Israel in the future _____ period.
5. Because of Israel's continued rebellion throughout this present time, what action would God take as He disciplined them?
6. The good news is that God would _____ Israel as a believing nation after the _____ period.

answers

1. God rebuked the elders for making inquiries (v 3) and through Ezekiel gave them a message of judgment because they were not judging themselves for their past and present sins of idolatry.
2. The history covered in these verses covers four periods of Israel's unfaithfulness. They were:
 - a. During the time in Egypt, when they were already involved in idolatry.
 - b. During the time in the wilderness, when they profaned God's sabbaths.
 - c. During the time in the promised land, when they used the land as places of sacrifice.
 - d. During the time of Ezekiel, when they continued to defile themselves with idols.
3. In spite of Israel's continued and repeated rebelliousness, God in His grace preserved His people.
4. Verses 33-44 show us God's dealings with Israel in the Tribulation Period, yet to take place in the future.
5. Throughout the present time, God would scatter His people (v 34), then bring them under His rod of discipline (v 37), and judge them and purge out the rebels (v 38).
6. The good news is that God will restore Israel as a believing nation after the Tribulation period when they will turn from their idolatry (v 39) and faithfully serve the Lord (v 40).

discuss / consider

Why was God so patient and merciful toward the sinfulness of His people Israel? Has He changed today, either in the way He deals with the Jewish people, or as He deals with the people in the body of Christ today? Consider situations today that may parallel the repeated sinfulness and rebelliousness of the nation Israel during the ages prior to Christ's birth.

challenge

Look for the teaching of truth in the parables of the Bible. Whether in the Old Testament, like the parable here in verses 45-49, or in the New Testament in the parables spoken by our Lord, do not overlook the truth which is taught in each one, truth often applicable to you at the moment!

memorize

"I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out." Ezekiel 20:34

"Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for which I lifted My hand in an oath to give to your fathers." Ezekiel 20:42

Lesson 22

God's Sword of Judgment Ezekiel 21

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The sign of the sword meant God's judgment of Judah would be sure, sudden and unsparring.
2. The sign of the sword meant that God's judgment was not limited to Judah.

practical application

Don't rejoice when you should weep!

questions

1. In the last section of chapter 20, Ezekiel gave the parable of the forest fire, prophesying that the Babylonian forces would invade Judah and Jerusalem for a third time, affecting everyone. At that time, many of the people who had not been taken into captivity had not been greatly affected. Had these people heeded the message of the parable of the forest fire? Had they changed their ways in view of the prophesized judgment? Would the strong message of chapter 21 have been God's response to the actions of the Jewish people?
2. Ezekiel gave three messages of the sword, perhaps acting out the messages dramatically. What were these three messages? See verses 3-7, 8-17 and 18-24.
3. In verses 25-27, Ezekiel's message looks forward into the future. Not only is the wicked king Zedekiah referred to as the wicked prince of Israel, but the _____ is also included in this prophesy, assuming the role of both priest and king (v 26).
4. When the turban and crown (role of priest and king) is taken from with wicked ones, who does God give them to (v 27), and at what time in the future will He give them?
5. In the fourth message of the sword in this chapter, the foreign nation of Ammon is included in God's judgment. Ammon's doom would be worse than Judah's. In what way would Ammon's doom be worse?

answers

1. The prophetic message of the parable of the forest fire in chapter 20, representing the Babylonian armies sweeping into Jerusalem and showing no mercy to anyone, righteous or wicked, was not heeded by the people remaining in Judah and Jerusalem. They had continued in their apathetic and wicked ways. Ezekiel's messages of the sword here in chapter 21 were God's strong and dramatic message of the certainty of His coming judgment.
2. The three messages were that God had drawn His sword and both the righteous and wicked would be cut off (vs 3-7), that God's sword was sharpened to include everyone in the sudden and severe judgment, including the leaders (vs 8-17), and that it would be against Judah, not Rabbah that God would send the invading armies of Nebuchadnezzar (vs 18-24).
3. As Ezekiel's message looks forward into the future (vs 25-27), the Antichrist of the last days, the one who will assume the role of both priest and king, is pictured here.
4. When the turban and crown, representing the role of priest and king, is taken by God from the Antichrist, He will give them to the rightful King and Priest, Christ Himself at His second coming.
5. Ammon's doom would be worse than Judah's because as history has shown, Ammon would not be remembered (v 32), but Israel would be restored.

discuss / consider

Discuss the strange situation recorded here in verses 18-24 when Nebuchadnezzar would use divination to decide whom he would attack and conquer, and yet be under God's sovereign control in his reasoning and decision making.

challenge

Do the sinful ways of the people Israel and the often sinful ways of our nation today, bring you to tears? Will you be one who calls the church to tearful repentance in light of God's sure and coming discipline?

memorize

"Remove the turban, and take off the crown; nothing shall remain the same. Exalt the lowly and abase the exalted. Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown! It shall be no longer, until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it to Him." Ezekiel 21:26-27

Lesson 23

Israel's Furnace of Judgment Ezekiel 22

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. Jerusalem was judged because all categories of sin were committed.
2. Jerusalem was judged because all classes of society had sinned.

practical application

Be a gap person!

questions

1. Here in chapter 22, three more messages of judgment pronounced against Jerusalem and Judah are given, with each successive message beginning in verses 1, 17 and 23. At this time of Ezekiel's receiving the word of the Lord, some of the Jewish people had already gone into captivity. Had the taking of captives by the Babylonians caused Israel to turn from their abominable sins?
2. The categories of the sin practiced by the people of Jerusalem and Judah are listed in some detail in this chapter. List six of the categories or areas of sin and the verses in which they are described.
3. The bloodshed mentioned several times in this chapter probably included _____ as well as _____. Identify two books of the Old Testament that would give credence to this probability.
4. All classes of society were involved in the excessive sinning by the Jewish people. List four of the classes of people mentioned in this chapter and the verses in which they are identified.
5. Since all of the people were guilty of sinning against the Lord, was God justified in bringing judgment against the whole nation? Identify the three verses which confirm the answer.

answers

1. God's earlier warnings of judgment including the taking of some captives by the Babylonians did not bring a response of remorse and repentance by the people of Jerusalem and Judah. Verses 1-13 clearly describe the reality of the continuing and worsening sins committed by the people.
2. Six of the areas or categories of sin being committed by the people were idolatry (vs 3-4), oppression of the needy (v 7), sacrilege (v 8), immorality including incest (vs 9-11), extortion (v 12), and bloodshed (vs 3, 4, 6, 12, 13, 27).
3. The bloodshed mentioned in the verses listed in answer 2 above, probably included child sacrifice as well as murder. We know from the record of Kings and Chronicles that the kingdoms of Israel and Judah both sank to the level of the idolatrous sacrifice of children to the pagan gods.
4. Four classes of the Jewish society involved in the ongoing sin that God was to judge were the prophets (vs 25, 29), the priests (v 26), the princes (v 27), and the rest of the people (v 29).
5. Verses 29-31 clearly explain the justification of God to bring judgment against the entire nation. All the people were guilty of continuing in all categories of sin (vs 1-28) and furthermore, not one person could God find to "make a wall and stand in the gap" on behalf of the land.

discuss / consider

Discuss what it means in application to "make a wall and stand in the gap on behalf of the land" today. Identify some examples or applications in which you are or might be involved. Consider carefully the characteristics necessary for the Christian who would be willing to "make a wall" and effectively "stand in the gap". Discuss whether it would be likely for one believer to have all of the necessary characteristics.

challenge

Are you willing to take a place in the gap in the wall? Have you taken time to identify gaps in the wall of your own life, or in the life of your church, or in the life of your state or nation? Have you looked for or found others to stand with you? What risks have you considered for standing in the gap . . . *or for not standing in the gap?*

memorize

"As silver is melted in the midst of a furnace, so shall you be melted in its midst; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have poured out my fury on you." Ezekiel 22:22

"So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one." Ezekiel 22:30

Lesson 24

Judah and Jerusalem, the Harlot Sisters Ezekiel 23

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The parable of the 2 sisters was scathing.
2. The punishment of the 2 sisters was sure.

practical application

Let God's Word determine your boundaries!

questions

1. In the parable of this chapter, the sister Oholah is identified as Samaria, representing the northern kingdom of _____. The younger sister, Oholibah, is identified as Jerusalem, representing the southern kingdom of _____. Both sisters are seen as daughters of one mother, _____, who is married to the Lord.
2. What are two of the reasons why God used this graphic imagery and language to communicate to His people?
3. It is made clear in this chapter that Israel's sin of idolatry did not start with the worship of the golden calf in the wilderness. It had started earlier in _____.
4. Samaria and the northern kingdom of Israel had already fallen to the cruel Assyrians in _____ BC, and the people were literally killed or taken into captivity or lost through intermarriage. Therefore the ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel were _____ to secular history.
5. As God punished the northern kingdom of Israel (the sister Oholah) at the hands of the Assyrians, so He would punish the southern kingdom of Judah (the sister Oholibah) at the hands of the _____.

answers

1. The parable sister Oholah represents the northern kingdom of Israel and the sister Oholibah represents the southern kingdom of Judah. Both sisters represent the daughters of the nation of Israel, who is married to the Lord.

2. Two of the reasons God used the graphic imagery and language to communicate to His people were: 1.) There is no better illustration of love and fellowship than marriage and family life, and therefore no sadder situation than a broken marriage and severed relationships 2.) The pagan religions of the foreign gods all involved to one degree or another literal sexual perversion and prostitution in their pagan rites.

3. It is made clear in verses 3, 8, 19, 21 and 27 that Israel's practice of idolatry started in Egypt, not in the wilderness.

4. The northern kingdom of Israel had fallen to the Assyrians in 722 BC. The ten tribes of the northern kingdom were lost to secular history, as a result of being killed, taken into captivity or through intermarriage.

5. The southern kingdom of Judah would be punished by God at the hands of the Babylonians.

discuss / consider

God pronounced judgment on Israel in large part because of her ungodly dealings with neighboring nations or peoples such as Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia. Discuss which nations and/or peoples of the world with whom our own country may have ungodly relations, and the questionable reasons for which we appear to have established those relationships.

challenge

Through a careful reading of this chapter, can you identify or confirm any sins of immorality in your relationships with others? Has lust for personal pleasures or lewdness in your behavior or speech while apart from other believers exposed sins of immorality which have been "hidden" in your life? Are you ready to repent and confess these sins in order to restore your relationship with your Lord? Now is the time, before God's judgment takes place.

memorize

*"Because you have forgotten Me and cast Me behind your back, therefore you shall bear the penalty of your lewdness and your harlotry."
Ezekiel 23:35*

Lesson 25

Jerusalem's Last Two Signs of Judgment Ezekiel 24

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The boiling away of Ezekiel's pot was a sign of coming death and destruction.
2. The taking away of Ezekiel's wife was a sign of coming death and destruction.

practical application

1. Do we really believe in the sovereignty of God?
2. How much heat does it take to get our attention?

questions

1. Ezekiel chapter 24 marks not only the mid-point of this prophetic book, but also marks the point that Ezekiel's messages had predicted, that is, the beginning of the _____ of Jerusalem by the _____ forces.
2. Verses 1 and 2 verify the date that the Lord gave this message to Ezekiel as the _____ year of Ezekiel's captivity and more specifically, the month of _____ in the year _____ BC.
3. In the parable of the boiling pot, _____ was the pot and the contents were the _____ people. The corrosion and scum represented the _____ of the city.
4. Who is it that is described in verse 16 as "the desire of your eyes"? Why would the death of "the desire of your eyes" come so quickly?
5. Why was Ezekiel told not to mourn in the usual, outward way?

answers

1. Chapter 24 marks the point that Ezekiel's messages had predicted, that is, the beginning of the siege of the city of Jerusalem by the Babylonian forces.
2. Verses 1 and 2 verify the date as the 9th year of Ezekiel's captivity in Babylon, and more specifically, the month of January in the year 588 BC.
3. In the parable of the boiling pot, Jerusalem was the pot and the contents in the pot were the sinful people. The corrosion of the scum and the pot as it too was burned away, represented the exceeding wickedness of the city.
4. The "desire of your eyes" refers to the prophet Ezekiel's wife. As she was taken away in death, so death would come to Jerusalem. Her sudden death (v 18), indicated the imminent destruction of the city and the beautiful Temple of Solomon.
5. Ezekiel was told by the Lord not to mourn outwardly because his wife's death (v 22), indicated that when the death and destruction came upon Jerusalem, it would be so horrible and catastrophic and complete, that there would be no customary mourning.

discuss / consider

Discuss the responses to recent serious, significant events that would have been good indications that you, your small group or your church really believe in the sovereignty of God. Perhaps the responses instead indicated a weak faith regarding the truth that God is in control of all things. Consider what means you and your friends can use to strengthen your faith in God's sovereignty.

challenge

Do you have an apathetic attitude about the immoral and godless actions of many of the leaders and people of our country? Have you thought seriously about the downward trend of the personal moral standards of many of the individuals who make important state, federal and global decisions? It is time to become informed and to begin to pray specifically that God would bring repentance and/or discipline to individuals and governments before His righteous judgment becomes a reality.

memorize

"Therefore says the Lord God: 'Like the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so I will give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will set my face against them.'" Ezekiel 15:6, 7a

Lesson 26

God's Judgment against Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia Ezekiel 25

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The Lord pronounced judgment on Ammon.
2. The Lord pronounced judgment on Moab.
3. The Lord pronounced judgment on Edom.
4. The Lord pronounced judgment on Philistia.

practical application

Know the Lord now rather than later!

questions

1. Of the 7 foreign nations that surrounded Israel and Judah, Ammon, Moab and Edom were located to the _____ and the nation of Philistia was to the west.
2. Why were these 4 nations (as well as the other 3 countries that we will find in chapter 26) subject to God's judgment? God's judgment of these nations was a fulfillment of what previous covenant that God had made? Where do we find this covenant recorded in the Bible?
3. Why did God pronounce judgment specifically on Ammon, on Moab, on Edom and on Philistia?
4. What countries or powers or means were used to bring God's prophesied judgment to bear on these 4 nations?
5. The nations of Moab and Ammon descended from _____ through the incestuous relationship that he had with his _____. In verse 8 we read, "Because Moab and Seir say . . .". Seir is a reference to the Edomites. The Edomites were descendants of _____.

answers

1. Ammon, Moab and Edom were located to the east of Israel and Judah, Philistia to the west.
2. All 4 (7) of these countries were subject to God's judgment because of their wrong treatment of God's chosen people. God's judgment against these countries was a fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, recorded in Genesis 12.
3. God pronounced judgment specifically on Ammon because she did not come to Judah's aid when the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple and took the people into captivity in 586 BC (v 3); on Moab because she denied that the Jews were God's special people and nation (v 8); on Edom because she had taken vengeance on Judah when the Jewish fugitives were fleeing before the Babylonians (Obadiah 10-14); and on Philistia because of her multiple acts of revenge (Sampson, Goliath, hanging Saul and his sons' bodies on the wall at Beth Shan) – and for their thinking of trying to destroy Israel (v 15).
4. The Babylonians took Ammon into subjection and she was further plundered by Bedouin tribes; Moab met a similar fate; Edom's ultimate judgment may await the last days; and Philistia disappeared as a nation during the intertestamental period.
5. The nations of Moab and Ammon descended from Lot through his relationship with his 2 daughters. The Edomites were descendants of Esau.

discuss / consider

Consider the nations of the world today that have refused to support Israel, have supported the enemies of Israel, have stated their intentions to bring harm and destruction or annihilation to Israel or have taken direct action to do the same. Can you name them? In contrast, discuss the nations that have supported Israel since her founding in 1948 and the evidence of their support.

challenge

When you have cast your vote for the political leaders of your country, or discussed with others the political leaders and positions of other nations, have you been obedient and faithful to the admonitions and warnings of Scripture regarding those who support the nation of Israel, or those who seek to bring her harm? Are you faithful in prayer for Israel's safety and for the restoration of her people?

memorize

"Because you clapped your hands, stamped your feet, and rejoiced in heart with all your disdain for the land of Israel, indeed, I will stretch out My hand against you and give you as plunder to the nations." From Ezekiel 25: 6,7

Lesson 27

God's Judgment against Tyre Ezekiel 26

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The history of Tyre was predicted by Ezekiel.
2. The sure judgment of Tyre was prophesied by Ezekiel.

practical application

Don't become a negative example for the Lord to use!

questions

1. Tyre was a city-state of ancient Phoenicia, and was located to the _____ of Israel and Judah. While the trade routes involving caravans over land were controlled by Jerusalem, the trade routes involving _____ and the _____ were controlled by Tyre. Tyre was located in the area that is now _____.
2. This prophesy of Ezekiel was given in the 11th year of Ezekiel's captivity which was _____ BC, the very year that Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians. It was not completely fulfilled at the time of Nebuchadnezzar when he and the Babylonians destroyed the city-state, however. What other powers acted against Tyre to bring about the complete fulfillment of God's Word that she would "never be found again" (v 18)?
3. How was a causeway built from the mainland part of the city of Tyre to the fortified island part of the city? Who built this causeway?
4. Did Jesus visit Tyre during his earthly life of ministry? Is the modern town of Tyre on the same location as the ancient city? What are portions of the site of ancient Tyre now used for?

answers

1. Tyre was a city-state of Phoenicia located to the north of Israel and Judah, and controlled the trade routes involving ships and the sea. Tyre was located in the area that is Lebanon today.
2. Ezekiel's 11th year of captivity was the year 586 BC, the very year that Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians. Other powers that acted against Tyre were the Persian Empire, the Greeks under Alexander the Great, the Roman Empire, and finally the Saracens near the 14th century AD. The attacks by these powers are illustrated in verse 3 "as the sea causes its waves to come up."
3. When Alexander the Great attacked and destroyed Tyre in 332 BC, he took the material ruins of the mainland city and used them to build the causeway to the fortified island part of the city. He was then able to attack and capture the island fortifications.
4. Yes, Jesus did visit the region of Tyre (Mt. 15: 21; Mk. 7:24). The city was rebuilt following its destruction by the Greeks, but never regained its former glory, and the modern town is not on the same site as the ancient city. Part of the site of the ancient city had the rocks scraped clean "like the top of a rock" (v 4), by Alexander the Great, is now used by fisherman to spread their nets to dry (v 5).

discuss / consider

Consider the amazing details of Ezekiel's prophesy concerning the city-state of Tyre. Compare this great prophesy with others in the Old Testament and discuss how you can use this prophesy in your testimony to unbelievers to help convince them of the inspiration and accuracy of God's Word.

challenge

Can you identify times or circumstances when you were, or you could have been, a negative example used by God? Can you identify times or circumstances when you were a positive example used by God? Are you now committed to being a positive example with your love abounding in discernment, approving things that are excellent, being without offense, and filled with the fruits of righteousness (Philippians 1:9-11)?

memorize

"Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against you, as the sea causes its waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken", says the Lord God." Ezekiel 26:3-5

Lesson 28

A Lamentation for Tyre Ezekiel 27

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The glory of ancient Tyre is portrayed as a beautiful ship.
2. The judgment of ancient Tyre is portrayed as a sinking ship.

practical application

Don't lose your soul in order to gain the world!

questions

1. In addition to Tyre being a commercial power, they were also a _____ power.
2. What sinful attitude caused God to bring judgment against the beautiful and powerful city-state of Tyre?
3. While the glory of Tyre was portrayed as a beautiful Phoenician ship, the judgment of Tyre is illustrated as a _____ ship. The "east wind" of verse 26 certainly represents what military power from a land east of Tyre?
4. How does the type of language used in this chapter give an indication of the totality and certainty of the fall and destruction of Tyre?

answers

1. Tyre was a strong military power (vs 10,11), in addition to being a great commercial power.
2. Not only had Tyre become extremely prideful, but her pride caused her to gloat over the fall of Jerusalem when Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians conquered the kingdom of Judah. See chapter 27:3 and chapter 26:2,3. God would bring His judgment against this prideful city.
3. The judgment of Tyre is pictured as a beautiful, majestic but sinking ship. The strong east wind (v 26) represented the military power of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians, when God used the first “wave” of His judgment against Tyre.
4. The portion of this chapter written in poetic form, verses 3-11, is written in the traditional Hebrew rhythm of a funeral dirge, providing a unique indication of the judgment and end of the kingdom of Tyre.

discuss / consider

Consider the nations in various parts of the world today that could be compared to the city-state of Tyre as to their commercial and military power and resulting great influence in the world. Have there been nations or empires in more recent history of the world that have gained great power and then fallen? Discuss how these powers in recent history may have fallen or yet may fall because of their pride and/or their disdain for Israel.

challenge

Has the significance of the challenge given by Jesus in Matthew 16:26, “For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” taken on a greater meaning for you since you have read and studied these chapters in Ezekiel? Has the overwhelming evidence of the complete and final destruction of Tyre as foretold in great detail by God through Ezekiel motivated you to make changes in your daily life in regard to the priority of the material things in your life? Don’t lose your soul in order to gain the world!

memorize

“But when you are broken by the seas in the depths of the waters . . . all the inhabitants of the isles will be astonished at you . . . their kings will be greatly afraid, and their countenance will be troubled . . . you will become a horror, and be no more forever.” From Ezekiel 27: 34-36

Lesson 29

A Proclamation against the King of Tyre and against Sidon Ezekiel 28

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The Lord revealed the evil pride of the King of Tyre.
2. The Lord revealed the evil power of the King of Tyre.

practical application

Remember what Jesus said about Tyre and Sidon!

questions

1. What was the name of the human king of Tyre denounced here in chapter 28? His pride even caused him to _____ himself (v 2).
2. Daniel is mentioned in verse 3 of this chapter. Where was Daniel when his great wisdom became known?
3. How was the shameful death of Tyre described in this chapter?
4. Verses 11-19 are interpreted here as going beyond the human king of Tyre and describing the evil power source behind this pagan king, namely Satan. List 3 descriptions given in these verses which could not describe the human king of Tyre, but could describe Satan.
5. Regarding the creation and fall of Satan, list 4 implications from Scripture that would support the interpretation that Satan was created during creation week and that he fell (not too long) after creation week.

answers

1. The name of the human king of Tyre was Ethbaal or Ittobaal. His pride caused him to deify himself, placing himself above God.
2. Daniel had already gained fame for his wisdom throughout the region while he was a captive in Babylon.
3. The shameful death of Tyre is described as those who die at sea, with no burial (v 8), and like an uncircumcised barbarian (v 10).
4. Three verses that could not describe the human king of Tyre, but could describe Satan are:
 - Verse 13: The human king of Tyre was not in the Garden of Eden.
 - Verse 14: The human king of Tyre was not a cherub.
 - Verse 15: The human king of Tyre was not created without a sinful nature.
5. The 4 implications that Satan was created during creation week and fell soon after are:
 - a. Angels are created beings and therefore they function in the space/matter/time universe that God has created. Only God functions outside His created universe.
 - b. At the end of creation week we read in Genesis 1:31, "And God saw everything He had made, and it was very good." This indicates that everything was in perfect harmony with no jarring notes like a fallen Satan. And in Genesis 2:1 we read, "Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them . . ." which may be a reference to the created angelic hosts.
 - c. We see here in Ezekiel 28 that Satan was in the Garden of Eden initially in his pre-fallen state, and the Garden of Eden was certainly not in existence before creation week.
 - d. In Job 38:7 we read that at the time of creation all the sons of God shouted for joy. That is, all the angels rejoiced because they were still all holy angels.

discuss / consider

Consider what can be learned about Satan from the passages in this chapter (vs 11-19), and how the human king of Tyre followed the same path as Satan. Discuss how the sin of pride continues to threaten and/or cause the fall of individuals as well as nations.

challenge

Listen once again to the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew chapter 11, verses 21 and 22. "Woe to you Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you." To reject Christ as your Savior and Lord is an even greater sin than the great sins of Tyre and Sidon. Will you turn to Jesus today and follow the words of truth in Romans 10:9 " . . . if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved"?

memorize

"Thus says the Lord God: 'When I have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they will dwell in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob.'" Ezekiel 28:25

Lesson 30

God's Judgment against Egypt Ezekiel 29

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The Lord judged Egypt with the military forces of Babylon.
2. The Lord rewarded Babylon with the spoils of Egypt.

practical application

Let's reap the benefits of fulfilled prophecy!

questions

1. For review, list the 7 foreign nations that surrounded Israel upon which God pronounced judgment. The last one of the 7, Egypt, is covered here in chapter 29.
2. The prophecy of judgment upon Egypt is a series of ____ prophetic oracles, beginning here in chapter 29 and continuing through chapter _____. What is the phrase that identifies the beginning of all of the oracles? What are the dates given in this chapter for the 1st and 2nd oracles?
3. What was the name of the pharaoh who ruled Egypt at the time of this 1st oracle, from 588-569 BC? What was the sinful characteristic of this king that we also saw as a characteristic of the king of Tyre?
4. What was a more specific reason why God was to bring judgment against Egypt (vs 6,7)?
5. Who took the Egyptians into captivity? How long were they in captivity? After their captivity, did the nation of Egypt ever return to its former power and worldly power?

answers

1. The 7 surrounding nations were Ammon, Moab and Edom to the east; Philistia to the west; the city-state of Tyre to the north; and here, Egypt to the south.
2. Seven (7) prophetic oracles contain the prophecies of judgment against Egypt, beginning here in chapter 29 and continuing through chapter 32. The phrase that identifies the beginning of each oracle is, "The word of the Lord came to me, saying . . ." The dates given in verses 1 and 17 respectively are January, 586 BC, the month during which the siege of Jerusalem was taking place and 7 months before the fall of Jerusalem; and March-April, 571 BC, after the 1-year siege of Tyre by the Babylonians.
3. Hophra was the name of the Egyptian pharaoh who ruled from 588-569 BC. Hophra was, like the king of Tyre, guilty of great worldly pride.
4. A more specific reason for God pronouncing judgment upon Egypt, was their lack of support for Israel when Judah had looked to them for help against the Babylonians. Jeremiah 37 gives more detail regarding Egypt's half-hearted effort to help Jerusalem.
5. Egypt was taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians. They were held there for 40 years when the Persians released them to return to their country. However, Egypt never regained the power and worldly glory that she had once had, even to this present day.

discuss / consider

Consider the interesting Biblical truth that even when God uses foreign armies to do His work, as He did here with the Babylonians against the Egyptians, He does not take advantage of them unfairly. God rewarded Babylon with the material spoils of Egypt. Discuss instances in modern history when nations who have conquered evil nations have been rewarded with the spoils.

challenge

Throughout the study of the book of Ezekiel, we have seen instance after instance where God's prophecies have been fulfilled, even down to the last detail. Has this powerful evidence of God's absolute sovereignty given strength and confidence to your faith and testimony? Have people with whom you have shared your faith been convinced that God was not only sovereign in ancient days, but is in sovereign control of all things in the world today?

memorize

"Surely I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; he shall take away her wealth, carry off her spoil, and remove her pillage; and that will be the wages for his army. I have given him the land of Egypt for his labor, because they worked for Me," says the Lord God." Ezekiel 29: 19,20

Lesson 31

God's Judgment against Egypt's Allies Ezekiel 30

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. Egypt was defeated when the Lord strengthened the hands of Nebuchadnezzar.
2. Egypt was defeated when the Lord broke the arms of Pharaoh.

practical application

Think through your alliances!

questions

1. Here in chapter 30 are 2 more (7 total) of the prophetic oracles of judgment against Egypt. All 7 of the oracles are dated precisely except the oracle in verses 1-19 of this chapter. Explain why this oracle is thought to be the last one written.
2. Normally in the writings of the prophets, the phrase "the day of the Lord" refers to the eschatological "day" in the future when the Lord returns in judgment. Here in the context of this chapter, however, it has a different meaning. Explain the meaning here.
3. In earlier chapters, it was clear that God pronounced judgment against Egypt because of her pride and her failure to come to the rescue of Judah when the Babylonians were besieging Jerusalem. Here, another reason for God's judgment is given (v 13). What was this reason and what were some of the specific results of God's judgment that would come to pass (vs 10-19)?
4. Why were many of the countries around Egypt brought under God's judgment (vs 3-9)?
5. In His proclamation against Pharaoh, God said He would "break both of the arms" of Pharaoh. This highly figurative language of the breaking of Pharaoh's arms most likely refers to what historical battles or invasions?

answers

1. The oracle here in verses 1-19 may have been the last oracle written, because it includes what may be a reference to the Jewish people being in Egypt, “and the men of the lands who are allied” (v 5). This phrase could be translated “people of the covenant land,” that is, the Jews. If this is the case, these Jews would be those who came to Egypt with Jeremiah after the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 586 BC.

2. The phrase “the day of the Lord” in verse 3 is speaking in the historical context of the judgment of God about to fall upon Egypt at the hands of the Babylonians. This judgment would come within a few years of when Ezekiel gave this prophecy. In the broader context, the “day of the Lord” could be defined as any time the Lord intervenes in the affairs of nations for judgment or for blessing.

3. The additional reason for God’s judgment against Egypt given here in chapter 30 was their worship of idols (idolatry), and God was to expose these idol-gods of Egypt as false gods. Many of the cities of upper and lower Egypt that were religious centers would be put to the sword and burned (vs 13-19).

4. The countries around Egypt who shared in God’s judgment had allied themselves with Egypt (vs 4, 5), and had upheld and helped Egypt (vs 6, 8) in her sinful ways.

5. The “breaking of the first arm” of Pharaoh may have taken place as early as 605 BC when Egypt was defeated at the historical battle of Carchemish, or it may have been Pharaoh Hophra’s more recent unsuccessful advance against the Babylonians who were surrounding Jerusalem. This encounter is detailed in Jeremiah, chapter 37. The “breaking of the second arm of Pharaoh” would come in about 569 BC when Nebuchadnezzar invaded and conquered Egypt.

discuss / consider

Discuss the military and/or economic alliances of nations in the world today, such as the European Union, the United Nations, NATO, and others. Would you consider that any of the nations within these alliances could likely come under God’s judgment in the future

challenge

Make a list of those individuals, groups and organizations which you have joined or with whom you’ve made some kind of alliance. Examine them as to their loyalties, agendas, values and priorities. Be certain they are not contradictory to the admonitions of God’s Word.

memorize

“I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put my sword in his hand; but I will break Pharaoh’s arms, and he will groan before him with the groanings of a mortally wounded man.” Ezekiel 30: 24

Lesson 32

A Lamentation for Egypt Ezekiel 31-32

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. Egypt would be cut down like the fallen tree of Assyria.
2. Egypt would be captured like a netted monster.

practical application

Remember, the higher the tree, the greater the fall!

questions

1. Ezekiel chapters 31 and 32 are the final 2 chapters of the subsection of Ezekiel concerning prophecies against foreign nations surrounding Israel. These 2 chapters also include the final ____ of the ____ prophetic oracles.
2. In the great tree of Assyria (31:3), what do the birds nesting in the branches and the beasts of the field living in their shade (31:6) illustrate?
3. What was the sin of “the tree of Assyria” that caused the Lord to “cut it down” (31:10-12)?
4. Why was it foolish for Egypt think she was greater than Assyria (31:18)?
5. In Ezekiel’s 6th prophetic oracle, when the date given in 32:1, is compared to the date given in 33:21, we find that Ezekiel gave this oracle _____ after the news of Jerusalem’s _____ had reached the captives of Babylon.
6. Egypt’s fall would be accompanied by what God-given signs (32:7,8)?
7. List the nations that would precede Pharaoh into the realm of the dead (32:22-30) Why had God judged them with this fate (32:23-25, 27, 30)?

answers

1. Chapters 31 and 32 contain the final 3 of the 7 prophetic oracles.
2. The birds nesting in the branches of the great “tree” , and the beasts living beneath them illustrate all of the nations that were under the power and control of the great empire of Assyria.
3. The sin of the empire of Assyria was the pride of greatness, and the Lord was using Assyria and its fall as a lesson for the other nations.
4. It was foolish for Egypt to think she was greater than Assyria because Egypt had been successfully invaded by Assyria, who had destroyed Egypt’s major city of Thebes in 633 BC. Then, Assyria was conquered by the Babylonians. Egypt would be cut down like the fallen tree of Assyria.
5. Ezekiel’s 6th prophetic oracle was given 2 months after the news of Jerusalem’s fall had reached the captives in Babylon.
6. Egypt’s fall would be accompanied by the stars and moon being darkened and the sun being covered by a cloud. Darkness would come upon the land.
7. Ezekiel prophesied that Assyria, Elam, Meshech, Tubal, Edom and the Sidonians would precede Egypt to the realm of the unbelieving dead. God had judged them with this fate because they “caused terror in the land of the living.”

discuss / consider

Discuss the issue of terrorism and its growth in the world today. Consider the conditions and belief structures of the cultures and societies that are producing terrorists.

challenge

The sin of individual and national pride stands out in Scripture as a major cause of God’s judgment. Can you accurately identify and assess the pride that may be in your own heart today? Do you have a trusted Christian friend or mentor who could help you “see” any hidden pride and encourage you to confess this sin? “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

memorize

“Because of the terror of the mighty in the land of the living, you shall be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised and lie with those slain by the sword . . . For I have caused My terror in the land of the living,” says the Lord God.” From Ezekiel 32:27, 28 and 32

Lesson 33

Israel's Watchman, Ezekiel Ezekiel 33

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. God deals with individuals as well as with nations.
2. God determines what is right in every situation.

practical application

Why do you go to church?

questions

1. Here in chapter 33, what major change took place in Ezekiel's means of prophetic communication? Had God told Ezekiel earlier that this change would take place? What was the historic event that predicated this change? Did the basic content and thrust of Ezekiel's prophetic messages change at this time?
2. In this chapter, God calls Ezekiel to what role? In this role, what was Ezekiel's primary responsibility? Was this responsibility to be directed only to the nation of Israel as a whole?
3. One of the primary messages of this chapter is that God holds individuals accountable for their attitudes and behavior. If individual people would change from ways of wickedness and begin to do what is right, how would God respond? How would God respond if individual people continue in their wickedness?

answers

1. In chapter 3, Ezekiel was told that as a sign to the people, he would only be able to speak when he had a message for them from God. In chapter 24, Ezekiel was told by the Lord that when the news of the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple reached the captives in Babylon, his mouth would be opened and he would no longer be dumb or mute, but be able to speak freely. Here in chapter 33 (v 22), Ezekiel's mouth was opened. From this point on throughout the rest of the book, Ezekiel's ministry and messages become more comforting and encouraging, because he will speak about Israel's future restoration.

2. God calls Ezekiel to the role of watchman (v 7). His primary responsibility in this role was to hear a word from God's mouth and warn the nation of Israel (v 10), and the individuals as well (v 12).

3. God said that if people turned from their wicked ways and begin to do what is right, He would withhold His judgment (v 15). However, if the people did not turn from their wicked ways and they continued in unrighteous living, then the judgment of God would lead to death.

discuss/ consider

Discuss the application of the role of "watchman" in the world today to you as an individual believer, or to your local church body of believers, or to the world-wide body of believers. Consider the possible responsibilities in each of these cases.

challenge

Before you attend the next worship service at your church, ask yourself this question regarding each part of the service; the prayer time, the singing of songs and hymns, and the spoken word. "Was my mind and heart focused on what I would and did receive, and on what I could and did offer to the Lord in true worship?" Which case would have the greatest impact on changing your lifestyle to become more Christ-like?

memorize

"And it came to pass, that one who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me and said, 'The city has been captured!' Now the band of the Lord had been upon me the evening before the man came who escaped. And He had opened my mouth; so when he came to me in the morning, my mouth was opened, and I was no longer mute." From Ezekiel 33: 21, 22

Lesson 34

Israel's False Shepherds and True Shepherd Ezekiel 34

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The false shepherds were unfaithful and uncaring of Israel.
2. The true Shepherd will restore and care for Israel.

practical application

Sing for showers of blessing!

questions

1. In chapters 33-39, there are 6 messages that begin with the phrase, "The Word of the Lord came to me saying." Here in chapter 34 is the second message, and in the first part of the message (vs 1-10), God denounces the shepherds of Israel. Who were these shepherds? How had they failed in their role of shepherds? Who were the victims of their failure?
2. What form did God's judgment take against these false shepherds?
3. In the second part of this message, Ezekiel speaks of the true Shepherd. Who is the true Shepherd? List several ways the true shepherd will serve the people.
4. In this message, who are the good sheep ("My sheep" or "My flock")? What and where is the land to which they would be returned?
5. Has the prophecy of the return of the people to the land been fulfilled yet? If so, when was the return? If not, when will the return be?

answers

1. The shepherds that God denounced (vs 1-10) were the kings, elders and leaders of the nation of Israel. They had failed the people by caring only for themselves (v 2), not feeding the people (v 2), not caring for the sick and helpless (v 4), not bringing back those who had wandered (v 4, 6), and not doing anything to keep the people from being scattered and attacked (v 5). The victims of their failure as shepherds were the people of Israel who in the Lord proclaimed as “My flock” (vs 6, 8, 10).
2. God denounced the false shepherds and judged them by declaring that He was against them and by taking away their role and responsibilities as shepherds (vs 8-10).
3. The true Shepherd is the Lord Himself, Israel’s Messiah (vs 11, 30, 31). As the true Shepherd, the Lord will search for His sheep and bring them back into the land (vs 11-14); He will feed them and give them rest (vs 14, 15); He will heal and strengthen the injured and sick among them (v 16); and He will discipline the sheep, as well as judge and remove any who are not really part of His flock (vs 16-22).
4. In the context of this chapter, the good sheep are clearly the Jewish people, and the land of return is the land of Israel.
5. This prophecy of great blessing, the return of the people to the land of Israel, has not yet been fulfilled. It was not fulfilled when the Jewish people returned from their captivity in Babylon, for they did not experience the prophesied rest and security and blessing at that time (vs 25-27). This prophecy will be literally fulfilled in the future when many of the Jewish people will turn to the Lord and be saved, and restored to the literal land of Israel.

discuss / consider

Discuss the importance of interpreting the prophetic blessings of this chapter as a promise to the Jewish people that God will restore their spiritual relationship with Him, and will return them to the land of Israel. What problems of interpretation are encountered if the blessings of this chapter are being spiritualized to the Church today? Consider God’s covenant with Israel in Jeremiah 31:31 in this regard.

challenge

What a great blessing the Lord has promised to the people and to the land of Israel! Are you praying and looking forward to the fulfillment of this great blessing with anticipation? Pray earnestly for the spiritual restoration of the Jewish people to their Lord, their literal return to the land of Israel, and for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6).

memorize

“And I will bring [My sheep] out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places in the country.” Ezekiel 34:13

Lesson 35

Israel's Future Blessing and Restoration Ezekiel 35-36

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. Edom was judged and destroyed because of God's covenant with His people.
2. Israel will be regathered and restored because of God's covenant with his people.

practical application:

All we have to do is ask!

questions

1. Here in chapter 35 we have the third of the six messages (chapters 33 to 39) given by Ezekiel to the people of Israel. What has God promised in this message that makes it a message of encouragement and hope for the Jewish people?
2. Why did God pronounce judgment against Edom? What would God's judgment entail regarding the land of Edom?
3. In contrast to God's judgment against Edom in chapter 35, God promised many blessings for Israel in chapter 36. In verses 8-15, He promised that the land of Israel would become _____, it would become _____, it would become _____, and it would become _____.
4. The second half of chapter 36 is the fourth of the six messages, and is another message of hope and encouragement. This message is clearly addressed to _____. It is not addressed to the _____.
5. The sprinkling of the clean water here in verse 25 is not Christian _____, but is the language of the red _____ sacrifice of Numbers 19 where the ashes mixed with water were for cleansing from defilement. This certainly typifies our cleansing from sin as believers because of the work of Christ, but in the context here, this is part of the new _____ that is made with regathered _____ in the land that God gave them (v 28).

answers

1. This third message is one of hope and encouragement to the people of Israel because God promises the destruction of Edom and other enemies of Israel represented by Edom. The mountains of Edom would become waste and desolation (35:7-8), while the mountains of Israel would be blessed (36:8).
2. God pronounced judgment on Edom because of their wrong treatment of the people of Israel and the land of Israel. The Edomites certainly knew of the covenant that God had made with Abraham (Genesis 12), because they were the descendants of Esau. However, they showed enmity towards Israel and actually helped in the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem. Read the prophecy of Obadiah in this regard.
3. God promised that the land of Israel would become productive (vs 8-9), populated (vs 10-11), possessed (v 12), and purified (vs 13-15).
4. The fourth message, recorded in the last half of chapter 36, is clearly addressed to Israel. It is not addressed to the church. The church is not Israel and has not replaced Israel in the prophecies and promises made to Israel here in Ezekiel and elsewhere in the Bible.
5. The sprinkling of the clean water in verse 25 is not Christian baptism, but is the language of the red heifer sacrifice of Numbers 19. In the context here, this is part of the new covenant that is made with regathered Israel in the land that God gave them.

discuss / consider

Read Genesis 12:1-3 and discuss the specific blessings that are part of the covenant that God made with Abraham. Consider why the promise to “make you a great nation” was so significant when made to Abraham while he was still in Haran. Discuss the timing of the fulfillment of the promises made by God to Abraham and therefore to the people of Israel.

challenge

What blessings has God promised you as a believer? What has he asked of you? In John chapter 14, Jesus said, “If anyone loves Me, He will obey My teaching.” Are you aware of his teaching? Are you being obedient to Jesus’ teaching? Jesus said, “Whoever has My commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves Me. He who loves Me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show Myself to him.”

memorize

“For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.” Ezekiel 36: 24, 26-27

Lesson 36

Israel – From Dry Bones to Restored Kingdom Ezekiel 37

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The vision of the dry bones predicted the future restoration of Israel.
2. The sign of the 2 sticks predicted the future restoration of Israel.

practical application

Your dry bones can come to life!

questions

1. The 6 messages of hope and encouragement in Ezekiel chapters 33-39 are not addressed to the _____. From the context we can see they are addressed to the _____ people. The specific purpose of the messages was to give them hope and encouragement about the future of their _____ including the _____.
2. The vision of the dry bones was a fitting description of _____ after the Babylonians had defeated and slaughtered the Jewish people, conquered Jerusalem, and destroyed the _____.
3. The fulfillment of the prophecy of the dry bones is in 3 stages. List them. What was the Lord's interpretation of the prophecy?
4. Was this prophecy fulfilled in the past when the Jews came back from their captivity in Babylon?
5. From the prophecy of the sign of the 2 sticks, explain what the 2 sticks represent. When will this prophecy be fulfilled?

answers

1. The 6 messages of hope and encouragement are not addressed to the Church, but are addressed to the Jewish people. The specific purpose of the messages was to give them hope and encouragement about the future of their nation including the land.
2. The vision of the dry bones was a fitting description of Judah after the Babylonian armies under Nebuchadnezzar had conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the temple.
3. The 3 stages of the fulfillment of the prophecy of the dry bones are the skeleton stage, the body stage and the life stage. In verses 11-14 the Lord gives the interpretation of the prophecy: The bones are the whole house of Israel, that is, the scattered Jewish people from all 12 tribes who will be brought back into the land of Israel and be spiritually restored to the Lord.
4. This prophecy was not fulfilled in the past when the Jews came back from their captivity in Babylon. That event only foreshadowed the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy when the Jewish people will not only be back in the land but will also experience a spiritual revival. A remnant will turn to their Messiah whom they once rejected.
5. In the prophecy of the 2 sticks, the sticks represent the 2 kingdoms of Israel; Judah, the Southern Kingdom and Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom. Judah was the primary tribe of the Southern Kingdom and Ephraim of the House of Joseph was the primary tribe of the Northern Kingdom.

discuss / consider

Consider which stage of the dry bones prophecy we may be experiencing in our day. Discuss what we might expect to happen during the future stage of the prophecy. Also, consult your Bible maps in regard to boundaries of the land that God promised, described in verse 25. Discuss these boundaries in relation to the current boundaries of the State of Israel.

challenge

Is there any life in your “dry” bones today? If you have not put your trust in the Savior, Jesus Christ, would you take that step right now, and experience abundant and eternal life in Him? God will keep his promise of a new life for you just as He will keep the promise of a restored land and restored spirit for the Jewish people.

memorize

“Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the land of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand . . . and I will make them one nation . . . and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.” From Ezekiel 37:19-22

Lesson 37

Ezekiel's Vision of Gog's Attack and Judgment Ezekiel 38-39

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. Gog will invade the land of Israel.
2. Gog will be defeated by the God of Israel.

practical application

Get ready for the rapture!

questions

1. Can we be sure that the attack by Gog of Magog and his allies against Israel will take place as prophesied here in chapter 38?
2. List the geological and meteorological influences that God will use against Gog in his defeat.
3. According to the prophetic message of these 2 chapters, what will be the outcome of the attack against Israel for Gog?
4. What will be the outcome of Gog's attack against Israel for God and the people of Israel?

answers

1. Yes, we can be sure that Gog of Magog will attack Israel, that he will attack from the north, and that he will be defeated by God. The prophecy here, however, does not make clear who Gog is, or exactly when the attack will take place. We can be certain it will occur during the last days.
2. Verses 19-23 of chapter 38 describe earthquakes, the collapse of mountains, pestilence, torrential rains, hailstones, fire and brimstone that God will use in His defeat of Gog.
3. The outcome of Gog's attack will be utter defeat and destruction for Gog and his allies. As described in chapter 39, their weapons will be destroyed (vs 3, 10), the warriors will be slain and devoured by the beasts of the field (v 4), and Gog and his invaders will be buried in Israel (v 11).
4. The outcome of the attack for God and His people, also described in chapter 39, will be that God's people will not profane God's name again (v 7), that God will set His glory among the nations (v 21), and that all nations will know that God has brought His people back to their land and to Himself forever (vs 28-29).

discuss / consider

In regard to the timing of the attack of Gog against Israel, consider verse 8 of chapter 38. Discuss how the description of the people of Israel being back in the land and dwelling safely in the land influences the possibilities of the timing of the attack. Consider also the prophecy of Daniel chapter 9, regarding the signing of a 7-year peace covenant which will signify the beginning of the end-time Tribulation period.

challenge

In Mark chapter 13, Jesus admonishes each believer to be alert and watch for the signs of the end times, particularly of His second coming. While we are not to know the exact time, we do know that the rapture of the church will occur prior to Jesus' second coming to this earth to establish His Millennial Kingdom. His warnings include the threat of Satanic deception, and the appearance of false messiahs and false prophets appearing. As a believer, will Jesus find you trusting in Him, the true Messiah and Savior? Will He find you living a godly and obedient life in the service of His kingdom? Through earnest prayer, daily time in God's Word, and fellowship with faithful believers, prepare now for the Christ's coming and the preceding rapture of the church. "Be on guard! Be alert! Be prepared!"

memorize

"I will set My glory among the nations; all the nations shall see My judgment which I have executed, and My hand which I have laid on them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day forward." Ezekiel 39:21-22

Lesson 38

Ezekiel's Vision of the Millennial Temple (I) Ezekiel 40

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The Temple of Ezekiel's vision was not a rebuilt temple.
2. The Temple of Ezekiel's vision is not the Christian church now.
3. The Temple of Ezekiel's vision is the future Temple of the Millennium.

practical application

Remember, our present eschatology will become our future experience!

questions

1. The prophecies in chapters 40-48 have to do with Israel's future, and contain prophecies concerning Israel during the _____ Kingdom of Christ here on this earth. Chapters 40-43 give a description of the future _____ that will be built for that kingdom.
2. What was the year of Ezekiel's vision of the future here in chapter 40? This was _____ years after Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians, and was the 25th year of Ezekiel's captivity.
3. We believe that the high mountain upon which Ezekiel saw the vision, The high mountain upon which Ezekiel saw "something like the structure of a city" (v 2), is the literal location of the city of _____ in the future. List 2 scriptural references which indicate that this city will be raised above all surrounding hills and mountains.
4. What are the reasons that the temple described in detail here in chapters 40-43 cannot be a description of the Temple rebuilt by Zerubbabel when the Jewish people returned from captivity in Babylon, or the Temple built by Herod that stood on the Temple Mount at the time of Christ?
5. List the reasons that clearly indicate that the temple described here in Ezekiel's vision is not a spiritualized description of the church of today.

answers

1. Prophecies from chapters 40-48 concern what will take place during the Millennial Kingdom of Christ here on this earth. Chapters 40-43 describe the future temple that will be built for that kingdom.
2. Ezekiel's vision of the Millennial Temple took place in the year 573 BC, 14 years after the city of Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians.
3. The high mountain described by Ezekiel in verse 2 of this chapter is the literal location of the city of Jerusalem in the future. Both Isaiah 2:2 and Zechariah 14:10 predict that Jerusalem and the Temple Mount will be raised above the surrounding hills and mountains at that time because of major topographical changes that will take place in Israel.
4. The dimensions of the Temple built by Zerubbabel do not agree with the dimensions of the Temple described here by Ezekiel, and the Temple built by Herod was not a new temple.
5. The specific details given in Ezekiel's vision of the Temple would have no meaning if they were to be spiritualized to the Church. Also, Ezekiel's description of the first Jewish Temple in chapters 7-12 came true literally, right down to the very details. There is no reason to change principles of hermeneutics or interpretation regarding the description of the Temple in chapters 40-43. We expect them to be literally fulfilled in the future.

discuss / consider

Discuss the timing of the building of the Millennial Temple in the future. Consider the events described in the biblical passages regarding the temple of the Tribulation Period which precedes the Millennial Kingdom.

challenge

Has your faith been strengthened by the prophecies concerning the coming return of Christ, His Millennial Kingdom, and the anticipation of His reign here on this earth? Be encouraged by the reality of your future experience of being part of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ.

memorize

"In the visions of God He took me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain; on it toward the south was something like the structure of a city . . . there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze . . . and the man said to me, 'Son of Man, look with your eyes and hear with your ears, and fix your mind on everything I show you; for you were brought here so that I might show them to you. Declare to the house of Israel everything you see.'" From Ezekiel 40: 2-4

Lesson 39

Ezekiel's Vision of the Millennial Temple (II) Ezekiel 41-42

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The details of Ezekiel's Temple emphasize that it is not a symbolic description of the present Christian church.
2. The details of Ezekiel's Temple emphasize that it is a literal description of the future Millennial Temple.

practical application

Remember, diagrams and models are helpful!

questions

1. In chapter 40 we saw that the Temple in Ezekiel's vision does not correspond to any Jewish temple that has already been built in history, including Zerubbabel's smaller Temple, and the Temple built by Herod which was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. Can you identify two characteristics of the Temple described here in Ezekiel that would make it uniquely different from the Millennial Temple?
2. Some Christians believe that the Temple in Ezekiel's vision represents the Christian Church today. List some of the reasons that make this view difficult to support biblically.
3. Describe the topographical changes that will take place when the Lord returns. What causes these changes? Where are the predictions of such changes to the land given in Scripture? Will these changes affect the location and arrangement of the millennial temple complex?

answers

1. There is no ark seen in Ezekiel's Temple, nor is any veil described to block the way into the inner sanctuary. These items will not be needed in the Millennial Temple.

2. The basic problem with the view that the Temple of Ezekiel's vision represents the Christian church is that it assumes that God has no plans for a restored Israel in the future, and that there is no future earthly kingdom of Christ known as the Millennium. In this view, therefore, there can't be a future literal temple in Jerusalem in the literal land of Israel. However, Romans 11 *does* predict a restored Israel in the future and Revelation 20 *does* predict a literal earthly, 1000 year kingdom of Christ when He returns. And remember, these predictions were made *after* the Church had already been formed!

3. Ezekiel 38:19 and Zechariah 14:4-10 describe the actions of earthquakes, when mountains, valleys and plains will be moved, leveled and/or raised. Yes, these topographical modifications could affect the exact location and arrangement of the millennial temple complex.

discuss / consider

In answer 1 (above), it is noted that there will be no need for an ark or a veil in the Millennial Temple. Discuss the reasons that these two items will not be needed in the temple at that future time.

challenge

Would you like to stand on the present Temple Mount in Jerusalem and contemplate the fulfillment of the prophecies given to Ezekiel in his visions? Pray that the Lord would make it possible, if it is His will, for you to travel to Israel to see and experience the land of the Bible – past, present and future!

memorize

"The north chambers and the south chambers . . . are the holy chambers where the priests . . . shall lay the most holy offerings – the grain offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering – for the place is holy." From Ezekiel 42:13-14

Lesson 40

God's Glory in the Millennial Temple Ezekiel 43

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The glory of the Lord will return to the Millennial Temple.
2. The sacrifice of the Lamb will be remembered at the Millennial Temple.

practical application

You can't have it both ways!

questions

1. The glory of the Lord departed from the Temple and from Israel as we saw in Ezekiel, chapters 10 and 11. Did the glory of the Lord return to the rebuilt Temple when the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity? Did the glory of the Lord return to the expanded and rebuilt Temple of Herod the Great? Has the glory of the Lord returned to Israel? Will the glory of the Lord return to any temple that is built before or during the Tribulation Period of the future?
2. We sometimes refer to the glory of the Lord as the _____ glory. The glory of the Lord signifies the Lord's _____. When will the glory of the Lord return to the Temple? From which direction will the glory of the Lord return to the Temple?
3. The altar in the Millennial Temple will be consecrated with sacrifices and used for sacrificial offerings. Levitical priests from the line of Zadok will minister before the Lord at the altar. In light of Hebrews 10, verses 12 and 18, which says, "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sin forever, sat down at the right hand of God . . . Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin," why will there be literal sacrifices on this literal altar in the literal temple in the future?

answers

1. After the glory of the Lord departed from the Temple, it did not return to the Temple rebuilt under Zerubbabel after the captivity or to the Temple expanded by Herod, and it has not returned to Israel. And the glory of the Lord will not return to any temple that is built before or during the Tribulation Period.

2. The glory of the Lord is sometimes referred to as the Shekinah Glory, and signifies the Lord's presence. The glory of the Lord will return to the Millennial Temple from the east.

3. The author of Hebrews is pointing out that the Old Testament sacrifices did not take away sin. Their purpose was to point forward to the one great sacrifice of the Lamb of God for all time. As the Old Testament sacrifices looked forward to the cross, so the sacrifices during the Millennium will look back in remembrance of the work of Christ on the cross. They will be memorial in character, not efficacious in character. That is, they will not take away sin. Even though the Lord will be here on this earth in His glory, unsaved people (not everyone born during the 1000 years will become a believer) will need to be reminded and taught that salvation is necessary and only possible because the Lord Jesus went to the cross and died as the Lamb of God for the sins of this world. The literal sacrifices during the Millennium will be that constant reminder.

discuss / consider

Discuss the spiritual needs of people who are born during the 1000-year reign of Christ here on earth. Consider the number of people who will come to the Millennial Temple to worship, and the purpose and impact of the sacrifices at the altar in the Temple.

challenge

Take time to list several of the Messianic prophecies for the first coming of Christ that you know came true exactly as predicted. Then list several prophecies concerning the second coming of Christ and His 1000-year reign on earth, including some of the details of the Millennial Temple. Can you recognize the need for hermeneutical consistency in order to interpret the prophecies regarding the second coming of Christ literally, just as the prophecies of the first coming of Christ were to be interpreted literally?

memorize

“And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east . . . the glory of the Lord came into the temple by the way of the east gate which faces toward the east . . . and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple.” From Ezekiel 43: 2-5

Lesson 41

The Priests of the Millennial Temple Ezekiel 44

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The eastern gate and the prince have special significance during the Millennium.
2. The Sons of Zadok have special status during the Millennium.

practical application

As priests today, let us teach the way of holiness!

questions

1. Is the eastern gate of Ezekiel 44:1-2 the same eastern gate that is visible today in the eastern wall of the Temple Mount? Explain.
2. What is the significance of the eastern gate of Ezekiel chapter 44 being closed?
3. Who is the prince of Ezekiel 44:3?
4. Why will the status of the Levites be lowered in the future Millennial Temple?
5. Why will the status of the sons of Zadok be elevated in the future Millennial Temple?

answers

1. No. The eastern gate visible today in the Temple Mount wall did not exist at the time of Christ, so the Lord never entered it. The location of the earlier eastern gate, below the visible eastern gate and below present-day ground level, does not agree with the detailed description of the future Temple complex as given in Ezekiel chapters 40-42. And, the eastern gate of Ezekiel chapter 44 will be in the future Millennial Temple complex, not in the current Temple Mount wall. It is yet to be built!
2. The significance of the eastern gate of the future Millennial Temple complex being permanently closed (v 2) is that the Lord will have come to permanently dwell in the midst of His people. He will never leave again and never have a need to enter again.
3. The prince of 44:3 is likely the vice regent who will rule the restored nation of Israel under Christ during the Millennium. His role as one who rules is suggested by the fact that he will sit “in the gate” (v 3), a location common to those in governmental authority in Jerusalem and Israel.
4. The status of the Levites as priests will be lowered in the future Millennial Temple because of their apostasy in the past, allowing idolatry into the temple courts (vs 9-14).
5. The status of the sons of Zadok will be elevated. They will be awarded the priesthood in the future Millennial Temple (vs 15-31), because of their faithfulness to David and to the Lord during the times of rebellion by Absalom and also by Adonijah (v 15). You can read about these days of trouble in 2 Samuel 15 and 1 Kings 1-2.

discuss / consider

Consider the characteristics of the sons of Zadok for which they are to be blessed by God as they fulfill a very special role in the future Millennial Temple. Discuss specifically how these same characteristics can be encouraged and strengthened in your individual lives so that you can and will be more effective believer-priests in the Church today.

challenge

Read 1 Peter 2 over several times. Think about the significance of being called to be a part of the royal priesthood when you were saved! Identify the attitudes and behaviors that God exhorts you to possess and demonstrate: believe, obey, proclaim, live honorably, submit, honor, serve, suffer, follow . . . How are you doing in your believer-priest responsibilities?

memorize

“And the Lord said to me, ‘This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut.’” Ezekiel 44:2

Lesson 42

The Division of the Land around the Millennial Temple Ezekiel 45

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. During the Millennium, the land surrounding the Temple will be for the priests and Levites and prince.
2. During the Millennium, the sacrifices associated with the Temple will not be for taking away sins.

practical application

Don't cheat your customers or clients!

questions

1. In the area of the literal Millennial Temple of the future, the territory around the Temple will be set apart as a portion of land for the priests, Levites and prince, given to them as an _____. The Lord has designated this area as _____ land.
2. We learn from chapter 48 that Israel will be divided into 12 strips of land, one for each of the 12 tribes, and the strips of land will run all the way from the _____ Sea eastward to the _____ River and perhaps beyond for some tribes. There will be an additional east-west strip of land between the land designated for the tribe of _____ to the north and the tribe of _____ to the south, and it will include the city of _____.
3. Because the sacrifices in the future Millennial Temple will look backward and commemorate the completed sacrificial work of Christ, it is in this way similar to an ordinance celebrated by the Church today. Name that ordinance. Why will this ordinance not be celebrated during the Millennium?
4. Based on the words of the Lord in verses 18-22, which Jewish feasts will be observed during the Millennial Kingdom in the Millennial Temple? Could there be other feasts kept during the Millennium that are not mentioned here?
5. What will the responsibilities of the prince be during the Millennial Kingdom?

answers

1. The land around the future Millennial Temple that will be assigned to the priests, Levites and prince, will be given to them as an inheritance (v 1). The Lord has designated this area as holy land (v 1).

2. The strips of land described in Ezekiel chapter 48 will extend all the way from the Mediterranean Sea eastward to the Jordan River or beyond. Between the strip of land assigned to the tribe of Judah to the north, and the strip of land assigned to the tribe of Benjamin to the south, will be a strip of land as described in chapter 45, verse 1. It will measure 25,000 cubits wide and will extend from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River. It will include the city of Jerusalem.

3. The ordinance celebrated regularly by the church today, the Lord's Supper, is similar to what the sacrifices in the future Millennial Temple will be, in that they are both memorial in focus and commemorate the sacrificial work of Christ on the cross. The Lord's Supper will not be celebrated during the Millennium because it was intended specifically for the church until the Lord's second coming. See 1 Corinthians 11:26 in this regard.

4. The Jewish feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles will be observed during the Millennium based on verses 21-25 and chapter 46, verses 1-15. There may be additional feasts observed during the Millennium that are not spoken of here in Ezekiel.

5. The prince has the responsibility to provide for all the regular sacrifices from the animals and grain that the people give to the Lord, including burnt offerings, grain offerings and drink offerings. He will also prepare the sin offering and the peace offering (vs 16-25).

discuss / consider

Consider the significance of Israel becoming a holy nation and being an actual light to the Gentiles during the Millennium. Discuss the truth that many people who are born during that thousand-year period of time will need a savior, and how the believers among the Jewish people will be those who lead many to Christ, often through the testimony of the temple sacrifices.

challenge

God told His people that cheating and deceiving with false weights and balances was "violence, plundering, injustice and a means of stealing (v 9). Have you minimized the seriousness of false entries on your tax return or failing to return an excess of change given to you by a store clerk? Commit yourself to total truthfulness in all of your day-to-day transactions in the marketplace!

memorize

"When you divide the land by lot into inheritance, you shall set apart a district for the Lord, a holy portion of the land; its length shall be twenty-five thousand cubits, and the width ten thousand. It shall be holy throughout its territory all around." Ezekiel 45:1

Lesson 43

The Manner of Worship at the Millennial Temple Ezekiel 46

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The Millennial Temple will be a place where people remember the redemptive work of Christ.
2. The Millennial Temple will be a place where people gather for worship and fellowship.

practical application

Don't interrupt the continuing burnt offering!

questions

1. In review, we believe that chapters 40-48 of Ezekiel should be interpreted _____. This would include the dimensions of the _____ and the detailed regulations of _____. This interpretation also harmonizes with the predicted _____ of the nation of Israel. The prince mentioned frequently in this chapter is not the _____ or the resurrected _____, but is a high ranking leader of the future nation of Israel.
2. The future of the nation of Israel is clarified in which chapter of Romans? The establishment of the Millennial Kingdom is clarified in what chapter of Revelation? Where in the book of Zechariah do we find the prediction of the person who will direct the building of the Temple? Who will this person be?
3. Why will the inner east gate of the temple complex be left open on certain days? On which days will it be left open?
4. According to verse 17, what ancient Jewish celebration will be observed throughout the Millennium? What is this celebration more commonly called?
5. Why will there be no temple or animal sacrifices in the eternal state that will follow the Millennium?

answers

1. We believe chapters 40-48 of Ezekiel should be interpreted literally, including the dimensions of the Temple and the detailed regulations of worship. A literal interpretation harmonizes with the predicted restoration of the nation of Israel. The prince, who has significant responsibilities relating to the worship at the Millennial Temple, is not the Lord or the resurrected David because he has sons (vs 16-18).

2. The future restoration of the nation of Israel to the Lord is made clear in Romans chapter 11, as is the Millennial Kingdom in Revelation chapter 20. In Zechariah 6:13, it is predicted that the Lord Himself will direct the building of the Millennial Temple.

3. Verses 1 and 2 indicate that on the weekly sabbaths, the monthly days of the new moon and appointed feast days, the inner east gate will be left open for the people to worship. This gate will be shut on the six working days. This shows that there will be work during the Millennium.

4. The ancient celebration of the year of liberty, more commonly called the year of Jubilee, will be observed during the Millennium (v 17).

5. There will be no temple or animal sacrifices in the eternal state because the effects of “the curse” will be forever erased. See Revelation 21:22 and 22:3 in this regard.

discuss / consider

Read Zechariah 14:16 and Isaiah 42:6-7. Discuss the participation of the saved Gentile nations in the worship of the Lord God in the Millennium, and how the restored Israel will be a light to the Gentiles at that time. Consider the uniqueness of this relationship in contrast to the present situation where Gentile believers are a light to an unbelieving and not-yet-restored Israel.

challenge

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise – the fruit of lips that confess his name.” Hebrews 13:15. As it will be with the daily, morning burnt offering in the future Millennial Temple, let the worship of the Lord be a continual and continuing practice in your life, with lips of praise in prayer and in the reading and study of God’s Word.

memorize

“Thus says the Lord God: ‘The gateway of the inner court that faces toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and on the day of the New Moon it shall be opened . . . Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the entrance to this gateway before the Lord . . .’” From Ezekiel 46:1-3

Lesson 44

The Life-Giving Waters from the Millennial Temple Ezekiel 47

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The river of water in Ezekiel 47 is literal, but includes spiritual lessons.
2. The division of the land in Ezekiel 47 is literal and includes the Palestinians.

practical application

Don't dump the details!

questions

1. What direction does the river of water flow from the Millennial Temple? Will the river be shallow or deep? Will it be of fresh water or salt water?
2. Into what existing body of water will the river of water flow, and what affect will it have on this body of water?
3. Is the hermeneutical principle of drawing spiritual lessons from literal texts the same as spiritualizing the text?
4. In verses 13-20 of chapter 47, the general description of the future borders of the land of Israel is given. What will be the western border of the land? What will be the eastern border of the land that lies south of the Sea of Galilee?
5. Describe the instruction given to Israel concerning strangers or sojourners who will live within the future boundaries of the land of Israel.

answers

1. The river of water from the Millennial Temple will flow from the eastern side of the Temple complex toward the east (v 8). The river will be shallow as it leaves the area of the Temple, but will become increasingly deep as it flows eastward (vs 3-5), and it will be a river of fresh water (vs 8-9).

2. The river of fresh water will flow down into the Dead Sea. Verse 8 says that the water from the river will “heal” the salty Dead Sea, bringing it to life in a way that great numbers of fish will thrive (v 9), and fish of the same kinds as in the Mediterranean Sea will be caught in great numbers from its banks (v 10), and on its banks will grow all kinds of food-bearing trees as well as trees bearing leaves with medicinal qualities. Interestingly, the marsh area will intentionally remain salty (v 11), being an important continuing source of salt.

3. Spiritualizing entire portions of biblical text such as chapters 40-48 of Ezekiel and denying the literal content and details of the text, is much different than drawing spiritual lessons from a biblical text that is interpreted literally. We believe that the scriptural passages of prophecy in these chapters concerning the Millennial Temple, the Millennial City, the future land of Israel, the return of the Jewish people to their land and their restoration to the Lord, and the river of living water flowing from the Temple, are to be taken literally. At the same time, many spiritual lessons can be drawn from the passages for us today, as has been done in many of these studies in the book of Ezekiel.

4. The western borders of the future land of Israel will be the Mediterranean Sea (vs 14-20). Adjacent to and south of the Sea of Galilee, the eastern border will be the Jordan River and the Jordan River Valley (vs 18-19). North of the Sea of Galilee the eastern border will continue further east, being marked by cities and towns (vs 15-20).

5. Verses 21-23 give specific instructions to Israel to include strangers and their children (v 22) in the lands given to the twelve tribes. These people, who would include the Palestinians today, are to be incorporated into lands of all twelve tribes, and are to be included as full citizens, including ownership of land (v 22-23).

discuss / consider

Consider the impact on the world scene if the solution to the “Palestinian Question” found here in Ezekiel chapter 47 were presented to Israel, the Palestinian Authority and other major world powers. Discuss the actions that would have to take place in order to implement this solution.

challenge

The many important details in Scripture that are to be taken literally, such as these in Ezekiel, are important for your biblical understanding and growing confidence in God’s Word. Are you committed to consistent Bible study that includes these detailed portions of Scripture?

memorize

“Then he said to me: ‘This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the valley, and enters the sea. When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed.’” Ezekiel 47:8

“Thus you shall divide this land among yourselves according to the tribes of Israel . . . And it shall be that in whatever tribe the stranger sojourns, there you shall give him his inheritance,” says the Lord God.” Ezekiel 47:21, 23

Lesson 45

The Division of the Land in the Millennial Israel Ezekiel 48

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. Israel, during the Millennium, will have a new layout.
2. Jerusalem, during the Millennium, will have a new name.

practical application

Remember, DNA is not the only way!

questions

1. When the land of the Israel of the future is divided among the twelve tribes, some sections will be longer east-to-west than others. Does this mean that some tribes will receive more land area than others?
2. Is the millennial city of Jerusalem the same city as the New Jerusalem described in Revelation chapters 21 and 22? Describe some of the differences between the two.
3. Are the boundaries of the land to be divided among the twelve tribes in the Millennium the same boundaries that were given for the division of the land at the time of Joshua and the conquest?
4. Will the city of Jerusalem still be called Jerusalem during the Millennium? Will it receive an additional name? If so, what will that new name be?

answers

1. When the long east-to-west sections of land are laid out for each of the twelve tribes, each tribe will receive the same amount of land area (Ezekiel 47:14). Since some sections will be longer than others, it means that the longer ones will be narrower in their north-to-south dimension.
2. There will be so many significant differences between the millennial city of Jerusalem and the New Jerusalem described in Revelation chapters 21 and 22, that we do not believe they are the same city. The New Jerusalem of Revelation may hover over the earth as a satellite city during the Millennium and then descend to the earth for the eternal state, but we believe the millennial Jerusalem is a different city. Here are some of the notable differences: The millennial Jerusalem will be the city of the Temple while the New Jerusalem of Revelation will have no temple; the millennial Jerusalem will be about 8 miles on a side while the New Jerusalem will be about 1500 miles on a side; the New Jerusalem will have golden streets and foundations, wall and gates of precious stones while the millennial Jerusalem will have neither; the river of the New Jerusalem will flow in the middle of the main street while the river of the millennial Jerusalem will flow down into the Arabah to the Dead Sea; the New Jerusalem will descend from heaven to earth while the millennial Jerusalem will be built on earth; and the New Jerusalem will be for the eternal state while the millennial Jerusalem will be for the Millennial Kingdom of Christ.
3. The boundaries of the land between the twelve tribes during the Millennium will be totally different than the boundaries established during the time of Joshua. See Joshua 13-21 for the description of the land at the time of the conquest, and Ezekiel 47 and 48 for the markedly different boundaries given for the time of the Millennium.
4. Yes, Jerusalem will still be called Jerusalem based on the millennial passage of Zechariah 14. However, the city will be given the new name, "Jehovah Shammah", which means, the Lord is there, because the Lord literally will be there!

discuss / consider

Discuss the layout of the section of land that will be set aside for the city of Jerusalem, the temple complex, the Levites, the priests and for the prince. Descriptions are listed in Ezekiel 45:1-8 and 48:8-22.

challenge

Is your life one that brings spiritual healing wherever it goes, like the river that will flow from the Millennial Temple? Will you make your life one that brings new life to others as you share the life-giving message of Christ?

memorize

*"All the way around [the city] shall be eighteen thousand cubits; and the name of the city from that day shall be: The Lord Is There."
Ezekiel 48:35*