

Ezekiel 4-5 –19 December 2024

“Symbolically Led To Reality”

Introduction

*Ezekiel is commissioned 5 yrs after being taken

*The priest Ezekiel preaches from 592-570 BC

*Book's Theme: “They shall know that I am God”

*1st Section was (Chap 1-3): Ezekiel's Commission

*2nd Section (Chap 4-24): Prophecies Against Judah

*3rd Section (Chap 25-32): Prophecies Against Nations

*4th Section (Chap 33-39) Of Israel's Restoration

*5th Section (Chap 40-48) Of the Millennial Kingdom

*The 1st efforts Ezekiel is told to take w/ the captives in Babylon is to act out the coming judgement on the city of Jerusalem & Judah

*It should cause us to consider some aspects of what the final judgement in the end will be like, as well

Today, we'll see 3 aspects of God's judgement upon Israel proclaimed thru symbolism

#1 – Symbolized by lying down, we see the length of judgement (Chap 4:1-8)

Read Chap 4:1-3

1. Thru creating symbols, he's told to portray, ahead of time, what will happen to Jerusalem
2. They've found 1,000s of these clay tablets
 - a. Used for writing purposes
3. As w/ toys, he's to act out a siege of the city
4. Happened in public, where Jewish captives could see, *to be a sign to them*
5. This iron pan division represents inescapability
 - a. Remember the time; he arrived in Babylon (597BC), he's commissioned & gives this symbol (592BC) & the city will fall in 586BC
 - b. Many in Jerusalem thought 597BC was the last they would see of Babylon

Read Vs 4-8

1. Laying down so that each day represents a year of Israel's punishment (430 total days = 430 yrs)

- a. God uses '1 day=1 yr' pattern for judgement other times (Num 14:34 two spies 40 days=40 yrs)
 - b. Strength of His right arm is to be shown, symbolizing God's strong judgement
2. Some explain timing as how long Israel sinned during the Kingdom but it's not now long they sinned but how long they'll bear the punishment
3. Why more punishment for the north (Israel)
 - a. They had more people & tribes (10 tribes)
 - b. They had way more wicked kings
 - c. (Vs 8) He can't turn until days are complete
4. Jeremiah's 70 yrs prophecy of Israel's captivity was specifically for the land to have total rest
 - a. **Read** Jer 25:11, **29:10**
 - b. **II Chr 36:21** concludes Babylonian Captivity is the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy
 - c. **This** was 605BC to 536BC
5. **Ezekiel** tells of 430 yrs of punishment for Israel
 - a. Problem: 430 yrs from 605BC is 176BC; nothing changed at that time for Israel

6. At end of Babylonian Captivity, there're 2 compelling remarks that solve the Ezekiel problem
 - a. **Read** Neh 1:8 – This was foretold in Law
 - b. Turn to Dan 9:1-3, 10-13
7. What is this curse in the Law? It's Lev 26
 - a. Let's outline the chapter of Lev 26
 - i. Vs 1-13 is blessings for obedience
 - ii. Vs 14-39 is the curse for disobedience
 - iii. Vs 40-46 is confession God's looking for
 - b. Let's examine the section on the cursing
 - i. Read Lev 26:17-18, 21, 24, 28, 33-34, 38-39
 - c. There are 2 things emphasized here
 - i. If Israel continues in disobedience, it's 7x
 - ii. 'They'll be ruled over by foreigners'
8. How do we know that Daniel & Nehemiah were right that this prophecy applies?
 - a. Turn to Ezra 9:1-3, 13-14, **Read** Neh 13:17-18, **Read** Mal 2:2
9. **So that** leads us to do the math
 - a. Ezekiel's punishment began in 605BC

- b. **At** 536BC (end of Jeremiah's 70 yrs) they're still in rebellion so the Lev 7x prophecy applies
 - c. **7 times** the remaining 360 yrs is 2520 yrs
 - d. **Convert** to our calendar is 2483 yrs, 284 days
 - e. Add 1-yr b/c there's no year 0
 - f. That brings you to May 14, 1948
 - g. Conclusion to 'Those that hate you will reign over you' & 'land will lay desolate' was 1948!
10. Here's the grace of it all
- a. Israel & Judah's punishment WILL end
 - b. They'll be reunited together again!
 - c. And we've seen it in our generation!

#2 – Symbolized by cooking food, we see the embarrassment of judgement (Chap 4:9-17)

Read Chap 4:9-13

- 1. So Ezekiel wasn't on his side 24/7
- 2. Eating exactly 8 oz of bread daily would show the scarcity of food during the siege & conquest

3. This scarcity is also shown by limited water (1 qt daily) & the only fuel would be human waste
4. This is to be intentionally done *in their* sight
5. Ezekiel is warning them of humiliation to come
 - a. It would be impossible to keep their diet
 - b. It would be humiliating to be impoverished among nations that don't know the Lord

Read Vs 14-17

1. Whether cooking with human or animal dung, both are offensive & against the Mosaic Law
 - a. God is pleased to allow him to limit his violation of the Law's cleanliness standards
 - b. These pictures of cleanliness in the Law aren't sin, but they're picturing what it is to sin
2. How's this apply to us?
 - a. We must be in this world but not of it
 - b. Turn to Luke 14:16-23 – We're going get a little dirty going into to all these places to be a godly influence

#3 – Symbolized by a mourning shave, we see the depth of judgement (Chap 5)

Read Chap 5:1-4

1. Shaving one's hair was a sign of mourning
2. He's to use this to describe the fate of Israel
 - a. About 1/3 will die in the siege
 - b. About 1/3 will die by the sword
 - c. About 1/3 will go into exile
 - d. A few, the faithful remnant, will continue to suffer persecution
3. Isn't done b/c God cares not for Zeke or his hair
 - a. Quite the opposite; it's b/c God's warning them all
 - b. God knows every hair by number Zeke shaved off
 - i. Notice Luke 12:7 doesn't say 'God knows the total number', it says, 'God knows the number of each one individually'

Read Vs 5-10

1. Jerusalem is the center in historical, geographical and redemptive ways

- a. Can't have a proper, theology, soteriology or eschatology without a proper 'Israelology'
2. B/c God worked among Israel, yet they turned from Him, there's great accountability; greater than the nations around them
 - a. Siege of Jerusalem would be so severe they would even turn to cannibalism (cf Lam 4:10)

Read Vs 11-12

1. So God spells out what the shaving meant
2. What a crime! That God gave Israel a present from Him to them & they used the gift for adultery

Read Vs 13-14

1. Punishment is designed to get them to hear and listen to God
2. Acts of God are designed to get us to believe the previous words of God, so that we can believe the next words of God without further need of acts
3. Notice, there's a decisive end to their punishment

Read Vs 15-17

1. Thus the judgement of God will be intense, severe and complete
2. These things are designed to instruct, not just Israel, but all that see these things

Conclusion

As in the days of Ezekiel, so too for us, we should be well aware of the coming judgement

1. **We see the length of the judgement**
 - a. Jesus called it “everlasting fire”
2. **We see the embarrassment of the judgement**
 - a. Jesus said there’s weeping & gnashing of teeth
3. **We see the depth of the judgement**
 - a. Jesus called it “outer darkness”, it is the absence of the presence of God

If we truly examine these aspects of the coming judgment on the world, it will prompt us to warn our friends and family to flee to the cross & find salvation