



The Sent Ones PT. IV | Ezekiel

Mark Allen | 10.4.26

Small Group Guide

Yahweh Will Strengthen

Before You Meet

Group members should read Ezekiel 1, 37, and 47 before gathering. Come prepared to share one thing that stood out to you from the reading.

Overview

This week's sermon walked through the book of Ezekiel, a prophet whose name means "Yahweh will strengthen." Ezekiel ministered during the Babylonian captivity, a time when Israel appeared utterly hopeless. Through two great visions — the throne room vision in chapter 1 and the valley of dry bones in chapter 37 — God reminded his people that he is present, he is powerful, and he is not finished. The sermon also drew connections to end-times prophecy and closed with the image of a river of living water that brings life to everything it touches.

Opening Question

Think of a time in your life when your circumstances felt completely hopeless. What did that season feel like, and what helped you get through it?

Key Takeaways

- God shows up in the middle of captivity. Ezekiel did not encounter God after his situation improved. He encountered God while standing by a river in Babylon with no temple, no sacrifices, and no clear purpose. God met him exactly where he was.
- The name Ezekiel means "Yahweh will strengthen," and that theme runs through the entire book. God does not abandon his people when they are at their lowest.
- The vision of the dry bones in Ezekiel 37 is a picture of Israel's spiritual condition in captivity. It is also a picture of what every human being looks like apart from God — dead, scattered, and without breath.
- The river of living water in Ezekiel 47 begins as a trickle and grows into a river too deep to cross. Everything the river touches comes to life. Jesus claimed to be the fulfillment of this image in John 7:37-38, where he described rivers of living water flowing from within those who believe in him.
- Satan was created as a beautiful, worship-leading being who fell through pride. His hatred of Israel is rooted in the fact that it is through Israel that the Messiah was revealed. Understanding this gives context to the spiritual conflict surrounding Israel throughout history and into the present day.
- God is still at work in and through Israel, and the prophecies of Ezekiel 38 regarding the Battle of Gog and Magog point to events that have not yet been fully fulfilled.

Discussion Questions

Getting Into the Text

1. Ezekiel was a priest with no temple, in a foreign land, with no obvious way to fulfill his calling. Have you ever felt like your circumstances made it impossible to be useful to God? What did that feel like?
2. In the throne room vision of Ezekiel 1, Ezekiel falls on his face when he sees the glory of the Lord. When was the last time you were genuinely overwhelmed by who God is? What prompted that response?
3. In Ezekiel 37, when God asks Ezekiel, "Can these bones live?" Ezekiel answers, "O Lord God, you know." He does not say yes and he does not say no. What does that answer reveal about Ezekiel's faith? What would your honest answer have been in that moment?

4. Pastor Mark pointed out that God breathed the breath of life into man in Genesis 2, and that the same Hebrew word for breath — ruach — is used in the valley of dry bones vision. Why is it significant that life, in both cases, comes from God breathing into what is lifeless? What does that say about spiritual life today?
5. Pastor Mark described how all three types of musical instruments — percussion, wind, and strings — exist within the human body, and suggested that human beings were created to be instruments of worship. How does that idea change the way you think about your own purpose? Does it change the way you think about corporate worship?
6. In Ezekiel 47, the river begins as a trickle and grows into something too deep and too wide to cross. The sermon connected this to Jesus' words in John 7:37-38 about rivers of living water flowing from within believers. In what areas of your life does your faith feel more like a trickle than a river? What do you think contributes to that?
7. Pastor Mark made the point that Satan's fall came through pride — he began to receive for himself the worship that belonged to God alone. Where in your own life do you find it tempting to take credit or receive glory that belongs to God?
8. Pastor Mark closed with the statement that everything the river touches lives, and applied that to the believer's calling to share the gospel. Who in your life needs to encounter the living water of Jesus Christ? What is one practical step you could take this week to move toward that conversation?

Going Deeper

The sermon drew a connection between the four faces of the living creatures in Ezekiel 1 — lion, ox, man, and eagle — and the four Gospels: Matthew presenting Jesus as the Lion of Judah, Mark as the servant, Luke as the Son of Man, and John as the eternal Word above all.

- Read the opening verses of each Gospel: Matthew 1:1, Mark 1:1, Luke 1:1-4, and John 1:1-14.
- Discuss as a group: How does each Gospel's opening shape the way you read and understand Jesus throughout that book?
- Why do you think God gave us four accounts of the life of Jesus rather than one? What does that tell you about the fullness of who Jesus is?

Practical Applications

This Week, Choose One:

- Read Ezekiel 37:1-14 slowly and prayerfully. As you read, ask God to show you any area of your life where you have become spiritually dry. Spend time in prayer asking him to breathe life into that area.

- Identify one person in your life who does not know Jesus. Write their name down and commit to praying for them every day this week. Ask God to open a door for a natural conversation about faith.
 - Reflect on your personal worship life outside of Sunday mornings. Is worship something you practice throughout the week, or is it limited to one hour on Sunday? Consider adding one intentional act of worship to your daily routine this week — whether that is a song, a prayer of thanksgiving, or a moment of stillness before God.
 - Study Ezekiel 47:1-12 alongside John 7:37-38 and Revelation 22:1-5. Journal what you observe about the river of life across all three passages. What do they collectively tell you about the character of God and the life he offers?
-

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by praying for one another in the following three areas:

1. That God would meet each group member in whatever "Babylon" they are currently walking through.
 2. That the rivers of living water would flow outward from each member's life into the lives of people around them who do not yet know Jesus.
 3. That the group would grow in its understanding of God's faithfulness — to Israel, to the church, and to each individual — as revealed throughout Scripture.
-

Memory Verse for the Week

Ezekiel 37:3 — Reflect on God's question to Ezekiel and Ezekiel's response. Sit with both the question and the answer this week.

