



THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

GBC EQUIPPING HOUR | FEBRUARY 16, 2020

Class 8 – Straight Talk to the Covenant People (12:1-19:14)

PURPOSE: To relate to the early Jews in Exile -leaving their glory days, entering into hostile territory, always looking ahead to the Kingdom of Redemption.

Introduction: Bad as Bad Can Be

I. **Their Spiritual Anarchy as ‘Normal Living’ (Ezekiel chp. 12)**

A. Totally Checked Out

The word of the LORD came to me:² “Son of man, you dwell in the midst of **a rebellious house**, who have eyes to see, but see not, who have ears to hear, but hear not, for they are **a rebellious house**.

- Ezekiel 12:1-2

B. ‘We’ve Got Plenty of Time’

“Son of man, what is this proverb that you have about the land of Israel, saying, **‘The days grow long**, and every vision comes to nothing”?

- Ezekiel 12:22

C. Grim Awakening / Escape... to Tragedy

But **I will let a few of them escape** from the sword, from famine and pestilence, **that they may declare all their abominations** among the nations where they go, and may know that I am the LORD.”

- Ezekiel 12:16 (cf. King Zedekiah in 12:12-13)

II. Their Magnetism to False Prophets (Ezekiel chp. 13)

A. Lots of Bling-Bling but No Bible

Nothing against attractive and positive, upbeat speakers but when their only message is ‘it’s all good’ (13:10), with musings that swoon in and out of “imagination” (13:2), while clothed with the trimmings of sparkly stuff (13:18)... one has to wonder about the substance of their message.

In fact the message of the false prophets, while being aesthetically pleasing, was actually harmful in the end. God characterizes them as white washed walls (similar to stucco) that appear strong and monolithic from the outside but can be broken down with the lightest tap of a hammer (13:12).

B. Upside Down Preaching

Because you have **disheartened the righteous falsely**, although I have not grieved him, and you have **encouraged the wicked**, that he should not turn from his evil way to save his life,

-Ezekiel 13:22

III. Their Being Likened to ‘Rotten Kids’ (Ezekiel chp. 14)

A. Both the Leaders and Subjects Steeped in Idolatry

(Read Ezekiel 14:1-5).

B. Call to Repent = Turn Away from Evil

(Read Ezekiel 14:6).

C. Back to the Issue of Leadership

It’s easy to think of bad kids as simply the byproduct of bad parents. But God says that even if Judah had the very best shepherds (Noah, Daniel, and Job -14:20), they still would remain *so hardened*, you wouldn’t feel sorry about their inevitable Day a-comin’ (14:22).

IV. Their Being a ‘Good for Nothing’ (Ezek. chp. 15)

God double-downs on rebellious Judah, describing them as a limp vine that cannot serve like a sturdy tree. And one step lower: once the vine is used as fuel it cannot be used again.

V. Their Having Scorned Their Faithful Husband (Ezek. chp. 16)

God describes the infidelity of his covenant people in graphic detail. She is likened to an insane prostitute who actually offers \$\$\$ to her clients rather than requiring payment from them. Israel and Judah fornicated with the nations around them, turning their backs on the One who first chose to be compassionate to them. Instead they chose idolatry, making greasy international deals which literally made no sense at all.

Glimpse of future hope: something about a future “everlasting covenant” that comes through a final “atonement” (16:60-63).

VI. Their Seeking Military Aid from the Nations (Ezek. chp. 17)

The OT prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah both warned Israel against making military pacts with foreign nations (see Isa. 30:1-2 and Jer. 37:7-10). But the king could see no other way. This was a classic case of the fear of man over the fear of God.

VII. Their Shifting Blame Back to God (Ezek. chp. 18 [vv. 25-29])

“Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just?²⁶ When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it; for the injustice that he has done he shall die.²⁷ Again, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall save his life.²⁸ Because he considered and turned away from all the transgressions that he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die.²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ O house of Israel, are my ways not just? Is it not your ways that are not just?

VIII. Their Becoming a Lament Song (Ezek. chp. 19)

Judah, once like a mighty roaring lion, is left a caged animal by her captors.

Once like a tall tree, now plucked up and laid down in the scorching desert wind.

Conclusion

... "Their" ...and there is "us" ..

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, **and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.**

- Ephesians 2:1-3

The Book of Ezekiel Course Outline:

- Introduction to Ezekiel
- Ezekiel's Close Encounter (1:1-28)
- Ezekiel's Strange Commissioning (2:1-3:27)
- Four Signs of Coming Judgment (4:1-5:17)
- Two Messages of Coming Judgment (6:1-7:27)
- Idolatry in the House (8:1-18)
- God's Glory Departs (9:1-11:23)
- Straight Talk to the Covenant People (12:1-19:14)
- Defective Leadership (20:1-23:49)
- The Purge (24:1-27)
- Foreign Raiders Not Exempt (25:1-33:20)
- Reentering the Land on God's Terms (33:21-39:29)
- Restoration of Temple Worship (40:1-46:24)
- Restoration of the Land (47:1-48:35)