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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Ezekiel 2.

(2014)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

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Ezekiel 2.

Topics.

- The LORD sends Ezekiel to speak to the rebels of Israel.
- The LORD tells Jeremiah what to say to Israel.
- Biblical visions.

Introduction to the Book of Ezekiel: Ezekiel, a prophet and priest, was exiled to Babylon in 597 B.C. His ministry extended over at least twenty-three years. The book opens with his first dramatic vision of the "likeness" of the LORD". Ezekiel was keenly aware of God's presence and power in human affairs. He addressed both the exiles and the people left in Judah with messages of warning and judgment, predicting the fall of Jerusalem.

After its fall (586), Ezekiel prophesied of hope and reassurance for the people of Judah, who had then lost the focus of God's covenant and the temple in Jerusalem. His vision of the valley of dry bones (ch. 37) is a classic picture of God's ability to breathe new life into those who are spiritually dead. Ezekiel is prophesying about the Jews that did not go into captivity to Babylon, but remained against the word of the LORD in Jerusalem.

NOTE: Ezekiel's message is primarily directed to the people in the land of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (the two tribes), but often it is difficult to separate the message from Judah and Israel (the ten tribes) because much of what the LORD says can be applied to both Judah and Israel because the two are so intertwined and both nations were guilty of the same gross sins.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

The LORD sends Ezekiel to Speak to the Rebels of Israel.

Ezekiel 2:1-3 ----- ¹And he (the LORD) said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you." ²And as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. ³And he said to me, "Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels, who have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me to this very day.

Son of man: means mortal man.

Ezekiel, with the men of Judah who had influence was taken to Babylon ten years before Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem. Ezekiel had been in captivity for five years when the LORD called him to be a prophet (Ezekiel 1:2) then five years later Jerusalem was destroyed. This chapter is in the 5th year of Ezekiel's captivity, five years prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and the LORD is telling Ezekiel to go and speak to the people of Israel.

The LORD tells Jeremiah what to say to Israel.

Ezekiel 2:4-10 ----- ⁴The descendants also are impudent and stubborn: I send you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' ⁵And whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house) they will know that a prophet has been among them. ⁶And you, son of man, be not afraid of them, nor be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns are with you and you sit on scorpions. Be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. ⁷And you shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear, for they are a rebellious house. ⁸"But you, son of man, hear what I say to

you. Be not rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you."
⁹And when I looked, behold, a hand was stretched out to me, and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. ¹⁰And he spread it before me. And it had writing on the front and on the back, and there were written on it words of lamentation and mourning and woe.

Five times in these few verses the LORD says Israel is a rebellious people and then describes them as being: -

- Rebels who have rebelled against Him.
- Impudent and stubborn.
- Briers, thorns and scorpions.

This is why the LORD tells Ezekiel not to be afraid since it is to these people Ezekiel is to proclaim God's message to. This is so tragic the people of God have become so corrupt that the LORD has to warn the Ezekiel the prophet that He is sending to not only call Israel to turn from their wicked ways, but also to warn them of the impending judgment that is about to come upon them if they do not repent and turn from their gross sins and rebellion. The LORD in his eternal foreknowledge and because of the corruption that is already rampant amongst Israel sees that they will rebel against His words and against Ezekiel which of course is another reason He encourages Ezekiel with the words, "Do not to be afraid."

Open your mouth and eat what I give you: means accept what I say do not reject it. The LORD no doubt tells Ezekiel this because the message the LORD does give Ezekiel is not a positive message, but one full of sadness, grief and woe.

NOTICE: even if Israel refuses to listen to Ezekiel and obey the words of the LORD all is not lost. This is because if they refuse to obey the prophetic words of Ezekiel and heed his warning they will suffer God judgment, but eventually be convicted and turn to God when they see the events Ezekiel prophesied have actually come upon them (this is exactly what happened).

The History: Israel set their hearts diamond hard against the word of God's prophets they rebelled against the LORD they turned to other gods and entered into gross sin so the LORD used Babylon to bring the curses of the covenant upon them. Babylon invaded Jerusalem and took its inhabitants (the two tribes of Judah) into captivity later Babylon conquered Assyria who had previously taken Israel (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria) captive. Israel and Judah were under Babylonian rule for seventy years. They went into captivity to Babylon as two rebellious nations who had turned from God to idols and who were even sacrificing their own children to pagan gods.

While in captivity God moulded them like a master potter moulds a beautiful clay jar, Israel and Judah went into Babylon as two unfaithful nations that had turned away from the LORD to idols and other gods. Seventy years later, Cyrus (King of Persia) who the LORD called His Shepherd (Isaiah 44:28) gave permission to Israel to return to Jerusalem. Under Ezra and Nehemiah God brought Israel and Judah back to their beloved city Jerusalem as one united nation faithful to only one God, the LORD their God, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob (Israel never turned to idols or pagan gods again)

Multitudes of Jewish families who had been scattered throughout the nations returned to Jerusalem and the land of Israel with triumphant joy and rejoicing. When the temple of God was completed their faith was once again established and a time of prosperity and peace followed. Sadly Israel as a nation never recognised their Messiah the Christ when he came, but even this was in the LORD'S sovereign will. The prophet Zechariah tells us when the Lord returns in glory: -

- God will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn (Zech. 12:10-14).

The scroll: in this vision Ezekiel see a scroll with the prophetic message he is to speak to Israel written on it

Biblical visions: can relate to a spectacle gazed at by the eyes or a movie played out in the mind. In most cases God gives the picture or vision then the prophet speaks or writes it in their own words. Since many of these biblical visions, events or experiences often appear as real events to the person experiencing them they can be spoken of in the following two ways: -

1. As an actual and real event.
2. As a vision (an image or mental experience within the mind).

The person having the vision maybe left in confusion as to whether it was a vision or an actual event. This is because many biblical visions appear so real the emotions and the body respond as though it is an actual real event, even though it may simply be playing out in vivid colour and crystal clear pictures on the imagination of the mind.

The reason for this is that the human nervous system does not have a mind of its own and therefore cannot discern the difference between a real picture being played out on the imagination of the mind or an imaginary one so the nervous system responds to both the real image and the imaginary image in the same manner. This is why in many chapters the same event is written as a real experience in some verses and as a vision in others since the biblical character is not always sure what they actually experienced (2 Cor. 12:1-3).

Paul when speaking of himself in the third person said: -

- I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows and I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows (2 Cor. 12:1-3).

Jesus took Peter, James and John up a mountain and he was not only transfigured before them, and his face, shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light, but Moses and Elijah also appeared to them. This event was so real that Peter asked Jesus if he should make a tent for the Lord and one for Moses and one for Elijah, yet as they were walking back down the mountain Jesus told Peter, James and John not to tell this vision to anyone (Matt. 17:1-9).

A biblical vision is always under God's control and can appear as a movie played out on the screen of the imagination of the mind (similar to a dream) or it may appear as a hologram appearing in the air that is actually seen by the eyes of the prophet or to whoever God chooses to give the vision to. The vision communicates the LORD'S will or future events to the prophet or to whoever God choses to give the vision to and they then proceeds to tell the vision to the people, sometimes in their own words and at other times in the exact words the LORD has spoken to them in the vision.

For more on visions see the title: -

- Visions in, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

End.