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

Ezekiel 5.

(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 5.

Topics.

- Ezekiel is told to take a sharp sword.
- A fire will come out into all the house of Israel.
- God is against the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
- The LORD will do something He has never done.
- Israel had defiled the LORD'S temple.
- The LORD is a jealous God.
- The inhabitants of Jerusalem will be mocked.
- The LORD will destroy the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

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 (chapter 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.

History of Ezekiel: 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.

Ezekiel is told to take a Sharp Sword.

Ezekiel 5:1 ----- ¹"And you, O son of man, take a sharp sword. Use it as a barber's razor and pass it over your head and your beard. Then take balances for weighing and divide the hair. ²A third part you shall burn in the fire in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are completed. And a third part you shall take and strike with the sword all around the city. And a third part you shall scatter to the wind, and I will unsheathe the sword after them.

In these verses the LORD is using Ezekiel's hair as a symbol of the people of Israel. The sharp sword, the razor and the bald head are all symbols of the impending destruction of Jerusalem and its inhabitants being removed from it.

A third does not mean exactly a third, it is an expression showing that the following three types of doom are about to come upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

1. A third will be killed by fire.
2. A third will be killed by the sword.
3. A third will be scattered to the wind.

It is simply stunning to the enthusiastic and passionate Bible reader that the prophecies of the LORD are so beautifully symbolized and so exact in their fulfilment, but then we shouldn't expect anything less from the majestic Almighty eternal God who holds the world in His hands. When the Babylonian armies entered the city of Jerusalem they burned the people's homes, killed the soldiers and took the survivors to Babylon perfectly fulfilling Ezekiel's prophetic words, "A third shall burn in the fire, a third shall be struck with the sword and a third shall be scattered to the wind.

A Fire will come out into all the House of Israel.

Ezekiel 5:3 ----- ³And you shall take from these (Ezekiel's hair) a small number and bind them in the skirts of your robe. ⁴And of these again you shall take some and cast them into the midst of the fire and burn them in the fire. From there a fire will come out into all the house of Israel.

From the strands of hair Ezekiel is to cast to the wind he is told to take a few of them and bind them in his skirt. This is a picture of the LORD protecting those who are in captivity to Babylon, and from these few bound in his skirt he is told to take a few more out and cast them in a fire, symbolising the oppression of the Babylonian captivity, but from the overcoming endurance and faithfulness of this few will arise the nation of Israel.

This is simply fantastic: Judah and Israel were under Babylon rule for seventy years they came under Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon dominion as two rebellious nations before God, but while in captivity God the Master Potter moulded them into one united nation and turned them from a people who worshipped multitudes of gods to a nation that only worshipped one God, "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" they were cured of their gross idolatry and never again turned to pagan gods.

At the end of the seventy years Cyrus the King of Persia (who the LORD called His anointed shepherd) (Isa. 45:1) conquered the Babylonian Empire and gave the united people of Israel written permission to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their homes, the city and the temple of God. Multitudes of scattered Jews under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah triumphantly returned with great rejoicing and the temple of God was rebuilt, their faith established and the nation reborn out of the fire of the seventy year Babylonian captivity.

How can you not love the wonder and splendour of God's prophetic word and the faithfulness of His prophets who amidst great criticism and persecution refused to simply tell the people what they wanted to hear.

God is against the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 5:5-8 ----- ⁵"Thus says the Lord GOD: This is Jerusalem. I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries all around her. ⁶And she has rebelled against my rules by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against my statutes more than the countries all around her; for they have rejected my rules and have not walked in my statutes. ⁷Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you are more turbulent (multiplied your sins in KJV) than the nations that are all around you, and have not walked in my statutes or obeyed my rules, and have not even acted according to the rules of the nations that are all around you, ⁸therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, even I, am against you. And I will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations.

God has set Jerusalem in the centre of the nations to be a light to all the surrounding nations, but instead of being a light to the nations they have acted

even worse than the surrounding nations who were without God. God Himself says that the people of Israel have multiplied their sins even more than the nations around them and do not even obey the surrounding nation's rules (v7). This would be referring to the surrounding nations rules of good conduct and behaviour. Even today there are secular people whose behaviour (i.e., integrity, honesty and moral values etc.) is far better than those who are in leadership of some churches.

Sins in the land of Judah and Jerusalem at this time: were gross idolatry, astrology and occultism. They not only had altars for worshiping the host of heaven (the sun, moon, stars and planets) in the court of the temple and worshipped at the altars of Baal, but were even sacrificing their sons on the altars of Molech in the Hinnom Valley. Added to these abominations they were shedding innocent blood, cheating the innocent out of justice, not helping the less fortunate and oppressing the poor for their own gain all of these gross wickedness's permeated the land of Judah and Israel.

The LORD Will Do Something He Has Never Done.

Ezekiel 5:8-10 ----- ⁸therefore (because of Israel's wickedness) thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, even I, am against you. And I will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations. ⁹And because of all your abominations I will do with you *what I have never yet done*, and the like of which I will never do again. ¹⁰Therefore fathers shall eat their sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers. And I will execute judgments on you, and any of you who survive I will scatter to all the winds.

The thing the LORD says He has never done: in the past was to cause a lack of food so great that fathers would eat their sons and sons would eat their fathers so they could survive the famine. This famine came about through King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon who the LORD used as His servant to bring about His judgments upon the corrupt and rebellious people who refused to heed the words of Ezekiel and remained against the LORDS word at Jerusalem. King Nebuchadnezzar had his armies surround the walls of Jerusalem so that no-one could go in or out for nearly two years to get food.

Israel had Defiled the LORD'S Temple.

Ezekiel 5:11-12 ----- ¹¹Therefore, as I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely, because you have defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will withdraw. My eye will not spare, and I will have no pity. ¹²A third part of you shall die of pestilence and be consumed with famine in your midst; a third part shall fall by the sword all around you; and a third part I will scatter to all the winds and will unsheathe the sword after them.

Another thing that the LORD did that He had never done was to withdraw His eye from Israel and have no pity toward them. The inhabitants of Judah had set up altars to pagan gods in the temple of the LORD. How can anyone expect the LORDS blessing under such wicked and offensive practises. The offensiveness and hurt that God would feel in His heart is the same as a faithful wife who loves her husband would feel in hers when she finds out that he has brought other women into their bed and without any concern for his wife's feelings had sex with them.

The LORD is a Jealous God.

Ezekiel 5:13 ----- ¹³"Thus shall my anger spend itself, and I will vent my fury upon them and satisfy myself. And they shall know that I am the LORD—that I have spoken in my jealousy— when I spend my fury upon them.

The LORD is a jealous God because He knows: -

- Idols have no power, they are simply blocks of wood, and therefore the mind of anyone who worships them is open to mental illusions.
- There are no other gods, they are all fantasies of the mind and because of this they will lead a person who believes in them into fantasy and error.

- He knows that His ways are the only ways the human race can live in harmony.
- He is a God of justice and cannot protect or bless His people if they are corrupt.
- His people are a reflection of who He is, they represent His character to others if they are wicked it destroys His good name and He loves His people.

Throughout the Bible the LORD values and protects His name. His name is a name of love, justice, grace, mercy, forgiveness kindness and eternal life, so when people that represent His name act corruptly it brings a bad testimony to His name and turns people away from Him. He desires that everyone should be saved and be granted eternal life so those who act wickedly in His name force Him to act justly to protect His name. The LORD does this by removing His hand of blessing and replacing it with His hand of judgment.

The things that offend God are: -

- Denial of His existence and the honour due to Him.
- Pride (exalting oneself as superior to others i.e. looking down on people).
- Oppressing or using others for our own selfish gain.
- Not helping the poor and the less fortunate when able.
- Lies and deceit.
- Demeaning or degrading other humans.
- Violence to any human of any sort, verbal, sexual, financial, physical or spiritual.

At the time of Ezekiel the inhabitants of Jerusalem were guilty of all these.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem will Be Mocked.

Ezekiel 5:14-15 ----- ¹⁴Moreover, I will make you a desolation and an object of reproach among the nations all around you and in the sight of all who pass by. ¹⁵You shall be a reproach and a taunt, a warning and a horror, to the nations all around you, when I execute judgments on you in anger and fury, and with furious rebukes—I am the LORD, I have spoken.

When Jerusalem was destroyed and God's temple pillaged and all the people of Judah were taken captive to Babylon all the surrounding nations mocked and taunted them especially as they were lead away in chains to Babylon.

The LORD will destroy the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 5:16-17 ----- ¹⁶when I send against you the deadly arrows of famine, arrows for destruction, which I will send to destroy you, and when I bring more and more famine upon you and break your supply of bread. ¹⁷I will send famine and wild beasts against you, and they will rob you of your children. Pestilence and blood shall pass through you, and I will bring the sword upon you. I am the LORD; I have spoken."

The four constant themes of Jerusalem's punishment, is: -

1. War and destruction.
2. Great famine.
3. Pestilence (probably because of all the wounded and dead bodies).
4. Captivity into a foreign nation (rob you of your children).

End.