

removal to Babylon without seeing it. Five years after Ezekiel uttered the message it came to pass (Jer. 52:7-11).

The message of chapter 18 is “The soul who sins is the one who will die.” No individual’s eternal fate is determined by his parents’ behavior. We are each responsible for our own destiny.

In chapter 24 the death of Ezekiel’s wife is announced. His wife is described as “the delight of your eyes” and he was instructed that she would die suddenly but he is not to mourn or weep (vv. 15-18).

The death of Ezekiel’s wife took place on the very day the siege of Jerusalem began (24:1-2 and 2 Kings 25:1). What was this date? _ _ _ _ _

One of the saddest verses in Ezekiel is 24:18, write it: _ _ _ _ _

It served as a heart-rending sign to the exiles that their beloved city Jerusalem was now going to be taken from them. Silence is imposed upon Ezekiel til news came that the fall of the city was complete (v. 27).

Some Lessons from Ezekiel

1. God wants sinners to be warned of the consequence of their wicked ways.
2. Each individual must bear the responsibility of his own sin. The human will is more powerful in determining destiny than either heredity or environment.
3. The terrific responsibility that rests upon one of God’s messengers should cause him to be faithful.

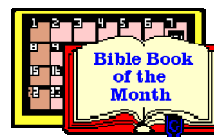
CLOSE: Chapters 1-24 were written before the fall of Jerusalem reminding the captivities that God’s judgment on the city and the Temple was surely coming.

Our next lesson on Ezekiel will deal with:

- Part III. The prophecies to the surrounding nations, and
Part IV. which contains prophecies of their restoration to their land and more promises of the Messiah.

Printed September 25, 2002

EZEKIEL – Part 1



Text: Ezekiel 1 - 24

Introduction

Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah the second time (597 BC) to put down a rebellion by King Jehoiakim. But Jehoiakim had died (or was killed) and his son Jehoiachin who had ruled only eight months was taken captive to Babylon.

Ezekiel, then twenty-five and in training to be a priest (1:3) was taken into exile along with 10,000 of the most prominent leaders, soldiers, and craftsmen of Judah (2 Kings 24:14). Ezekiel settled in his own house in a village near Nippur along the river Chebar in Babylonia (3:15, 24). He prophesied for at least 22 years.

He was a contemporary of Daniel, both of them living in Babylonia, but we don’t know whether they ever met or not. Daniel had been taken captive in the first invasion 8 years earlier and was trained to be a civil servant in the Babylonian government.

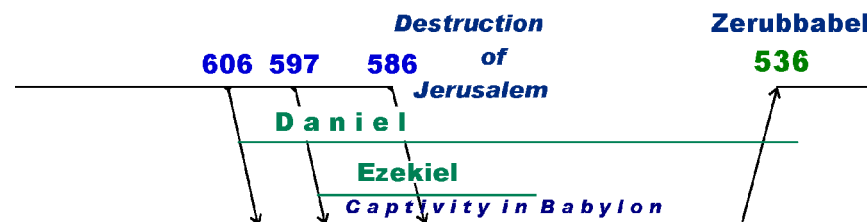
Jeremiah was also contemporary with Ezekiel and preaching during this time in Jerusalem trying to save the city and the nation. He may have been a powerful influence on the young Ezekiel growing up in Judah and even while in exile.

Zedekiah was then installed by Nebuchadnezzar as king. Eleven years later Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar hoping for help for Egypt.

The Babylonian Captivity

630 620 610 600 590 580 570 560 550 540 530

Jeremiah



That prompted the third invasion which brought the complete destruction of the city and the temple in 586 BC (2 Kings 25).

God called Ezekiel to explain His actions in allowing the Israelites to be taken into captivity. The phrase, “They shall know that I am the Lord,” is used nearly 70 times in this book. The Israelites had been sinful and stiff-necked. When other nations did what Israel had done, God destroyed them. However, God did not intend to allow Israel to be completely destroyed, for there was a remnant that drew back to the Lord and through whom the promised messiah would come.

From their experiences in captivity the Jews would remember the lesson God taught them and they would never be guilty of idolatry again.

Brief Outline of the Book

- I. Call and vision of Ezekiel, ch. 1-3
- II. Prophecies concerning the sins of Judah, ch. 4-24
- III. Prophecies concerning foreign nations, ch. 25-32
- IV. Certainty of the return, ch. 33-48

I. CALL AND VISION (Ch. 1-3)

Ezekiel is a book of visions, beginning in the very first chapter. Many of the visions provide background for some of John’s visions in the book of Revelation.

The 30th year in 1:1 is understood as Ezekiel’s own age. How long does this mean that Ezekiel had been in captivity before God called him? _____

What would be especially significant about this age to Ezekiel (Numbers 4:3)? _____

What did Ezekiel see in his vision? (1:5) _____

Beginning in 2:1, Ezekiel is addressed as the “son of man” throughout the book. The phrase simply means “human being” or “mortal man.” This is also the term that Jesus used most often to refer to Himself.

What did God commission Ezekiel to do? (2:2-7) _____

What does the passage (2:9 - 3:3) remind you of? _____

The real responsibility of being a watchman is found in Ezekiel 3:18-19, can you explain its meaning? _____

II. CONCERNING THE SINS OF JUDAH (Ch. 4 - 24)

In chapters 4 and 5, Ezekiel enacted the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. The “props” of his drama were a large soft clay brick on which he drew and made a model of Jerusalem. It was complete with siege towers and ramps and the enemy encampment around it.

The people watched as he measured out a meager measure of grain and water to bake his bread over a fire of cow’s dung.

He then shaved his head and beard to show Jerusalem’s disgrace (5:1). All this represented how Judah was wasted away in the siege until only a tiny handful, meaning the exiles, would remain (6:8). What is this tiny handful often called? _____

Part of Ezekiel’s message to the people had to do with visions he received. In ch. 8 he has a vision of wickedness in the Temple. Ezekiel is transported to Jerusalem and set down beside the temple (8:1-4). What did the Lord show Ezekiel concerning the practices of the temple? (8:9-13) _____

What does God say in 9:4-9 that He is going to do because of Judah’s iniquity? _____

Contrary to the popular belief of Ezekiel’s day (and our own) God both sees and sends His judgment. In chapter 10 Ezekiel describes in vision the burning of the city of Jerusalem (cf. 10:2). This chapter is awesome in its vision of some angels of God at their work. Its message is summed up in 10:18. _____

Even when uttering judgment upon the unfaithful leaders (false prophets) in Jerusalem (ch. 11), what message of hope does Ezekiel have for the faithful remnant (11:16-17)? _____

Again Ezekiel preaches by dramatic action in ch. 12 as he digs a hole through the wall of his house at night and carries an “exile’s baggage” through it in the night. This chapter contains amazing details of how King Zedekiah will fare in the siege. It speaks of his secret flight, capture and his