

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did God tell Ezekiel to speak to the people when He knew they would not listen?
2. What prerequisites are required to speak God's Word?
3. Was Ezekiel the only man made a watchman by the Lord?
4. Regarding God's Word, is there a time to be silent as well as a time to speak?

SUMMARY:

Ezekiel was a priest, who was taken captive during the first Chaldean invasion of Israel. This was during the reign of Jehoiachin who ruled three months before the first captivity. The second captivity took place 11 years later. Ezekiel received his call as a prophet during the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity and the destruction of Jerusalem. This helps us to understand some of Ezekiel's prophecies concerning the destruction and then the return of the Israelites.

The specific lesson for us is that we too, like Ezekiel, are required to preach the Word of God, whether it is received or not. We must not depend on our own strength but on the strength that comes from God.

NOTES:

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Bible Lesson #5

April 30, 2006

Second Quarter

EZEKIEL, PROPHET OF THE EXILE

LESSON TEXT: *Ezekiel 3:1-27*

LESSON SETTING: Beside the river Chebar in Chaldean captivity.

TIME: Approximately 595 B.C.

I. GOD SPEAKS TO EZEKIEL *Ezekiel 3:1-15*

- A. Go Speak (vs. 1) Matthew 10:27; Mark 16:15
- B. Speak the Word (vs. 4) Acts 5:20; Titus 2:15
- C. Lack of Reception (vs. 7) 2 Chronicles 36:15-16; 2 Timothy 4:4
- D. Strength Promised (vs. 8) Isaiah 40:31; Ephesians 3:16

II. GOD COMMANDS EZEKIEL *Ezekiel 3:16-21*

- A. Made a Watchman (vs. 17) Hebrews 13:17
- B. Warn the Wicked (vs. 18) Isaiah 58:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:14
- C. Extent of Responsibility (vs. 18-20) 2 Corinthians 2:16; James 3:1

III. GOD PREPARES EZEKIEL *Ezekiel 3:22-27*

- A. God Directs (vs. 22) Isaiah 30:21; John 16:13
- B. Filled with the Spirit (vs. 24) Ezekiel 37:27; John 14:17
- C. Time for Silence (vs. 26) Ecclesiastes 3:7; Amos 5:13
- D. Time to Speak (vs. 27) Acts 18:19; Ephesians 6:19

GOLDEN TEXT: *I HAVE MADE THEE A WATCHMAN UNTO THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL: THEREFORE HEAR THE WORD AT MY MOUTH AND GIVE THEM WARNING FROM ME.* *Ezekiel 3:17*

NEXT SUNDAY'S LESSON: Ezekiel 37:1-28

SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES: Zephaniah 3:14-20;
Ephesians 2:1-10

QUARTERLY THEME: God's People in Captivity

TOPIC: RESURRECTION OF ISRAEL

INTRODUCTION: The prophecy concerning the dry bones in the valley was an indication to the Israelite captives that a hope for them still existed. They were scattered in all of the Chaldean provinces. They seemed to be a dead nation with no chance for restoration. Now comes this ray of hope that all of these people shall be brought together, restored to their land and spiritual life (worship of God) reinstated.

They would no longer be two nations, (Israel and Judah) but would be one nation. They would not again have a political king such as those who led them into sin but would someday have David rule over them. This is an allusion to the Lord Jesus who will be their King in the day when the time of the Gentiles is ended.

We can also take a spiritual lesson for our day. Though men and women are dead in sin and are as the dry bones, yet through the power of God, they can be filled with a new heart of flesh, not a hard heart, but a new way life devoted to Him in all things and to worship Him.

God shows us that he cannot always overlook sin. He proved this with His judgment of Israel, a flourishing nation brought down to dust and dry bones. Paul says, "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17:30)

With repentance, a sorrow for sin and a desire to make amends, comes the hope and promise of restoration and peace with God.

CENTRAL TRUTH: Though sin brings death, the gospel of Jesus Christ brings life.

GOLDEN TEXT: *BEHOLD, I WILL CAUSE BREATH TO ENTER INTO YOU, AND YE SHALL LIVE.*
Ezekiel 37:5

Israel had no hope! Imagine the despair that must have filled the hearts of the people! Even in the midst of this despair were some who still had their hearts set on God. We think of Daniel and his companions, and of Jeremiah and now of Ezekiel. These men rejoiced in the Lord and in His promises.

Now all Israel received the promise of restoration. This became a uniting force among them and became a ray of hope for the end of their captivity which was still about 56 years away. This indicates too, that God's timetable is so different from ours. When we know of God's promises, we desire to see them accomplished immediately, but God has a purpose in His planning. Specifically, referring to the captivity, He said it would last for 70 years.

Concerning the spiritual life God promises mankind today, we have this assurance that we shall walk in newness of life and that we shall live with Him. The words given through Ezekiel assure us that God will give new life or breath to us. He also said, "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and will give them an heart of flesh." (Ezekiel 11:19)

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF May 1 - 7

M. Sin Brings Death. Genesis 3:15-24
T. *Valley of Death and Life. Ezekiel 37:1-28
W. Victory Over Death. John 11:33-44
T. Spiritual Life for All. Ephesians 2:1-10
F. The Certainty of Death. Hebrews 9:22-28
S. The First Resurrection. Revelation 20:1-6
S. The Second Death. Revelation 20:7-15