

Hebrews 11

EZEKIEL

Hebrews 11:32

Introduction

Date:	a. 593 - 571B.C.
Propesied:	b. To Exiles before and after captivity. At the Babylonian river Chebar.
Setting:	c. During the second Babylonian deportation.
Key Themes:	d. Coming Judgement and Restoration.
Name:	e. Ezekiel – “God will strengthen/harden.”
Contemporaries	f. Daniel, and Jeremiah

As the Babylonians invaded Jerusalem they took the people captive in three deportations. On the last deportation the city and temple was destroyed and Jerusalem officially overthrown. It was during the 2nd deportation that Ezekiel was taken captive to Babylon and there by the Babylonian river Chebar, Ezekiel the Priest now became a Prophet. He there saw the *visions of God* and there the hand of the LORD was upon him. His message to the people was given in two main parts. Chapter’s 2-33 concern the Fate of Judah (coming destruction)

and chapter’s 34-48 concern the Future of Judah (restoration of the house of Israel and Judah).

Lesson Outline

A. Resilient Faith

B. Radical Faith

Memory verse: So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. Ezekiel 33:7

A. Resilient Faith

a. The Call – Ch. 1-2

i. 1:1-3 – The **Place**

1. God called him in whilst he was “amongst the captives” – God is still calling even in the darkest of days and most unlikely of places.

ii. 1:26-28 – The **Posture**

1. Ezekiel encounters the glory of the LORD in the face of the Son of God – His response: V28 – “I fell of my face...” and “I heard the voice of one that spake.”
2. He said: “Son of man, stand upon thy feet...” Humble yourselves in the sight of the LORD and He shall lift you up!

iii. 2:1-3 – The **Pronouncement**

1. 2:3a “Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel...”
2. Here the pre-incarnate Son of God, tells the son of man – I send thee
 - a. *“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, **even so send I you.**” John 20:21*
 - i. The Great Commission – Matthew 28:17-20. This giving of this commission was preceded by worship “they worshipped him...” v17

b. The **Crowd** - Ch. 2:3- 3:7

i. Their **House** – 2:3, 5, 8; 3:5

1. They were a **rebellious** nation a rebellious house!
 - a. This was not just a single person or family.
 - b. V8 – Ezekiel warned not to become like the people he will be ministering to. He was to “OPEN HIS MOUTH...”
2. They were his own house... 3:5

ii. Their **Hearts** – 2:4, 6; 3:6, 7.

1. V4 - “**impudent children.**” –Hard of face, brazen faced. They refuse to be ashamed. They sin and wipe their mouths like the harlot.
 - a. *“Such is the way of an adulterous woman; **she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.**” Proverbs 30:20*
2. V4 – “**stiffhearted...**” 3:7 – “**hard-hearted.**” – Their hearts are as hard as a rock. Hard to leave an impression upon them.
 3. V6 – “be not afraid of **their words.**” – Don’t fear their reproaches, mocking, jesting, and threatening.

4. V6 – “nor be dismayed at **their looks...**” – their angry faces, frowns, and fury.
 - a. “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”
Matthew 10:28

iii. Their **Hearing** – 3:6-7; 2:5

1. 3:6-7 – “The house of Israel **WILL NOT** hearken unto thee; for they **WILL NOT** hearken unto me...”
2. 2:5 – “...whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear...**yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.**”
 - a. He that hath an ear LET HIM HEAR!
 - b. There are: “none so deaf as those that will not hear.” M.H.

c. The **Course** – Ch. 2:7-3:3; 3:8- 11; 17-21

i. The Lord sets down THE PLAN of ACTION for Ezekiel.

1. 2:8- 3:3 – “**Eat the scroll...**” Don’t be rebellious. He ate a scroll that was full of lamentations and mourning and woe – but it was sweet as honey to Ezekiel’s mouth. He was to “eat” so that the message would be internalized and flow from within. It was sweet because speaking for God not matter the message is always sweet to the messenger.
2. 3:4 – “**Speak** with my words unto them...”
3. 3:8-11 – **I’ll give you a strong face** and a **hard forehead**. As (v9) an adamant – a sharp diamond stone that could cut the flint (hardest rock in Israel).
 - a. Note: The LORD was not going to give him a hard heart like theirs because he still wanted to be able to speak to Ezekiel and for Ezekiel to hear His words 3:10.
4. 3:17-21 – “I have made thee a **Watchman...**” v17 – “give them a warning from me...” x7 the word “warn, warning, or warned” appears. Ezekiel was responsible to WARN THE PEOPLE or their blood will be upon his hand.
 - a. “...*Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, **warning every man**, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:*” Colossians 1:27-28

B. Radical Faith

a. The Drastic Signs

- i. 3:23-27 – Ezekiel was told to **stay in his house**, tied up, and silent
- ii. 4:1-3 – Ezekiel was to take a **clay tablet** and engrave a portrait of a siege against Jerusalem. Then (v3) he was to take an iron pan/plate and put it between him and the city (portrait). The iron pan was to represent the barrier that was between God and Israel because of their sins.
- iii. 4:4-8 – Ezekiel was to **lie on his left side** for 390 days for Israel **and his right side** for 40 days for Judah. Each day represented a year and by lying on his side he was picturing that he was bearing the sins of the people. It also indicates that he was tied up during this time and unable to switch sides until the days were accomplished.
 1. It is likely that he laid on his side for only part of the day that he was to declare this message to the people. It was a public example to the people. 4:9 – indicates that he moved around also.
- iv. 4:9-17 – Ezekiel was to **make a small portion of bread** 250 grams and was to eat that from time to time. He was also to **drink water by measure** less than a litre from time to time. He was to **use human faeces to fuel the fire** when cooking the bread, yet this is later substituted for **cow dung**.
 1. This was all done to depict the scarcity of bread and water during the time of the siege. It also was to show them that they will be eating defiled bread when they are taken by the Gentile nations.
- v. 5:1-4 – Ezekiel was to **shave his head and beard** and burn a portion of the hair, smite a portion with a knife, and tuck a portion in his skirt.
 1. Shaving one's head and beard was a sign of humiliation and mourning.
- vi. 12:1-14 – Ezekiel was to **pack his bags and dig** through the wall of Jerusalem.
 1. This was a sign that Judah will be moving into captivity.
 2. The digging through the wall was a prediction that Zedekiah would flee from the city at the evening when he could not see the ground.
- vii. 12:17-20 – Ezekiel had to **eat his bread with quaking and drink water with trembling**. This would be a sign to Judah that they

would eat their bread in astonishment and anxiousness when they see the enemy approaching.

- viii. 21:8-17 – Ezekiel was to have a **sharp sword** which represented God's sword, the nation of Babylon which God will use as a weapon to judge Judah.
- ix. 24:1-14 – Ezekiel had **to cook a pot of stew**. The pot was Jerusalem and the pieces of meat were the people. The pot filled with scum and rust depicting the filthiness and corruption of the city.
 - 1. After all the pieces were burnt up, the pot was emptied and heated to remove all the scum. This depicted that the LORD would purge His people from their idolatry.
- x. 24:15-24 – Ezekiel **could not mourn the death of his wife**.
 - 1. This was a picture that the “desire of their eyes” the temple will be destroyed and they will not be able to mourn it because of the state of shock that will come upon them at the siege. The damage so great that there will be no place for mourning.

Our lives must match the message. There needs to be a **DRAMATIC ASPECT** to our ministry. We cannot just be content with saying the words but not living the words. When you start acting out what you're preaching and your life becomes an object lesson – then you will be charged with being **RADICAL**.

There is to be no indifference, no apathy and no half-heartedness in our ministry for the LORD.

Conclusion

- a. Our faith must have a measure of *resilience* and it must have a *radical* expression if we would ever be people of faith in a world of hardhearted, stiff hearted, rebellious, deaf people!

"A minister, without boldness, is like a smooth file, a knife without an edge, a sentinel that is afraid to let off his gun. If men will be bold in sin, ministers must be bold to reprove." William Gurnall

"Can we be casual in the work of God -- casual when the house is on fire, and people in danger of being burned?" Duncan Campbell

DOMINATION BY NEO-BABYLONIAN EMPIRE

PERSIAN

PROPHET
IN
JERUSALEM

J E R E M I A H

KINGDOM OF JUDAH

JOSIAH

JEHOIAKIM

JEHOIACHIN

ZEDEKIAH

FIRST
INVASION

SECOND
INVASION

THIRD
INVASION
FALL OF
JERUSALEM

RESTORATION

ZERUBBABEL

TEMPLE
STARTED

Jews in Exile (70 YEARS)

B.C. 627...

609 ...

...605 ...

...597 ...

...593

587 ...

586 ...

574 ...

...559

550 ...

538 ...

...536 ...

PROPHETS
IN
BABYLON

DANIEL TAKEN CAPTIVE

... EZEKIEL TAKEN CAPTIVE ...

Ezekiel

D A N I E L