



EZEKIEL

YOU SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD



WEST MAIN
CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Introduction

Introduction

We are about to begin a great study through the book of Ezekiel. This book is not often studied as much as it should be. I've studied the book of Isaiah a few times, the Minor Prophets on multiple occasions, but I have not taken the time to study the book of Ezekiel. What about YOU?

Now is our time. I've read through Ezekiel a few times this year and I have also listened to it. In this class, I'm going to read it again. We have a lot of ground to cover.

Before we dive into any book in the Bible there are a couple of things to remember.

1. All scripture is inspired, 2 Timothy 3:16-17.
2. We are not under the Old Testament Law, but it is important that we read what's in it. Why?
3. Books in the Bible were not written in a vacuum. Therefore, it's important that we understand the historical context with what was taking place when these books were written.

Let's look at some details surrounding Ezekiel.

- This book has 48 chapters. We will not be going verse by verse through this book.
- Ezekiel was 30 years old when he saw a vision from God, Ezekiel 1:1.
 - He was born in 622 B.C. when Josiah was on the throne. He would have heard Jeremiah prophesy (he began around 627/626).
- Ezekiel was a priest, Ezekiel 1:3. Becoming a priest would have been a big deal for him. He was preparing himself for his important role, Ezekiel 4:14. But God had something different in mind.
- Ezekiel was one of the captives of Judah taken to Babylon in 597 B.C., Ezekiel 1:2-3; 2 Kings 24:14.
 - The nation of Babylon defeated the remnant of the Assyrians in 609 B.C.
 - The first captives of Judah taken away began in 605 B.C.
 - The temple would be destroyed in 586 B.C.

Introduction

- Ezekiel was a part of the group that's mentioned in Jeremiah 24:1–10. This chapter will give us some insight with what Ezekiel would be called to do.
 - He was to help the people of God to have faith. He was speaking to people who felt like God had deserted them, who were suffering, who had seen loved ones die, and were losing hope.
 - He warned them against false hope of an early return back home. They would be in captivity for 70 years, Ezekiel 3:15–19.
 - Ezekiel loved God's people and yet was compelled to obey God.
- Ezekiel was a married man, Ezekiel 24:15–18.
- Some describe this book as a book of DOOM. The Jews had a hard time believing that Jerusalem would really go under. WHY?
- Despite men like Jeremiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel, judgment was coming. It was so bad that it didn't matter if Daniel, Job, and Noah were in the land, it would still be destroyed, Ezekiel 14:13–21.

Introduction, Message, Method

Outline of the Book

The book can be divided up into three sections:

- Chapters 1–24 tell us that Jerusalem will fall.
- Chapters 25–32 tell us that foreign nations will fall.
- Chapters 33–48 shows the hope of restoration.

Themes

- The Holiness of God. God's holiness will not permit him to dwell in a temple that has become the center of iniquity, Ezekiel 8:6.
- The Sovereignty of God, Ezekiel 20:33.
- God's loyalty to the covenant: Israel believed they were safe because of God's covenant loyalty. Ironically, judgment was the only way for God to be true to His covenant. It was part of the terms made with the people (Deuteronomy 27–28). God proved that He can destroy Jerusalem, purge its inhabitants, and remain true to His covenant. In fact, these actions would bring Him glory.

- The importance of righteous living. The reason for the message of doom was due to the unrighteousness of the people.

Additional Details

- Ezekiel may have been the first of the prophets who began writing his prophecies immediately. This seems like a small matter, but it was actually unique. For example, Jeremiah had been prophesying for 30 years before he is told to write down his prophecies, Jeremiah 36:2.
- Ezekiel's message is highly personal. His own body, house, and family are part of his prophetic actions. Although there are some similar demands made of OT prophets (e.g., Hosea), no prophet parallels Ezekiel in this way.

Introduction, Message, Method

The Message and Method

This is a strange book. Many believe it's the most peculiar in the Bible. This is why it is often avoided. There are some obstacles for us to be aware of as we study:

- His prophecies and signs interact with both Jewish and pagan world history.
 - His prophecies include both actions and words.
 - Ezekiel becomes the main actor in the divine drama of Jerusalem's tragedy.
 - He will speak to the exiles in Babylon, but the message will center on those still in Jerusalem.
 - While we are able to understand much of what is written, there will be parts that will be challenging. It can be easy if not careful to lose sight of the big picture.
 - Parts of the book will be repetitive in nature.
- His writing differs substantially from other prophets. He uses long narrative sections. Six of the minor prophets are shorter than Ezekiel 16.
 - This book is filled with visions (4), parables (5), and sign-acts (12). It makes for a very fun read! Yet understanding all of this may prove challenging.
 - His message is graphic!
 - His sign acts are graphically oriented (chapters 4–5). God tells him to use props and eccentric behaviors. Sometimes he will act out scenes that have a message attached (chapter 12). Detailed visions are relayed to the exiles (chapters 8–11,37).
 - His message is sexual (16,23). There are images of blood and feces (4,16), extreme violence, and disturbing behavior (5:10).

Final Thoughts and Actions: Before the next class, read 2 Kings 21–25; 2 Chronicles 33–36; Ezekiel 1–5.

Introduction, Message, Method

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Introduction, Message, Method

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Ezekiel 1–5

Introduction

Before we dive into chapters 1–5, let's do a bit of review.

What did you learn from your reading of 2 Kings 21–25 and 2 Chronicles 33–36? Write your thoughts below.

Ezekiel 1–5 Introduction

1. Chapter 1: A Fantastic Vision, Ezekiel 1:4–28.
2. Chapter 2: The sending of Ezekiel.
3. Chapter 3: Ezekiel speaks to the exiles.
4. Chapters 4–5: A portrayal of Jerusalem's fall.

Classroom Discussion

Questions: As you read, think about these questions to guide your thoughts. Write out your answers and be prepared to discuss.

1. Where is Ezekiel?
2. What is taking place?
3. What phrases are used repeatedly?
4. Who is Ezekiel talking to?

Ezekiel 1-5

5. What time references are given?
6. What's the message of Ezekiel to the people?
7. What sin is Ezekiel addressing?
8. What do we learn about God?
9. What's the response of the people?
10. What application can we make?
11. What questions do you have?

Final Thoughts

Ezekiel 1-5

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Ezekiel 1-5

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Ezekiel 6–10

Introduction

Review: What have you learned so far from chapters 1–5?

Ezekiel 6–10

1. Chapter 6: Judgment upon Israel.
2. Chapter 7: The end is near for Israel.
3. Chapter 8–10: Vision of Ezekiel of God's departure from the Temple.

Classroom Discussion

Questions: As you read, think about these questions to guide your thoughts. Write out your answers and be prepared to discuss.

1. Where is Ezekiel?
2. What is taking place?
3. What phrases are used repeatedly?
4. Who is Ezekiel talking to?
5. What time references are given?

Ezekiel 6–10

6. What's the message of Ezekiel to the people?

7. What sin is Ezekiel addressing?

8. What do we learn about God?

9. What's the response of the people?

10. What application can we make?

11. What questions do you have?

Final Thoughts

Ezekiel 6-10

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Ezekiel 6-10

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Ezekiel 11–15

Introduction

What's happened so far in the first 10 chapters? What theme or themes are you seeing in the book up to this point?

Ezekiel 11–15

1. Chapter 11: Judgment upon rulers.
2. Chapter 12–14: Ezekiel's sign of exile versus false prophet's words of peace.
3. Chapter 15: Judgement upon faithless people.

Classroom Discussion

Questions: As you read, think about these questions to guide your thoughts. Write out your answers and be prepared to discuss.

1. What is Ezekiel?
2. What is taking place?
3. What phrases are used repeatedly?
4. Who is Ezekiel talking to?
5. What time references are given?

Ezekiel 11–15

6. What's the message of Ezekiel to the people?

7. What sin is Ezekiel addressing?

8. What do we learn about God?

9. What's the response of the people?

10. What application can we make?

11. What questions do you have?

Final Thoughts

Ezekiel 11-15

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Ezekiel 11-15

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Ezekiel 16–22

Introduction

Ezekiel 16 is a long chapter. Don't skip it. Read all of it. Ezekiel in a vivid way speaks of the harlotry of Israel.

Spend some time looking at the riddle that is found at the beginning of Ezekiel 17. What is this riddle about? What is the riddle highlighting? Understanding this will help us as we look at the next few chapters.

Ezekiel 16–22

1. Chapter 16: The harlotry of Israel.
2. Chapter 17–18: National sin and the justice of God.
3. Chapter 19: A lament for the princes of Israel.
4. Chapter 20: Israel's rebellion and God's mercy.
5. Chapter 21–22: God's sword drawn for judgment.

Classroom Discussion

Questions: As you read, think about these questions to guide your thoughts. Write out your answers and be prepared to discuss.

1. Where is Ezekiel?
2. What is taking place?
3. What phrases are used repeatedly?

Ezekiel 16-22

4. Who is Ezekiel talking to?
5. What time references are given?
6. What's the message of Ezekiel to the people?
7. What sin is Ezekiel addressing?
8. What do we learn about God?
9. What's the response of the people?
10. What application can we make?
11. What questions do you have?

Final Thoughts

Ezekiel 16-22

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Ezekiel 16-22

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Ezekiel 23–24

Introduction

By now you are aware of what's going to happen to Jerusalem: Judgment. Ezekiel 23 may be one of the most uncomfortable sections for modern readers. The entire illustration is based in sexually explicit language. It is often shocking for Christians when they read this for the first time. I think that was the point of how it was written. This would have been shocking for the Israelites as they read this.

In Ezekiel 24, we will see that the time of judgment has finally arrived. Judgment begins.

Ezekiel 23–24

1. Chapter 23: Oholah and Oholibah the whoring sisters.
2. Chapter 24: The fall of Jerusalem.

Classroom Discussion

Questions: As you read, think about these questions to guide your thoughts. Write out your answers and be prepared to discuss.

1. Where is Ezekiel?
2. What is taking place?
3. What phrases are used repeatedly?

Ezekiel 23–24

4. Who is Ezekiel talking to?
5. What time references are given?
6. What's the message of Ezekiel to the people?
7. What sin is Ezekiel addressing?
8. What do we learn about God?
9. What's the response of the people?
10. What application can we make?
11. What questions do you have?

Final Thoughts

Ezekiel 23-24

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Ezekiel 23-24

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Ezekiel 25–32

Introduction

We've seen that judgment has come against Jerusalem. Now, we see a shift in the prophecy of Ezekiel. He now begins to prophecy against other nations.

One of the major points of this book is "They shall know that I am the LORD." The Israelites would learn this point. Now the rest of the nations would too.

Ezekiel 25–32: The downfall of other nations.

Classroom Discussion

Questions: As you read, think about these questions to guide your thoughts? Write out your answers and be prepared to discuss.

1. Where is Ezekiel?
2. What is taking place?
3. What phrases are used repeatedly?
4. Who is Ezekiel talking to?

Ezekiel 25–32

5. What time references are given?
6. What's the message of Ezekiel to the people?
7. What sin is Ezekiel addressing?
8. What do we learn about God?
9. What's the response of the people?
10. What application can we make?
11. What questions do you have?

Final Thoughts

Ezekiel 25-32

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Ezekiel 25-32

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Ezekiel 33–37

Introduction

Ezekiel has fulfilled his task to predict the destruction of Jerusalem. A fugitive will arrive in this chapter verifying the prophecies that Ezekiel uttered in the first 24 chapters (Ezekiel 33:21–22).

In Ezekiel 33, the prophet will restate some of the major themes within the first section of the book, but the aim now is focused on how the exiles will respond to the present circumstances.

Ezekiel 33–37

1. Chapter 33: Rehearsal of past events
2. Chapter 34: Restoration of leadership
3. Chapter 35–36: Restoration of the land
4. Chapter 37: Restoration of the people

Classroom Discussion

Questions: As you read, think about these questions to guide your thoughts? Write out your answers and be prepared to discuss.

1. Where is Ezekiel?
2. What is taking place?
3. What phrases are used repeatedly?
4. Who is Ezekiel talking to?

Ezekiel 33–37

5. What time references are given?
6. What's the message of Ezekiel to the people?
7. What sin is Ezekiel addressing?
8. What do we learn about God?
9. What's the response of the people?
10. What application can we make?
11. What questions do you have?

Final Thoughts

Ezekiel 33-37

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Ezekiel 33-37

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Ezekiel 38–43

Introduction

Ezekiel 38–39 usually have a lot of questions surrounding them. We may not have all of the answers to the questions that can be raised from these chapters. But we can understand a very important point: God will be with His people when they are attacked.

Ezekiel 40–43 looks at the restoration of God's Temple. Like the previous chapters, there are a lot of questions about these chapters. What is the significance of what we find in these chapters? Are we to view what Ezekiel says here as something literal or figurative in nature?

Ezekiel 38–43

1. Chapter 38–39: Seal of protection over God's people.
2. Chapter 40–43: Restoration of God's temple.

Classroom Discussion

Questions: As you read, think about these questions to guide your thoughts? Write out your answers and be prepared to discuss.

1. Where is Ezekiel?
2. What is taking place?
3. What phrases are used repeatedly?

Ezekiel 38–43

4. Who is Ezekiel talking to?
5. What time references are given?
6. What's the message of Ezekiel to the people?
7. What sin is Ezekiel addressing?
8. What do we learn about God?
9. What's the response of the people?
10. What application can we make?
11. What questions do you have?

Final Thoughts

Ezekiel 38-43

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Ezekiel 38-43

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Ezekiel 44–48

Introduction

We have come to the conclusion of our study. Before we wrap everything up by looking at chapters 44–48, take some time to consider what we've learned. What has stood out to you from the book of Ezekiel?

As we discuss chapters 44–48, consider everything that Israel has experienced. Consider the judgment that God has brought upon them. What overarching message is God trying to communicate to His people in these chapters? Is it positive or negative in nature?

Ezekiel 44–48

1. Chapter 44–46: Restoration of Law.
2. Chapter 47–48: Restoration of land

Classroom Discussion

Questions: As you read, think about these questions to guide your thoughts? Write out your answers and be prepared to discuss.

1. Where is Ezekiel?
2. What is taking place?
3. What phrases are used repeatedly?

Ezekiel 44–48

4. Who is Ezekiel talking to?
5. What time references are given?
6. What's the message of Ezekiel to the people?
7. What sin is Ezekiel addressing?
8. What do we learn about God?
9. What's the response of the people?
10. What application can we make?
11. What questions do you have?

Final Thoughts

Ezekiel 44-48

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