

Ezekiel

by Jacob Prasch

Ezekiel's sermon emphasizes the importance of faithfulness and speaking God's words to others, even in the face of rebellion and rejection.

Duration: 30:52

Scripture: Ezekiel 2:8 - 3:7, Revelation 10:10-11

Topics: "Ezekiel"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the passage from the book of Ezekiel where the prophet is instructed to eat a scroll and speak to the house of Israel. The preacher emphasizes the importance of obedience and warns of the consequences of not delivering God's message. He explains that the imagery and symbolism in the book of Revelation, particularly in chapter 10, is influenced by the book of Ezekiel. The preacher concludes by highlighting the bittersweet nature of the Word of God, which brings both joy and conviction.

Transcript

Hello dear friends, this is Jacob Prowse speaking to you on Radio Kingfisher Today. Reading from the book of Ezekiel, chapters 2 and 3. In Hebrew we call him Hezekiel Hanavi. Ezekiel the prophet, Hezekiel means my strength or the strength in God.

Commencing in the first verse of chapter 2, he said, Then he said to me, Son of man, stand on your feet that I may speak with you. Every Hebrew prophet is a type of the Messiah Jesus. Every single one is a foreshadowing of him.

Ezekiel is no exception. Ezekiel is called the son of man, just as Jesus is. And he teaches something about the return of Christ.

Whenever the scriptures speak of Jesus and his return, when it speaks of him eschatologically, of coming again, it's always as the son of man, never as the son of God. It's the eschatological description or title of Jesus. Then he said to me, Son of man, stand on your feet that I may speak with you.

And he spoke to me, and as he spoke, the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. Now, typologically, looked at from the point of view of Jewish midrash, there is much, much in this. It is a sort of death-resurrection experience when he falls down, and he gets up when the

Spirit enters him.

That's what happens to us, of course. We die with Christ. When the Spirit enters us, we become new creations.

We are born again, but I only mention this aspect in passing. He spoke to me, the Spirit entered me, and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking. Now, pay attention.

Then he said to me, Son of man, I am sending you to the sons of Israel, I'bene Israel, to a rebellious people who have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me to this very day. I am sending you to them who are stubborn and obstinate children, and you shall say to them, Thus says the Lord God.

As for them, whether they listen or not, for they are a rebellious house, they will know that a prophet has been among them. And you, Son of man, neither fear them, nor fear their words, though thistles and thorns are with you, and you sit upon scorpions. Neither fear their words, nor be dismayed at their presence, for they are a rebellious house.

But you shall speak my words to them, whether they listen or not, for they are rebellious. Now you, Son of man, listen to what I am speaking to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house.

Open your mouth and eat what I'm giving you. Then I looked, and behold, a hand was extended to me, and a scroll was in it. And when he spread it out before me, it was written on the front and on the back, and written on it were Lamentations, Warnings, and Woe.

Continuing in chapter 3, verse 1, Then he said to me, Son of man, eat what you find, eat this scroll, and go speak to the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he fed me this scroll, and he said to me, Son of man, feed your stomach, and fill your body with this scroll, which I am giving you. Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth.

And he said to me, Son of man, go to the house of Israel, and speak with my words to them. For you are not being sent to a people of unintelligible speech or difficult language, but to the house of Israel. Nor to many peoples of unintelligible speech or difficult language, whose words you cannot understand.

But I sent you to them who should listen to you. Yet the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, since they are not willing to listen to me. Surely the whole house of Israel is stubborn and obstinate.

This echoes Jeremiah chapter 7, verse 27. Behold, I have made your face as hard as their faces, and your forehead as hard as their foreheads. Like the emery, harder than splint, I have made your foreheads.

Do not be afraid of them, or be dismayed before them, though they are a rebellious house. Moreover, he said to me, Son of man, take into your heart all my words, which I shall closely speak to you, and listen closely. And go to the exile for the sons of your people, and speak to them, and tell them whether they listen or not.

Thus says the Lord God. Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard a great rumbling sound after me. Blessed be the glory of the Lord in this place.

And I heard the sound of the wings of the living beings touching one another. Reverting back to chapter 1. And the sound of the wheels next to them, even a great rumbling sound. So the Spirit lifted me up and

took me away, and I went away embittered in the rage of my spirit.

And the hand of the Lord was upon me strongly. Then I came to the exiles who lived next to the river Shebor at Tel Aviv. Now, this is not Tel Aviv, Israel.

This is in Mesopotamia. And I sat there seven days, where they were living, causing consternation among them. Now, it came about at the end of seven days that the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman to the house of Israel.

Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, warn them from me. And when I say to the wicked, you shall surely die, and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquities. But his blood I will require at your hand.

Yet if you have warned the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked ways, he shall die in his iniquities. But you have delivered yourself. Again, when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I place an obstacle before him, he shall die, since you have not warned him.

He shall die in his sin, and his righteousness, which he has done, shall not be remembered. But his blood I will require at your hand. However, if you have warned the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live, because he took warning, and you have delivered yourself.

And the hand of the Lord was on me there, and he said to me, Get up, go out on the plain, and there I will speak to you. So I got up and went out to the plain, and behold, the glory of the Lord was standing there, like the glory which I saw by the river Shabar, and I fell on my face. The Spirit then entered me, and made me stand on my feet, and he spoke with me, and he said, Go shut yourself up in your house, as for you, son of man.

They will put ropes on you, and bind you with them, so that you cannot go out among them. Moreover, I will make your tongue fit to the roof of your mouth, so that you will be dumb, and cannot be a man who rebukes them, for they are a rebellious house. But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth, and you will say to them, Thus says the Lord God, He who hears, let him hear, and he who refuses, let him refuse, for they are a rebellious house.

We have to understand what's happening here. Ezekiel is the third of the major prophets. He's following Isaiah and Jeremiah.

Isaiah, Isaiahu Hanavi, was the first of the Hebrew prophets to predict the Babylonian captivity of the southern kingdom. By Jeremiah's day, the prophecies of Isaiah were beginning to be fulfilled in the days of Yirmiyahu, Jeremiah the prophet. The people did not listen to the warnings of Isaiah.

Then they rejected the warnings of Jeremiah, and persecuted him as well. But now by Ezekiel's day, the judgment had already fallen. Ezekiel was in the captivity, and not much was left of Jerusalem.

Even when the judgment came, even when they knew that Isaiah and Jeremiah, the prophets they rejected and persecuted, were right and were proving right, they still spit in their neck and would not listen to the word of the Lord. New Testament eschatology, the teaching of Jesus particularly on the last days, takes this sad era in Judah's history, and recapitulates it, recycles it for the church. The themes of Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Isaiah are replayed in the last days for both the Jews and the church.

The idea of the temple being destroyed in Jeremiah, that's how Jesus begins speaking of the last days in Matthew 24 in the Olivet Discourse. The repeated polemics against the false prophets by Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Jesus says the same thing about the false prophets. The fact that people were believing calamity would not come upon them, Jesus said it would in 70 A.D., and both the first temple of Solomon and the second temple of Jesus' day, the temple of Zerubbabel, later called Herod's temple, were destroyed the same exact day of the year, according to the Hebrew calendar, Tisha B'Av, roughly the 9th of August, in the same kind of strategic scenario.

So what happens in the last days of Judah happens in the last days of Jerusalem in Jesus' day, and both of these things foreshadow, pre-figure, something that's going to happen eschatologically in the last days for both the church as well as, in some way, for the Jews. But let's begin at the beginning. By Ezekiel's day, they already knew that all the false prophets were false, and they still wouldn't repent and listen.

Let's look now at our day. You know, I recall there were people who predicted things that failed to happen. In Great Britain, the late John Wimber bought the Kansas City Prophets, led by Paul Kane, Mike Bickle, and someone called Bob Jones, who was found in immorality, to England.

And they predicted the greatest revival virtually in Britain's history would come in October of 1990. In the ten years since, more mosques have been built in England than churches. Mormonism has become the fastest-growing, quote-unquote, Christian sect in the UK.

New Age antagonism, the fastest-growing religious movement. And, in fact, there were people who predicted, prophesied, that the Lasting Revival was a revival such as Rodney Howard Brown of South Africa. No revival has come to Britain, South Africa, Australia, or New Zealand.

None at all. Yet people see these things don't happen, and they still believe it. There was a man in America named Mick Joyner who wrote a book called The Harvest.

And Mick Joyner made major predictions that failed to happen. In fact, the opposite, the diametric opposite happened. People know he prophesied falsely.

Benny Hinn made outrageous prophetic predictions in the name of the Lord in New Zealand, as did Gerald Coates from the United Kingdom. These prophecies never came to pass. People know that the prophecies failed, even by biblical definition.

They're false prophets, according to Deuteronomy 18, but the people still wouldn't listen. You look now. People know no revival came from the laughing and the holy laughter, as they called it, or the getting drunk in the Spirit.

They know no revival came, but they'll still persist in the next lie. They'll still reject those who warn and tell the truth. The Isaiahs, the Jeremiahs, and the Ezekiels are always rejected.

The false prophets are always accepted. That's the way it was in their day, and that's the way it is in the last days. But in the final analysis, the bottom line, it's only the word of the Lord spoken through the true prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel that matters.

The false prophets burn in hell forever, lest they repent. But generally speaking, they never do. Let's continue.

Son of man, I'm sending you to the sons of Israel, to a rebellious people. They've rebelled against the Lord. Jeremiah was saying the same thing.

By following proven false prophets, they were in chronic rebellion. And God tells Ezekiel, tell them whether they listen or not. We are not called to be successful as man counts success.

We're called to be faithful. Was Noah a successful preacher? Eight people saved, and they were all related to him? As man counts success, Noah was not a successful preacher. He never had a big church, quote-unquote.

But as God counts success, he was, because he was faithful. God's word does not return void. It will either serve to someone's salvation or towards their indictment.

But it won't return void. Let's consider this. Tell them whether they listen or not.

Not only does God say, tell them whether they listen or not. Later on in this text, God tells Ezekiel ahead of time they won't listen. Why bother warning people who aren't going to listen? God gives three reasons.

The first reason they are told to warn is that when the judgments fall, God's justice will be vindicated. They will not be able to say they were not warned. This is what the book of Lamentations is largely about.

The second reason God says to tell them anyway is because there will always be a faithful remnant who will listen, who will repent, who will hear. For the sake of the remnant, God says to warn them. The third reason God says to warn them even though they won't listen they will know a prophet has spoken.

It will vindicate your own ministry, God tells Ezekiel. The Lord said much the same to Jeremiah. They're not going to listen to you, but tell them anyway.

You know, I would never claim to be a prophet and I have no desire to continue to warn the church about those teaching false doctrine and deception and making false prophetic predictions in the name of the Lord. I have no desire to do that. I certainly don't claim to be a prophet.

But God still says tell them anyway. Whether they listen or not, they're a rebellious house. You, son of man, neither fear them nor their words.

A lot of people know these people teaching false doctrine and heresy even blasphemy are deceivers. A lot of people know they're false prophets teaching error, that they're deceivers, that they're money-grubbing connivers, they're con artists, they're hype artists masquerading as ministers of the Lord. Many people know that.

Many pastors, vicars, and dorminees know it. But they won't do anything. You see, only a shepherd will protect the sheep.

A hireling will not, Jesus said. There are many dorminees, vicars, and pastors who know. So many of the most visible Christian leaders in the Protestant world today are those who Jesus warned would come on the last day to deceive the elect.

But they won't stand up and protect the sheep because they're hirelings. Their priorities are their position, their salary, their pension, their housing allowance everything except the sheep, the truth, and the Lord. Well, that's what Jesus said would happen in John 10 and that's much of what's happening here in Ezekiel

chapters 2 and 3. The Hebrew word for shepherd and pastor is the same word, ro'eh.

We say in Hebrew, Adonai ro'i, the Lord is my shepherd. People fear man. The political correctness of the secular world finds its way into the church.

Oh, they may be teaching error, but we shouldn't stand up and say so. We shouldn't name the names of people. We should just deal with the error without saying who they are.

So I assume then that Ezekiel was wrong for saying, watch out for Jehoshiah the high priest. Watch out for Teltiach Benazor. And therefore, because Ezekiel was wrong and the word of God is wrong for naming the names I shouldn't name Rodney Howard Brown or Kenneth Copeland men who teach things contrary to the word of God and I will debate them publicly in front of a camera any time they want.

But let's look. God says, don't fear them. When you see people fearing man that tells you right away they are not fearing God.

Now I understand what the Christians who are being persecuted by the Muslims in northern Nigeria have to be afraid of. I have no doubt that the Christians in southern Sudan being persecuted by the Muslims have something to be afraid of. I can understand if they were afraid.

But you know, very often those people are standing courageously loving not their lives in this world even unto death. But they have something to be afraid of. What do people in South Africa have to be afraid of? Or England or America? Their position? Their salary? Their status? Losing the praise of men? They're fearing man.

When you find such people fearing man that tells you that they are not fearing God. It's not men they will give account to on the day of the Lord. And these shepherds, vicars and dorminees who compromise and remain silent in the face of heresy and the wolves who are devouring the sheep.

When they give account for those sheep to the chief shepherd as Peter says I would not wish to be in their position. Neither fear them or their words. Though thistles and thorns are with you don't fear their words nor be dismayed at their presence for they are rebellious.

I have wondered how in this country in the Rustenburg Declaration a leading Pentecostal preacher Ray McCauley actually wrote and published I'm not attacking, I'm citing what he wrote that building the Tower of Babel is God's model for Christian unity for Africa. Building the Tower of Babel is God's model for unity said Ray McCauley. The Word of God said building the Tower of Babel was an abomination and a rebellion that brought the judgment and wrath of God sayeth the Lord.

No, it's His model for unity sayeth Ray McCauley. Who is right? God or Ray McCauley? You can't believe both. I would love to debate Ray McCauley on television.

I was dismayed. How could a preacher say such an outrageous thing? How could a man like Desmond Tutu want to ordain lesbian priestesses into the Anglican clergy? I was dismayed. But God told Ezekiel don't be dismayed at their presence for they are a rebellious house sayeth the Lord.

But you shall speak My words to them whether they listen or not for they are rebels. And the sin of rebellion in the Bible we are told in the Hebrew text is makshafut, witchcraft. Now you, son of man, listen to what I'm speaking to you do not be rebellious as they are in verse 8. If we do not listen to what God is

saying and we do not speak out we too shall be part of the rebellion.

It is not enough to keep your mouth closed open your mouth and eat what I'm giving you sayeth the Lord. Otherwise, you too will be a rebel and rebellion against them all time. Then a hand is extended to him and a scroll was in it.

The Hebrew word for scroll is megillah. The book. The word of the Lord.

Son of man, eat what you find eating the word of the Lord. As the Hebrew prophet who preceded Ezekiel said in chapter 15 of Jeremiah verse 16 thy words were found and I ate them. Thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart for I've been called by thy name, O Lord of hosts God of hosts.

I did not sit in the circle of the merrymakers nor did I exult because of thy hand upon me I sat alone. Your words were found and I ate them so I couldn't sit in the circle of the merrymakers. I ate your word.

I believed your word. Therefore, I couldn't go to Toronto or Pensacola or to a Rodney Howard Brown circle of the merrymakers. I ate the scroll said Ezekiel.

So I opened my mouth and he sent me this scroll Son of man, fill your stomach. Much of the imagery and symbolism in the book of Revelation what we call in Hebrew Chazon Yochanan in Greek Apocalypse much of it comes from the book of Ezekiel.

Turn with me please to the book of Revelation chapter 10 in verse 10 and I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it and it was sweet in my mouth just like Ezekiel but when I had eaten it it made my stomach bitter and just as with Ezekiel John is told you must prophesy again concerning many peoples, nations tongues and kings prophesy again the scroll is sweet in the mouth but bitter in the stomach that is the nature of the word of God oh, it is interesting it is edifying it is encouraging it is always sweet in the mouth but when we swallow it we become responsible to act upon it eating the word that's what the New Testament teaches it's what the Tanakh, the Old Testament teaches we eat the word it is our spiritual food the apostles wrote when you read the Bible when you go

to a Bible based church and hear a sermon or attend a Bible study I hope it's sweet in your mouth I hope you find it interesting and encouraging but the real proof of the pudding is always in the eating is it bitter in your gut? does it challenge you? does it make you uncomfortable? does it put you in a position where you have to act upon it? do things you don't want to do maybe go places you don't want to go say things you don't want to say if that scroll is bitter in your stomach it means you've eaten it you are not a rebel but if it's not bitter in your stomach you have not eaten it you are one that's not what I say that's what God says but let's look son of man, speak to these people I'm sending you to your own kind not the people whose language you don't know these are your fellow

Hebrews but they'll not listen to you because they won't listen to me it's no different today the whole house of Israel is stubborn and obstinate and so is most of the church but God called Ezekiel like Emery harder than flint I've made your forehead don't be afraid of them don't be dismayed before them although they're rebellious when you see these false teachers and money preachers these fake prosperity manipulators coming over from America don't be afraid of those people don't be dismayed before those people they're nobody to be afraid of they have a lie you have the truth moreover, son of man, in verse 10 you can take into your heart all my words and I shall speak to you listen closely go to the exiles, the sons of your people and tell them once more whether they listen or not it

doesn't matter if the people in your neighborhood your church, your family listen or don't listen God says tell them for the sake of the remnant the odd one here, the odd one there who will listen God says tell them but something else begins to happen you will cause them consternation although they won't listen you will cause them consternation you can make them very angry and that's part of God's plan we should be making the wicked who mislead God's people angry this goes on and God says if we don't warn them we're blood guilty you know, if we withhold the gospel we're blood guilty and if we don't warn the church to repent God will require their blood of our hands but the story continues in verse 26 God tells Ezekiel something that troubles him in the previous verse, verse 25 God says

they'll put ropes on you they'll bind you they'll try to shut you up and stop you from going out and speaking this way they'll try to put a lid on your ministry but then God says I'll make the tongue in your head stick to the roof of your mouth God won't even let us rebuke them when we get angry why? because the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God it must be a holy anger a holy anger that only comes from God not our personal indignation as sincere and well placed as it may be the time comes when God says I'm going to shut you up for a season but when He lets you out then He says get on your feet and speak they may not listen but you'll cause them consternation they will know a prophet has spoken sayeth the Lord and for the sake of the remnant tell them anyway swallow

the scroll eat the word of God swallow it, don't be a rebellion don't be in this rebellion, God tells Ezekiel and that's what He tells us eat it, swallow it it's sweet in the mouth but bitter in the stomach don't lick it don't sniff it don't taste it pick up your Bible read it, believe it eat it this is Jacob Prasche, God bless you

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