

Israel has only just got out of Egypt ■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ They are just over the Red Sea ■■■■■■■■■■ This is the song of Moses and all Israel As they have escaped from Egypt and Pharaoh ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ They have only just begun their journey ■■■■■■■■■■ But here it says Thou hast guided them in thy strength To thy holy habitation ■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ The place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in ■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ The sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established ■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ That takes us right on to the end of their history ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Hundreds of years would have to pass Before the temple was built ■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Before Jerusalem The holy mountain was secured ■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ They had got to go a long way For a long time Before they

came there ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ But here, right at the beginning It is spoken of As though it were already accomplished ■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Now I'm going to pause for a moment ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ I don't know whether you're going to be able to do two things ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ It is not very helpful to me To be speaking to the tops of everybody's heads ■ ■■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ I would certainly look into your faces as I'm speaking ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Whether you'll be able to do your writing And look at me at the same time, I don't know ■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Well, you see from this instance What I mean By God's end always being right there at the beginning ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Heavenly things always govern all the earthly things ■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Invisible things

govern all the visible things ■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Spiritual things govern all the temporal things ■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Universal things govern all the local things ■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ That is something you must always remember When you are reading the Bible ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Let's keep in mind as we approach this book of Ezekiel ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Human history is not just human history It is God's history ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ This book of Ezekiel seems to have a lot of earthly history in it ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ But the truth is that it is all governed by a divine end and purpose ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Now the big question which we meet right at the beginning of this book ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Is does this book have a message for the church in this dispensation ■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Does it

just relate to a period in the past history of the people of Israel ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Does it relate to the future dispensation in the matter of prophecy ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Or is its main message for the church in this dispensation ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ We shall be compelled to face those questions as we move into this book ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Especially in those parts of the book which we are going to particularly consider ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ The answer is found not in the earthly but in the heavenly ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Not in the temple but in the spiritual ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ So we come to the setting and reason for this book ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ We must recognize when the book was written and why ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ What is in this book happened at a time when

a whole system had broken down and failed ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ The reason for that breakdown and that failure was because that system became something in itself ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ It lost its spiritual and its eternal meaning ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ We must recognize that this is something that constantly recurs in the history of the things of God ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ It happened in Israel ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ It has happened in Christianity generally ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ It has happened in many movements and pieces of work of God ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ It began with a great

ministry

It is a time factor in our ministry So the date is a very important thing in ministry When God really raises up men He raises them up for a time And then next note Ezekiel was raised up in relation to a special situation at that time What we have just read shows that Ezekiel was right there in the situation He was in the closest personal touch with the need The need was his need He was put right into the heart of the situation And his ministry came out of that He said I sat where they sat And that takes ministry out of the realm of the merely theoretical and puts it into the very practical You will

notice that this was true of all the prophets They did not speak to the Lord about the Lord's people as they They are in this situation They have done these things They have these needs The prophets always spoke to God We are in distress Read the prayer of Nehemiah Read the prayer of Daniel They were a part of the situation And you and I to be effective ministers must be there Then the third thing This ministry has to be very personal You notice what it says in verse 3 The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest That means two things It means that Ezekiel did not get his ministry out of books He did not fulfill a second hand ministry His ministry was not the result of study This came to him personally These visions of God were his own His message was original and not

second hand It must be like that Our ministry must be like that It must be the result of something that God has said to us personally And then the last thing The word of the Lord came expressly That meant that there was an urgency about it You know the meaning of that word You speak about an express train What do you mean by an express train?

One that must get there quickly, it's very urgent You remember the word of the apostle, the spirit speak it expressly There is urgency about this The word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel There is something very urgent about this You have got to get there as soon as you can There is very serious business on hand All your energies must be concentrated upon this object That's how it has got to be with us There has got to be a tremendous urgency about our preaching There are very great issues at stake I would say to you preachers one thing Before you deliver your message Stop and say one thing to yourself I am now going to influence lives perhaps for all time and all eternity I am now going to influence lives perhaps for all time and all eternity We will see face to face what God has in

store for his people We will see the great river We will see the great temple We shall come to the wonderful city And then at the end we shall come to Jehovah's Sharma The Lord is there But you cannot come to understand all that until you see the kind of man that God needs for it It is a kind of man that will bring that into view The things that I have just said are the things which make up the kind of man needed I would like you to go back over them again Remember that this is a man whose whole life has been revolutionized by the purpose of God God's need has changed the whole course of his life God's need has disappointed him so far as his natural life is concerned Something of the disappointment and dissatisfaction of the heart of God has entered into this man's life I do try to lay

hold of that this morning Because it was on that very thing that God moved all the way through history I suppose Abraham was for most of his life very satisfied with the earl of the colonies He had all that he wanted there But then there began to come into his heart a great dissatisfaction with that life And his heart was reaching out for something that he did not know All he could say was, this is not what I was made for I

am sure that there is something more in life than this There must be some greater purpose and meaning than this This does not satisfy me It was on that ground that God moved in in his life It was God working into Abraham his own dissatisfaction And when that dissatisfaction was there, God could give the positive side of what really was his purpose And that was true of

all the great servants of God I believe it was true of Moses Quite sure that it was true of Ezekiel It was true of Paul I believe that we can detect, even in Paul of Tarsus, something of dissatisfaction God prepares his way like this We must have this in us before God can do anything else In order to bring his great positive purpose in, he must write the negative in our hearts This is the way of service On the one side it is disappointment On the other side it is God's appointment And then the consciousness of having no natural ability And all the ability having to come from God himself A work that no man could do And certainly a work that no man would take on himself That was Ezekiel But God had taken hold of this man Everything that happened to him was because the hand of the Lord was

upon him For this morning I am going to finish there It's a matter of the hand of the Lord being on us If the hand of the Lord is upon us, then we cannot help ourselves Work may be difficult The disappointment may be great The demands may be great But we cannot help it, we've got to go on You remember what Jeremiah another prophet said about this Because the people would not listen And because his ministry meant so much suffering Jeremiah said that he decided never to speak again He was going to give up preaching He was going to give up the work of God But then he said, while I kept silent The fire burned The word of the Lord was as a fire in my bones I could not speak again I could not do otherwise That is what Ezekiel meant by the hand of the Lord was upon me You see what that meant

afterwards How that hand of the Lord moved Ezekiel everywhere He was a man under the hand of the Lord Do pray that you may be like that That it will not be your choice one way or the other But that your life will just be because the hand of the Lord is upon you The Lord needs men and women like that Pray that you may be like that You are not in the thing because you like it Because you chose it Because you have any qualification for it You are in it because the hand of the Lord is upon you And to take yourself out of this work would be to take yourself out of the hand of the Lord Now if it is like that Something is going to happen You will have a message for the time You will have a message for the situation You will feel the urgency of this message The word will be like a fire in your

bones The Lord makes us all messengers like that Now you can see what I meant at the beginning It is spiritual value that matters It is not the intellectual knowledge But that we are men and women like this That is spiritual effectiveness You ask the Lord to make you like that That everybody is able to recognize that you have a heart that is burdened by the Lord On the one side you have seen what is wrong On the other side you have seen what God wants And that you feel that he has laid his hand on you in relation to that The Lord makes that true of us, all of us

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