

Commentary Notes - Ezekiel

by Walter Beuttler

Walter Beuttler's sermon on Ezekiel explores the prophet's call, the significance of God's holiness, and the consequences of Israel's idolatry and disobedience.

Scripture: Ezekiel 1:1, Ezekiel 10:12, Ezekiel 33:7, Ezekiel 36:22, Ezekiel 40:1, Ezekiel 44:1, Ezekiel 47:1, Ezekiel 48:1

Topics: "Divine Sovereignty", "Gods Holiness"

Description

Walter Beuttler preaches on the book of Ezekiel, focusing on the impending siege of Jerusalem and the prophet's visions, experiences, and messages. He highlights Ezekiel's lineage, personal life, and the key theme of 'the glory of the Lord' throughout the book. The sermon delves into the importance of surrendering to God, the vindication of God's holiness, the demonstration of His sovereignty, and the ultimate triumph of divine holiness over man's sinfulness.

Transcript

A. THE BOOK

1. At the time Ezekiel began his ministry, the northern kingdom of Israel had long ceased to exist. One deportation of Judah had already taken place and the final overthrow of Judah was imminent
2. Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim, II Kings 24:6, had been placed on the throne of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, but, following the advice of partisans of an Egyptian alliance, and in defiance of the protests and threatenings of Jeremiah, Jehoiachin revolted against Nebuchadnezzar with the result that Jehoiachin was made captive and carried away to Babylon, II Kings 24:11-16
3. The exiles by the river Chebar held delusive hopes of a speedy return from captivity fostered by false prophets who saw peace for Jerusalem when there was no peace and when, in fact, the destruction of the city was imminent
4. The book of Ezekiel does not only record what the Lord spoke by his prophet, the things which he had seen and heard (Acts 4:20), but also Ezekiel's personal experiences which are as instructive as his words
5. The key phrase of Ezekiel is "the glory of the Lord"

B. THE PROPHET

1. Ezekiel belonged to the priestly order by virtue of being a descendant of the superior line of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, and was carried off in Jehoiachin's captivity while Jeremiah was left behind
2. The name Ezekiel signifies "whom God will strengthen." It was a very appropriate name inasmuch as he had to prophesy to those who were "stiff-hearted" and "of a hard forehead"
3. Ezekiel was married and lived in his own house in a Chaldean city called Tel-abib on the river Chebar, believed to have been a tributary of the Euphrates
4. The sphere of his prophetic activity was not only the captivity, but also the Jews still remaining in Judea and even foreign nations
5. Ezekiel is the prophet of "the glory of the Lord"

(With due acknowledgment to Pulpit Commentary and The Preacher's Homiletic Commentary)

C. THE MESSAGE

1. The vindication of the holiness of God
2. The demonstration of the sovereignty of God
3. The ultimate triumph of the divine holiness over man's sinfulness

IMPENDING SIEGE OF JERUSALEM, 1:1-24:27

A. EZEKIEL'S VISION, 1:1-28

1. To what does the "thirtieth year" in 1:1 refer? Probably to the thirtieth year of Ezekiel's age which in Jewish reckoning was the age of full maturity
2. When did Ezekiel receive the vision of the glory of the Lord, 1:1-2? On the fifth of July, B. C. 595, "Which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity"
3. What is meant by "expressly" in 1:3? That "the word of Jehovah came in reality unto Ezekiel," contrary to the words of the false prophets who only claimed to have heard from God
4. What is meant by "the hand of the Lord was there upon him," 1:3? That Ezekiel had a conscious awareness of having received a divine communication
5. Give the general import of "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord," 1:4-28: The announcement of the vindication of the holiness of the Lord by means of the whirlwind (tornado) of God's furious wrath (Nah. 1:2-3) and his fiery jealousy (Deut. 4:24) executed from the north by the Chaldean forces in the complete destruction of Jerusalem described in Ezek. 24:1-27
6. The "living creatures" in 1:4-28 as ministers of God carrying out his will yield valuable lessons for Christian service. Point out some of these lessons from 1:10:
 - (1) The face of a man suggests human compassion and understanding for our fellowmen, an ability to enter into their joys and sorrows as though they were our own, (Rom. 12:15)

(2) The face of a lion suggests kingship, dominion over the things that befall the prophet of God, strength and fearless boldness in the face of obstacles and hostile opposition

(3) The face of an ox suggests patient and enduring service even in weariness and painfulness (II Cor. 11:27). An ox works when he is called upon to do so, whether he feels like it or not

(4) The face of an eagle suggests living on a high spiritual plane above the things of the earth, (Isa. 40:31). The same wind which causes other birds to seek shelter lifts the eagle to higher altitudes

7. Suggest a practical truth for Christian service from the description of the cherubim in:

(1) 1:9a - Harmony with our fellow-workers as "labourers together with God," I Cor. 3:9

(2) 1:12a - Singleness of purpose with no deviation because of other interests

(3) 1:12b - The leading of the Spirit, not our own ambitions and preferences

(4) 1:14 - No slothful lingering in indecision, but prompt and speedy execution of his will

(5) 1:17a - When we go in the service of God we must go with four faces (1:10)

(6) 1:18b - Ever watchful for any divine communication and alert to the enemy's snares, I Pet. 5:8

(7) 1:20a - Being led of the Spirit involves the surrender of personal choice

(8) 1:20b - The spirit of God's fully surrendered servant becomes submerged in the divine activity

(9) 1:24-27 - God's servants are subject to the government of the throne of God

(10) 1:28a - The servant of God has the assurance that God is ever mindful of his covenant

B. EZEKIEL'S CALL, 2:1-3:21

1. Comment on 2:1-2 in the light of 1:28: As a necessary preparation, the prophet of the Lord:

(1) Must be made weak in his own strength before he can become strong in God's strength

(2) Must lie prostrate before God before he can stand before God

(3) Must be emptied of self before he can be enabled by God

(4) Must place worship before service

(5) Must learn that abasement of self precedes the exaltation of God

2. Of what is Ezekiel informed in:

(1) 2:3-6? Of the hostility and rebelliousness of his hearers

(2) 2:5? That he will not be recognized as a prophet until after his mission is completed

(3) 2:6? That as a prophet he must endure the sufferings of a prophet

(4) 2:7? That he must declare God's words regardless of the people's attitude

3. Give the basic significance of 2:8-3:3: The prophet himself must respond to God irrespective of the implications

4. Note the various principles of qualifications for a prophetic ministry from:

(1) 2:8-10 - The prophet participates in the sufferings of his people

(2) 3:1-3 - The prophet must feed on his own message, eating what he gives to others

(3) 3:4 - The prophet speaks with God's words, not with his own

(4) 3:8-9 - The prophet receives the fortitude to withstand hostile opposition

(5) 3:14 - The prophet has God's hand upon him - and woe to that man who lays a hostile hand upon God's messenger (I Chron. 16:22)

(6) 3:15 - The prophet sits where they sit - on the level of the people

(7) 3:16 - The prophet's ministry begins not with speech, but with silence

(8) 3:17-21 - The prophet is responsible before God to declare God's words whether these words are accepted or rejected.

5. Ezekiel's real difficulty was what, 3:5-7? Not intellectual incapacity, but unresponsiveness of heart on the part of his hearers

6. What does 3:8-9 show? That the prophet must remain undismayed by the people's looks, the mirror of their attitude, while reassured by God's provision

C. SIGNS OF JUDGMENT, 3:22-7:27

1. Ascertain the meaning of the following signs:

(1) Ezekiel's dumbness, 3:22-27 - A rebuke to the people's rebellious attitude and rejection of God's words

(2) The tile, 4:1-17 - The certainty of the siege of Jerusalem to the astonishment of the population in spite of Zedekiah's alliance with Egypt

(3) The sharp knife, 5:1-17 - Judgment by grievous famine, pestilence, and sword

2. What do the following passages show concerning the prophet of God?

(1) 3:22-23 - The implicit obedience to God which he must render

(2) 3:24 - The isolation from people which he may have to endure

(3) 3:25 - The limitations which may be imposed upon his movements

3. What is to be noted concerning the signs in 4:1-5:17? That they belonged to the period of Ezekiel's silence and were deemed more eloquent than words

4. What, in general, is described in 6:1-7:27? The utter desolation of the land because of Israel's idolatrous abominations (yet with the preservation of a remnant)

5. What does God mean by the repeated statement that they "shall know that I am the Lord," 6:7-7:27? That the people will be compelled to recognize God's words by his acts of judgment since they failed to recognize his words by the mouth of the prophets

6. Comment on 7:26: In their coming distress the people will vainly turn to the prophets for a message from God, but the only message then will be the consequences of rejecting God's words

D. JERUSALEM'S ABOMINATIONS, 8:1-11:25

1. How much time had elapsed since Ezekiel's vision at Chebar, 8:1; 1:1-2? Fourteen months

2. What happens to Ezekiel in 8:1-3? He is transported in spirit to Jerusalem while he sits in his house with the elders of Judah before him

3. List the visions of Jerusalem's abominations from:

(1) 8:3-5 - The image of jealousy in the temple of God (an idol, Deut. 32:16, 21)

(2) 8:6-12 - Idolatry practiced in secret by the most influential leaders

(3) 8:13-14 - The worship of Tammuz (conjectured to be the Adonis of Greek mythology)

(4) 8:15-16 - Worship of the sun with the priests backs to the temple and God

4. As a consequence of these abominations, God will do what, 8:17-18? He will send judgment without pity and refuse to hear the idolaters even though they cry to God

5. Give the meaning of the vision in 9:1-11: The massacre of the inhabitants of Jerusalem

6. Comment on:

(1) 9:3 - The glory of the Lord has now moved from its place to the threshold on its way out, but remains lingering there, reluctant to leave, waiting for a change on the part of the people which would enable it to stay

(2) 9:4 - Even in the midst of a backslidden people there are those who still remain faithful to God and "the Lord knoweth them that are his," II Tim. 2:19

7. Give the meaning of the vision in 10:1-22: The vindication of the holiness of God by means of the dissolution of the temple worship and the departure of the glory of God

8. Comment on:

(1) 10:4 - The glory of the Lord now stands over the threshold of the temple, an unmistakable threat of its intention to leave, yet giving time for repentance

(2) 10:12 - In 8:12 the elders said "The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth." But the eyes of the Lord are everywhere; the presence of God sees every thing, for it is "full of eyes"

(3) 10:18 - Not finding any response to its clear invitation as indicated by its reluctance to depart, the glory of the Lord moves farther away from its abode in the temple to a place above the cherubim

9. For what reason is judgment falling on the ruling classes, 11:1-13?

- (1) For their rejection and ridicule of God's message by Jeremiah, Jer. 29:4-7
- (2) For bringing the Chaldean army against Jerusalem as the result of their wicked counsel
- (3) For practicing the ways of the heathen

10. Comment on:

- (1) 11:14-15 - Those at Jerusalem considered Israel's exile as evidence of their departure from God (which it was) and their own remaining in the land as an evidence of God's favor (which it was not)
- (2) 11:16 - Even in exile Israel had the invisible sanctuary of God's presence, for it is the presence of God that makes the sanctuary, not the sanctuary which makes the presence
- (3) 11:17-21 - As evidence of this God will bring about the ultimate restoration and conversion of Israel
- (4) 11:22-23 - As a further testimony against the unwarranted complacency and assumption of the people at Jerusalem, the glory of the Lord left both temple and city and stood waiting upon the mountain to the east, God's personal presence and protection being withdrawn. The rabbis said that the Shekinah retired eastward to the Mount of Olives, and there for three years called in vain to the people with a human voice that they should repent (Speakers Commentary)

11. What takes place in 11:24-25? Having been taken back to Chaldea in vision, Ezekiel now made known to those in the captivity what God had shown him

E. SIGNS AND DENUNCIATIONS, 12:1-24:27

1. Ascertain the meaning of the following signs:

- (1) Ezekiel's removing, 12:1-16 - King Zedekiah's departure into the Babylonian captivity blinded by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. 39:4-7, in fulfillment of Ezek. 12:13
- (2) Ezekiel's trembling, 12:17-20 - The terrors of the approaching siege of Jerusalem

2. Comment on 12:21-28: Whereas the people considered the announced judgments as belonging to the distant future, God promises to end their excuse for temporizing by declaring the imminence of those judgments

3. Who is denounced and for what in:

- (1) 13:1-16? The false prophets for prophesying messages of hope without divine authorization that misled the people into a false security without need for repentance
- (2) 13:17-23 - The false prophetesses for deceiving the people with false promises and living on the credulity of their victims with prophecies that distressed the righteous and encouraged the wicked
- (3) 14:1-11 - The elders of Israel for inquiring of God without any intention to obey him, nor with any inclination to depart from their idolatry upon which their hearts were set

4. What, in effect, is God saying in 14:12-23? That the destruction of Jerusalem is now inevitable and the city will not be spared under any condition

5. What does the reference to the three patriarchs in 14:14-20 show? That they stood high in the estimate of God and had great influence with him

F. SIMILITUDES AND PARABLES, 15:1-18:32

1. Ascertain the meaning of:

(1) The parable of the vine tree, 15:1-8: The worthlessness of Judah before the destruction of Jerusalem and much more so after that event

(2) The outcast infant, 16:1-63: Judah's unfaithfulness and ingratitude toward God, notwithstanding his compassion and kindness so marvelously demonstrated in so many ways, must be dealt with in judgment commensurate with its guilt

2. Explain the pertinent points of the allegory of the two eagles and the vine, 17:1-24 from:

(1) 17:3 - The "great eagle" with diverse colors is Nebuchadnezzar with various nations under his dominion

(2) 17:3 - "The highest branch of the cedar" is Jeconiah, king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar deposed from his throne, (v. 12)

(3) 17:4 - Nebuchadnezzar carried Jeconiah with the more eminent citizens of Jerusalem ("his young twigs") into a land of traffic, i. e., Babylon, the merchant country, (v. 12)

(4) 17:5 - "The seed of the land" is Zedekiah who was made king by Nebuchadnezzar in Jeconiah's stead and placed over Judah, the land of "brooks and water," Deut. 8:7-9, (v. 13)

(5) 17:6 - The kingdom of Judah under Zedekiah prospered only modestly (a "vine of low stature"). Zedekiah's national policy was oriented toward Nebuchadnezzar by a covenant with him ("whose branches turned toward him") and upon whom Zedekiah was dependent ("the roots thereof were under him"), (vs. 13-14)

(6) 17:7 - The other "great eagle" represents Pharaohhophra, Jer. 44:30, king of Egypt. Zedekiah ("this vine"), wearied with his subjection to the king of Babylon, made an alliance with Egypt ("did bend her roots toward him") and, in violation of his oath, rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, (vs. 15-18)

(7) 17:8 - Though under the dominion of Babylon, Zedekiah could have enjoyed a measure of prosperity which had been the intention of Nebuchadnezzar

(8) 17:9-10 - Zedekiah's alliance with Egypt shall not prosper, but assure the ruin of Judah without great military effort. The Chaldeans, in fact, raised the siege of Jerusalem in anticipation of the intervention of the Egyptian army. However, the Egyptians never arrived and the Chaldeans then took the city (vs. 15-18)

(9) 17:19-21 - God regards Zedekiah's breach of covenant against Nebuchadnezzar as a sin against God, the God of all truth, and therefore God will speak to Zedekiah by means of the consequences of his conduct (10) 17:22-23 - From the cedar of Israel God will take Christ ("a tender one") from the royal line

("of the highest branch of the high cedar") and exalt him to a position of eminence and influence

(11) 17:24 - The surrounding nations ("all the trees of the field,") who witness the downfall of Israel, shall also see the incredible working of God in the resurrection of Israel

G. EQUITY OF DIVINE JUSTICE, 18:1-32

1. Explain the proverb in 18:2: The sour grapes which the fathers eat are their own personal sins which they commit; the setting of the children's teeth on edge is the unpleasant sensation of acid on their teeth

2. Give the implication of this proverb in 18:2: The people charged God with injustice for visiting upon them the sins of their fathers, thus causing the innocent to suffer instead of the guilty

3. What does God declare in 18:4?

(1) His sovereign and indisputable right to deal with men in accordance with his laws of justice

(2) Individual responsibility and retributive justice in correspondence with individual guilt

4. Point out the principles of divine justice as declared in:

(1) 18:5-9 - The man who is righteous according to the law of God shall live

(2) 18:10-20 - The righteousness of a father will not save an unrighteous son, and the righteous son will not be held accountable for the sins of an unrighteous father

(3) 18:21-28 - The ungodly man who turns and repents shall live, but the righteous man who turns to the ways of sin shall die

5. Comment on:

(1) 18:29 - They judged the righteous ways of God by the standard of their own unrighteous ways and so considered God guilty and themselves innocent

(2) 18:30-32 - Contrary to the unrighteous opinions of the people, God's righteousness is evidenced by his granting an opportunity for repentance and offering life

H. SIMILITUDES AND PARABLES, 19:1-21:32

1. Explain the pertinent points of the parable of the lion's whelps, 19:1-9:

(1) 19:2 - Israel is the lioness among the other lions, the surrounding nations

(2) 19:3-4 - Jehoahaz, also called Shallum in Jer. 22:11, is "one of her whelps." He was ensnared by the ways of those nations and deported to Egypt by Pharaoh-Necho, Jer. 46:2; II Kings 23:34

(3) 19:5 - When there was no longer any hope for the restoration of Jehoahaz, "she took another of her whelps," Jehoiachin, (Jehoiakim is completely passed by) and made him king

(4) 19:6 - Jehoiachin, in order to achieve his great ambitions, engaged in oppression and bloodshed

(5) 19:7-9 - Jehoiachin alarmed Nebuchadnezzar and other nations with his ambitions and was carried to Babylon as Jehoahaz had been carried to Egypt

2. Give the general meaning of the parable of the wasted vine, 19:10-14: The mother of Jehoiachin, namely Judah, with the royal princes ("strong rods") was plucked up and planted in Babylon ("the wilderness") when Zedekiah revolted against Nebuchadnezzar ("and fire is gone out of a rod of her branches") with the consequences of a destroyed Jerusalem and nation ("hath devoured her fruit")

3. For what purpose had certain elders of Israel come to Ezekiel, 20:1? To inquire of the Lord, most likely with regard to the termination of their penal sufferings

4. How did God respond to this inquiry, 20:2-44? God answered, but not as they had expected. Since they came to inquire without first repenting, God ignored the purpose for which they had come and instead remonstrated with them for their abominations

5. Give the meaning of the parable of the forest of the south field, 20:45-48: Judah ("the forest"), to the south of Chebar ("of the south field"), is to be destroyed by the fiery judgment of the Chaldean invaders

6. Comment on 20:49: In an effort to avoid the application of Ezekiel's message to themselves because of its unwelcome implications, they slandered his message as being too obscure to understand. This was an excuse for hardening their hearts against remonstrances which needed no explanation

7. Comment on 20:49: Like the hearers of Christ, John 6:60, the hearers of Ezekiel claimed inability to understand as an excuse for hardening their hearts, which was an attempt to escape responsibility of responding to the truth

8. Give the meaning of the parable of:

(1) The sighing prophet, 21:1-7 - The sword of judgment against Israel by the hands of the king of Babylon, 21:19

(2) The sword of God, 21:8-17 - The approaching terror of God's judgment upon princes and people by the ready sword of the Chaldeans

9. What is described in 21:18-27? Nebuchadnezzar's march against Jerusalem and the Ammonites

10. Comment on:

(1) 21:21-22 - Nebuchadnezzar stood with his army at a point where the road divides into two. The one led to Rabbath, capital of Ammon, the other to Jerusalem, the

capital of Judah. Undecided against which city he ought to march first, he turned to divination and the lot fell upon Jerusalem

(2) 21:23-24 - The people of Jerusalem, hearing of the event, did not believe the divination, considering themselves safe because of Zedekiah's oath to Nebuchadnezzar. He, however, remembered the breach of the oath and marched toward Jerusalem

(3) 21:25-26 - Zedekiah, "the wicked prince of Israel," (Judah), whose treachery toward Nebuchadnezzar had brought on the national crisis and the complete destruction of the Jewish state, will shortly come to the

end of both his reign and his wickedness

(4) 21:27 - God will bring the kingdom from crisis to crisis and from ruin to ruin until the time when Christ will take the government upon his shoulders

11. What is described in 21:28-32? The judgment of the Ammonites, who were a major cause of Israel's idolatry

I. SIMILITUDES AND PARABLES, 22:1-24:27

1. With what do the following sections deal:

(1) 22:1-16? With the description of Israel's sins in justification of the announced judgments

(2) 22:17-22? The doom of Israel in the fire of God's anger

(3) 22:23-31? The total corruption of the nation, prophets, priests, princes, and the people, with none righteous enough to be either a defender or an intercessor

2. Explain the allegory of the two harlots, 23:1-49, from:

(1) 23:2-4 - Israel, the mother, had two daughters, namely, Samaria (Aholah "her tent"), capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, and Jerusalem (Aholibah "my tent is in her") capital of the southern kingdom of Judah

(2) 23:5-8 - Samaria's lovers are the nations with whom she formed an alliance, first with Assyria, then with Egypt

(3) 23:9-10 - The kingdom of Israel sought to play off Assyria and Egypt, Hos. 7:11; II Kings 17:4, with the result that Shalmaneser, having discovered Hoshea's treachery, besieged Samaria and took her sons and daughters into exile

(4) 23:11-21 - Judah, instead of having been warned by the fate of her sister Israel, courted alliances with Assyria, Chaldea, and Egypt, being fascinated by their splendor and idolatries which incited Judah to cultivate religious, political, and commercial relations with these nations

(5) 23:22-35 - Judah, having gone the same way as her sister, must now also drink of the same cup of judgment

(6) 23:36-49 - God declares unto Aholah and Aholibah their abominable idolatries as the cause and basis of their judgment

3. Give the meaning of:

(1) The parable of the boiling pot, 24:1-14 - The complete destruction and irrevocable doom of Jerusalem by the Babylonian army under Nebuchadnezzar in a siege that lasted about two years and fulfilled the punishments threatened in 23:22-49

(2) The sign of the death of Ezekiel's wife, 24:15-27 - The destruction of Jerusalem will be such an overwhelming blow as to stupefy the people with a grief too deep for tears and a sorrow too great for expression

4. Comment on:

(1) 24:16-18 - The wounding of Ezekiel by the stroke of God with the suppression of any outward show of grief provides an almost frightening insight into the possible sufferings of a prophet who must continue his ministry in a state of hidden grief

(2) 24:17-19 - The prophet's message is not only conveyed by his words, but also by his actions which are sometimes utterly contrary to custom and propriety

(3) 24:27 - This event will end the prophet's ministry as a sign (24:24) and the period of silence (imposed in 3:26-27) as the messenger from Jerusalem arrives in Chaldea three years after the beginning of the siege, 33:21-22

PROPHECIES CONCERNING FOREIGN NATIONS, 25:1-32:32

A. JUDGMENT OF FOREIGN NATIONS, 25:1-32:32

1. Against whom and why is judgment announced in:

(1) 25:1-7? Ammon, because she gleefully rejoiced at the downfall of Judah

(2) 25:8-11? Moab, because she despised God's election of Judah as his people

(3) 25:12-14? Edom, for overt acts of hostility in revenge for Jacob's wrongs, Gen. 27:36

(4) 25:15-17? Philistia, because of her revengeful acts against Judah in a perpetual hatred

(5) 26:1-28:19? Tyre, because of her delight in Jerusalem's overthrow to the advantage of her own commercial interests

(6) 28:20-24? Zidon, a Phoenician city, because she had been as thorns and briers to Israel

(7) 29:1-32:32? Egypt, because she failed Israel when she trustingly leaned on Egypt, 29:6-7

2. Comment on:

(1) 26:7-11 - After a siege of thirteen years, the city was at last taken by the Babylonian army under Nebuchadnezzar

(2) 26:12 - During the siege of Tyre the Tyrians moved the bulk of their treasures to an island half a mile from the shore, where, leaving the ruins of the city behind, they built a new one deemed impregnable. More than two hundred years later Alexander the Great attacked the island city of Tyre, but was frustrated because of the sea and the Tyrians' powerful fleet Thereupon he made his soldiers tear down the ruins of the old city, taking the stones, timber and dust to build a causeway to the island and thereby defeat Tyre after a siege of seven years. The city was burned to the ground and has never been rebuilt. Today it is a small fishing village along the Mediterranean shore

(3) 28:12-19 - The language of God here goes beyond the king of Tyre to Satan, who inspires the pride through which man exalts himself to the place of deity and accordingly demands the homage from his subjects. It is a description of the unfallen state of Satan and gives pride as the cause of his fall

(4) 28:25-26 - The nations hostile to Israel shall yet be compelled to recognize Israel as the elect of God

(5) 30:14-16 - "No" is also called No-Ammon because it was the abode of the god of Ammon. "No" is now known as the city of Thebes, Egypt. It was a city of indescribable magnificence, wealth, and power. Even today its ruins compel speechless admiration and utter amazement. This city with its hundred gates and overwhelming splendor, many mighty columns which radiate into avenues from every point, temples of colossal dimensions, many obelisks and sphinxes, seemed eternal. Yet this city began to be destroyed by the Persians under Cambyses and to this day the traveller may visit the ruins of Thebes, the ancient "No" of the Bible.

ISRAEL'S RESTORATION, 33:1-48:35

A. DENUNCIATIONS AND PROMISES, 33:1-36:38

1. What, in general, is the message of 33:1-20? The prophet's responsibility to God

2. Note the basic activity of a prophet, 33:7:

(1) He must hear from God

(2) He must declare what he has heard

3. What is declared in 33:10-20? The unswerving equity of the divine government

4. Note the effects of willful unbelief from:

(1) 33:21-24 - It blinds the soul to the significance of events

(2) 33:25-26 - It prevents repentance and abandonment of sin

(3) 33:27-29 - It assures God's judgment which could have been averted

(4) 33:30-33 - It leads to mockery of the prophet of God in sheer self-justification

5. Point out the general content of 34:1-10: God's denunciation of the unfaithful shepherds, the civil rulers of God's people

6. Specifically, for what are the tyrannical rulers denounced in:

(1) 34:1-3? For ministering to their self indulgence rather than to the people

(2) 34:4? For neglecting their duty as shepherds to tend the flock of God

(3) 34:4-6? For ruling God's sheep with force and cruelty

7. Point out the general content of 34:11-31: God's care for his sheep and his intervention for them

8. Specifically, how is God's care for his sheep shown in:

(1) 34:11-16? He will gather the scattered sheep and tend them

(2) 34:17-22? He will discriminate between the self seeking shepherds and the oppressed sheep

(3) 34:23-31? He will give them a true shepherd, (John 10:11) and deliver them from the oppressing shepherds who care more for themselves than for the sheep

9. Against whom is judgment announced in 35:1-15 and why? Against Edom (here called Mt. Seir, "shaggy," for its rugged hills) because of her savage gloating over the downfall of its hated rival and eagerly possessing the desolated land

10. Give the general content of:

(1) 36:1-15 - Promise of the restoration of the land occupied by Israel's gleeful enemies

(2) 36:16-21 - Israel's sinfulness, the cause of her national ruin

(3) 36:22-38 - Israel's restoration, cleansing, conversion, and blessing during the millenium and the vindication of God, all of which shall shame Israel's enemies

B. END TIME PROPHECIES, 37:1-39:29

1. Ascertain the meaning of:

(1) The vision of the dry bones, 37:1-14: The national restoration of Israel from a totally hopeless condition is to be accomplished by divine power

(2) The sign of the two sticks, 37:15-28: God will unite Judah and Israel as one nation under one king, namely Christ, with one center of worship for the one and only God

2. Note the general content of the prophecy concerning Gog, 38:1-39:29, in the following sections:

(1) 38:1-13 - The expedition of Gog against Israel

(2) 38:14-23 - The intervention of God against Gog

(3) 39:1-20 - The defeat and destruction of Gog

(4) 39:21-29 - The results of Gog's defeat

3. Read Zech. 12:1-14; 14:1-9; Rev. 19:17-21; 20:7-10 in conjunction with Ezek. 38:1-39:29

4. Comment on the identity of Gog, 38:2: This appears to be a reference to the descendants of the sons of Japheth, Gen. 10:2, who settled in the northern regions, and hence, to the peoples generally known today as Russians

5. Specifically, what may be learned from:

(1) 38:15? That this invasion of Palestine will come from the north of Palestine

(2) 38:16? That this invasion of Palestine will take place in the "latter days"

6. How will the defeat of Gog affect:

(1) Gog, 39:6? They shall be compelled to recognize that God is God

(2) The nations, 39:21? They shall see the glory of God by his power and judgment

(3) Israel, 39:22, 25-29? They shall receive a personal knowledge of God, national security, and the benediction of his face and presence

(4) God, 38:23? God will be magnified and universally recognized as the one and only God

THE NEW TEMPLE, 40:1-48:35

A. THE NEW TEMPLE, 40:1-43:27

1. With what does 40:1-4 deal? With the announcement of an important revelation

2. Wherein does the importance of this revelation lie, 40:4? In that it would inspire the Jews with an abiding confidence in the certainty of their future restoration

3. Ascertain the length of a "measuring reed," 40:5: About nine feet, assuming the cubit to have been about eighteen inches

4. Relative to the outer court, 40:5-27, what is described in:

(1) 40:5? The enclosing wall

(2) 40:6-16? The east gate

(3) 40:17-19? The outer court

(4) 40:20-23? The north gate

(5) 40:24-27? The south gate

5. Relative to the inner court, 40:28-49, what is described in:

(1) 40:28-31? The south gate

(2) 40:32-34? The east gate

(3) 40:35-37? The north gate

(4) 40:38-43? The arrangements for sacrifice

(5) 40:44-47? The chambers of singers and priests

(6) 40:48-49? The porch of the temple

(7) 41:1-4? The interior of the temple

(8) 41:5-11? The wall and side buildings

(9) 41:12-14? The separate place

(10) 41:15-26? The projections of the temple

(11) 42:1-14? The priests' chambers

(12) 42:15-20? The temple precincts

6. Note the event in 43:1-6: The glory of the Lord came from the way of the east, as if to enter the very door through which it departed, 10:19; 11:23

7. Observe God's purpose in:

(1) 43:7-9 - To show Ezekiel Jehovah's purpose in entering the temple, namely, to dwell again among his people

(2) 43:10-12 - To show to Israel this well-proportioned house so that, as they contemplate its fair dimensions with its moral and spiritual implications, they might be induced to repent

8. Comment on 43:11: In the event that the presentation of this house should awaken them to the realization of their sin and lead them to repentance, they were to receive a greater unfolding of the meaning of the temple as reflecting the perfection of the divine Being

9. What is described in:

(1) 43:13-17? The temple altar

(2) 43:18-27? The ritual for its consecration

10. Comment on the design of this temple:

(1) The complete exclusion of man from its design shows the inability of man to determine the standards of divine holiness

(2) Its entire design was a caricature of the holiness and perfection of God

(3) The specifications of the minute details show that nothing is unimportant to God

B. THE REORGANIZED WORSHIP, 44:1-46:24

1. What, in general, is described in:

(1) 44:1-3? The relationship of the prince to the sanctuary

(2) 44:4-16? The relationship of the people, Levites, and priests to the sanctuary

(3) 44:17-31? The duties, conduct, and emoluments of the priests

2. Suggest the purpose of the shut east gate, 44:1-2: To inspire the people with an exalted conception of the sanctuary as the house of God

3. Suggest the identity of the prince in 44:3: The civil head of the new theocracy partaking of the sacrificial meals

4. Give the content of:

(1) 45:1-6 - The Lord's portion of the land

(2) 45:7-8 - The prince's portion of the land

(3) 45:8-12 - Exhortation to the practice of justice and equity

(4) 45:13-17 - The oblations for the prince

(5) 45:18-25 - The re-institution of the sacrifices and feasts which are now memorial, rather than anticipatory of the cross, as heretofore

(6) 46:1-15 - Directions for solemn acts of worship

(7) 46:16-18 - Directions for the prince's disposition of his inheritance

(8) 46:19-24 - Sacrificial particulars for prince and people

C. REDISTRIBUTED TERRITORY, 47:1-48:35

1. Comment on the river of the sanctuary, 47:1-12, from:

(1) 47:1 - The river had its source in the temple of God, not in the temple as such, but in the presence and activity of Him whose glory filled the temple

(2) 47:2-12 - The waters flowed eastward from the temple of God and on to the Dead Sea in an ever deepening stream of an abundant supply of water, bringing an amazing restoration of the barren land and the healing of the Dead Sea

(3) 47:10 - The Dead Sea which is now without any vegetable or animal life whatever, shall become an important source of food

(4) 47:11 - The marshes, or swampy areas, which this river does not reach shall retain their salt and so their unusable character

(5) 47:12 - The "very many trees," (v. 7), along the banks of the river produce every sort of fruit in every season for food and health

2. What is described in:

(1) 47:13-23? The borders of the land in accordance with God's promise to Abraham, Gen. 15:18-21

(2) 48:1-7? The distribution of the land among the tribes in seven parallel strips from the Mediterranean to the east border, these tribes being Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, and Judah

(3) 48:8-12? The priests' portion of the land

(4) 48:13-14? The Levites' portion of the land

(5) 48:15-20? The portion of land for the city

(6) 48:21-22? The prince's portion

(7) 48:23-29? The allocation of the land to the rest of the tribes, Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, and Gad

(8) 48:30-35? The city and its gates

3. Ascertain the entire circuit of the city, 48:31-35: Eighteen thousand reeds, i.e., 18,000 x 6 (cubits) x 1 1/2 (feet) - 162,000

feet - 30 miles

4. What will be the name of this city, 48:35? "The Lord is there"

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