

20170917 The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel

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A Prophet To the Nation. God Departing

Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. (Ez 1:1)

Firstly we come to know that Ezekiel is a Prophet to the Nation, this is the nation of Israel. In verse one we identify both the timing of his calling and its nature. The timing was during the time of the captivity, *as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar*. It was not before the Captivity but during the captivity, he being *“among the captives”*.

We see also the nature of the calling of Ezekiel, *that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God*. Verse three tells us who he is, who was his father, where he was and that *“the hand of the Lord was there upon him”*.

One would ask if this were the case and the people had already been taken into the captivity warned about by both Isaiah and Jeremiah, to what purpose did it serve them that Ezekiel was a prophet to the nation? Well certain it is that the Lord was sending him, his call is confirmed in chapter 2. Verse three giving the specifics as to whom he was sent;

³ And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel,

By the end of the chapter Ezekiel was presented with a book written within and on the back side. The beginning of **chapter three** he was commanded to consume the book and it was sweet as honey to his mouth, these are the words of the Lord and their sweetness is given to those to whom it is charged to warn and to speak.

Verse 5 tells us that Ezekiel is not sent to a people **with a hard language**, but to the people of Israel. Not to people that cannot understand his words and his speech but to those who can hear and can understand. But verse 7 tells us yet again that it is not a question of ability but a question of the will. Read with me his words; take it from verse 6 that we may gain an interesting context;

⁶ Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee. ⁷ But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hardhearted”

They WILL NOT HEARKEN, do we notice a theme as we go through these prophets, never do we see a problem with the ability of the people to hear and to listen and to trust and obey, but always we see that it is a question of the will.

Verse 17 confirms that his charge was as a watchman to the people with the detailed specifics of his commission by the Lord given to verse 21. We'll read only to verse 19 and you will get the point of his responsibility.

¹⁷ Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. ¹⁸ When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. ¹⁹ Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his

iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

A similar detail is repeated in chapter 33 of Ezekiel and God uses the analogy of a trumpet sounding the warning of impending evil upon the people. **The trumpet sounds and if they don't take warning its not the fault of the trumpeter.** But if evil is coming and the watchman refuses to sound the alarm, the people are destroyed and who's fault is it? It's the Watchman's fault. He knew danger was coming and warned no one. Last time we spoke about the Pilot of the airliner who switched off the warning to PULL UP, PULL UP!

Brethren you know what it is that I am going to tell you!

We are the Ezekiel's of today. We have been sent by the Lord to warn people of the danger they are in. For the last two thousand years Christians have been commissioned for this very purpose. Brethren the headline issue of today is not Same Sex marriage, it's not Assisted Suicide, it's not Islamic terror, it's not economic uncertainty or the government.

The issue today is the same issue that afflicted the nation of Israel and the nations of the world to this very day.... **The issue is SIN.**

And the danger is the inevitable Judgment of God for sin.

And the cover that people are to shelter themselves from this judgement, is Jesus Christ.

And the trumpet we are all called to carry and blow, is the Gospel.

Consider the hope we can give them, look at verse 21

“²¹ Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.”

But when it came to the nation, they WOULD NOT HEAR nor believe the words of Ezekiel. Romans chapter one tells us the fascinating effect that comes upon man when he rejects all that is plain to see concerning God. Turn there with me for a moment because we will see this also play out in a very apparent way to the nation.

Romans 1:18-19

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; ¹⁹ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. ²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

As you read on you come to discover that this rejection of all that is plain to see concerning God leads to further and further depravity until a point comes to which God 'gives them over' to a mind that cannot discern anything concerning him.

Verse 28 makes it plain saying...

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

GOD, together with his wisdom, his truth and his understanding, **departs from them** and they are given over to the foolishness of their own minds. We see in Ezekiel God also departing from the nation for their rejection of him. Turn to Ezekiel 10:4 we see the Glory of God beginning to depart from the nation just as some are marked for their faithfulness to him.

⁴ Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory.

Down to verse 18

¹⁸ Then the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims.

Verse 19 says

¹⁹ And the cherubims lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went out, the wheels also were beside them, and every one stood **at the door of the east gate** of the Lord's house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.

Its important to remember that the Lord departed from the nation of Israel by the **DOOR OF THE EAST GATE**, why is that interesting to know? That is where Christ will enter in, Gods glory returned!

Down to Chp 11:23

²³ And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city.

Finally the Lord had departed from them for their rejection of him, standing uppn the mountain which is on the east side of the city, this is none other than The Mount of Olives, this is exactly where Jesus will stand at his second coming.

But at this time, the Glory of the Lord is no longer found in the Holy of holy's, no longer in the temple and no longer in the City. A smoke by day and fire by night when they took their journey from Egypt, tabernacled with them through their wanderings for forty years, was their king during the time of the Judges, dwelt in the Temple of God during the reign of 20 kings. Now he has left them to themselves.

All the way back just before the flood, **“the Lord said My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh”** Gen 6:3

A Prophet To The Nations. Satan Administering

Ezek 25:1-4

The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, ² Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them; ³ And say unto the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord God; Thus saith the Lord God; Because thou saidst, **Aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel, when it was desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity;**

The first 24 chapters of Ezekiel, God is dealing with Israel, his nation through the prophet Ezekiel. And he departed from them. For the next eight chapters Ezekiel is a Prophet to the Nations, and we discover that they are governed under a different Administration.

Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia are dealt with in chapter 25.

These nations rejoiced at the fall of Jerusalem. They were happy when the sanctuary of God was profaned, rejoiced when the city was made desolate. They hated the people of God and desired nothing more than their destruction and they were pleased when the Lord dealt with them according to their folly in following the habits of **THESE SAME NATIONS THAT LAUGH**. Its curious don't you think?

The world despises the children of God and encourages them to behave just like themselves so they can feel justified in their sin, then, when God chastises his children for behaving just like the world, **the world rejoices and laughs**. The children of God desire to be liked by the world (**this being part of the reason they behave like them**), they turn from the God who

separated them for himself, then when they are finally chastised by God and separated from him, they are scorned by the ones in whom they desired affection!!!!

Turn to Matt 6:24

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

There is an old Italian saying that says “**The dog who has two masters will die of hunger**”. This is essentially what has happened to Israel and be warned Christian, this also happens to us. Those who are separated to God CANNOT find fulfilment in the world but only in the Lord. But when they seek fulfilment in the world, **they find they will have neither joy in the world nor comfort from the Lord.**

An entire chapter is dedicated to Egypt, chapter 29.

A half chapter is dedicated to the condemnation of Sidon in chapter 28

But TWO chapters are taken up for the condemnation of the City of Tyre and her Prince and King in chapters 26- part way through chapter 28.

Turn to Chp 26

26 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first day of the month, that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, ² Son of man, because that Tyrus **hath said against Jerusalem, Aha**, she is broken that was the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste: ³ Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. ⁴ And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. ⁵ It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God: and it shall become a spoil to the nations.

Isaiah, Joel, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Zechariah; God despised Tyrus with no less than six prophets condemning the city.

We discover that the city itself was incredibly wealthy, a “**Mart of nations**” (Isa 23:3) the bible tells us. Scripture foretells that two empires will come against her, one of them is The Babylonians. History tells us that Alexander the Great was the second. Tyre was both an island and a mainland city. Situated on a small peninsula. **The main City on the peninsula** is that part dealt with in Ezekiel.

Verses 7 to 14 describe the efforts of Nebuchadnezzar against the city. From 15 to 21 is the pronouncement of Gods miraculous dealings with her. Not least of which is sinking the entire city into the depth of the sea.

Consider from 26:18

¹⁸ Now shall the isles tremble in the day of thy fall; yea, the isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure. ¹⁹ For thus saith the Lord God; When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee; ²⁰ When I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit, with the people of old time, and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth, in places desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited; and I shall set glory in the land of the living; ²¹ I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God.

Chapter 27 goes into incredible detail about the untold wealth and prosperity of the City, that it was essentially the envy of the world for both abundance and luxury. Toward the end of the Chapter its

tell again of its demise and the mourning of the nations who were made wealthy by her, saying;

27:32 **And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, saying, What city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?**

If you know your history and particularly that of ancient legends, the nature of the City of Tyre together with its destruction, might ring a bell for you. You might link it with the legend of another City that abounded in wealth and luxury but sunk into the sea, and though it has been sought after for many years, has never been found...?

Plato's ATLANTIS.

Penned only a few decades after Ezekiel's writing this prophecy. The similarities are striking.

- Both were Islands
- They were both recognized as the center of the world for economics, inventions, sea travel, and military strength.
- They both existed around the same time era. (The legend was around at the same time that Tyre was.)
- Both attacked by two nations
- They both were eventually destroyed by sinking into the sea.

Interesting fact: Plato's student was Aristotle. Aristotle's student was Alexander the Great, who eventually destroyed Tyre.¹

But this island nation had a king that sat on the throne who is referred to as a prince in chapter 28 who thought himself to be God.

28:1-2

The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, ² Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord God; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God:

He thought himself so wise and so incredible and thought that it was HIS wisdom that got him all these riches and become the envy of the world and the Lord goes into pronouncing the evil that will come upon him for his pride and lifted heart and belief that he is God. Verse 9 tells us that this prince will die the death of a man;

⁹ Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee.

But, there was another influence that seemed to govern through this "Prince", consider with me from verse 11. Recall that verse one the Lord had commanded Ezekiel to speak to the "Prince of Tyrus". Verse 11 we get the distinct impression it is a different individual.

¹¹ Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, ¹² Son of man, take up a lamentation **upon the king of Tyrus**, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. ¹³ **Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God;** every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: **the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.** ¹⁴ **Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth;** and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁵ **Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that**

¹ <https://theanonymousnovelist.wordpress.com/tag/atlantis/>

thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. ¹⁶ By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, **O covering cherub**, from the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁷ **Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty**, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

Who was it that was in the Garden of God? Who was it that was covered with light? A created Cherub, that is, a powerful angel? Who was on the holy mountain of God? Perfect from the day he was created? But filled with pride and cast out?

This does not speak of any Earthly king. There was a very different administration governing the nations than we think. There are princes and principalities, the Bible teaches, that govern the events and leaders of the world very different from what we see.

I will try to deal with this a little fuller when we get to Daniel next week. But it is worth bringing to mind that in this passage **there is another influence over the ruling prince of Tyrus**, it seems this ruling influence has the hierarchal designation of The King of Tyrus.

A Prophet To The Present. The Spirit Warning

The time that Ezekiel prophesied was to warn the people in the present time. Both Israel and the nations around it were in danger of destruction and of judgement and the warning of Ezekiel was for the specific purpose of having the wicked turn from their wicked ways and repent and follow the Lord.

Turn to Ezekiel 33:11

¹¹ Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

The Lords desire is not a difficult one for man to understand. **It is simply that man would recognize their sin and turn to the Lord and Live.** Everything God does in the life of man **is to awaken him and turn him from sin** and his warnings are **ever present**.

We are the watchman of today, but the Bible also teaches that man is given two warning / Restraining instruments. One of them is within, the other is without. Consider for a moment what the warning / restraining system God has employed from **within** is?

The conscience. (*Con* = With, *Science* = Knowledge)

Yes, it is an inner knowledge of Good and Evil. So the conscience is that warning and restraining system built within man. What is the warning or restraining influence that is without?

The Holy Spirit.

It is the spirit of God that restrains sin in man from working to its fullest extent. The Holy Spirit is who God uses to restrain sin. Do we have any direct evidence in scripture that shows God preventing sin in man? Yes, from the beginning of the Bible.

Turn to Genesis 20

20 And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. ² And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. ³ But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife. ⁴ But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous

nation? ⁵ Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. ⁶ And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; **for I also withheld thee from sinning against me:** therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.

We find the Spirit to be he who restrains sin for he it is whom we are told, hands us over to our sin when we ignore that INNER Warning and Restraining system.

Ps 81:12

So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust:
And they walked in their own counsels.

The new testament tells us that the Lord “gave them up to uncleanness” (Rom 1:24) “gave them up unto vile affections” (Rom 1:26), Romans 1:28 tells us ²⁸ “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, **God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;**” And there will yet come a time when that same spirit that warned man of sin in the time of Ezekiel and today will be taken out of the way and no longer restrain it.

Turn to 2 Thess 2:6

⁶ And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. ⁷ For the **mystery of iniquity** doth already work: **only he who now letteth will let,** [To hinder or restrain. Same use in Tennis today] **until he be taken out of the way.** ⁸ And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

There will come a time when the Spirit of God who now restrains the evil will be “taken out of the way”. The evil in man will then have a cleared path to its end. Ezekiel was a prophet for the present, but it is the Spirit of God who is warning man today, both from within and from without.

A Prophet To The Future. Christ Controlling

From Chapter 33 to the end of the book of Ezekiel there are details concerning Israel's Future restoration.

Chapter 37 gives to us the future specific prophecy in the Valley of the Dry bones where God promises to bring together his scattered people from all nations and place them in the land of Israel. And we are witnesses of that historic reality coming to pass, even today it is still happening, rising persecutions against Jews the world over has the Israeli Prime Minister calling for them to come home. But there is an event that is yet to occur that Ezekiel describes in chapters 38-39 that has some specific details concerning a battle (really an INVASION yet to take place).

The people of Gog and Magog, Gomer and Torgarmah, Persia, Libya and Ethiopia.

Gog = Russia

Meshec & Tubal = Some of the former states of Russia to the north of Iran today

Persia = Iran

Torgarmah= Turkey

Gomer= Eastern Europe

These are the names of the ancient people who inhabit and have formed the countries noted above. These are the family groups separated after the confounding of the languages in Genesis 11. I won't read the account for you as we would be here too long, it is found in chapters 38 & 39 and it gives in brief an account of an INVASION against the nation of Israel.

I personally believe that this invasion is prompted by a proceeding war that is described in

Psalm 83, where Israel are attacked by their near neighbours, they win the battle and as a result enlarge their borders that we see in the Ezekiel passage. I think this may be what prompts the invasion against her by the nations noted above.

Now scripture gives us an indication that this invasion **is one of determined annihilation**.

38:9 says

Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee.

This is repeated again in verse 16 but in that verse we are given a hint as the reason God has moved these people against Israel.

Yes, it is the Lord that is moving these people against Israel;

⁴ And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords:

It is the Lord who is in **perfect control of the event** and we find it is for two reasons, take a look at the passage with me;

^{38:16} **And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land**; This speaks to the extent of the effort. Verse 9 says that it will be 'like a storm'.

Read on

it shall be in the latter days, this refers always to the end of the last days, we are not sure if this is before or after the Rapture of the Church, it could easily be either, we could all potentially witness this event.

and I will bring thee against my land, **that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.**

And here we see its purpose, that the world will KNOW God through this event.

How?

Chapter 39 gives no indication that Israel defends herself, unlike the Psalm 83 war not a weapon is said to be raised by Israel in this effort, but God says (39:3-4)

I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand.
⁴ Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee:

Verse 5-6 Thou shalt fall upon the open field: **for I have spoken it**, saith the Lord God. ⁶ And **I will send** a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and **they shall know that I am the Lord**.

So great will be the deliverance of Israel that all will recognize it as a divine intervention, a true miracle. And in verse 7 the lord gives to us both the second and repeats the first reason for this invasion effort against his people

⁷ So will I **make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel**; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: **and the heathen shall know** that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel.

There are indications in the Bible that this intended invasion of Israel would be Nuclear. It speaks of Israel being sustained by the fuel of this endeavour for seven years (39:9). A special protective

burying place is given consistent with that of protecting radioactive materials today (39:11). A long seven months will be taken up in the clean up of the land, this is no small endeavour and gives an indication of the intended effort of the enemy (39:12). There will be people employed in the continual clean up operation, even marking the location of bones similar to how dead animals on the side of roads are marked today to warn of contamination (39:13-15).

That in itself is interesting and many Scholars have considered that this event is what may immediately precede the signing of the seven-year peace treaty, (Covenant) with Israel by the Anti Christ that we see in Daniel 9:27. The motivation for this covenant fits perfectly with what God has clearly demonstrated concerning his watchful care of his people.

It's incredible to consider these things, but what is most wonderful to notice is that no matter what is happening in the world today, Christ is in perfect control.

Please dear brethren, don't be anxious about the days to come, but rejoice, rejoice wonderfully as you see the Lord's hand so evident.

Continue to love the people around you, share the wonderful Gospel of Christ to them and above all, be a watchman for them, warning them as a prophet for the present, a prophet to your nation, a prophet who is told the future.

Encourage people everywhere to turn to the Lord and believe in his name.

Chapter 44 sees the Temple of the Lord rebuilt and the Glory of the Lord returned, yes he comes into the temple the way he left.

Ezekiel 44:4

Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house: and I looked, and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord: and I fell upon my face.