

"THE MAN GOD CALLED, "THE SON OF MAN"

(EZEKIEL)

Everyone needs encouragement, but never so much as when one feels as though he has no one to turn to and that God seems to have gone away as well. Ezekiel spent 22 years ministering to the Jews exiled in Babylon.

I. THE TIMES:

1. In Jerusalem:

- (1) Ezekiel, along with 10,000 others had been taken captive to Babylon.
- (2) All the precious vessels and instruments of the Temple had been taken along to Babylon, as captured booty.
- (3) Jeremiah had become very unpopular, as he had been preaching all along that Judah was going into captivity.
- (4) In 587 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar returned and took the rest of Judah back to Babylon after leveling Jerusalem.

2. In Babylon:

- (1) Daniel was among those first brought out of Judah.
- (2) For 11 years 10,000 Judeans lived in Babylon while the rest of their families were still in Jerusalem.
- (3) For 5 of the 11 years, the exiles had no preacher.
- (4) All hope seemed gone because they had been forced to leave.
- (5) False prophets and teachers became plentiful.

II. THE MAN:

1. Ezekiel was greatly influenced by Jeremiah's preaching.
2. He came from the Line of Zadah and was of the aristocracy.
3. He received a dramatic call to preach.
4. Ezekiel didn't begin preaching immediately upon being called.
5. He spent long hours studying his people and after understanding how they felt, he was better able to minister to them.
6. Ezekiel destroyed all their hopes of any early return home.
7. His task was to teach, train, and build up their hope of the future.
8. In order to attract attention, he often did unusual things, such as cutting his hair short, dragging all his possessions around in a sack.
9. Ezekiel, at times, was very harsh, blunt, and uncompromising.

III. THE BOOK: Carefully planned, orderly, systematic, and it is well outlined.

OUTLINE:

- 1 - 24: Certain doom for Jerusalem:
 - 1 - 3: Vision and call of Ezekiel.
 - 4 - 24: Sins denounced.
- 25 - 48: Hope for the Future:
 - 25 - 32: Seven surrounding nations denounced.
 - 33 - 48: Israel to be restored and blessed.
 - 33 - 49: Concerning the people.
 - 40 - 48: Concerning worship in the new temple.
 - 40 - 43: The temple.
 - 44 - 46: Who may enter?
 - 47 - 48: Blessings for all.

IV. LESSONS OF VALUE:

1. God wants everyone saved.
2. Each individual must bear the responsibility of his own sin.
3. The human will is more powerful in determining destiny than either heredity or environment.
4. The minister must not allow personal griefs and disappointments to hurt his ministry.
5. The terrific responsibility that rests upon God's ministers should cause him to be most faithful.
6. Proper emphasis should be placed on ritual if right behavior and conduct is expected.
7. Before one can be effective as a teacher or preacher, he must be able to see the problem from both sides.
8. Only from God is heavenly healing possible.