

Nov 13th 2005: OT review series: Ezekiel 1:1; 2:1—3:15

The book of Ezekiel.....one of those OT books.....so easy to pass by....
Its fairly long.....and uses terms and language.....complex

Yet it's a book that teaches us so much about God.....and how He responds to His people

The settingis Babylon.....The year is 593BC

And Ezekiel is a Jew living in captivity

When Ezekiel was just 17.....he had watched in dismay....as the army of Babylon King Nebuchadnezzar set up a puppet king.....and took several key Jews
It was the beginning of the punishment.....that God had said He would...if.....

IT WAS A WARNING.....YET NOTHING CHANGED

Then 8years later.....the Jews had rebelled against the Babylonian Empire Back came Nebuchadnezzar.....**and this time** the result was a good deal worst 10,000 Jews.....including Ezekiel were marched off in chains to Babylon

For the 25yr Ezekiel this was disastrous

It seems he was a devout Jew.....and because he came from....
He was set to become a Priest.....at the age of 30

But it was imposs to be a priest.....away from Jerusalem....TEMPLE

And so 5 years further on.....we come to the time mentioned in Ezekiel chapter 1
Ezekiel has reached the age.....could become a Priest.....**Yet** he knew it was imposs
And then....as he sat by the river in captivity.....**He saw visions of God**

*I suggest you read thro chapter one.....sense of him struggling to describe....
....the glory of the heavens.....in earthly terms*

then in v25—28.... he sees what he later describes....

as the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord v25-29...
What follows is his description...his call to be....not God's Priest but...Prophet 2:1-5

For the next 22 years Ezekiel was God's prophet in exile

More than any other prophet he was called to act out the message

We find 12 symbolic acts he had to perform

Including laying on his side for 390 days

Shaving his head and beard

Digging a hole through a wall and crawling through it

Remaining tearless at his wife's funeral

The seriousness of message.....was confirmed.....by the outlandish things God....

And it was indeed.....a serious message.....those Jews in exile

For they believed that their exile was a temporary glitch

That God would soon restore Jerusalem.....Take them back.....Never allow Temple

And through His Prophet.....God said the opposite

In the first 24 chapters.....the message is....things will get much worst

You won't be rescued.....Indeed..... The whole population will be exiled

And Jerusalem with its Temple...totally destroyed.....because of the evil...

THEN IN 24.....things change dramatically.....

Ezekiel receives a very definite word from the Lord -→ 24:1-2.....

Then he is told that he must not openly mourn....wife....

As a sign that God would not mourn.....

And so a change happens.....After 24.....Ezekiel's words of judgment

Are mainly against the Nations surrounding Israel.....

Until we read this in 33:21-22.....

The silence about Judah's future was now broken

God's people had sinned grievously..... the punishment had fallen

NOW was the time for God to give them hope and a future

Look with me at 34:11-12..... v16..... and then v23-24.....
Jesus said in John 10:11.....Luke 19:9-10.....

From this point on....book of Ezekiel is full.....of future blessings God will give
And so many of them.....refer to those that Christ makes available to all....sheep

Consider 34:26..... 36: 26-27.....

But for me.....the most wonderful illustrationof what God will do for a people
..or a life given over to Him.....IS contained in chapter 37

37:1-6.....

For the people of Israel.....this miracle actually happened
After 70 years in exile.....Cyrus of Persia conquered.....and not only sent...but..

But its greater fulfillment happened.....with the coming of Jesus Christ....
Once again there was judgment.....but this time God the Son bore it in our place
On the cross of Calvary

And then....after His resurrection.....came forgiveness.....and life etrnal thro the H.S

This is what following Jesus is all about.....Knowing for sure that God has wiped
He has made you a new person in Jesus
He has breathed His Spirit into you.....
And you are alive before God by the power of Jesus

The miracle of Ezekiel 37 has occurred within you

So live out this new life.....**By** faith seek to do things for Jesus that
Depend upon His strength to rise above

And more than anything else.....Be continual in thanksgiving....to Him the Shepherd
...who has promised.....to never leave you.....or forsake you.

