

EZEKIEL

page 5

The future hope and promises for Israel. Ezekiel 33 to 48.

Ezekiel has been giving warnings messages of judgement and the future punishment for Israel and the other nations, but later in this message Ezekiel has a prophecy of a bright future for the people of God. Some discussion on the interpretation of chapters 33-48 has occurred between Bible students. As all the previous messages from God through Ezekiel were literal (being the most normal meaning) and not having a "spiritual" interpretation in their meaning then we should continue to accept the next message in the same way. Any of the basic spiritual thoughts indicated must apply to the Jews and the Church today.

Warnings and promises.

[Ezekiel 33:1 to Ezekiel 35.](#)

The sins of the Jewish Nation. [Ezekiel 33:1-33.](#)

This chapters looks back in the previous messages, God seems to be repeating as a reminder, no one has an excuse for not hearing the Word of God. The message covers the Jewish nation, those in Israel and those in exile in Babylon.

The watchman was a common sight in a walled city in those times, they were stationed on the walls and their job was to watch for danger, they would then sound an alarm. They had to be very faithful to the post and task or the city and people could die. God has called Ezekiel to be the "watchman" for the Jewish nation, but some warnings will apply to other nations,

[Ezekiel 3:19-21,](#)

It was his task to take the warning messages of God to the people.

If the watchman fails then he is guilty of the death of the people. If a person ignores the warnings then that is their fault and they must suffer the consequences,

[Isaiah 56:10.](#)

Ezekiel has faithfully passed on the messages given by God, *"if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; "* verse 9. The Jews have blamed their older generations for their situation, but God makes it clear that each person is responsible for their own actions and the ultimate result.

Again the people felt that God was not fair, they accuse Him of changing the rules. This showed that they had not repented of their sins and failures before God.

Those left behind. [Ezekiel 33:23-29.](#)

The Babylonian's had left some of the poorer Jews behind to look after and tend the land,

[Jeremiah 52:16,](#)

These were now claiming the land for themselves, *"we are many; the land is given us for inheritance."* they felt special, but God said that they had broken His law. He lists some of their sins, therefore, instead they also will be punished, the land will be "rested" as commanded by God,

[2 Chronicles 36:21.](#)

The message of proof arrives. [Ezekiel 33:21-33.](#)

Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonian's in August 14, 586 BC, five months later a Jew, who had escaped, travelled with the news to the Jews in Babylon. This was just as Ezekiel had prophesied, so proving that he was the messenger of God.

Seven years previously God had made Ezekiel mute, unable to speak except with a message from God. On hearing the news, the mouth of Ezekiel is released, after these years of being mute. Even after the proof and the miracle of Ezekiel speaking, the people still did not seek the Word of the Lord in truth, *"Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD."* This was their common joking invitation to each other.

Consider [John 12:44-50.](#)

The Leaders are sinful. [Ezekiel 34:1-31.](#)

The next message was aimed at the leaders of the exiles, at the time. God had already exposed the leaders of the nation,

[Ezekiel 22:1ff.](#)

Verses 1-10: The message referred to the people as "My sheep," Showing that God still cared for them. These officers of government were mis-using the Jewish people they were responsible for, everything they did was for their own benefit. They were abusing, ill treating them and ignoring the needs of the people, the poor, the sick were just used for their own personal gain.

Verses 11-22: God promised to search and rescue His "sheep." The passage speaks of "*gather them from the countries,*" verse 13, so this promise must also refer to the end times.

However, some of the promise cannot refer to the return of the exiles or the future, God will "*gather the sheep*" and protect them, "*I will destroy the fat and the strong.*"

Verses 23-31: The flock is protected, this must be a prophecy for the future, because the remnant did not have a ruler to care for them. Neither did the "showers of blessing" come upon the returning exiles. The prince of verse 24, must be Jesus.

Note that these promises will only apply if they faithfully obey the Word of the Lord and the covenant.

When Jesus Christ rules the world no nation will be permitted to attack or harm the Jewish nation.

The sins of Edom. [Ezekiel 35:1-15.](#)

The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, Jacobs twin brother. "Edom" means "red", the nickname of Esau. He had no interest in the things of God. There was a hatred for the descendants of Jacob, the Jews, because God had chosen Jacob to receive the blessings. The Lord had already made a judgement on Edom,

[Ezekiel 25:12-14,](#)

This is now repeated but with additional details.

Mount Seir was another name for the location of the Edomite's. The message reminded the Edomites that they had assisted the Babylonian's in the destruction of the Jews, therefore they had killed their own blood relatives, the result was that the Edomite nation was to be removed from the earth.

Ezekiel lists the reason for this judgement, against the will of God they were out to take over the lands of Judah and Samaria, which God had given to the Jews. Edom had already been given their own land,

[Deuteronomy 2:1-7.](#)

"thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it: and they shall know that I am the LORD."

"Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD:"

[Ezekiel 36:37.](#)

Following the news about Jerusalem, depression was the main effect on the people in Babylon, if only they had listened to the messages from God they would see a happy future.

Jeremiah had told them that the punishment would last seventy years,

[Jeremiah 29:10,](#)

Now Ezekiel is telling them what the future plans God has for them after the seventy years.

The land is restored. [Ezekiel 36:1-15.](#)

The message was to the "*mountains of Israel,*" the land had been made desolate by the Babylonian's.

The other nations, such as Edom had desired to take over the land, but God was about to overrule their action. God states that He will repay the nations for their actions against the Jews. In addition, Ezekiel tells them that the future will have abundant blessings for the Jews if they obey the covenant.

The Jewish population had learnt the lessons of idol worship so sacrifices will cease on the pagan shrines on the mountains, verses 12-15, "*I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit: and I will settle you after your old estates,*"

The people are made clean. [Ezekiel 36:16-38.](#)

Two sins of the Jews are mentioned, the first was the polluting of the land, verses 16-19. The Holy land, which was given to them by God, had been turned into a land of idol worship, and sacrifice to false gods,

[Leviticus 18:1ff,](#)

God therefore threw them out of His land. The second sin was associated with the witness of the people to the other nations, "*they profaned my holy name,*" verse 20, when they should be showing the glory of God, the punishment was "*for mine holy name's sake.*" Now for His glory and by His grace, God will restore His people.

See [Ephesians 1:3-7](#);

[Ephesians 2:8-10](#).

[Ezekiel 36:24-38](#).

It appears that in the last days, after the Jews have been returned by God to the Promised land, they will be changed in a spiritual way, similar to the action of the Holy Spirit for a Believer.

They will be cleansed of their sinful life in preparation for the new situation, verses 25,29. This act is described in,

[Leviticus 14:1-9](#) ;

[Numbers 8:5-7](#)

Will and only apply to a symbolic cleansing by water.

They will receive a new heart, verse 26, they will know the Lord and the covenant will be in their hearts personally and not just written, therefore they will be open to the Word of God.

Verse 27: *"I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes."* They will receive the Holy Spirit, so proving they are born of God and will seek to please and worship Him,

[Ephesians 1:13,14](#);

[2 Peter 1:1-4](#).

Verses 29,30 and 33-35, They will be blessed by God, as promised in the covenant,

[Leviticus 26:1-13](#).

Three more blessings are listed:

The people will regret and hate their sinful nature, verses 31,32.

A wonderful fellowship with the Lord, able to pray directly to God, not just through a priest, verse 37.

The population will be blessed and fruitful, verse 37,38.

These blessings from God will bring glory to Him.

The Nation will be reborn and united. [Ezekiel 37:1-14](#).

Verses 1-3: Ezekiel was shown many skeletons, possibly the Jewish soldiers killed in a battle, the bodies had not been buried. This is very humiliating for a Jew. The Lord had warned the Jews that this would happen if they turned against Him,

[Deuteronomy 28:25,26](#).

Ezekiel is instructed to walk through the scattered bones, this was an instruction which would not normally be given to a priest, who should not touch dead bodies in any form, it would make them unclean.

Ezekiel is asked, *"Can these bodies live?"* Ezekiel's reply was *"Only you know Lord."* God makes a promise, verse 5,6 after Ezekiel is told to prophesy to the dead bones. The bones come together and flesh appears upon the bones, but the bodies have no life. Ezekiel is now told to prophesy to the wind with words specified by God. The power of God enters the dead bodies and they stand up.

The Lord now gives the meaning of this vision. The dry bones show the whole Jewish nation, a nation which has died but one day, at the command of God, the people will be called from where ever they are, "life" will be given to the "dead nation," they will be restored as a physical nation but the spiritual life will not appear until they see and accept Jesus as their Messiah, then the Holy Spirit will complete the work of the restoration.

The United Kingdom of Israel. [Ezekiel 37:15-28](#).

We now see the last of the "action sermons" by Ezekiel. He takes two sticks, each representing the two Jewish nations, Judah and Samaria. Ezekiel writes the names of the two nations, one on each stick, then states that the two sticks will become one in his hands. Ezekiel then explains that God will one day unite the two nations in their own land, as one nation. A nation humbled under one leader and worshipping God, there will be no more idol worship.

The leader will be the Messiah, a *"prince forever,"* verse 25. God will give them a *"covenant of peace,"* verse 26 and a new place of worship. In chapters 40-48 Ezekiel will be given more information on the new Temple.

The future nation. Ezekiel 38 to 39.

The following chapters are considered the most difficult to interpret, some feel the prophetic words are associated with Armageddon as described in,

[Revelations 16:13-16](#)

[Revelations 19:11-21](#)

But the two events do not align completely. Various other explanations have been produced but none seem to completely agree with the prophetic descriptions.

"Gog" and "Magog" are also referred to in,

[Revelations 20:7-9](#)

But in connection with people from all round the world, while the army described in Ezekiel has only six nations involved and they come from the north. Both events involve an attack on the Jews and they are saved by intervention of God, it is therefore assumed that the prophetic events described in Ezekiel and Revelation are records of future events, but are not the same event.

According to the plan of God as listed in Revelation, the next event is the Rapture of the church, this can happen at any time,

[1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#).

After that will be an agreement of the Jewish nation with the head of a European group of nations for protection,

[Daniel 9:24-27](#).

The time between these two events is not given but the second event starts the seven-year tribulation of [Matthew 24:1-28](#);

[Revelations chapters 9 to 19](#).

On completion of the new Temple in Jerusalem the Antichrist is revealed from the European nations. He will setup his own image in the new temple and force the world to worship him.

[Daniel 9:27](#);

[2 Thessalonians 2:1-12](#);

[Matthew 24:15](#);

[Revelations 13:1ff](#).

Prior to the invasion. [Ezekiel 38:1-13](#).

We must remember that the events now prophesied have no time involved or given, and does not appear to be directly link to the events given in Revelation, however, there must be some connection in time and reason.

The army is lead by a person called Gog, the ruler of "*Magog*", which means "*the land of Gog*," This country was located between the Black sea and the Caspian Sea.

Gog has the title, "*the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal*:" The words "*the chief prince*" can also be translated as "*prince of Rosh*." This country has not been located. Some Bible students feel that "*Rosh*" is Russia, but there is no real proof of this. "*Meshech and Tubal*" are located in eastern Asia Minor.

"*Gomer and Togarmah*" are also in this area. Therefore, this army appears to consist of the following countries, Persia (Iran), Cush (Ethiopia), Put (Libya), Gomer and Togarmah.

Why would these countries want to attack Israel, if a ten country European army was protecting them?

They may just be after the wealth of the land, verse 13, as under the protection of the European Coalition they would have become very rich. In addition, the nations named are all Islamic in their religion, so may be wanting to protect the "Dome on the Rock," the Islamic temple in Jerusalem, this is built in the same position that the Jewish temple was originally built, therefore the Jews will want to build the new replacement temple in the original position, to do this the "Dome on the Rock," will have to be removed first.

Whatever the reason, we read in the verse 4, that God is fully in control of the situation and will protect His people.

The invasion. [Ezekiel 38:14 to 39:8](#).

Prince Gog and his army will attack from the north, "*thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army*," verse 15. This action is as planned by God, He is fully in control.

Before the European protection can act, God causes a great earthquake,

[Ezekiel 38:19,20](#).

The effect of this is to make the army of Gog to panic and start fighting each other. God then sends rain, hailstones, fire and brimstone from heaven, totally destroying the army, it will take seven months to bury the bodies,

[Ezekiel 39:12](#).

In [Ezekiel 39:1-8](#)

The prophecy is referring to the leader Gog of Magog, not only destruction of his army but verse 6, *"I will send a fire on Magog,"* his country will be judged.

Why does the Lord deliberately lead this army into His trap?

"Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD."

[Ezekiel 38:23.](#)

"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."

[Ezekiel 39:7.](#)

The Lord has gathered His people back from every nation and now needs to make them confess His holiness and authority.

What will the leaders of the European Coalition think as "nature" appears to be fighting on their side, will he claim the credit? The building of the temple can now proceed.

Following this invasion. [Ezekiel 39:9-29.](#)

There will be numerous dead bodies following this action by God, the land will need to be cleaned up, so the people from the nearby Jewish cities will collect the weapons and supplies left and burn them, this action will take seven years, verse 9. They will also bury the bodies in a cemetery East of a sea, verse 11. Some believe that this is referring to an area near the Dead Sea.

Due to the time it takes to collect and bury the bodies the wild animals and birds will have a feast, following the invitation of the Lord, verses 17-20.

As a result of this event and action by God *"I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward."*

[Ezekiel 39:21-29.](#)

A warning to the Gentiles that the Lord considers the Jews special.