

# Building Your Life for God

Studies in Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Daniel, Ezekiel, Haggai, & Malachi

[Shaping Hearts for God Curriculum]

## Lesson 5 – Ezekiel Warns the People

### Theme: Righteous Judgment - God's Punishment & Forgiveness

#### Memory Verse - Daniel 6:10

“Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house...[with] windows open toward Jerusalem...and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.”

#### Daily Bible Readings

**Thursday** – Ezekiel 4:1-3, 16-17 - **Friday** – Ezekiel 10:1-4, 18-19 - **Saturday** – Ezekiel 18:1-3, 20-32 - **Monday** – Ezekiel 37:1-14 - **Tuesday** – Ezekiel 43:1-11

#### Questions

- 1) What was Ezekiel to write on the brick?
- 2) Through Ezekiel, God was warning Jerusalem that what was about to happen?
- 3) Would there be much or little food and water in Jerusalem?
- 4) In Ezekiel's vision, what filled the temple court?
- 5) At the end of the vision, God's glory left from where?
- 6) Whose fault is it when you sin?
- 7) Who will be punished for your sin?
- 8) Instead of being punished for sin, what does God desire for all people?
- 9) When the Spirit of God came on him, what did Ezekiel see in the valley?
- 10) What happened to the bones?
- 11) What lesson was God teaching in this vision?

12) True or False. God was willing to dwell among his people if they put away their sin.

13) How should the people of Israel feel about their sin?

14) Do we tend to try and blame others for our sin?

- a. What is the most difficult sin for you to personally accept responsibility for?
- b. What is your plan to help you take full responsibility for this sin?

#### Bible Project Videos

Ezekiel: Part 1 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-CIPu1nko8>

Ezekiel: Part 2 - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDeCWW\\_Bnyw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDeCWW_Bnyw)

#### Teacher Notes:

God had Ezekiel do some unusual things to communicate His message to Israel in Jerusalem. God had Ezekiel write “Jerusalem” on a brick and then “attack the brick by building ramps up the brick to show soldiers coming to attack. This was to demonstrate to the people that if they did not turn back to God and away from their sin, God would send a nation, Babylon, to attack Jerusalem and punish them.

Jerusalem was the most important city in Judah. The Temple of God was there and the King ruled there. If the city fell, this would mean defeat for the whole nation.

God’s people had forgotten Him and started worshipping false gods and idols. God had tried many times to turn them back. He had sent prophets to warn them, but they would not listen. So, the time had come for God to send another nation to punish His people. Ezekiel’s “brick attack” was a warning to the people that this was about to happen.

A proverb is an observation or lesson about life put in a few words. In Ezekiel’s day, people used this proverb: “The fathers eat the sour grapes, but the children’s teeth are set on edge” (Ezekiel 18:2). The proverb means that children can suffer because of their parents’ actions. God commanded Ezekiel not to use this proverb anymore. God wanted people to understand that each person was accountable for their own actions. God said it like this, “People will die because of their own sin” (Ezekiel 18:20). Parents’ actions strongly influence their children. Children may suffer the consequences of their parents’ sin. For example, children may not have the opportunity to attend bible classes and worship every Sunday because their parents don’t want to go or won’t take them.

In the end, everyone must give account for themselves no matter what those around us have done, even our own family members. We want to blame others for our bad decisions. We like to say, "She made me do it." But each person is responsible for their own decisions and actions. We can't blame anyone but ourselves.

One time, the Spirit of the Lord took Ezekiel and set him down in the middle of a valley full of bones. Everywhere he looked, he saw dry and brittle bones. God told Ezekiel to say to the bones, "O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." When Ezekiel said what God wanted him to say, suddenly he heard a rattling sound as bones came together. Flesh grew on the bones and skin covered them. Finally, breath and life came into the bones, and they came alive and stood on their feet! God said the dead, dry bones stood for the people of Israel who were in captivity, away from their homes and without hope. God would take them back to the land of Israel. God forgives and gives life!

When the temple was first built, the glory of the Lord filled it. One day, on his 30th birthday, as he sat by the Chebar canal, the prophet Ezekiel saw a vision of God's glory in Babylon. This vision was of God's glory on His throne-like chariot being wheeled into the Temple. Why was God's glory in Babylon and not in Jerusalem in the Temple? As Ezekiel watched, God's glory moved out of the temple and toward the gate and over to Babylon. God's people kept sinning and would not turn back to Him. Because of this, Ezekiel's vision showed God's glory leaving the temple and leaving His people. Later, Ezekiel sees God's glory coming into the temple and filling the house! God said he would be with His people again if they would turn from their sins. God wanted His people to stop sinning so He could forgive them and be with them.

The message of Ezekiel is one of warning and punishment, and then hope and restoration. We find ourselves in the same position as Israel did. Our sin can harden our hearts and separate us from God, even to the point where His presence is no longer with us. We can become like "dry bones". If we find ourselves in sin, God's word can provide a path to bring us back into a relationship with Him, to renew our hearts and change them from stone to flesh. That is God's desire for all men. He desires that none should perish but that all would come to repentance (1 Peter 3:9). Following God's word makes us "alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:11), and "in Christ we shall all be made alive" (1 Cor 15:22). If we are in Christ we have hope! God has promised the faithful an inheritance and the Spirit is our guarantee of it (Eph 3:13-14).