



Life group lesson – Ezekiel

Week of 11/2/14

Quick Review:

What insight, principle or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be the most helpful, eye opening or troubling?

My Story:

1. Have you ever weathered a severe storm, like Super storm Sandy, that made you wonder if you would get through it? What was that experience like for you?

Digging deeper:

Babylon attacked Jerusalem on three separate occasions, 605BC, 597BC, and 586BC. Each time captives were taken from Jerusalem to Babylon. Ezekiel the prophet was taken to Babylon after the second invasion in 597BC. There in

Babylon he was a prophet to the exiles of Judah (southern Israel). He acted out many of his messages. His primary message was to warn those in Babylon that they would not be going home from captivity as soon as they were being told they were by the false prophets. Instead of God rescuing Jerusalem, it along with its beloved temple would soon be destroyed. This was not a very popular message to the captives in Babylon and so Ezekiel was not well received at first. But after the temple was destroyed in 586BC and Ezekiel proven correct his status as a prophet increased. Along with declaring the destruction of the city of Jerusalem he also prophesied the nation's restoration to the land and the rebuilding of its temple. Ezekiel's message therefore was filled with warnings of punishment but also hope for the future.

1. In his sermon Pastor Bob made reference to the fact that Ezekiel was given a vision of the glory of God three times: chapter 1; chapter 8; and chapter 43. What are the three questions these three visions address and how do they relate to us today?
2. In Ezekiel 1:1-4 Ezekiel is given a vision of God coming in a storm from the north. A common belief was that God was a local deity. Therefore His coming to the Israelites in Babylon was significant. What message do you think that sent to the captives?
2. Discuss the glory of God that Ezekiel saw. Ezekiel saw God arriving in a cloud chariot upon his throne. It is easier to understand this chapter if you work from his throne at the end of the chapter back to the angels surrounding it. His throne is mentioned in Ezekiel 1:26. The platform of the throne is mentioned in Ezekiel 1:22 (firmament). The wheels of the chariot are mentioned in Ezekiel 1:15. Beside these wheels are four angels called cherubim in Ezekiel 1:5. (If you feel you have time you may want to read as you go along.)

4. In Ezekiel 8 Ezekiel is given a vision of God's glory leaving the temple. Read Ezekiel 8:6. What is the significance of this?
5. Read Ezekiel 43:3-4. The glory of the Lord returns back to the temple after the land of Israel is destroyed. What is the message to God's people here and how would that have encouraged them?
6. Ezekiel can be outlined as follows: Ezekiel 1-24 are messages concerning Judah and Jerusalem; Ezekiel 25-32 are messages concerning the nations surrounding Judah; and Ezekiel 33-43 are messages of restoration. The messages concerning the nations speak of the consequences of these nations being hostile to God's people. What is the message here?

Taking It Home

This week we saw that Ezekiel was exiled along with Judah. He experienced all that the other exiles did. However, God used Ezekiel to bring not only messages of warning about judgment, but also messages of encouragement concerning the restoration. Ezekiel went through the trials and tribulations along with the other exiles, but despite his stormy circumstances, he was used to bring encouragement. Have you been through a storm in your life that God might use to bring encouragement to someone else? Ask God to show you others who might be going through storms similar to yours, then reach out to them and encourage them. Use your testimony to bring hope to someone who is in the midst of a storm.

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