

“When God Gives You a Message!”

1. Intro:

- 1.1. After the **vision** came the **voice!** (read 1:28)
 - 1.1.1. So we left off with Ezekiel face down in humble worship.
 - 1.1.2. Before He could understand the sin of the people he needed a
- 1.2. **Q:** Have you ever felt God was nudging you to talk to someone, about something?
 - 1.2.1. **Q:** What if we know they're **not** going to listen to us?
 - 1.2.2. **Q:** What if we're **scared**?
 - 1.2.3. **Q:** What if **they look** really scary?
 - 1.2.4. **Q:** What if **they say** really mean things?
 - 1.2.5. **Q:** What if **you** don't like God's message to them?
- 1.3. **Q:** What do we do if God gives us a message for someone?

2. EZEKIEL'S COMMISSION! (2:1-3:3)

- 2.1. **Son of man** – used **93** times. Emphasizes the frailty & true humanity of the prophet
 - 2.1.1. Applied to **Christ**, it took on a unique meaning, & was basically synonymous with *Son of God*.
- 2.2. **TO AN UNFAITHFUL PEOPLE!** (2:1-5)
- 2.3. **WHO THEY ARE!**
- 2.4. His message is directed to the nation of Israel.
 - 2.4.1. Specifically it will be to the **people of Judah** who are **in exile** in Babylon.
- 2.5. **WHAT THEY ARE!**
- 2.6. They are **rebellious**, **impudent**(*stiff faced*), & **stubborn**(*hard hearted*).
- 2.7. **Whether they hear or refuse** (5)
 - 2.7.1. We have a phrase, “Don't shoot the messenger”.
 - 2.7.1.1. The response is immaterial/irrelevant to the messenger.
 - 2.7.2. With us, God's concerned with **the delivery**.
 - 2.7.2.1. If you've ever **served someone papers**, you only have to make sure you get them in there hand.
 - 2.7.3. It's the **Cal-Trans worker** putting up the signs whether people are going to believe/heed them or not. {Warning Bridge Not Safe; Sharp Turn Ahead; Do Not Pass}
 - 2.7.3.1. Some signs aren't so clear – “*Slow Men working*” (Which way do they mean that? 😊)
 - 2.7.4. **His success** would **not** be based upon the public response to his message, **but** fulfillment of the divine commission.

- 2.8. (5) This was **no rosy picture** for Ezekiel, like the slogan used to read, “**Join The Navy And See the World**”.
- 2.8.1. No it was more, “Join the Prophets! Where you can get **poked & pricked & can sit on Scorpions!**”
- 2.8.2. No, you didn’t **sign up** for this, you were **compelled**.
- 2.9. **WITH A FAITHFUL MESSAGE!** (2:6-3:3)
- 2.10. **EZEKIEL GETS THE SERMON HE NEEDS!**
- 2.11. (6) **Briers, thorns, & scorpions** – Symbols of the trials he’d suffer.
- 2.11.1. **Briers** = a thorny wild plant, especially a trailing rose.
- 2.11.2. You’ve met these thorny people right?
- 2.12. Ultimately Ezekiel,...be **Fearless & Faithful!**
- 2.13. (7) We just need to make sure they’re **God’s words** & not **our opinion**, nor **our personal convictions**. (If they are, say they are & why)
- 2.14. (10) Scrolls were usually written on only **one side** - rarely both sides.
- 2.14.1. The scroll given to Ezekiel, was written on both sides, thus indicating the **extensiveness of the troubles** that were to come upon them.
- 2.14.2. **Something like this is meant in Revelation 5:1.**¹
- 2.15. (3:2) God fed him the scroll. – Eat & it becomes part of you.
- 2.16. (3) It was **sweet**, even though a message of judgment, it was **just & appropriate**.
- 2.16.1. **Q: If you were on a jury, & had a boat load of evidence against a serial murderer, would it be difficult to read the **guilty** verdict?**
- 2.17. They would be **stubborn & rebellious**, **yet** he was to be **strong & courageous**.

3. **EZEKIEL’S INSTRUCTIONS!** (3:4-27)

- 3.1. **TO THE NATION ISRAEL!** (4-11)
- 3.2. **EZEKIEL GETS THE STRENGTH HE NEEDS!** (8,9)
- 3.3. Even the greatest of prophets got weak knees!
- 3.4. Like **adamant**(unbreakable) **stone, harder than flint** –
- 3.4.1. **Is.50:7 “For the Lord GOD will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.”**
- 3.4.2. **Luke 9:51,52 “Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before His face.”**

¹Freeman, J. M., & Chadwick, H. J. (1998). *Manners & customs of the Bible*. "Rewritten and updated by Harold J. Chadwick"

- 3.5. God needed a stubborn prophet for a stubborn people.
- 3.5.1. Stubborn, meaning ***persistent*** in conveying the message to the depraved nation.
- 3.5.2. Like a **knife blade being tempered** (hot/cold, hot/cold, the metal is “toughened” by tempering)
- 3.5.2.1. A **blacksmith** would often **sing a familiar song** so as to gauge the time he would **heat** what he was working on.
- 3.5.3. “**God’s eye is on the thermometer, & his hand on the thermostat!**”
- 3.6. **REFLECTION!** (10,11)
- 3.7. Before delivering the message, allow it to **sink down deep in your own heart!**
- 3.7.1. Own the seriousness/gravity/weightiness of the message 1st.
- 3.8. **TO THE EXILES IN BABYLON!** (12-15)
- 3.9. Maybe what this means is that he is assuming the attitude of God, i.e. being embittered & angry in his spirit.
- 3.9.1. **Q: If God was mad at them, should His prophet have a smile?**
- 3.9.2. He felt the **same emotions** toward Israel’s sin, as God did.
- 3.10. **I sat where they sat** – he walked a mile in their moccasins.
- 3.10.1. He sat with them, & **identified with their pain!**
- 3.11. **A WATCHMAN!** (16-21)
- 3.12. Ezekiel assumes the role of **spiritual watchman**.
- 3.13. A **watchman’s** responsibility was to stand on the protective wall surrounding the city & watch for possible invaders.
- 3.13.1. The physical welfare of the people was in his hands.
- 3.13.2. If he saw an invading army, he sounded the trumpet, warning the people of an impending invasion.
- 3.13.3. If he failed, he forfeited his life.²
- 3.14. It is a serious thing to be a **watchman**, for the destiny of **precious souls** is at stake!
- 3.14.1. A watchman must be **alert** to every situation, & must **not be afraid** to sound the alarm.
- 3.14.2. **Have you ever went past a speed trap & then after flashed your head lights to warn other motorist to slow down don’t so they get a ticket?**
- 3.15. False watchmen are **not faithful**, & will have much to answer for at the judgment.
- 3.15.1. Paul was a faithful watchman who was able to say, “**I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.**” Acts 20:26-27
- 3.16. **His blood required at your hand** – meant the prophet would forfeit his life.

² Shepherds Notes; pg.10

- 3.17. **Four scenarios:** (17-21)
- 3.18. [1] Prophet **doesn't warn**; wicked doesn't repent; sinner dies + prophet dies.
- 3.19. [2] Prophet **warns**; sinner doesn't repent; sinner dies + prophet lives.
- 3.20. [3] Prophet **doesn't warn**; *backslidden righteous person* doesn't repent; backslider dies + prophet dies.
- 3.21. [4] Prophet **warns**; sinner **repents**; sinner lives + prophet lives.
- 3.22. Little did he know the price he would have to pay to be a watchman, but he was **faithful!**
- 3.23. **Q: Who has God made us spiritual watchmen over?**
- 3.23.1. Your family, your wife, your kids, your Sunday School classroom, a ministry, your neighbor, all the lost in the world that you come in contact with?
- 3.24. **Q: Aren't we responsible at all if we don't share the gospel with others?**
- 3.24.1. **Q: Is there any blood on us?**
- 3.24.2. Paul was sure thinking about it above!
- 3.25. **IN HIS HOUSE!** (22-27)
- 3.26. The Lord **empowered** Ezekiel (22)
- 3.26.1. 1st be empowered by the Lord.
- 3.27. The Lord **revealed** His glory to Ezekiel (23)
- 3.27.1. 2nd allow yourself to be awestruck by the awesomeness of God.
- 3.28. The Spirit **entered** Ezekiel (24)
- 3.28.1. 3rd be centered on the Holy Spirit.
- 3.29. The Lord **restricted** Ezekiel (25,26)
- 3.29.1. Likely a figure of speech.
- 3.29.2. A prophets **solitude & silence** were signs to the people that God was **angry** with them for rejecting His Word.
- 3.29.3. He is imprisoned in his own house, where God temporarily causes him to be unable to speak.
- 3.29.4. 4th be ready for spiritual left turns.
- 3.30. The Lord **prohibited** him from speaking **unless** He gave Ezekiel a message (27)
- 3.30.1. 5th wait, wait, & again I say **wait!**
- 3.30.2. 2 Sam.18:22 Joab says to Ahimaaz **“Why will you run,...since you have no news ready?”**
- 3.31. Ezekiel was **filled** w/the Spirit. He **listened** to the Word of God. He **fed on** the Word of God, which gave him what he needed to **speak** God's Word.
- 3.32. Ezekiel knew that he had been called at a **difficult time**, to a **difficult work**, with a **difficult people**, & yet he obeyed the Lord.
- 3.33. The Lord has given you a place on the wall to stand on.
- 3.33.1. **Q: Are you still standing there today? Q: Have you continued to blow the trumpet though it may cost you position, friendships, or status? Q: Do people know where U stand? Q: Have you warned anyone lately?**
- 3.34. **End: Albania Team** - Larry, Donna, Brandon , Erica, Kim, Jennifer, & Norma.