

“Ezekiel Plays in the Dirt!”

## 1. Intro:

- 1.1. A member of the Albanian Team will share – Brandon Smith.
- 1.2. **Prayer:** The Greeks had a race in their Olympic games that was unique. The winner was not the runner who finished first. **It was the runner who finished with his torch still lit.** I want to run all the way with the flame of my torch still lit for Him.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.3. Ezekiel uses both **visual aids** & **4 action sermons** to describe the *tragic spiritual decline* among the people of Israel.
  - 1.3.1. He uses 4 illustrations as symbols to communicate Gods heart.
- 1.4. **Outline:** Ezekiel’s **Sandbox**; Ezekiel’s **Sleeping Habits**; Ezekiel’s **BBQ**; Ezekiel’s **Haircut**.
  - 1.4.1. Or, The **Fact** of the Siege; The **Length** of the Siege; The **Severity** of the Siege; The **Results** of the Siege.
- 1.5. Let’s roll up our sleeves & jump into *Ezekiel’s Sandbox* with him!

## 2. [1] EZEKIEL’S SANDBOX! (4:1-3)

- 2.1. **The Fact of the Siege!**
- 2.2. **The Symbols!** (1,2)
- 2.3. **Clay Tablet** – **Soft clay tablet** Babylon used as a writing pad; **sun-baked brick**.
  - 2.3.1. Shape of Jerusalem was so distinct, so it was **easy to sketch**, & was **easily recognized**.
- 2.4. **Lay siege against it** – “Play war”.
  - 2.4.1. **Siege wall**/earthen towers – Walls of dirt erected all around Jerusalem. It protected the offensive army from arrows from walls.
  - 2.4.2. **Mound/Ramp** - Smooth incline to be able to push siege towers & battering rams up it.
  - 2.4.3. **Set up Camps** – To cut off any supplies. No relief. No escape.
  - 2.4.4. **Battering Rams** – constant hammering gradually weakening city walls
- 2.5. **Iron Plate** – Probably signifying the **barrier** between God & His people.
  - 2.5.1. **Q:** Can we as His children today cause a barrier to exist between us?
    - 2.5.1.1. Sure, a barrier in **fellowship**, because of sin or our leaving 1<sup>st</sup> love; a barrier in **prayer**, thus Him not hearing(answering) them.
    - 2.5.1.2. **Read** Ezek.6:9 – God was **crushed** by their sin! ☹️

<sup>1</sup> Fan The Flame, J. Stowell, Moody, 1986, p. 32

2.5.2. Eph.4:30 **Do not grieve the H.S.** - God is **saddened & disappointed** when His people fail to live up to their **new nature**.

2.5.2.1. A friend of **Vance Havner** coined a word by combining the words **squelch** and **quench**. He used to say, "**Don't squench the Spirit.**" [**Squelch**(silence) and **quench**(extinguish)]

2.6. **The Significance!** (3)

2.7. The Babylonian army, like an **iron wall**, will soon surround Jerusalem.

### 3. [2] **EZEKIEL'S SLEEPING HABITS!** (4:4-8)

3.1. **The Length of the Siege!**

3.2. **The Symbols!** (5-7)

3.3. **Lie on Left Side** – **390** days for the years of **Israel's** sin.

3.4. **Lie on Right Side** – **40** days for the years of **Judah's** sin.

3.5. **Lie on his Back w/arms tied** -

3.6. **The Significance!** (4,8)

3.7. Each day(390 + 40) represents on year of punishment.

3.8. On back w/**arms tied** – depicts the **helplessness** of Jerusalem against the Babylonian attack. [representing Israel's inability to escape the captivity]

### 4. [3] **EZEKIEL'S BBQ!** (4:9-17)

4.1. **The Severity of the Siege!**

4.2. **The Symbol!** (9-15)

4.3. **Food & water rationing?** – as the people in Jerusalem will do when there is a **scarcity of food**, because of the Babylon invasion.

4.4. **6 Grain bread** – Normally, Israelites would use only wheat; mixing the wheat w/courser grains like barley was a sign of **poverty & famine**.

4.5. He's to prepare a meager meal & cook it over dried cow **dung** [better than option #1]

4.5.1. How he must have desired a *George Foreman Grill* about now!

4.6. Actually **dung** was used in the Middle east because of scarcity of wood(*still is*).

4.6.1. It is mixed with **straw**. Allowed to **dry**. It **burnt slowly**.

4.6.2. **But...gave off an unpleasant odor!**

4.6.3. **Human Dung?** – Repulsive!

4.6.4. **Q: Why the shock treatment?** I think to show what "*defiled*" looks like in God's eyes & smells like in God's nostrils.

4.6.4.1. Defile = *pollute, soil, contaminate*.

4.7. **The Significance!** (16,17)

4.8. This is a **warning** that the people of Israel will be **forced to eat defiled food** among the nations where God will drive them.

4.8.1. **Daniel**(in captivity) – **Dan.1:5,8,12,15**

- 4.8.2. Peter – Acts 10:14 **But Peter said, “Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.”**
- 4.9. **They had left their 1<sup>st</sup> love!** [Revive = to make alive again]
- 4.9.1. Warren Wiersbe said; “God would rather see His land devastated, the city of Jerusalem ruined, His temple destroyed, and His people killed and exiled, **than** to have them give such a false witness to the Gentile nations. Judgment begins with the people of God.”
- 4.10. I pray that God would find **us** a people whose hearts are totally devoted to him.
- 4.10.1. That we are **interceding** for our community and nation.
- 4.10.2. That we are praying for **revival**.
- 4.10.3. That we are **looking within ourselves** to make sure we are **right with God**.
- 4.11. *Stephen Olford* once said that revival is “**an invasion from heaven that brings a conscious awareness of God.**” 😊
- 4.12. **Revival is** “that sovereign work of God in which He visits His own people, restoring and releasing them into the fullness of His blessing.” *Robert Coleman*.
- 4.13. **Revival is** “A true revival means nothing less than a **revolution**, casting out the spirit of **worldliness**, making God’s love **triumph** in the heart.” *Andrew Murray*.
- 4.14. True revival is the people of God **returning to their first love for God** and **sharing that love with the world**.
- 4.14.1. We should pray that God would do this in **US!**

## 5. **[4] EZEKIEL’S HAIRCUT! (5:1-17)**

- 5.1. **The Results of the Siege!**
- 5.2. **The Symbol!** (1-4)
- 5.3. He is to shave both his **head & beard** & is to place the hair into **3 equal parts**.
- 5.3.1. Baldness may be in style today, but this’d be a real sacrifice for a Jew
- 5.3.2. It spoke of mourning, or shame, humiliation, disgrace.
- 5.3.2.1. It symbolized Israel’s broken covenant w/the Lord.
- 5.3.3. **1<sup>st</sup> part burned; 2<sup>nd</sup> part struck w/the sword; 3<sup>rd</sup> part scattered by wind; small portion hidden in his fold of robe.**
- 5.4. **The Significance!** (5-17)
- 5.5. Vs.12 interprets: This is to predict that 1/3 of Jerusalem’s people will soon **die by petilence/famine**; another 3<sup>rd</sup> **die by the sword**(invasion); & the final 3<sup>rd</sup> will be scattered as they **fled the devastated city**.
- 5.5.1. Few strands, remnant that would **be saved**.
- 5.6. **Q: Why was God angry with his people?**
- 5.6.1. Because they **rebelled against His law**(6);
- 5.6.2. Because they **defiled His temple**(11);

- 5.6.3. Because they **did more abominations** than the heathen nations around them(5,6).
- 5.6.4. Because they **did not glorify the Lord** but used all His blessings to promote their sin.
- 5.7. Knowledge brings responsibility!
- 5.7.1. To whom much is **given**, much **will be demanded**.
- 5.7.2. **Q:** What are we doing with the knowledge we have of the Word of God? [Very important to me this few years]
- 5.7.3. **Q:** Are we responding to it? [If you are great, don't always think you're not!]
- 5.7.4. **Q:** Is it shaping our lives in godliness?<sup>2</sup>
- 5.8. Some Christians are less "*Christian*" in their lives than many who reject or ignore **Christ**. In the light of these verses what may we infer to be **God's attitude** to this sad fact?
- 5.9. 390 years is a long time to continue in sin!
- 5.9.1. We can only marvel at the **long-suffering** of the Lord!
- 5.9.2. **Q:** As you look back on **your life**, has the Lord been Long-suffering in your life?
- 5.10. **End:** Remember the Greeks race. The winner was not the runner who finished 1<sup>st</sup>. **It was the runner who finished with his torch still lit.**
- 5.10.1. Let's run all the way, with the flame of our torch **still lit** for Him.

---

<sup>2</sup> Shepherd's Notes; pg.13.