

SUMMER QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2017

THEME – RESPONDING TO THE MASTER’S CALL AS A PROPHET

UNIT II – CALLING OF PROPHETS

“GOD CALLS AND ASSIGNS EZEKIEL”



Sunday School Lesson No. VIII – July 23, 2017

Lesson Presented by Rev. Frank A. Davis, III ~ Pastor-Teacher

Lesson Text: Ezekiel 3:1-11

Required Reading: Ezekiel Chapters 1 through 3

Motto Text: Ezekiel 3:10-11 (NLT), “Then he added, “Son of man, let all my words sink deep into your own heart first. Listen to them carefully for yourself. Then go to your people in exile and say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says!’ Do this whether they listen to you or not.”

Reliable Resources: Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Standard Lesson Commentary; Logos Bible Software; Precepts for Living (UMI); Cruden’s Concordance; Life Application Bible Notes; Bible Exposition Commentary (OT); Bible Notes by H. L. Wilmington; Children’s Ministry Resource Bible

Introduction

Beloved, we are again challenged to view highlights of another of God’s great prophets who is called out from humanity to serve God and His people. Our character is called Ezekiel, whose name means “*God Strengthens.*” In order to appreciate this giant of a Godly servant, let us note several highlights concerning his life from one of a few resources.

From “Insights into Ezekiel” (Children’s Ministry Resource Bible, p. 992):

“Ezekiel: God’s Prophet in Babylon

Ezekiel was born into the family of a priest named Buzi who was in the family line of Zadok. When he was about twenty-five years old, he was captured by the Babylonians and taken as a prisoner of war to Nippur, a suburb of Babylon....Five years after Ezekiel arrived in Babylon (1:2), God called him to preach and share his message to those living in exile (2:1-10). There Ezekiel preached for twenty-two years, during the same time the prophet Jeremiah was preaching back in the region around Jerusalem.

Ezekiel's Message

Ezekiel's message was one of judgment. Israel had rebelled against God (2:3), and Ezekiel explained that God was using the captivity to punish them for their sins as a nation and as individuals (7:1-27). These sins included pride, materialism, idleness, and selfishness (16:48-51). The prophet urged the Israelites to repent of their sins and turn back to God (33:14-20).

Although the book of Ezekiel is long, it has an orderly structure. After a brief introductory section about the prophet and the nature of his mission (chs. 1-3), the book falls naturally into three main divisions: judgment on the nation of Judah (chs. 4-24); judgment on the surrounding nations (chs. 25-32); and future blessing for Israel (chs. 33-48). Ezekiel received many of his prophetic messages from God in a series of visions. Visions were trancelike messages received while the prophet was awake...

In addition to recording his visions, Ezekiel used parables, signs, and symbols to dramatize God's message to His exiled people. The most touching sign in the Book of Ezekiel deals with the death of the prophet's wife. God revealed to Ezekiel that his wife would die (24:15, 16). Ezekiel was commanded not to grieve her death; he was to steel himself for this tragedy even as God had prepared Himself for the death of His beloved city (24:17-22). This harsh message emphasized the seriousness of sin and suffering it causes God. God's anguish over our sin – for which He must judge us – led Him to give His own Son to redeem us."

Anticipated Power Points:

- **The Prophet's Preparation. Ezekiel 3:1-3**
- **The Prophet's Proclamation. Ezekiel 3:4-9**
- **The Prophet's Potentiality. Ezekiel 3:10-11**

LESSON OUTLINE EXPRESSED

I. The Prophet's Preparation. Ezekiel 3:1-3

The prophet's preparation reaches all the way back into chapters one and two. His job was not easy but with Godly obedience it was without question, possible! Psalm 119:11, "*Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*" One cannot hide the Word in their heart if they have not digested it in their system. When one loves and honors God, His Word is sweet as honey.

II. The Prophet's Proclamation. Ezekiel 3:4-9

The message was received by the prophet whole-heartedly. Jehovah's Words should be "*a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway.*" The true servant of God receives from God and delivers to those to whom God sends them. Ezekiel is warned that God's people will reject the message but he is to deliver it and not be afraid or dismayed! Even the enemies of God would have received the message, but God's people rejected it. Beloved, would that we who carry the truth might do it with joy and not grief. "*Let God be true and every man a liar!*" Romans 3:4

The preparations of God are more than adequate for the assignment. God made Ezekiel's head like a diamond for strength, that whatever clashed against it could not penetrate his commitment to the will and calling of God. God's servant had the strength of a battering ram! The hymnist wrote, "*Be not dismayed whatever betide... God will take care of you.*"

III. The Prophet's Potentiality. Ezekiel 3:10-11

The assignment to Ezekiel was further reinforced by Jehovah. Be sure that God's Word is in your heart! Jesus overcame the devil in the wilderness because He had the Word in His heart, and that's the only way for the prophet, or you and me to reach our divine potential.

CLOSING

When one flies on a commercial airline, he is told to be sure that if the air pressure changes in the cabin, to put on his own oxygen mask before assisting others! Beloved, Jesus Christ wants us to be sure, very sure of our relationship with Him. Then and only then can we carry out our calling and Divine assignment in this wicked society. Proverbs 3:5-6, "*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*"

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LOOKING AHEAD:

July 30, 2017

Amos 7:10-17

Please join us each Wednesday noon at Bibleway where Pastor Davis teaches the Sunday School lesson.