

**Part 1, Week Three: The Storm, the Coming Judgment, “Ezekiel:”
“God hardens” – Ezekiel 1-3**

We’re not done working Ezekiel 1-3, so we will revisit it again this week. Please take out your worksheets and reread all of these three chapters again, letting your mind reinforce all that we’ve already worked through during the first two weeks of study. Reread your notes along the way, also.

Day 1 – Why did the LORD Come in a Storm?

Let’s make a list again of the descriptive words Ezekiel used to explain what he saw in this vision of the storm cloud:

“a storm wind”
coming from the north
a great cloud with fire flashing forth continually
a bright light around it
in its midst something like glowing metal in the midst of the fire
figures within the great cloud were four living beings
in midst of beings something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches darting back and forth among the beings
the fire was bright
lightning was flashing from the fire
the living beings ran to and fro like bolts of lightning
from above the expanse was a figure with the appearance of a man, from His loins upward and downward He appeared like fire, glowing metal

Why was God’s flying chariot throne depicted as a storm cloud with “burning coals of fire?” What were these “burning coals of fire” meant to tell us about God’s purpose for His manifestation of His glory here at this particular time in Jewish history?

Please read Exodus 27:1-8, 38:14, Leviticus 1, 6:8-13 in your Bibles. From what material was the outer court altar made?

Why was this outer court altar covered with bronze?

What was the purpose of this altar? See burnt offerings in Lev. 1, grain offerings in Lev. 2, peace offerings in Lev. 3, sin offerings in Lev. 4, 5, the instructions for priests concerning the offerings in Lev. 6, 7, and the Day of Atonement in Lev. 16.

What was the purpose for the horns on all four corners of the altar? See Lev. 4:7, 18.

Why would the priests need pails for removing ashes and shovels, basins, forks and fire pans?

What would the priest transfer to the animal to be sacrificed on that altar? See Lev. 1:1-4.

Would the innocent animal bear the judgment of God for the sins of the people? What does that word, “judgment” mean? Why does God have to judge sin? Use a dictionary and also check out “to judge,” in your Vines’ Expository Dictionary on pp. 125-126.

In Isaiah’s commissioning as a prophet (Isaiah 6), the angel takes a hot coal from the altar with tongs and touches it to Isaiah’s lips and says to Isaiah that his iniquity is taken away and his sin is forgiven. What was the purpose of the altar that the angel took the burning coal from and why did the touching of the burning coal to Isaiah’s lips forgive him of his sin? See Lev. 6:8-13.

Now, once again, why did God appear to Ezekiel as a storm wind with all the descriptive imagery above and specifically the “burning coals of fire? What was God coming to do to Israel?

Days 2-3 – God’s Conditional Covenant with the Israelites

Please read the giving of the Law in Exodus 20:1-26 and also the recap of the Law in Deuteronomy 5:6-27. The giving of the Law was written in two portions, that which was the Law concerning the relationship Israel was to have with Jehovah God and that which was the Law concerning the relationships the Israelites were to have with each other. Thus, the golden rule which sums up all the Law: Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, and might, and love thy neighbor as thyself.

What two commandment(s) of the Law had the Israelites violated at the time of Ezekiel’s prophesying?

Please read about the second law the Israelites violated which is explained in more detail in Leviticus 25:1-22. Sadly, the Israelites never celebrated a year of Jubilee. What was this second law? Why was this violation so hideous to God? What did this violation show about the character of the Israelites?

Now, I would like you to read Moses' rehash of the Law written down during the last days of Moses' life. Begin your reading in Deuteronomy 29 and continue to the end of chapter 30.

Answer from the Deuteronomy passage. What was the conditional covenant or law that God made with the Israelites and which the Israelites agreed to obey? See 29:15-20.

Now, continue reading in Deuteronomy 31:14-22. Did God know ahead of time that the Israelites would break His Law and worship other gods?

Did God tell Moses just exactly how it would be for the Israelites when they did bow to other gods and forsake Jehovah God? Read Deuteronomy 28:15-68. For bringing a nation against them, see Deut. 28:25-26, 49-50. For famine in eating their children, see Deut. 28:51-57, 38-40. For plagues, see Deut. 28:21-22, 27, 59-63. For captivity, see Deut. 28:32, 41, 64.

Did God tell Moses ahead of time that He would take the Israelites into captivity for their failure to observe the Law He had given them? See Deut. 28: 64-68.

I know that there has been a lot of reading to do for these two days, but the one thing I want you to understand concerning all of this is that God was justified in His anger against the Jews' willful disobedience. He warned them ahead of time and He displayed longsuffering and mercy towards them for the many years leading up to their captivity. They had provoked God and God now had to carry out His wrath against their sinfulness. God had tried absolutely everything to bring them back to Himself (see Isaiah 1), but they were stubborn and rebellious and wanted their own way as well as their chosen gods. The Jews, who forsook Him, were killed by the sword or by pestilence. Those who remained faithful were taken away to Babylon for 70 years, one year for each of the Sabbaths the land was not given rest, (or for 490 consecutive years that the land was not given its Sabbath rest).

Day 4 – Promise of Salvation from Death to Individuals or to the Whole House of Israel

All of this reading and understanding brings us back to the questions which I asked in lesson two, reprinted for you here:

Do you think the encouragement, the strengthening Ezekiel gave to the people (week 1) was for the whole house of Israel or only for those individuals who comprised or who would make up the Remnant of that time? What had God seen in both houses of Israel and Judah that would lead Him to raise up first the Assyrians (the northern kingdom – approximately 100 years before) and then the Babylonians (the southern kingdom) to take away His people from their land? Would God carry out the judgment sentence on the

entire nation including the Remnant who had been faithful to Him? Were there already those in Babylon who had been taken captive who were part of the faithful Remnant?

Please read Ezekiel 3:16-21 again. Who are the two types of Israelites, here?

The two types of Israelites here are those who were going to be saved from death and those who were going to die because God judged them for their sin in turning away from him. Of the former group, we have those who have remained faithful to God's covenant (as best they could in their own strength) and those who turned back to Him and repented of their evil deeds in worshiping other gods. The latter group is made up of those who will physically die in these sieges at the end of the Babylonians' sword, from pestilence/disease, or from starvation. These are those Israelites who were once righteous (according to the Law) and have since turned away from Him and those Israelites who have always been opposed to God and refuse to repent and come to Him. This passage of Scripture is not talking about eternal salvation, only salvation or deliverance from death. Those who were worshipers of idols were going to die; those who worshipped Jehovah God would be sent into captivity. During their time in captivity, the remainder of the Jews was completely broken of their idolatrous ways.

So, you may ask, were there any among the captivity, who had bowed down to other gods but had not yet repented and turned back to God? From what I know of God, those whom He knew would eventually turn or return to Him, He would keep alive until that point in time when they would repent and return. We see God's longsuffering for those who are and who will be His, even in the words Ezekiel was to speak to each of these groups; by Ezekiel's words, God was prodding them one more time to make that right choice.

I would like us to do a word study here. Please look up the word "Ezekiel" and the word "hardened" in your concordance. Write down the numbers and the English transliteration of the Hebrew words associated with these two words below and also their meanings.

Ezekiel

Hardened

The word for "hardened," in the Hebrew (hazaq) forms part of the Hebrew word for the name of "Ezekiel," (yechezgel).¹ In week one, we said that Ezekiel's name meant, "God strengthens." According to the words for "Ezekiel" and "hardened" above, his name also means, "God hardens." God strengthened Ezekiel by making his head as hard as those heads of the stubborn Israelites. Ezekiel would not waiver from his God-given

¹ These two words, "hazaq" and "yechezgel" are transliterations of the Hebrew words.

responsibilities and he would not be at the mercy of the words of the rebellious Israelites because of what God had done in hardening his head. For those of you who do have a Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament words, please look up "to be strong" in the Hebrew word portion of the book on pp. 250-251 and write down what it says in the blank space provided below.

How did God strengthen Ezekiel when Ezekiel went out to the plain where God spoke to him again in chapter 3:22-27? What did Ezekiel have to do before God strengthened him?

What did God tell Ezekiel to do in 3:24?

Why was Ezekiel to shut himself up in his house? Think here what the people will do with Ezekiel's words.

What will God do when He wants Ezekiel to speak to the people?

Day 5– Personal Application

After all of this study this week, answer the following questions as honestly as you can; remember that these questions are meant for me as much as they are meant for you:

How do you feel about the way God carries out justice? Do you think that He is right in His acts of justice?

How do you feel about His patience or longsuffering? Do you think that He could have been a little bit more patient with the Israelites than He was? Do you think He could be a bit more patient with you?

If you had been an Israelite in the midst of these sieges on Jerusalem, would you have believed Ezekiel who was prophesying doom for Israel or the other prophets who were saying Jerusalem would soon be delivered? Whom would you have liked to believe? Defend your position.

Is life fair?

Is God fair?

What does “fair” mean?

Does God provide all with the choice of salvation? Or is God just providing the accessible western culture with this knowledge and this choice? Would He be fair if He didn't allow the whole world to know the way of salvation? Would He be fair if He didn't allow the whole world to have the opportunity to know His Son, Jesus Christ? Please read Romans 9:14-24 and Romans 10:11-21 with emphasis on 10:18. What is the key to eternal salvation in the above two Roman passages?

Have you ever wanted to be God's spokesperson? What motive was there behind the desire? After viewing Ezekiel's lot as a prophet, would you want to be a prophet of God in our day?

Who is called to be a prophet of God in our day? What is their source of prophecy? Does God foretell events through prophets today or is only forth telling using Scripture that is valid? For some of you, this is a very important issue in your lives.

I have one last request for you for this week. In the appendix, there is a Theme Summary Chart for your use to write down themes for each of the chapters of Ezekiel as we go through them. I would like you to decide on one theme for each of the first three chapters and record those themes at the beginning of each of the chapters on the double-spaced worksheets in the Appendix and also on the Theme Summary Chart.

This next week, we will move out of the initial three chapters of Ezekiel and into Part 2, the prophecies of judgment on Jerusalem and Judah. Probably some of you have noticed that the book of Ezekiel follows the same pattern of judgment that Isaiah does, i.e., first judgment at home in Israel, and then judgment on the other nations surrounding Israel. We will see Ezekiel do some pretty weird things to get the attention of his fellow captives in Babylon.

**God's Judgment Message for Jerusalem and Judah
Coming in a Storm Cloud**

Why did the Lord come in a storm cloud?	Did God come in judgment?	Judgment on moral grounds?	To whom would judgment come? 2 groups Ezek 3:16-21	What does this mean for us (the USA)?
<p>Description of a storm wind: -coming from north -great cloud w/fire flashing forth continuously -in its midst something like glowing metal in midst of fire -figures w/in cloud were 4 Living Beings (LB) -in midst LB something like burning coals of fire, like torches darting back & forth among LB -fire bright & lightning flashing from fire -LB dart to & fro like lightning bolts -from above expanse-figure w/ appearance of man, from loins upward & downward appeared like fire glowing metal God's use of Assyrian/Babylonian nations to judge His people in this case-from N b/c that's how the Babylonians will come into the land to carry out judgment -God came to Moses in a thick cloud on the mtn. in sight of all the people - Exod 19:9-24, 19:16 in the AM, thunder/lightning flashes/thick cloud 20:18-26 -figure like a man Rev 1:12-17 -4 LB's - Rev 4:2-8 -Lamb slain - Rev 5:9 -Ezek 3 - seal judgments written on both sides; Ezek eats scroll - So does John in Rev 6 -the brazen altar - Exod 27,38, Lev 1, burnt offerings tied on horns; cont. burn of altar of atonement -Ancient of Days throne ablaze w/flames/ wheels a burning fire; books opened in judgment - Dan 7</p> <p>So why did God come in the storm? God was coming to judge them.</p>	<p>Word Reference Tool: to criticize or condemn somebody on moral grounds</p> <p>Vines (Verb): "to judge" a third party sits over 2 parties at odds with one another, renders decision of the right¹</p> <p>Vines (Noun): "to judge" act of a judge hearing case and rendering proper verdict²</p>	<p>Two laws of violation</p> <p>1. Idolatry - see Exod 20:1-5</p> <p>2. The Sabbath Rest - as it pertained to the land - see Exod 10:8-11, Deut 5:6-27, Lev. 25:1-8</p>	<p>1. Those who would be saved from death -those who remained faithful to God as best they could in their own strength -those who turned back to God and repented of their evil deeds in worshiping other gods.</p> <p>2. Those who were going to die at the end of the Babylonians'sword, from starvation or from pestilence/disease -those Israelites who were once righteous (a.t. the Law) and have since turned away from Him -those Israelites who have always been opposed to God and refuse to repent and come to Him the first time</p> <p>*this passage is not talking about eternal salvation, only salvation or deliverance from death.</p> <p>*those who worshiped idols were going to die; those who worshiped Jehovah God would be sent into captivity</p>	<p>1. What kind of storm cloud do you see over us as a nation? -famine? -economic collapse? -pestilence? -disease? -another nation to discipline us?</p> <p>2. Will God judge this nation on moral grounds? -idolatry? -not observing the Sabbath Rest?</p> <p>3. Will we (as individual Believers) be subject to the same judgment as the rest of our nation who refuses to turn or return to God?</p>
	<p>1Vines pp. 125-126 2Vines pp. 125-126</p>			

Scripture quotations taken from the (NASB ©) New American Standard Bible©, Copyright ©1960, 1971, 1977 by the Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
“www.lockman.org”

Ezekiel Part 1

Chapter 1

Chapter Theme _____

Ezek. 1:1 Now it came about in the thirtieth year, on the fifth day of the fourth month, while I was by the river Chebar among the exiles, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.

Ezek. 1:2 (On the fifth of the month in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile,

Ezek. 1:3 the word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and there the hand of the LORD came upon him.)

Ezek. 1:4 And as I looked, behold, a storm wind was coming from the north, a great cloud with fire flashing forth continually and a bright light around it, and in its midst something like glowing metal in the midst of the fire.

Ezek. 1:5 And within it there were figures resembling four living beings. And this was their appearance: they had human form.

Ezek. 1:6 Each of them had four faces and four wings.

Ezek. 1:7 And their legs were straight and their feet were like a calf's hoof, and they gleamed like burnished bronze.

Ezek. 1:8 Under their wings on their four sides were human hands. As for the faces and wings of the four of them,

Ezek. 1:9 their wings touched one another; their faces did not turn when they moved, each went straight forward.

Ezek. 1:10 As for the form of their faces, each had the face of a man, all four had the face of a lion on the right and the face of a bull on the left, and all four had the face of an eagle.

Ezek. 1:11 Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above; each had two touching another being, and two covering their bodies.

Ezek. 1:12 And each went straight forward; wherever the spirit was about to go, they would go, without turning as they went.

Ezek. 1:13 In the midst of the living beings there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches darting back and forth among the living beings. The fire was bright, and lightning was flashing from the fire.

Ezek. 1:14 And the living beings ran to and fro like bolts of lightning.

Ezek. 1:15 Now as I looked at the living beings, behold, there was one wheel on the earth beside the living beings, for each of the four of them.

Ezek. 1:16 The appearance of the wheels and their workmanship was like sparkling beryl, and all four of them had the same form, their appearance and workmanship being as if one wheel were within another.

Ezek. 1:17 Whenever they moved, they moved in any of their four directions, without turning as they moved.

Ezek. 1:18 As for their rims they were lofty and awesome, and the rims of all four of them were full of eyes round about.

Ezek. 1:19 And whenever the living beings moved, the wheels moved with them. And whenever the living beings rose from the earth, the wheels rose also. Ezek. 1:20 Wherever the spirit was about to go, they would go in that direction. And the wheels rose close beside them; for the spirit of the living beings was in the wheels. Ezek. 1:21 Whenever those went, these went; and whenever those stood still, these stood still. And whenever those rose from the earth, the wheels rose close beside them; for the spirit of the living beings was in the wheels.

Ezek. 1:22 Now over the heads of the living beings there was something like an expanse, like the awesome gleam of crystal, extended over their heads. Ezek. 1:23 And under the expanse their wings were stretched out straight, one toward the other; each one also had two wings covering their bodies on the one side and on the other. Ezek. 1:24 I also heard the sound of their wings like the sound of abundant waters as they went, like the voice of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army camp; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings. Ezek. 1:25 And there came a voice from above the expanse that was over their heads; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings.

Ezek. 1:26 Now above the expanse that was over their heads there was something resembling a throne, like lapis lazuli in appearance; and on that which resembled a throne, high up, was a figure with the appearance of a man.

Ezek. 1:27 Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around Him.

Ezek. 1:28 As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.

Chapter 2

Chapter Theme _____

Ezek. 2:1 Then He said to me, “Son of man, stand on your feet that I may speak with you!”

Ezek. 2:2 And as He spoke to me the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet; and I heard Him speaking to me.

Ezek. 2:3 Then He said to me, “Son of man, I am sending you to the sons of Israel, to a rebellious people who have rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day.

Ezek. 2:4 “And I am sending you to them who are stubborn and obstinate children; and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD.’

Ezek. 2:5 “As for them, whether they listen or not — for they are a rebellious house — they will know that a prophet has been among them.

Ezek. 2:6 “And you, son of man, neither fear them nor fear their words, though thistles and thorns are with you and you sit on scorpions; neither fear their words nor be dismayed at their presence, for they are a rebellious house.

Ezek. 2:7 “But you shall speak My words to them whether they listen or not, for they are rebellious.

Ezek. 2:8 “Now you, son of man, listen to what I am speaking to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you.”

Ezek. 2:9 Then I looked, behold, a hand was extended to me; and lo, a scroll was in it.

Ezek. 2:10 When He spread it out before me, it was written on the front and back; and written on it were lamentations, mourning and woe.

Chapter 3

Chapter Theme _____

Ezek. 3:1 Then He said to me, “Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.”

Ezek. 3:2 So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll.

mEzek. 3:3 And He said to me, “Son of man, feed your stomach, and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you.” Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth.

Ezek. 3:4 Then He said to me, “Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them.

Ezek. 3:5 “For you are not being sent to a people of unintelligible speech or difficult language, but to the house of Israel,

Ezek. 3:6 nor to many peoples of unintelligible speech or difficult language, whose words you cannot understand. But I have sent you to them who should listen to you;

Ezek. 3:7 yet the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, since they are not willing to listen to Me. Surely the whole house of Israel is stubborn and obstinate.

Ezek. 3:8 “Behold, I have made your face as hard as their faces, and your forehead as hard as their foreheads.

Ezek. 3:9 “Like emery harder than flint I have made your forehead. Do not be afraid of them or be dismayed before them, though they are a rebellious house.”

Ezek. 3:10 Moreover, He said to me, “Son of man, take into your heart all My words which I shall speak to you, and listen closely.

Ezek. 3:11 “And go to the exiles, to the sons of your people, and speak to them and tell them, whether they listen or not, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD.’”

Ezek. 3:12 Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard a great rumbling sound behind me, “Blessed be the glory of the LORD in His place.”

Ezek. 3:13 And I heard the sound of the wings of the living beings touching one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, even a great rumbling sound.

Ezek. 3:14 So the Spirit lifted me up and took me away; and I went embittered in the rage of my spirit, and the hand of the LORD was strong on me.

Ezek. 3:15 Then I came to the exiles who lived beside the river Chebar at Tel-abib, and I sat there seven days where they were living, causing consternation among them.

Ezek. 3:16 Now it came about at the end of seven days that the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Ezek. 3:17 “Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman to the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from My mouth, warn them from Me.

Ezek. 3:18 “When I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die’; and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand.

Ezek. 3:19 “Yet if you have warned the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself.

Ezek. 3:20 “Again, when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I place an obstacle before him, he shall die; since you have not warned him, he shall die in his sin, and his righteous deeds which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand.

Ezek. 3:21 “However, if you have warned the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; and you have delivered yourself.”

Ezek. 3:22 And the hand of the LORD was on me there, and He said to me, “Get up, go out to the plain, and there I will speak to you.”

Ezek. 3:23 So I got up and went out to the plain; and behold, the glory of the LORD was standing there, like the glory which I saw by the river Chebar, and I fell on my face.

Ezek. 3:24 The Spirit then entered me and made me stand on my feet, and He spoke with me and said to me, “Go, shut yourself up in your house.

Ezek. 3:25 “As for you, son of man, they will put ropes on you and bind you with them, so that you cannot go out among them.

Ezek. 3:26 “Moreover, I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so that you will be dumb, and cannot be a man who rebukes them, for they are a rebellious house.

Ezek. 3:27 “But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth, and you will say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD.’ He who hears, let him hear; and he who refuses, let him refuse; for they are a rebellious house.