



OUR CLAIM TO FAME

Studies in Ezekiel

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Growing in Spirit & Truth

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It Starts at the Top

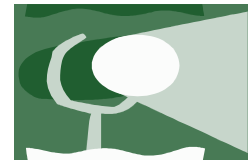
Introduction to Ezekiel 12-17

The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

- **Worship**—You were planned for God’s pleasure
- **Fellowship**—You were formed for God’s family
- **Discipleship**—You were created to become like Christ
- **Ministry**—You were shaped for serving God
- **Evangelism**—You were made for a mission

It is a time-honored truth that a well-run business, nation or church is primarily determined by the quality of its leadership. Literally, it starts at the top, and works its way throughout the organization. This was certainly true of Judah in the time of Ezekiel. It was the responsibility of the leaders to follow God’s will and then encourage their constituents to do the same. Sadly, this was far from what happened, as Ezekiel 12-17 illustrates. God told Ezekiel to warn Judah of the impending disasters that were coming by first performing an “mini” enactment of the siege against Jerusalem, then to eat bread and drink water with trembling anxiety to show how bad things were going to be. The response of the leaders, however, was skeptical; they believed this

wouldn’t happen anytime soon. The false prophets predicted peace instead and their wives led people astray with their pagan sorceries. These leaders also made inexplicable decisions. Their elders requested an audience with God while they held to idols in their hearts. They stupidly refused to believe God and they led their people into false hopes of better days. The result of poor spiritual leadership was that Israel had become as useless to God as a charred grapevine. Finally, Judah engaged in illogical defections from God. In spite of the fact that they were born of pagan Canaanites (before the time of Moses), God had found her and cleaned her up, put clothes on her, made her beautiful and cared for her. However, Judah began to



Our claim to fame is found as we reflect the glory of God.

trust in the beauty God had given to her and pursued foreign nations and their gods, adopting their disgusting practices as well. Finally, Judah, through King Zedekiah, defected from God’s plan to be subservient to Babylon. Many more would have remained in the land if they hadn’t broken the covenant and turned to Egypt. In spite of the poor spiritual leadership God still determined to show them grace by remembering His covenant and installing His leader. He knew better than all that “it starts at the top”.

Daily Study Questions for Ezekiel 12-17

(For answers to questions attend an ABF or go to www.celebrationnet.com, small groups, abf)

1. Look at Ezek 12:1-16. What did God tell Ezekiel to do (v3-6)? Why did He command this (v2-3, 8) and what did it mean (v10-16)?	
2. In Ezek 12:17-28 what else was Ezekiel to do (v17-18) and what did this mean (v19-20)? What did the people think about this threat (v21-22) and what was God’s response (v23-28)?	
3. From Ezek 13 what had the false prophets done wrong (v1-3, 4-5, 10) and how would God deal with them (v8-9, 11-16)? What would this reveal about Him (v14)?	

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Ezekiel 12-17 Daily Study Questions (cont)

4. Using Ezek 14:1-11 what prevented the elders from getting God's help (v3-4) and how would God respond (v3-4, 8-9)? Why (v5, 11)? Apply.

5. According to 14:12-23 what would God do to Jerusalem (v13, 15, 17, 19, 21)? Who could not deliver them (v14) and why (v12)? Why would the survivors bring comfort to Ezekiel (v23)?

6. Looking at Ezek 15 how was Israel useless like a vine (v3-4)? How would God deal with them (v7) and what would result (v8)?

7. From 16:1-34 describe Israel's early years (v1-5, 6-14) and her sin (v15-22, 23-26, 28-29, 30-34). How did God show her grace (v1-14) and justice (v27)?

8. In 16:35-62 what would Judah's discipline be (v35-41) and how would this end (v42-43, 60-63)? Who was Judah worse than (v46-52)?

9. Using 17:1-10 how did the 1st eagle, Babylon, treat Israel, the vine (v4-6)? When Judah turned to Egypt (the 2nd eagle) against God's will what did He promise (v7-10)? What can we learn from this?

10. Looking at 17:11-24 what had Zedekiah (king in v7-10) done wrong (v11-14, 15)? What would result (v16-21)? What else would God do and why (v22-24)?

11. From Ezek 12-17 how did Judah's leaders show their stupidity (12:21-28, 13:1-16, 14:1-11, 15:1-8, 16:15-34, and 17:11-15)? How was God's grace seen (16:1-14, 60-63, 17:22-24)?

Scripture to Remember

"So I shall tear down the wall which you plastered over with whitewash and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation is laid bare...and you will be consumed in its midst."

Ezekiel 13:14 (NAS)

Celebration Fellowship

Help—Hope—Healing

We're on the web

www.thehospitalchurch.com

Life Group Questions—Sheep Need Chill Time (Ps 23:2)

(Using questions based on today's message, Life Groups meet in homes to build supportive relationships with others at Celebration Fellowship that enable us to grow in Christ.)

1. Each person share what their "dream" vacation would be. Are you someone who needs a vacation after your vacation, or do you really get refreshed?
2. Read Psalm 23:2. Which of these things drain you most often—people, problems, want, or work? Why do you think that is?
3. Discuss how hard or easy it is for you to rest. How would you define rest, and why do you think it is important (physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually, etc)?
4. Talk together about what getting "beside quiet waters" means. Why is the leadership of the Shepherd so critical in accomplishing this?
5. What do the indicators reveal about your need for this—disproportionate responses to life events, dreading the grind, full plate/empty heart, little time with the Lord?
6. Talk about how to adopt God's definition of worth and keep your focus on what you currently have. Then talk about ways to annually abandon, weekly withdraw, and