

LESSONS for TODAY

from the

***MAJOR  
PROPHETS***

**LIFE-LESSONS FOR THE  
PEOPLE OF GOD**

by Keith S. Andrews

# **Lessons For Today from the Major Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, & Daniel**

- Wk 1**                      The role of the Old Testament prophet
- Wk 2**                      The language and style of biblical prophecy.
- Wk 3**                      Isaiah's call and ministry.
- Wk 4**                      Isaiah's prophecies of judgment, restoration, consolation, and redemption.
- Wk 5**                      The Messiah in the prophecies of Isaiah.
- Wk 6**                      Jeremiah's call and ministry.
- Wk 7**                      Jeremiah's prophecies of warning and hope.
- Wk 8**                      Ezekiel's call and ministry.
- Wk 9**                      Figures and symbols in the prophecies of Ezekiel.
- Wk 10**                     The new covenant in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.
- Wk 11**                     Daniel's call and ministry.
- Wk 12**                     Dreams and Visions in the prophecies of Daniel.

# LESSON 1

## THE ROLE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHET

### THE NEED FOR REVELATION

#### A. Man cannot discover God, God must reveal Himself.

1. Man takes his finite understanding and extrapolates it into infinity.
2. Man takes his human character and extrapolates it into divinity.
3. Man can only discover a god created in his own image!

#### B. The means of God's revelation

1. "General revelation" - God reveals Himself through His creation.
2. "Special revelation" - Revelation through the inspired spoken and written words of men.
3. "Personal revelation" – God revealed through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

### NOTES:

### THE OFFICE OF THE PROPHET

#### A. The prophet is one who "speaks for God," or who stands as God's representative before the people.

1. The Hebrew word for prophet, *nabi*, means "one who has been called."
2. One was a prophet because of the *calling* and *empowering* of God, not because of training or heritage.
3. It was the *Spirit of the Lord* who spoke through the prophet. The words of the true prophet were, therefore, the revealed Words of God.
4. The prophets of God were often called "seers," *ro'eh* or *hozeh*. This name refers to one who sees the situation from God's perspective. "*Who can know the mind of God except the Spirit of God?*"

#### B. Office established in the person of Moses

1. Earlier godly men were called "prophets."
  - Jesus numbered Abel with the prophets (Lk. 11:50-51).
  - Enoch is called a prophet by Jude (Jude 1:14).

- In Abimelech's dream, God refers to Abraham as a prophet (Gen. 20:7).
2. The office of prophet was patterned on the relationship between God and Moses (Deut. 18:18).

**ELEMENTS OF THE PROPHETIC MINISTRY**

1. Encouraging trust in God's power and mercy rather than human strength, merits, or wisdom.
2. Reminding the people that safety and blessedness depend on faithful adherence to the covenant.
3. Encouraging the people with God's promises of redemption and restoration.
4. Demonstrating God's sovereignty through fulfilled prophecy (See Isa. 42:9; 44:7-8).

**Read Deut. 18:15-22.**

1. Why was the prophetic office established? \_\_\_\_\_  
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 \_\_\_\_\_
2. How were the people to respond to the words of the prophet?  
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 \_\_\_\_\_
3. How were they to know false from true prophets?  
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4. God called many prophets to speak His words to His people. Did any of them perfectly fulfill this promise? (Consider Deut. 34:9-12). \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. Is the ultimate fulfillment of this passage to be found in Jesus? (Compare this passage with Jn. 6:14, 7:16, 8:28, 12:48-50, 14:23-24; Acts 3:22-23). \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
6. Jesus Christ is our Prophet, our Priest and our King. Considering Deut. 18:19, how should we receive His words as recorded in the Gospels? \_\_\_\_\_  
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# LESSON 2

## THE LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY

### THE HISTORICAL FOCUS OF THE PROPHETIC MESSAGE

NOTES:

#### A. The immediate need

1. To proclaim or explain God's will to the people
2. To apply God's Word to the present life situation
3. To instruct or correct

#### B. The near future

1. To call to repentance or warn of judgment
2. To remind the people of their covenant relationship and responsibilities.
3. The fulfillment of these prophecies was in the future of the first hearers, but in our past.

#### C. The far future

1. Spoke to the people's situation from the perspective of God's over-all plan of salvation history.
2. Fulfillment is often universal in scope.
3. The fulfillment is in our future as well as that of the first hearers.

#### D. While the message is *to* the people of God, it may be *about*:

1. God's people – their moral, ethical, and religious conduct.
2. Surrounding nations – the people are often reminded that God rules sovereignly over all nations.
3. The world – God superintends His creation according to His own will and purpose and will forever.

### PROPHETIC LANGUAGE

#### A. God spoke through the prophet in 1<sup>st</sup> person

See. Isa. 43:14-21, 45:18-19

#### B. The words of the prophet are attributed to God.

1. "This is what the LORD says"
2. "This is what the sovereign LORD says"
3. "Hear the word of the LORD, . . ."
4. "Then the word of the LORD came to me: . . ."

### C. Prophets delivered their message by:

1. Brief oral statements
2. Long oral speeches
3. Descriptions of their visions
4. Writing their message
5. Symbolic actions

## LITERARY STYLES OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY

### A. Poetry

1. Because of its rhythm and form, poetry is more easily memorized.
  2. Ideas can be more clearly explained using poetic forms.
- **Synonymous parallelism** – the second line expresses a thought identical or similar to that of the first line.
    - A *“I have swept away your offenses like a cloud,*
    - A’ *your sins like the morning mist.”*(Isa. 44:22)  
  
    - A *“Hear the word of the LORD,*
    - You rulers of Sodom;*
    - A’ *listen to the law of our God,*
    - You people of Gomorrah!”* (Isa 1:10)
  - **Antithetical parallelism** – the second line expresses a thought which is in sharp contrast to that of the first line
    - +A *“They do not cry out to me from their hearts*
    - A *but wail upon their beds.*
    - +B *they gather together for grain and new wine*
    - B *but turn away from me.*
    - +C *I trained them and strengthened them,*
    - C *but they plot evil against me.”*(Hos. 7:14-15)
  - **Synthetic parallelism** – the second (or subsequent) line continues or adds to the thought of the first; often creating a type of progression.
    - “What the locust swarm has left,*
    - the great locusts have eaten;*
    - what the great locusts have left,*
    - the young locusts have eaten;*
    - what the young locusts have left,*
    - other locusts have eaten.”* (Joel 1:4)

## B. Apocalyptic literature

### 1. Characteristics

- Consists of dreams and/or visions
- Often includes angel messages
- Addresses those who are living through a crisis

### 2. Common subjects

- Two ages – this present age / the age to come
- Apostasy
- Salvation for the people of God
- The resurrection of the righteous
- An anti-God figure
- The Messiah
- The triumph of right and the judgment of evil

### 3. Helps for interpretation

- Remember that the imagery is symbolic. Don't press for an overly-literal meaning.
- Look for the main point of the passage.
- Consider the historic context.

# LESSON 3

## ISAIAH'S CALL AND MINISTRY

### I. THE OBJECT OF ISAIAH'S MINISTRY

### NOTES:

Read the opening verses of Isaiah (vv. 1-4). Here we see a clear picture of the condition of the people of Judah. Describe their relationship to God. \_\_\_\_\_

Read vv. 10-17. Have the people abandoned the practices of the Hebrew religion? \_\_\_\_\_ How would you describe the problem? (Consider also 2 Tim. 3:1-5). \_\_\_\_\_

**Isaiah's ministry was to reveal the truth concerning the condition of the covenant people from God's point of view.**

Isaiah served the people of God under kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. During the early part of this period Judah was economically prosperous and politically successful. In this atmosphere of prosperity, the people came to think of themselves as self-sufficient--they developed an attitude of carnal self-confidence.

God was preparing to intervene. Isaiah was His chosen vessel to issue the call to repentance. As Gleason Archer wrote, "a holy God will not permit unholiness in His covenant people and will therefore deal with them in such a way as to chasten and purge them and make them fit to participate in His program of redemption." Isaiah's approach was two-fold:

- 1) to point out the sinful and rebellious condition of the nation and the need for repentance.
- 2) to proclaim the hope of redemption and the faithfulness of God.

Would this be a valid pattern for us to follow in sharing the gospel?

Even in the midst of condemnation we find words of hope.  
Read vs. 18. Is this hope unreasonable? Why or why not?  
(Consider also Acts 17:2, 18:4). \_\_\_\_\_

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Read and compare Isa 1:18, 43:25, 44:21-23; Ps. 51:7.  
Who is will accomplish the redemption of God's chosen people and  
for what purpose? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **II. ISAIAH'S COMMISSION**

Read Isa. 6:1-13. It has been suggested that it was because the  
king (Uzziah) had died that Isaiah was suddenly able to see the  
true King, Yahweh Himself, who sits on the throne and rules over  
the affairs of nations (see vs. 1). Read 2 Chron. 26:16-22 for an  
account of the circumstances of Uzziah's death.

What is the result of Isaiah's vision of God (vs. 5; also  
consider Ex. 33:18-20; Luke 5:8; Rev. 1:12-18)? \_\_\_\_\_

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How was Isaiah prepared for his mission? (vs. 6) \_\_\_\_\_

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The mission given to Isaiah seems to be one without hope of a  
positive result (vv. 9-13). What do you think is God's purpose in  
sending Isaiah? \_\_\_\_\_

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To whom is the church to preach the gospel? (See Mk. 16:15-16;  
Matt. 28:19; Ps. 96:3) \_\_\_\_\_

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# Lesson 4

## ISAIAH'S PROPHECIES OF JUDGMENT, RESTORATION, CONSOLATION AND REDEMPTION

### PROCLAIMING GOD'S JUDGMENT

### NOTES:

Read Isa. 5:1-7. Notice that the vinegrower has planted his vineyard "on a fertile hillside" (vs. 1), that he "dug it up and cleared it of stones," that he "planted the choicest vines," and that he "built a watchtower and cut a winepress." Having done all this, what sort of crop should the vinegrower expect (vs. 2)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What sort of crop did the vineyard actually produce? \_\_\_\_\_

In vv. 5-6 we see the response of the vinegrower. What does he plan to do? \_\_\_\_\_

In vs. 7 we see that the vinegrower is the Lord and that the vineyard represents the people of His covenant. The Lord's response to their lack of fruitfulness sets a pattern that we will see played out again and again in Isaiah. In vv. 5-6 we see the removal of God's *protection*, His *provision*, and His *blessing*. This is the character of God's judgment upon His own people.

Compare the preceding passage to Jesus' words in John 15:1-8. In what ways do the two passages relate? \_\_\_\_\_

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In chapters 13-23 we find prophecies of judgment upon the unbelieving nations that surround Israel (Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Damascus [Syria], Cush, Egypt, Tyre [Phoenicia]). This section concludes with a prophecy of judgment upon the whole earth in chapter 24. Who is to be the object of this judgment? (vs.

2) \_\_\_\_\_ What is the offense that is being judged? (vs. 5) \_\_\_\_\_

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Notice the sudden emergence of praise in vv. 14-16a. Even as vs. 6 hinted, there is a faithful remnant. These, the people of God, the church, are preserved. Notice that they come from the *west* (vs. 14), from the *east* (vs. 15), from the *islands of the sea* (vs. 15), from the *ends of the earth* (vs. 16). Even in the midst of judgment, God has not forgotten His covenant, nor has He abandoned His people.

**The time of distress for the ungodly nations is a time of redemption for the people of God!**

The prophecy ends in victory for our God and for His people (vs. 23).

## **PROCLAIMING HOPE**

Where the previous chapters have dealt primarily with the sins of the God's people, His call to repentance, and His judgment, chapter 40 begins a new section which proclaims *consolation, hope, redemption, and restoration.*

Read Isa. 40. The message is clear, "*your hope is in the Sovereign Lord who transcends all else. What He wills is what shall come to pass!*" In this passage we see God's *forgiveness* (vs. 2), His *glory* (vs. 5), His *authority* (vs. 8), His *sovereignty* (vs. 10), His *power* (vs. 12), His *wisdom* (vv. 13-14), His *majesty* (vs. 15), His *supremacy* (vs. 18ff, 25ff), His *grace* (vs. 29-31).

Read Isa. 65:17-25. Isaiah's prophecy was to those who were soon to be carried into exile in Babylon. It was important for them to know that, even as they faced the day of their exile, there was a day of restoration coming. Read Revelation 21:1-22:5. Compare and contrast the two passages.

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# Lesson 5

## THE MESSIAH IN THE PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH

### WHAT IS “MESSIANIC” PROPHECY?

NOTES:

#### A. Messianic prophecy deals specifically with the *person and office of Messiah.*

1. A descendant of David who would rule the nations as supreme king.
2. One who would rule with righteousness and justice.
3. One who would rule with power and might.
4. Only when the Messiah is clearly in view should the prophecy be considered “Messianic.”

#### B. Soteriological prophecy

1. Deals with the general idea of God’s redemptive purpose and the time when this purpose will be achieved.
2. Does not deal explicitly with the role or person of Messiah.

#### C. Eschatological prophecy

1. Relates to the end of this present age and the establishing of the age to come.
2. While God is central, the Messiah figure is absent.

### THE “THRONE NAMES” OF MESSIAH (CHRIST)

One of the clearest descriptions of Messiah is found in chapter 9 of Isaiah. Verses 6-7 present a striking portrait of His person and office. In Messiah, the dismal picture of the previous chapter becomes a picture of victory and hope.

#### A. *Wonderful Counselor*

This is counsel in the sense of plan, design, or purpose. Messiah is the One who brings to fruition the wonderful plan and purpose of Yahweh.

#### B. *Mighty God*

This phrase literally means, “God the helr, the mighty warrior.” The power of Messiah is so great that He can defeat all evil.

### **C. Everlasting Father**

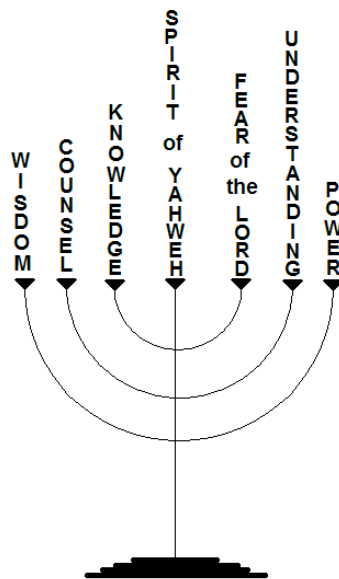
The Messiah's care for His adopted family is never-ending.  
(Compare "Mighty God and "Everlasting Father" with Isa. 40:10-11, 63:16; Deut. 1:30-31; Ps. 103:13-17).

### **D. Prince of Peace**

Through Messiah, a reconciliation shall be established between God and man. The rule of Messiah is a reign of peace between man and man as well.

## **MESSIAH AND THE SPIRIT OF YAHWEH**

### **A. Isaiah 11:2-9**



### **B. Messiah's calling (Isa. 61:1-3 and Luke 4:16-21)**

1. Preach good news
2. Bind up the brokenhearted
3. Proclaim freedom from bondage
4. Inaugurate the reay of jubilee and the day of vengeance.
5. To comfort all who mourn

## **MESSIAH, THE SUFFERING SERVANT OF YAHWEH**

### **A. Isaiah 7:13-14**

### **B. Isaiah 42:1-7**

### **C. Isaiah 50:4-10**

### **D. Isaiah 52:13-53:12**

### **E. Isaiah 63:1-6**

# Lesson 6

## JEREMIAH'S CALL AND MINISTRY

### GOD CALLS JEREMIAH

Read Jer. 1:4-10. At what point was it determined that Jeremiah should be a prophet of the Lord? (vs. 5) \_\_\_\_\_

Who made this determination? \_\_\_\_\_ To whom was Jeremiah appointed a prophet? \_\_\_\_\_

Jeremiah's mission was six-fold. Which of these seem to be positive? (vs. 10)

Which seem to be negative? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think that God put the negative things first? \_\_\_\_\_

How might this be applied to God's dealings with individuals? \_\_\_\_\_

As with many who speak the truth to a generation that is more comfortable with falsehood, Jeremiah found his calling a difficult one. Read Jer. 20:7-9. Is Jeremiah compelled to speak forth the word of God? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### A. Jeremiah was the last of the "pre-exilic" prophets.

1. His ministry was primarily to Judah.
2. He prophesied in the years just prior to the Babylonian exile and during the time of the siege of Jerusalem.

#### B. Jeremiah prophesied under the rule of 5 kings

1. Josiah (during his reign the book of the law was found and read to the people)
2. Jehoahaz
3. Jehoiakim

### NOTES:

- 4. Jehoiachin
- 5. Zedekiah

**C. Jeremiah did not go into Babylon at the time of the deportation. He was, instead, at a later date, abducted and carried into exile in Egypt where he died.**

**THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK**

The book of Jeremiah not chronological in order. It is for this reason that the NIV study bible calls it "one of the most difficult prophets to follow." Though some scholars maintain that it has been arranged topically, even this is difficult to demonstrate. It is known that Jeremiah's prophecies were written down by Baruch, Jeremiah's secretary. It is possible that he edited and organized them as well. Read Jer. 36 for an interesting account of Baruch's role in the preservation of Jeremiah's prophecy!

**THE TWO SINS OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD**

Read Jer. 2:13. What are the two sins of the people?

- 1. They rejected the true and living God, His Word, and the covenant
- 2. They made "gods" of their own that could not hear or save.

Jesus said, "I will give you living water" (see Jn. 4:10-14). It is a sad thing when the people of God reject the living water that the Lord provides. Notice in Jer. 2:13a that it is man who has forsaken God and not God who has forsaken man. Is there evidence of this sin today? Comment. \_\_\_\_\_

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It is one thing to forsake the living and true God. It is quite another thing to fashion a replacement for Him. How do men "dig their own cisterns?" \_\_\_\_\_

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# Lesson 7

## JEREMIAH'S PROPHECIES OF WARNING AND HOPE

### A CALL TO FAITHFULNESS

### NOTES:

Jeremiah's primary warning to the people of God is to remain faithful in their covenant relationship. It is their unfaithfulness that is the root cause of the distress that is coming upon them. Read Jer. 3:6-8. To what does God compare this unfaithfulness? \_\_\_\_\_

Consider James 4:4. How does James apply the same term? \_\_\_\_\_

The unfaithfulness of Judah went far beyond a simple turning from God. Their sin took on a far more vile character. What is described in the following passages?

Jer. 2: 5b, 9:13-14 \_\_\_\_\_

Jer. 44:16-17 \_\_\_\_\_

Jer. 7:30-31, 19:5, 32:34-35 \_\_\_\_\_

Read Jer. 2:20-28. Here we see a picture of futility. The people have turned away from the true and living God and have made gods of their own design. Their gods of wood and stone, however, are powerless to help them. It is a sad picture, but a familiar one.

How might this passage be applied to the life of the modern Christian? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the benefits of faithfulness?

Ex. 19:5-6a \_\_\_\_\_

Ps. 103:17-18 \_\_\_\_\_

Lk. 19:17 \_\_\_\_\_

Rev. 2:10 \_\_\_\_\_

## THE PROMISE OF GOD

As terrible as Judah's apostasy might have been, it in no way annulled the promise of God. Though it required a purifying exile, Yahweh would restore His relationship with his people. The uprooting and destruction would simply be a prerequisite to God's planting and his building. What is the message of each of the following passages?

Jer. 30:3 \_\_\_\_\_

Jer. 30:11 \_\_\_\_\_

Jer 30:18-21 \_\_\_\_\_

Jer 31:23-25 \_\_\_\_\_

## JEREMIAH'S PREDICTION OF A 70 YEAR CAPTIVITY

Read Jer. 25:1-14. There is not any universal agreement as to the exact meaning of this prophetic prediction. The major deportation of the Hebrews by Nebuchadnezzar took place in 586 B.C. The Babylonians were conquered by the Persian Empire in 539 B.C. Within a few years, a Jewish remnant was allowed to return to the land. This accounts for a time span of about 50 years. It is interesting, however, to consider the Temple rather than the presence of the people in the land. The Temple was destroyed in the siege of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The rebuilding of the Temple was completed in 516 B.C.; exactly 70 years after its destruction!

Read Jer. 29:10-14.

Describe God's plans for his people (vs. 11). \_\_\_\_\_

What were the great sins of the people that led to their exile?

\_\_\_\_\_ What does God require of them before they are returned from their captivity? (vv. 13-14) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In what way is this important to us as well? (Consider Deut. 6:5; Josh. 22:5; Prov. 3:5-6; Mk. 12:28-30; Col. 3:23-24). \_\_\_\_\_

# Lesson 8

## EZEKIEL'S CALL AND MINISTRY

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Ezekiel could be called, "the prophet of the exile." He was deported from Judah to Babylon in 597 B.C. (eleven years before the fall of Jerusalem) along with King Jehoiachin and "all the officers and fighting men, and all the craftsmen and artisans-- a total of ten thousand" (2 Kings 24:8-15). It fell to Ezekiel to present "God's point of view" to the exiles. Their exile was not a failure on the part of God to protect His people from an enemy. Their exile was God's discipline upon a rebellious people who must repent and turn back to the God of their fathers.

Ezekiel was a priest, although it is uncertain whether he ever served in the Temple. His first vision came to him in Babylon at the age of 30--the age when Levites normally begin their priestly duties (See Ez. 1:1-3). Ezekiel was married, but his wife died (See Ez. 24:16-18). There is no mention in the book of Ezekiel's children.

### EZEKIEL'S CALL AND THE ENABLING SPIRIT

Read Ez. 1:4-9, 22-28. What are the primary components in Ezekiel's vision? (Don't be overly specific) \_\_\_\_\_

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Compare Rev. 4:2-7, Dan. 7:9. Are there enough similarities to think that John and Daniel are describing the same scene as Ezekiel? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what are they describing? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When Ezekiel's vision is complete, he falls face down. Much like Isaiah, Ezekiel has come face to face with God. He has seen himself in the light of God's holiness and majesty. Read Ez. 2:1-2. When Ezekiel hears the voice of God, what is he told to do (vs. 1)?

How is Ezekiel able to do what the Lord instructed (vs. 2, consider also 8:2-3, 11:1, 24, 37:1)? \_\_\_\_\_

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### NOTES:

How might Ezekiel's experience be applied to our lives? Does God require us to fulfill our calling by means of our own strength and wisdom? How is God's calling fulfilled through us? Comment.

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### **EZEKIEL AS WATCHMAN**

Read Ez. 2:3-5. To whom is Ezekiel sent? \_\_\_\_\_. Does it seem that the people will respond positively to Ezekiel's message? \_\_\_\_\_. How is Ezekiel to evaluate the people's response (see vs. 7)?

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What might God's purpose be in sending Ezekiel on an unfruitful mission? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Ez. 3:16-21, 33:1-9. What is the purpose of the watchman?

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If the people do not respond to the watchman's warning, who is at fault? \_\_\_\_\_ If the watchman fails to sound the alarm, who is at fault? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Ez. 2:9-3:3. Before Ezekiel could speak God's word to the people he had to do something. What was it? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you think this means and how might it apply to those who have been called to ministry today? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Matt. 28:18-20, Acts 1:8. What is the mission of a disciple of Jesus Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

How is that mission to be accomplished? \_\_\_\_\_

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Is that mission ongoing? \_\_\_\_\_ How? \_\_\_\_\_

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In what ways are we and are we not responsible for the success of that mission? \_\_\_\_\_

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# Lesson 9

## FIGURES AND SYMBOLS IN THE PROPHECIES OF EZEKIEL

The book of Ezekiel is filled with imagery, with symbolism, and with figurative language. In this lesson we will look at four representative examples:

**NOTES:**

- 1) The Prince of Tyre
- 2) The Shepherds of Israel
- 3) Dry Bones
- 4) The Temple of God

### THE PRINCE OF TYRE

If you scan through Ez. 27 and the first 10 verses of chapter 28 you will find a description of an arrogant and ungodly, yet prosperous city with an equally arrogant and ungodly ruler. The actual city of Tyre served as the major port and political center of the Phoenicians. Notice in 28:2, 9 that the king of Tyre thinks he is a god. What is he really? \_\_\_\_\_ In your opinion, what was the king's "problem"? \_\_\_\_\_ What was the source of this problem? (see vv. 4-5) \_\_\_\_\_

Read Ez. 28:11-19. This second "lament concerning the king of Tyre" has a slightly different character. How is the king presented here?

- vs. 12 - \_\_\_\_\_  
vs. 13 - \_\_\_\_\_  
vs. 14 - \_\_\_\_\_  
vs. 15 - \_\_\_\_\_  
vs. 16 - \_\_\_\_\_  
vs. 17 - \_\_\_\_\_  
vs. 18 - \_\_\_\_\_  
vs. 19 - \_\_\_\_\_

Can these characteristics apply to the king of the Phoenicians? \_\_\_\_ To whom do they seem to apply? \_\_\_\_\_  
What conclusions might you draw from the connection that has been drawn in this prophecy? \_\_\_\_\_

## THE SHEPHERDS OF ISRAEL

Read Ez 34:1-6, 10-11, 15-16. For what practices does the Lord condemn the shepherds of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does the Lord promise to do? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Ez. 34:23 and compare Jn. 10:11-14. Do you think that Jesus is making a reference to this passage? Why or why not? \_\_\_

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Who are the "shepherds" of Israel? \_\_\_\_\_ Why do you think that shepherds were used in this imagery? \_\_\_\_\_

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How would you apply this passage today? \_\_\_\_\_

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## THE DRY BONES

Read Ez. 37:1-14. What was God's question to Ezekiel in vs. 3? \_\_\_\_\_ This is the very question that Israel was asking about herself (see vs. 11). What is God's promise and purpose as stated in vv. 4-6? \_\_\_\_\_

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What is represented by the "dry bones"? \_\_\_\_\_ Why do you think that bones were used in this imagery? \_\_\_\_\_

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Has this prophecy been fulfilled in the history of ethnic Israel? (Also consider Ez. 11:17-20). Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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## EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE

We know that Solomon's temple was destroyed during the siege of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The temple was rebuilt on a less grand scale by Zerubbabel after the exile. Zerubbabel's temple was later enlarged and renovated by Herod. None of these temples, however, fit the description given by Ezekiel in chapters 40-47.

Though some scholars contend that this is a description of a physical temple that is yet to be built, it might be better to understand it as a symbol.

Read Ez. 10:18-19, 11:22-23. What is being depicted in these passages? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Ez. 43:1-12. What is being depicted in this passage? \_\_\_\_\_

Consider each of the following NT passages and comment on each.

- 1 Cor. 3:16 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Cor. 6:19 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Cor. 6:16 \_\_\_\_\_
- Eph. 2:19-22 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Thess. 2:4 \_\_\_\_\_
- Rev. 3:12a \_\_\_\_\_
- Jn. 2:19, 21 \_\_\_\_\_

It is interesting to compare Ez. 40 with Rev. 21:15-22. What are the similarities in the two passages? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the major difference between the two passages? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ How might this difference be explained?

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# Lesson 10

## THE NEW COVENANT IN JEREMIAH AND EZEKIEL

### GOD'S ETERNAL COVENANT

Covenant (Heb., *b<sup>e</sup>rit*) - A statement of a relationship. Covenants may be between individuals, between groups, or between nations. Covenants normally include signs, sacrifices and a solemn oath.

### NOTES:

The covenant between God and man is unique for several reasons:

- 1) The covenant between God and man is a *covenant of decree*. It was not an "agreement" between God and man. That is to say, God and man did not "come to terms" upon a set of mutual obligations. God established the terms of the covenant, man is to obey them.
- 2) The covenant between God and man is a *covenant of grace*. It is based entirely upon the mercy of God. While man has much to gain from the covenantal arrangement, God only gives.
- 3) The covenant between God and man is an *eternal covenant*. It does not come to an end when certain conditions have been met. Because it exists by God's decree, it can only be dissolved by God's decree. God is devoted to maintaining the relationship between Himself and His people (See Jer. 33:20-22).

### A LAW WITHIN

Read Jer. 31:31-33. What does God promise in vs. 31? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ What covenant does He say that it will be unlike? (Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic) \_\_\_\_\_ The people were certainly *aware* of God's law; it was already "in their minds." Why were they unable to keep the law? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What will be the differences between the old and the new covenants? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ When is the new covenant coming and with whom is it to be made (see vs. 31)? \_\_\_\_\_  
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## **AN UNDIVIDED HEART AND A NEW SPIRIT**

Read Ez. 11:17-20. In what ways had the people of God exhibited a "divided heart" with respect to their relationship with God? \_\_\_\_\_

How will God accomplish His purpose in restoring His people to a right relationship with Him? (vs. 19) \_\_\_\_\_

Notice that this is not something that the *people* do; it is a *work of God!*

Read Jer. 32:37-41. Notice the recurring theme in the statements of God's promises. What does God desire? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ What does God promise to give His people in vs. 39? \_\_\_\_\_  
How long is God's covenant to last? \_\_\_\_\_

These promises go a step further in Ez. 36:25-28. Verses 25-26 and 28 read much the same as parallel passages in Jeremiah. In vs. 27, however, there is an astounding difference. God does not promise just to give His people a "new" spirit. What does He promise? \_\_\_\_\_

## **THE ETERNAL KING**

Read Jer. 33:14-16. What is the specific promise of vs. 15? \_\_\_\_\_

The name given to this descendent of David is "the LORD our righteousness" (Heb., *Yahweh Tsidqenu*). In what way is this important to us? (Consider Php. 3:8-9) \_\_\_\_\_

Read Ez. 37:21-28. In the first few verses of this passage, God promises to restore unity to His people. The undivided heart will allow an undivided kingdom for the people of God. Together they will serve and honor their King and Shepherd. Notice in vs. 26 that this is to be a covenant of \_\_\_\_\_ and an \_\_\_\_\_ covenant. The final promise is that the presence of God will be with His people forever.

# Lesson 11

## DANIEL'S CALL AND MINISTRY

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Like the book of Ezekiel, the book of Daniel has the Babylonian exile as its backdrop. The prophet Daniel was deported to Nebuchadnezzar's country several years before the prophet Ezekiel, however. (Daniel's exile began around 605 B.C., while Ezekiel's began about 597 B.C.). When Ezekiel arrived in Babylon he found the Hebrew, Daniel, already established in the royal court of Nebuchadnezzar. What does Ezekiel say about Daniel in Ez. 14:14, 16, 18, 20, and in 28:3 and with whom is he compared?

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### NOTES:

The Babylonian empire lasted until 539 B.C. when Babylon fell to the Medo-Persians. Belshazzar was the last of the Babylonian rulers. Daniel still seems to be in the Babylonian region, however, during the rule of Cyrus the Persian; the man who authorized the rebuilding of the Temple in the city of Jerusalem (See Dan. 1:21, 6:28, 10:1).

### THE LANGUAGE AND FORM OF THE BOOK

The book of Daniel deals with two subjects: 1) the historical situation and hope of the *Hebrew people*, and 2) the historical situation and judgment of the *Gentile nations*. These two are kept distinct by the use of language--those portions which deal primarily with the Jewish people are written in Hebrew, those portions which deal primarily with Gentile nations are written in Aramaic. The original language text of Daniel is in Hebrew from the beginning of the Chapter 1 through 2:4a and from the beginning of Chapter 8 to the end of the book. The entire section from 2:4b through 7:28 is written in Aramaic.

The book also contains two distinct styles, historical narrative and apocalyptic. Chapters 1, 3-6 are historical narrative. Chapters 7-12 are apocalyptic. Chapter 2 is a combination of the two literary styles.

**DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS**

Read Dan. 1:1-7, 18-20. What do we know about Daniel from vv. 3-4? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the duration and purpose of the training? \_\_\_\_\_

Daniel and three of his companions are mentioned by name. What were their Hebrew names? \_\_\_\_\_

What Babylonian names were they given? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Dan. 3:1-6. What are the king's orders with regard to the image of gold that he has set up? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What is the punishment for those who don't comply with his order? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read 3:8-12. What report is brought to the king by his astrologers? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The report is, of course, true. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abennego did refuse to worship and serve the gods of Babylon. In verse 15, Nebuchadnezzar tells them the punishment and then asks the question, "what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?" Read 3:16-18. What is their answer to the king? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you agree with their "statement of faith"? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

For the "rest of the story" read 3:19-30. Who do you think the "fourth man in the furnace" was? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What is the king's analysis of the situation? (See vs. 29) \_\_\_\_\_

Read Dan. 6:1-5. What do we learn about Daniel from these verses? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Dan. 6:6-28. Compare Daniel's experience with that of his three friends. In what ways were they similar? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the outcome of each? \_\_\_\_\_

# Lesson 12

## DREAMS AND VISIONS IN THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL

### DANIEL AND THE GREAT STATUE

### NOTES:

Read Dan. 2:1-6. Here we see the king calling together his court magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to give them a "mission impossible." He was asking them to not only interpret his dream, but also tell him the content of the dream. Read 2:10-11. Do the wise men he consulted think this is possible? No. In his anger, the king ordered the execution of all the "wise men" in Babylon. This edict, of course, included Daniel and his friends. Read 2:13-19. After visiting with the king, Daniel talked to his friends. What did he ask them to do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ How did God respond? \_\_\_\_\_

It is interesting to compare the statements of the king's pagan "wise men" with those of Daniel. Compare 2:10-11 with 2:27-28. What is the essential difference in the two views of God/the gods represented here? \_\_\_\_\_

Read 2:31-44. What are the five primary components of the statue in the king's dream and what does Daniel say that they represent?

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\_\_\_\_\_

### DANIEL AND THE FOUR BEASTS

Read Dan. 7:1-28. This dream would seem to have come to Daniel some time after the Nebuchadnezzar's dream. We can see from vs. 1 that Belshazzar is now king of Babylon. Though the content of the dream is very different from that recorded in chapter 2, its interpretation is very similar. What are the primary components of this dream and what do they represent?

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There has been much written concerning the "ten kingdoms" and the "little horn" which are part of the vision of the fourth beast. It is important to note at this point that: 1) both spring from, or come out of, the fourth beast; 2) that the ten horns and the little horn exist at the same time; and 3) that their appearance precedes the coming of the "son of man" on the clouds.

### **DANIEL IN THE CITADEL OF SUSA**

Read Dan. 8:1-14. The two primary components of this vision are the ram and the goat. It is interesting to note that the two horns of the ram did not grow together, even though both are part of the ram (vs. 3). The goat, of vv. 5-7, comes from the west and destroys the ram. Read 8:15-22. This vision is to reveal the events at what time in human history? \_\_\_\_\_ What does the ram represent? \_\_\_\_\_ What does the goat represent? \_\_\_\_\_

Read 8:23-27. While this ruler could be seen to represent Alexander the Great, or Antiochus Epiphanes, or even Adolph Hitler, it would seem more likely that he is the one Paul calls "the man of lawlessness." Compare the description we have just read with that of Paul in 2 Thess. 2:3-12. In what ways are they similar? \_\_\_\_\_

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Consider the following chart:

### **DREAMS AND VISIONS IN DANIEL**

| <b>Daniel 2</b> | <b>Daniel 7</b> | <b>Daniel 8</b>   | <b>Meaning</b>      |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Gold            | Winged lion     | XXXX              | Babylonian Empire   |
| Silver          | Bear            | Ram               | Medo-Persian Empire |
| Bronze          | Leopard         | Goat              | Greek Empire        |
| Iron & Clay     | Beast           | XXXX              | Roman Empire        |
| XXXX            | Little Horn     | Final horn        | Antichrist Kingdom  |
| Great Stone     | Son of man      | Prince of princes | Messiah (Parousia)  |