

Ezekiel 5 – Prophecies to the Children of Israel through Dramatization

By Holly Effiom

VV1-4

What does God tell Ezekiel to do?

What was Ezekiel to do with his hair?

What will God do to those cast upon the wind?

Will a remnant be spared from this fate?

What will God do to some of the remnant?

God had told Ezekiel that He was not sending him to a people of “strange tongue”, so why is God speaking to the children of Israel through dramatizations?

What does this tell us about God?

LESSON: God has Ezekiel tell the story of Jerusalem through what he does with his hair. One-third will be destroyed by fire; one-third will be destroyed by the sword; and one-third will be cast in the wind, and yet a sword will still chase these cast in the wind. God will still preserve a remnant; however, even among the remnant will suffer. I don't know if the suffering among the remnant is due to their participation in the sin or because they are innocent bystanders, but to be certain, all of the children of Israel will suffer for the sin of the leadership. Which brings to mind a cosmic truth: If the leader is corrupt, the whole nation suffers.

VV5-6

Who is God describing in this dramatization?

What made Jerusalem more sinful than the nations about her?

In what way has Jerusalem transgressed God's law?

LESSON: How is this similar to Babylon the great in Revelation? In our study of Revelation 17, we had come to understand that Jerusalem was being described as Babylon the great, the great whore, because God expected fidelity from her – He was in *relationship* with her – but her descent into idolatry (adultery) made her a whore. There was no such expectation from the *promiscuous* Babylon (nations).

VV7-13

What were the children of Israel saying to God through their actions?

Did they also transgress the laws of the nations?

Does this mean that God expected the children of Israel, if they weren't going to adhere to His own laws, to at least adhere to the laws of the nations about them?

What does this tell us about the character of the children of Israel?

What is the punishment for being completely lawless?

What does this tell us about God?

LESSON: When studying this, the Law of the Firstborn came to me.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast it is mine.” Ex 13:1-2 “That thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast, the males shall be the Lord's. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck; and all the firstborn of man among they children shalt thou redeem.” Ex 13:12-13

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Why is the ass singled out from among the beasts? What is unique about the ass? It does not conform to the law of reproduction – the offspring of two asses is usually sterile, and to produce an ass requires cross breeding with a horse – it is unable to reproduce “...after his own kind...” Gen 1:24 The ass cannot abide in the Law of God, it is *lawless*. Man has the option to redeem the first born of an ass with a substitute of the sheep, but if he chooses not to, man must kill the firstborn ass because he cannot conform to the law.

Looking at this section of Ezekiel in which the children of Israel neither abide by the Law of God nor the laws of man, they are deemed *lawless* by God. It is God who has the option to redeem the children of Israel with the substitute of the sheep, or *kill* this lawless one.

VV14-17

To whom is God speaking through Ezekiel?

What is being promised?

What will the nation become to the nations around it? Why is this noteworthy?

Are these the things that befall a nation when God Himself is against it?

LESSON: God makes it clear that He is against the one that crosses Him – the one who refuses to keep his vow, to conform to His Law. In Deuteronomy 28, after reading the Law to the children of Israel, God goes on to explain the behavior that will bring blessing and that which will bring cursing – Note that this was prior to the children of Israel ever entering the Promised Land. In reading this section of Ezekiel, it is sad to see that the children of Israel have brought the curses upon themselves, such that they were being cast out of the Promised Land.

What form do the curses take? Increased famine and the broken staff of bread.

Famine isn't just “hunger” or food “scarcity” – it's hunger *caused* by the mal-behavior of man such as war, inflation, or government policies. The broken “staff of bread” is the hunger resulting from natural causes, such as crop failure due to climate instability, natural disasters, locusts, etc.

The curses include attacks and *troubling* from not just wild beasts, and pestilence and blood passing through you as a result of bacterial and viral infections, but also the sword of men. Not only will men attack and trouble you, but it seems all of nature will cease to work to the benefit of mankind.