

Ezekiel 6 – Speaking to the Mountains

By Holly Effiom

VV1-2

- What is God telling Ezekiel to do?
- What is it to face the mountains?
- Who are the mountains?

VV3-7

- To which mountains is Ezekiel directed to speak?
- What is God's message to the mountains?
- Who else does He expect to listen?

LESSON: We've learned in our study of Revelation that "mountains" as a term was used to describe kings and kingdoms – i.e., leadership. This is also the case here in Ezekiel. God is calling Ezekiel to give a hard message – the message that God Himself is against them – to the leadership of Israel; He's called Ezekiel to speak "*truth to power*". It is clear that Ezekiel would definitely meet with *some* resistance to his message.

What exactly is the message? Verse 3 specifically says that God will destroy Israel's "high places". When reading throughout the Old Testament, the terms "high places" and "groves" is used synonymously with idolatry. The pagans would set up places of worship or altars of sacrifice on mountains and hills (high places) to be closer to or seen by their god; or a clearing in the forest or create a garden (groves). There was only one place where sacrifice was acceptable to God for the children of Israel, the temple in Jerusalem.

The final thing that informs our understanding, just in this section of scripture, is the consequence of the rebellion of the leaders. We studied the concept in Daniel, where the children *suffer* and *die* as a result of the poor decisions of the parents. Interestingly, the second commandment clearly warns of this outcome as it applies to idolatry, "...thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." Ex 20:5-6

VV8-10

- What does God promise to the children of Israel in the day of their judgment?
- Why does He make this promise?
- What purpose will that remnant that escapes serve?
- Do you hear anger in God's words to the children of Israel? Do you hear hurt? In what way?
- Will this remnant that escapes remember what they have done? How will they feel about themselves?
- What will this remnant no longer doubt by the end of this process?

LESSON: Recently, when I read this section of scripture in a different translation, I was brought to tears with the thought that God might feel "*crushed*" by our bad behavior; and it occurred to me to wonder how *very* much God might've felt was out of His comfort zone in dealing with mankind.

This won't be the last time that the book of Ezekiel would almost make God seem... *touchable*.

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I find the last sentence in this section to be so poignant, so *sad* – this people in whom, with whom, through whom God had worked *miraculously*, through their actions have shown that they don't even *believe* in Him. Is this what my actions show about me? I pray not!

VV11-14

What is it to "...smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot...?"

What is the gist of what is being said?

What 3 things will cause Israel's demise?

Who will die of pestilence?

Who will die by the sword?

Who will die by famine?

What will be accomplished in this upheaval?

Where will the men be slain?

What else will suffer because of the people's idolatry?

What will be known by the end the punishment?

LESSON: This section of scripture reminded me of Revelation 9:18.

"By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths."

We discussed the different ways in which men will be killed, but perhaps the type also addresses where men will be when they meet death.