

Ezekiel Chapter 15

Ezekiel 15:1-2 "And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying," "Son of man, What is the vine tree more than any tree, [or than] a branch which is among the trees of the forest?"

This is a new vision. The "vine tree" here, is speaking of Israel. Israel, often symbolized by a vine had become useful for nothing. Failing to do the very thing God set her apart to do, bear fruit, she no longer served any purpose and was useless. Other trees can be used for construction of certain things, but a fruitless vine is useless. It has no value. In every age, the people of God have their value in their fruitfulness.

Israel had been thought of as being the vine, and God was the Branch.

Jesus is spoken of as "the BRANCH" in Zechariah:

Zechariah 6:12 "And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name [is] The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD:"

The trees in the forest here, are spoken of the unsaved world. The "vine tree" is more than the worldly tree, only when they are attached to the BRANCH. Their attachment to God made Israel different.

Ezekiel 15:3 "Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will [men] take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon?"

Trees that were cut down for wood to burn, were not trees for God's use. The vine would not make wood for burning, or even wood to make a peg (a pin). The vine was to produce fruit. In the case of Israel here, they were not doing God's work. They had lost connection with the BRANCH. They had broken relationship with God.

Ezekiel 15:4 "Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. Is it meet for [any] work?"

The vine (Israel), had been good for nothing, but to burn in the fire. God allowed this vine to be burned severely. God sent fire into Jerusalem, and into all the land. Only a remnant had been saved. This is asking the question, can this severely burned vine, come back and produce for God?

"Is it meet for [any] work" means: "useful".

Ezekiel 15:5 "Behold, when it was whole, it was meet for no work: how much less shall it be meet yet for [any] work, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned?"

Before it was burned, the vine had not produced, because it had detached itself from the BRANCH. The vine is of no use to anyone, not even itself, when it does not draw its strength from the BRANCH (God). God had not cut them off and abandoned them. They had detached themselves from Him. If they were not living for God when they were all together whole, how could the remaining vine, live for God and accomplish His desire for them?

The burning of the fruitless vine symbolized judgment in the deportations (of 605 BC and 597 B.C.), leading up to the final conquest (in 586 B.C.). Isaiah made the same analogy in his prophecy saying Israel produced only useless sour berries.

Ezekiel 15:6 "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

This vine detached, was no more than a piece of wood to burn. God has no more respect for them than He does for the heathen world. God sends fire upon His people and Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the home of the temple, where God's presence was with the people. They separated themselves from God. He would no longer dwell with them.

Ezekiel 15:7 "And I will set my face against them; they shall go out from [one] fire, and [another] fire shall devour them; and ye shall know that I [am] the LORD, when I set my face against them."

This destructive fire comes from God. He will turn from them, as they have turned from Him. God is a consuming Fire. His fire destroys all sin that He looks upon. This time, the sin is in His own people. God's chastisement was upon them. He would not spare. They may run, but there is no hiding from God. God's chastisement leaves no doubt with anyone that He is the LORD.

Ezekiel 15:8 "And I will make the land desolate, because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord GOD."

The prophet applies the symbol to Israel and predicts the desolation of the city and the land. In the time of the Great Tribulation, it will be so again (see Revelation 14:18).

Their trespass is not just a single sin. They have chosen the false gods of the world over the One True God. God makes them desolate, because of their total rejection of Him. The message in this is so important for us to understand.

A simple way of saying this would be to say, that without God, I can do nothing. With God as my strength, I can do all things.

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Look with me, at some Scriptures in the very Words of Jesus, which explain how important it is for us to draw our strength from Him.

John 15:4: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

John 15:6-7: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast [them] into the fire, and they are burned." "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

John 15:10: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

The most important thing in our lives, other than our initial salvation, is to walk every day, drawing our strength from God.

John 8:12: "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

1 John 1:7 "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Ezekiel Chapter 15 Questions

1. Who is the "vine tree" in verse 2?
2. Who is the "BRANCH"?
3. When is the "vine tree" more than the worldly tree?
4. Who are the trees in the forest in verse 2 speaking of?
5. How was the vine different from the world tree?
6. Israel had lost relationship with the _____.
7. When the vine loses contact with the Branch, what is it good for?
8. Who had been saved in the burning?
9. Can the severely burned vine come back and produce for God?
10. Why had the whole vine not produced for God?
11. What will God do to the inhabitants of Jerusalem?
12. What had been special about Jerusalem?
13. What does God's chastisement of fire accomplish?

14. What was the trespass?
15. The author believes what is a simple way of stating the lesson we can receive from is?
16. What wonderful promise does Jesus make to believers in John 15:7?
17. What is the most important thing in our lives other than receiving salvation?