

Ezekiel Chapter 5

Ezekiel 5:1 "And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor, and cause [it] to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard: then take thee balances to weigh, and divide the [hair]."

God calls Ezekiel son of man. Ezekiel is the instrument God uses to show what he will do to His people. This sharp knife and razor are both representative of the judgment of God.

This fourth sign, in which Ezekiel shaves his head and beard, demonstrated the severe humiliation to come and represented, by the separate clumps of hair, the four groups among the Jerusalem populace who would experience its fall.

Ezekiel was a priest and was not generally to cut his hair, or his beard.

Each one of the hairs represents individuals who make up the nation of Judah. The judgment is against all. The dividing of the hair shows that not all will fall under the exact same punishment. Each hair (individual), suffers, but not all of them in the same way.

A woman's head was shaved when she was found guilty of adultery. These strands of hair represent the wife of God (Israel). They have committed spiritual adultery by worshipping false gods.

Ezekiel 5:2 "Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled: and thou shalt take a third part, [and] smite about it with a knife: and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them."

This is illustrating the calamities to three segments of Jerusalem due to the Babylonian conquest. Some were punished by fire meaning pestilence and famine (starvation), others died by the enemy's sword (battle), and some were scattered and pursued by death.

Ezekiel 5:3 "Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts."

The remaining few hairs symbolized a believing remnant. Even some of these would suffer oppression, since some of these hairs were also tossed into the fire, meaning they would experience trials.

The best example of that is in the following Scripture.

Psalms 91:7 "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; [but] it shall not come nigh thee."

This binding in the skirt shows their supernatural protection.

Ezekiel 5:4 "Then take of them again, and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; [for] thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel."

This is showing that some, who were spared at first, would be destroyed later, because they were not repentant.

Ezekiel 5:5 "Thus saith the Lord GOD; This [is] Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries [that are] round about her."

All eyes had been on Jerusalem. It had been the center of the nations around them. Many came to Jerusalem to worship in the temple there. In the days of Solomon, people had come from far away countries to see the glories of Jerusalem and her God.

Ezekiel 5:6 "And she hath changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and my statutes more than the countries that [are] round about her: for they have refused my judgments and my statutes, they have not walked in them."

Judgment begins at the house of God. Jerusalem was God's. God will judge Jerusalem and her people more severely, because they sinned in full knowledge. They had the law of God. They were not a heathen nation. For them to worship false gods was to turn their backs on their Creator. The countries around her had never had the law of God. It was more serious for Jerusalem to be involved in spiritual adultery than the other countries, because of Jerusalem's position with God.

Ezekiel 5:7 "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye multiplied more than the nations that [are] round about you, [and] have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that [are] round about you;"

They were to be a separated people. They represented God to all the people of the earth. This is very similar to what the Christians are today to the world. We are Christ's representatives upon the earth. It is important for believers, then and now, to live above the sins of society. The wrath God felt was, because those He had trusted with His law had gone bad.

“Because ye multiplied more” to me have 2 separate meanings. One was the fact they were greatly blessed as God had poured out His blessings on them which they had begun to take for granted. (The same as a lot of people in this country today).

Second, they multiplied quickly as a nation in the sheer number of people. Remember the Pharaoh in Egypt was afraid of them because there were so many? Perhaps 2 to 3 million strong when they left Egypt which continued to increase as the years went by.

The ironic thing is the Muslims far outnumber them at present. All they have to do is to change their current law and give the right of return for Palestinians and before long they will be history as the Palestinians can take over the government by vote and force the Jews to leave without ever firing a shot. And they are considering this today thanks to our government.

Ezekiel 5:8 "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, [am] against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations."

"Therefore", connects this Scripture with the Scripture before.

God is very disappointed in their unfaithfulness. He has given them every opportunity to repent, and they had not. They have been unfaithful to Him in the presence of the nations. Now, He will bring judgment on them in the presence of those same nations.

Ezekiel 5:9 "And I will do in thee that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like, because of all thine abominations."

This is when the fury of God has come up in His face. The destruction will be great, because their abominations were so great.

Now read this (in conjunction with verse 10).

Ezekiel 5:10 "Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds."

This speaks of the cannibalism that goes on, when the famine becomes so great in Jerusalem. This is so unusual, because the Hebrews thought children were one of the greatest blessings from God. Those who do not die from the siege will suffer great trials.

The book of Lamentations reveals how literally these promises were realized when parents ate their children and sons ate their fathers in the times of starvation.

Down through the centuries had come the threats (of Lev. 26:29 and Deut. 28:53), taken up by Jeremiah and sealed in the life of the disobedient nation. Even the remnant would be scattered and suffer.

Ezekiel 5:11 "Wherefore, [as] I live, saith the Lord GOD; Surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish [thee]; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity."

God thinks of them as an adulterous wife. They have embarrassed Him in front of the nations. They have even carried idols into His sanctuary.

God will not show them any pity, because they chose to leave Him for false gods. This is worse than the world sinning. They have polluted their worship services by listening to false prophets.

Here was a solemn oath pledging the very existence of God for the fulfillment of the prophecy. It is found 14 times in this book. Their greatest sin was defiling the sanctuary, showing the height of their wickedness.

You will see this in a couple of chapters from now.

Ezekiel 5:12 "A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them."

This is the same message (as in verse 2 of this lesson). It is spoken of in the separation of the hair. They will all be punished. Some will die from the sword, some will die from the famine, and some will be taken captive.

They had no place to offer atoning blood, thus bearing their sins without relief.

Ezekiel 5:13 "Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted: and they shall know that I the LORD have spoken [it] in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them."

God will always save a remnant of His people. The punishment will finally stop, after it has caused some of them to repent and turn back to Him. The fury will be great, but it will cease. When the punishment is fulfilled, it will satisfy the righteousness of God. God is righteous, and He expects His people to be righteous too.

Ezekiel's purpose was to impress on Israel's conscience God's intense hatred of idolatry and apostasy. "Fury" and "anger" are repeated 6 times.

Ezekiel 5:14 "Moreover I will make thee waste, and a reproach among the nations that [are] round about thee, in the sight of all that pass by."

We studied about this in Jeremiah. God will allow His holy city, Jerusalem, to be destroyed, because of the sins of the people. The temple had been His special place to be present with them. He has no desire to be with them, because of their sins.

He even destroys the temple. This beautiful city, which all admired, will be destroyed and become nothing but ruins.

Ezekiel 5:15 "So it shall be a reproach and a taunt, an instruction and an astonishment unto the nations that [are] round about thee, when I shall execute judgments in thee in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes. I the LORD have spoken [it]."

The word "taunt" means revilement. God has punished His own. This is partly for the instruction of those looking on. Even the Babylonians made the statement that Israel's God had caused this great calamity to come upon them.

God had spoken the destruction on them. The Babylonians were the instrument God used, but the punishment was from God. "I the LORD have spoken it" leaves no doubt that the judgment was from God.

Ezekiel 5:16 "When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for [their] destruction, [and] which I will send to destroy you: and I will increase the famine upon you, and will break your staff of bread:"

“Arrows of famine”. The evil arrows included hail, rain, mice, locusts and mildew. These are the things that destroy crops.

Famine is a punishment that is associated with the worship of false gods. God will not share our love with false gods. Famine comes when God shuts off the rain.

Wars sometimes cause famine, because it is impossible to grow a garden in the midst of war.

All of this comes from an angry God. Famine is the cruelest of all deaths, because it takes so long to die.

Ezekiel 5:17 "So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken [it]."

This is the third time “I the Lord, have spoken” was used (in verses 13, 15 and now verse 17). This was God’s personal signature on their doom and there is no way to turn back this punishment.

As if the famine is not bad enough, the beasts are hungry, too, and they attack the people. This is horror beyond our wildest imagination. Only hell will be worse.

Ezekiel Chapter 5 Questions

1. What does God call Ezekiel in verse 1?
2. What does God tell him to do?
3. What does the razor represent?
4. Why is the hair divided and weighed?
5. Who do each of the hairs represent?
6. What happens to each third of them?
7. Who do those bound in the skirt represent?
8. Why will some of them, that are not destroyed at first, be destroyed later?
9. What had the surrounding world thought of Jerusalem?

10. Where does judgment begin?
11. When they worshipped false gods, they had turned their backs on _____.
12. Who had the Israelites represented God to?
13. Why was it important for the nations to see God's judgment against them?
14. What does "therefore" in verse 8 show us?
15. Why was the destruction so great?
16. What is verse 10 describing?
17. What had the Hebrews thought were one of the greatest blessings from God?
18. What had they done to the sanctuary, that angered God so greatly?
19. Verse 12 is the same judgment as what other verse?
20. When will the punishment from God stop?
21. The temple and the city, Jerusalem will be _____.
22. What does "taunt" mean?
23. What statement leaves no doubt where the destruction comes from?
24. What is the cruelest of all the deaths mentioned here?
25. Why is it the cruelest?
26. What is the only horror worse than this destruction?