

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Ezekiel: Effective Ministry To The Spiritually Rebellious

Part II: God's Call To Minister In His Ways And Means

(Ezekiel 2:1-10)

I. Introduction

- A. When God called Ezekiel to minister to the Hebrew captives in Babylon (Ezekiel 1:1-2), he was among the initial captives taken to Babylon with king Jehoiachin, captives who thought they were about to be returned to Judah. Thus, Ezekiel's message on their need to repent initially fell on deaf ears, B. K. C., O. T., p. 1230.
- B. Ezekiel thus needed a call from God to minister in **God's ways** and **means** in a **supernatural** ministry in his **difficult** assignment, and Ezekiel 2:1-10 gives it with invaluable insight and application for ministry today:

II. God's Call To Minister In His Ways And Means, Ezekiel 2:1-10.

- A. Ezekiel was to minister by the Holy Spirit's power in view of his human limitations, Ezekiel 2:1-2:
 - 1. In God's call for Ezekiel to minister as His prophet, the Lord addressed him as "son of man," Ezekiel 2:1a.
 - 2. The term "man," *'adam*, stressed Ezekiel's humanity opposite God's deity, and the term "son of" stressed Ezekiel's human relationships and heredity, *Ibid.*, p. 1229. Both terms in the context point to Ezekiel's human limitations, what needed to be circumvented if he were to have success in his superhuman task.
 - 3. When God then addressed Ezekiel as "son of man" and told him to stand on his feet that the Lord might speak with him, the (Holy) Spirit entered Ezekiel and put him on his feet, indicating the power by which he was to minister his supernatural ministry was that of the Holy Spirit. (2 Timothy 1:6-8, 14 in our era)
- B. Ezekiel was to minister by letting God make him credible before his spiritually hardened hearers, Ez. 2:3-5:
 - 1. The Lord repeatedly described Ezekiel's hearers as being rebellious against the Lord, sinful, disrespectful and stubborn in Ezekiel 2:3-5a ESV. Ezekiel would thus not be able to prove his credibility to his hearers.
 - 2. Consequently, he was to rely on the Lord to produce in His own divinely effective way the credibility Ezekiel needed before his hearers so that his ministry would become effective, Ezekiel 2:5b.
- C. Ezekiel was to minister by revering God above fearing his audience, Ezekiel 2:6 with Ezekiel 1:28b:
 - 1. Ezekiel was not to fear his hearer's words or looks that indicated their rejection of his ministry, Ez. 2:6.
 - 2. The way to resist fearing his hearer's words and looks was to recall the awesome words and appearance of God in His call that had put Ezekiel flat on his face in Ezekiel 1:28b -- to fear God more than his hearers!
- D. Ezekiel was to minister by aiming only to obey the Lord, not to gain a positive response from his hearers, 2:7:
 - 1. Since Ezekiel's audience was rebellious against the Lord, God directed him to focus only on ministering the words that God had given him to speak, Ezekiel 2:7a, c.
 - 2. This focus was to replace Ezekiel's seeking to produce a positive response from his hearers, Ezekiel 2:7b.
- E. Ezekiel was to minister by being God's free man, independent of the ungodly influence of his hearers, 2:8a,b:
 - 1. As a prophet to a spiritually calloused people, Ezekiel would face reactionary pressure from his hearers to yield to their ungodly views and influence instead of retaining his level of righteousness, Ezekiel 2:8b.
 - 2. Thus, Ezekiel was to resist yielding to his hearers' influence, being God's free man as separate in fellowship from his hearers because he focused on heeding what God had assigned him to do, Ez. 2:8a.
- F. Ezekiel was to minister by accepting God's Word as good even if it was about negative judgment, Ez. 2:8c-10:
 - 1. The Lord directed Ezekiel to open his mouth and eat what God was about to give him, Ezekiel 2:8c.
 - 2. Ezekiel saw that God wanted him to eat the scroll of a book that was written on its inside and outside, Ezekiel 2:9-10a. Scrolls were normally written only on the inside part that was concealed by being rolled up (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Ezekiel 2:9-10), but this scroll was filled with writing both on the inside and the outside, indicating it contained the fullest extent of the will and motivation of the Lord.
 - 3. God's prophet then saw that the scroll's profuse writings were about lamentations and mourning and woe, the message of divine judgment for sin that was overdue to the sinful people of Judah, Ezekiel 2:10b.
 - 4. Thus, Ezekiel was to accept as good God's negative message on judgment that he was about to deliver, making it a part of his very being as he "ate" and "digested" it!

Lesson: To achieve success in a superhuman calling, Ezekiel was to minister in the Holy Spirit's power, let God establish his credibility before others, revere God and not fear his hearers, aim to heed God and not gain a positive response, be separate from his ungodly hearers and accept God's Word as good though it spoke of judgment.

Application: May we apply God's leading of Ezekiel to succeed in superhuman assignments the Lord gives us.