

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Ezekiel: Effective Ministry To The Spiritually Rebellious

Part IV: God's Prophecies Of Judgment By Signs, Ezekiel 4:1-5:17

C. God's Judgment Of Jerusalem's People In The Sign Of Ezekiel's Hair (Ezekiel 5:1-17)

I. Introduction

- A. Ministering to a very spiritually hard, rebellious people is a humanly overwhelming task, but God at times actually directs some of His servants to function in such a ministry.
- B. However, God equips His servants to serve Him well in such callings, leading them powerfully to impact others, and one such event involved Ezekiel's exhibiting the sign of his hair in Ezekiel 5:1-17.
- C. We view this passage for insight and application in ministering in our era (as follows):

II. God's Judgment Of Jerusalem's People In The Sign Of Ezekiel's Hair, Ezekiel 5:1-17.

- A. God had Jeremiah give a fourth sign involving his shaved hair in Ezekiel 5:1-4 (as follows):
 - 1. The Lord directed Jeremiah to shave his head and beard using a sharp *hereb*, the word for a sword that is used 83 times in the book of Ezekiel to describe the weapons soldiers used in war to kill their enemies, Ezekiel 5:1a,b; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1236-1237.
 - 2. After shaving this hair this unusual instrument, Ezekiel was to use a set of scales to weigh his shaved hair and thus part it into three equal piles with a few strands left over, Ezekiel 5:1c; *Ibid.*, p. 1237.
 - 3. After enacting the days of the siege of Ezekiel's sign of lying prostrate were fulfilled, he was to take a third of his shorn hair and place it in the midst of the model brick city and set the hair on fire, Ezekiel 5:2a.
 - 4. The second third of the hair was to be chopped up by the sword and scattered about the city, Ezek. 5:2b.
 - 5. The last third of his shorn hair was to be scattered to the wind, Ezekiel 5:2c. God added that He would draw a sword to pursue them, indicating this bunch of hair represented scattered people, Ezekiel 5:2d.
 - 6. The few strands of hair left over were to be tucked away in the folds of Ezekiel's long outer tunic worn that was secured by a belt or sash around the waist, Ezekiel 5:3; *Ibid.* He was then to take some of these few strands out of his garment and cast them into the fire, indicating that the sufferings of God's judgment would be continually and repeatedly experienced by all of the people of Israel, Ezekiel 5:4.
- B. God then explained this sign of Ezekiel's shaved hair as predicting the fate of Jerusalem's people, Ez. 5:5-17:
 - 1. The Lord explained that though He had set Jerusalem in the midst of the Gentile nations to be a testimony for her God, she had rebelled against Him, doing more evil than the surrounding pagan nations, Ez. 5:5-6.
 - 2. For such gross rebellion and wickedness, God announced that He was against Judah and would administer His judgment on her in the sight of the onlooking pagan, Gentile nations, Ezekiel 5:7-8.
 - 3. That judgment would be unparalleled in Judah's previous or future history, a judgment involving the fathers eating their sons and the sons eating their fathers due to severe hunger, Ez. 5:9-10a.
 - 4. Those who survived this judgment would be scattered to the winds, that is, scattered among the nations in judgment for gross idolatry, a judgment in which God would show no mercy, Ezekiel 5:10b-11.
 - 5. God then explained the sign of Ezekiel's shorn hair in Ezekiel 5:12-17:
 - a. A third of Jerusalem, seen in the hair that was burned, would die by disease and famine, Ezek. 5:12a.
 - b. A second third of Jerusalem, seen in the chopped up hair about the city, would die by the sword, v. 12b.
 - c. The final third of Jerusalem's people, seen in the hair thrown to the wind, would be scattered among the Gentile nations, and God would unsheathe a sword to pursue them oppressively, Ezekiel 5:12c.
 - d. The sign of the bits of hair that were initially tucked away in Ezekiel's robe only later to be removed and some of them thrown into the fire illustrated God's judgment would keep on pursuing the people even after Jerusalem had fallen to where they would experience ongoing trials of being treated dishonorably by Gentiles, suffering famine, suffering the loss of children even by wild animals and ongoing problems with disease and death by the sword, Ezekiel 5:13-17.

Lesson: *Since the people of Jerusalem had not only violated their calling to be a testimony for the Lord among the nations, but they had sinned more grievously than the Gentiles, God would long and severely punish them.*

Application: *(1) If we sin, may we confess it lest we face God's discipline. (2) If we face not only severe but repeat trials, may we FIRST examine our hearts in view of Scripture to discern if we have sinned, and if so, repent! (3) If we see OTHERS facing severe, prolonged trials in God's discipline, may WE learn to revere God and avoid sin!*