

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 379 – The Sword Upon The Land Through His Equal Ways (Ezekiel 33:1-20)

1. What was a watchman to do when he saw the sword come upon the land?

Warn the people: *“(1) Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, (2) Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: (3) If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people” (Ezekiel 33:1-3).*

- God expected Ezekiel to go and speak His words (**Jeremiah 42:4, Jonah 3:1-2, and II Timothy 4:2**).
- At this time, the coming of the sword was by the will of God (**Jeremiah 25:31 and Ezekiel 11:8**).
- The watchman set upon the wall (**Isaiah 62:6**).
- The work was to warn when attacks were coming (**Nehemiah 4:15-18, Jeremiah 4:5, Jeremiah 6:1, and Joel 2:1**).

2. Who was at fault if the watchman blew the trumpet and someone didn't heed the warning?

The person who ignored the warning was at fault if they didn't take heed: *“(4) Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. (5) He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. (6) But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand” (Ezekiel 33:4-6).*

- If they heard, but didn't take the warning (**Jeremiah 6:13-17**).
- Blood upon them (**Matthew 10:5-15**).
- Both die if the watchman doesn't warn, but God's judgment for the failure cometh upon the watchman. This applies spiritually too (**Matthew 15:1-14**).

3. What did Ezekiel need to do to deliver his soul?

He needed to warn the Israel concerning the Lord's judgment upon them: *“(7) So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. (8) When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. (9) Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul” (Ezekiel 33:7-9).*

- These things are discussed here as well as in chapters three and eighteen. As a chosen spiritual watchman (**Jeremiah 23:28** and **Jeremiah 26:2**), Ezekiel needed to warn everyone (**Colossians 1:28** and **I Thessalonians 4:1-2**; cf. **James 5:19-20**) of what is to come if they erred and did not repent (**Luke 13:1-9**).
- As we addressed already in chapter two, Israel was rebellious. God expected Ezekiel to go and preach regardless of the result (**Ezekiel 2:1-8**).
- The message to the wicked is clear (**Psalms 37:20**, **Proverbs 11:21**, and **Isaiah 3:11**).
- There is a heightened accountability for those whom are teachers (**James 3:1**).
- To be free from guilt, the messenger must faithfully publish the message (**Acts 20:20-27**).
- The false prophets were not only remaining silent about what was to come, but they were providing false peace (**Jeremiah 14:13-16**).
- The messenger is not accountable for the rejection of the message (**Luke 8:1-15**). The power of conversion is not in man or in the certain delivery skills of a person (**I Corinthians 1:18-3:6**), but in the word of God (**Romans 1:16**, **Romans 10:14-17**, and **Colossians 1:5-6**).

4. Did the Lord want to see the wicked perish?

No, He wanted them to repent: *“(10) Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live? (11) Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel”* (**Ezekiel 33:10-11**)?

- Repentance would not keep them from captivity (**II Chronicles 66:11-21** and **Jeremiah 17:19-23**; cf. **Proverbs 1:24-31**, **Hosea 4:17**, **Acts 13:14-51**, **Romans 1:18-32**, **II Thessalonians 2:10-12**, and **Revelation 2:20-23**).
- However, they could have willingly submitted to captivity and lived therein (**Jeremiah 21:7-10**, **Jeremiah 27:1-13**, and **Jeremiah 38:1-2**).
- The Lord doesn't want any to perish, but rather to come to repentance (**Isaiah 55:6-7**, **Hosea 14:1**, **Luke 15:1-32**, **Luke 19:1-10**, **I Timothy 2:1-6**, and **II Peter 3:9-14**).

5. Could one's past righteousness be enough to overcome their current transgressions?

No: *“(12) Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth. (13) When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it”* (**Ezekiel 33:12-13**).

- Your past righteous actions do not excuse you from present sins nor does righteousness of the past void errors of the future (**Ezekiel 3:16-21**, **Ezekiel 18:24**, and **Hebrews 10:26-38**).
- The unrepentant sinner answers for his, her, or their sins (**Ezekiel 18:4**, **Ezekiel 18:20**, **Romans 6:23**, **Galatians 6:7-8**, and **James 1:13-16**).

6. What clearly displayed the equal justice of God?

That anyone, righteous or not, was accountable for their transgressions:
“(14) Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; (15) If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. (16) None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live. (17) Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal. (18) When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby. (19) But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby. (20) Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways” (**Ezekiel 33:14-20**).

- They were going to die if they didn't repent (**Ezekiel 14:1-8**).
- The same point is true in our future (**II Thessalonians 1:7-9** and **Revelation 21:8**).
- The point was, the choice was theirs (**Deuteronomy 30:15-20** and **Proverbs 8:36**).
- The Lord was [is/will be] a just, fair, equal judge (**Deuteronomy 10:17**, **Psalms 7:8-17**, **Hosea 14:9**, **Zephaniah 3:5**, **John 5:28-30**, **Acts 10:34-35**, **Romans 2:1-11**, **II Corinthians 5:10**, **II Timothy 4:8**, and **I Peter 1:17**).