

Why and How to Study Ezekiel.- 1 -

Why study the book of Ezekiel?

Ezekiel is an interesting book to study for several reasons. I hope that it will do a number of things for us.

Firstly, To appreciate the seriousness of sin and to understand the depth of God's anger towards it. We need an understanding of the horror of sin and its effects.

Secondly, To learn more about the Old Testament and the history of Israel and to understand how it points us to Jesus.

Thirdly, To appreciate the extent of God's forgiveness by understanding the seriousness of God's punishment.

How to read the book of Ezekiel?

To prepare for your study of Ezekiel there are a number of things you need to do. They are as follows:

Historical Context and background.

Firstly you need to know the historical background of this period. You can read 2 Kings 22 to 25 for this information.

Secondly, you need to place this period in the larger historical context of the Bible.

(see page on the timeline of Israel)

Structure :

Some understanding of the structure of the book is also useful. The structure of the book maybe represented like this:

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| <p>(Part 1) Chapters 1-24</p> <p>Judgment on Judah</p> | <p>(Part 2) Chapters 25-32</p> <p>Judgment on the Nations</p> | <p>(Part 3) Chapters 33-48</p> <p>Prophecies of Hope and Restoration</p> |
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Preparation.

The best way to prepare for this book is to read the entire book through. Because it is such a big book you may need to do this over a period of time. During this first read through, you are just reading for familiarity. You may have hundred of questions, don't worry about them for the moment. If you can, just take note of some of your questions and read on. The purpose of this first reading is just for you to get an idea what is in

Why and How to Study Ezekiel.- 2 -

the book. Read through quickly to get a rough idea of what the book is about, the tone and some of the issues.

Because we have only allocated 6 weeks for this series, we won't be covering the entire book, just enough to give us an overview of the book. Don't worry if the Bible study doesn't cover everything. Hopefully the talks will cover most of the important things. The purpose is to *introduce* us to this period of Old Testament prophecy.

As a group you will read the passage that has been allocated, and work out what questions you need to ask and work out what are the important issues. Sometimes the group discussion may feel a bit lost and you may feel frustrated. Please persevere, be patient, we have deliberately chosen to do it this way so as to help you learn to read the Bible for yourselves. Reading the bible often requires hard work and frustration. There many questions swimming around all the time. Just be aware that we may be covering big sections so don't worry if not all the details are explained. This is one way which God helps open our minds and help us see how big He is.

These are the chapters we will be covering:

Study 1: Chapter 1-2

Study 2: Chapter 3-5

Study 3 : Chapter 8-11

Study 4 : Chapter 34

Study 5 : Chapter 37

Study 6 : Chapter 40-48 : summarise the whole study.