



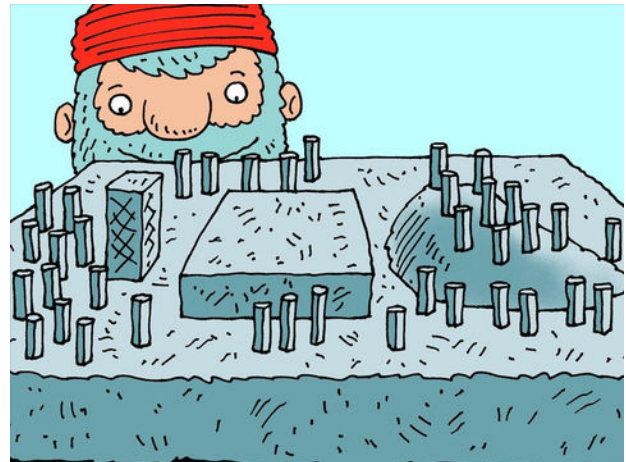
L3L50: Ezekiel the Watchman

Ezekiel 1-11, 33, 40-48

After the Kingdom of Israel was taken into captivity, you'd think it would have been too late for a prophet to warn the people. After all, what is the point of warning someone of something that has already happened? Well, God had a very special message of warning for Israel through His prophet Ezekiel. Ezekiel was told to be a "watchman" for the house of Israel. At the time, Ezekiel was living among the captives of the Babylonians. God gave him some very unique instructions, signs that he should perform to reinforce the warning message he proclaimed. So who was the message for? It was for the house of Israel in the future, at the Time of the End—today.

Discuss:

- What is the role of a watchman? Why did God give him this job?
- Why did God tell Ezekiel to build a clay model of Jerusalem? What do you think the people thought of Ezekiel for setting up the model?
- Even though God was warning of punishment for Israel, what did God tell Ezekiel He would do in the end? What does it mean when God says He will give the people a "Heart of flesh"?
- The final chapters of Ezekiel describe the temple complex in the Millennium. What parts of what he describes stand out to you the most? What are you most looking forward to seeing?
- According to Ezekiel 47, what will happen to the Dead Sea in Israel during the Millennium?
- What will be the name of the city during the Millennium period? Why do you think God will choose that name for it?



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Memory Challenge:

Ezekiel 11:19-20

Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God.



L3L51: Zerubbabel

Ezra 1-7

The people of Judah had been in captivity for nearly 50 years. Some had longed to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple of God and worship there once again, but they were not allowed until a man named Cyrus, King of Persia came to power. This Cyrus wrote a decree that told the people of Judah they could return to Jerusalem to rebuild God's house - the temple. The returning captives followed a man named Zerubbabel who led them back to their homeland. The people were excited to return and get started on their rebuilding projects, but they didn't know they were about to face some very challenging obstacles. Their faith was about to be tested, but through it all one man wasn't about to give up on what they had set out to accomplish.

Discuss:

- Why did Cyrus, the king of Persia, decide to make his proclamation? What does this teach us about how God works with people and leaders in the world?
- What was one of the first things Zerubbabel did when they arrived in Jerusalem? What does this show us about his priorities? What can we learn from his example?
- What was the first big obstacle the people faced when they began working on the temple?
- After the work on the temple discontinued for a while, how did it start back up again?
- Who gave the people the official decree that they could finish their work on the temple? What did the people do when the temple was finally finished?



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Memory Challenge:

Ezra 1:3

Who is among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem.



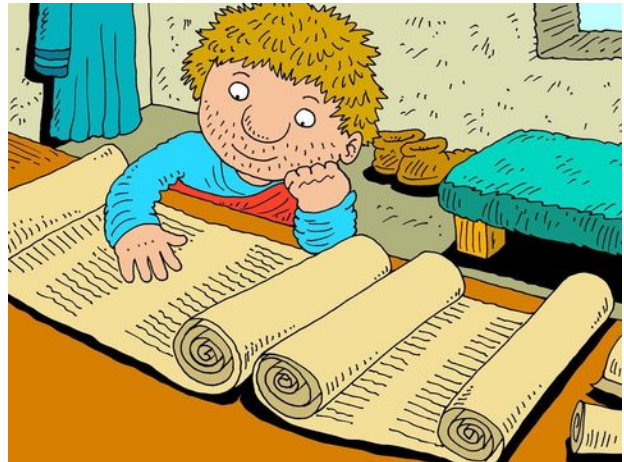
L3L52: Ezra

Ezra 7-8

A group of Jews had returned from exile to rebuild Jerusalem and to restore the temple. They had met with some adversity, but ultimately they completed what they had set out to accomplish. Another group of Jews was planning to come back to Jerusalem to help with the job and to help restore true worship of God in Jerusalem. Among this group was a scribe named Ezra. He was very skilled in knowing the scriptures and teaching the law, but more than that he possessed a heart prepared to seek God's Law and to do it with all his might. As it turned out, he is just what the people in Jerusalem needed.

Discuss:

- Who was the king of Persia who gave support to Ezra and the others with him returning to Jerusalem? What did he do to show his support?
- When the King of Persia promised Ezra his help and support, to whom did Ezra give the credit?
- When Ezra returned with the group of people to Jerusalem, he wrote that he was ashamed of something. What was it? What does this say about the kind of person Ezra was?
- How did God protect the people on their return to Jerusalem? (Ezra 8:31)
- When the Bible says that Ezra "had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord" what does that mean? How can we follow this example?



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Memory Challenge:

Ezra 7:10

For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.



L3L53: Nehemiah

Nehemiah 1-6

The temple in Jerusalem had been rebuilt by the group of captives that had been allowed to return to the city. However, even though the temple was completed and rededicated, there was still trouble for the people. The walls of the city were broken and Jerusalem was not protected from the attacks of the surrounding enemies. At the time, a man named Nehemiah worked as the cupbearer for the Persian king Artaxerxes. Nehemiah heard that the people in Jerusalem were in distress and he became very sad, and cried out to God for help. God, hearing Nehemiah's prayer, had a plan to help the people through the kindness of a king and the leadership of a cupbearer.

Discuss:

- What was Nehemiah's first reaction when he heard about the situation in Jerusalem? What can we learn from his actions?
- What are the responsibilities of a cupbearer? How did the king notice something was wrong when Nehemiah came before him? What does this tell us about the kind of person Nehemiah was?
- How did Nehemiah organize the building of the wall? Why do you think he did it this way?
- What kind of difficulties did the people have as they were trying to build the walls? What was the response of the builders to the adversity they met? What should our response be when we have difficulties trying to accomplish our goals in life?
- How long did it take the people to finish rebuilding the walls? What roles did Nehemiah play in helping the people finish the job so quickly?



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Memory Challenge:

Nehemiah 2:17

Then I said to them, "You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach."