**Faith Foundations 2023-2024**

**The Book of Ezekiel**

**Session 3—Ezekiel 4-5**

**In our previous session, we read about God’s call to Ezekiel and the difficult task that He wanted His prophet to undertake. We saw God’s warning to Ezekiel that the Judahite exiles probably would not like what he had to say, but also His exhortation to Ezekiel not to be afraid of them. Ezekiel would be speaking the truth, and God would be behind him to strengthen and uphold him for the days ahead. In these next two chapters of Ezekiel, we hear more about exactly what God wanted him to say to His wayward people.**

**Read Ezekiel 4:1-3. What model did God tell Ezekiel to build? What were the components of the model, and what did they represent?**

**Read Ezekiel 4:4-8. What was Ezekiel supposed to do with the model after he had constructed it?**

**What did this entire prophetic sign act symbolize?**

**What are some possible symbolic meanings of the numbers of days for which Ezekiel was supposed to lie on his sides?**

**What does God mean when He tells Ezekiel that He will “place cords upon [him]?” Should this be understood literally or figuratively?**

**Read Ezekiel 4:9-17. What was Ezekiel supposed to eat and drink while he lay on his side? How much food and drink was this?**

**What did Ezekiel’s diet symbolize?**

**Upon what was Ezekiel supposed to cook his bread? What did these cooking instructions symbolize?**

**Why did Ezekiel balk at God’s cooking instructions? What concession did God make for him, and why was this not much of a concession?**

**What was Ezekiel prophesying about the fate of the people of Jerusalem?**

**Read Ezekiel 5:1-4. What was Ezekiel supposed to do with his hair? What did shaving one’s head typically symbolize in ancient Israelite culture?**

**What different things was Ezekiel supposed to do with the hair he had shaved?**

**Read Ezekiel 5:5-12. How does God describe Jerusalem’s conduct in these verses? How does He (unfavorably) compare Jerusalem to the other nations in verse 7?**

**What is God going to do to His people? What kinds of things will happen as a result of His judgment?**

**How does verse 12 explain the prophetic sign act from verses 1-4? What do you think is the significance of the extra strands of hair that Ezekiel saved, and then burned some of them later?**

**Read Ezekiel 15:13-17. How would the people of Jerusalem know that Yahweh was the true God?**

**How would God’s judgment affect the other nations’ perceptions of Jerusalem?**

**To which hardships in particular does God promise to subject Jerusalem?**

**These chapters of Ezekiel set the tone for much of the rest of the book. God’s judgment was coming upon His people, and it would be ugly. They had sinned against Him, and they would soon receive the due reward for their unfaithfulness. The next several chapters will continue this theme of God’s judgment, so don’t expect any changes anytime soon!**