**Faith Foundations 2023-2024**

**The Book of Ezekiel**

**Session 9—Ezekiel 16**

**In this very long chapter of Ezekiel, God uses an extended metaphor to describe His relationship with His people of Israel, one that will appear again in chapter 23. He compares His relationship with the Israelites to that of a husband and an adulterous wife, and He uses some rather graphic language in doing so. Such language may seem shocking to our contemporary Christian ears, but it does serve to emphasize the gravity of the situation. Be warned: this chapter of Ezekiel is not for the prudish or faint of heart!**

**1.) Read Ezekiel 16:1-7. What does God say about the origin of Israel’s birth? Why would He say something like that? Is He speaking literally or metaphorically?**

**2.) What does God say about the circumstances of Israel’s birth? What does He mean?**

**3.) How did God save Israel when nobody else wanted it? What did God do for Israel?**

**4.) What are the real life events in the history of Israel that God is describing metaphorically in this passage?**

**5.) Read Ezekiel 16:8-14. How does God begin to describe His relationship with Israel in this passage? What has He done for His people?**

**6.) What metaphorical blessings has God given His people? What are some of the real life blessings God gave Israel that would correspond to these things?**

**7.) What happened to Israel as a result of God’s attention and blessings?**

**8.) Read Ezekiel 16:15-22. How does God describe Israel’s actions in this passage? What did Israel do in real life that this passage describes metaphorically?**

**9.) What did Israel do with the blessings God gave it? Why was this so terrible?**

**10.) According to verse 22, what did Israel forget? Why is this significant?**

**11.) Read Ezekiel 16:23-29. How does God metaphorically describe Israel’s actions in verse 24? What does this mean?**

**12.) With whom did the Israelites “commit adultery,” and how? Why is this significant?**

**13.) Read Ezekiel 16:30-34. How is Israel metaphorically different from a prostitute? Is this a good or a bad thing?**

**14.) Read Ezekiel 16:35-43. What would God do to Israel because of its misdeeds? How does He describe this action metaphorically?**

**15.) Who would be the instruments of God’s justice against His people? Why is this ironic?**

**16.) Read Ezekiel 16:44-52. How does God describe Israel’s “family?” Who are these “sisters,” and what are their characteristics?**

**17.) What did God do to Israel’s “sisters” because of their sins?**

**18.) How do Israel’s sins compare with those of its “sisters?”**

**19.) Read Ezekiel 16:53-58. What does God promise to do for Israel and its “sisters?” What is the purpose of this?**

**20.) When did this restoration take place in real life? What aspect of the restoration still has yet to take place?**

**21.) Read Ezekiel 16:59-63. How has Israel treated its covenant with God? How will God treat His covenant with Israel?**

**22.) How will Israel feel when it is restored?**

**23.) What relationship will Israel’s “sisters” have with it after the restoration? Why?**

**24.) According to verses 61-62, what role will God’s covenant play in this new relationship? Is it the same covenant, or a different one?**

**25.) In verse 63, what does God promise to Israel? What will He do to its shame and sin?**

**Through this extended and sometimes graphic metaphor, God describes how Israel has been unfaithful to Him and worshiped other gods. Israel has sinned even more than some of its pagan neighbors. Yet, because of God’s covenant with Israel, He will not let it fall forever, but will rather restore it to its former glory. Of course, this ultimately takes place through the death and resurrection of Jesus, and it will find its consummation on the last day when He returns. On that day, Jesus will return to claim His bride, and we will all rejoice in the unending wedding feast in God’s eternal kingdom.**