**Faith Foundations 2023-2024**

**The Book of Ezekiel**

**Session 12—Ezekiel 19-20**

**In these two chapters of Ezekiel, God once again criticizes His people for their rebellion against Him. However, instead of focusing merely on the present moment and the imminent destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, God looks back to the history of His people to show that they have been unfaithful and rebellious from the beginning. The Israelites did not just forsake their God during the period of the divided kingdom; they had been forsaking Him ever since He first revealed Himself to them. Our lesson today begins with a poetic lamentation over the leaders of Israel and their idolatry.**

**1.) Read Ezekiel 19:1-9. To what is God referring when He describes the princes of Israel’s mother as a “lioness” (see Genesis 49:8-12)?**

**2.) How did this lioness raise one of her cubs in particular? How did this lion act, and what happened to it in the end?**

**3.) What did the lioness do after her cub was captured? How did this second cub compare to the first, and what happened to it in the end?**

**4.) To whom in actual history do these two lion cubs refer?**

**5.) Read Ezekiel 19:10-14. What metaphor does God use in this passage to describe Israel?**

**6.) What kind of vineyard was Israel originally? What does the scepter mean?**

**7.) What would eventually happen to the vineyard of Israel (metaphorically and literally)?**

**8.) What would happen to the scepter? How is this sad in light of Genesis 49:8-12?**

**9.) Read Ezekiel 20:1-26. What did the elders of Israel do? How did God want Ezekiel to respond to them?**

**10.) What parts of Israel’s history does this passage recount?**

**11.) What did God do for the Israelites multiple times, and what did He command them to do multiple times?**

**12.) How did the Israelites respond to God’s grace and His commandments?**

**13.) What did God repeatedly want to do to the Israelites? Did He end up doing it?**

**14.) According to the text (verses 9, 14, and 22 specifically), why did God continue to relent of the disaster that He promised upon the Israelites? What does this mean?**

**15.) According to verses 23-24, what did God do to Israel instead of completely destroying them? When did this happen in actual history?**

**16.) According to verses 25-26, what else did God do to Israel? What does this mean, and why did He do it?**

**17.) Read Ezekiel 20:27-32. Of what does God accuse the Israelites in this passage?**

**18.) Why will God not listen to the Israelite elders’ inquiries?**

**19.) According to verse 32, what do the Israelites want? Will they ever get it?**

**20.) Read Ezekiel 20:33-39. What does God promise to do for the Israelites? What aspects of this will be painful, and why?**

**21.) According to verse 38, what will God do to the remaining unfaithful Israelites? Why will He do this?**

**22.) In verse 39, what does God tell the unfaithful Israelites to do? Why?**

**23.) Read Ezekiel 20:40-44. What positive things does God promise to do for the Israelites?**

**24.) How will the Israelites react to God’s grace toward them?**

**25.) Read Ezekiel 20:45-49. What was Ezekiel supposed to prophesy to the Negeb? What did this symbolize?**

**26.) In verse 49, what is Ezekiel’s complaint to God? What does he mean by this?**

**Regardless of how he was received, Ezekiel needed to speak the truth to his fellow Israelites and warn them about the coming wrath of God. As one might imagine, it was very difficult for him to deliver these oracles of gloom and doom to an audience that was not interested in listening to him. Yet God also made some wonderful promises to His people who remained faithful to Him. Even though their nation and city would be destroyed, He would preserve them and bring them safely into His kingdom. They would know that He was the true God, because He dealt with them according to His promises of love and grace. And unlike the Israelites, God would never break any of His promises!**