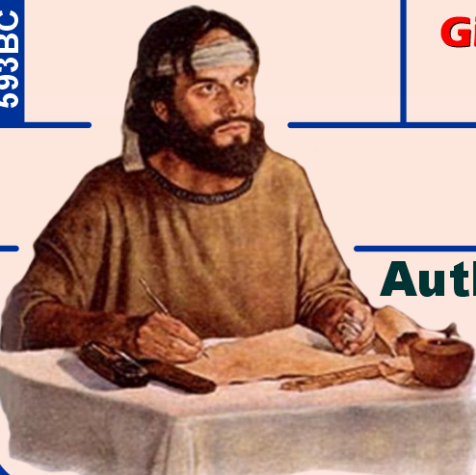


FUTILITY OF FALSE OPTIMISM

EZEKIEL

15

BOOK OF EZEKIEL – OUTLINE

INWARD → Personal		OUTWARD ↻ Peoples		ONWARD → Prophetic															
1 — 3		4 — 24		25 — 32		33 — 48													
Ezekiel's Call to Ministry - Ezekiel Birth (623BC) and Ministry Years (593-571BC) 597BC is the 2nd Deportation; Ezekiel taken at age 25 593BC Ezekiel begins Ministry at age 30		Sinfulness of Israel and Fall of Jerusalem - A Disobedient Nation (4-7) - A Departed Glory (8-11) - A Disciplined Nation (12-24) - The Futility of False Optimism (12-19) - The History of Judah's Corruption (20-24)		Judgment on Nations that Opposed Israel - Ammon (25:1-7) - Moab (25:8-11) - Edom (25:12-14) - Philistia (25:15-17) - Tyre (26:1—28:19) - Babylonia (26) - Sidon (28:20-24) - Egypt (29-32)		Restoration of Israel in the Future - Return of Israel to the land (33-39) - Restoration of Israel in the Kingdom (40-48) - Promised Land; Millennial Temple, and the Glory of God													
593BC		Given BEFORE the siege of Jerusalem		587BC		Given DURING the siege of Jerusalem		586BC		Given AFTER the siege of Jerusalem		571BC							
								The City Destroyed 7 Years Prophesying JUDGMENT											
Author: Ezekiel (“God strengthens”) Place: Babylonia Time: About 22 years (593-571BC)																			
Events: <table><tr><td>605BC — FIRST Siege upon Israel by Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel taken)</td><td>Ezekiel 17 years old</td></tr><tr><td>597BC — SECOND assault upon Jerusalem (Ezekiel taken)</td><td>Ezekiel 25 years old</td></tr><tr><td>593BC — Ezekiel at age 30 called by God to testify against Israel</td><td>Ezekiel 30 years old</td></tr><tr><td>586BC — THIRD assault upon Jerusalem (City & Temple destroyed)</td><td>Ezekiel 37 years old</td></tr></table>												605BC — FIRST Siege upon Israel by Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel taken)	Ezekiel 17 years old	597BC — SECOND assault upon Jerusalem (Ezekiel taken)	Ezekiel 25 years old	593BC — Ezekiel at age 30 called by God to testify against Israel	Ezekiel 30 years old	586BC — THIRD assault upon Jerusalem (City & Temple destroyed)	Ezekiel 37 years old
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3 PARABLES ON JUDGMENT

Ezekiel 15-17

3 PARABLES ON JUDGMENT — EZEKIEL 15-17

- **Ezekiel 15, Unprofitable Vine of Jerusalem**
(Ek.15:1-8)
- **Ezekiel 16, Jerusalem's History as a Prostitute**
(Ek.16:1-63)
- **Ezekiel 17, Riddle and Parable of the Two Eagles**
(Ek.17:1-24)

The background of the slide is a scenic landscape. In the foreground, there are dense bushes with bright orange and yellow autumn leaves. A dark wooden fence runs along the bottom left. In the middle ground, a calm blue lake stretches across the scene, with rolling green hills and mountains in the distance. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, and the overall lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

UNPROFITABLE VINE OF JERUSALEM

Ezekiel 15:1-8

**Then the word of
the LORD came to
me, saying:**

EZEKIEL 15:1



Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: (Ek.15:1)

- **A series of three parables (Ek.15-17) show that there was no possibility of deliverance for Israel.**
- **In this brief parable Judah and Jerusalem are given to Babylon for the burning.**
- **The following question (v.2) implies that a vine is inferior to the trees of the forest.**



**"Son of man, how is the wood
of the vine better than any
other wood, the vine branch
which is among the trees of
the forest?"**

EZEKIEL 15:2



GOD ASKS 3 QUESTIONS — EZEKIEL 15:2-4

- 1** **“How is the wood of the vine better than any wood of a branch which is among the trees of the forest?” (v.2)**
- 2** **“Can wood be taken from it to make anything, or can men take a peg from it on which to hang any vessel?” (v.3)**
- 3** **“If it has been put into the fire for fuel... is it then useful for anything?” (v.4)**

"Son of man, how is the wood of the vine better than any other wood, the vine branch which is among the trees of the forest? (Ek.15:2)

- The obvious answer is, apart from its ability to bear fruit, the wood of a tangled vine is inferior to the wood of a tree.**
- Israel, often symbolized by a vine (Ek.17:6-10; Ge.49:22; Je.2:21), had become useless.**
- Failing to do the very thing God set her apart to do (bear fruit) she no longer served any purpose and was useless.**
- Grapevines are not good fuel for cooking because they burn too hot and too quickly!**



**Is wood taken from it to make
any object? Or can men make
a peg from it to hang any
vessel on?**

EZEKIEL 15:3



Is wood taken from it to make any object? Or can men make a peg from it to hang any vessel on? (Ek.15:3)

- **God pressed His point by asking two additional questions. Is wood ever taken from it to make anything useful? Do they make pegs from it to hang things on?**
- **The wood of grapevines is useless as a building material. Its twisting, gnarled branches cannot even be fashioned into a stout peg for hanging objects.**
- **It was not even good for making a peg on which to hang a vessel because it was so weak.**



**Instead, it is thrown into the fire
for fuel; the fire devours both
ends of it, and its middle is
burned. Is it useful for any work?**

EZEKIEL 15:4



Instead, it is thrown into the fire for fuel; the fire devours both ends of it, and its middle is burned. Is it useful for any work? (Ek.15:4)

- **If the vine by itself was nearly useless, how much more so would it be after it had been through the fire?**
- **Vine wood was not good for making much of anything because it was too soft, weak, and crooked.**



**Indeed, when it was whole, no
object could be made from it.
How much less will it be useful
for any work when the fire has
devoured it, and it is burned?**

EZEKIEL 15:5



Indeed, when it was whole, no object could be made from it. How much less will it be useful for any work when the fire has devoured it, and it is burned? (Ek.15:5)

- **The worthlessness of a charred branch with its crooked, blackened ends is obvious.**
- **It was only good for producing grapes.**
- **If vine wood was naturally of so little value, it was of even less value when charred by fire.**



**"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
'Like the wood of the vine among
the trees of the forest, which I
have given to the fire for fuel, so I
will give up the inhabitants of
Jerusalem;**

EZEKIEL 15:6



"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Like the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so I will give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem; (Ek.15:6)

- **God applied the parable to Jerusalem. She was the vine branch.**
- **Since she had stopped bearing the fruit of righteousness, she was useless.**
- **Israel's only use was as fuel for the fire.**



"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Like the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so I will give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem; (Ek.15:6)

- **The Lord asked Ezekiel how the wood of a vine was superior to the wood of other trees.**



- **Vine wood is not even good for fuel since it is so soft and burns so quickly.**



"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Like the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so I will give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem; (Ek.15:6)

- **The vine was one of the most common symbols of Israel (Ge.49:22; Du.2:32; Ps.80:8-16; Is.5:1-7; Je.2:21; Ho.10:1; Mt.21:33-41; Jn.15:1-6).**
- **Israel's purpose was to bless the nations with fruitfulness. She was to be a source of blessing to the world (Ge.12:1-3).**
- **If she failed to do that, she was of very little value.**



**and I will set My face against them.
They will go out from one fire, but
another fire shall devour them. Then
you shall know that I am the LORD,
when I set My face against them.**

EZEKIEL 15:7



and I will set My face against them. They will go out from one fire, but another fire shall devour them. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I set My face against them. (Ek.15:7)

- Israel had become a wild vine of the forest.**
- As Israel was simply fuel for the fire, God would treat His people in Jerusalem as fuel.**
- God's judgment was certain: I will set My face against them.**



and I will set My face against them. They will go out from one fire, but another fire shall devour them. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I set My face against them. (Ek.15:7)

- Jerusalem had surrendered to Babylon in 597 B.C.; and though they escaped total destruction then, God would bring Babylon back to finish the job.**
- Although they have come out of the fire, the fire will yet consume them.**
- The Lord had set His face against His people in judgment twice already (Ps.66:12).**
- They had experienced two invasions and deportations, in 605 and 597 B.C.**



and I will set My face against them. They will go out from one fire, but another fire shall devour them. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I set My face against them. (Ek.15:7)

- **The Lord had set His face against His people in judgment twice already (Ps.66:12). This pictures a hostile army riding in victory over Israel's defeated troops.**



You have caused men to ride over our heads; We went through fire and through water; But You brought us out to rich fulfillment. (Ps.66:12).

- **They had experienced two invasions and deportations, in 605 and 597B.C. Babylon will invade one more time in 586BC.**



EVENTS SURROUNDING EZEKIEL

IN BABYLON

640BC

Josiah begins his reign in Judah (640BC, **2Ki.22-23**)

The lost Book of the Law was found resulting in sweeping reforms when Ezekiel was a young boy.

①

605BC

The first Jewish captives are taken to Babylon including Daniel (**Da.1:1-2**)

②

597BC

The second Jewish captives are taken to Babylon including Ezekiel, Jehoiachin, with a group of 10,000 (**2Ki.24:14**)

593BC

Ezekiel's prophetic ministry begins at age 30 (Ek.1:1)

588BC

Final siege of Jerusalem begins & lasts for 18 months (**2Ki.25:1-2**)

③

586BC

Babylonians destroy Jerusalem and Temple as the 3rd invasion (**2Ki.25:2ff; 2Ch.36:17-21**)

605BC

70 YEAR JEWISH CAPTIVITY

→ **536BC** ...

Ezekiel Birth: **623BC**

Ministry Begins: **593BC** End: **571BC**

IN JERUSALEM



609BC

Jehoahaz becomes king for 3 months (**2Ki.23:30-34**)



608BC

Jehoiakim becomes king of Judah (**2Ki.23:34—24:19**)



598BC

Jehoiachin becomes king for 3 months (**2Ki.24:17—25:7**)



597BC

Zedekiah as last king begins reign in Judah (**2Ki.24:6-25:30; 2Ch.36:11ff**)

**Thus I will make the land
desolate, because they
have persisted in
unfaithfulness,' says the
Lord GOD."**

EZEKIEL 15:8



Thus I will make the land desolate, because they have persisted in unfaithfulness,' says the Lord GOD." (Ek.15:8)

- **Israel thought of herself as the vine of God's blessing, but she had not produced the spiritual fruit God intended (Ps.80:8-18; Is.5:1-7; Je.2:21; Ho.10:1).**

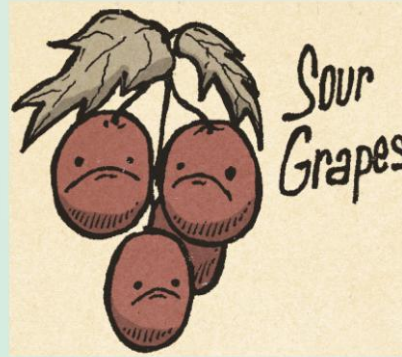


- **There was no cause for optimism, for the judgment from Babylon had only been delayed.**
- **It is clear from Matthew 21:33-41 and other passages that God desires fruit.**



Thus I will make the land desolate, because they have persisted in unfaithfulness,' says the Lord GOD." (Ek.15:8)

- **Instead of fruit, God finds sour grapes or none at all.**



- **Unless men come into vital relationship with the true vine, there can be no fruit (Jn.15:1).**
- **They did not believe that God's judgments would destroy Judah as Ezekiel had proclaimed.**



GENERAL APPLICATION — EZEKIEL 15

- **God compares Israel not to the fruit of the vine, as the Israelites flatteringly thought of themselves, but to the vine itself.**
- **Northern Israel was already "burned up" by the Assyrian invasion and exile of 722 B.C.**
- **Most of Judah and many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem were "burned up" by the Babylonian invasion and exile of 598 B.C., the one in which Ezekiel had been taken.**



GENERAL APPLICATION — EZEKIEL 15

- **Have you become apathetic and unfruitful to God? How can you begin fulfilling his plan for you?**
- **In every age, the people of God have their value in their fruitfulness.**
- **Isaiah made the same analogy in his prophecy (Is.5:1-7), saying Israel produced only useless, sour berries.**
- **The Lord Jesus also used the vine as a picture of believers today in John 15.**



GENERAL APPLICATION — EZEKIEL 15

- **What is the purpose of a vine? It is to do one thing—bear fruit. And nothing else.**
- **The people were supposed to represent God, and they had failed to do it.**
- **We who have heard His Word have a great responsibility. God wants us to be bearing fruit today.**
- **We can produce nothing aside from Christ.**



FUTILITY OF FALSE OPTIMISM

EZEKIEL

15