

Ezekiel 4

Read Ezekiel 4:1-3: We had mentioned that Ezekiel was using props and a *show-and-tell method* to clarify God's message to his people. Jeremiah told his people over and over that Jerusalem was going to get sacked. Sometimes it takes more than words to get a message through. Ezekiel will make it visual. God tells him to take a brick (large paver made of clay) and inscribe the features of Jerusalem on it. Then he is to shove dirt around the edges of the Jerusalem prop to show how the Babylonian siege works and ramps will scale the outer Jerusalem's outer walls. Then he is to make little GI Joe battering rams and soldier camps all around the city. The idea is that the people need to visualize what is happening.

Next, he is told to take an iron pan and put it between himself and this besieged city. Sometimes words just lose their meaning. The iron boundary may be signifying that there is no escape. They are blocked in by God himself. None can break through and help. None can break out. It may have seemed that Jeremiah and Ezekiel were mere men; but they were also communicating unstoppable power from God.

For behold, I have made you this day A fortified city and an iron pillar, And bronze walls against the whole land— Against the kings of Judah, Against its princes, Against its priests, And against the people of the land. ¹⁹ They will fight against you, But they shall not prevail against you. For I am with you," says the LORD, "to deliver you." (Jeremiah 1)

Thus says the LORD: 'Do not deceive yourselves, saying, "The Chaldeans will surely depart from us," for they will not depart. ¹⁰ For though you had defeated the whole army of the Chaldeans who fight against you, and there remained only wounded men among them, they would rise up, every man in his tent, and burn the city with fire.' " (Jeremiah 37)

God goes on to say that this whole public demonstration is a sign. We have run into this word for *sign* before. It is the same word in Genesis 1 for the creation of the sun, moon and stars, that are purposed for visual clocks and God's precise calendar appointments (solar and lunar eclipse's that land on Jewish Holidays). God used solar eclipses and blood moons that landed on Jewish holy feasts throughout history to put his stamp of God on it. It is a meeting called by God. These are things that are going to happen. God was equating Ezekiel's props to

the accuracy of the stars on his calendar. The siege lasted 3 years until Jerusalem actually fell.

אוֹת 'ōwth, oth; probably from [H225](#) (in the sense of appearing); a signal (literally or figuratively), as a flag, beacon, monument, omen, prodigy, evidence, etc.:—mark, miracle, (en-) sign, token.

Read Ezekiel 4:4-8: In addition to the Jerusalem props, Ezekiel himself will lay on his side to commemorate the judgements upon Israel and Judah. He will lay on left side in the public square for 390 days. That represents 390 years of sin. He will then lay on his right side for 40 days. That task would affect your social plans for the next year and a half. God tells Ezekiel that he will bear the iniquity of his people (figuratively and publicly). There is nothing easy about being a prophet.



Solomon was a hinge pin to the northern Kingdom collapse. His idolatry caused God to take the 10 northern tribes away. He caused the kingdom to split. Israel-north fell into idolatry under the outlier leadership of Jeroboam, who relocated their capital at Shechem, and replaced their God with golden calves at Dan and Bethel. That was a disaster which plunged the northern kingdom into idolatry. God told the northern tribes to repent; without success. Eventually Assyria took them all away. All of this came as a result of King Solomon marrying foreign idolatrous wives. What a massive tragedy Solomon brought from the heights of his father David, leading to the destruction of his own country.

“For Israel has forgotten his Maker, And has built temples; Judah also has multiplied fortified cities; But I will send fire upon his cities, And it shall devour his palaces.” (Hosea 8)

Read Ezekiel 4:9-16: God told Ezekiel that he had to live off of rations, like the people under siege. He had his food weighed and measured, just as if he too was on food rationing in the Jerusalem siege. He had to make his cooking fires with dried human poop. The children of Israel would likewise have to eat defiled food during the siege and among the Gentiles after their deportations. Ezekiel protested about having to defile himself. God made a provision and allowed him to cook over dried cow patties instead. God essentially made his servant live out what he was prophesying. We don't get the luxury to live on a different planet than those who defile it. We are all in this mess together.