

Speechless Sorrow - 11/01/20

TEXT- Eze 24:15-18 *Also the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 16 Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. 17 Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. 18 So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded. Eze 24:24 Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD.*

INTRO- No matter what happens in the election we will still have a duty to follow the Lord. In 605 B.C., the Babylonians began the first of several deportations of the Jews; including Daniel and the 3 Hebrew children.

In the second group (597 B.C.) was Ezekiel, then about 25 years old.

He was taken to Tel-abib near the ship canal Chebar Eze. 3:15.

There he lived in his own house with his wife vs.16.

Five years after Ezekiel came to Tel-abib, he was called to be a prophet.

This was six years before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586, so while Jeremiah was ministering to the people back home, Ezekiel was preaching to the Jews of the captivity in Babylon. Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel was a priest called to be a prophet.

God commanded him to do a number of symbolic acts in order to get the attention of the people:

Play at war Eze 4:1-3; lie on his side a certain number of days Eze 4:4-17 shave his hair and beard Eze 5:1-4;

Act like someone fleeing from war (Eze 12:1-16);

Sit and sigh (Eze 21:1-7); the most difficult of all, have his wife die

God used the affliction Ezekiel as a means of spiritual instruction.

Her death symbolized the fate of the guilty Jerusalem.

I. SUDDEN AND UNEXPECTED. The Lord took away from the prophet the desire of his eyes "suddenly" "*At even my wife died.*"

A. Ezekiel's love for his wife "*the desire of thine eyes*"

The terms Ezekiel employs show how great was his love and attachment to his wife; all the more was this sudden bereavement a shock.

B. Her death was not anticipated

18 So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died;

C. Judah did not expect Jerusalem and the Temple to be destroyed

Repeated warnings and threatenings could not stop the fall of "the joy of the whole earth,"

D. Their confidence was misplaced

Their pride was destined to humiliation. The death stroke came, and it came with suddenness which corresponded with the prophet's bereavement.

Joe Scriven was a missionary from Ireland to Canada, working among the Iroquois Indians. He was joined by his fiancé who was also from Ireland. Just before the wedding, she was killed in an ice accident. Joe buried her with his own hands, and a broken heart. A year later, in a letter to his mother, he reflected,

"What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer! Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged. Take it to the Lord in prayer." Joe was on the road to triumph, even though there were times when the road was rough.

II. SEVERE.

A. It was distressing to Ezekiel.

No affliction which could befall Ezekiel could be so distressing

B. This it was symbolic of the coming judgment upon Jerusalem.

"Behold," said the Lord, "*I will profane my sanctuary, the pride of your power, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth.*"

Patriotism, historical associations, religious pride, and other elements were affected. No heavier blow could fall upon them than this.

III. IT WAS INEVITABLE.

Ezekiel acknowledged and felt; it was God who deprived him of the desire of his eyes. The dead return not to their place, which knows them no more.

Ezekiel's fellow-countrymen were to learn that it was the Divine purpose to inflict upon Jerusalem the last indignity. No human power could avert, and no human power could repair, this evil.

IV. CRUSHING EVEN TO SILENCE. Ezekiel was bidden, when his bereavement came upon him, to refrain from weeping and mourning, and from all the outward signs of grief. Distressing and difficult as the command certainly was, it was obeyed. And the prophet's obedience to it was significant. When the day of Judah's trouble came, it came in such a manner and with such circumstances accompanying it that the survivors and spectators of the national calamity were rendered speechless through grief.

Psa 39:9-10 *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it. 10 Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.*

V. HOPE EXTENDED

A. A deep mystery

Why does God take away our beloved ones with a stroke?

B. There is hope for the future

Psa 30:5 *For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*

B. These dry bones will live again Ez. 37 -38

1. Deep mystery.

John 13:6-7 *Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? 7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.*

2. Divine instruction. The fact should teach us important lessons; e.g.:

3. Comfort. God is all-wise, perfectly righteous, infinitely kind. His actions to us, are for our good.

VI. LIFE CONTINUED

18 *So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.*

• **Daniel –**

Dan 6:7 *All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.*

Dan 6:10 *Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.*

- **Nehemiah - Neh 4:6** *So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.*
- **David – 1 Sam. 30:6** *And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.*

Joseph, Job and Peter

Acts 13:50-52 *But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. 51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.*

After William Carey was well established in his pioneer missionary work in India, his supporters in England sent a printer to assist him. Soon the two men were turning out portions of the Bible for distribution. Carey had spent many years learning the language so that he could produce the scriptures in the local dialect. He had also prepared dictionaries and grammars for the use of his successors. One day while Carey was away, a fire broke out and completely destroyed the building, the presses, many Bibles, and the precious manuscripts, dictionaries, and grammars. When he returned and was told of the tragic loss, he showed no sign of despair or impatience. Instead, he knelt and thanked God that he still had the strength to do the work over again. He started immediately, not wasting a moment in self-pity. Before his death, he had duplicated and even improved on his earlier achievements.

CONCL - Hos 13:6 *According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.*

Chippie the parakeet never saw it coming. One second he was peacefully perched in his cage. The next he was sucked in, washed up, and blown over.

The problems began when Chippie's owner decided to clean Chippie's cage with a vacuum cleaner. She removed the attachment from the end of the hose and stuck it in the cage. The phone rang, and she turned to pick it up. She'd barely said "hello" when "ssssopp!" Chippie got sucked in.

The bird owner gasped, put down the phone, turned off the vacuum, and opened the bag. There was Chippie -- still alive, but stunned.

Since the bird was covered with dust and soot, she grabbed him and raced to the bathroom, turned on the faucet, and held Chippie under the running water. Then, realizing that Chippie was soaked and shivering, she did what any compassionate bird owner would do . . . she reached for the hair dryer and blasted the pet with hot air.

Poor Chippie never knew what hit him.

A few days after the trauma, the reporter who'd initially written about the event contacted Chippie's owner to see how the bird was recovering. "Well," she replied, "Chippie doesn't sing much anymore -- he just sits and stares."

It's hard not to see why. Sucked in, washed up, and blown over . . . That's enough to steal the song from the stoutest heart.