

Making
the **Message**
Memorable

Ezekiel 36:16-28

ABU Preaching Conference

June 2012

Making the **Message** Memorable

The **Message**
and
Your **Message**

Making the **Message** Memorable

Your Message

does it fit with

The **Message?**

Historical

Context

Making the Message Memorable

PASSAGE

1 Cor 13

Ezek 36

Col 3

BIBLICAL
CONTEXT

Scriptural
(Canonical)

Historical

Biblical
Theological

LITERARY
CONTEXT

Epistle
to Poetry
Emotion

Prophecy
Symbolism
Parable

Epistle
Descriptive
Groupings

METHOD
Message
Memorable

Compare/
Contrast
Repetition

Symbolic
Story
OT to NT

Outline
Patterns
Story

The Historical Context – Ezekiel 36

The Text – Ezek 36:16-28

Dates

Events

598 BC 1st exiles of Judah (often called Israel by Ezekiel) deported to Babylon

593 BC inaugural vision (Ezek 1-3)

592 BC 1st temple vision (Ezek 8-11)

588-586 siege of Jerusalem, then destruction

587-585 oracles against nations (Ezek 25-32)

Text – Ezek 36:16-28

573 BC 2nd temple vision (Ezek 40-48 / 43:5)

571 BC last dated oracle (Ezek 29:17)

The Historical Context – Ezekiel 36

The Text – Ezek 36:16-28

People of Israel:

Disobeyed God and profaned His holy name

Defeated by the Babylonian army

Taken as exiles from Israel to Babylon

Caused foreign nations to insult & belittle God

... which caused God to defend His reputation ...

by promising the restoration of His people

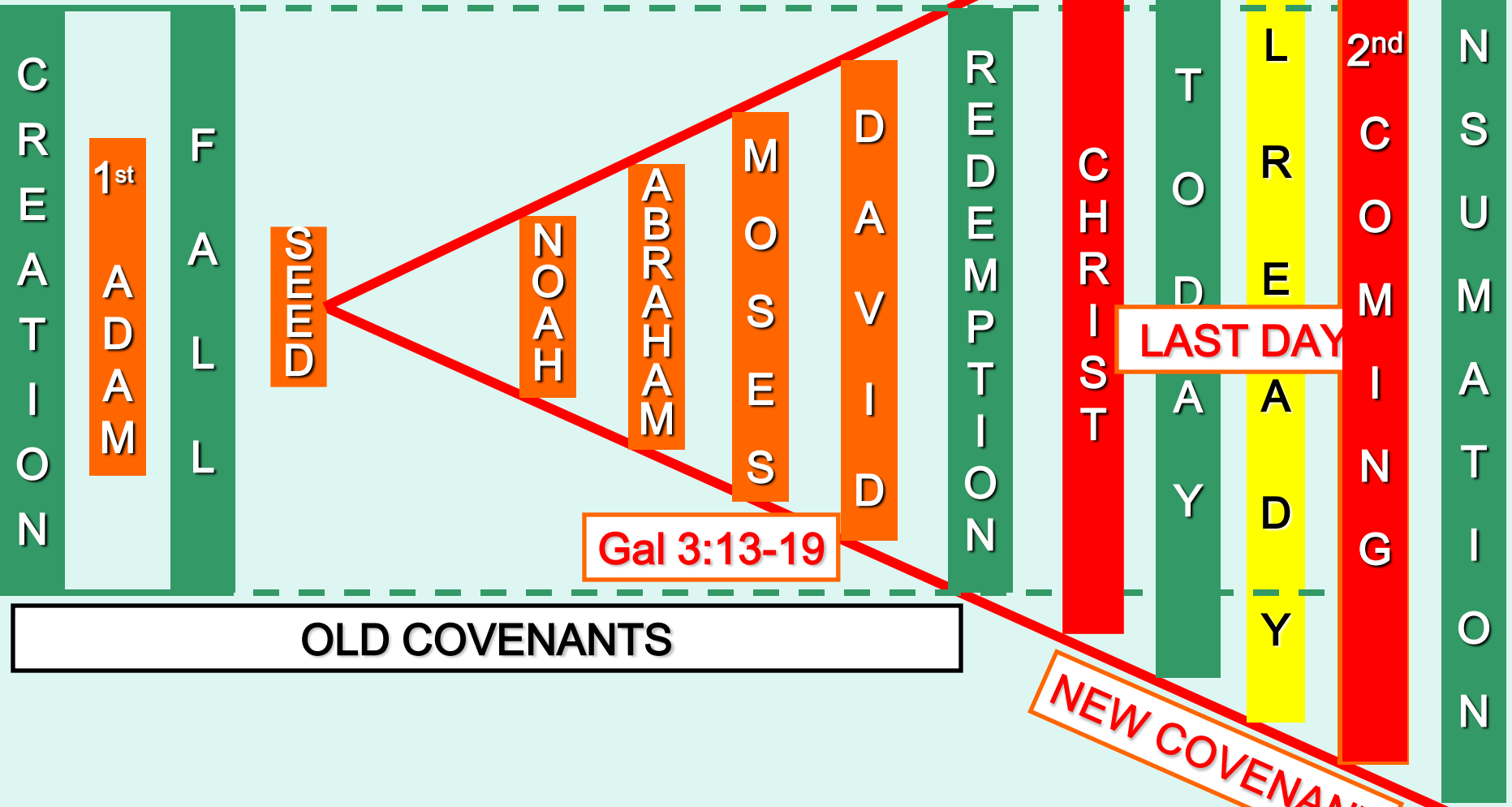
through **a radical spiritual transformation**

thereby restoring the **glory** of His Name

and returning the exiles to Israel

Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel

5 GREAT MOMENTS IN TIME & SPACE



OLD COVENANTS

NEW COVENANT

LAST DAY

Gal 3:13-19

COMING AGE

2nd

1st

The Literary Context of Your Message

The Text – Ezek 36:16-28

First, much of the book consists of **visionary writing**, which transports readers to a world of the **imagination** where the rules of reality are obviously suspended in favor of **highly unusual visions**....

The Literary Context of Your Message

The Text – Ezek 36:16-28

Second, Ezekiel employs a technique known as *symbolic reality*, which occurs when a writer consistently transports the reader to a world of *visionary experience* where the most important ingredients are *symbols*—symbols like a *vine*, a *boiling pot*, or a *valley full of dry bones*....

The Literary Context of Your Message

The Text – Ezek 36:16-28

Third, prophecy is itself a genre, made up of **oracles** (pronouncements from God through the agency of a prophet) that fall into two main categories—oracles of **judgment** and oracles of **blessing**.

Combining Historical Context and Literary Context in Your Message

Ezekiel combined the Historical Context and the Literary Context in the Message. Ezekiel described Israel's historic situation in a visionary, symbolic way: Disobedient Israel had a "heart of stone" – a heart that could not sustain life – which must be replaced with a "heart of flesh" – a heart that could sustain life – so that Israel would not disgrace God's holy name. Israel cannot do this. God can and will.

Combining Historical Context and Literary Context in Your Message

Can Ezekiel's Historical Context and Literary Context be combined in your Message for today?

Today disobedient people do not obey God and do not reverence His Name because they have hard hearts and need new hearts which only God can provide.

What could symbolize their need? Is there a visionary way –a symbolic story to convey the same truth in your Message?

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

Introduction: We live in an amazing world!

If I had told you 40 years ago that there were signals carrying voices into this room from 100s even 1000s of miles away, you would have said I was crazy.

Today most of you have a little device in your pocket to receive these voices.

You can even talk to people across the ocean from you. That is truly amazing!

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

As amazing as that it is – something more amazing happened here in Africa in 1967. A man lay dying in a hospital because his old heart could not sustain his life. Then a doctor came to his room and said, “We have found a new heart for you!” The man was taken to the operating room and the doctor took out his old hard heart and gave him a new living heart. **my friend** The first heart transplant was in Africa!

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

Yet, there is still something more amazing!

That man had a physical heart transplant which will keep him alive for a number of years, but then he will die.

However, the Bible tells us about a heart transplant which you can receive and never die – a spiritual heart transplant!

The prophet Ezekiel told about this 1000s of years ago.

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

Ezekiel told about a disobedient patient who needed a great doctor to perform an operation in order for the patient to live.

As I read the text – **Ezekiel 36:16-28** – I want you to be looking for four things:

1. Who is the patient?
2. What kind of patient is he?
3. Who is the doctor?
4. What kind of operation is it?

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

Ezek 36:16-28 The word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁷ "Son of man, **when the house of Israel lived in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their deeds.** Their ways before me were like the uncleanness of a woman in her menstrual impurity. ¹⁸ So I poured out my wrath upon them for the blood that they had shed in the land, for the idols with which they had defiled it.

Combining Historical Context and Literary Context in Your Message

¹⁹ I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries. In accordance with their ways and their deeds I judged them. ²⁰ But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned my holy name, in that people said of them, 'These are the people of the LORD, and yet they had to go out of his land.'

Combining Historical Context and Literary Context in Your Message

²¹ But I had concern for my **holy** name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to which they came.

²² "Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my **holy** name, **which you have profaned among the nations to which you came.**

Combining Historical Context and Literary Context in Your Message

²³ And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.

²⁴ I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land.

Combining **Historical Context** and Literary Context in **Your Message**

²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶ **And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.**

Combining **Historical Context** and Literary Context in **Your Message**

²⁷ And I will put my **Spirit within you**,
and cause you to walk in my statutes
and be careful to obey my rules. ²⁸ **You**
shall dwell in the land that I gave to your
fathers, and you shall be my people,
and I will be your God.

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

1. Who is the patient?

Israel

2. What kind of patient is he?

disobedient

3. Who is the doctor?

God

4. What kind of operation is it?

a heart transplant

Combining Historical Context and Literary Context in Your Message

Main Idea: Disobedient people need a new heart which only God can provide

You need a heart transplant

This was true of people in ancient Israel and this is true of people today

To Make The Message Memorable use both the Historical and the Literary contexts in the sermon – updating the Historical with similar contemporary examples and using a similar symbolic image – a physical heart transplant.

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

I. **Need, Treatment, Results** (16-24)

interaction: **Patient Israel** (disobedient) and **Doctor God**

A. initial treatment

1. **Need – Patient Israel** sick & dying
– defiled land—when living in it—by
conduct & actions—shed blood,
idols (18)

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

I. **Need, Treatment, Results** (16-24):

A. initial treatment

2. **Treatment – Doctor God –**

- wrath (18), Israel kicked out of homeland, dispersed among nations, judged (19)

e.g. aggressive treatment—radiation,
chemotherapy to kill disease

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

I. **Need, Treatment, Results** (16-24):

A. initial treatment

3. **Results** of initial treatment

a. **Patient Israel** – rebellious—(20)

wherever went profaned God's name

b. **Other Nations** – talking (20)

These are the Lord's people, yet they had to leave his land

c. **Patient Israel** – was warned, knew the consequences; yet did not obey

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

- **Application** – interaction between Patients & Doctors today –
 - a. A young Pastor (me) – “2/3^{rds} in the hospital put themselves there – stress, diet, drink, weight, worry”
 - b. Doctor friend: “John, you are wrong. Your numbers are way too low!”

e.g. pastoral counsel (free), Doctor’s advice costs – yet hyper-tension 95%

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

- people condemn themselves to death

E.g. 1st heart bypass I knew 1970s

Dr Robachek & Smoker / Joe Camel

Why do people do that? they know what's bad for them, the deadly results; yet they do it anyway?

- **PROBLEM** frequently – heart becomes hard as plaque builds up on inside walls
- same with ongoing sin; hardens heart

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

B. radical treatment – **Dr God's** response

1. **Dr God** – had concern for his **Holy Name** (21); **Patient Israel** was giving **Dr God** a bad reputation
 - a. **Doctors** do not like **patients** staying sick, not getting well and dying; it gives them a bad reputation
 - If **Patient Israel** does not get well, the **nations** will not come to **God** for help

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

B. radical treatment – **Dr God's** response

b. “elective” surgery (22) God chose to operate not disobedient patient Israel

1] the reason God chose to operate was to show the **holiness** of His great name (23)

2] to show the nations the kind of **Doctor** He was through restoring Israel to their homeland (24)

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

B. radical treatment – **Dr God's** response

- the nations will know that **Dr God** is the Great Physician through **Patient Israel's** recovery
- **God** will show Himself **holy** (pure) through **Israel** (the defiled, impure)

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

B. radical treatment – **Dr God's** response

2. **Patient Israel** – did not deserve the operation, abused self and **Doctor's** advice; damaged **Doctor's** reputation

a. did not choose the operation

b. in spite of **Patient Israel** rejecting **Dr God** and working against His advice, **Dr God** graciously chooses to operate

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

II. **Heart Transplant surgery (25-27)**

A. **PURIFICATION (25)** irrigate, sterilize, disinfect – scrub inside & out

1. sprinkle with clean water – wash away contamination, revive

- OT water rituals symbolize need for inner moral purity to meet God

2. produced by God on the inside

you—patient Israel—will be clean!

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

II. **Heart Transplant surgery (25-27)**

B. **PROCEDURE (26-27)** INTERNET

hypothermia (lower the body
temperature)

stop the heart

clamp/cut the veins and arteries

connect to heart-lung machine

remove the old heart

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

II. **Heart Transplant surgery (25-27)**

B. **PROCEDURE (26-27) INTERNET**

put in the new heart

connect the veins and arteries

electric shock to start the heart
beating (defibrillation)

- transplanted **heart** pumps blood,
gives life to the body

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

APPLY: physical heart = center of your
physical being; strength and life

1. metaphysical heart = center of your
spiritual being; intellectual and
spiritual processes, understanding
 - a. person in totality, comprehensive
character, personality as a whole
 - b. place where a person meets God,
either as godly or disobedient

Combining **Historical Context** and Literary Context in **Your Message**

APPLY: physical heart = center of your
physical being; strength and life

2. spiritual heart transplant = a new
center of being; a new strength, a
new life; a new person; alive to God

- heart of stone (hard, useless, dead)

versus

- heart of flesh (soft, useful, alive)

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

III. Recovery & Restoration to Family

you will be my people & I your God (28)

God will gather Israel from captivity,
bring them to their own land (24)

A. receive patient back from surgery —
Family Waiting Room, Recovery

B. life goes on, but each moment
sweeter, precious—joy, thanksgiving

- church rejoices when one is converted

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

- Here Ezekiel's story ends
- But 1 critical factor is left out
- awaits New Testament fulfillment
- one sad reality in every heart transplant
 someone has to die – a **donor**
- Someone had to die in order for you to receive a new heart

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

IV. DONOR – who had to die in order for you to receive a new heart?

A. harvesting the dead – a living heart from one who has died

B. a prophetic passage looking beyond Ezekiel's and Israel's day to a Messiah

- Old Testament anticipates the coming of **the great donor** **Jesus Christ**

- God gave His **Son** to be the **donor**

Combining Historical Context and Literary Context in Your Message

The Old Testament anticipates the coming of the great donor, Jesus Christ

The Supremacy of Christ

It also anticipates a great operation which takes place when the Spirit of God removes your heart of flesh and transplants a new spiritual heart in you – a heart that replaces old sinful attitudes and inclinations by making you a new creation and giving you a new direction.

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

John 7:38 (Jesus on the feast's last day)

“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his **heart** will flow rivers of living water.’”

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

Conclusion. Another friend of mine needed a heart transplant. He was taken to a famous hospital to receive a new heart. But no new heart could be found. He died in the hospital waiting for a new heart.

But my friend is more alive today than any of us. He is alive in the very presence of God because years earlier he received a new spiritual heart from God.

Combining **Historical Context** and **Literary Context** in **Your Message**

A signal carrying a voice may be coming to you right now in this room.

If this is true, it is not a voice coming from across the ocean but a voice from heaven itself – the voice of the **Holy Spirit**.

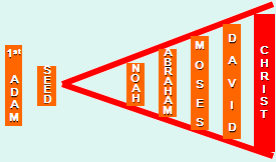
The voice of the **Holy Spirit** saying to you, “You need **a new heart**.”

If **He** is calling – believe on the **Lord Jesus Christ** and you will receive **a new heart**.
You need a heart transplant

AMEN!



PICTURE



Exodus 24:4-8

And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD.

He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵ And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD.

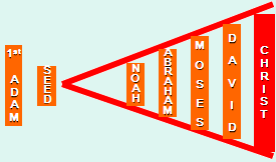
⁶ And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar.

⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people.

And they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient."

⁸ And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."

PICTURE



Galatians 3:13-19; 28-29

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us - for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree" - ¹⁴ so that in **Christ Jesus** the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith. ¹⁵ To give a human example, brothers: even with a man-made **covenant**, no one annuls it or adds to it once it has been ratified. ¹⁶ Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his **offspring**. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to **one**, "And to your **offspring**," who is **Christ**. ¹⁷ This is what I mean: the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a **covenant** previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void. ¹⁸ For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise. ¹⁹ Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the **offspring** should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.... ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are **Christ's**, then you are Abraham's **offspring**, heirs according to promise.

Introducing the Literary Context into Your Message – 1 Cor. 13:1-3

1. Literary Device

Today's World: **Everything** – Love = **Nothing**

Sports star

Your **Homework!**

Entertainer

Think of a person
in each category
who achieved their

Businessman

EVERYTHING

Politician

but had **NOTHING** inside
and threw it all away