
SUNDAY SERMON

**Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Willow, Alaska**

Date: August 19, 2018

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 33:1-33

Text: Ezekiel 33:1-33

Subject: EZEKIEL SERIES – The Watchman & Doers of the Word

1 ¶ Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: 3 If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; 4 Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. 5 He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

6 But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

This speaks of the physical city of Jerusalem and the nation of Israel being invaded by a foreign intruder who wields the sword against the people of that land. If the watchman who is appointed by the people sees the danger coming and sounds the

alarm, he has delivered his soul. It is then up to those who hear the alarm to respond to save their lives. On the other hand, if the watchman sees danger approaching and fails to sound the alarm, which is his duty to do – then the people shall perish, but their blood shall be required of the watchman. The watchman shall be responsible for the deaths of those he failed to warn.

7 So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

Ezekiel, the prophet for the whole house of Israel was set of the LORD as a watchman unto that whole house – not Judah only. His job, as a watchman, was to hear God's word and warn the whole house of Israel.

8 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. 9 Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

This shows us that Ezekiel's actions or the lack of it would result in the very same thing as what happened to the watchman chosen of the people of Jerusalem or Judah. If Ezekiel warned the wicked by delivering to him God's word, then he would deliver his soul – and if he did not speak God's warning to the wicked, then the blood of the wicked man would be required at his hand. Ezekiel would be responsible for the man's death because he failed to warn him by speaking God's words to him.

10 ¶ Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?

Therefore – because I, the LORD, have made you a watchman – speak this to the house of Israel. God knew what they were saying because he knows every word in man’s mouth altogether. God delivered their own words back to them through his watchman, Ezekiel, who was to say: You are saying, O Israel, if our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we live?

They wanted to know what they had to do in order to live and not die.

11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

In this 11th verse we have the record of God’s answer given to Ezekiel for Israel. The Lord God says, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked. God would have the wicked turn from his wicked way and live. Then he commands them: “Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?”

We must be sure to remember this concerns physical death – and is spoken to a people who are under the Old Covenant – the law covenant.

12 Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth.

In other words, if a righteous man is living righteously, then turns to transgress the law of God, neither shall he be able to live for his righteousness. Accordingly, neither shall the wicked man fall by his wickedness because he turns from his wickedness to live righteously. This was God's message to the house of Israel by the mouth of Ezekiel.

13 When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

The *righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him* from the wrath of God, and the curse of the law, *in the day of his transgression*. When he becomes a traitor and a rebel, and takes up arms against his rightful Sovereign, it will not serve for him to plead in his own defense that formerly he was a loyal subject, and did many good services to the government. No; *he shall not be able to live*. The remembrance of his former righteousness shall be no satisfaction either to God's justice or his own conscience *in the day that he sins*, but rather shall, highly aggravate the sin and folly of his apostasy. And therefore. *for his iniquity that he committed he shall die*,

14 Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; 15 If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. 16 None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

He that does thus repent and turn from his wickedness shall escape the ruin he was running into, and his former sins shall be no prejudice to his acceptance with God. Let him not pine away in his iniquity, for, if he confess and forsake it, he shall find mercy. *He shall surely live; he shall not die. He has done that which is lawful and right, and he shall live thereby.* But will not his wickednesses be remembered against him? No; he shall not be punished for them.

Again, we must remember this speaks of physical death of persons under the Old Covenant – the Law Covenant.

17 Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal.

God's way is always equal and unexceptionable. But, as for the “*children of thy people,*” God turns them over to Ezekiel, as he did to Moses ([Ex 32:7](#)):

Exodus 32:1-7 (KJV) And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto

him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. **2** And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* unto me. **3** And all the people brake off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* unto Aaron. **4** And he received *them* at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. **5** And when Aaron saw *it*, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow *is* a feast to the LORD. **6** And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play. **7** And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for ***thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves:***

"**They are thy people**; I can scarcely own them for mine." As for them, *their way is unequal; because their way of quarrelling with God and his prophets is for them ridiculous.* In every dispute between God and his creatures it will certainly be found that he is in the right and they are in the wrong.

18 When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby. 19 But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.

In these two verses (18 & 19), the Lord reiterates his word! If the righteous man turns to wickedness, he shall die therein. If the wicked man turns from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.

20 *Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways.*

Yet – the house of Israel debates with the Almighty! God affirms his righteousness. I will judge you every one after his ways. You will reap what you sow. Look at this principle.

Galatians 6:7-8 (KJV) Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. **8** For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

21 ¶ *And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity, in the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, The city is smitten.*

Jeremiah 39:2 (KJV) *And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was broken up.*

Jeremiah 52:5-6 (KJV) *So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. 6 And in the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land.*

Thus, the twelfth year, the tenth month, and the fifth day of the month was a year and a half after the capture of the city which occurred according to Jeremiah in the eleventh year and fourth month.

At this exact time, ***that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, The city is smitten.*** – The one who escaped out of Jerusalem came in accordance with the prophecy of Ezekiel 24:26.

Ezekiel 24:25-27 (KJV) *Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters, 26 That he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears? 27 In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.*

22 Now the hand of the LORD was upon me in the evening, afore he that was escaped came; and had opened my mouth, until he came to me in the morning; and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb.

In this, we see the precise fulfilment of God's word on His prophet, Ezekiel. It is true that Ezekiel has prophesied to the whole House of Israel by signs, many of them again and again – and had also prophesied to the nations which God would destroy

because of their attitude and actions against Judah. He had prophesied against Ammon, Moab, Edom, the Philistines, Tyre, Zidon, and Egypt – all nations who opposed and spoke against God’s chosen people, Judah. These prophecies were doubtless delivered by writing or some means like writing, since Ezekiel was unable to speak.

23 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 24 Son of man, they that inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel speak, saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land: but we are many; the land is given us for inheritance.

Let us remember that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had left some of the poor of the land there.

2 Kings 25:11 (KJV) *Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carry away. 12 But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.*

Jeremiah 39:10 (KJV) *But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time.*

Jeremiah 40:7 (KJV) *Now when all the captains of the forces which were in the fields, even they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto*

him men, and women, and children, and of the poor of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon;

Son of man, they that inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel, -- The small remnant (not the believing remnant, but those) which continued in the land under Gedaliah, after the desolation of Jerusalem, flattered themselves, notwithstanding all their crimes, that they should inherit the whole land. Their words show them to be lifted up, proud and haughty.

speak, saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land: -- Abraham was but one man, and had no child, when the promise of inheriting the land was made unto him; and he was but a single worshipper of God, and yet he had this favor and privilege of continuing in the land.

but we are many; the land is given us for inheritance. – If a single person could inherit the land, they reasoned, how much more all of us who are many.

25 Wherefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Ye eat with the blood, and lift up your eyes toward your idols, and shed blood: and shall ye possess the land? 26 Ye stand upon your sword, ye work abomination, and ye defile every one his neighbour's wife: and shall ye possess the land?

But the Lord God sent an answer of restraint to them about their thinking to inherit the land. He sent it by the mouth of Ezekiel who said: Ye eat with the blood; you lift up your eyes toward your idols; you shed blood, shall ye possess the land?

Ye stand upon your sword (you trust in your sword, instead of me, your God); Ye work abomination; and ye defile every one his neighbour's wife: and shall ye possess the land?

All of these things were sins before the Lord God who have given them that good land flowing with milk and honey, but now they were worthy to be cast out of the land like the inhabitants who were before them.

27 Say thou thus unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; As I live, surely they that are in the wastes shall fall by the sword, and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured, and they that be in the forts and in the caves shall die of the pestilence.

Shall you inherit the land? Indeed, not! Those living in the wastes (from the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar) shall fall by the sword; those in the open field God would give to the beasts to be devoured, and they that be in forts and caves should die of the pestilence.

28 For I will lay the land most desolate, and the pomp of her strength shall cease; and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through.

What a solemn word this! Desolate land. Pomp of her strength taken away. The mountains desolate, that none pass through! The land empty; by the hand of the Lord God.

29 Then shall they know that I am the LORD, when I have laid the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed.

Then shall they know that I am the Lord, -- An all-knowing Being is he, that could foresee and foretell what would come to pass. They would then know the all-powerful one – the almighty, able to do whatever he pleased, and true and faithful to his word. They would know the Lord God is a sovereign Lord, whose will cannot be resisted; this they should see, understand, and acknowledge. But, alas!! Too late for the land! When would they know this?

when I have laid the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed. -- He is a sovereign Lord, but he does not execute his judgments just because he is able to do so, **no**: His judgment falls because of the abominable sins committed by men, which provoke His holy name.

30 ¶ Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD.

Notice again how the Lord God calls these people “thy people.” They are saying they want to come together to hear the word of the LORD. But do they?

31 And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.

When they come, they sit as my people. They hear your words, but they will not do them. O, yes, they talk well and promise much about loving me – but their hearts go after covetousness! Ah, sinful nation!

James 1:21-25 (KJV) *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. 23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*

32 And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.

And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, -- Whose voice, and the music of it, are regarded, and not for the words or message of the song, but the manner in which it is sung. These people did not so

much listen and take in what the prophet said as they did the manner of his delivery – the way he spoke to them. They were delighted with the harmony of his voice, the eloquence of his speech, the decency of his expressions, the eloquence and aptness of his diction, and the cadence of his words, and not with the excellent doctrines he delivered. They were affected and pleased in the very same way as if they had been at a concert of music; or had been entertained by one that understood not only vocal music, but could "play well on an instrument" at the same time, and make both agree together. This great talent gives the hearers of music great pleasure.

The Gospel is a lovely song indeed; "a song of loves", as it may be said. It speaks of the love of God, and of the love of Christ. For those who truly hear the message, the voice of the minister gives a pleasing sound for the soul as well as the ears. But to others it is merely a voice, and nothing else. They may be delighted with his manner of speech, but not with the substance. Why is that? Because they hear the words, but they do them not. And why do they do them not? Is it not because there is covetousness in their hearts which is idolatry?

33 And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them.

And when this cometh to pass, -- The prophecy of which Ezekiel has been speaking which concerns the desolations in the land of Israel, by the sword, pestilence, and wild beasts.

(lo, it will come;) Who is he that can withstand the Almighty? Whatever is predicted by the Lord; in the mouth of his prophets, certainly comes to pass.

then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them. -- Then shall they know that a prophet has been among them; and they will acknowledge it. And they will say that the prophet was Ezekiel, who spoke to them the word of the LORD as it was delivered him as a faithful watchman to the whole house of Israel.

Hear me, beloved. In much the same way, God has raised up men to prophesy (to expound the word of God as it has already been delivered) in their generation. And, like the watchman of old, "Woe unto him if he preach not the gospel!" If he does this thing willingly, he shall receive a reward. But if against his will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed to him. What does that mean? The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. He does not take back his gifts. Therefore, if one does not preach the gospel willingly, but of compulsion - that man cannot in any sense expect thanks, or any extraordinary reward, for doing what he is obliged by his superior's command under a great penalty to do.

And what is that gospel? It is this:

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (KJV) Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; **2** By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. **3** For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the

scriptures; **4** And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: **5** And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: **6** After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. **7** After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. **8** And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

John 3:36 (KJV) *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

John 5:24 (KJV) *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

Romans 10:8-10 (KJV) *But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; **9** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. **10** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

What shall you have if you believe on him and come to follow him? What can you expect?

Mark 10:29 (KJV) *And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or*

*sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, **30** But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.*

John 16:33 (KJV) *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED.