

Ezekiel's Sign

Ezek 3:10-11; 24:15-24, 27
SS Lesson for 11/16/2025

Devotional Scriptures: Ezekiel 12:1-11

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary
Key Verse: Jer 3:10

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

WORDS FROM GOD SIGN FOR THE CAPTIVES (EZEK 3:10-11)

Listen carefully (10)

- Listen because God's word is useful (2 Tim 3:16-17)
- Listen because God's wonders provide knowledge (Prov 18:15)
- Listen because God's blesses those who listen (Matt 13:16)
- Listen because His words are true (Prov 8:4-9)

Speak carefully (11)

- Speak relying on the Holy Spirit (Matt 10:19-20)
- Speak realizing we are responsible and accountable for every word (Matt 12:34-37)
- Speak by witnessing about those things we know about God (Acts 4:20)
- Speak because God will give us boldness to speak for Him (Acts 18:9-11)

SIGN OF EZEKIEL'S WIFE DEATH (EZEK 24:15-18)

God's command about his wife (15-16)

- Commands that sometimes seem to be offensive (Hos 1:2)
- Commands that sometimes are because of unfaithfulness (Hos 2:2)
- Commands that sometimes test us (Gen 22:2)
- Commands that sometimes impacts relationships (Eph 5:28)

No mourning for his wife (17)

- No mourning sometimes because of being exiled (Jer 22:10)
- No mourning sometimes because of wickedness (Jer 22:17-18)
- No mourning because of hope after death (1 Thess 4:13)
- No mourning because of returning to God (Joel 2:12-13)

Ezekiel's obedience (18)

- Obedience leads to righteousness (Rom 6:16)
- Obedience leads to the praise of God by others (2 Cor 9:13)
- Obedience leads to the reward of blessings (Deut. 28:1-6)
- Obedience brings the reward of freedom (James 1:25)

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- Meaning can be related to coming destruction (Ezek 21:7)
- Meaning can be related to disobedience (Mal 3:7-8)
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- A fate of destruction of cities (Jer 7:12)
- A fate of being conquered by enemies (Lam 1:8-9)
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- Use of the prophet as a sign of lack of provisions (Isa 20:3)
- Use of the prophet as a sign to Israel (Ezek 4:3)
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Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

The prophet Ezekiel was a contemporary of the prophet Jeremiah. Both lived at the time of the Babylonian captivity in the mid-sixth century BC. Ezekiel was 30 years old in “the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin,” which was the year 592 BC (Ezekiel 1:1–2; compare 2 Kings 24:8–15). The Babylonian captivity occurred in three stages: the deportations of 605, 597, and 586 BC (2 Kings 24–25; 2 Chronicles 36). Ezekiel’s involuntary relocation to Babylon was a part of the second stage of exile in 597 BC. He was among the 10,000 of the elite citizenry taken at that time (2 Kings 24:12–14). Daniel and other Jews who had been deported in the first stage ended up serving “in the king’s palace” (Daniel 1:4). While Ezekiel, coming in the second stage, found himself in a completely different setting. He was “among the exiles by the Kebar River” in Babylon (Ezekiel 1:1). Ezekiel is introduced as “the priest” (Ezekiel 1:3). And that is what he would have remained had it not been for the divine wrath that was to be visited on the southern kingdom of Judah at the time. His call to be a prophet is described in Ezekiel 2, which is not part of today’s study.

Key Verse: Jer 3:10

Moreover He said to me: "Son of man, receive into your heart all My words that I speak to you, and hear with your ears

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Words from God Sign for the Captives (Ezek 3:10-11)

10 Moreover He said to me: "Son of man, receive into your heart all My words that I speak to you, and hear with your ears.

11 And go, get to the captives, to the children of your people, and speak to them and tell them, 'Thus says the Lord God,' whether they hear, or whether they refuse."

Listen carefully (10)

Listen because God's word is useful (2 Tim 3:16-17)

16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Listen because God's wonders provide knowledge (Prov 18:15)

15 The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge; the ears of the wise seek it out.

Listen because God's blesses those who listen (Matt 13:16)

16 But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.

Listen because His words are true (Prov 8:4-9)

4 "To you, O men, I call out; I raise my voice to all mankind. 5 You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain understanding. 6 Listen, for I have worthy things to say; I open my lips to speak what is right. 7 My mouth speaks what is true, for my lips detest wickedness. 8 All the words of my mouth are just; none of them is crooked or perverse. 9 To the discerning all of them are right; they are faultless to those who have knowledge.

Speak carefully (11)

Speak relying on the Holy Spirit (Matt 10:19-20)

19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Speak realizing we are responsible and accountable for every word (Matt 12:34-37)

34 You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. 36 But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. 37 For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

Speak by witnessing about those things we know about God (Acts 4:20)

20 For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Speak because God will give us boldness to speak for Him (Acts 18:9-11)

9 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. 10 For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." 11 So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

Sign of Ezekiel's Wife Death (Ezek 24:15-18)

15 Also the word of the Lord came to me, saying,

16 "Son of man, behold, I take away from you the desire of your eyes with one stroke; yet you shall neither mourn nor weep, nor shall your tears run down.

17 Sigh in silence, make no mourning for the dead; bind your turban on your head, and put your sandals on your feet; do not cover your lips, and do not eat man's bread of sorrow."

18 So I spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died; and the next morning I did as I was commanded.

God's command about his wife (15-16)

Commands that sometimes seem to be offensive (Hos 1:2)

2 When the Lord began to speak through Hosea, the Lord said to him, "Go, take to yourself an adulterous wife and children of unfaithfulness, because the land is guilty of the vilest adultery in departing from the Lord."

Commands that sometimes are because of unfaithfulness (Hos 2:2)

2 "Rebuke your mother, rebuke her, for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband. Let her remove the adulterous look from her face and the unfaithfulness from between her breasts.

Commands that sometimes test us (Gen 22:2)

2 Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."

Commands that sometimes impacts relationships (Eph 5:28)

28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

No mourning for his wife (17)

No mourning sometimes because of being exiled (Jer 22:10)

10 Do not weep for the dead [king] or mourn his loss; rather, weep bitterly for him who is exiled, because he will never return nor see his native land again.

No mourning sometimes because of wickedness (Jer 22:17-18)

17 "But your eyes and your heart are set only on dishonest gain, on shedding innocent blood and on oppression and extortion." 18 Therefore this is what the Lord says about Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah: "They will not mourn for him: 'Alas, my brother! Alas, my sister!' They will not mourn for him: 'Alas, my master! Alas, his splendor!'"

No mourning because of hope after death (1 Thess 4:13)

13 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.

No mourning because of returning to God (Joel 2:12-13)

12 'Even now,' declares the Lord, 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.' 13 Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Ezekiel's obedience (18)

Obedience leads to righteousness (Rom 6:16)

16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey, whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?

Obedience leads to the praise of God by others (2 Cor 9:13)

13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

Obedience leads to the reward of blessings (Deut. 28:1-6)

1 If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. 2 All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God: 3 You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country. 4 The fruit of your womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock — the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. 5 Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed. 6 You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.

Obedience brings the reward of freedom (James 1:25)

25 But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it — he will be blessed in what he does.

Sign of God's Sobering Prophecy (Ezek 24:19-24, 27)

19 And the people said to me, "Will you not tell us what these things signify to us, that you behave so?"

20 Then I answered them, "The word of the Lord came to me, saying,

21 'Speak to the house of Israel, "Thus says the Lord God: 'Behold, I will profane My sanctuary, your arrogant boast, the desire of your eyes, the delight of your soul; and your sons and daughters whom you left behind shall fall by the sword.

22 And you shall do as I have done; you shall not cover your lips nor eat man's bread of sorrow.

23 Your turbans shall be on your heads and your sandals on your feet; you shall neither mourn nor weep, but you shall pine away in your iniquities and mourn with one another.

24 Thus Ezekiel is a sign to you; according to all that he has done you shall do; and when this comes, you shall know that I am the Lord God."

27 on that day your mouth will be opened to him who has escaped; you shall speak and no longer be mute. Thus you will be a sign to them, and they shall know that I am the Lord."

Prophecy's meaning (19)

Meaning can be related to seeking man versus God (Ezek 17:12-15)

12 "Say to this rebellious house, 'Do you not know what these things mean?' Say to them: 'The king of Babylon went to Jerusalem and carried off her king and her nobles, bringing them back with him to Babylon. 13 Then he took a member of the royal family and made a treaty with him, putting him under oath. He also carried away the leading men of the land, 14 so that the kingdom would be brought low, unable to rise again, surviving only by keeping his treaty. 15 But the king rebelled against him by sending his envoys to Egypt to get horses and a large army. Will he succeed? Will he who does such things escape? Will he break the treaty and yet escape?'"

Meaning can be related to coming destruction (Ezek 21:7)

7 And when they ask you, 'Why are you groaning?' you shall say, 'Because of the news that is coming. Every heart will melt and every hand go limp; every spirit will become faint and every knee become as weak as water.' It is coming! It will surely take place, declares the Sovereign Lord."

Meaning can be related to disobedience (Mal 3:7-8)

7 Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the Lord Almighty. "But you ask, 'How are we to return?' 8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings."

Meaning can be related to unfaithfulness (Mal 3:13-14)

13 "You have said harsh things against me," says the Lord. "Yet you ask, 'What have we said against you?' 14 "You have said, 'It is futile to serve God. What did we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the Lord Almighty?'"

Prophecy's fate (20-23)

A fate of destruction of cities (Jer 7:12)

12 "'Go now to the place in Shiloh where I first made a dwelling for my Name, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel."

A fate of being conquered by enemies (Lam 1:8-9)

8 Jerusalem has sinned greatly and so has become unclean. All who honored her despise her, for they have seen her nakedness; she herself groans and turns away. 9 Her filthiness clung to her skirts; she did not consider her future. Her fall was astounding; there was none to comfort her. "Look, O Lord, on my affliction, for the enemy has triumphed."

A fate of God's rejection of worship (Lam 2:7)

7 The Lord has rejected his altar and abandoned his sanctuary. He has handed over to the enemy the walls of her palaces; they have raised a shout in the house of the Lord as on the day of an appointed feast.

Prophecy's use of Ezekiel (24, 27)

Use of the prophet as a sign of lack of provisions (Isa 20:3)

3 Then the Lord said, "Just as my servant Isaiah has gone stripped and barefoot for three years, as a sign and portent against Egypt and Cush,

Use of the prophet as a sign to Israel (Ezek 4:3)

3 Then take an iron pan, place it as an iron wall between you and the city and turn your face toward it. It will be under siege, and you shall besiege it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel.

Use of the prophet as a sign for the loss of land (Ezek 12:5-6)

5 While they watch, dig through the wall and take your belongings out through it. 6 Put them on your shoulder as they are watching and carry them out at dusk. Cover your face so that you cannot see the land, for I have made you a sign to the house of Israel."

Use of the prophet as a sign of wickedness (Luke 11:29-30)

29 As the crowds increased, Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah. 30 For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from Thomas Constable

Until now Ezekiel had predicted that judgment would fall on Jerusalem and Judah in the future. The day of that judgment finally arrived, and he proceeded to announce it with a parable and two acted signs or "action sermons."

"With these verses we come to the climax of all that Ezekiel has been trying to say in the previous twelve chapters." [Note: Taylor, p. 176.]

Verses 1-3

The Lord instructed Ezekiel to note permanently the day this revelation came to him because it was the very day that Nebuchadnezzar began his siege of Jerusalem. This day fell in January (cf. 2 Kings 25:1; Jeremiah 39:1; Jeremiah 52:4). Block dated it as January 5, 587 B.C., [Note: Block, *The Book . . .*, p. 774.] but most scholars follow Parker and Duberstein and date it as January 15, 586 B.C. [Note: Parker and Dubberstein, p. 28; Cooper, p. 235; Taylor, p. 177; Zimmerli, p. 498; et al.] Ezekiel's ability to announce the beginning of the siege from Babylon validated his ministry as a prophet. The Jews later memorialized this special day with an annual fast (Zechariah 8:19). The prophet was also to deliver a parable to the Jewish exiles the same day. They were part of the "rebellious house" of Israel, one of God's favorite titles for His people Israel in this book.

This parable represented the siege of Jerusalem, which began on the day that Ezekiel told this story.

Verses 3-5

In this parable, the people were to put a bronze (Ezekiel 24:11) cooking pot (caldron, Heb. sir) on the fire and pour water into it. This large pot had two handles, a round base, and a large mouth. Then the people were to put various pieces of choice meat into the pot and were to build a strong fire under it so the water would boil and the meaty bones would cook. We might call Ezekiel 24:3-13 "the cooking pot song" since it is a poem similar to "the sword song" (Ezekiel 21:8-17) and "the cup song" (Ezekiel 23:32-34).

There is no indication that this was another of Ezekiel's acted parables. Rather it seems to have been a message that the prophet spoke without dramatizing it by really boiling meat in a caldron.

Verse 6

Ezekiel was then to announce woe on the bloody city (no longer the holy city) of Jerusalem (cf. Nahum 3:1), which the pot represented (cf. Ezekiel 11:3; Ezekiel 11:7; Ezekiel 11:11; Jeremiah 1:13-14). The pot had rust (Heb. hel'ah) in it that evidently stood for the blood of the people slain there (cf. Ezekiel 22:1-16). Another view is that the pot was bronze (which does not rust), and the red in it was the blood of the meat. [Note: Block, *The Book . . .*, pp. 777-78.] Ezekiel was then to draw several pieces of meat out of the pot at random, perhaps signifying God rescuing a remnant from judgment.

The reasons for Jerusalem's present judgment 24:6-8

Verse 7

Blood was in Jerusalem's midst like the blood of a sacrifice that had not been drained out on the ground and covered up (atoned for) as the Law prescribed (Leviticus 17:13). Israel's sins were open for all to see, like blood on a bare rock (cf. Isaiah 3:9). Not only was Jerusalem a city that had shed much innocent blood, but it was an unacceptable sacrifice to God because of the blood that was in it.

Verse 8

Therefore Yahweh was draining the blood out of Jerusalem by allowing the Babylonians to slay the Jews in it. The innocent blood that the Jerusalemites had shed had cried out to God for Him to take vengeance and to execute wrath on the murderers, as Abel's blood had done (Genesis 4:10; cf. Isaiah 26:21). As the people of Jerusalem had shed blood openly, so the Lord would shed their blood openly, on the bare rock of Jerusalem.

"The severe judgment sent by God upon Judah should be ample warning to those today who share the same callous disregard for the value of human life, both the born and the unborn." [Note: Cooper, p. 237.]

Verses 9-10

The Lord pronounced woe on the bloody city of Jerusalem and promised to make the pile of bones of the slain inhabitants great (cf. Isaiah 30:33). Therefore Ezekiel was to kindle a strong fire, to boil the meat well, to mix in the spices normally used when meat was cooked this way, and to let the bones burn. All this symbolized the fierceness of the attack on Jerusalem and the many people that would die there.

This second oracle stresses not the boiling of meat in the pot but the cleansing of the pot by superheating, a second stage in God's judgment process.

Verse 11

Then Ezekiel was to keep the empty caldron on the coals with the fire burning hotly under it so it would glow and all the impurities in it would burn up. This represented the continuing purification of Jerusalem after all the Jews had left it. It would remain empty, and that condition would free it from all sinful pollution for many years to come.

Verse 12

Jerusalem had wearied Yahweh as He toiled to scour its sin away in the past. The city would remain under judgment because its rust-like sin needed purging away (cf. Ezekiel 36:22-32).

Verse 13

Adultery in its many forms was part of Jerusalem's filthiness. It clung to the city even though the Lord had sent many prophets to clean it up and had already deported many of the people (in 605 and 597 B.C.). Now it was time for a thorough purging of the pot by the fire of God's wrath since cleansing with water had not been effective. Water and fire are two of God's favorite instruments of judgment, according to Scripture (cf. 2 Peter 3:5-7).

Verse 14

In conclusion, the Lord promised that this judgment would come as He had predicted. He would not change His mind or mitigate the punishment. He would thoroughly judge the people because of their conduct and actions. They would be the meat and He would provide the heat. This is the most emphatic affirmation of divine resolve in the book. [Note: Block, *The Book . . .*, p. 781.]

"God's mercy prompts Him to withhold judgment as long as possible to enable people to repent (cf. 2 Peter 3:8-10), but He does not wait indefinitely. A time comes when God punishes wickedness." [Note: Dyer, "Ezekiel," p. 1274.]

Verses 15-16

The Lord told Ezekiel that He was about to take the life of his beloved wife. The English word "blow" (Ezekiel 24:16) implies a sudden, unexpected death. The Hebrew word, *magephoh*, does not demand a sudden death, but it sometimes describes such a death (cf. 1 Samuel 4:17; 2 Samuel 17:9; 2 Samuel 18:7). It could also mean death by plague or disease or anything that strikes a person down (cf. Exodus 9:14; Numbers 14:37; Numbers 16:44-50; Numbers 25:8-9). In any case, the prophet was not to mourn, weep, or shed any tears over this personal tragedy (cf. Jeremiah 16:5-13).

Such an announcement raises the question of whether God commits unprovoked acts of cruelty just to illustrate a point. In view of revelations of God's character here and elsewhere, we should probably interpret this statement as meaning that God allowed Ezekiel's wife to die at this precise time. He used her death, which He predicted to the prophet, to communicate a message to His people (cf. the unfaithfulness of Hosea's wife). The text does not say that God put her to death as an object lesson. She could have been ill for some time before she died. Another similar situation involved God allowing the death of His innocent Son to occur at precisely the time God intended as another expression of His love and judgment.

The preceding parable pictured the siege of Jerusalem itself. The symbolic acts that Ezekiel performed next, perhaps on the same day, represented how the exiles were to respond to the news of Jerusalem's siege.

Verse 17

Ezekiel would have to sorrow inwardly; he was not to do so outwardly. It was customary for relatives of a dead loved one to wail long and loud with family, friends, and even paid mourners (cf. 2 Samuel 1:17; 2 Samuel 11:26; Micah 1:8). But Ezekiel was to observe none of the customary acts of mourning over the death of his loved one, which included throwing dust on his head, going barefoot, covering his mustache, and eating a modest meal after a day of fasting (cf. 2 Samuel 1:12; 2 Samuel 3:35; Jeremiah 16:7; Hosea 9:4). [Note: See Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, pp. 59-61.] Mourning was not appropriate in cases of capital punishment.

Verses 18-19

In the morning of the next day, or perhaps a few days later, Ezekiel addressed the people, and that evening his wife died. The prophet faithfully did as the Lord had commanded him. His actions bewildered the exiles who asked him to explain why he was behaving so abnormally.

"Ezekiel's entire life was a testimony to the exiles. Likewise, this should be the case with all who are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." [Note: Alexander, "Ezekiel," p. 862.]

Verses 20-21

The prophet replied that the Lord had said that He was about to destroy the temple and to slay the relatives of the exiles who remained in Jerusalem. The Jews loved the temple almost as much as Ezekiel loved his wife.

Verses 22-24

Ezekiel instructed the people to respond to their tragic loss as he had to his. The reason they were not to mourn publicly but only privately, though unstated, was that the judgment that God executed on Jerusalem was deserved.

"Ezekiel had a right to mourn his undeserved personal loss but did not. The Israelites had no right to mourn for their well-deserved national loss and could not . . ." [Note: Stuart, p. 243.]

"God is not the author of personal tragedy, but he does often use such experiences as unique opportunities and special windows through which people will come to 'know' that he is the Lord." [Note: Cooper, p. 240. Cf. Dyer, in *The Old . . .*, p. 682.]

Verses 25-26

Evidently Ezekiel was not to deliver any more prophetic messages to his fellow exiles after he made the explanation in Ezekiel 24:20-24 until he received word of the destruction of the temple and the capture of the remaining Judahites. This message reached him five months later (Ezekiel 33:21). His enforced dumbness must have been limited to prophecies concerning Israel, however, because Ezekiel 25:1 to Ezekiel 33:20 contains oracles against foreign nations some of which are dated during the siege of Jerusalem.

Verse 27

When that news arrived, Ezekiel could resume speaking about Israel because the Lord would give him additional prophecies about Israel (cf. Ezekiel 33:21 to Ezekiel 48:35). His silence concerning Israel's affairs during the siege of Jerusalem would have been further testimony to his sorrow.

"In Ezekiel 24:24 he is a sign of God's judgment and its consequences; in Ezekiel 24:27 he is a sign of God's grace and its consequences." [Note: R. W. Klein, *Ezekiel*, pp. 39-40.]

Ezekiel was to be a model for the exiles of how they should respond to the siege of Jerusalem. They should treat it as an unspeakable tragedy. Ezekiel's example would teach the exilic community that Yahweh really was God.

"This is a pivotal chapter in the development of the book. Till now Ezekiel has variously proclaimed the Lord's coming judgment on Jerusalem and Judah. He has systematically answered each argument against the impending judgment. Nothing remained except for the enactment of that discipline recorded in this chapter. The beginning of Babylonia's siege of Jerusalem was described. Then Ezekiel prophesied against the foreign nations who had abused Judah and mocked her during her judgments (Ezekiel 25:1 to Ezekiel 33:20). These foreign nations would be judged for their wicked attitude and actions toward Judah. However, the hope of future restoration and blessing would be promised to Judah." [Note: Alexander, "Ezekiel," p. 859.]

(Adapted from URL:<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/dcc/ezekiel-24.html>)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

The prophets often brought words of warning or imminent destruction and pain due to the people's lack of faithfulness to God. We see this time and time again in Scripture. The prophets were also responsible for bringing the word of God to people, whether they listened or not. Both the messages and the messengers were often rejected (Luke 11:47-51). God even predicted that such things would happen (Jeremiah 7:27; Ezekiel 3:7). It's probably safe to say that few, if any, of us will be asked to do something quite like Ezekiel was required to do. Even so, we all face times when speaking difficult truths to people is uncomfortable. Although the gospel is good news, it is also a stumbling block. As it tells us that we can have forgiveness in Christ, it also tells us we are sinners in need of a Savior. To speak this is our task.