



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

EZEKIEL

Week 2

DAY 8

You're on Your Own!

Ezekiel 14–15

OPENING
up to the Word

When you get into trouble, do you ever wish there were someone who could come and magically rescue you from it?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. While the elders of the land came to Ezekiel to inquire of the Lord regarding their predicament, why was God still angry with them (14:1-4)?
2. Some Christians find significance in horoscopes, palm readings and psychics. What can we learn from this passage about God's attitude toward such practices (vs. 7-8)?
3. God mentions three historical figures who were pillars, who, if they were alive in Jerusalem, still could not save anyone but themselves from the coming judgment. Who are they, and why do you think they are mentioned (vs.12-20)?
4. These three were known for "their" righteousness—but whose righteousness ultimately transforms you and me? What do these three men have in common?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Have you ever had anyone rescue you from danger or serious trouble of some kind?
2. Why do you think they rescued you? What did it cost them to do that?
3. Has anyone ever warned you of spiritual danger you were getting close to? What was your response?

WINDOW
on the Word

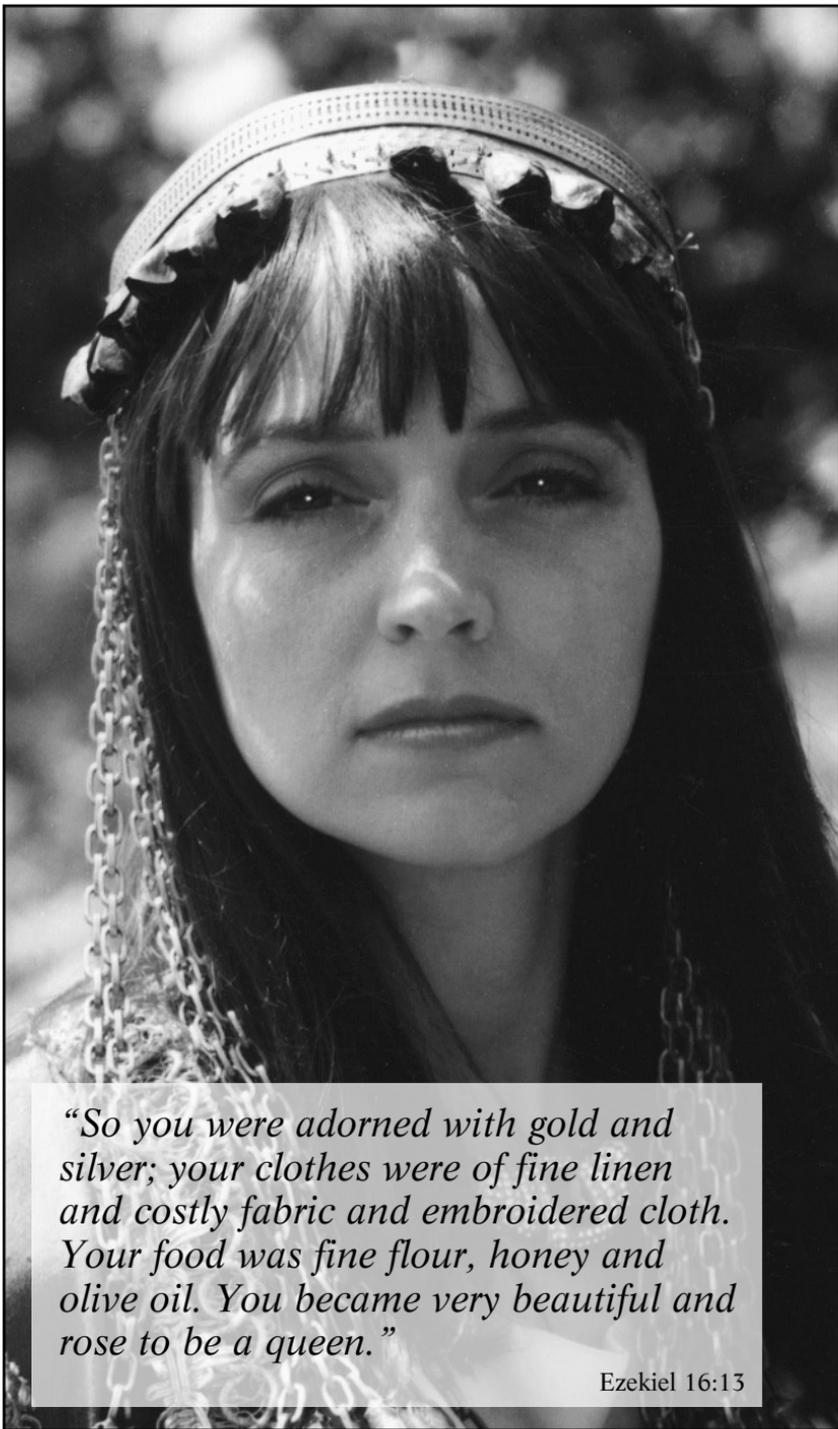
Noah, Daniel and Job (14:14) were each famous in Scripture for righteousness. Righteous Noah saved his family (Ge 6:8-7:1), while Daniel was able to save his friends (Da 2:12-24). Job interceded to save his three friends from God's anger after his own trials (Job 42:7-9). Yet, in Israel's case, these three men would have been unable to save anyone but themselves in the coming judgment.

*“I will make the land
desolate because they
have been unfaithful,
declares the Sovereign
Lord.”*

Ezekiel 15:8



Photo by Monte Wolverton—PTM



“So you were adorned with gold and silver; your clothes were of fine linen and costly fabric and embroidered cloth. Your food was fine flour, honey and olive oil. You became very beautiful and rose to be a queen.”

Ezekiel 16:13

Rags to Riches to Prostitution?

DAY 9

Ezekiel 16

When people suddenly become wealthy, they often leave behind the values they once held. Why do you think this happens?

1. In this chapter, God describes Israel's history in parable form. Metaphorically, who were the parents of Jerusalem (v. 3, see note)?
2. When God chose Israel to be his people, what condition did he find her in (vs. 4-6)?
3. How did God treat Israel when he found her in a destitute condition (Eze 16:6-14)?
4. While Israel behaved like a prostitute by worshipping idols, what made her spiritual prostitution even worse (vs. 32-34)?

1. When God offers us his grace, what spiritual condition does he find us in (Ro 3:9-18; Eph 2:1)?
2. When you became a Christ-follower, God transformed you by his grace. Think of radical changes God has performed in your life.
3. Have you ever experienced a sudden and positive change in your external circumstances? Did this cause you to draw closer to Christ, or not? Why?
4. True or false: *when you are going through good times, you tend to forget God, yet when trouble hits you tend to remember him more.*
5. How do you keep yourself from forgetting what God has done for you? Have you ever thought of keeping a journal of God's faithful acts towards you?

Amorite, Hittite (v. 3). *Jerusalem was once a leading city of an Amorite coalition (Jos 10:1-5; 24:15). Before David conquered Jerusalem, it had a Hittite governing class. Figuratively, the city had an Amorite mother and a Hittite father. This passage deals not with the origin of the Hebrew race, but the origins of Jerusalem.*

OPENING
up to the Word

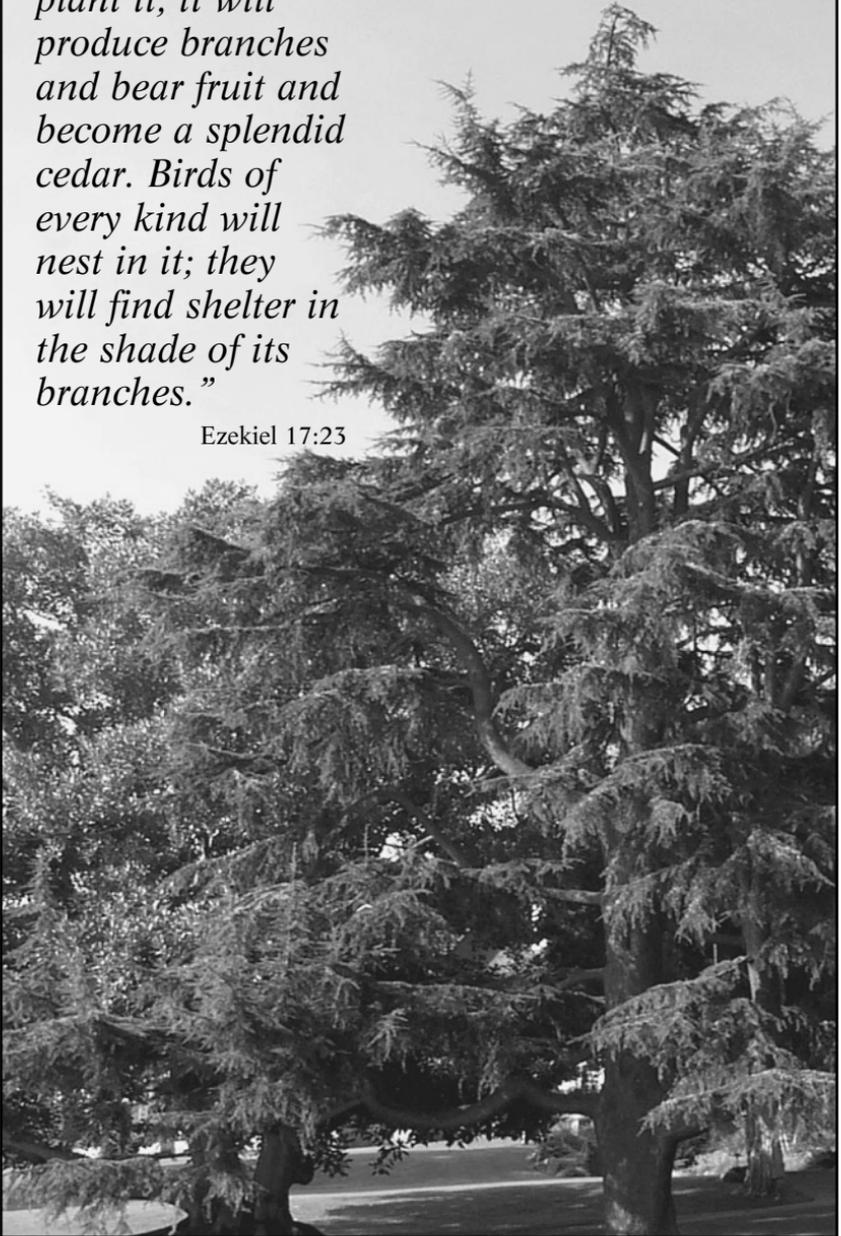
DIGGING
into the Word

LIVING
out the Word

WINDOW
on the Word

*“On the
mountain heights
of Israel I will
plant it; it will
produce branches
and bear fruit and
become a splendid
cedar. Birds of
every kind will
nest in it; they
will find shelter in
the shade of its
branches.”*

Ezekiel 17:23



Ezekiel 17

Have you ever tried to get out of discipline or punishment you had incurred by appealing to a different authority?

1. Why do you think God was speaking to Israel and Jerusalem through parables?
2. Who was the first great eagle in the story (v. 12) and who was the second (v. 15)?
3. What did the “shoot from the very top of a cedar” represent (v. 22)?
4. To whom was the king of Judah going to appeal in order to get out of the treaty with Babylon (vs. 15-18)?
5. Even though Israel was unfaithful, what encouraging promise did God give them (vs. 22-24)?

1. When was the last time you were punished or disciplined by the government, police, your employer or someone else? What had you done to incur the penalty? Did you think it was fair?
2. Did you make any attempt to get out of the punishment in some way? Did you appeal to a higher authority? Were you successful?
3. Did your punishment teach you anything, or did it just make you mad? If it taught you something, what did you learn?

“But the king rebelled” (v. 15). *When Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem in 597 B.C., he deposed King Jehoiachin, and set up Zedekiah as king, making a treaty with him. It is possible that Zedekiah swore by Yahweh to keep the treaty. But Zedekiah appealed to Pharaoh to form an alliance against Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar would destroy Jerusalem, and Egypt would not be able to help them. “On the mountain heights of Israel I will plant it”* (v. 23) *appears to refer to the eternal rule of Christ, the “tender sprig” of the House of David.*

OPENING

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DAY 11

It's Only Fair

Ezekiel 18–19

OPENING
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DIGGING
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Have you ever been considered guilty by association?

1. To what do you think the parable in 18:2 is referring?
2. What did God command concerning the quoting of this parable in Israel (vs. 3-4)?
3. Some people believe that God enjoys condemning people and bringing judgment and death for sins. What do verses 23 and 32 reveal about God's heart?
4. Who did the lion cubs represent in 19:3-9?

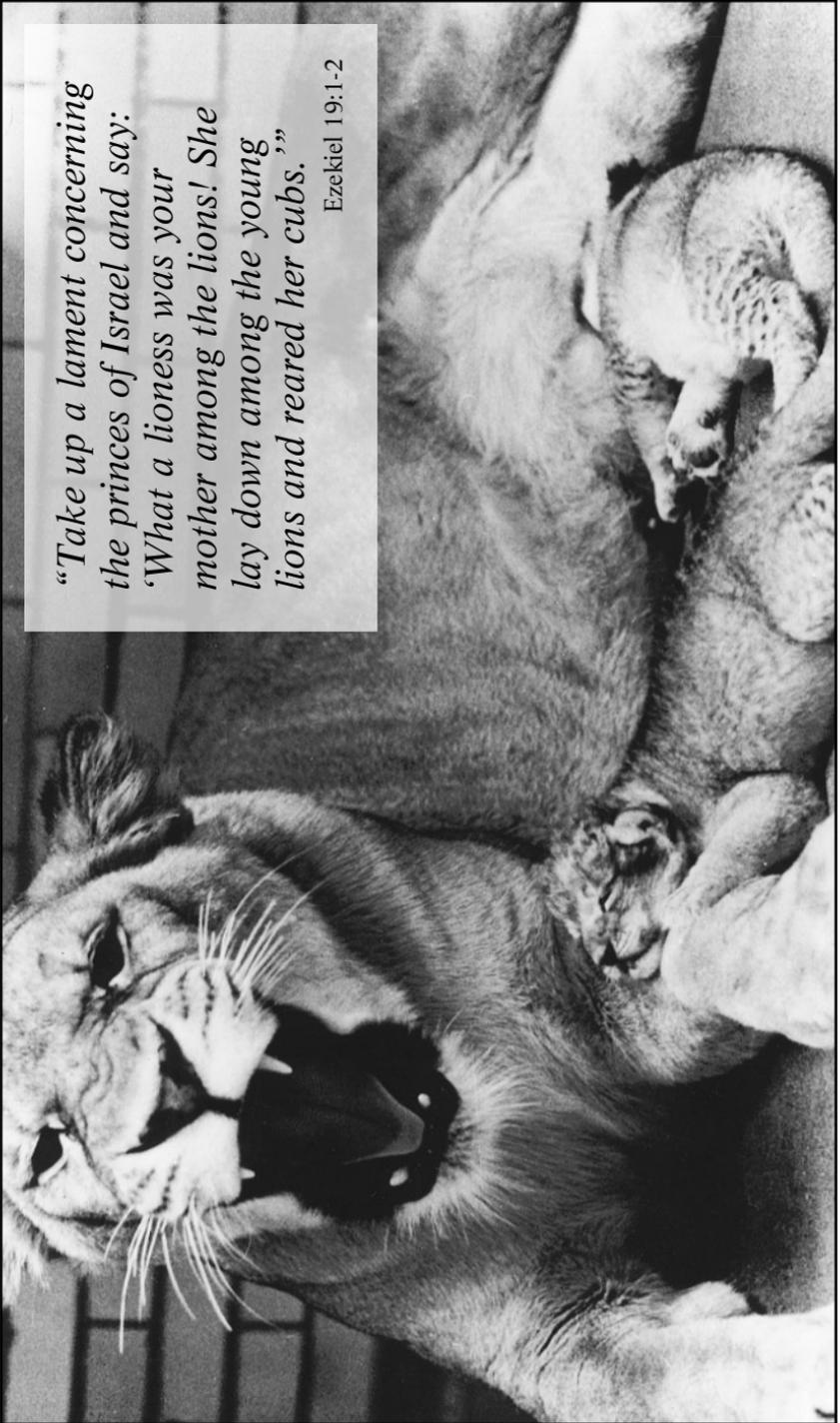
1. Have you ever been guilty of judging someone's character or actions based on their family, their race or color, their neighborhood or their appearance?
2. How often do you judge people by appearance? (a) never, (b) seldom, (c) occasionally, (d) frequently.
3. Have you ever judged someone based solely on appearance? Were you correct? If not, how different was the person from your perceptions?
4. In what area do you feel you are most tempted to judge based on appearance? What does the Bible teach about this behavior (Jas 2:1-12)?

Sour grapes (18:2). This proverb teaches that the children are being penalized for the actions, or sins, of their parents.

Believing themselves to be innocent, the people of Israel were claiming they were being penalized for the sin their forefathers had committed. As a result, they accused God of being unfair. God replies that each person will be judged for his or her own sin. **Lion cubs** (19:3-9). The first cub (v. 3) probably refers to King Jehoahaz, who was king after Josiah. After only three months he was deposed by Pharaoh Neco II of Egypt, who reportedly led him by hooks in his nose attached to a leash, to Egypt. The second cub likely refers to King Jehoiachin, who had a bloody and violent three-month reign before Nebuchadnezzar deported him to Babylon, where he was imprisoned for 37 years.

*“Take up a lament concerning
the princes of Israel and say:
‘What a lioness was your
mother among the lions! She
lay down among the young
lions and reared her cubs.’”*

Ezekiel 19:1-2



Enough Is Enough

Ezekiel 20

OPENING
up to the Word

Those who don't learn from the past are destined to repeat it. Do you feel you are more likely to repeat a mistake, or learn from it?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. What phrase and theme did God repeat in this prophecy (vs. 11, 13, 21)?
2. When you consider God's justice, do you feel he gives us: (a) less punishment than we deserve, (b) exactly what we deserve, (c) more than we deserve?
4. What desire did the people of Israel express that God declared would not be allowed (vs. 32-38)?
5. A day would come, God said, when Israel would remember something they did and would loathe themselves for it. What would they remember (v. 43)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. What particular behavior or habit have you had great difficulty breaking away from? Why do you think this sin is so difficult for you to overcome?
2. How frequently do you repeat the same mistakes? (a) never, (b) seldom, (c) occasionally, (d) frequently.
3. What great mistake have you made in your past that you learned from, and what did you learn?

The Sword of the Lord

DAY 13

Ezekiel 21

Have you ever had someone warn you that the path you were heading down would bring you trouble? How did you respond to their warning?

1. In this chapter God speaks of drawing his sword to punish Judah (v. 3). What nation would he use as the sword (v. 19)?

2. Israel could not say they had not been warned. What did God say they had continued to ignore (vs. 10, 13)?

3. How would Nebuchadnezzar decide whether to invade Rabbah or Jerusalem (vs. 19-22)?

4. Although the Ammonites were enemies of Israel, they had formed an alliance with Israel against Babylon. When Jerusalem was targeted by the Babylonians instead of Rabbah, the Ammonites felt they had escaped destruction. What did God have to say about that (vs. 28-32)?

1. How well do you take advice from others? (a) not well, (b) fairly well, (c) very well. Was there ever a time when not listening to a warning from someone cost you something, or led to trouble?

3. When you see someone heading in a dangerous direction, are you most likely to: (a) ignore it, (b) hint at trouble, (c) hope they change, (d) tell them how you feel.

***“The lot for Jerusalem”** (v. 22). When Jerusalem rebelled in 588 B.C., she was one of three countries seeking independence. The others were Tyre and Ammon. When Nebuchadnezzar reached Rabbah, he held a war council with his generals to determine which direction to go. Unable to agree, they consulted their idols, casting the lot with arrows and examining a liver. We aren’t sure exactly how these divinations were practiced, but God determined that the signs would point to Jerusalem. The **“profane and wicked prince”** (v. 25) was King Zedekiah. Stripped of his authority, de-throned and deposed, the exalted was brought low.*

OPENING

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Jerusalem— The Joke's on You!

Ezekiel 22

OPENING
up to the Word

At times we can have a higher estimation of ourselves than we should. Has anyone ever “taken you down a notch or two”?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Jerusalem was proud of her military might and her great wealth. She felt these things insulated her from danger, yet her mistake cost her greatly. What can we learn from this lesson?

2. List God’s accusations against Jerusalem in verses 6 through 12.

3. To what does God compare Jerusalem, and what does he promise to do to her (vs. 17-22)?

4. Even the priests were unholy. How were they failing in their calling (v. 26)? Do you think God could make the same kind of charges against some religious leaders today?

5. God accused the prophets of being involved in a cover-up. What were they covering up (vs. 28-29)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Would you say that you have a problem with pride? (a) no, never; (b) maybe a little; (c) more than I’d like to admit; (d) yes, it’s a major problem in my life.

2. What is the worst humiliation you ever experienced?

3. Make a list of three or four things that you wish you wouldn’t brag about so much.

4. Have you ever humiliated anyone else when you thought they were getting “too big for their britches”? Do you regret this, or do you feel it helped?

WINDOW
on the Word

“The dross of silver” (v. 18). When metals are heated to high temperatures they melt, and the impurities in them rise to the surface. These impurities are called dross. Israel was now a nation of dross, full of impurities in God’s eyes. He would gather them together in Jerusalem like a melting pot, and melt them in judgment.



“As silver is melted in a furnace, so you will be melted inside her, and you will know that I the Lord have poured out my wrath upon you.”

Ezekiel 22:22