

A reading from Ezekiel (Ezekiel 3:22-4:16) – week 4- July 12th

²²God grabbed me by the shoulder and said, “Get up. Go out on the plain. I want to talk with you.”

²³So I got up and went out on the plain. I couldn’t believe my eyes: the Glory of God! Right there! It was like the Glory I had seen at the Kebar River. I fell to the ground, prostrate.

²⁴⁻²⁶Then the Spirit entered me and put me on my feet. He said, “Go home and shut the door behind you.” And then something odd: “Son of man: They’ll tie you hand and foot with ropes so you can’t leave the house. I’ll make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so you won’t be able to talk and tell the people what they’re doing wrong, even though they are a bunch of rebels.

²⁷“But then when the time is ripe, I’ll free your tongue and you’ll say, ‘This is what God, the Master, says: . . .’ From then on it’s up to them. They can listen or not listen, whichever they like. They are a bunch of rebels!”

4 ¹⁻³“Now, son of man, take a brick and place it before you. Draw a picture of the city Jerusalem on it. Then make a model of a military siege against the brick: Build siege walls, construct a ramp, set up army camps, lay in battering rams around it. Then get an iron skillet and place it upright between you and the city—an iron wall. Face the model: The city shall be under siege and you shall be the besieger. This is a sign to the family of Israel.

⁴⁻⁵“Next lie on your left side and place the sin of the family of Israel on yourself. You will bear their sin for as many days as you lie on your side. The number of days you bear their sin will match the number of years of their sin, namely, 390. For 390 days you will bear the sin of the family of Israel.

⁶⁻⁷“Then, after you have done this, turn over and lie down on your right side and bear the sin of the family of Judah. Your assignment this time is to lie there for forty days, a day for each year of their sin. Look straight at the siege of Jerusalem. Roll up your sleeve, shake your bare arm, and preach against her.

⁸ “I will tie you up with ropes, tie you so you can’t move or turn over until you have finished the days of the siege.

⁹⁻¹² “Next I want you to take wheat and barley, beans and lentils, dried millet and spelt, and mix them in a bowl to make a flat bread. This is your food ration for the 390 days you lie on your side. Measure out about half a pound for each day and eat it on schedule. Also measure out your daily ration of about a pint of water and drink it on schedule. Eat the bread as you would a muffin. Bake the muffins out in the open where everyone can see you, using dried human dung for fuel.”

¹³ God said, “This is what the people of Israel are going to do: Among the pagan nations where I will drive them, they will eat foods that are strictly taboo to a holy people.”

¹⁴ I said, “God, my Master! Never! I’ve never contaminated myself with food like that. Since my youth I’ve never eaten anything forbidden by law, nothing found dead or violated by wild animals. I’ve never taken a single bite of forbidden food.”

¹⁵ “All right,” he said. “I’ll let you bake your bread over cow dung instead of human dung.”

¹⁶⁻¹⁷ Then he said to me, “Son of man, I’m going to cut off all food from Jerusalem. The people will live on starvation rations, worrying where the next meal’s coming from, scrounging for the next drink of water. Famine conditions. People will look at one another, see nothing but skin and bones, and shake their heads. This is what sin does.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**