

Ezekiel's Symbolic Acts

Ezekiel 4 - 7

by Don Falkos

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Following God's instruction, Ezekiel built a model of the city of Jerusalem. He staged an attack on it – siege towers, earthworks, battering rams. He set up an iron griddle as a wall between himself and the model and stared through it as though he were the one besieging the city.

Next, he spent over a year lying on the ground bound with ropes, first on one side and then on the other, acting out the role of the scapegoat, taking onto himself the guilt of Israel and Judah. Then once again staring at the model of Jerusalem, he reached out his hand toward it and prophesied against it.

During all this time, Ezekiel cooked his food over a fire fueled with cow dung. His food and water were severely limited, just as would be the case in the actual besieged Jerusalem.

Ezekiel used a sword to shave off his hair and beard. He put a third of the hair on his model of Jerusalem and burned it. A third he sprinkled around the model and then struck it repeatedly with the sword. A third he scattered on the wind.

The Lord said, "My people have refused to follow me and have worshiped idols. Now they will suffer the consequences. Jerusalem will once again be under siege. Food and water will be in such short supply, some people will resort to cannibalism. A third of the people will die of disease in the city. A third will die by the sword around the city. A third will flee the city, pursued by their enemies.

"A few will escape, and all will know that I am the Lord."