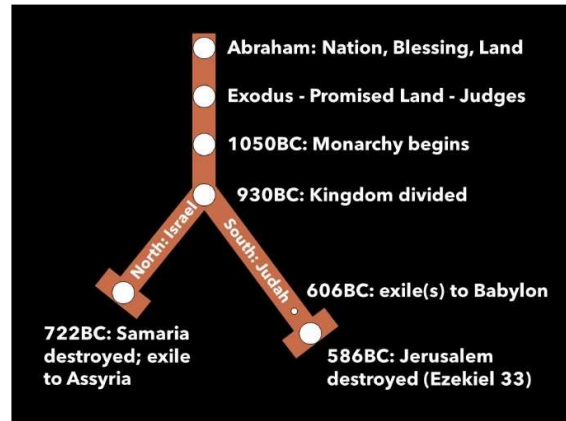


EZEKIEL: JUSTICE FOR ALL

WEEK 5: CHAPTERS 34-39 (HOPE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE)

WARM UP: 1. Share some of your favourite comeback stories with each other (whether from movies, sport, history etc.) 2. Do you have a personal story of coming back from an impossible situation?

Context: As the slide on the right shows, the people of Israel were in a hopeless situation. They were at a dead end – the northern kingdom had fallen in 722BC and now, as recorded in Ezekiel 33, the southern kingdom had fallen with the destruction of Jerusalem in 586BC. God had promised to make them into a great nation, but now all hope seemed lost.



1. **Read Ezekiel 34.** Go through the chapter and call out all the “I will” statements in it. For the Israelites, exiled in Babylon, describe how it must have felt to hear these words from God (through Ezekiel).
2. **Read John 10:11-18 and Matthew 25:31-33.** Jesus fulfils God’s promises in Ezekiel 34 but not necessarily in the way the Israelites would have expected. What was surprising about the way Jesus fulfilled it? How does what we know about Jesus transform our understanding of what the promises in Ch 34 mean?
3. What difference does Jesus being the ‘good shepherd’ make to you?
4. **Read Ezekiel 37:1-14.** These are famous verses of the Bible! God can bring the deadest of things to life. But specifically, God is saying here that He can even bring to life people who have sinned and come under his judgement for their sin. In other words, no one is “too far gone” for God to save and restore! Have you ever come across someone who believes they’re too far gone? Have you ever doubted that God really will forgive and save you?
5. The valley of dry bones gives us an image of the gospel. Jesus took all of humanity’s sins, as well as God’s judgement and anger against sin, to the cross. He was dead and buried. But God resurrected him and breathed new life into him. And we can experience this new life too when we believe in him! Take a moment to read verses like: 1 John 2:2; Romans 4:25, 5:8-9; 2 Cor 5:17; Romans 8:10-11; Ephesians 2:1-10. Are you living in this reality today?

PRAY: That you would have hope & joy & be free from guilt & condemnation.