

April 20, 1997
1st - 6th Grades

Ezekiel Chapters 20-24
3EZE31

Accept God's Word, Don't Resist Him

Ezekiel



Materials I Need:

****Please note that lesson plans will now include options in the each section, for grades 1-6, so that you may teach to the different skill levels of your group of Bible students.**

Memory Work:

	1 st - 2 nd : Ezekiel 18:32
	3 rd - 6 th : Ezekiel 18:30-32
Prophet	Ezekiel
People	Exiles in Babylon
Prophecy	God's Glory Won't Mix with Your Sin
Principle	Accept God's Word, Don't Resist Him

Aim Questions:

1. What are the 4 P's of Ezekiel?
2. What has been unique about Ezekiel up to this point? (*He only speaks when God gives him utterance.*)
3. What does God use to "remind" the Israelites of their sin and God's desire for the people to turn to Him? (*Ezekiel's' wife's death, his voice back, corroded pot illustration*)
4. How did Ezekiel respond to the death of his wife? How would you respond to a death? Or, if you have had a death in your family, how did you respond?
5. How are we like the Israelites in the cooking pot? Do we think we are safe and secure as we go through the motions of Christianity or are we truly living for God? How do you know?

Hook:

FIRESTORM VIDEO. Drama. Begin a video with footage from firestorm, pan over to a strong looking man. He is dressed as a Babylonian and is carrying a large sword. As the man approaches the sign posts marked "Ammon" and "Judah", he pulls the sword from his scabbard. The Babylonian looks up at the sign post and he taps the section of the sign post marked "Judah". The sword says, "The sword of God". He nods his head "Yes" and begins marching towards Judah. The camera cuts back to firestorm footage.

FIRESTORM VISITOR. Speaker. Invite someone in who was involved with one of Spokane's firestorms. Have that person share some of their experiences. Possible topics to be covered: How the fire consumed everything in its path, the intense heat, the fire doesn't pick favorites, etc.) Give your guest a copy of the Adventure so that they can tie their brief talk into a "great" HOOK.

REMINDER. Object Lesson. You will need string, scissors, Post-its, lists, calendars, etc. Bring in whatever you use as reminders. Have a sharing time: Tell of ways you remind yourself to do things. Have Bible students share how they remember to do things. **DEBRIEF:** God gave the Israelites many reminders but they wouldn't be reminded. (Can you remember some of the reminders He gave them?) Have the Bible students tie a string around one of their fingers as a reminder that "God's Glory and Your Sin Won't Mix!" ****At this point have one of the teachers hold up a "reminder" to move on to the next item on the agenda. The "reminder" could say, "music is next" or "Adventure Now!"**



TIMES UP. Option 1: Color page. God has waited a long time for His people to repent. Guess who's time is up? **Option 2:** Game. Play "Times up, Israel". You will need a brightly wrapped box and lid, (wrap the two separately) a timer, and some music. Have the Bible students sit in a circle like they are going to play hot potato. To start, set the timer for a few minutes and place it into the box--don't let the Bible students see you do this. Start the music and hand the box to one of the students to begin passing. When the timer goes off, stop the music. **DEBRIEF:** Time is up for us, just like God was telling the Israelites their time was up. Listen to today's Adventure to hear God's plans for the Israelites.



Book:

Presentation Ideas -



FORK IN THE ROAD. Illustration or overhead. Ask the students who they think the king might be. Which way will he decide to go? Tell the Bible students to listen carefully to the Adventure so they might know why there's a cooking pot at the end of the road. **3EZE31.GF4**

Bible Adventure -

Suppose you had a friend who had a fascination with fire. His attraction to it is plain to see. He's done everything from blistering his fingers to singeing his eyebrows, and still he's the first one you'll see pulling a burning stick out of a campfire. You've warned him to be careful, his parents have warned him, and it does no good. Your friend constantly puts himself in danger, and even when you tell him not to, he does it anyway.

This was the kind of attitude God was seeing in the Israelites of Ezekiel's day. Though Ezekiel had warned them of God's coming judgment, they did not believe him. Now the elders of the Jews in exile had come to Ezekiel again, wanting to hear a word from the Lord. God was not flattered by their attention, for He could see into their hearts. He said He would not give them a new word, because they had ignored His words in the past.

Remember our story from last week, where God's people kept doubting His word that He would judge them? God's answer to them was that judgment was coming, and coming very soon. God kept repeating the message, because the people just weren't getting it. God's love for them was so great that He kept on warning them, and now, instead of giving them a new word, God had Ezekiel explain to them why the judgment they would receive was fair and well-deserved. He also described in detail what the judgment would be like. Why do you think God did this? It's because when the judgment did fall, God wanted there to be no doubt in anyone's mind that it was His doing.

God told Ezekiel to confront Israel with her sin. Ezekiel, since becoming God's prophet, had only been able to speak when he spoke for God. He spoke, reminding the Israelites of their rebellious history. They had rebelled against God clear back in Egypt by worshipping Egypt's idols. Part of the covenant they had made with God was to keep the Sabbath holy, but they had failed to do that. They kept up their sinful ways until Ezekiel's time.

Because of God's great love and mercy for His people, and because He wanted the other nations of the earth to see His mercy, God did not judge His people when they rebelled in Egypt. He did judge them when they rebelled while living in the desert, but He did not release His awesome anger against them. The people continued to sin right up to Ezekiel's time. So Ezekiel told them about a coming firestorm. God would send the storm of an invading army to destroy the land. God said, "Everyone will see that I have kindled (lit) it; it will not be quenched." God wanted everyone to know that He was responsible for the army's invasion. God also told the people He was pulling out a sword to use against them. He made it clear that the king of Babylon would be that sword. To do this God had Ezekiel mark out two roads and put up a signpost. One road would go to Ammon and the other to Judah and Jerusalem. The king of Babylon would stop there and decide which way to go. God would make sure He would choose Judah and Jerusalem to invade. God said to the Israelites, "Because you people have brought to mind your guilt by your open rebellion, revealing your sins in all that you do--because you have done this, you will be taken captive."

God slapped His hands together to express His displeasure with His children's disobedience. They were violent, greedy, selfish people who had forgotten God. Their sin was so great that when God looked to find just one Jewish leader who could turn the people away from their path to destruction, He could not find one. God said Jerusalem was like an evil, immoral woman, chasing after the Assyrians and then the Babylonians for protection, instead of relying on her God. In fact, she openly turned her back on God. Because Jerusalem had done this, God would allow all these nations she trusted in to turn against her.

Remember, the Jews thought they were safe as long as they were inside the walls of Jerusalem. Ezekiel told them that Jerusalem would be their place of destruction. They thought they were like meat in a big cooking pot, safe and secure, but Ezekiel told them that the pot was corroded and rusted, ruining the meat inside. God would dump the meat out, which meant the people of Jerusalem would be taken captive. God told Ezekiel the exact day that the king of Babylon would attack Jerusalem. God said to His people, "The time has come for me to act. I will not hold back; I will not have pity, nor will I relent. You will be judged according to your conduct and your actions."

God knew the destruction of Jerusalem would make His people very sad. Something happened on the same day the city fell that made Ezekiel sad too. Ezekiel's wife died. God told His prophet not to cry and mourn openly. When the people saw that Ezekiel was not doing the normal things a person in mourning would do, they asked him about it. Ezekiel told them that on that very day their precious city of Jerusalem would be destroyed and family members they had left there would die. They were not to weep and mourn either, but to think about their sin and grieve because it was the cause of the destruction. Someone would escape from the battle in Jerusalem and come to tell the exiles about it. Then they would see God's hand in all these events and know that Ezekiel had spoken God's words. Ezekiel was now able to speak freely again. Just imagine this prophet's love for God that he could endure the death of someone he loved so much and continue giving out God's message. Only a man who had witnessed the glory of God could have done that--only a man who knew in his heart that God's majesty and character were great, greater even than the love of a man for his wife. It's amazing what God can do with a man like that.

Don't you think the Israelites were a lot like our little firebug friend we talked about earlier? They kept getting burned but they kept going right back to the sin. God's prophets were there, faithfully bringing God's message: God's glory and your sin will not mix. Isaiah's message was: "Return to God and He will forgive. Continue in sin and He will punish." Jeremiah said, "You've run out of time. God's punishment is inescapable. Submit to it, accept it as God's discipline, and turn from your sin to Him." Ezekiel said, "This is it--God's judgment. Watch and see--there's no way out of this. Listen, you hard-hearted people! See this punishment. Live this captivity. Stop trying to explain it away. You will know God is the Lord, because He did exactly what He said He would do."

It's the same for us today. Our sin and God's glory will never mix. Let's listen to God's warning, and not play around with sin. If we do, we're going to get burned. Let's thank God today that because of His son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit living in every believer, we have a solution to our sin problem. We can know God and learn to live to please Him.



Look:



BOOKMARK. Craft. Read Ezekiel 21:1-17 using volunteers. Cut out the sword bookmark and discuss this section of scripture. Fold in half and attach a large paper clip to the hilt of the sword. The sword will go on two sides of one page, being held in place by the paper clip. Color in the sword. **3EZE31.GF1**



REMINDER. Option 1: Role Play. Use the band instruments to mark time. Have the students tell the Israelites their time is up by saying, "See this punishment, live this punishment, don't try to explain it away! HEY!" Repeat this several times....Have fun, wear ear plugs? **Option 2:** Worksheet. **3EZE31.GF9**



FIRESTORM. Word Game. How many words of 3 or more letters can you make from FIRESTORM? **3EZE31.GF2**



REMEMBER? Worksheet. Read Ezekiel 20:5-24 aloud to the class. Have them listen for the times and ways that the Israelites rebelled against God...(In Egypt: worshipped the idols of Egypt. In the desert: broke the laws, didn't keep the Sabbath, continued to worship idols.) Discuss why He waited to bring judgment upon them. **3EZE31.GF10**



REMEMBER THE SABBATH. Worksheet. Discuss how the many sins of Israel had brought God's judgment upon the people. One in particular stands out in today's scripture. God's people had

forgotten Him and they had not kept the Sabbath. "Keeping the Sabbath" has gotten a lot of bad press because of all the extra rules that were added. Keeping the Sabbath however, was very important to God. On the worksheet you will find God's instructions and man's rules for the Sabbath.

Option 1: Work as a class to distinguish between God's and man's rules for the Sabbath.

Option 2: Let the students work individually and when completed, discuss the answers. What did God intend the Sabbath to be?

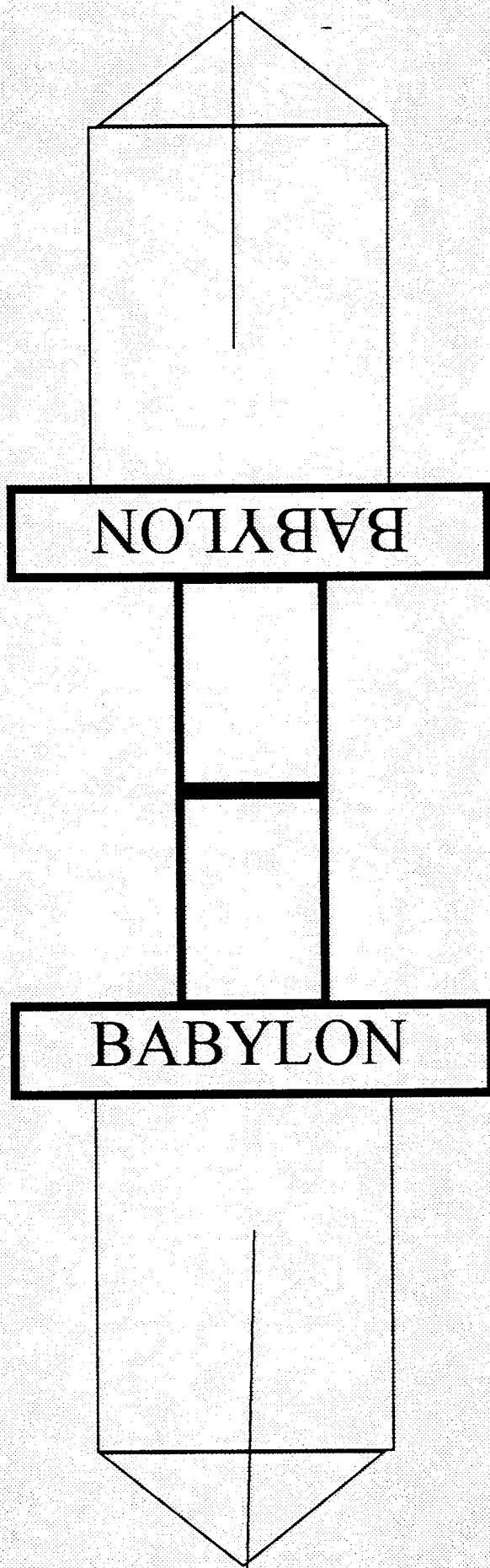
- SYMPATHY CARD.** Craft. Ezekiel was not allowed to express his grief when his wife died. Why did God tell him not to grieve? Color and fold into quarters the sympathy card for Ezekiel. **3EZE31.GF5**
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Took:

- NEVER MIX.** Object Lesson. Remind the Bible students that God's glory and your sin won't mix. Use the Object Lesson from two weeks ago again. Send the recipe home with your students to make their own reminder. **3EZE29**
- THE ROAD NOT TAKEN.** Poem. Read "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost. Many times our lives come to a "fork in the road." We have to make a decision that may have a lasting effect on our future. It would be very scary to think that we're on our own at times like these. God knows what's down these "roads" and He can control the decision we make just like He did with Nebuchadnezzar. Should we plow ahead on our own or ask Him to lead? **3EZE31.GF9**
- JUMPIN' 4 P'S.** Jump rope this ditty to stay in shape for the firestorms ahead. When the Bible student hears the rope hit the ground, it's time to jump in!
The Prophet is Ezekiel
The People are --- Exiles in Babylon
The Prophecy --- God's Glory Won't Mix
With Your Sin
The Principle --- Accept God's Word
Don't Resist Him!
These are the 4 P's
Got 'em from Ezekiel
Now it's time to jump out!
- AIM QUESTIONS.** Discussion. Use the Aim Questions to lead a table discussion. These questions are on the same page as FIRESTORM. **3EZE31.GF2**
- WORSHIP BOOKLET.** Devotional. **Option 1:** Continue to re-inforce the importance of the 4 P's of a daily devotional life. Introduce this week's "practice" sections with the half sheet symbols in view. **3EZE30.GF6** Half sheet symbols - Practice. **3EZE31.GF6.1-6** **Option 2:** Need Beth's gf to complete. **3EZE30.GF7**
- WHY?** Discussion. Don't look now, but there is a string tied to your finger. Can anyone remember why it's there? Is anyone's finger falling off? **Remember** to take it off.

GOD'S SWORD OF JUDGMENT



Cut out the sword bookmark.

Discuss Ezekiel 21:1-17.

The bookmark will go on two sides of a book page, being held in place by the paper clip.

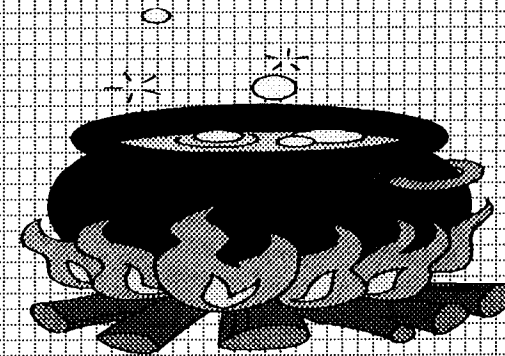
How many words of 3 or more letters can you make out of the word "FIRESTORM"?



AIM QUESTIONS

1. What are the 4 P's of Ezekiel?
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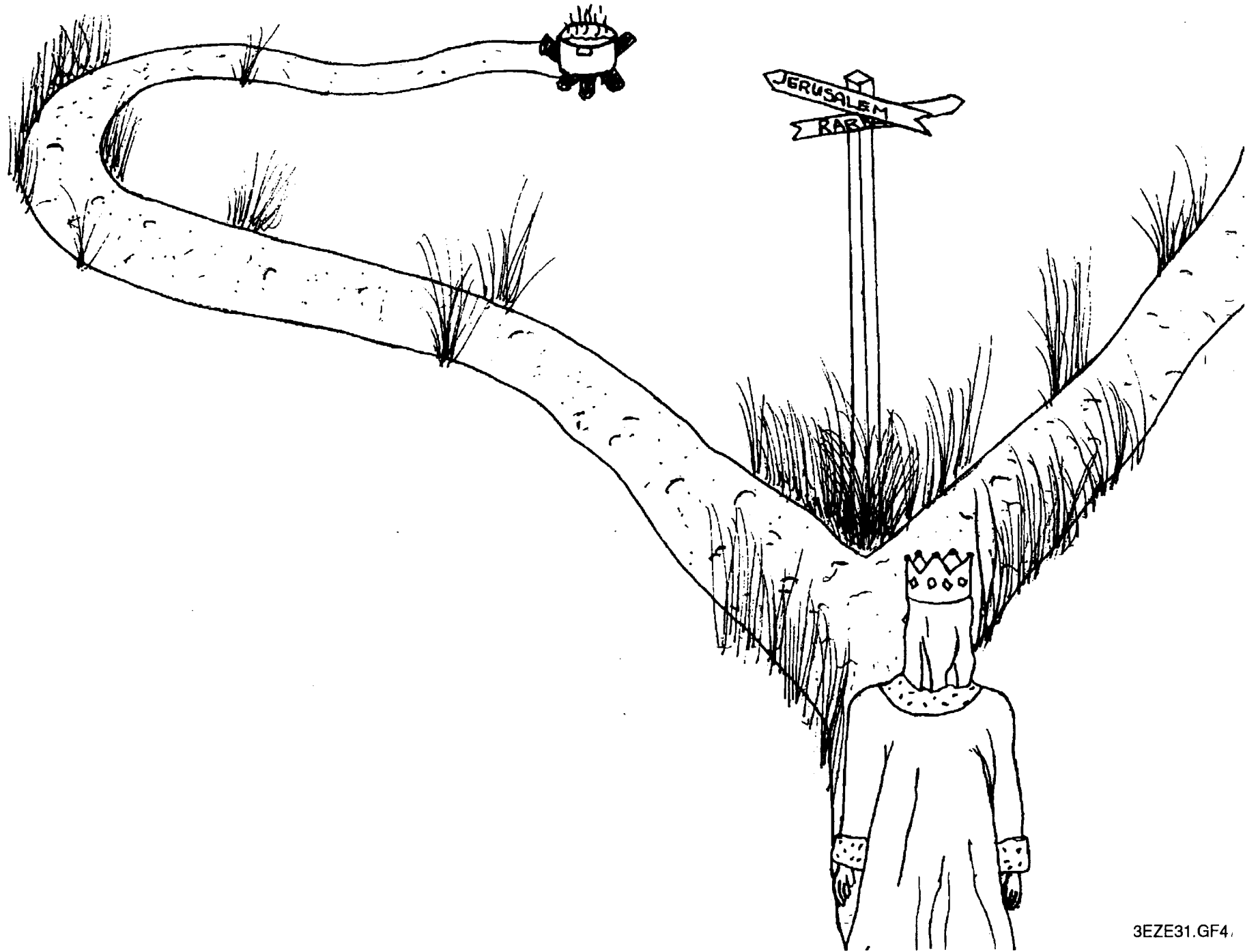
FIRESTORM



REMEMBER THE SABBATH

God gave instructions for the keeping of the Sabbath. Men added many of their own rules. Mark God's instructions with a '+' sign and man's rules with a '-' sign.

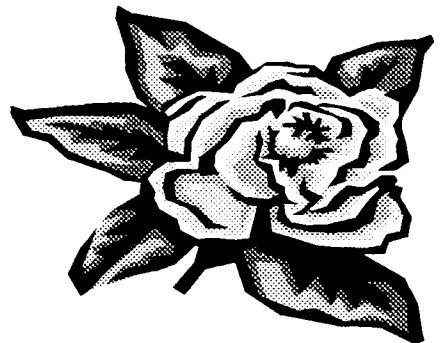
- _____ Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. (Exodus 20:8, 31:15)
- _____ Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during the plowing season and harvest you must rest. (Exodus 34:21)
- _____ Do not pick a handful of grain to eat on the Sabbath.
- _____ Do not light a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day. (Exodus 35:3)
- _____ Do not spit in the dirt on the Sabbath.
- _____ The seventh day shall be your holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it must be put to death. (Exodus 35:2)
- _____ Be careful to do everything I have said to you. Do not invoke the names of other gods; do not let them be heard on you lips. (Exodus 23:13)
- _____ The seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly. (Leviticus 23:3)
- _____ Prepare food for Sabbath meals ahead of time. (Exodus 16:23)
- _____ Gathering of wood on the Sabbath is not permitted. (Numbers 32-36)
- _____ Do not carry a heavy load as you come through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. (Jeremiah 17:27)



*May you find comfort
in the LORD*

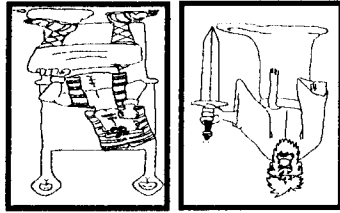


We're so sorry



3EZE31.GF5

Ezekiel Chapters 25-32



Give the
Glory to God...

MONDAY-

Prayer - Pray to be diligent this week to meet daily with the Lord.

Passage - Read Ezekiel Chapter 25. What are the 4 groups of people that Ezekiel prophesies about? What will those people know?

Praise - Sing: *Whisper a Prayer In The Morning*

TUESDAY-

Prayer - Pray that you will seek the Lord even in the things that seem small.

Passage - Read Ezekiel Chapter 26. Who will be no more and never found again?

Praise - Sing: *You Can't Be A Beacon if Your Light Don't Shine*

FRIDAY-

Prayer - Pray to know God better each day through the study of His Word.

Passage - Read Ezekiel Chapter 29 & 30. What did God want Egypt to know? Do you know it?

Praise - Sing: *God Is So Good*

SATURDAY-

Prayer - Pray that the Lord will increase in your life and you will decrease.

Passage - Read Ezekiel Chapter 31 & 32. In 31:18 what happened to the Pharaoh?

Praise - Sing: *He Is Exalted / He Lives*

WEDNESDAY-

Prayer - Daily ask God to make you aware of areas in your life that you need to ask forgiveness.

Passage - Read Ezekiel Chapter 27. How is Tyre described?

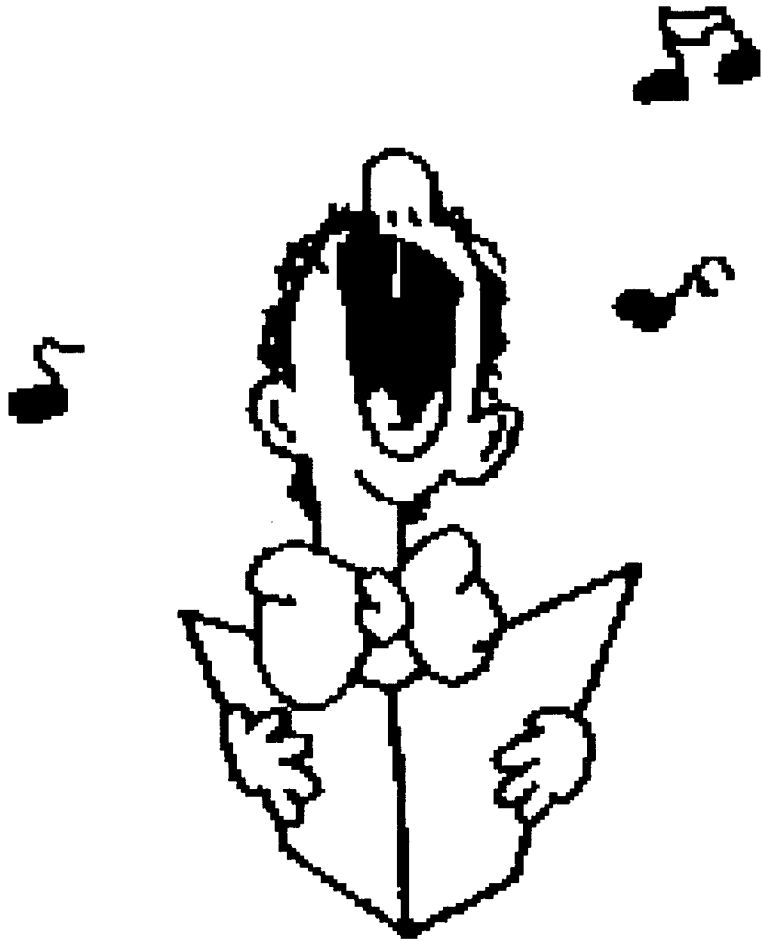
Praise - Sing: *Happiness Is The Lord / Hear My Cry*

THURSDAY-

Prayer - Pray for Evelyn Hatten, a missionary nurse in Zambia, Africa.

Passage - Read Ezekiel Chapter 28. What happened to the braggart king?

Praise - Sing: *Praise the Lord / Micah 6:8*



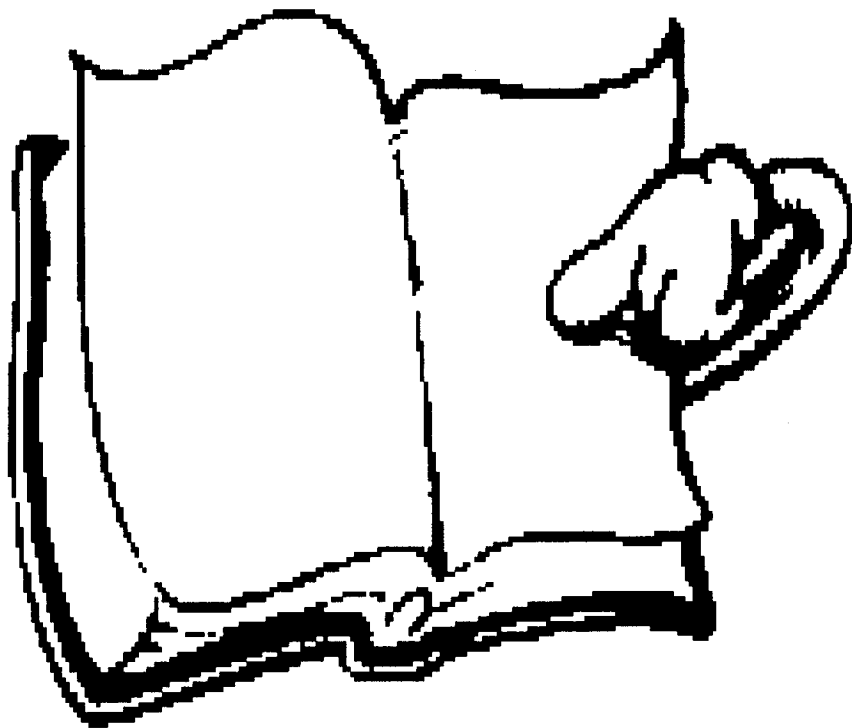
PRAISE

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PRAYER

3EZE31.GF6.2



PASSAGE

3EZE31.GF6.3



Be a Helper

3EZE31.GF6.4



**You look nice!
Good job!**

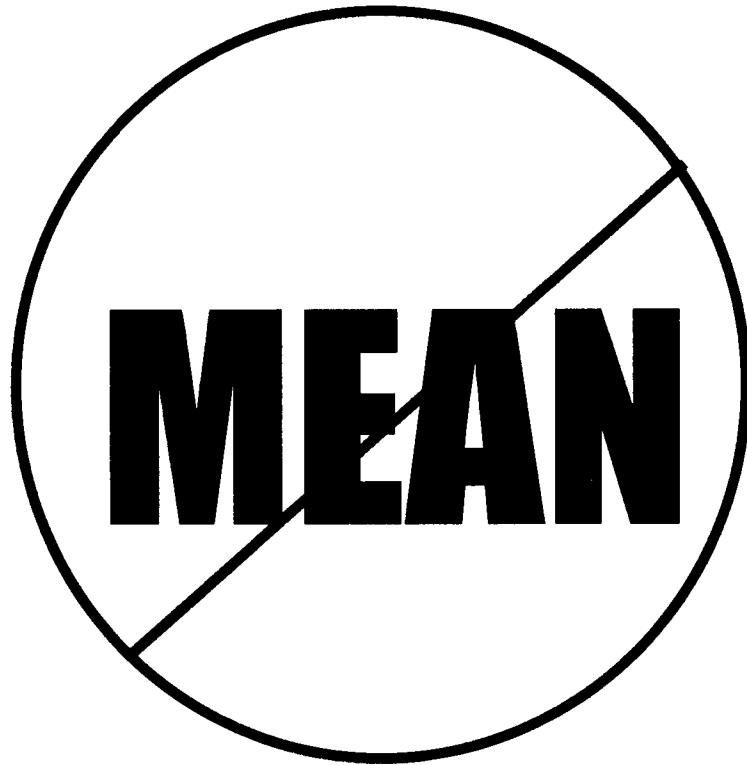
Be an Encourager

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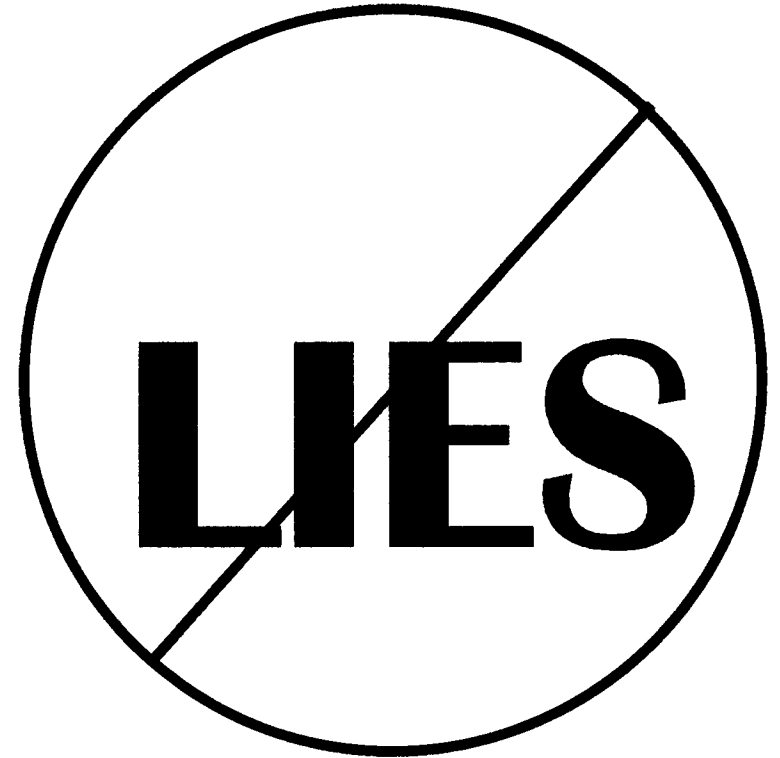
Be a Listener

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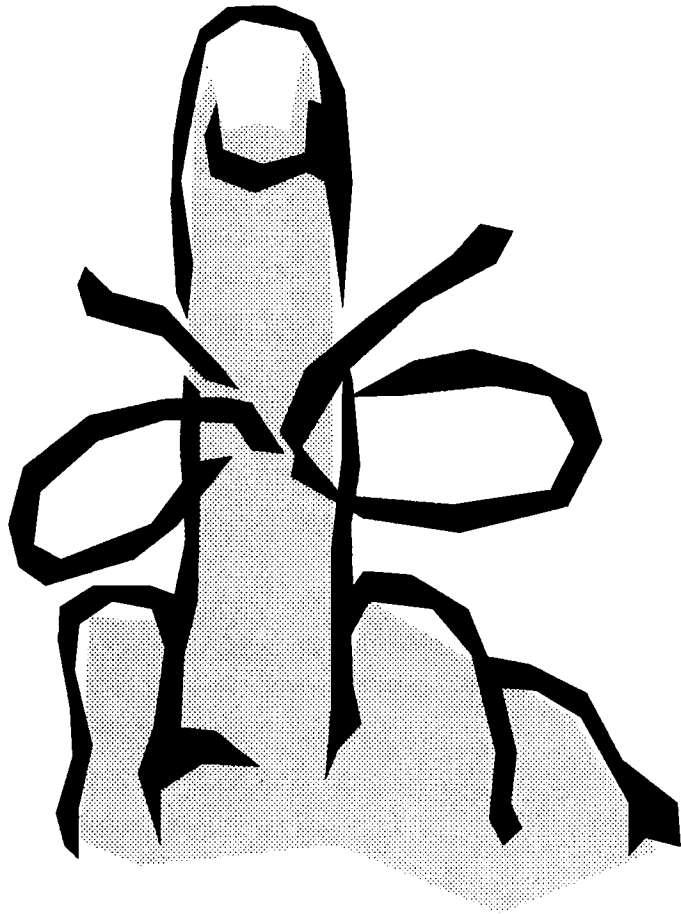
Be Kind

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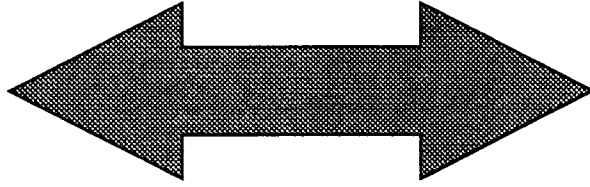
Tell the Truth

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***Remember God. What has
He done for you?***

3EZE31.GF6.9



The Road Not Taken

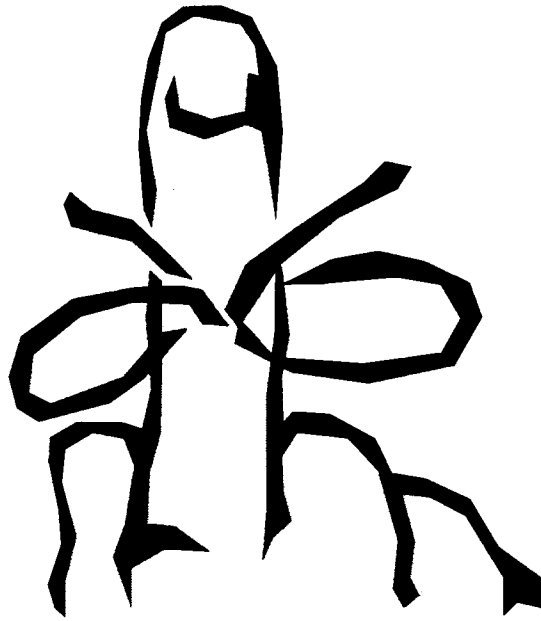
***Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
and sorry I could not travel both
and be one traveler, long I stood
and looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;***

***Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,***

***And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.***

***I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.***

- Robert Frost



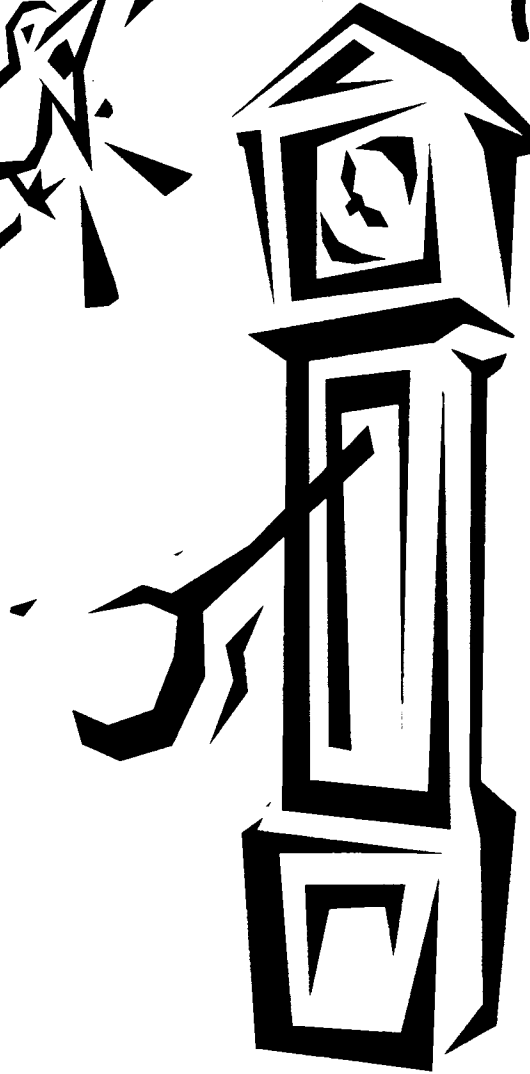
REMEMBER?



God gives a brief history of the Israelites' rebellion in Ezekiel 20:5-24, reminding them of His great love and how He had "put off" judging them. List the times when God withheld judgment. Why did He wait?

The LORD is patient, but He can't withhold judgment forever. Judah's time has finally come.

TIME'S UP!



*God has waited a long time for
His people to repent.
Guess who's time is up?*