



Amir Tsarfati
Steve Yohn

Authors' Corner: Exploring Ezekiel Part 1

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AMIR: Hey, Shalom everyone. I'm Amir Tsarfati from CONNECT in Galilee, Israel. And today we have a super-exciting *Authors' Corner* with Pastor Steve Yohn from Parker, Colorado. Shalom Steve, how are you doing, my friend?

STEVE: Doing great, Amir, it's fantastic to be back with you again for *Authors' Corner*.

AMIR: Yes, and today we have a very, very important and timely episode of *Authors' Corner* because we're about to talk about the exciting and upcoming book that I had the privilege of writing with your father's assistance, and I'm talking about *Exploring Ezekiel*. By the way, that's the actual book. I just got the copy, and it looks phenomenal, especially when it stands right next to the other two in this series, *Revealing Revelation* and *Discovering Daniel*. So, Steve, before we dive into this amazing, timely book, how about you start with a prayer?

STEVE: Great. Our God, we are so thankful to be here today. We thank You for the opportunity that You have given us to get Your Word out through a written medium. We know that there are opportunities that Amir has all the time to teach Your Word, and to talk to folks all around the world. But this is one more way that You have chosen to get Your Word into the hands of people so they cannot just hear it once, but they can read it over and over, so it gets deep into their hearts. We know nothing replaces Your Word, the true Word of God. But we thank You for the opportunity to allow us to write about what You have written, and to teach some of the depth and the intricacies of Your amazing Word. So, Lord, we give this time to You today as we talk about

Exploring Ezekiel; we talk about the incredible message that this prophet gave, that You gave through him. We give this time into Your hands, and we ask that You are glorified in all we say and all we do. We pray in the name of our Savior Jesus, Amen.

AMIR: Amen. Amen. So, Steve, take the lead. I mean, you are asking me...

STEVE: ...There are some people who may say, “Well, this is just a book to fill out a trilogy.” I



mean, you have the big three in Scripture when you’re talking about prophetic books. You’ve got Revelation, you’ve got Daniel, and you’ve got Ezekiel. And if you’ve done Revelation and Daniel, you’ve got to get Ezekiel in there. So, this is just a way to fill out the trilogy. But this is truly one of the most timely books

that you have ever written because of what we see taking place in the world around us. What was it that moved you to say, “We need to write a book on the prophet Ezekiel”?

AMIR: Yeah. Well, first of all, I’ll be very honest with you, before I was teaching about Revelation and Daniel, I’ve been teaching about Ezekiel forever. In fact, one of my first messages that I traveled the world with was “The Days of Ezekiel.” And the reason is because the prophet Ezekiel not only gave us a wonderful window to understand the heart of God for Israel in the good things and the bad things; but also he gave us the single most up-to-date picture of current events since the return of the Jews back to the land through the outcome of the Holocaust in Europe, and the establishment of the state of Israel, all the way through the days we live in right now, and the very soon immediate future that we’re all experiencing and we can see already the stage set up for. So rarely you have a prophet that brings to you within a small number of chapters in the heart of that book, a precise and timely look into our life today. I mean, normally people, they talk about the past of Israel, or they talk about the millennial kingdom when one day the Messiah will reign. But rarely you see something that is even more precise than today’s newspaper talking about us,

our generation, our time, and what's going to happen in the very near future. So for me, I mean, this is amazing. And I thought there's no way, no way we could just go about teaching Bible prophecy without analyzing and exploring this particular book of the prophets.

STEVE: Yeah, I mean, all Scripture speaks to all of us. It tells us about the world, it tells us about who we are, it tells us about who God is. But as a modern-day Israeli, I've got to think there's no other book of the Bible that speaks so much to you and your present-day life that you were living each and every day than the book of Ezekiel.

AMIR: Yeah, exactly. And as I said, I've been feeling that in my bones since the very early years of me traveling and speaking in different parts of the world, and almost in every newsletter and every post that I'm posting online, I happen to relate to this book and this prophet. And again, the prophet Ezekiel is not just [chapters] 38 and 39. There's so much in that prophet that we can learn about. And while the whole world, for example, I'll give you an example, while the whole world is obsessed with the coming third temple, many people forget about what happened to the first, and a lot of people don't even know that there's going to be the fourth (temple). And this particular book is dealing with that sandwich of the first and the last, which is again rarely seen in books of the Bible. I mean, even the book of the 2 Thessalonians speaking about the Antichrist entering into the temple of God is speaking about the third temple, not about the fourth. And again, a lot of people don't understand how the Spirit of God left the first temple. The building was empty from the presence of God.

And again, so the prophet Ezekiel is giving us an amazing and intimate and very genuine, very—You know, you can see that there is no sweeping under the carpet of anything here. You can see how the prophet is putting a mirror right in front of the people of Israel. And it's telling them, what I believe even Isaiah tried to say, religion is not the answer; religion is the problem.

And a building, you can call it the house of God as much as you want, but there's a good chance that God is not even in there. And I think it's a lesson even to all of us today. There's a lot of places that people like to call the house of God, but the stuff that is being done there and the things that are being said there, and the teachings that are being taught there are as far from God's Word as east from the west. And there's a good possibility that God is not there at all. So I mean, we see that precedent, we see that. And again, it's a very timely book. And for me to cover it from the beginning to the end was super important. I did not want to just dwell on a small portion that everybody's talking about all the time. I wanted to give the broader picture.

STEVE: Well, it's like what you talk about in your *Exploring the Bible* shows with my dad, where you look at Scripture and the way you understand Scripture is by looking at the rest of Scripture. You can't understand just a verse if you don't know its context and to just pull out 36, 37, 38, and 39 without knowing the rest of the book of Ezekiel, you can't know what's happening, why it's happening. Why is God bringing this great war? What led up to this? And we know that in 36 through 39, that's just one more example or illustration of what God is doing to show people who He is. The theme of the book is not, "I'm bringing a big war." The theme of the book is, "Then they shall know that I am the Lord." And that's carried throughout the whole thing. And how will they know that? Well, one of the ways is when He steps in and protects Israel during this great war.

AMIR: Exactly, Steve. And if it was just all about the Ezekiel War, I would say a fiction book would be enough because it's a war, preparation for the war itself. And...

STEVE: ...Can I interrupt you a second on that?

AMIR: Yes.

STEVE: We do have a fiction book coming.

AMIR: I was trying to allude to that one. Of course, that's the point.

STEVE: I'll let you take it.

AMIR: [Laughter] I'm just saying we will go deeper when it comes to that war from a very, very unorthodox way. But when you want to *study* the Bible, and this book is not just a book about a certain event, one event. We want to study the *book* of Ezekiel. You really want to step back and have a wider perspective of God's promises, and the way God conducts Himself with Israel. And it's interesting because even when we dealt with the book of Revelation, I remember writing *Revealing Revelation*, I remember how I was stunned how many times I had to quote Ezekiel in order to explain the things that John the Beloved saw in the mission control room in heaven.

So Ezekiel had an amazing revelation from God. And I think it's timeless. It's for those who lived then as much as it's for us today. And it's for us also to prepare us for what He's about to do even in the future. That's why I love the fact that in the first ten chapters, you read about the first temple. So we see how God did not approve things in the past. But then you go all the way to the fourth temple of the future, and you see what God really wants the temple to look like when the Messiah will reign from it. So you see the amazing, amazing way God is introducing Himself to the nation that His name will be glorified and that the people, as you said, will know that He is God.

STEVE: And we see in there the way that God deals with Israel. We see the way that God deals with the nations. You see that from the beginning. You see that throughout in the judgment against the nations and the judgments against Israel. And then you see that in 38 and 39, again, the way God deals with Israel, and the way that God deals with the rest of the nations. But the one thing that you find throughout is God's never-ending love, favor, compassion for His people. It's in there with Israel and we know that that's true with us too. Ezekiel 38 and 39, the entire book actually, it

is that picture of God's love for Israel and God's love for the church, for His people. He will never, no matter how much we stray from Him, when we belong to Him, we always belong to Him. And He has an end goal where He will bring us back to Him. His eye is always on us, no matter how far we run from Him, His eye is always on us.

AMIR: Yeah, and that's what breaks my heart in these days to see so many so-called Christians falling in the trap of Jew-hatred and Israel-hatred. And then they bring up this theological concept of "The Jews rejected Christ therefore God is no longer with them." And you think about it, none of them truly ever read, studied, and understood the prophets. Because if Israel's story with God is over 2,000 years ago when they rejected the Messiah as a nation, then half of the Old Testament is irrelevant, and much of the New Testament that is quoting the Old Testament is irrelevant as well. To me, Ezekiel is the ultimate proof that although God rebuked Israel, and at times punished Israel, He never stopped loving them, and He never canceled any of His promises to them. And Israel is still the nation through which He wants to reveal Himself to the rest of the world, even today.

The funny thing is that most of them don't even understand that today. But God is still out there in that job of working through Israel, in Israel, with Israel. And Ezekiel is the ultimate book to see that. You know, a lot of people don't understand that not a single time in the Bible, God ordered another nation to either replace Israel or to *utterly* destroy Israel. Even when God had allowed another nation to come against Israel, God was using that as a disciplinary action against Israel, but He always judged and punished those who came against Israel. Because to begin with, He did not put that thought in their mind. He just allowed them to execute what they had in their mind, but He punished them for that type of thought. So any person that called himself a person of God, a follower of God, a lover of God, a lover of God's Word, you better watch out because

the mere thought that you are out there to punish, curse, and cancel Israel, one day will cost you. God will not approve that. God is not sending Christians to curse Israel, sending Christians to cancel, hate, and remove them. This is all from the pit of hell. And I love Ezekiel because Ezekiel, although he started with the failure of Israel in the first temple, he continues to the fourth temple when Israel is back with the head of all nations and the Messiah, Yeshua, is reigning, from Jerusalem.

STEVE: You know, one of the definitions of racism is looking at a people group and saying that they all think and act exactly the same. It's saying every Asian believes and acts the same, every Arab believes and acts the same. And no one would ever do that because we know that people think differently. [There are] always different thinkers, different ways of processing, different beliefs within a people group. Yet when it comes to the Jews, particularly those first century Jews, people inside the church and outside of the church say they rejected Christ. They, as in the big THEY, capital letters all the way through, "the Jews rejected Christ; therefore, God has rejected them, every single one of them." And it's such a silly and ignorant argument because all you have to do is look at Scripture and see that not all the Jews rejected Jesus. There were many who followed Him.

AMIR: And Steve, the New Testament would have never been written. The New Testament would never been written if all the Jews rejected Christ. [Laughter] There would be no disciples. There would be no apostles.

STEVE: So this whole thing about rejecting, about God rejecting the Jewish people and replaced [them] with the church makes absolutely no sense because that would mean that God looked at the Jews and said, "They have all rejected Me." Because we know that God doesn't make other people pay for the sins of another person. It's just like children don't pay for the sins of their parents. You

know, one person doesn't pay for the sin of another person. So God's not going to look at... there were, yes, Jews who rejected Christ. He's not going to say, "Well, I'm going to throw the baby out with the bathwater. If these leaders rejected Christ, then I'm going to get rid of all the Jews." It's just—what kind of person thinks that way, let alone what kind of loving God would think that way. It just makes no sense.

AMIR: I tell you what kind of a person, I tell you the kind of a person that thinks that way is a kind of a person that never read or studied the Bible. So they don't know the Word. They don't know the heart of God. They don't know the character of God. They're religious people. And because they are religious people, one day the Messiah will say, "I don't know you, you, workers of iniquity. You, depart from Me. I don't know you. The fact that you all look the same, all of you are dressed white and all of you are waiting to be taken, doesn't mean I'm going to take you all. I mean, I don't know you. Who are you?" "Oh, 'we did this in Your name. We did thus in Your name.'" "I don't know you. What do you mean you did this in Your name? You did this in *your* name. You guys had an imaginary messiah that you followed who is an anti-Semite, who hates his own brethren, who is not representing the heart of his Father."

Whereas all that the Messiah is, is God in the flesh walking among us, God with us, Immanuel, the same God of Israel who loves His nation, who protects them and cares for them, who has their names inscribed on the palm of his hand. Go away! Who are you? You are bandits. You are ignorant people. And you need to repent. You are not saved. You don't know Yeshua. You don't know Him personally. You don't have the Holy Spirit. You will not be raptured if the rapture happens in the next 10 seconds. You need to repent, and you need to be saved. And I always tell people, you know, Israel is a litmus test. God is testing the world and the church by that one.

And again, Steve, and that's one of the reasons I love to teach the whole book and not just one or two chapters, because that's exactly what these people are doing. They're always cherry picking the verses in the chapters they feel comfortable with. Sometimes it's even part of a verse that they feel comfortable with, taking things out of context, removing the end or the beginning. So God forbid you will not know what else happened. And then they project a picture of a very antagonistic, angry, punishing God. And yet they think that "Oh, as long as you are not a Jew and you're a follower of Christ, you're okay." You know, it's so sad. I'm not saying that with an attitude of, "I think I am better." I'm just thinking, I think God is sad when He sees such an attitude coming from those who claim to be His.

STEVE: And what I love about this book, *Exploring Ezekiel*, is that what you're teaching right now, what you're talking about right now, it's not just Amir's thoughts on this. It's not just you picking verses here and there. That, like you said, it's the whole counsel of God. It's the full Scripture that you are teaching from. And you've got your knowledge of Scripture combined with my dad's extensive knowledge of Scripture, which I don't want to go too far here, but he may actually know more about the Bible than you, Amir. Because I think he knows more about the Bible than anyone I know. And you've got both of you together putting this book, looking at the full counsel of God and saying, "This is what Scripture says." And again, the whole theme of the book, "Then they will know that I am the Lord", as we look at Ezekiel, and as we look at the rest of the Scripture, this is who God is. God is not the kind of God who rejects His people. God is not the kind of God to turn His back on those that He once loved. God's lovingkindness goes on forever and ever. That *hesed* love never ends. And that's what you find in Ezekiel. And that's what I love so much about this book, because Ezekiel is a harsh book. It is the harshest and at times most

difficult to read book of any in Scripture. [AMIR: Yeah, I know that.] But throughout, you see the love of God coming through and His passion for His people.

AMIR: Yeah, absolutely. First of all, your dad is 88, I think. And I can never stop gleaning from his knowledge and wisdom. By the way, it's knowledge and wisdom that you cannot buy. You cannot, there's no way you can get it somewhere. It's knowledge and understanding, and experience, that only years of life, and walking with the Lord and living in this world can give you. And there's so much that we can and should glean from people that age that; there is clarity there that is mixed with experience. They've seen it all, they've heard it all, they've known... They're not surprised with what they see, but they are also... They have this amazing, beautiful conviction that at times, you know, I'm 52 but I am pretty young compared to him. I'm not that young compared to all the young buds all around. But the thing is, at 52, I don't think it's enough to claim the things I claim in the book without having this amazing stamp of approval and amazing guidance that I had from your dad here. And I think that I will forever be grateful to him. And I think that the beauty of this trilogy of all three books is the fact that it combines the understanding of Scriptures from the perspective of an Israeli, a Jew, and someone who lives now with the knowledge and the experience of someone who's been teaching the Bible longer than I have lived. Longer than I have lived, he's been a teacher of the Bible, a student and a teacher of the Bible. This too gives me so much comfort, assurance, and understanding that God is in it. I mean, I don't know how many people have a mentor like that that they can sit under and glean from. And I think it's a strength and it's a great point of advantage when it comes to this book.

STEVE: And what's amazing as I sit and talk with him, we have breakfast every week, is that he at 88 years old is still a passionate learner. He is learning all the time more about God, more about the Scripture, more about himself and how God has created him and gifted him. And I see him

doing new things and trying new things. And that's what keeps him young, that's what keeps him fresh, but that's what makes him so relevant to this world, to you and to me, is that he is always seeking after God and God's truth.

AMIR: Yeah, yes, and again, that's one more very good reason to get a hold of *Exploring Ezekiel*. And I think it's time for us to wrap this things up right now. But I will tell you, Steve, that the book is coming out on October 7th, not for nothing. I think that that day that Hamas tried to get the world to associate it with shame and pain and sorrow for Israel, I think this book is claiming back this date to remind people of God's unfulfilled promises for Israel that are around the corner. He has not abandoned His people whom He foreknew. And that is why I want to claim that date as a date that I want to associate with God's future for Israel, not only with what the enemy intended it for evil things.

And so October 7th, and we want to encourage people, if you really want this book to be in the shelves of non-Christian bookstores and department stores such as Walmart and Target and Hobby Lobby and others, pre-order it right now. And once you pre-order it now, those stores see that there's great interest in those books and then they'll order it to their shelves in their brick-and-mortar stores. And then the non-believers will be exposed to it. So help us to get this word out by pre-ordering now, *Exploring Ezekiel*. And you can get it on ExploringEzekiel.com. We have a landing page that will direct you to pre-order it right now.

Thank you, Steve. As always, it's a great pleasure to sit and talk with you about books that we write. And I want to thank everyone who watched this. Please share it with as many people as you can. And until then, thank you, and God bless you. And Shalom from Galilee, Israel and Parker, Colorado.

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