

August 19 Answers

- 1) God told Ezekiel to **act** out the coming destruction of Jerusalem (the final siege would begin in less than five years). God did this because many if not most of the exiles believed that they would **return** to Jerusalem soon and that God would never allow the wicked Babylonians to destroy His holy temple. Ezekiel warned them that they were mistaken. They had defiled the temple with their idols, and God's patience with their evil was at an end. Ezekiel used a brick to represent Jerusalem, and he surrounded it with tiny siege-works. Then he lay on his left side facing north to signify the sin of the northern kingdom of Israel. He did this for a few hours each day for 390 days. Once the 390 days were complete, he lay on his right side facing south to signify the sin of the southern kingdom of Judah. He did this for a few hours each day for 40 days. During this enactment of the coming siege, God told him to eat and drink in a way that would show how the starving Jews would eat the food that remained in Jerusalem. Ezekiel was also bound with ropes to picture how the people would be trapped in the city. Ezekiel's symbolic enactment **captured** the attention of the exiles and made them realize that sin had serious **consequences**. They should not continue to believe that their status as God's chosen people made them **immune** to punishment. Ezekiel also told the exiles that God had been "**broken** over their **whoring** heart that has departed from me and over their eyes that go whoring after their idols" (Ezek 6:9). When all the things Ezekiel prophesied came to pass, the remnant who survived would **know** "that I am the LORD; I have not said in vain that I do this evil to them" (Ezek 6:10).