



## [Ezekiel 3:16-21](#)

(16) And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, (17) Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. (18) When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. (19) Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. (20) Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. (21) Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.

*King James Version*

The rest of the chapter relates that Ezekiel himself will be a sign through the means of being struck dumb. The only words that he could speak were what [God](#) gave him to say. This was how the people would know that God was speaking.

This shows that the servant of God is *a watchman* sent to warn the people. What God dwells on is [sin](#); the prophet is to warn them of their sins. There is also an element of warning them of what is coming, but this warning message also has a personal and individual aspect to it. It is not just telling [the world](#), "The Great Tribulation is coming, and [Jesus](#) is coming not long thereafter." There is also the part of "show My people their sins." In effect, the prophet is to say, "Look, you perverts. What you are doing is not the way it should be! This is the way God has said. You should change. [Repent!](#)" This is what Ezekiel was supposed to do with the bitterness, the anger, and the astonishment that had been building inside him for seven days. God tells him, "This is how you channel that attitude and those emotions. You preach a warning message, as a

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Ezekiel 3:16-21 (<http://www.theberean.org>)  
watchman."

Obviously, such a job would bring him into conflict with the people; people do not like to hear such a message. They do not like to hear that things are going down the tubes, and especially that they are personally responsible. But that is basically what the watchman's message is. Nothing changes unless it begins in the individual. The individual must change! He must repent and go God's way. As more individuals do this, society will change.

However, Ezekiel has already been told that everything he says will fall on deaf ears, so he must have a forehead of flint, an undaunted, courageous spirit, to keep repeating the message until he dies.

— Richard T. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**  
[The Two Witnesses \(Part 1\)](#)



#### **Related Topics:**

[Ezekiel](#)  
[Ezekiel, Book of](#)  
[Prophesying](#)  
[Prophet as Message Carrier](#)  
[Prophet, Appointed by God](#)  
[Prophet, Function of](#)  
[Prophet, Sign of True](#)  
[Prophetic Office](#)  
[Prophetic Warning](#)  
[Prophets](#)  
[Warning](#)  
[Warning Message](#)  
[Watchfulness](#)  
[Watching](#)  
[Watchman](#)

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Ezekiel 3:16-21 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

Commentary copyright © 1992-2016 [Church of the Great God](#)