



[Ezekiel 3:16-21](#)

(16) At the end of seven days the word of the LORD came to me: (17) "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. (18) When I say to a wicked man, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to dissuade him from his evil ways in order to save his life, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. (19) But if you do warn the wicked man and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his evil ways, he will die for his sin; but you will have saved yourself. (20) "Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and does evil, and I put a stumbling block before him, he will die. Since you did not warn him, he will die for his sin. The righteous things he did will not be remembered, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. (21) But if you do warn the righteous man not to sin and he does not sin, he will surely live because he took warning, and you will have saved yourself."

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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 watchman."

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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 \(Part 1\)](#)



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